



Improve governance
and quality of the forest management
in protected Mediterranean areas

QUALIGOUV Project

Progress book n°2

Seminar
in the Province of Taranto,
Italy
27-29 Avril 2010



Seminar
in the Region of Valencia
Spain
20-22 October 2010



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Foreword

We are pleased to present to the friends of the Mediterranean forests, from all the countries, the information about the work of our partnership within the framework of the MED QUALIGOUV project.

At mid-term of the project, our method consists of spreading the information about its progress.

Usually, most of the stakeholders, and not only the scientists, wait for the end of a process to collect and publish results considered as certain and acquired.

We prefer to expose you, step by step, to what we are doing. This is, in our opinion, in harmony with the MED Programme's spirit, which helps to promote dynamic partnerships, and also with the International Association for Mediterranean Forests (AIFM) purposes.

This is the second progress book of the QUALIGOUV project. If you have not read the first progress book yet, you can contact the AIFM's secretariat of the, or any other partner (the email addresses are available in the part "Presentation of the partners", pages 8 to 22 of the present progress book).

At this stage of the project, we can consider that we have begun to perceive the outcomes of the project, in terms of contents and relevance of the central problem: how to improve the quality of the forest management and the governance in the Mediterranean protected areas.

From now on, we not only better comprehend what good governance should be, but also, and especially, we are able to enrich the contribution of all the partnership by associating the project with other important initiatives such as the second Mediterranean Forest Week, in particular the "Forests, Societies and Territories" sessions.

We hope that this project will continue contributing to this synergy in favour of a sustainable and participative management of the Mediterranean wooded ecosystems.

Juan de Dios CABEZAS
Head of the General Direction of Natural Heritage
and Biodiversity of the Region of Murcia

Mohamed Larbi CHAKROUN
President of the International
Association for Mediterranean Forests

1 - Event of international level organized by the FAO (Silva Mediterranea committee) and other partners such as EFIMED, Blue Plan, and AIFM, in Avignon from 5 to 8 of April 2011. The reports will be available soon on the website of the project: www.qualigouv.eu.

Conception and drafting: Jean BONNIER, Gaëlle FOSSOY, David GASC, Rémi VEYRAND, International Association for Mediterranean Forests - www.aifm.org.

Photos: David GASC from AIFM (cover and pp. 25 and 29); Francisco FLORES from the Region of Murcia (pp. 23 ; 26 ; 34 and 38).

Warning

This volume constitutes the second progress book of the QUALIGOUV project "Improve governance and quality of the forest management in protected Mediterranean areas", co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

It was realized in conjunction with the third and fourth seminars of the project which took place from 27 to 29 of April 2010 in the Regional Natural Park Terra delle Gravine (Province of Taranto, Italy) and from 20 to 22 of October 2010 in the Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel (Region of Valencia, Spain).

Such international seminars are essential in the capitalization process of the project: they allow for debate, formulation of observations about the difficulties faced in the undertaking of activities and to obtain results by passing word to the local stakeholders involved in concrete projects, to the elected representatives, to the daily users and to the concerned institutions. Indeed, if international meetings on these subjects are recurrent, they are rarely opened to the numerous stakeholders' categories, in particular for the "actors of the daily life" whose experiences are, therefore, not enough capitalized. The debriefing sessions, which prolong the field trip during the seminars, allow us to gather various perceptions of common problems and to build gradually, and collectively, a "shared conception of the Mediterranean forest management" faithful to the field realities.

Our methodology consists in communicating throughout the project, without expecting for its end. The vocation of the progress books is thus to report, the most accurately as possible, and in a progressive way, major elements discussed during these seminars, following the field trips and the peer group's meetings. Each one of them synthesizes the information and the state of progress of all the partnership's activities, with more information concerning territories visited during a seminar.

So, the succession of three progress books is aimed at presenting the project progress, between between its initiation and the final state, in terms of improvement of the collective reflection about the forest management quality and territorial governance. The objective of these progress books is to capitalize knowledge but also, and especially, to validate and to promote good practices, management tools and decision-making support which can be developed or used in other Mediterranean contexts. This constitutes an information and qualitative evaluation mean of the project for the QUALIGOUV partners themselves, for the management authorities of the MED programme, and for other stakeholders of the Mediterranean forests. The capitalization report will finally resume all the conclusions, realizations and publications elaborated during the project.

Every step we make forward will allow us to better integrate the stakes related to the Mediterranean wooded areas into regional policies.

Note: At the same time as the progress books publication, more detailed information is being published on the project website www.qualigouv.eu. In particular, one shall find there the detailed reports of the seminars and peer group meetings, steering committee's decisions statements, and other working documents produced by the different partners.

General Presentation of the QUALIGOUV project

MED Programme

The MED programme is a transnational programme of European territorial cooperation. It is financed by the European Union as an instrument of its regional policy and of its new programming period. It continues the tradition of the European programmes for cooperation (previously named Interreg). It takes place within the objective "European territorial cooperation" of the period 2007-2013.

With a budget of more than 250 millions euros (whose 193 millions of ERDF), the Programme launch, until exhaustion of its ERDF envelope, calls for projects to build transnational partnerships aiming at meeting the priority objectives of the Programme in the Mediterranean space.

Programme objectives:

- To improve the area's competitiveness in a way that guarantees growth and employment for the next generations (Lisbon strategy).
- To promote territorial cohesion and environmental protection, according to the logic of sustainable development (Goteborg strategy).

Four priority axis were identified:

- Axis 1: Strengthening innovation capacities.
- Axis 2: Environment protection and promotion of a sustainable territorial development.
- Axis 3: Improving mobility and territorial accessibility.
- Axis 4: Promoting a polycentric and integrated development of the Med area (QUALIGOUV responds to this axis).

Problematics of the mediterranean forests²

It is essential to remind here that in each one of our interventions we consider all the natural and forest areas characterized by Mediterranean climate. It does include deforested zones or areas affected by erosion, herbaceous natural habitats, scrubland or dehesa, as well as more intensively wooded areas and ageing forests, or also man-made artificial areas (plantations). Because of their historically quite intense anthropogenic transformation, the Mediterranean ecosystems incessantly evolve between "naturalness" and "artificialization". The diversity of these areas is generally included under the term of "Mediterranean forests and other wooded areas". By convenience, we shall call them "Mediterranean forests".

Although Mediterranean forests generate a reduced commercial production, they provide many amenities to the society. They are subject to traditional and new uses (production, biodiversity conservation, soil, water, carbon sequestration, recreation) that follow to the needs of society and involve an increasing stakeholders' diversity.

This sometimes leads to situations of conflict and misunderstanding, especially about the development and the management of these areas. This is particularly evident in the Mediterranean region, the scene of suburban and tourist activities in which the pressures and challenges are increased.

² - See "Problématique de la forêt méditerranéenne". Review *Forêt Méditerranéenne*, special issue n°1, august 2002. Project realised within the framework of Interreg II C programme.

QUALIGOUV: Common difficulties, shared objectives, coordinated action

Facing these challenges, the aim is to improve local policies as well as the dialogue required for a sustainable management of protected Mediterranean forests and woodland areas by focusing on the conception and implementation of good governance and management quality tools. The fact is that the multi-purpose nature of these protected areas requires the designing and fine tuning of new strategies for shared activities capable of involving a variety of participants. Such activities range from simple popularization of information to the involvement at an institutional, technical and / or financial level of the different stakeholders and involved publics.

At the same time, QUALIGOUV aims at facilitating the collaboration between people living in urban centres and those from nearby rural areas.

To reach its objectives, QUALIGOUV intends to undertake concrete and innovative experimentation in the pilot sites. In particular, such initiatives include:

- a survey of what is presently being done, at a local or regional level, about governance and quality policies for forest management;
- the identification and consideration of the assorted outlooks, viewpoints and expectations;
- the setting up procedures to resolve disputes and conflicts, and to establish synergy between the various people and involved partners;
- the design and test of functional and reproducible tools for multi-purpose management and control;
- the guarantee that the obtained results are monitored and assessed and that such results and information are communicated to everyone involved, from stakeholders to the concerned publics.

Pilot experimental activities have been set up in order to test and identify good practices related to governance improvement, quality of stand planning, fighting against wildfire, public reception, biodiversity conservation, forest products promotion (such as energy-wood), etc, according to the local priority and context.

QUALIGOUV suggests an ambitious strategy for the widest possible spread of the benefits accruing from the project. Project activities will be carried out within a framework of collaborative transnational reflection thanks to a peer group, composed by repre-

sentatives from partner's organizations along with external experts. This group has been created to capitalize the results obtained from the project's experimental activities. Having once ascertained the strengths and the weaknesses of the various activities, the peer group will contribute to the design and application of innovative mutually-shared tools for governance, assessment and management quality. The results of the project, validated knowledge and competence will be widely disseminated using various media³ throughout the partner regions and the MED Programme area (see "Expected results", below).

QUALIGOUV total budget, as approved by the MED Programme, is 1,818,000 euros for an operating period of 36 months (2009 - 2012). The 75% is financed by the ERDF (European Regional Development Funds). The residual 25% is generally funded by the partner organization's own resources (self-financed) or by other parts like local authorities or other structures (Regional Centre of Forest Ownership of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône, French Ministry of Ecology, Italian ministry of Finance and Economy...).

Expected results

The pilot experiments have to allow to identify the "good practices" related to:

- the governance of the forest management based on the institutional, technical and financial implication of the various actors concerned by their active participation in the process of decision and management;
- the quality of the silvicultural practices and the management of areas, based on the follow-up and the evaluation;
- the dialogue between urban and rural stakeholders. By extension, the implication of the decision-makers in the management of the suburban and natural woodlands in order to reach a co-responsibility of the administration, the owners, the administrators and the users;
- the communication and the awareness improvement of the civil societies about the values of these areas and about the stakes related to their integrated management.

Over and above the communication tools that are mentioned below, QUALIGOUV will produce several

3 - See: "Communi-coopération : une expérimentation menée à terme". By Jean BONNIER, in the review *Forêt Méditerranéenne*, t. XXVII, n°4, december 2006.

documents and reports for managers of protected areas, people needing reference works and decision-makers who seek an integrated overview of their territories.

- A progress book will be compiled for every two seminars in order to present the visited pilot territories and scheduled activities and, above all, to summarize the main elements of discussion during the seminars. Every exchange meeting and event related to the project will be written up in detailed reports available on the web-site.

- A capitalization report will round out the project. It will synthesise the acquired benefits and gains accruing from the project and its pilot activities, and indicate how transferring good practices of forest management and governance of local and regional entities to other areas in the MED Programme area. This report will be largely based on the work carried out by the peer group.

- At the project's mid-term, the project leader will commission a quality assessment report to be made by an independent auditor. The goal will be to estimate the quality and relevance of the undertaken activities in the light of project initial objectives and, as a consequence, to suggest certain adaptation measures in order to improve the project implementation for the remaining period.

The partners will publish, in a cooperative way when it is possible, some guides and reports such as:

- preliminary diagnosis and surveys;
- methodological guides for the elaboration of Wildfire Prevention Plans (Valencia);
- "Tool Box" for the conception, management, monitoring and assessment of protected wooded areas (WWF);
- communication strategy for integrated forest management (Alpilles);
- technical guides for multi-purpose management of forests (Luberon);
- a methodology for conducting sociological surveys and studies (Alpilles and Taranto).

Overall, QUALIGOUV tries to achieve cooperative sharing among the various Mediterranean-based initiatives that focus on the forests and natural areas management and thus foster their mutualisation in order to speak to European and international organisms with one specifically identifiable "shared Mediterranean voice". Through the representation and participation of different Mediterranean woodlands stakeholders, QUALIGOUV aims at bringing out problematics and overall relevant solutions that need to be transmitted to decision-makers and policy-makers ("bottom-up" approach).

Coordination, evaluation and capitalization: a proved method

Project leader and coordination

The General Direction of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity of the Region of Murcia is the leader of the project. It coordinates the implementation of QUALIGOUV. It means that it is responsible for the project's good execution at institutional, technical and financial levels.

A steering committee, directed by the leader, has been set up since the beginning of the project in order to take care of the respect of the commitments established with the European Union through the application file.

AIFM

Every issue related to Mediterranean forests interests and/or involves, more or less directly, different social and professional communities. Therefore, to respond to the various problematics and stakeholders of the Mediterranean forests, the International Association for Mediterranean Forests (AIFM), created in 1996, aims at facilitating exchanges of knowledge, experiences or simple ideas, thanks to a crosscutting and multidisciplinary approach.

To achieve these objectives, the AIFM initiated and moderates a network of organizations and individuals (approximately 3 000 international contacts) including experts of various skills (foresters, environmentalists, scientists, politicians, civil security) and other concerned actors, ensuring a horizontal approach. AIFM also publishes a magazine ("The latest on Mediterranean forests") in French and in English, monitors a website (www.aifm.org), attends and organizes some events related to the Mediterranean forests, etc.

Otherwise, the AIFM participates in and/or coordinates projects of decentralized cooperation through the European programmes Interreg II and III: "Problematics of the Mediterranean forest" (1999-2001) and RECOFORME (2003-2006). Recently (2010-2013), within the MED Programme framework, AIFM also initiate, in the same time as QUALIGOUV, a project aimed at adapting the Mediterranean forests to the effects of climate change (FOR CLIMADAPT)⁴.

4 - NDLR : Since the publication of the French version of this *progress book*, another project (PRO-FORBIOMED, Promotion of residual forestry biomass in the Mediterranean basin), also initiated by the AIFM, also began.

Step by step, the AIFM appears as the only NGO dedicated to Mediterranean natural and wooded areas in all their aspects. Through its international activities, it tries to enhance the emergence of a “shared voice” on the Mediterranean forests and a larger audience contributing to the visibility of these ecosystems specificity on an international level.

Capitalization and communication strategy

Capitalization is a strong element of our methodology. It is based on three elements⁵:

- A field trip on the different pilot sites during the seminars, in order to debate and to learn together thanks to a direct confrontation with local stakeholders and field realities.
- The establishment of a group of experts (peer group) composed by independent and competent persons responsible for the analysis of the pilot projects. It is conducted by the AIFM as an independent partner (out of local projects).
- A qualitative assessment by an independent auditor at mid-term of the project implementation.

These methodological tools should enable the project to extract good practices and to analyze the bad ones, suggest improvement solutions and identify elements that are transferable to other Mediterranean areas. The practices may include forestry tools, techniques or methods, regarding to governance and quality in forest management.

There is no capitalization without communication about the results and achievements. For this, the dissemination is first at the local level, on each pilot site and between local stakeholders, and then between partners.

Finally, QUALIGOUV also commits to the spread of the results and achievements beyond the project; like towards other cooperation projects or initiatives, international agencies and through the AIFM's Mediterranean network. For this, some communication means are dedicated to QUALIGOUV (www.qualigouv.eu, notebooks, newsletters, reports...) and are completed by means developed by each partner (posters, magazine, WebPages, press releases...).

The main objective of this second progress book is to inform widely about the actual state of the project and its eventual difficulties and imperfections.

Experienced partnership

All the partners have experience in international cooperation through decentralized cooperation or multilateral cooperation. The AIFM, the Region of Murcia, the Generalitat Valenciana and the Regional Natural Park of the Alpillles have already been partners of an Interreg IIIB cooperation project: RECOFORME “Structuring Networks and Cooperative Action Concerned with Mediterranean Forests”, where they acquired and exchanged good practices and established a network of institutions and individuals. The French Forestry Office has extensive experience of cross-border projects with Italian partners of Piedmont and Lombardy. The WWF MedPO, based in Rome, is a regional branch dedicated to the Mediterranean area. It developed a pan-Mediterranean network in favour of preserving the biodiversity of this “biodiversity hot spot”.

The pilot territories are located in 8 regions of the MED area: Murcia, Valencia (Spain), Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (France), Puglia, Sardinia, Tuscany (Italy). Added to the Algarve and Alentejo Regions (Portugal) through the action of the WWF (Fig. 1).

The pilot sites are located in Reserves, Parks, Natura 2000 sites and other areas where biodiversity preservation is a major issue and, if possible, in suburban areas.

The QUALIGOUV project is coordinated by the General Direction of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity belonging to Agriculture and Water Council of the Autonomous Region of Murcia. Its skills and missions are the conservation and the preservation of the natural heritage. Two Services are mobilized:

- Information and environmental integration, in charge of the administrative and financial management of the project,
- Hunting, fishing and defence of the natural environment, in charge of environmental data collection and wildfires management.

The partners all participated in diverse initiatives in connection with the QUALIGOUV problematics, within the framework of community programmes or more specific action.

⁵ - The capitalization strategy of the project was highlighted in particular during the day of capitalization organized by the MED programme in Naples on 16 of November 2009.

Presentation of the partners, the pilot sites and their context, and the project activities



Map 1: Localization of partners Regions and pilot territories of the QUALIGOUV project

Region of Murcia (lead partner of the project)



Website:

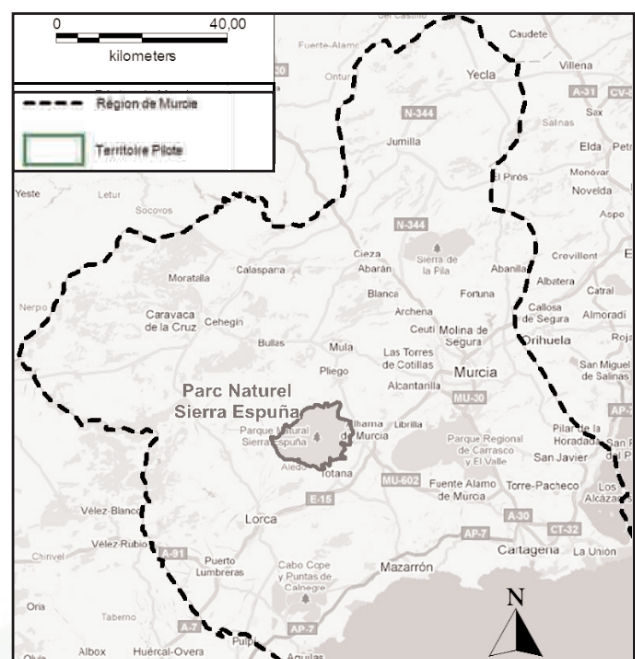
www.murcianatural.com

Contact:

Eng. Juan de Dios CABEZAS CEREZO
juand.cabezas@carm.es

A technical support is given by the Region of Murcia to the Regional Natural Park of Sierra Espuña, pilot site of the project (see Maps 2 and 3).

The regional woodlands are considered as ones of the most singular in Europe with a high number of Ibero-African endemic species coexisting with properly Iberian species (more than 2000 vegetal species).



Map 2: Localization of the pilot territory in the Region of Murcia

Regional Natural Park of Sierra Espuña

Identity file of the protected area (see Map 3)

- ▶ Date of creation: 1992 (protected since 1916)
- ▶ Population: 68 180 inhabitants
- ▶ Superficie: 178 km²
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 3
- ▶ Main cities: Alhama de Murcia, Mula, Totana
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 30 km from Murcia
- ▶ Main economic sectors: Agriculture, breeding, salting, tourism...
- ▶ Other: A lot of protected areas (Natura 2000, "Protected landscape" of Barrancos de Gebas)

In this context, forest activities are very concentrated on comarcas (inter-municipality authorities) inside the Park. Their economical importance is weak but essential as an income source for the mountainous area populations, and as a tool for the natural resource management and conservation.

The main vegetal populations are Sabin wood (*Juniperus phoenicea*), the Thermo-Mediterranean ones, such as palm trees, as well as Meso and Supra-Mediterranean ones to which are linked populations of *Sedum sediforme*, rare short oaks formations on calcareous soil and shadowed dolomites.

There are also specific populations of brooms, like *Genista valentina*, endemic rock plants populations like *Centaurea saxicola*, *Lafuentea rotundifolia*, *Teucrium rivasi* and *Erodium saxatile*, some very singular rockrose on clay soils (*C. laurifolius*, *C. populifolius*, etc.), and willows

near to the Espuña river (*Salix pedicellata* and *Erica erigena*). Other important plants species are *Fumana fontane-sii* (unique area in Europe) and *Rhamnus lycioides* subsp. *atlantica* (unique area in the Region, and probably in the Iberian Peninsula).

Presentation of the wooded areas

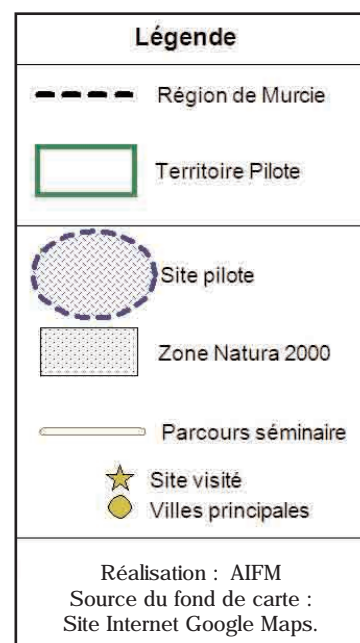
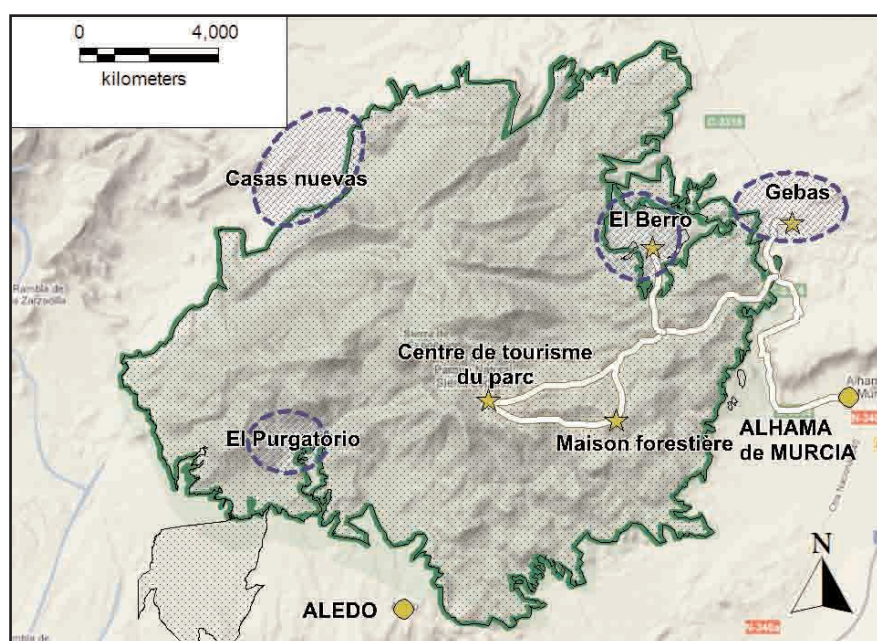
- ▶ Regional forest cover: 4 900 km² (45%)
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: 142 km² (80%)
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Pinus halepensis*
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Biodiversity, landscapes
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 30% private; 70% public

Forest governance and protected area management

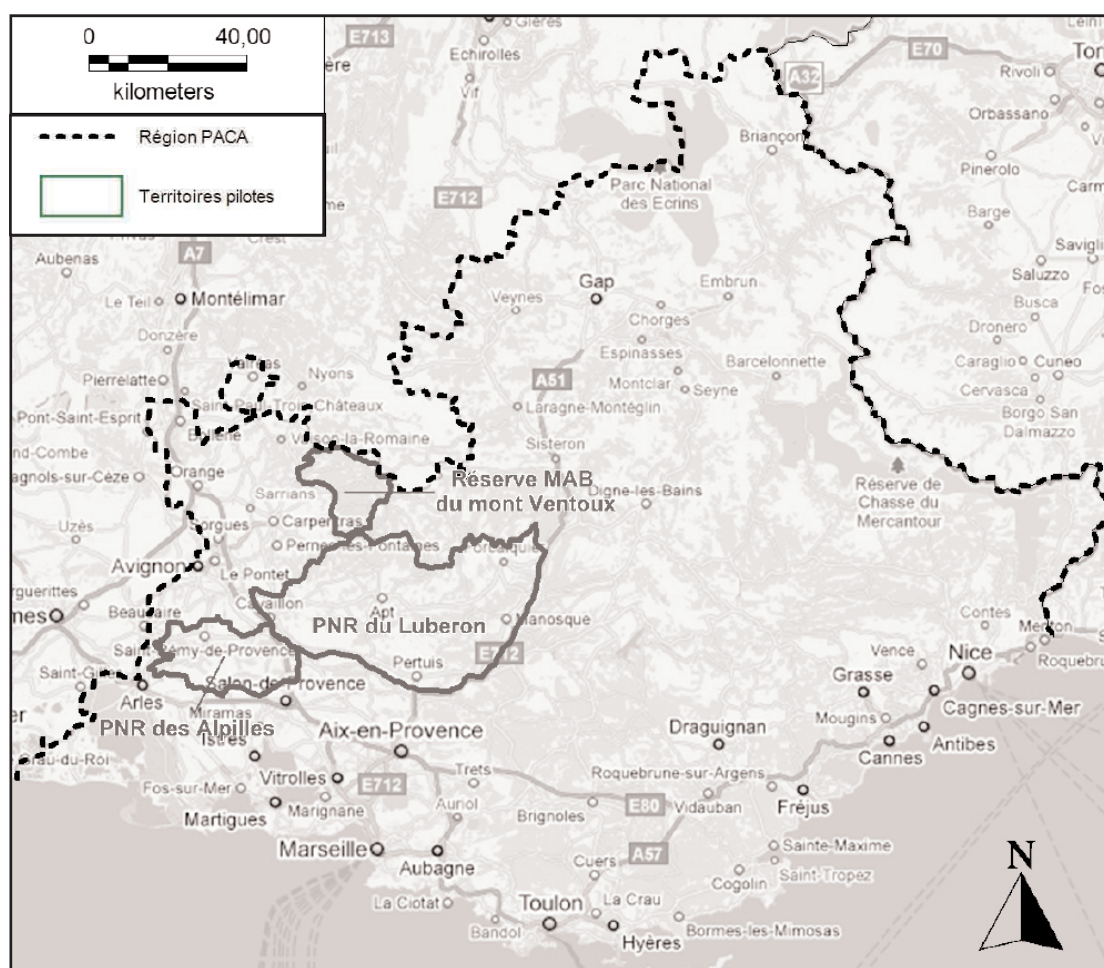
- ▶ Scientist committee: Yes
- ▶ Thematic commissions related to the forest management in the area: Yes (farming property)
- ▶ Frame documents in application: Natural Resources Management Plan (PORN, 1995) including:
 - Director implementation and Management Plan (PRUG, 2002) aimed at strengthening protection means in protected areas and defining zones, plans and specific measures;
 - Forest Development Plan (PSF), for the forest resources management and planning.
- ▶ Geographic Information System (GIS): Yes

Pilot project

See progress book n°1



Map 3: General view of the Natural Park of Sierra Espuña



Map 4: Localization of the pilot territories in the Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Regional Natural Park of Alpilles



Website:
<http://www.parc-alpilles.fr/>

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Identity file of the protected area

- Date of creation: 2007
- Population: 42 000 inhabitants
- Superficie: 550 km²
- Number of municipalities: 16
- Main cities: Cavaillon, Salon de Provence, St-Martin-de-Crau, St-Rémy-de-Provence, St-Etienne-du-Grès, Les Baux-de-Provence
- Nearest agglomérations: 10 km from Salon-de-Provence, d'Arles, 20 km from Avignon, 70 km from Marseille, Aix-en-Provence and Nîmes
- Main economic sectors: Tourism, services, agriculture (olives, cereals, arboriculture...)
- Other: A lot of protected areas (Natura 2000, French directive for landscape protection, archeologic sites...)

Partner's presentation

Calcareous block of 30 km length and 10 km large, the Alpilles Massif is the last mountain before the Rhône's delta. Isolated between both valleys of the Rhône and the Durance, and both plain territories of the Comtat Venaissin and Crau, the Alpilles looks like an island (see Map 4).

Between the urban areas of Marseille, Nîmes and Avignon, the Regional Natural Park of Alpilles (PNRA) gathers 16 municipalities about a shared project: the Park Charter. The population, partly seasonal, is constantly growing (+33% since 1975).

In spite of this, more than 4000 years of human presence have shaped the countryside and created a natural habitats mosaic hosting a rich biodiversity, and in particular a hundred of rare and protected species like Bonelli's eagle, Eurasian eagle-owl, Spring snowflake, different sorts of orchids, etc.

Inside this territory, forest has an important place. More than 19 000 ha of Mediterranean forest around populated areas motivate the main competence and priority of the Park: fighting against wildfire and restoration of burnt areas. Traditionally considered, by local population and decision-makers, as a free space where anyone can have a walk, hunt or just meet friends, the forest is today submitted to new expectations from society (in particular recreation and tourism).

The action of prevention and maintenance carried out by the Park and other operators (ONF, CRPF,...) are not always well understood or accepted by local population.

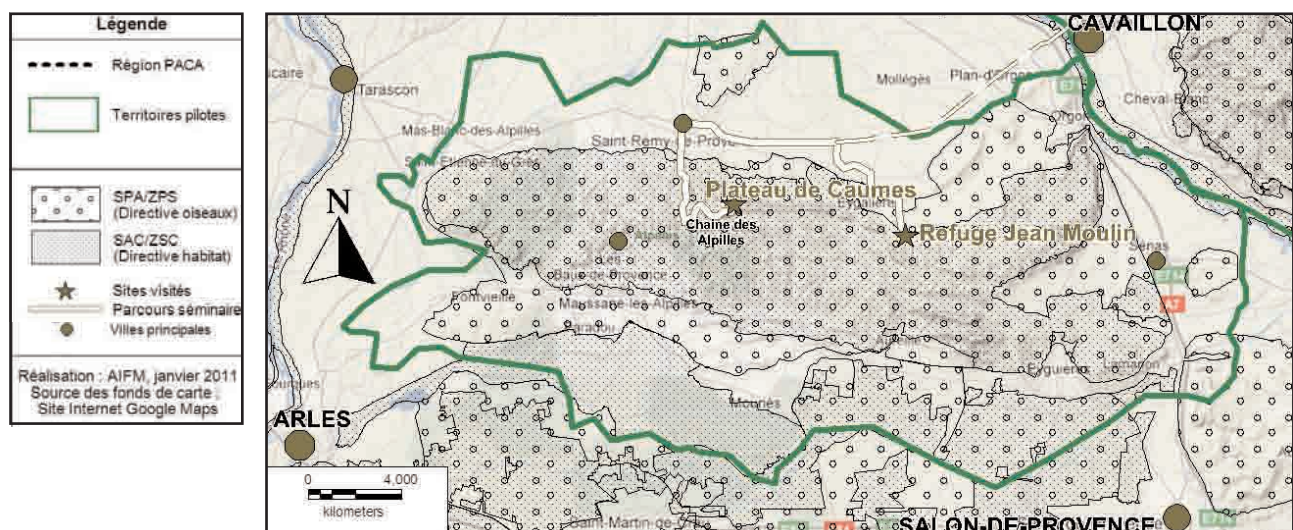
In front of these challenges, the strategy of the Park relies on two complementary orientations:

- to protect the massif against wildfire;
- to promote a global forest management in order to take into account the social demand of reception, relaxation and conviviality, promoting a sustainable valuation of the natural resources.

The missions of the Park are defined by the Charter (2007-2019), which presents 5 strategic priorities:

- The willing to protect, manage, and share the exceptional natural, cultural and landscape heritage, and to pass down the Provençal culture of the Alpilles, alive and in a constant evolution.
- The required ambitious policy of agricultural and urban land markets control for a sustainable development and a social cohesion on the territory.
- The development of an economy toward its territory, with agriculture as a keystone.
- The choice of a sustainable tourism and a controlled access to the natural landscapes.
- The willing to enhance inhabitants and local stakeholders to take part in the decision process, creating a local democracy and eco-citizenship dynamism.

For the PNRA, to participate in the QUALIGOUV project is an opportunity to inventory, assess and reinforce its practices in terms of governance and communication for a sustainable woodlands management. The resulting actions concern its whole territory.



Map 5: General view of the Regional Natural Park of Alpilles

Presentation of the wooded areas

- ▶ Regional forest cover: 15 000 km²
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: 190 km² (35%)
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Pinus halepensis*, *Pinus sylvestris*
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Decking (paper industry), tourism, fuelwood
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 50% private; 50% public

Forest governance and protected area management

- ▶ Scientist committee: No
- ▶ Thematic commissions related to the forest management in the area: "Town and country planning", "Urbanism and landscape", "Natural heritage and human activities"; their actions are validated by a Syndical Committee
- ▶ Frame documents in application: Charter of the Natural Regional Park (2007-2019)
- ▶ Geographic Information System (GIS): Yes

Pilot project

The Alpilles project consists in improving the acceptability (in terms of environment, landscape and social expectations) of the forestry works for wildfire prevention. The project concretely consists in:

- Realising a forest governance diagnosis in itinere;
- Realising a sociological study aimed at better knowing the stakeholders' expectations and perceptions toward Alpilles woodlands;
- Establishing interactive electronic boxes allowing to collect public opinion about forestry works;
- Elaborating a governance and communication strategy for forest management in the Park.

Each one of these deliverables will be realized in close collaboration with all the project partners.

Regional Natural Park of Luberon



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Partner's presentation

The Regional Natural Park of Luberon (PNRL) is a protected area in the heart of Luberon mountains, that are low elevated and extending from East to West between the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence and Vaucluse provinces. It is limited at South by the Durance river, including three mountainous massifs: Grand Luberon, Luberon Oriental, and Petit Luberon. He is encircled by the Natural Regional Park of Alpilles on the Southwest, and by the Natural Regional Park of Verdon on the East (see Map 4).

The Park provides shelter for exceptionally diverse fauna and flora, as well as architecture (in particular dry stone constructions) and landscapes of great heritage value. That is why the Park was granted, in 1997, as a Man & Biosphere reserve (UNESCO recognition).

Two pilot sites of Roussillon Ochres and the Eastern Luberon part besides Villeneuve (see Map 6) have been chosen thanks to their various stakes in

Identity file of the protected area

- ▶ Date of creation: 1997
- ▶ Population: 170 000 inhabitants
- ▶ Superficy: 1850 km²
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 72
- ▶ Main cities: Cavaillon, Pertuis, Apt, Manosque, Forcalquier
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 10 km from Avignon and Aix en Provence, 30 km from Marseille, 30 km from Orange
- ▶ Main economic sectors: Tourism, services, agriculture (arboriculture, cereals, vegetables, wine, lavender...) and breeding
- ▶ Other: A lot of protected areas (Natura 2000, Man and Biosphere Reserve...)

terms of protection against wildfires, woodlands promotion and biodiversity preservation (see details in the second seminar report).

The PNRI's missions are defined by its Charter (2009-2021) presenting 5 strategic priorities:

- Protection and promotion of natural, cultural and landscape heritages.

- Territorial planning: the Park aims at implementing an accurate and coherent planning with the whole territory, in order to improve the environment and the life quality.

- Economic and social development: the Park contributes to create synergies between environment quality and economic activities, in particular in the sectors of agriculture and tourism.

- Reception, education and information: the Park aims at developing them for the inhabitants and visitors, school environment education trainings, cultural creation and performances. It promotes participative initiatives and better exchanges with other territories.

- Experimentation: the Park contributes to research programs and has got for mission to initiate new processes and action methods that can be then transferred to other territories.

Presentation of the wooded areas

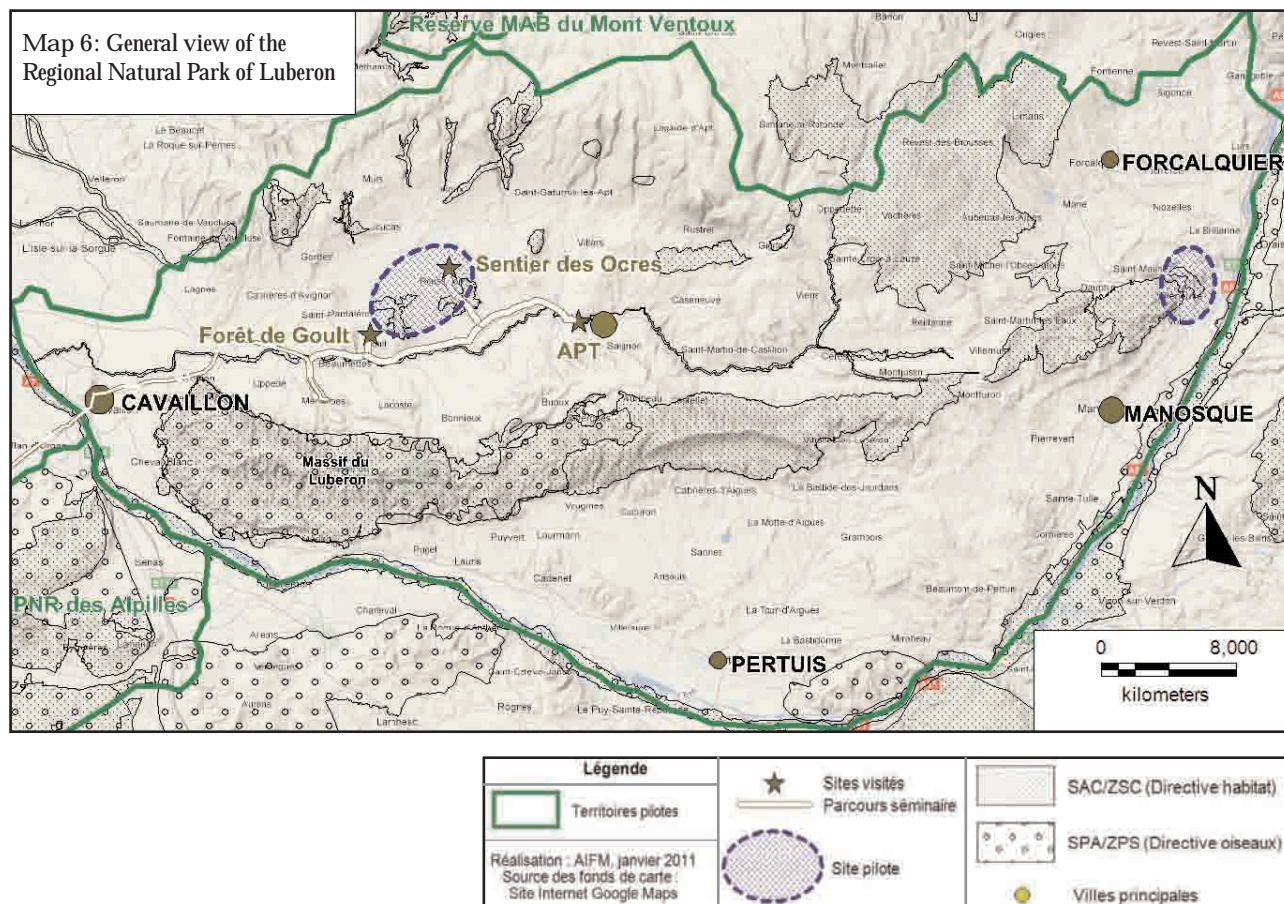
- ▶ Regional forest cover: 15 000 km²
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: 950 km² (51%)
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Pinus halepensis*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Quercus pubescens*, *Cedrus atlantica*
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Decking (paper industry), tourism, fuelwood, timber
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 72% private; 28% public

Forest governance and protected area management

- ▶ Scientist committee: Yes
- ▶ Thematic commissions related to the forest management in the area: "Forest and natural areas", which actions are validated by a Syndical Committee
- ▶ Frame documents in application: Charter of the Natural Regional Park (2009-2021) and Forest Territory Charters of "PNR du Luberon" and "Montagne de Lure"
- ▶ Geographic Information System (GIS): Yes (www.atlas-parcduluberon.com)

Pilot project

See progress book n°1 or www.qualigouv.eu.



National Forestry Office (ONF)



Website:

<http://www.onf.fr/mediterranee/>

Contact:

M. Philippe BOURDENET

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Partner's presentation

Created in 1966, the French Forestry Office (ONF) is a public organism with industrial and commercial competences. Its main missions are the management of public forests submitted to the forestry regime (according to the National Forestry code), as well as the implementation of general interest missions delegated by the French State. The ONF also develops other services like management implementations, expertises, forestry works, for any kind of customers on these fields: natural areas sustainable management, environment protection, wood exploitation and territorial development.

The ONF is headed by an Administration Council, whose responsibilities are defined by the Forestry code. Its president and members are pointed by government's order. Ministers Council points its General director.

The ONF is organized in 9 territorial directions, 5 regional directions, 50 agencies, 9 works agencies and more than 500 operating units. The territorial direction that participates in QUALIGOUV project is ONF Méditerranée. It covers the whole territory of both Regions of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Languedoc-Roussillon.

Facing threats like wildfire and erosion, the ONF Méditerranée carries out preventive measures integrating it in the planning documents, by setting up and maintaining specific protection equipments for fighting against forest wildfires (Défense des forêts contre l'incendie, DFCI) and for mountain land restoration (Restauration des terrains de montagne, RTM).

Identity file of the protected area

- ▶ Date of creation: 1990
- ▶ Population: 5 habitants en zone centrale, 38 000 inhabitants including the coopération zone
- ▶ Superficie: 21 km² (zone centrale), 268 km² (incluant la zone tampon), 894 km² (including the coopération zone)
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 34
- ▶ Main cities: Carpentras, Pertuis, Apt, Manosque, Forcalquier
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 10 km from Carpentras, 30 km from Avignon
- ▶ Main economic sectors: Tourism, services, agriculture (arboriculture, lavender, wine, truffles...), breeding
- ▶ Other: Classified area; decree of biotope protection (Arrêté de Biotopie); natural areas with ecologic, floristic and faunistic interest (Zones Naturelles d'Intérêt Ecologiques, Faunistiques et Floristiques); Biosphère Reserve (MAB); Natura 2000 Sites; integral biological Reserves; Regional Naturel Park creation in project

The Mont Ventoux Biosphere reserve (see Map 7)

The Mont Ventoux (the "Géant de Provence") is located in the North of the Region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, encroaching the Region Rhône-Alpes in the South of the province of Drôme (see Map 4). Its bioclimatic characteristics and historical memory induce diverse stakes in terms of country planning and natural resources management on a large scale.

This preoccupation should evidently find a concrete prolongation, in terms of forestry planning, and orient the different actions that the managers have to carry out in the area with numerous and diverse stakeholders.

During centuries, the forests of the Mont Ventoux have been overexploited for coal, timber production and grazing. At the end of the 18th century, the mountain was completely deforested. In the middle of the 19th century, it was called "Region of thyme and lavender". Roots did not structure the soil anymore and the mountain could not retain its weight. Landslides swept away roads and villages.

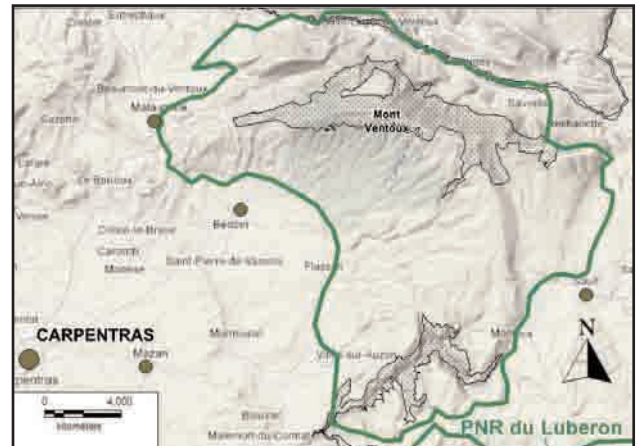
Important works of mountain land restorations (RTM), launched by the Waters and Forests Administration, were implemented by the ONF. They have been carried out during more than half a century.

The remarkable diversity of areas managed by the ONF is explained by the specificity of this mountain that, in spite of its low elevation (1 909 m), presents an altitudinal graduation, with 5 main vegetation levels, from typically Mediterranean vegetal formation with

Holm oak, until upper grassland with alpine influences. So we can inventory more than 1200 plants species, among which we find a lot of protected, rare or endemic species.

The main stakes on this massif are the following ones:

- Soil protection;
- Wood production;
- Habitats and species protection;
- Tourism, leisure and public reception.



Map 7: General view of the Biosphere Reserve of the Mont Ventoux

The site management is conducted by the Mixt Syndicate for Mont Ventoux Management and Equipment (Syndicat mixte d'aménagement et d'équipement du Mont Ventoux, SMAEMV).

Since 1996, a steering committee gathers decision makers, administrations, managers, users, local associations, etc. It assists the coordination structure of the SMAEMV in its orientations. This steering committee has drafted the Reserve management plan, defining the actions to be implemented for the protection and promotion of natural heritage, sites and landscapes, for the sustainable economic development, or also for education.

Otherwise, a research frame programme, written by elected people from the SMAEMV and by the steering committee's members, defines the priorities in terms of research topics. This programme is now applicable to the scientific committee of the Biosphere Reserve.

Presentation of the wooded areas

- Regional forest cover: 15 000 km²
- Forest cover in the Park: 150 km² including the central zone and the buffer zone (56%)
- Main forest essence(s): *Pinus halepensis*, *Quercus ilex*, *Cedrus atlantica*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Pinus uncinata*
- Main forest valuations:
Decking (paper industry), fuelwood, tourism, timber
- Forest land ownership: 25% private; 75% public

Forest governance and protected area management

- Scientist committee: Yes
- Thematic commissions: Yes, among them, the steering committee
- Frame documents in application: Massif Plan will be elaborated soon within the framework of the future Natural Regional Park Charter elaboration
- Geographic Information System (GIS): Yes

Pilot project

The pilot project of the ONF is articulated by several actions aimed at improving governance and forest management quality. A first work will consist in inventorying the available fuel wood and timber resources. Then, a pilot forest exploitation sequence will be carried out and concluded by a qualitative selection process leading to a distinct valorization of the logs as fuel or timber.

A pedagogic governance tool, the "Marteloscope"⁶, will be experimented to inform and educate different publics to the integrated forestry.

Another activity will concern the setting up of pockets of senescence, in order to allow a natural evolution of the forest.

Finally, a timber worksite using animal strength (workhorses) will be experimented as an alternative to the mechanic haulage. Workhorses are supposed to be more efficient on these steepy lands with high biodiversity protection stakes. Economic and environmental balances will be made in order to assess their pertinence and viability.

6 - In a wooded compartment (more or less than 1 ha), all the trees are numbered and inserted into a data base according specie, age, and ecological value categories. The participants tick the trees they think that have to be cut. The results are entered in an computer program, which allows to make a simulation of the long-term consequences of the cut. This system has been used for 10 years as a pedagogic tool for students, professionals, tourists, etc. You can have a look on the numerical mateloscope developed in Haute-Savoie province on the web page: <http://www.megeve.com/martelloscope/>.

Generalitat Valenciana



Website:

<http://www.cma.gva.es/intro.htm>

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Partner's presentation

The Generalitat Valenciana, gathering all the institutions of the autonomous Region of Valencia, participates in the QUALIGOUV project through its General Direction of Natural Environment Management, responsible of the forest management policy, hunting, fishing, biodiversity and environmental impact, protected natural areas management and wildfire prevention.

The service "Wildfire Prevention and Forest Health" has the direct responsibility of the project. Its usual role is the wildfires prevention, fix and mobile surveillance, enhancing the volunteerism, development of a preventive silviculture, creation of prevention infrastructures, realization of statistical reports and researches about wildfires causes and forest health.

All these functions are exercised in all the Region of Valencia woodlands (more than 1 million ha) independently of the private or public propriety regime. However, wooded areas included in the natural parks network of the Region of Valencia constitute the priority for wildfire prevention actions.

This double problematic, of natural parks management and wildfire prevention, guides the Valencia Region actions in the QUALIGOUV project framework. The wildfire prevention service already has an important experience in that field as it developed, for years, wildfire prevention planning action in the protected natural areas, contributing to improve their governance.

Otherwise, this service has also an experience in similar cooperation projects with different European partners, among which the RECOFORME project "Structuring Networks and Cooperative Action Concerned with Mediterranean Forests" (Interreg IIIB Medocc).

Localization and presentation of the pilot sites

The Region of Valencia is located on the Oriental coast of the Iberian Peninsula. This Region is characterized by its diversity, strong Mediterranean influence and large natural and wooded areas (more than 53% of the regional territory). The woodlands are mainly private at the regional scale (67%).

The Generalitat Valenciana has suggested some natural parks from the regional network as pilot territories (see Map 8), with a particular accent on the following parks: Chera - Sot de Chera and Puebla de San Miguel that are the more recent, Turia and Sierra Calderona that are the nearest from the metropolitan area of Valencia, which count more than 1,5 million inhabitants.

Natural Parks management is the exclusive competence of the Generalitat Valenciana through the corresponding Direction. Each Park has a conservation

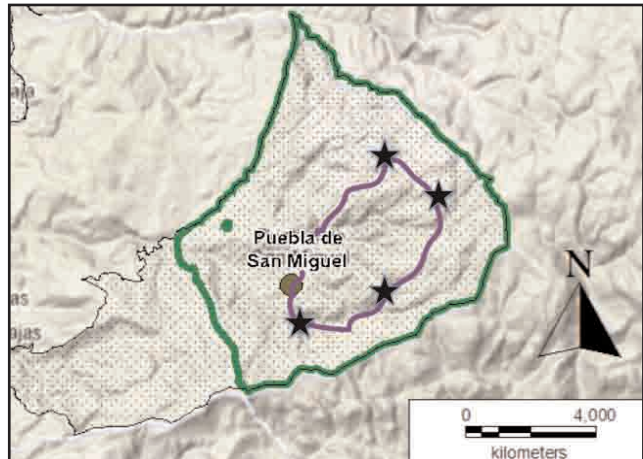


Map 8: Localization of the pilot territories in the Region of Valencia

Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel

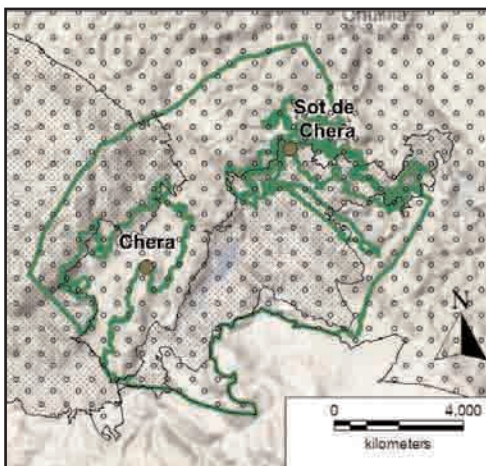
The Park of Puebla de San Miguel has been the goal of the field trip in October 20th, 2010, during the seminar of Valencia. Remarkable points of this trip (stars on the map) were: 1 = Micro-Reserve Las Blancas; 2 = Mirador El Bueno; 3 = Micro-Reserve Pino Vicente; 4 = Observatory El Gavilan.

- Date of creation: 2007
- Population: 66 inhabitants
- Superficie: 64 km²
- Nombre de municipalities: 1
- Main cities: Puebla de San Miguel
- Nearest agglomeration: 160 km from Valence, 100 km from Requena, 50 km from Teruel
- Main economic sectors: Agriculture, forestry, tourism
- Forest cover in the Park: 59 km² (92%)
- Main forest essence(s): *Juniperus thurifera*, *Taxus baccata*, *Pinus nigra*, *Pinus silvestris*
- Forest land ownership: 13% private; 87% public



Map 9: General view of the Natural Park of Puebla San Miguel

Légende des cartes 9, 10 et 11	
	Territoires pilotes
	SAC/ZSC (Directive habitat)
	SPA/ZPS (Directive oiseaux)
Réalisation : AIFM, janvier 2011 Source des fonds de carte : Site Internet Google Maps	
	Villes principales



Map 10: General view of the Natural Park of Chera-Sot

Natural Park of Chera - Sot de Chera

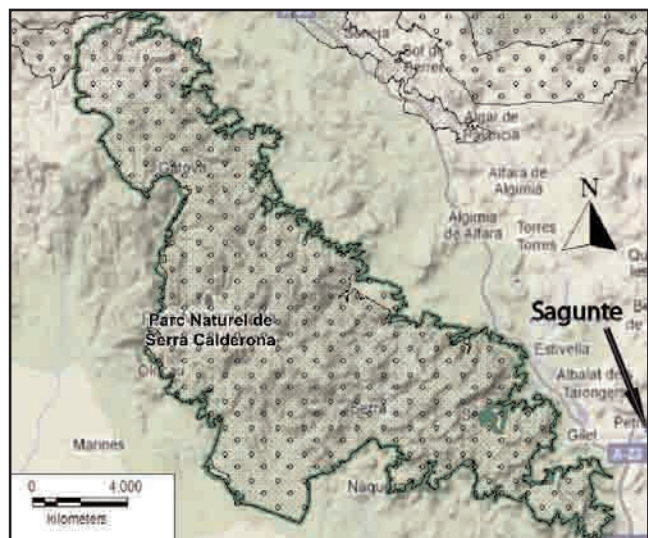
The relief of the Park of Chera-Sot de Chera (see Map 10) is very uneven and mountainous, located on a seismic fracture. It is the first geologic Park in the region. In spite of the forest fires, which affected the region, it constitutes an important representative forest of the Mediterranean area.

- Date of creation: 2007
- Population: 1 000 inhabitants
- Superficie: 65 km²
- Nombre de municipalities: 2
- Main cities: Chera, Sot de Chera
- Nearest agglomeration: 80 km from Valence, 20 km from Requena
- Main economic sectors: Agriculture, tourism
- Forest cover in the Park: 59 km² (90%)
- Main forest essence(s): *Pinus pinaster*, *Pinus halepensis*, *Quercus rotundifolia*, *Quercus faginea*, *Taxus baccata*
- Forest land ownership: 8% private; 92% public

Natural Park of Serra Calderona

The Park of Serra Calderona (see Map 11) is located few kilometres from Valencia city, and possesses one of the better preserved Mediterranean forests, covering more than 45000 ha.

- Date of creation: 2002
- Population: 97 000 habitants
- Superficie: 180 km²
- Nombre de municipalities: 18
- Main cities: Serra
- Nearest agglomeration: 50 km from Valence, 20 km from Sagunte
- Main economic sectors: Agriculture, tourism
- Forest cover in the Park: 158 km² (88%)
- Main forest essence(s): *Pinus pinaster*, *Pinus halepensis*, *Quercus ilex*, *Quercus suber*
- Forest land ownership: 64% private; 36% public



Map 11: General view of the Natural Park of Serra Calderona



Map 12: General view of the Natural Park of Turia

Natural Park of Turia

The Park of Turia (see Map 12) is a meeting between two different reliefs: the Iberian Peninsula and the Turia river plain. This union creates a highly varied landscape, with a remarkable variety of habitats and an environment with a high ecological value.

- ▶ Date of creation: 2007
- ▶ Population: 200 000 inhabitants
- ▶ Superficie: 46 km²
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 9
- ▶ Main cities: Manises, Paterna, Riba-roja, l'Eliana, Vilamarxant et Pedralba
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 5 km from Valence, 10 km from Liria
- ▶ Main economic sectors: Services, tourism
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: 27 km² (59%)
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Pinus halepensis*
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 50% private; 50% public

Director pointed by the regional Ministry of Environment who takes the decisions related to the management. A boarding committee (collegial entity with only a consultative power) meets periodically and takes acknowledgment of implemented or foreseen activities in the Park. It is composed by representatives of local municipalities, Valencian Provinces, universities, syndicates, environmentalist associations, hunting societies, etc.

Forest governance and protected areas management in the Region of Valencia

- ▶ Scientist committee: Yes
- ▶ Thematic commissions: Yes
- ▶ Frame documents: Natural Resources Management Plan (Plan de Ordenación de los Recursos Naturales, PORN), Director Plan for Uses and Management, Fire Prevention Plan in the Nature Parks
- ▶ Geographic Information System (GIS): Yes

Pilot project

In all these areas, wildfire risk is permanent, whatever its origin (accident, crime, natural...). That is why it requires the elaboration of prevention measures.

In the continuation of RECOFORME, the Generalitat Valenciana would like to improve the forest management planning in order to face the stakes and interests, sometimes contradictory, on these sensitive territories. Firstly, a wildfire prevention plan for protected areas will be elaborated in the Chera-Sot de Chera and Puebla de San Miguel Natural Parks through a participative approach. Then, these plans will be translated into local context (local wildfire prevention plan, methodological guide for elaboration of local plans). In addition, first concrete activities will be developed in the periurban parks of Turia and Sierra Calderona, which both already get a plan. This will allow to assess the efficiency of the collaboration developed during the plan elaboration process.

Province de Tarente



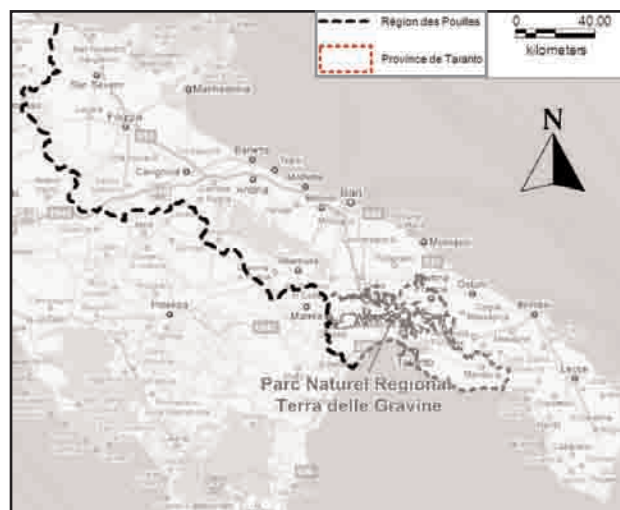
Website:

<http://www.provincia.taranto.it/>

Contact:

Dott. Antonio MONACO

antonio.monaco@provincia.ta.it



Map 13: Localization of the pilot territory in the Region of Puglia

Partner's presentation

The Province of Taranto belongs to the Region of Puglia located in the extreme South-East of Italy (see Map 13). The Region of Puglia covers 19 458 km² for a population of 4 millions inhabitants. Protected areas (National and Regional Parks, Biosphere Reserves, Natura 2000 sites,...) represent 13% of the regional area.

The unit "Protected Areas" of the Province of Taranto, temporarily responsible of the "Terra delle Gravine" Natural Park management following the regional law 18/2005, is commissioned of skills like:

- Setting up and implementing the Management Plan of the Park.
- Promoting the Management Plan of the Park.
- Establishing rules for its good functioning.
- Designing and implementing management plans for the Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI) from Habitat Directive of the European Union.

The Conception and the execution of the required interventions in the protected areas in accordance with the Regional operative programme (Programma operativo regionale, POR).

Regional Natural Park of "Terra delle Gravine"

The Regional Natural Park is located on the South side of the South-Eastern Murges, in front of the Ionian Sea. It is the largest protected area in the Region of Puglia. The territory has been deeply shaped by torrential rivers, creating some sort of canyons called "gravines" (gorges).

The Park perimeter, extremely indented and heterogeneous (parts of the territory are separated from the rest), makes it more difficult to develop the management and the governance of the area where the divergent interests are significant (see Map 14). The central area is characterized by stricter management rules, in opposition with the protective buffer area.

The pilot site of the project is mainly located on the municipality of Laterza and extends over 75 km² including the Gravine di Laterza.

The particularly interesting natural habitats are the thermo-xerophilous grassland, scrubland, mesophilic wooded scrubland and thermo-xerophilous forests with undergrowth dominated by *Pistacia lentiscus*.

The Province is the provisional manager of this Park, created in 2005. However, this official establishment was decided with a very weak public and local stakeholders consultation. Some municipalities and landowners (farmers...) decided to get out of the

Identity file of the protected area

- Date of creation: 2005
- Superficy: 280 km² (80% in central zone); pilot site: 75 km² (50 km² in central zone)
- Number of municipalities: 13
- Main cities: Laterza, Ginosa, Castellaneta, Mottola, Palagianello, Martina Franca, Crispiano, Palagiano, Massafra, Statte, Montemesola, Grottaglie, S. Marzano, Villa Castelli
- Nearest agglomeration: 60 km from Tarente, 20 km from Matera, 40 km from Massafra
- Main economic sectors: Agriculture and breeding
- Other: Natura 2000 "Area delle Gravine", "Murgia di Sud-Est", "Gravine", OASI WWF "Monte S. Elia", OASI LIPU "Gravina di Laterza"

Presentation of the wooded areas

- ▶ Regional forest cover: 1 800 km²
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: 47 km² (62% corresponding approximatively to the central zone)
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Quercus trojana*, *Q. ilex*, *Q. pubescens*, *Pinus halepensis*
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Tourism and fuelwood
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 50% private; 50% public

Forest governance and protected area management

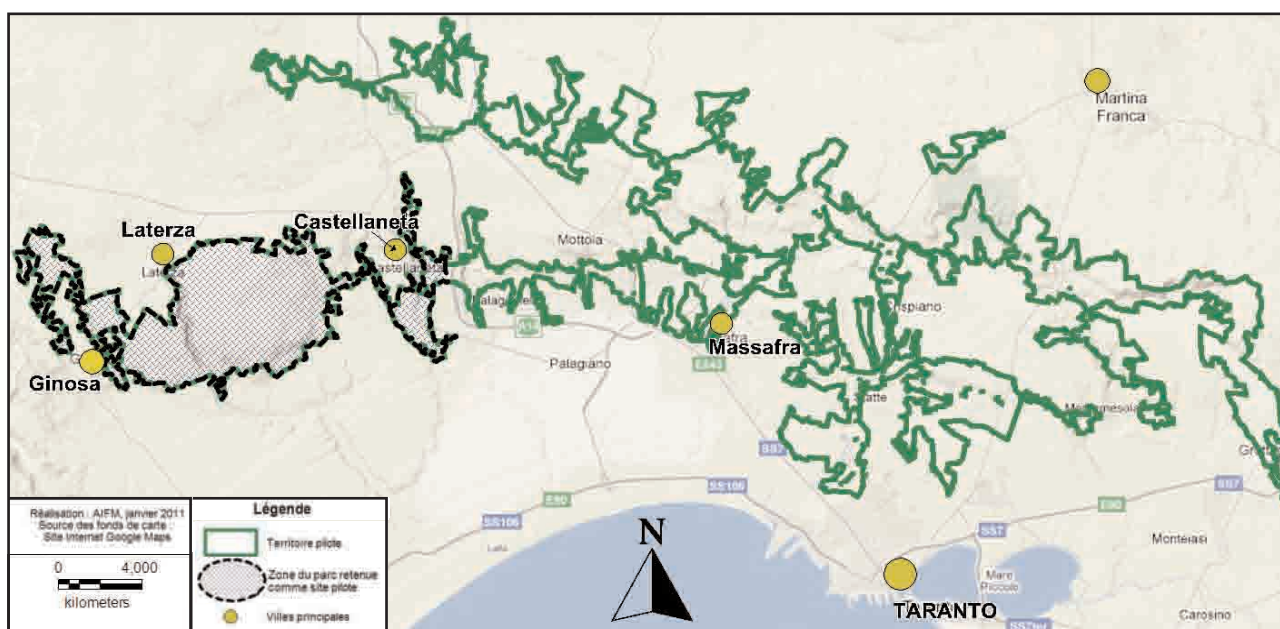
- ▶ Scientist committee: No
- ▶ Thematic commissions: No
- ▶ Frame documents: No
- ▶ Geographic Information System (GIS): Yes

perimeter. This explains the discontinuous perimeter that makes management planning more difficult.

Moreover, general management and specific forest management planning of the area still need to be defined tackling priority issues like tourism frequentation control and sustainable natural resources management.

Pilot project

See "Project progress and partial results", p. 3 to 30.



Map 14: General view of the Natural Park of Terra delle Gravine

WWF Mediterranean Program Office



Site web:

[http://wwf.panda.org/what we do/where we work/mediterranean](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/mediterranean) ; <http://www.pt>

Contact:

D^{ssa} Marzia VENTIMIGLIA
mventimiglia@wwfmedpo.org

Partner's presentation

Created in 1961, the World Wildlife Found (WWF) is the first non-governmental organization for general nature and environment protection in the world. It employs 4 000 technicians working on 12 000 protection programmes spread in 90 countries.

The organization shows a real desire to involve all the concerned stakeholders: local communities, companies, governments, international and non-governmental organizations...

The mission of the WWF is to interrupt, and then reverse, the global planetary degradation process. For this, WWF's programmes are structured following priority action themes: climate change, chemical pollution, sustainable ways of life, overseas, threaten species, forests, soft water, oceans and coastlines, agriculture and environmental education.

The objective of WWF Med PO (Mediterranean Programme Branch of WWF), the QUALIGOUV project partner, is to preserve natural richness of the Mediterranean, and to promote sustainable and respectful practices for the environment and for everyone's benefit.

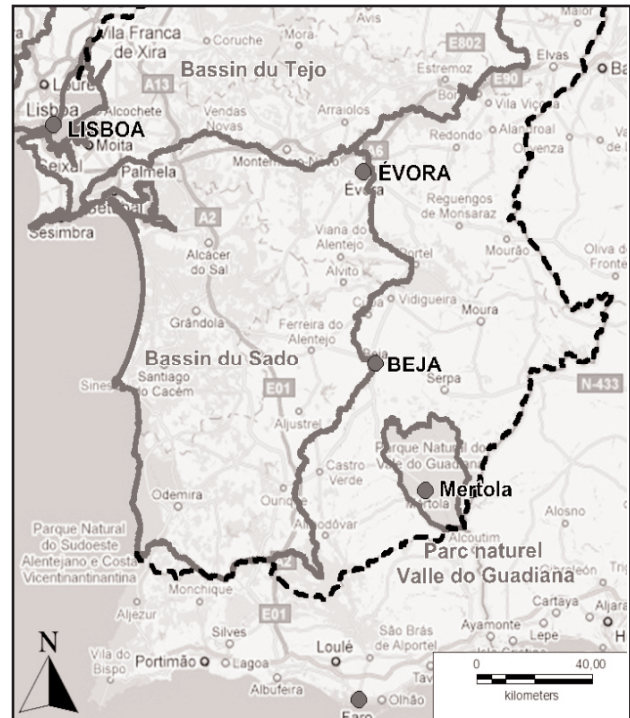
Presentation and localization of the pilot territories

The pilot sites are located in Portugal (two sites included in Natural parks and/or Natura 2000 sites rich in oak woodland, in particular Holm oak and Cork oak) and in Italy (two sites included in reserves "Oasi", property of WWF Italy).

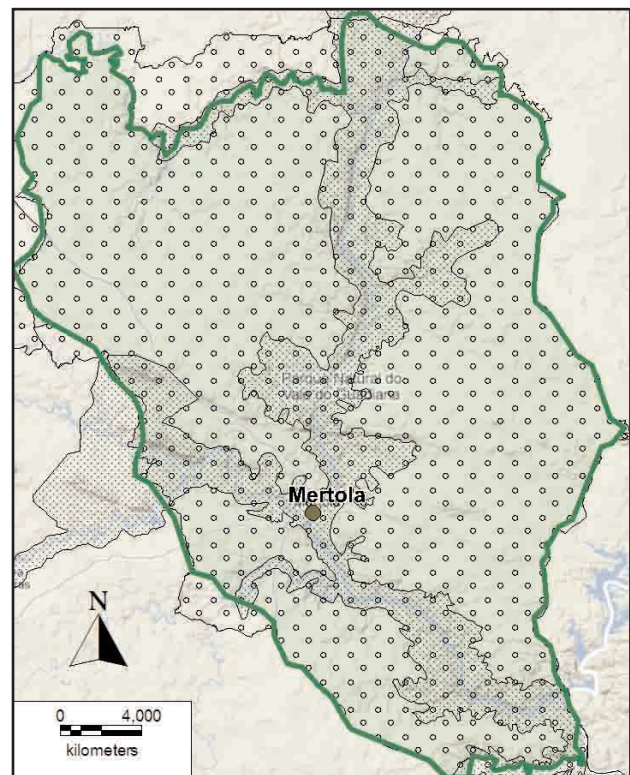
Forest governance and protected areas management in Portugal

In Portugal, the key stakeholders for natural protected areas management are the forestry associations and administrative structures such as National Forestry Authority (Autodidade Forestal Nacional, AFN) and the Institute for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e da Biodiversidade, ICBN). Almost 90% of the wooded areas are private, giving to the forest owners associations (when they do exist) an important technical advice and expertise role for the forest management. The AFN is responsible of implementing the legislation related to forest and public areas management. The ICBN is the National Portuguese Authority dedicated to natural protected areas. On the Tejo and Sado watershed, these two structures try to elaborate management plans in collaboration with other local stakeholders (farmers, forests managers, municipalities...).

Since 2008, after involving all the concerned stakeholders, the Vale do Guadiana Natural Park elaborated a Management Plan in a participative way. It complements the strategic Director Plan and allows to specify sectorial management modalities.



Map 15: Localization of the pilot territories in the Region Alentejo



Map 16: General view of the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana

Common data of the Region of Alentejo pilot sites (see Map 15)

- ▶ Regional forest cover: 31 551 km² (53%)
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Cork, hunting, breeding, timber

Tejo and Sado Basin

- ▶ Population: 1 285 000 inhabitant
- ▶ Superficy: 11 700 km²
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 34
- ▶ Main cities: Santarém and Setúbal
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: > 60%
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Quercus suber*, *Pinus pinaster*, *Pinus pinea*, *Eucalyptus globulus*
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 85% private; 15% public

Natural Park Vale do Guadiana (see Map 16)

- ▶ Date of creation: 1995
- ▶ Population: 4 000 inhabitants
- ▶ Superficy: 776 km²
- ▶ Numbre of municipalities: 4
- ▶ Main cities: Mertola, Serpa, Mina de S. Domingos
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 60 km from Beja
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: > 60%
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Quercus rotundifolia*
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 90% private; 10% public

Region of Tuscany

- ▶ Regional forest cover: 10 860 km² (47%)
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Hunting, breeding, decking

Reserve WWF of Bosco Rocconi

- ▶ Date of creation: 1995
- ▶ Population: 0 inhabitant
- ▶ Superficy: 1,4 km²
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 2
- ▶ Main cities: Roccalbegna and Semproniano
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 50 km from Grosseto
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: > 40%
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Quercus ilex*, *Phillyrea latifolia*, *Erica arborea*
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 100% private (property of the WWF)

Region of Sardinia

- ▶ Regional forest cover: 12 132 km² (50,3%)
- ▶ Main forest valuations: Cork, hunting, breeding, timber

Reserve WWF of Monte Arcosu

- ▶ Date of creation: 1985
- ▶ Population: 0 inhabitant
- ▶ Superficy: 36 km²
- ▶ Number of municipalities: 3
- ▶ Main cities: Uta, Assemini, Siliqua
- ▶ Nearest agglomeration: 20 km from Cagliari
- ▶ Forest cover in the Park: > 80%
- ▶ Main forest essence(s): *Quercus ilex*, *Q. suber*, *Arbutus unedo*, *Rhamnus alaternus*, *Phillyrea latifolia*, *Erica arborea*
- ▶ Forest land ownership: 100% private (property of the WWF)

Pilot project

In Portugal, WWF is very active thanks to its staff that mainly works on wooded ecosystems. WWF launched the FSC certification in Portugal and contributed to the national interpretation of the “High Conservation Value Forests” (HCVF) concept.

WWF is particularly interested in the quality of forests management implemented in the protected natural areas, in order to improve their financial support by certification, ecosystems services promotion, management, restoration and public reception:

- Development of the HCVF and of a regional Geographic Information System (GIS) aimed at localizing the HCVF attributes in the Portuguese pilot sites;
- Edition of reports about HCVF concept application in the Portuguese pilot sites;
- Implementation of the participative conservation action plan in the Italian pilot sites;
- Elaboration of a web toolbox gathering the main available conservation tools for forest management in the protected areas and practical guidelines.

Project progress and partial results

Project of the Province of Taranto

(3rd seminar, Italy, 27 to 29 of April 2010)

The Province of Taranto organized, in April 2010, the third seminar of the QUALIGOUV project, which lasted 3 days. A first day was dedicated to a field trip including 6 stops. A debriefing was done in the morning of the second day. The rest of the second day was characterized by a plenary session including a presentation of the partner's activity state of progress and then by the statutory meetings: steering committee and peer group. This last one pursued its debates during the next day.

The Province of Taranto, current administrator of the Park of Terra delle Gravine, leads actions on the experimental site, covering a part of the Park territory, in collaboration with the spin-off of the university of Bari, and also receives the support of the Region of Puglia in several aspects.

Regional Natural Park of Terra delle Gravine

The trip begins in the documentation reception center of the Oasi LIPU "Gravina di Laterza".

Natural environment and local problematic

Roberto Greco, from the spin-off of the University of Bari, presents the geologic process of the gravines genesis.

There are many groundwaters in that sector. Gravines arises from the combination of two geological phenomena: the dissolution of calcareous rocks by these groundwaters (karsts), and the collapse of the superficial layers because of the gravity and following a cracking line (graben). The accumulation of sediments

Surface des communautés forestières (en hectares)						
Forêt de Pinus halepensis	Maquis et maquis-forest de Quercus ilex	Maquis et maquis-forest de Quercus robur	Garrigue	Prairies	Reboisement	TOTAL
99,35	976,84	1.094,90	1.807,89	376,40	360,64	4.715,82

Fig. 1: Forest vegetation type in the Park Terra delle gravine (Source: Geographic Information System of the Province of Taranto)

in the gravine slopes allows an important vegetation establishment.

There are five gravines inside the Park. The Laterza's one is one of the biggest. The total extension of the QUALIGOUV experimental site is 7 500 ha. 60% of it are covered by "spontaneous" vegetation (scrubland, natural forests...). The remaining areas are covered by agro-pastoral and reforested lands (approximately 3 000 ha). On the site were also found several small careers, from which were extract the rocks used to build houses. The wooded areas cover near of 4 500 ha (see Figure 1, below).

Filippo Bellini, from the Province of Taranto, explains that the property of the Gravine of Laterza is public. There are much smaller gravines belonging to private owners. This raises numerous problems because of divergent interests.

One of the difficulties lies in the fact that the forest is weakly valued. To extract its economic profits, it is thus necessary to cut over big extensions. Until the



Photo 1: Beginning of the field trip in the Park Terra delle gravine, reception in the documentation centre of the Oasi LIPU

Second World War, the wood was exploited for coal production. The current vegetation on that area is approximately 60 years old. It went back up, raising out gradually from the gravines bottom. This last one acts as a species reservoir.

The sector is not confronted to wildfires. It is a good thing, because the access for fighting means would be very difficult.

The experimental site of QUALIGOUV aims at experimenting silvicultural activities allowing to maintain biodiversity.

Historic and institutional structure of the Park

Filippo Bellini presents the Regional Natural Park of Terra delle Gravine:

The Park was created in 2005. But the idea of its creation was launched in 1996 through a law of the Region of Puglia for the institution of protected areas in adequacy with the national law. A first perimeter of 52 000 ha was decided in 2001. However, political changes intervened and it has been necessary to start again the dialogue process and to reduce the extension into 28 000 ha, distributed on 13 municipalities.

Approximately 40% of the surface are covered by public property, in particular the gravines. Some municipalities suggested using these last ones as natural limits for the Park, but it was not accepted, because the implication of the nearby communities is essential to the successful conclusion of a real territory project.

The Park is mainly covered by agriculture areas, but approximately 50% of its extension are concerned by Natura 2000 sites. No city is located inside the perimeter.

The Park has not established yet the objectives for agriculture in the implementation of the project. It is likely that will be imposed coherent extensive practices with the objective of biodiversity conservation in these sensitive areas (for example, an organic farming which would allow to obtain support from the European Union).

The management of the Park was temporarily entrusted to the Province of Taranto. The regional law about the Park imposes many restrictions inside the perimeter. The question is to know until when they will be respected. For example, the construction of new buildings is forbidden. Only extensions are authorized. The local population perceives this quite negatively. Today, the Region wants to modify this law in order to make it more acceptable and more viable.

Otherwise, a particular clause, unique in Italy, was added to the regional law, allowing the local stakeholders to ask to be excluded from the Park perimeter. So, the Region and the municipalities received more than 700 demands of exclusion. The municipalities are the only ones authorized to make a decision, and some demands are still waiting for an answer. Today, only farmers' demands whose lands are located in the direct neighbourhood of the Park are considered acceptable.

For more details on that subject, see the participants' pack of the seminar.

Realizations of the Park and perspectives

The main objective is to improve the quality of the existing forest and to preserve the biodiversity but not to allow the nature to evolve freely because this would eventually lead to a progressive closure of the environment. Management choices are imperative. For example, the scientists would prefer to protect the vegetation of the gravines bottom, which is much richer than the higher areas, and unique in the region. But the final decision remains in the hands of the local politics, and is going to require specific dialogue efforts.

With the QUALIGOUV project and the work of the Spin-off of the University of Bari, the management models will be adapted according to the biotope type. On the experimental site, the actions are mainly going to concern the vegetation of gravines. The University of Bari is responsible for carrying out studies and plans, which will be discussed with the populations living on the territory.

When we make planning actions in a Mediterranean environment, the plans have to include social objectives (and not only environmental), because there are people living on these areas, which are composed of many uses and stakeholders. Involving sociology specialists, along with technical experts and naturalists, seems thus an essential aspect. "It is the heart of the problem with which all the QUALIGOUV partners are faced with" (Manuel Aguila). Therefore, the Spin-off staff includes a specialist of social issues.

On the other hand, the possibility of farming should not be contested, at least in areas already dedicated to it. That is what was scheduled by the Plan, and local meetings will be organized on that point.

Roberto Barberio is one of the rare farmers that saw in the Park a development opportunity. For him, it represents an indicator of a political will, which could, if the actors of the territory manage to take the opportunity, to become a good way to diversify and to develop

new activities and create jobs, while protecting and promoting the local heritage. His farm, mixing farming and breeding, allows to offer to the visitors some diverse and qualitative products, and to develop catering and accommodation business. However, he found himself disappointed by the few perspectives that were offered to him for the moment, and by the lack of consideration of the local stakeholders in the studies for the Management Plans elaboration.

Regarding to the private wooded areas already degraded, the Park will not take any measure of preservation. On the other hand, if there is a private area that seems interesting in terms of biodiversity, it is likely that the it will be protected by adapted measures such as agriculture activities restriction. The territory is included in a Natura 2000 site. Therefore, a management plan with biodiversity indicators, extracted from the Objectives documents (Natura 2000 IT9130007 "Area delle Gravine") will be set up.

During the three years of the project, information on these works will be relayed at the local level. The administrators of the Park are aware that the scheduled actions are not so well advanced, and quite modest, comparatively with those led by the other partners leading a Park in other countries (Sierra Espuña, Luberon...). But it has to be reminded that the reflection and the activities implementation are just beginning on the territory of Taranto.

Realizations of the spin-off (University of Bari)

Patrizia Tartarino explains that, within the QUALIGOUV framework, the University of Bari is making a detailed inventory of the fauna on a 7 000 ha restricted area (the other equivalent inventories in the Province concern 50 000 ha and are, thus, much less accurate). A network of monitoring plots will be created in order to establish a permanent follow-up of the biodiversity inside the gravines. A GPS will be used for the data capture. All the vegetation levels will be studied and followed up. Professor Gilles Bonin (from the Forêt Méditerranéenne French association) will come and spend two weeks in order to support the implementation of the monitoring plots network.

It is also planned to create a network of tracks in order to enhance tourism development. Today, people come freely inside the Park. This is actually in contradiction with its regulations (access controll recommended) but not with the Oasi's one (free access).

One of the objectives of the management Plan of the Park is to protect biodiversity. But it is also necessary to make the authorities aware of the importance of



Photo 2: Aleppo pine forest in the Park Terra delle gravine

this biodiversity. Perhaps it will be necessary to distinguish two zones:

- a zone where biodiversity will be protected and managed;
- a zone where the biodiversity will follow a natural development.

Then, the challenge will be to determine which type of biodiversity is the most relevant to establish the protection status.

Biodiversity and reforestation, local problem and contributions of the Region of Puglia

The experimental site of QUALIGOUV includes 360 ha of *Pinus halepensis* reforestation. A strip of reforestation was realized approximately 60 years ago with the aim of giving some work to the local populations.

After fifty years, we notice that the vegetation regenerates step-by-step, on some areas. The identified problematic in the framework of QUALIGOUV is "what can we do with these reforestation or artificial stands?" Moderate thinning (average density) was envisaged to allow the development of the other essences in the undergrowth. But if the thinning is excessive, the natural balance could collapse because the soils are shallow.

Another problem concerns the dry branches. A study showed their importance in the penetration of the light under the stand. It is thus necessary to prune in order to let the light penetrate.

It is not so good to eliminate undergrowth, but it plays a role in fires spreading. It is thus necessary to make them "efficient". But we do not really know how to cultivate them. Is it necessary to remove gradually

the Aleppo pine, or should we constitute mixed forests with Aleppo pine and scrubland?

Today, the Aleppo pine is not well valued. It is mainly used for the firewood, and some companies from nearby sectors buy it for the manufacturing of reconstituted panels.

The financing of the cuts is planned through the of Regional Development Plan of the Region of Puglia according to three objectives:

- Wood production is financed at 100% in public forests and 60% in private forests for the actions of stands structure improvement.
- Non-commercial goods production (environmental services supplied by forests) is financed at 100% in public forests.
- Seeds production is financed at 100% in public forests in particular for actions of seeds producing forests cartography, and equipments for public reception in these forests (paths, playgrounds, routes...).

The seed producing forest owners can also receive money from the Region, in the aim of forests preservation.

This implication of the Region can be explained by the fact that the Region of Puglia is the least afforested in Italy. That is why the regional government has a particular sensibility and is ready to finance this type of works. The financing of the Region intervenes in application of the Regional plan for the development of the Region of Puglia.

For the reforestation actions, there is a regional list, published at the beginning of 2010, listing the species to be planted first and foremost. Following the Puglia's Regional plan, the reforestation projects obtain additional points if they use the listed species.



Photo 3: The Gravine of Laterza

Municipality of Laterza's point of view and actions

The trip continues in a municipal young forest of 300 ha of *Quercus trojana* belonging to the city of Laterza (which extends over 18 000 ha for 15 000 inhabitants). It used to be managed as coppice and used for extensive itinerant pastures (approximately 200 cows grazing during four months). This allows maintaining opened areas. A regulation was set up to bound pasture areas. Besides, this sector recently burned, explaining its actual rich biodiversity. In the dry meadows, we can observe in particular a huge number of orchids species.

Roberto Fanelli, expert in agronomy and representative of the municipality of Laterza, explains that a project was presented in 2009 with the objective of cutting dense and strongly fire-prone woods on a 20 ha area (approximately 1 400 trees). A similar work will be done on roadside trees for security reasons, because tree falling on the roads are current in the rainy season.

The municipality owns another pine forest, bigger, where a project for forest fires prevention is carried on. The Region of Puglia also finances this project. The first undergrowth "gardening" actions, aimed at reducing fuels quantity, should begin soon.

Furthermore, the municipality owns a pine forest that includes a 120 ha area which is part of the 54 seed producing forests existing in Italy (five in the Region of Puglia). The silvicultural works will be financed at 100% by the Region (cf. "Biodiversity and reforestation" p. 25) because the Municipality has no money for that, as fire prevention remains its priority. Besides, the Region of Puglia employs a person to harvest seeds.

Finally, the Municipality would like to develop leisure activities in the forest (fitness trails, picnic areas, environment education...). In the future, there will probably be many projects aimed at developing and managing this kind of activities in natural environment.

For the Municipality of Laterza, it is economically interesting to protect biodiversity because it will allow, at mid-term, the development of tourism and job creation.

The trip ends with a spontaneous Aleppo Pine stand, contrasting with the reforested pine forest visited previously. Located in border of the Gravine of Montecamplo (left oriental of the experimental site of QUALIGOUV, between Laterza and Castellaneta), this stand is not very dense, and its undergrowth is well developed. We can admire numerous heliophilous species.

Another peculiarity of this sector is the limestone rock from Pleistocene, crumblier than anywhere else (near from molasses, sandy rock), explaining the presence of tree uprooting caused by wind. A little bit upper, a former career testifies the former extraction activity of these substrates.

Debriefing of the field trip in the Park Terra delle Gravine

Jean Bonnier opens the session by reminding that QUALIGOUV is a collective project where each partner brings his contribution to the whole project and gets profits from it in return. As the project arrives soon at mid-term, concrete realizations thus have to become clearer.

1. Feed back on the situation of the Park Terra delle Gravines in order to understand better problems and perspectives

Antonio Sigismondi, from the Biodiversity Preservation Service of the Parks and Natural Areas unit of the Region of Puglia, gets back on the general presentation of the Park (cf. "Historic and institutional structure of the Park" p. 24). The process of the Park creation spread over years, in particular because of a certain psychological resistance of the local actors. Now, beyond the constraints, the law establishing the Park offers numerous possibilities. The pasture is authorized, an environment-friendly agriculture (not only organic) is welcome, the multifunction of the area is respected (mushrooms harvesting, relaxation...) and perspectives are opened in terms of agro-tourism, restoration of ancient buildings, etc.

Antonio Prota, President of the consortium "100 Farms of Crispiano for the territory promotion" and head of a big farm in the Park, thinks that it belongs to the private owners to take advantage from the Park, by promoting economically a quality territory, rather than to recover to public subsidies. With this aim, some farm owners decided to coordinate their actions by creating a consortium in a territorial dynamic. Tourism reception (hotels and catering, farm produces sale, thematic routes around nature, gastronomy, history and architectural heritage) was developed in farms. The consortium benefits from financial supports of the European Union and the Region of Puglia, in particular for maintaining built heritage. So, the Park can be per-

Roberto Barberio, farmer and owner of an agro-tourism center, testifies:

When the idea of creating a Regional Natural Park was born, I was completely approving and I thought that it would bring us (the farmers) some benefits. My colleagues did not understand my enthusiasm and I was criticized, and even threatened. They said that a farmer should not encourage the creation of a Natural Park. This point of view, widely shared by the profession, was reminded during the second information meeting about the Park project.

Today, I have to admit that the Park brings us more constraints than real benefits. My point of view has become neutral. We have been told, for example that we would have the possibility to work for the Park, to provide services remunerated through agreements with the Park, but finally, no one promise became a reality. The Park management method does not allow public money granting to the farmers (while the Italian law allows it). On the other hand, land value inside the Park has been decreasing. It is a good thing for new farmers who wish to buy, but for us, owners, it is a big loss.

Furthermore, the perimeter was defined without knowing who are the people living here, nor their expectations. We have the feeling that the Park is more interested in the biological species than in the human activities. There is a real deficiency in the territory diagnosis in terms of local population consideration (agricultural productions, traditional uses, number of families, etc.).

Also, at the level of the communication, we have never been told about what the good aspects of being inside the Park are. That is why several farmers thought it was better to be excluded from it.

ceived as a tremendous opportunity in terms of local development. The private sector has to be the main-spring of this process and not to remain waiting for "everything coming from the sky". It means showing economic realism so that the Park continues to give some work for our generation and for the following ones. The local population involvement is essential for the success of this approach.

Samuel Jaulmes compares with the case of the Regional Natural Park of Alpiques which, in opposition with the Park of Gravines (that was created following a prescription of legal obligation), has emanated from a local demand. The dialogue allowed to define management objectives, and it is thus easier to remind the stakeholders to their commitments. However, because of the lack of legal obligation, some stakeholders make a fuss applying the Charter. If this kind of behaviour would come to spread out, there will be two types of "penalties" for the territory: the disqualification (loosing the Park title), or forest fires!

2. Technical aspects to be specified in order to better understand the objectives and bring adapted answers

The Province of Taranto, by its Direction of Ecology, assures a temporary supervision of the Park of Gravines. However, the staff of the Protected Areas Unit of the Province of Taranto is not necessarily competent for this mission. For example, cartographic incoherencies were found in the documents. Indeed, the official perimeter of the Park differs according to the different municipalities, and it is not in adequacy with the cadastral demarcations yet. A heavy situation which is about to evolve.

On this question of the parks perimeter, the Region of Murcia initiated a workshop of modernization of land registration (cadastre). Archives were used to verify the ownership and especially its adequacy with the local stakes.

In France, the municipalities are entirely included or entirely excluded from the parks perimeter, restraining this kind of problems⁷.

The Park of Gravines is the biggest park of the Region of Puglia and the population living inside is important, causing some conflicts of land uses. The pilot sites count with 3 000 ha of agricultural and pastoral areas, which is more than the third part of its total area. We notice a general tendency to farmlands abandonment, which will probably go on in the next centuries, and we should have to take into account (Jean Bonnier). However farmers are still widely active and are a majority on the territory of the Park. Young farmers are really motivated. Thanks to QUALIGOUV, a diagnosis allowed to specify what were the existing types of vegetation and to follow their evolution through. The stake is to determine which management will be applied for the new areas of scrubland-forest in case of rural activity abandonment situations within the Park for example. The generalization of scrubland-forest is not ideal, although it consists in a natural evolution.

Participative elaboration of management plans has to reconcile biodiversity preservation and human activities. Forty years ago, in the public owned gravines, grazing was free and heavily pressed on the vegetation and scrublands development. Today, the territory still includes numerous pasture areas, mainly on private lands. Furthermore, the productivity of the local forests is weak, and is valued only for the firewood. The governance is thus a necessary instrument in order to develop the economy of this territory, facilitate the coexistence of the different uses, and protect the biodiversity.

3. How the QUALIGOUV partners do implement the balance between biodiversity and human activities?

In France, there is a preliminary dialogue to create a contractual commitment in the Regional Natural Parks. However, the Park Terra delle Gravine looks more like a French National Park, which consists in the exclusion of most of the human activities. It is crucial to identify well the forest owners and to explain them clearly their commitment towards the Park. Pilar Ara, from the Generalitat Valenciana, exposes however the difficulty to involve the private owners in the gravines conservation because of the clause which allowing the exclusion from the Park. Besides, we can worry about the eventuality that this clause could be spread out to other Italian Regional Parks, although this arrangement was only created for the Park Terra delle Gravine, and is not legally binding at the national level.

The importance of the stakeholders' organizations involved in the dialogue and the elaboration of the governance, except the farmers, is raised: Are they very divided or are there some organs representing them collectively? Patrizia Tartarino answers that there are various stakeholders' associations but that they do not always agree together. Today, there are only farmers' associations and there is no forest owners' association. Mostly, woodlands are integrated in agriculture areas. This explains the importance of associating the farmers to the approach.

The dialogue with the local management groups is born at the same time as the project of Park creation. However, the discussion with associations should not substitute the fact of meeting individually the different stakeholders of the territory. Municipalities could contact these last ones by mail, asking them to describe their activities, because associations does not always have the necessary information at their disposal.

4 Suggestions from the participants to improve the governance in the project of the Province of Taranto

Within the QUALIGOUV project framework, the Region of Puglia is asking for solutions to improve forest management in the Park. The objective is to conclude, eventually, with the elaboration of a complete management Plan accepted by the largest public as possible. Some experiences of the partners are not shared enough. It would also be necessary to make the technicians travel on the field. Jean Bonnier considers that every administrator, scientist, decision-maker or local stakeholder could have saved time by making the jour-

⁷ - However, this situation is facilitated by the relatively reduced superficiality of the French municipal territories (Editor's note).

ney in an already existing Park (Luberon or Sierra Espuña, for example), in order to collect testimonies from farmers and residents already convinced by the committed approach.

Philippe Bourdenet regrets that the constraint levels imposed to the stakeholders are not well explained, in particular regarding to hunting (there is apparently a problem with boars), agriculture (pesticides use), but also outdoor activities like rock-climbing (a petition is on-line on the Park Website) and the forestry development, that seems very regulated. He suggests establishing levels of constraints in our respective Parks in order to make comparisons.

Jean de Montgolfier thinks that the integration of the protected areas in its global territory should be better taken into account. Indeed, it seems to be a priority to estimate the regional economic and agricultural context in order to guarantee a territorial coherence. For Jean Bonnier, for example, that three big towns located in border of the Park perimeter, that count with hotels, restaurants and important customers supply, contribute too weakly to the territory project, compared to the case in Murcia, Alpujolas or Luberon. Patrizia Tartarino answers that Terra delle Gravine is a very young Park with an enormous potential and some motivated stakeholders who are important mainsprings for the local dynamic.

But there is still missing a permanent administrative structure⁸ and a detailed technical management plan. The QUALIGOUV project is thus an opportunity, in this implementation phase of the Park, to confront points of view, identify together the local problems and suggest improvement solutions inspired by French or Spanish experiences. The international network so created should be perpetuated.

As a member of the peer group, Manuel Aguila regrets that the Park of Gravines was not able to benefit earlier from the 10 years experience of the Park of Sierra Espuña on that point. One of the common problems is the evolution of the Mediterranean natural environment because of the human presence. Indeed, farmers have to be a support of territorial development and nature preservation. For that purpose, it is necessary to make the stakeholders aware of the potential benefits represented by the Park, before imposing the constraints. So we limit disinterests problems and farmland abandonment. The local authorities are responsible for this process. Louis-Michel Duhén agrees, calling up to more efforts to explain to the populations what we want to do, why to create a Park, and how does it work. It requires time and accessible

communication for everyone. For example, if the objective is to preserve gravines, it is necessary to explain concretely why, by explaining, in an accessible way, the functioning of the river system, the wealth and the dynamics of these environments, etc.

Corrado Teofili exposes the case of the WWF Italy who managed nature for a long time according to the model used formerly in the United States, which considered two different worlds: the anthropological world and the world of the Nature. Nevertheless, to protect efficiently the biodiversity, both worlds have to evolve together. We cannot consider the Man without the Nature. In Sardinia, twenty years ago, the WWF bought a big part of the forest of the pilot site (Monte Arcosu). This allowed to set up a simplified forest management by avoiding the confrontation with local stakeholders. It has been possible because there are few inhabitants and the ownership is divided up. This site is about to become labelled as a "Park". Today, recognizing its mistake, the WWF adopts a different strategy, by better integrating local populations. The WWF and the Park Terra delle Gravine should work together on this problem. The Park of could be a perfect experiment site of this methodology.

5. Conclusions

Jean Bonnier notices that the project of the Park Terra delle Gravine is quite representative. Indeed, it raised the same problems as the other partners for some points. He should thus be considered as exemplary for the other Mediterranean territories.

In all our countries, the decision of creating a Park comes, above all, from a preoccupation connected to nature preservation. But finally we better know about the birds than about people who are living in the territory. Thus, the main difficulty is not the acquisition of "technical" knowledge on the territory but rather the existence of gaps in understanding the populations and their activities. The actions of local development are effective only if they take into account local



Photo 4: Debriefing in the headquarters of the Province of Taranto

8 - It is important to remind that the Region of Puglia has temporarily commissioned the Province of Taranto for the Park management.

expectations, collected by a sociological investigation, and if they are the object of a real work of dialogue.

On the other hand, more time and means (human, financial, technical...) would allow the stakeholders to better appropriate themselves the projects, because the available tools are not still adapted. Of course, it does not substitute the monitoring of the actions modalities carried out locally in order to adapt them as well as possible to the context. For example, in the case of the Park Terra delle Gravine, if there is no association for each social category of the population, it is necessary to make an effort to set them up. The Region of Puglia has to take its responsibilities and make a complete commitment in this way.

In this aim, it could be helpful to rely, for example, on an analysis of the experiences of the Man and Biosphere (MAB) labelled areas. Indeed, two of the experimental territories of the QUALIGOUV project (Park of Luberon and Mount Ventoux) are classified as MAB Reserves. It would be interesting to invite a representative of the MAB Reserve from Luberon or from Mont Ventoux for the next seminars of the project.

According to Mario Velamazán, from the Region of Murcia, lead partner of the project, this session allowed to realize, collectively, the immense effort remaining to be carried out in terms of dialogue and stakeholders' association within the framework of the actions performed locally.

He recommends that a delegation of persons representing the Province, the Region, the municipalities, the agriculture and tourism professional organizations could participate to a study trip in another partner territory, in order to meet leaders of equivalent projects and receive experiences feedback on these issues.

Project of the Region of Valencia (4th seminar, Spain, 20-22 of October, 2010)

Within the framework of QUALIGOUV, the Generalitat Valenciana (Region of Valencia), in charge of the protected natural areas, suggested realizing experimental activities on four Natural reserves: Sierra Calderona, Chera / Sot de Chera, Turia and Puebla de San Miguel. Each of them has appropriate characteristics, but the central problematic remains globally the same: fire risk prevention.

Generalitat Valenciana and fire risks in Natural Parks

To understand well the context and the activities led within the project framework, a brief presentation of the Region and its role is required.

Institutional framework and competences distribution

Jorge Suárez, Head of the Forest fires Prevention unit, insists on the particular institutional framework in Spain, where every Region has a different framework and possesses her own autonomous government. Natural parks are created by a regional Government decree.

The Spanish Parks generally undergo a strong pressure, in particular in terms of tourism and leisure activities. Now, the strict standards imposed inside of them can create conflicts and tensions, which can aggravate the fire risks. Besides, the forestry works for prevention, aimed at reducing forest fuel accumulation, are not always well understood by the populations and the different users.

The Generalitat Valenciana counts with 22 natural parks, 8 Protected Landscapes and 1 Natural Monument. In Valencia, as in the other Mediterranean regions, Natural parks depend on the Ministry of the Environment. Among others, the Direction of Natural Environment Management consists in several units:

- Natural resources management and environmental preservation (forest management, fire prevention, hunting and fishing);
- Natural areas and biodiversity preservation (natural areas management and micro-reserves);
- Environmental evaluation.

A specific article about Natural Resources Management Plans (Plan de Ordenación de los Recursos Naturales, PORN)⁹ indicates the obligation to intervene and to prevent forest fires in a consensual way. In this aim, the Region wished the creation of Fire Prevention Plans assumed by everyone, in particular in Natural Parks.

The elaboration of the Fires Prevention Plans in Natural Parks requires the coordination between two units: one is dedicated to the sectorial policy, among

9 - According to the nature conservation policy established by the law 42/2007 (13 of December, 2007), relative to natural heritage and biodiversity, any protected natural area has to be included in a PORN.

which forest management; the other one is dedicated to protected areas management. In return, this cross-cutting approach should allow to better involve the different territorial stakeholders.

Regarding to the Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel, the article 59 of its creation decree, concerning forest fires, specifies that “the unit responsible [of the Park] has to elaborate and approve a tool integrating the participation of local stakeholders and forest owners in order to prevent and struggle against forest wild-fire”.

The Fire Prevention Plan as a tool for governance improvement

Cristina Calderon, from VAERSA¹⁰, explains that the Fire Prevention Plans often have the same application area as the PORN, which perimeter is generally wider than the Natural Parks. The elaboration of such a plan goes on approximately for 6 months and includes three main source documents:

- The Diagnosis which collects physical, biological and sociological data about the studied area, statistics on forest fires and their evolution during the last 10 years as well as the available means of prevention and struggle, the causes of fires, the analysis of the conflicts (hunters, breeders, tourists...), or also the existing infrastructures (railroads, electric lines...). It is complemented by a phase of field investigation. The integration of the local stakeholders is then essential (environmental, elected representative) during the different consultation meetings.

- The Infrastructures Plan, which deals with stumpage modification, but also with surveillance structures and with the definition of an adapted public road network. So we define the optimal conditions to reduce the risks (fuel cuts, fireguard agricultural area, water reserves, paths, reception areas...).

- The Plan of Causes Prevention concerns the surveillance (ponds analysis, water points...). The propositions of actions can concern the extension of the surveillance schedules, communication and awareness actions in the public reception area or also electric lines safety improvement.

Once these three documents realized, the Fire Prevention Plans is completed by a prospective financial study over 10 years for its implementation. This study includes the actions financed by the Generalitat Valenciana and the private actions.

Then, Jorge Suárez exposes the long checking process, which follows the technical writing of the Plan. The first stage is the validation by the regional administration, which drafts a report integrating the comments of the “Fires Prevention” and “Natural Reserves” units. In numerous cases, problems are pointed out and a process of revision begins in order to find a consensus. It was the case for the Fire Prevention Plans of the Park of Puebla de San Miguel.

When the services’ deliberation is positive, the second stage is the general public consultation. The Plan is widely spread in the official diary, on the Ministry’s website, in city halls, provinces, representative associations, local press, etc. In spite of these diffusion efforts, the level of participation in the survey process remains quite low, but significant.

Extracts from the public inquiry results:

The contributions received during the elaboration of the Park of Puebla de San Miguel Plan were expressing:

- A total opposition to firebreak cuts (47%);
- Specific aspects on very local issues (30%);
- General aspects not directly connected to the Plan (12%) such as town planning, land registry, or form problems.

Approximately 65% of the answers were coming from local entities, in particular from municipalities and associations. 47% were not accepted because they were in contradiction with the Park regulations. Others were taken into account partially or totally and are today amending the current Plan.

Finally, the Plan is presented to the regional Government for approval by the Minister, which delivers an adoption resolution. After this long process, the actions of the Plan can be implemented.

Some comments are formulated concerning this process:

- This type of plan, developed within the framework of QUALIGOUV, is exclusively intended for the protected territories. Besides, two plans can come into force on the same area.

- The general public is informed (consulted) only at the end of the process, when the final version of the Plan is already available on Internet. Jean de Montgolfier notes that, in France, for example, if the place of a road is decided without consulting the opinion of the firemen, there is a risk that they consider it inappropriate and finally do not use it. Jorge Suárez specifies however that general public can formulate

¹⁰ - Regional public company in charge of the elaboration of the Territorial management plans.

requests. Besides, consultations targeted to concerned persons are led before the redaction, during the diagnosis phase. The Generalitat Valenciana is also in permanent contact with the department responsible for the wildfires struggle. Fire brigades communicate their needs in width of paths or types of vehicles for example. The paths plan is determined thanks to the cartographic study.

- Almost half of the requests received by the investigators are opposed the fuel cuts and firebreaks (see "Extracts from the public inquiry results", below). Could it be due to the impact on landscapes of these clearing actions? New implementation modalities of these cuts may have to be envisaged (Philippe Bourdenet). Jorge Suárez asserts that it is question of progressive treatments of the vegetation. The agents are working to improve the quality of the works and people begin to realize their utility.

Position of the Generalitat Valenciana towards QUALIGOUV project

For Maria Angeles Centeno Centeno, General director of the natural environment management, the importance of the QUALIGOUV project lies in the gathering of experimental and pilot activities in order to define clear objectives for the future. Besides, the QUALIGOUV project allowed to improve the methodology of stakeholders' participation in the definition of the Plan, and will be an opportunity to develop some of these strategic actions.

The new standards encourage to make the existing tools of planning easier, so that they can apply without contradiction (Park, Fire Prevention Plans, PORN, etc). 53% of the regional area are covered by woodlands. Today, almost every natural park has adopted a Fire Prevention Plans. The ideal would be that municipalities coordinate these plans and involve local stakeholders (farmers, elected representatives, associations, inhabitants, etc), so they would become real environmental integration tools. The Generalitat Valenciana is now thinking about to conceive pedagogic guides for the local population. This approach is strengthened and improved by the QUALIGOUV project.

Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel and wildfire risk management

The seminar of October 2010 began with a field trip in the Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel. This last one is located at the east side of the "Rincon de Ardemuz" district, an enclave of the Region of Valencia within the Region of Aragon, in the Northwest of the regional territory.

Local context and natural environment

The municipality of Puebla de San Miguel is a territory of 6 400 ha among which more than 90 % quote as wooded area. The local economy is traditionally based on agriculture and breeding (potato, lucernes, cereal, vineyard). The absence of industry, along with the violent climatic phenomena, the poor soils and the lack of communication provoked desertification process (only 97 inhabitants in 2009).

In spite of its high altitude (1 100 meters above the sea level, on average, which makes it the highest municipality of the Region) and the hilly landscape, rainfalls are low (approximately 600 mm per year).

Among other remarkable natural and landscaped elements, we can note the presence of Spanish junipers (cf. Photo 5) and old monumental yews of about 2 000 years and a fir-trees stand, rather rare thing in the Region. Besides, we note that the whole site is included in a Special area of conservation (SAC) of the Natura 2000 network (ES5233006, "Puebla de San Miguel").

The major reason of fires on the territory are the lightning. These last 10 years, there were only 9 weakly spread fires, but all of them were caused by lightning.

The 6 400 ha of the Park of Puebla de San Miguel (corresponding to the municipal territory) are watched over by only one single permanent agent of the environment service¹¹. It is helped by a surveillance staff which keeps crossing the area in order to identify potential factors of risk, send the alert in case of fire departure and take the first fighting measures.

The fire risk level is determined, by the prevention system of the Generalitat Valenciana, by Province and by District¹².

Fire Prevention Plans

Jorge Suárez explains that these plans constitute planning tools improving forest governance. In this framework, dialogue actions and pilot experiments will be developed through the QUALIGOUV project.

The Fire Prevention Plans are at diverse states of progress in the four aforementioned Parks. The Park of Puebla de San Miguel is one of the most recent in the

11 - In the Rincón de Ardemuz, the head district has got several local agents of the environment service at his disposal.

12 - A meteorological indication is calculated by the National Meteorology Agency. Following this indication, the regional Ministry of Governorate (and not the Ministry of the Environment), defines the alert level. This one is between 1 and 3. Three is the highest risk level. In winter, the alert levels are declared by Province, while in summer, they are declared by district.

Region of Valencia. It was created to protect an exceptional biological heritage. The Fire Prevention Plan was only approved in 2010. The considered actions are aimed at resolving conflicts of uses in order to allow the various users satisfying their needs while limiting, or maybe excluding, the wildfire risks.

Measures were proposed to reach the following objectives:

- to regulate the use of the fire;
- to watch over users' safety and extinction means;
- to regulate, as well as possible, activities that could provoke fires;
- to minimize forest fire risks resulting from these activities.

Entertainment and public reception areas

Manuela Roldán, manager of forest sector of Chelva (Region of Valencia) explains that the Park has a leisure area, a camping area "Don Guillén's fountain", several rest areas, as well as various forest shelters. Leisure, that causes massive influx of users, is especially centred on the mushrooms season, Easter holidays and summer. The main risk lies in the high potential of fire risk in these seasons.

The entertaining areas allow the users to spend the night and constitute ideal departure points for hiking (important network of pedestrian paths). For that purpose, they have to book in advance and obtain an authorization, which is not necessary for walks in the day. Entertaining areas (ground for tents, barbecues, picnic areas) are separated from the forest by stonewalls. People are not allowed to make fire, except inside these fitted zones. In case of a level 3 alert, making fire is totally forbidden (including in barbecues) and forest works are strictly limited. It seems that the case has never occurred until this day. The users can get informed about alert level on television, Internet, by SMS, or with the municipalities, which are informed first and foremost.

The barbecue is a local tradition. It is thus impossible to forbid it to the populations. Therefore, the Prevention Plan established rules defining characteristics for these historic installations, built in the years 1970-1980, receiving until 50 to 60 persons. For example, the roof can be opened or closed according to the wind orientation and the smoke evacuation pass through a fire-proofing nets which prevent the sparks from escaping. Vegetation around the barbecues is controlled (reduction of the forest biomass) and paper containers, made with fire-proofing material, are placed far away from the barbecues.

Micro-Reserves¹³

These reduced areas (until 20 ha), botanically interesting, are aimed at following-up, on a long-term, preservation of botanical species and endemic, rare or threatened vegetation types. They constitute a network of small plots, of public or private ownership, given up voluntarily by their owners with the objective of protecting one or several fauna or flora populations.

The constraints imposed by the micro-reserves concern various aspects. In particular, pasture and wood production are forbidden (except cuts for sanitary reasons). If, in the neighbourhood of the micro-reserve, thinning or other measures aimed at reducing the combustibility are necessary, these activities must be limited inside a minimum radius of 100 meters around the perimeter of the concerned site. Besides, a new measure was organized to control the erosion in the micro-reserves (in application of the PORN).

Cristina Calderón, from VAERSA, presents the case of the Park of Puebla de San Miguel which includes 6 micro-reserves. These have for main objective to protect some essences.

The Micro-Reserve "Las Blancas", created in 2002 by a decree from the Environment Council, is a 5,68 ha domain, with *Juniperus thurifera* (Spanish juniper) as the main specie. Some specimens overtake the 1000 years. Land property is declared as public interest, and thus property of the municipality of Puebla de San Miguel.

During the implementation of the Fire Prevention Plan of the Park of Puebla de San Miguel, the Micro-Reserves were considered in the establishment of the Infrastructures Plan.

The pasture limitation can appear paradoxical when we know that the presence and the regeneration of *Juniperus thurifera* stands is strongly favoured by the presence of animals (seeds scattering, vegetation opening by scratching, favouring germination). Presently, the Generalitat Valenciana looks for agreements allowing animals grazing, essentially in areas outside the fire protection network, in order to maintain the juniper regeneration.

The Infrastructures Plans for fire prevention

The Infrastructures Plan aims at:

- avoiding or minimizing forest fire ignition and spreading, working at the adequacy of the existing biomass (firebreak areas/vegetation management);

13 - The status of the botanical species protection called "Micro-Reserve" was established by the decree 218/1994 of the 17 of October 1994 from the Generalitat Valenciana's Government. The Order of the 7 of December 1995 from the Agriculture and Environment Councils fixed the concrete regulation.

- defining the roads network allowing a fast and secured access for surveillance and fighting means;
- defining an optimal water supply network (reservoirs and fire hydrants);
- recovering of traditional manners (recovery of the former farming practices, extensive breeding or fire use);
- obtaining the optimal conditions of safety regarding to wildfires in areas with public uses of the forests.

So, the objective of the Plan is to support the surveillance and fire extinction systems by adapting them to the reality and to the needs of the Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel.



Photo 5: *Juniperus thurifera* living for more than thousand years in the Micro-Reserve Las Blancas

Vegetation Management

In case of fire, the burnt areas must be the most reduced as possible. Firebreaks are thus constituted. Their location and width vary according to the ground and the vegetation.

The division of the territory depends on the quality of the forest regime, which consists in fuel cuts or “broken elements” classified in three orders. The area covered by first order firebreaks is 2 000 ha, 500 ha for the order 2, and 100 ha for the order 3. The division is assured by a structure constituted by firebreak elements in different orders so that, in case of fire, the third order element limits the fire spreading in a small perimeter. If the fire passed through this obstacle, it would be stopped by the second order structure and, in the worse case, by the first order structure.

On a central strip, the vegetation cover is shaved up into the mineral layer. It is lined by strips of selective

cleaning where the vegetation is removed, and then by auxiliary strips (the most external) which are cleared until it remains only 10% of the vegetation thickness. The same thing is done around the entertaining and urban areas, and a project plans to widen these measures to the whole Park in order to constitute a network.

Once the cut of fuel has been created, the selective cleaning strips are cleared every year. The auxiliary strip and the central strip are renewed, if necessary, after 4 years. We estimate the cost of the fuel cuts maintenance at approximately 6 000 euros / ha. To limit these costs, we try to make it being grazed by cattle.

Regeneration plans do exist, but they are managed by another service. Each Micro-Reserve has got its Plan with defined activities. However, the technicians of the Park finally define the needed works (essentially biomass management). A project of conservative management, to which will contribute the University of Valence¹⁴, aims at favouring this particular ecosystem, is going to be drafted soon.

The Plan has a statutory value because in some areas, determined works were declared compulsory. In the case of private properties, the owner can ask for help via a Regional subsidy or a contract to execute these compulsory works. In this case, the forest of the Puebla de San Miguel Park is completely public, except the urban and agricultural areas. An exceptional position in the Mediterranean context.

Today, there is no forest development plans in the Park. Gradually, it is planned to elaborate one to manage the forest in a sustainable development approach (prevention, wood-energy). Luis Velasco, Head of the Service of fire prevention and forests health of the Generalitat Valenciana, indicates us that the value of the standing wood was around 70 euros / m³ in 1989. Today there is no exploitation. The only valuation of the wooded areas is indirect, via tourism and breeding.

The accesses

Regarding to the access roads network for the machines, there are three categories there:

- the main roads, which require a minimal width of 5,5 meters;
- roads giving access to important massifs, which need to be at least 4 meter width with extensions;
- roads without outcome, which have to be 3,5 meter width with extensions and traffic circles allowing turning back.

¹⁴ - The fourth international seminar about juniper will take place from 5 to 8 October 2011 in Mont Dauphin (France). <http://www.colloquethurifere2011.fr>.

Water sources

The Park is equipped with six reservoirs, among which three are accessible to the aerial means (helicopters). Water sources are reservoirs of 200 m³, with cleared vegetation in a 20 meter radius. They are located in particular near the entertaining areas and have to allow the fast intake of water by the fire brigades vehicles and by the aerial means.

Environmental Agents and Surveillance Plan

Alberto Solana and José Urbano, from the Generalitat Valenciana, explain that the article 6 of the law 43 (21 of November 2003) on forests, attributes to the forest agents, among others tasks, functions of police and legal forest ownership guarantee. In each one of the three provinces of Alicante, Castellón and Valencia, there is a territorial Direction of Environment, water, country planning and accommodation, on which depend the agents of the environmental services. Each forest agent with territorial attachment has got a specific territory, which is assigned to him (her). The teams, the schedules, the possible replacements and the working priorities are defined by the head of the District.

Its main functions in terms of forest fires prevention are:

- signing the licences of fire use for the activities authorized by the law on forests, which are not envisaged in the local plans;
- investigating the causes of the fires in cooperation with the Research group on forest fires;
- collecting wildfires data in order to establish the official statistics;
- taking care of the respect of the regulations;
- checking monthly the water resources state.



Photo 6: Water storage basins are part of the Valencian dispositive of wildfires fighting

Puebla de San Miguel is included in the Preventive Surveillance Plan of the Region of Valencia. Surveillance units are constituted by local volunteers equipped with motorized vehicles. They work thanks to 71 points ("watchtower") located in strategic places, from where they can see the whole region and the neighbouring sectors. Their mission also consists in informing the users (farmers, hunters, visitors) about what is regulated in the Park (uses, protected species...). They are in permanent contact with the regional system of civil protection.

On the other hand, environmental agents are employed locally by the Generalitat Valenciana to increase the surveillance and the sensitization. For example, José Urbano, inhabitant from Ademúz, is one of four environmental agents employed to watch over the 35 000 ha of the sector "Rincón de Ademúz". He knows well the local context and the territory. These local agents have the power of charging people that commit breaches. It is a good way to involve the local population in the protection of the territory and to create jobs in these areas threatened by abandonment phenomena.

The means implemented by the Generalitat Valenciana in terms of fire prevention are not mutualised with the bordering Regions of Castilla-La Mancha and Aragón. The existing collaborative agreements especially concern the access to caring equipments for the enclosed populations.

Fire prevention network

In the Region of Valencia, there is a 60 fixed points network which main function is the early detection of wildfires. These "forests observatories" are located on the highest points of the territory, where the visibility toward the influence area is maximum.

A geographical information system (UBIFOC) allows to visualize series of photos composing the horizon. The operator and the agent can so, from their respective bases, communicate on the same image, thanks to a digitized system. As soon as a fire is detected, the agent contacts the fighting dispositive via a digital alarm system. This message is communicated with several services of the Generalitat (fire brigades, health...).

However, although the risk is managed by the Generalitat Valenciana, more and more fires are declared by users, thanks to their mobile phone, by composing the 112. These alerts are then verified by the system.

Case of the forest observatory “El Gavilán” (Jorge Suárez)

In the Park of Puebla de San Miguel the forests observatory “El Gavilán” is opened all year long, 24 hours a day in summer and approximately nine hours a day in winter.

Its main functions are:

- a dissuasive effect, due to its visibility;
- the early location of fire risks;
- the fast transmission of the information, thanks to the traditional systems (navigation and geographic location maps) and to the new technologies (UBIFOC application of location and fast detection of the forest fires);
- the connection between the various existing forest fire prevention means and the communication centres;
- the collection of current meteorological data collected and stored in the Geographic Information System;
- the follow-up of thunderstorms and the localization of possible fires due to the lightning, thanks to the traditional systems or to the computer localization system of lightning falls, in contact with the communication centres.

Note: this station is interesting because it presents stands of three Juniper species: *J. thurifera*, *J. savina* and *J. phoenicia*.

Prescribed burning

Prescribed burning is not forbidden, but it is not usually employed in the Region, except for experimental reasons, because the risk of losing the control of the fire is too high. But the reflection is progressing on this subject and the Generalitat Valenciana's staff has already attended actions of prescribed burning managed in French Pyrenees.

Forest, Park and rural employment

The Park is constituted by natural forests. During the war for independence, the populations needed to feed, and to warm. Therefore, the area was farmed, although it was not very productive. As the agriculture disappeared, studies have been done to reforest the region. The first reforestation phase took place in 1927, then it continued during some decades (approximately 200 - 300 ha a year). It allowed, at the same time, to fight against the erosion, but also to give some jobs to the local populations.

Today, after years, and in this time of crisis, the inhabitants again want to work on reforestation. Among the 96 permanent inhabitants of the village of Puebla de San Miguel, an important percentage still work in the Park as firemen, fires-guards, farmers... The priority is granted to the local populations for the recruitments of public jobs, in order to avoid the abandonment. This is authorized by the law and brings some supports from Europe. However, in crisis context, this percentage decreases. The economic level of the territory is maintained thanks to the sustainable tourism which begins to develop.



Photo 7: Bird's eyes view on the Park of Puebla San Miguel

Classified trees and forest management

According to Luis Velasco, we observe a political tendency which consists in considering some stands or trees as cathedrals. The multiplication of classification types like “Remarkable tree” or “Biological interest tree”¹⁵ can be in contradiction with a sustainable management of the wooded areas.

For example, the Micro-Reserve “Pino Vicente”, which presents an old fir-trees stand, obtained its name by a forester from Puebla de San Miguel who saved a great number of pines from cutting down, and in particular one remarkable specimen. In the 1990's, markings of Corsican pines and fir-trees were practiced. But cuttings progressively stopped, because of the opposition of some local country managers. This brought three problems:

- the spreading of mistletoe;
- the lack of maintenance (greater fire risk);
- the ageing of the stand.

Nevertheless, these pines forests could produce wood-energy. But except on an experimental area, there

¹⁵ - Law 4/2006, of the 19 of May 2006, from the Generalitat Valenciana, related to the monumental trees (*Patrimonio Arbóreo Monumental of the Comunitat Valenciana*).

was no serious study on the question at territorial scale. Thus, the potential biomass is not well estimated.

The legislation sometimes leads to paradoxical situations. An extreme example: in Valencia city, palm groves are forbidden to cut because they are classified, holding up the construction of a new subway line.

The voluntary work for the environment as a tool of social participation

Manuel Jordán, Coordinator of ACREBO¹⁶, explains that, in 1992, a meeting was organized with the persons concerned by the problem of forest fires, in order to share each one's experience. "We had the conviction that the population could change thanks to its sensitization", he says. In 1994, the General assembly of ACREBO decides to begin voluntary surveillances.

ACREBO fits out paths, plants trees, organizes hikes with the volunteers, gets back the wood for the municipality of Chiva... But in spite of the financial support of the Ministry of the Environment, the action means of the association are limited. At first, all the association worked on the principle of the voluntary work. For 3 years, ACREBO has collaborated with the prison services, so that certain punishments are purged through a public interest work. In 2010, the objective was to plant 1 000 trees and shrubs (however, the experience shows that the choice of species is not always pertinent).

In many cases, this initiative can be transferred as an example of unit and participative management of the wooded areas.

Debriefing of the field trip in the Park of Puebla de San Miguel

The project of Valencia contains four experimental sites among which some are more complex, such as the Natural Park of Turia, which is located in outlying suburbs of Valencia. The problems connected to wildfires are there also different of those presented in the Park of Puebla de San Miguel. This last one can seem simple

to manage because population as well as fire risk are there very low, contrary to the Park of Serra d'Espadà. Three kinds of activities were undertaken in the Park of Turia:

- restoration of water sources;
- communication (t-shirts...);
- writing of a "good practices" guide.

One of the main objectives of the Valencia project is to draft concrete "good practices" guides in connection with the Fire Prevention Plans.

Louis-Michel Duhen would have preferred to visit the site of Serra d'Espadà because it is actually more complex to manage and seems closer to the Alpilles and Luberon's problematics. However, he raises some interesting points on the Puebla de San Miguel site and compares it with France:

- In Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the elaboration of the PIDAF (Intermunicipal Plan of clearing and forest development), equivalent of the Fire Prevention Plans of the Region of Valencia, is implemented by local governance structures. Once approved, it is not spread, nor given to the general public, contrary to what is made by the Generalitat Valenciana, although this contributes largely to the improvement of the governance.

- In France, once the Plan has been elaborated, there is no system of requests with the local stakeholders. Nevertheless, associating the stakeholders with the manager of the Plan is very useful because it allows to make adjustments, corrections.

- In France, the owners are warned at the last moment of the forestry works and there is no registration like in Serra d'Espadà (see "Experience of the Natural Park of Serra d'Espadà", p. 47).

Manuel Aguila identifies two very positive conclusions and two elements that can be improved.

Positive points:

- The accurate aspect of the project, indispensable quality in terms of fire prevention.
- The contacts with the regional population, thanks to the work of the fire prevention teams. In the case of San Miguel, the area where the team works is public. Furthermore, the results of the undertaken actions are visible enough so that people can see what has been done.

¹⁶ - The *Asociación cultural para la recuperación del bosque* is a cultural association dedicated to the forest conservation. It was born just after great wildfires.

Improvable points:

- In order to better increase population's awareness, "open days" should be organized in the Park of Puebla de San Miguel and neighbouring villages.

- There is a lack of coordination between the services and the administration. It is specially the case in terms of management and fire prevention in the Micro-Reserves.

Jean Bonnier wonders to have rarely heard the word "governance" during the field trip and the different presentations. Besides, the other experimental sites of the Generalitat Valenciana have almost never been mentioned. On the other hand, the regional administration seems to be focused on the Region in general, more than on the local population of the experimental territories. The question "who are we working for?" should be considered by every partner (Alpilles, Luberon, Taranto...). The objectives are different whether the initiative concerns the local population or a wider geographical level.

Answer from the representatives of the Generalitat Valenciana: Further the various experimented valuation methods, the Generalitat established a list of concrete activities, among which some concern all the population of the Region of Valencia and some others are more specific for an area or a particular public. The "good practices" guide is, for example, a general tool that could be adaptable to particular sites.

Jean de Montgolfier insists on the importance of associating fire brigades to the conception of the forest defence equipments against fires. They are in a better position to know where and how to struggle, for example to determine the location and the dimension of tracks and fuel-break cuts. Fire brigades and foresters should go together on the field, and draft the plans together.

Answer: There is a very close collaboration between fire brigades, which define the criteria they require for an efficient wildfire fighting, and the regional Ministry, which applies the criteria and realizes the works.

According to Patrizia Tartarino, in the Fire Prevention Plans, it is necessary to distinguish the prevention, which relies on communication, and the fighting means, which rely on fire brigades and technical means.

Jean Bonnier raises the question of the local stakeholders' sensibility to fire prevention. "The risk perceived by local populations should be a part of the diagnosis, as well as the meteorological data... Local knowledge about fires, in particular from the ancients, must not be ignored". Daniel Seven adds: "what do we try to

protect by fighting against fires? This site presents a remarkable biodiversity, but what is really expected from this forest has not been formulated. If we do not speak about population expectations in terms of protection, it cannot be considered as good governance".

Answer: In the Region of Valencia, prevention against wildfires is something so evident for daily life (just speak with local residents or consult newspaper articles to verify it) that few efforts were considered necessary in terms of communication to justify the need.

Nevertheless, it seems that not all the stakeholders are involved yet, in particular those who manage the forest areas directly in the field. The fact that a volunteers' association manages a territory is a great innovation for participative governance. But some people were sceptical about its capacity to manage a forest at a long term. Besides, a Park director who is, at the same time, Mayor of a Municipality and forest owner is an exceptional position, which could favour the dialogue. But, on the other hand, is there not any risk of conflict of interests?

The Park of Serra d'Espadà is an interesting case due to its important population and the forest land property mainly private and very divided (and thus, more difficult to manage). It is a "textbook case" to analyze what is required to fight efficiently against wildfires.

According to Manuel Aguila, protecting forests against wildfires implies to protect the populations living there. Now, for this, the population have to remain in the Park and the planned works must be implemented. How do the partners of QUALIGOUV in France, in Taranto, or in Murcia, try to implement these objectives: to protect the populations and to make them actors of this struggle?



Photo 8: Field trip debriefing in the Region of Valencia headquarter

Elements for capitalization

Third meeting of the peer group (Taranto, Italy, 28 and 29 of April 2010)

Capitalization methods

Jean de Montgolfier makes a reminder of the peer group's methodology. The peers meet to assess each seminar. A report is drafted with the support of the peer group, including a synthesis of the answers to four points (positive aspects, questioning points, improvable approaches, transferable elements) following the "post-it" method. Then this draft circulates among the peer group's members. If everyone agrees with the proposed version, the report is adopted and every peer gets charged of spreading it to the partner's staff. So the peer group's member is the "focal point" between the peer group and the partner he is associated to.

The progress books are the central elements of capitalization throughout the project. Each one will contain a recurring part including a general presentation of the QUALIGOUV project, and a description of each partner and its scheduled experimental projects. The seminars synthesis and the corresponding peer group meetings reports will be gathered in the second part containing the factual summary of the field trips, the debates, the administrative decisions and the peer group's decisions. The progress books will be drafted by the AIFM in French, with translation to English (and to Spanish by the Region of Murcia if possible). Their estimated volume is around 40 pages in A4 format, and they will be spread out to the partners and the other concerned organisms.

In order to better progress, two complementary documents have to be supplied by the partner:

- a general presentation document of the pilot projects: "INTRO.doc" (localization, context, diagnosis, objectives, scheduled activities...);
- a synthetic document of half a page, aimed at being published in the progress books: "EVALUATION.xls".

The AIFM is supposed to homogenize them, on the basis of the information supplied by each partner. However some modifications are required by several members:

- to mention, in "INTRO.doc", social communication strategies for the territorial management and not only technical considerations connected to the forest management;

- to distinguish 2 paragraph "Description and location" and "Diagnosis and analysis of the needs";

- to specify the scheduled date of the realization (the partner supplies a chrono-program of its activities, Editor's note);

- to join a list of the local stakeholders who will be involved in the experimental project implementation;

- to add to the document "INTRO.doc" a paragraph about the administrative and political context of each experimental territory.

The contents of these documents will thus be revised consequently. Then, the AIFM will be able to extract some of this information for the elaboration of the progress book. The document INTRO will be also useful for the steering committee and will constitute a working base for the mid-term external evaluation.

According to Patrizia Tartarino, the role of the peer group is to estimate the project state of progress and to verify if the partners' experimental actions are being implemented such as they were presented to the European Union, but not to realize new documents of initial presentation.

However, the AIFM needs this information to boost the peer group's activity. The delay as regards to the capitalization is becoming worrisome. It is maybe necessary to appeal to the steering committee's authority in order to obtain documents and information (Word and Excel evaluation forms proposed by David Gasc and Corrado Teofili) necessary for the good progress of the peer group's work. Besides, it would be desirable to correspond more by email in order to exchange our documents.

Definitions and conceptions of "governance"

Several ideas are launched "in the air":

- The governance represents "a way of association of every stakeholder to a given project" (Jean Bonnier).

- It is "subject to a dialogue phase from the beginning of its implementation".

- "It does not consists only in a public dialogue, but also in the private sector involvement".

- "The problem is to understand the objectives of the different operators, and then, to make sure that these operators respect their objectives".

- "The governance implies people participation. In the QUALIGOUV project, we are not only dealing

with forests. Social management is also very important”.

- The question is to know whether all the partners are able to establish a governance state assessment within their projects. It seems quite clear in the projects of Murcia, Alpillles and Luberon, but what about the others?

- It seems obvious that the partners do not all have the same vision of the governance. For example, in the case of the Province of Taranto, which just begins the process, Patrizia Tartarino considers that it is necessary to finalize, at first, the forest Management Plan, and then to take care of the dialogue. “It is also the private stakeholders’ choice to integrate themselves into the process”, she says.

Jean Bonnier proposes that the AIFM centralizes all the documents and the e-mails exchanges to synthesise and then spread them. It would allow to constitute a permanent follow-up file allowing to collect all the elements produced during the project and to supply the QUALIGOUV website. Mario Velamazán adds that it is better to send the work messages related to the peer group only to the peer group’s members, with the mention “peer group” in the mail object in order to facilitate the identification. Besides, the definition of the word “governance” could be enriched on the QUALIGOUV Website (thanks to a cooperative tool such as Wiki, Editor’s note).

Note: it is possible to put on-line the documents already realized, but only on the QUALIGOUV website.

Sociological survey and evaluation

Jean de Montgolfier received a request from the Natural Regional Parks of Alpillles and Luberon to work together on a methodology of a sociological study. It could enrich the final report and would constitute a good evaluation for QUALIGOUV. It implies to establish a subgroup on this subject.

According to Manuel Aguila, a project supposed to improve the governance should necessarily include a sociological study about what did the project left in the local people spirits.

Jean Bonnier considers the survey realized by Murcia as a good example for similar projects.

The Park of Alpillles is interested in the Region of Murcia’s initiative. Both structures have already

exchanged information on this subject and Cristina Lopez (Regional Park of Sierra Espuña) sent some elements¹⁷ to Samuel Jaulmes. On this base, Louis-Michel Duhén drafted, for the Parks of Alpillles and Luberon, a provisional evaluation document, which requires, according to him, additional points of view and partners’ analysis, allowing to extract mutual teachings.

About the evaluation document proposed by the WWF, Mario Velamazán suggests to make a subgroup aimed at working by email to elaborate a simplified version. This information is essential. The partners must be more mobilized on this point.

Evaluation of Taranto’s project by the peer group concerning the experimental site (Regional Park of Terra delle Gravine)

I- Positive aspects

- Beautiful site, fully justifying the efforts undertaken to preserve it.
- Regional political will of promoting the sustainable management of this quality area.
- Very good ecological and forest skills among the team.
- Some local stakeholders (farmers, tourism sector) seem ready to make a commitment in favour of the Park.

II- Interrogation points

- Propositions in terms of governance almost non-existent.
- Apparently very “politicking” procedures of granting or denying demands of exclusion from the Park perimeter by the farmers.
- Late and insufficient consideration of the social and economic aspects in the project implementation.
- Strong dominance of the forest and ecological aspects that could give to the project a very technical, or even “technocratic” aspect. This could arouse unreceptive reactions from some local stakeholders.
- Some stakeholders, initially approving the Park, are very frustrated by their limited participation to the reflection and decision processes.

17 - Mario Velamazán specifies that the complete work of the Region of Murcia will be transmitted to the AIFM soon.

- Visible lack of links between the procedures “Regional Park” and “Natura 2000”.

- The identity and the image of the Park seem still insufficiently perceptible.

- Many stakeholders seem not aware of the benefits of being included in the Park.

III- Potential improvements

- Strengthening the team by skills in human sciences to deepen the socioeconomic context analysis.

- Setting up a governance structure endowed with sufficient means (animation structure in particular) allowing a real participation of field stakeholders concerned in the definition of objectives and strategies, in the management and in the control of the results.

- Fixing long-lasting territorial limits adapted to the stakes and to the constraints.

- Setting up a conflict management strategy, instead of the unclear procedures of granting or denying the demands of exclusion from the Park perimeter.

- Specifying the compensations (financial or other) to the access or manners constraints related to the existence of the Park.

- Opening a wide debate on the strategic choices to be made about biodiversity management: let the nature evolve spontaneously, or control its evolution. In this last case, defining a reference state to be taken as an objective.

- Better distinguishing the management of territories in natural evolution (ravines themselves) from the management of exploited or cultivated area surrounding them.

- Gathering and structure the local stakeholders with adapted procedures in order to involve them more.

- Gathering the forest owners around a more efficient management model.

- Better coordinating the various concerned organisms. In particular connecting better the procedures of “Regional Park” and “Natura 2000”.

- Creating a “Park image”, developing tourism and products identified as locally made, leaning on the local stakeholders.

- Adapting communication tools according to the different targeted publics, in particular local one.

- Using the GIS as a communication and participation tool.

IV- Transferable elements

- The ecological follow-up method for natural and semi-natural stands.

- The will of combining exploitation and protection thanks to well adapted forest management techniques.

- The approach based on regional laws, which seem easier to modify than national laws.

Things that could allow to get advantage from the cooperation network of QUALIGOUV:

- Organizing a study trip with stakeholder's groups representatives to a site where the dialogue is better functioning. Organizing twinning (with a Spanish or a French Park for example).

- Being inspired by “good practices” elaborated by the other QUALIGOUV partners (sociological analyses, certification, participative procedures...).

Concerning the organization of the field trips and the discussions

I- Positive aspects

- Good quality of the field trip, the explanations and the supplied documents.

- Presentations, interventions and debates during the debriefing, in particular from farming and tourism stakeholders.

- Exchanges between participants.

II- Interrogation points

- Insufficient translation (quality and contents).

- Presentation quite general, not enough focused on governance and management quality.

- Absence of local regional elected representatives (from province or municipalities...).

III- Potential improvements

- Spreading more information before the seminar (send the file earlier, by e-mail).
- During the peer group's meetings, dedicating more time to the in-depth discussions, and less to the methodological aspects.
- Developing the peer group's role in terms of evaluation of the experimental projects progress during these two years, which requires adequate information from the partners about the situation.

Third peer group's decisions statement

- The AIFM will send the evaluation form of Alpilles and Luberon, realized by Louis-Michel Duhén and by Pilar Ara, for approval as an official peer group's working documents.
- The AIFM will send again the "INTRO.doc" form after adding the modifications according to the requests emitted during the meeting (cf. "Capitalization methods", page 39). This form will be send back completed by the partners, and then spread to the peer group's members and the steering committee.
- The partners will complete and send the AIFM, before 15 of June 2010, "EVALUATION.doc" and "EVALUATION.xls" forms. Then, a simplified version will be spread among the partners by the corresponding subgroup.
- Every partner will think about the term of "governance" in order to establish a "governance diagnosis" of each experimental territory.
- The three progress books will include a recurrent general presentation of the MED program and the QUALIGOUV project, and then, reflection elements emanating from the two previous seminars about:
 - ▶ The notion of governance through a diagnosis;
 - ▶ The improvement perspectives of the experimental activities;
 - ▶ The collective propositions and the recommendations.

To finish, the final report of capitalization will establish a general synthesis.

At least two subgroups will be created :

- ▶ "sociological study" group, aimed at developing a collective methodology to realize a sociological study, coordinated by Louis-Michel Duhén and the AIFM;

▶ "evaluation form" group, that will work at the simplification of the evaluation form proposed by the WWF, coordinated by Miguel Aguila and the AIFM: Manuel Aguila, Francisco Navarro, Louis-Michel Duhén and Corrado Teofili.

Fourth meeting of the peer group (Valencia, Spain, 22 of October 2010)

Capitalization methods

Many interesting things have been realized during these first four semesters, but the heart of the QUALIGOUV project, which is the forest management governance, was not really deepened. Besides, every partner has well established objectives and will doubtless reach them, but it is also necessary to think about the common productions of the project.

We are also expecting for what can bring the EuroVértice's evaluation report which will be presented during the intermediary seminar¹⁸. This evaluation, realized within the framework of the project, on the AIFM's initiative, is not imposed by the MED program. It aims at determining, at mid-term of the project, if the initial objectives have been reached, or if they are going to be reached, and at correcting the possible difficulties. It will also allow to check if the peer group fills its function and if the use of the methodological tools, such as the assessment grid, seems effective and relevant or not. According to Jean de Montgolfier, the peer group and the assessor have to work in synergy in order to make the project to go ahead.

In terms of capitalization, the peer group has now three tools (WWF's evaluation grid, simplified form and mid-term evaluation) that we should synthesize into a single document. The evaluation grid proposed by the WWF has been considered too difficult to exploit, so it was transformed into nine questions, more realistic and concise (see the insert "Evaluation of the peer attached to the partner...", below).

Diverse trends get free concerning the continuation of the events:

- Jean Bonnier considers that, from now, the definition of the final document contents has to be a priority, taking inspiration from these 9 questions. This could

¹⁸ - The fifth intermediary seminar will take place from 24 to 27 of May 2011 in France, on the ONF's field (Biosphere Reserve of the Mont Ventoux), and in the AIFM's offices (Marseille).

Evaluation of the peer
attached to the partner...

Date : / / ...

- What is the local project of the partner within the framework of the project?
- On what state of progress the partner's project is at mid-term of the project?
- Which scheduled activities were realized...
 - ▶ totally?
 - ▶ partially?
- What has not been realized until there?

Among the activities not realized until there:

- Which difficulties did the partner met purchasing the objectives?
- What was the contribution of the previous seminars to the partner's project?
- Which advises can be given to the other partners?
- What can be reminded as capitalized experiences of the project?

Fig. 2: Evaluation grid of the pilot projects in 9 questions, based on the evaluative method proposed by the WWF

be initiated by the AIFM and then worked by the peer group during the next meeting. The final document should establish an ideal plan for a territorialized forest management project.

- Jean de Montgolfier wishes to talk again about the abstract level because, apparently, the terms do not have an equivalent signification for everybody. The quality implies a notion of indicators (forest surface, growth, wood quantity, wildfires number, received tourists number, biodiversity figures) allowing stakeholders to discuss. The governance should be defined as "the fact of associating stakeholders to discuss together about what, from their point of view, constitutes the quality of the Mediterranean woodlands".

- Louis-Michel Duhén thinks that, "before deciding which shape has to take the final report, it is necessary to bring some material based on concrete elements emanating from the seminars, and on the potentially transferable elements that have been identified". For example, it is important to exchange opinions on what is transferable or not. The peer group would then estimate if it corresponds to the subject, and sort out the pertinent information.

Mario Velamazán adheres to this last idea, according to which the transferable elements constitute the central nucleus to reach an ideal project. The peer group could work, at first, on the concrete elements that were observed visiting the various pilot sites, and then widen the reflection towards the abstract level. "To go from

concrete elements into the general aspects, in order to share tools allowing to improve ourselves", said Francisco Navarro.

Daniel Seven considers that, in all the visited projects, the civil society does not have (or not any more) a forest culture and is no longer actively participating in forest management. For some decades, the forest reconquered the Mediterranean areas by reforestation and agro-pastoral abandonment. Now, the populations do not have a conception of the management of these areas any more. Today, in France, the Mediterranean forest policies are mainly articulated around wildfire prevention. It is thus necessary to build a new culture allowing people to live with these new areas and to develop a "forest consciousness". The tool *martéloscope*, or also the sociological study, could contribute to this objective, by taking care of not reproducing the Nordic forest culture and by investigating the ways of revealing a specific Mediterranean forestry.

Concerning the transferable elements, every partner discovered, in the other projects, interesting elements for themselves. For example, the Park of Alpilles could be interested in:

- the sociological survey realized in Murcia;
- the protection guide from Valencia;
- the *martéloscope* from the ONF;
- the tool "Forest Charter" from the Regional Natural Park of Luberon;
- the elaboration process of the Fire Prevention Plans from Valencia;
- the possibility, for the owners, to get out of the perimeter of the Park Terra delle Gravine in the Province of Taranto;
- the evaluation of the non-market products worked out by the WWF, allowing the owners to know the global value of their lands.

Potential convergences do exist, in particular with Luberon, because both territories have quite close configurations. In the Alpilles, the communication to the attention of the owners' progresses and will allow to know their expectations and to gather them in order to introduce a collective approach.

Francisco Navarro suggests a basic plan of the common points existing between the different projects:

- communication: cases of the Alpilles, Murcia (which made an excellent work with the Master Plan) and Taranto;
- self-management: the good practices book and methodological guide;

- follow-up and indicators;
- collaboration and coordination: groups of volunteers, local associations, etc;
- administrative and normative aspects: Alpilles, just like Valencia, presents a problem of territorial plans and regulation overlapping. Etc.

According to Jean Bonnier, there are two kinds of situations:

- on one hand, organisms that already have tools at their disposal before the beginning of the project (such as the French Parks and the Park of Sierra Espuña);
- on the other hand, non-specialized forest services or territorial administration which have a project to be carried out and are confronted with the absence of preliminary dialogue with the populations and the local stakeholders.

For example, the Park of Alpilles was created after 15 years of work and discussions. Nevertheless, the Park considers useful to lead a sociological study. In the case of Murcia, there is a strong human presence on the territory, and agents who live in the Park and who are in direct contact with the users. This human and friendly side facilitate a good management. In comparison, in the case of Taranto, we have the impression that there was no preliminary work, in particular because of the short available time lapse for the constitution of the Park.

Some questions remain:

- Concerning the realized inquiries, what place is granted to such category of persons with regard to such other one? Does the answer of a simple user has the same importance as the forest owner's one?

- Concerning the public interactive terminals, how will be interpreted and considered the various answers? This questions us about the identification of the key stakeholders of a good governance and their importance according to their skills, their representativeness, their nature...

- Behind the term "transferable", it seems that the term "desirable" (and also "to be avoided") is implied. But is it always "feasible" on the legal, administrative or financial plan? For example, the French Regional Natural Parks are based on a Charter, whereas Italian Parks are decided by the Region. Thus, there is no possible preliminary dialogue.

- Finally, we notice that the debate tends to be limited to the cases of the partners that already have

organized their seminar and the field trip. What about the others?

Louis-Michel Duhen underlines the importance of the bilateral relations between the partners, in order to bring precision on the elements to be transferred.

The AIFM is going to make a first work of roughing out, in association with all the partners. So we will have a working base allowing to go further during the next meetings. The report will have approximately 80 pages, with a translation in French and in English. The translation in Spanish will be done by the lead partner, if possible.

In prevision of the next seminar, presentations and analyses of each project must be more detailed. There will be a final meeting, during which the peer group's members will have to make recommendations.

The essence of the peer group lies in the evaluation, transcribed in the final report, which has to be the result of a common debate. The document must be simple, brief, precise but rich in information. He must be easily understood by the general public.

Manuel Aguila and Mario Velamazán suggest adding a chapter on the general orientations in the aim of creating an "ideal project" about the Mediterranean forests. There would be matter enough for a new project (QUALIGOUV II) giving continuity to the implementation of this ideal project.

To abstract, the final report would consist in three parts (details appear in the decisions statement below):

- General and historic presentation of the project, in a "literary" style.

- Technical presentation classified by theme and tools categories, in form of "thematic boxes".

- Presentation of the strategic orientations for the creation of an "ideal" project in the Mediterranean forests.

If a partner works on a point that appears being transferable, he can get in touch by email with his colleagues (with copy to the AIFM) in order to inform them and appeal to voluntary participation. Louis-Michel Duhen proposes a table with, in the lines, the transferable points, and in the columns, the interested partners. So, "partners couples" or "subgroups" will be identified to lead shared activities or reflections.

For the writing work of the thematic boxes, it is advisable not to limit ourselves to the peer group's members. It is positive, and necessary, to urge the partners to bring some elements to these reflections and to produce a technical document (approximately 3 pages), which will be summarized into a thematic box. This last one will be signed by the partners and integrated into the final report. The boxes should incline people to learn more about the considered thematic, and send to the www.qualigouv.eu website.

For the box about the sociological study, which will be entitled "Study of the society", it would be interesting that two or three partners draft it together. Louis-Michel Duhén suggests organizing the information according to a simple plan:

- Who? (Targeted public: users, owners...)
- Why? (Pursued objective(s)...)
 - How? (Used method(s), innovation(s), costs, time spend...)
 - How much? (Number of people asked)

It could have the aspect of a "good (or bad) ideas stock exchange", which will allow to collect the material. The shape of the boxes will remain to be defined later.

Another box could speak about the dialogue structure of the partners. In the case of Valencia, for example, the opinion of the population is only considered at the final of the process ("feed back").

These boxes will also have to extract what is interesting in the Plans (How managing population of a territory when there is a big division? How managing biodiversity of a sector? Etc)

The peer group can, at some point, make a sorting of the boxes in order to remove the ones that are not pertinent or to amend, if need be, the ones that he will have considered relevant but improvable.

Evaluation of the Generalitat Valenciana's project by the peer group concerning the experimental site (Natural Park of Puebla de San Miguel)

I - Positive points

- Political will of the Generalitat Valenciana to promote the protection of the wooded areas.
- Good integration between regional prevention planning and local implementation.

- Methodology for the study of the Fire Prevention Plan very elaborated and applied in a very accurate way.

- Very good technical skills of the staff.

- Regulations of the uses (good practices) by trying to avoid bans and preserving the traditional manners. Looking for the consensus with users.

- Very active communication policy. Information easily accessible in Natural Parks.

II- Interrogation points

- The information about the project is very well done. But is there enough previous dialogue in the project and is there a real participation allowing the various social stakeholders to expose their expectations and ideas about what can be made in the territory? Does not this lack of preliminary dialogue harm the appropriation of the project by the local stakeholders?

- Absence of dialogue with fire brigades in the field.

- Visible lack of communication between various services (protection, management, studies).

III- Potential improvements

- Associating, from the beginning of the projects, the diverse categories of the population to the stakes diagnosis and to the definition of the objectives, in order to build a common vision of a "territory project".

- Making a comparative analysis of the technical and rigorous approach applied to Puebla de San Miguel and the more "socio-political" approach observed in Serra Espadà. Trying to harmonize these two complementary approaches.

- Thinking about a better articulation of the objectives between the regional and the local level.

- Associating strictly fire brigades to the choice of the tracks location, water resources and fuel cuts.

- Look for profitable uses of the ligneous combustible and vegetation. In this aim, try to gather the forest owners toward a more efficient management.

- Better analyzing the objectives of some preservation activities (Micro-Reserves in particular): protection of rare and threatened species or preservation of an agro-sylvo-pastorale landscape?

- Better analyzing messages passed on by the development of the remarkable trees ("Natural Monuments" vs "forest as a complex living organism").

- The action of the Chiva association's volunteers. They are moved by very good principles, but their efficiency would doubtless increase by being better guided technically.

IV- Transferable elements

- Suggesting and spreading a method of Fire Prevention Plans elaboration, at the same time rigorous enough to approach all the aspects of the problem, and flexible enough to be adaptable to very various cases.

- Be inspired by the example of Valencia to:
 - ▶ put the plans contents at disposal of the public, in particular the forest owners;
 - ▶ create the possibility, for the populations, of proposing improvements;
 - ▶ make the conventions with the owners a rule for the whole Plan duration.

Evaluation of the Generalitat Valenciana's project by the peer group concerning the organization of the field trips and the discussions

I - Positive points

- Very good organization of the field trip.
- Very pleasant place of the meetings.
- Very didactic presentation of the method, in the field and during the meetings.
- Excellent and instructive presentation on the case of Serra d'Espadà and the Park of Vale do Guadiana (Portugal).
- Satisfying working time for the peer group.
- Good translation.

II- Interrogation points

- Pilot site chosen for the field trip (Puebla of San Miguel) a little bit marginal (relatively weak fire risk, population and pressure of the public).
- It would have been interesting to have also a fast presentation of the other sites concerned by the

QUALIGOUV project in the Generalitat valenciana (on the other Parks).

- Not enough exchanges between participants during the debriefing session, conceived as a presentations sequence.

- Problems related to the translation equipment during the field trip.

III - Proposed improvements

- Specifying more clearly the contribution of the QUALIGOUV project.
- Making a comparative analysis of the various sites concerned by QUALIGOUV in the Region.

Fourth peer group's decisions statement

The decision-making, during this meeting, has mainly consisted in the elaboration of a proposition of plan for the final report. It would be constituted in three main parts:

I - Presentation of the project and its results

This part will be drafted by the AIFM, basing on the seminars reports and the documents transmitted by the partners.

I.1. General description of the project (3 - 5 p.).

I.2. Analysis of the difficulties (3 - 5 p.).

I.3. Presentation of the obtained results (3 - 5 p.).

I.4. To I.10. For each one of the 7 partners: results obtained on the experimental sites (analyzed on the basis of the following points: positive points; interrogation points; proposed improvements; transferable elements. 4 x 7 = 28 p.).

II - Thematic explanation (boxes)

These documents will be drafted by all those of the project participants who want to be voluntary to make it, individually or, rather, in small working groups. They will not have to exceed 2 or 3 pages and will be summarized, if necessary, before being integrated into the final report.

A temporary list of subjects, neither exhaustive, nor compulsory, was drawn up:

- Sociological studies and mental representations cartography.
- Martéloscope (and amenagementscope?).
- Charters of the French Regional Natural Parks and, more specifically, Territorial Forest Charter.
- Spanish Fire Prevention Plans.
- Natura 2000 areas.
- History of the dialogue structures.
- Assessment methodology of the WWF.
- Valuation of wood-energy.
- Management in a private ownership context (gathering forest owners).
- Use of GIS and Web GIS.
- Environmental education, in particular animation in schools.
- Biodiversity and landscapes preservation.
- Quality distinctions and labels for local products.
- Public consultation a posteriori about the implementation of Management Plans.
- Communication...

The AIFM will send a table recapitulating this list in order to make the partners complete it, group, create or delete some subjects. Everyone can make propositions following what he thinks he can share with the others or what he is interested in, and to find cooperation exchanges with the other partners.

III - Strategic orientations for the creation of an “ideal” project on Mediterranean forests

This chapter will speak about the consideration of the governance quality in the Development Plans and the sustainable management of the forests and other Mediterranean protected afforested areas (5 - 10 p.).

Finally, this part will be written by the AIFM and the peer group.

Two examples of public participation in the Management Plan of a Park

Experience of the Natural Park of Serra d'Espadà¹⁹

Antonio Cases, Conservative manager and mayor of a village of the Park, presents the Natural Park of Serra d'Espadà, created in 1998, a 31 000 ha area, (2nd biggest Park of the Region). It includes municipalities associations, 19 villages and only 8 000 inhabitants. The internal part consists in agricultural and wooded areas (a 1 500 ha cork oak stand, exceptional for the region) mainly private (90%) and very divided. In this context, it is very delicate to develop large-scale forest management.

The current Fire Prevention Plan affects 45 000 ha, including the territory of the Park. Among the problems, the fuel cuts. Most of the owners demand these cuts, and let it know during the public meetings. However, a NGO refused the idea. But during a field trip, its President understood the utility of these infrastructures and is henceforth favourable to it.

The main organs of the Park are the Director Council and the Council of Management and Administration (Junta Rectora). The last one gather representatives of 19 villages, farmers, private owners, breeders, hunters, environmentalist groups, universities... It was created to represent various groups of local interests in the Park management and to moderate the possible conflicts. Any intervention in the field must be preceded by a common signature with the owners (mainly private owners, but also administrations and municipalities). The idea is to involve, from the initiative of a project, all the stakeholders and not only make them to approve an already finalized document. If we use the adequate tools, the management is finally less complex.

Parks management consists in particular in maintaining the existing economic activities on the territory. Public reception is also favoured. Furthermore, jobs inside the Park (for example, the brigades of surveillance) are attributed firstly and foremost to the local populations, as it is also the case in the Park of Puebla de San Miguel. We also try to improve the qualitative image of the Park (olive oil and other local products).

¹⁹ - We can remind here that this Park does not belong to the pilot sites of the *Generalitat Valenciana* in the project.

The wooded part of the Park seems to be in very good health, thanks to the cork production. The inhabitants were living for a long time exploiting resources stemming from these wooded areas. To implement the management works, a convention concerning the availability of the lands is signed between the Park and the owners. Sometimes, it is only an oral agreement, which avoids administrative complications. But in the case of works related to fire prevention, the signature of a convention is compulsory. However, until now, some private owners implemented a very good management.

Manuel Aguila considers that the activities of the Park of Serra d'Espadà constitute a prototype of what the QUALIGOUV project looks for. The citizen participation is important from the beginning of the elaboration of the Management Plan. The comparison with the situation of the Park of Puebla de San Miguel, where the ownership is mainly public, is very interesting, but the transfer is not so easy in this case. They can be simply described as follows: fires prevention in Puebla de San Miguel and governance in Serra Espadà.

Experience of the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana

Pedro Azenha Rocha presents the case of the experimental site of the WWF in QUALIGOUV project, the Natural Park of Vale do Guadiana, created in 1995 on the initiative of the municipality of Mertola. We are in a context of very vast protected areas, with specific properties, where live about 6 000 inhabitants. The vegetation is varied (Cork oak, scrublands). The Park works on the preservation of the ecosystems and tries to reintroduce some species, such as the Iberian lynx. The quasi-totality of the Park is private (90% of its area), so it is necessary to make the owners participate in its management.

Since its creation, the Park population always complained about the lack of dialogue. That is why specific and general meetings have been organized to allow:

- to anticipate or to resolve the problems;
- to identify the financing means;
- to confront the different points of view;
- to elaborate a "good practices" guide;
- to implement the political decisions...

A Development Plan was finally adopted in 2004. However, there was still no Management Plan²⁰. The Park was not able to make this difficult work, facing a lot of bureaucracy for which it missed some field knowledge and a precise model. However, it was possible to use examples from existing plans, as "Preservation Action Planning" of the WWF, which has the objective of defining exactly what are the activities to be undertaken. These must be real and realistic, the results must be measurable and the deadline fixed. Several stages were passed through since summer toward the elaboration of a Management Plan: diagnosis, definition of objectives, expected results, realization timing, budget, follow-up mechanism and revision process.

More than 60 organizations were involved from the beginning in the elaboration of this document (universities, forest producers associations, fishing organizations, NGO, Ministry of Agriculture, institute of the water). Throughout the writing work of the Plan, meetings of dialogue were organized in order to define the general objectives, the financial means... Once the Plan adopted, an annual meeting is organized with all the stakeholders.

Within the framework of this Plan, actions were successfully carried out by groups of persons not necessarily related to the Park. All the actions were mapped.

The financial means and the budget remain a complex question which changes constantly. There is no important financial means from the Ministry to cover the needs of the 15 environmental agents of the project. A lot of perseverance was needed to do it.

The Plan, modifiable at any time, has a life expectancy of 5 years, at the term of which the scheduled actions and their realizations are evaluated. The Plan constitutes therefore a reference situation. For the Park of Guadiana, there was an important implication of people (participation in the meetings, apprehension of the project by the stakeholders).

20 - In Portugal, we distinguish the **development** (legal regulation of land uses, perceived as a set of constraints) and the **management** (identification of problems and definition of the objectives). The management plans are rare in the country, raising a real problem in protected areas.

State of progress of the activities at the conclusion of the first four semesters

Region of Murcia

The project of the Region of Murcia is based on the “ascending” participative process around the Regional Park of Sierra Espuña.

The diagnosis of the Master Plan was realized on the municipality of Casas Nuevas. Inquiries are in progress in El Berro and El Purgatorio. In the village of El Berro, after a meeting at the beginning of October, the writing of the definitive Development Plan is in progress. The village of El Purgatorio is the most difficult area in the Park. The process is longer and complicated and the elaboration of the Master Plan will not be completed before next year.

In Gebas, the first concrete activities are being implemented. The action is focused on the development of the Director Plan, in association with local populations. Meetings were organized and modifications were brought to the priorities. “People understand that we are interested in helping them and in their territory and, therefore, they want to participate”. The Master Plan’s Committee collectively defined as priority the elaboration of a thematic circuit about water around the village. A dialogue meeting took place in the Municipality and allowed to validate the beginning of the activities. It was a success regarding to the massive participation of the inhabitants. A tourism route should be created around the village, but, for the moment, the required funds are not available.

In parallel of these activities, general environmental diagnosis and questionnaires were elaborated. The communication efforts are maintained and it is well worth: the participation and the motivation of the stakeholders is really amazing.

One of the spotted difficulties is located at the level of the Santa Leocadia municipality where two owners’ associations are in conflict, blocking the negotiation. The priority for the next half-year is to focus the action on the dialogue and the road projects.

International Association for Mediterranean Forests (AIFM)

The graphics standards and the logo of the project were finalized and sent to the partners so that they can use it for the next publications. The opening of the www.qualigouv.eu website has been delayed, because of a defective provider, but was finally successful. The partners can henceforth send to the AIFM all the working documents and reports they want to spread widely on this website.

The Newsletters 1 and 2 of the project were spread as expected, as well as the seminar reports of Taranto and the joint seminar of Alpillles and Luberon.

The first progress book has been finalized and published, as well as the second one you have between hands, with a delay due to the difficulties met to collect the information about pilot territories and scheduled experimental activities.

Besides, the AIFM was involved in promoting the project and the partnership on the occasion of diverse events, in particular within the framework of the organization of the second Mediterranean Forest Week in Avignon (from 5 to 8 of April 2011). It drafted an article in the newsletter of the committee Silva Mediterranea from the FAO and dedicated an issue of its magazine “The latest on Mediterranean forests” spread, in French and English, to more than 1 700 contacts in the Mediterranean region. The partners were also incited to show themselves within the framework of the public consultation on the Green Book for the protection of the European forests.

Finally, a new evaluation form was proposed in order to facilitate and simplify the work of the peer group.

In spite of some delays, the progress of payment to the FEDER is correct.

Regional Natural Park of Alpillles

The sociological study suffered a little delay. The Park began to make a consultation on the basis of the specifications and selected the ARENAS Company, which will work in association with the engineering consulting firm ALCINA.

Because of a limited budget (14 000 Euros), ARENAS suggested interviewing only 15 personalities of the Park (two hours for each interview approximately) distributed in a homogeneous way on the territory. These persons were selected in a rigorous way because they represent at the same time the forest users and the

inhabitants, and not the groups already known by the Park authorities such as the forest managers. Individual interviews will consist in making an exercise of mental cartography and completing legends on the forest cover.

Furthermore, in order to provide a general overview about inhabitants and users expectations while bringing a raising sensitization to the attention of the general public, interactive terminals will be settled inside the Park.

Finally, a student is drafting a thesis about forest policies in the Park of Alpilles, which should contribute to complete the results of the study.

Regional Natural Park of the Luberon

The stage 2, which consisted in establishing a diagnosis of both experimental sites, is henceforth ended.

The stage 3 concerns a survey allowing a better knowledge of the private owners. A questionnaire was spread, 28% of the contacted owners answered (among 1 500 send). It allowed to know the various visions they can have on the forest, and establishing a typology.

The stage 4, related to the dialogue inside the experimental sites, just begun. We have already identified the resource persons, the individual contacts, etc.

Besides, the Park works at the animation of the Territory Forest Charter: elaboration of a "aménagement-toscope", finalization of the wood-energy supply Plan, promotion of the project "Pole wood-energy" with the inauguration of the "wood Park", organization of "Indications of the potential biodiversity" days.

These actions are coherent with the objectives. A problem with this potential method is the difficulty to define the experimental sites: natural environment, forest ownership division, important environmental requirements (Natura 2000)... The Park tries to enhance the involvement of the peer (Louis-Michel Duhén) in these activities.

National Forests Office (ONF)

The activities led by the ONF concerned the continuation of the field studies, which required a lot of time.

A contact was established with the Mixed Syndicate for the Management of the Mount Ventoux. Preliminary studies were led for the estimation of the wooden resource on the massif (timber, energy wood,

cuts feasibility using alternative techniques, study of forest stands for the implementation of the martéloscope, study for the localization of the pocket of senescence). An assessment of the past actions was drawn up. A wide consultation of the local wood industry was driven (meeting with a sawmill, and several foresters). Meetings for local dialogue were organized (in particular with the Director of the Man And Biosphere Reserve). A panel of stands with strong biological diversity, representative of the physical and ecological contexts of the massif was identified for the installation of the martéloscope²¹. Finally, the first field trips for pocket of senescence have been done.

The next planned activities are the finalization of the preliminary studies, the beginning of two kinds of experimental cutting experiment (quality timber and hauling techniques driven by animals²²), the installation of the martéloscope, the methodological definition of the pocket of senescence and the organization of stakeholders meetings.

The ONF is also a partner of a "Wood Park" project on the territory of Luberon. A mobile saw was tested there.

The communication was not very important for the moment, but an advertising campaign is planned from November 2011.

Generalitat Valenciana

The Generalitat Valenciana organizes meetings every month in order to analyze the projects. This half-year was dedicated to the organization of the seminar and to the field trip. The deadlines of execution are respected, even if they are not always translated into payment demands to the FEDER.

During this half-year, groups made a commitment in actions financed within the framework of the QUALIGOUV project. The fire risks and the prevention stakes in the Park of Turia were estimated. Specific projects were elaborated to implement the activities envisaged by the Plan. Providers were contractualized for the realization of promotion materials (T-shirt, caps...). Articles were published in the newsletter of the Region.

In terms of communication and advertising, T-shirts were provided to associations of Valencia. A "good practices" guide adapted to every experimental site is being written. It could be useful for all the partners, by bringing concrete answers to the local needs.

21 - See the report of the seminar in the Alpilles and Luberon, or the *progress book* n°1.

22 - This activity has been carried out during the summer 2011.

The team of the Generalitat Valenciana estimates having learnt a lot within the framework of QUALIGOUV in terms of enhancement of the Natural Parks dynamic.

The major problems result from the reduction of the regional budget. It is necessary to look for new finance means to allow to give a successful conclusion to the project.

Province of Taranto

The Action Plan scheduled, among others, a territorial analysis of the experimental site, the forest vegetation communities of interest, as well as the organization of a seminar and the elaboration of propositions for the local population.

The seminar was organized in the half-year 3, as expected.

The first phase is ended today. The territory was analyzed (fauna, flora, geology). This allowed to better specify the stakes in terms of management of the experimental site. In July-August, 4 meetings allowed to identify the stakeholders interested in this process.

Among the coming actions, an environmental educational process is going to be set up thanks to 3 groups stemming from 3 schools of the regional Park of Terra delle Gravine. These groups will be followed during two years in order to see what evolved from one year to the next.

Furthermore, a GIS is going to be set up and will be spread on the For. Rest. Med., Province of Taranto and QUALIGOUV websites.

Med Po WWF

In Portugal, experts were contractualized for the realization of inventories on biodiversity, forest cover and water resource.

A meeting was organized with the National forest authorities.

A SIG was elaborated in order to allow to visualize the areas of remarkable biodiversity, the threatened species in the experimental site (for example the Bonelli eagle), aquifers, cork oaks stands... The report is finished and the results were presented to the public in September during a conference.

A study case with cork producers' associations was also organized. This study has to allow every owner quantifying the value of its land thanks to a simple evaluation of the diverse products and the environmental services. It has been spread on Internet and everybody can consult it.

The main difficulty results from the data collect. Data are not always available or are not accessible.

In Sardinia, a working team dedicated to the project was constituted: 1 forest manager, 1 biologist, 1 responsible of the Oasi Monte Arcosu, 1 director of the Oasi, 1 local sociologist expert and teacher, 1 local elected representative and 2 peers for the external evaluation.

A perimeter, some stakes, a common vision and some priority targets (cork oak, Cervid of Sardinia...) have been defined.

List of participants to the four past seminars of the QUALIGOUV project

- First seminar: 22-24 of June 2009, Murcia [1]
- Second seminar: 18-20 of November 2009, Alpilles/Luberon [2]
 - Third seminar: 27-29 of April 2010, Taranto [3]
 - Fourth seminar: 20-22 of October 2010, Valencia [4]

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Thanks to all those who participated, and still participate,
in this Mediterranean collective adventure.

It is up to us to make QUALIGOUV to favour a dynamic
and synergies between our territories and our activities.

For that purpose, we count with you during the next seminars
and the other activities of the project, to make it live.

See you soon, on the Mediterranean network!



Partners representatives during the field trip in the forest of Sierra Espuña, at the occasion of the first seminar of the project

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