



Last training of *FireShepherds* in Portugal and Extremadura

From the 29th of November until the 2nd of December 2021, the 5th and last training of FireShepherds project took place in the Central Region of Portugal and Extremadura. These training sessions (Germany, Catalonia, Gran Canaria, Ariege and Portugal/Extremadura) have been a key part of the project, gathering shepherds and technicians from southern Europe with the aim to visit and learn from successful experiences linking extensive grazing with wildfire risk reduction.

During all the FireShepherds trainings, the consortium has visited all the regions, having the opportunity to share and receive lessons learned directly from the local stakeholders, people who is facing common problems day by day, for instance: access to land, low price of the products compared to their high quality, relationships with wild and domestic fauna, new climate change context or the lack of generational change, among others.



Photo 1 Members of the FireShepherds project in the last training of the project

Southern European regions are getting adapted to these problems, building innovative strategies that have extensive grazing as a fundamental activity with the capacity to reinforce landscape management. These regions are aware of that, and they are developing initiatives aimed at reducing wildfire risk through targeted grazing with programs such as Ramats de Foc, Cabras Sapadoras, MOSAICO, RAPCA, etc. All of these projects have a large potential in their respective regions. However, all of them are having troubles to scale up the project in order to have a spread impact at landscape scale.

With FireShepherds, it has been demonstrated that the cooperation and collaboration of public and private stakeholders is key to reinforce landscape management through the empowerment of the rural



sector. And, in this process, shepherds' schools play a fundamental role by training future and present shepherds and giving them the necessary tools to develop their own grazing projects.

Apart from training sessions for shepherds and technicians, project partners have developed an online module aimed at helping young or non-experienced shepherds to develop skills concerning silvopastoralism and fire prevention management. The study module has been divided into different units and each unit has several lessons specifically designed for FireShepherds.



Photo 2. Field trip in Extremadura during the last training of the project

The module will be available [here](#) for everyone interested in the following topics: The role of fire in Mediterranean ecosystems, prescribed burns, wildfire preventive infrastructures, forest management for silvopastoralism, animal feed in silvopastorals systems, silvopastoralism as a fire prevention tool, livestock infrastructures, relationship with public administrations and products commercialization and valorization.

Overall, the project has fostered silvopastoralism as a traditional and sustainable forest management model, promoting shepherds' job, local products and multifunctional landscapes for ecosystem services provisioning through the training of young shepherds.