

European Forum on Nature Conservation & Pastoralism

ANNUAL REPORT

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Introduction

Europe's natural and cultural heritage is enriched by the wide variety of regional farming systems which work in harmony with local environmental conditions. However, many of these farming systems are currently under threat. The aims of the European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism (EFNCP) are therefore:

- To increase understanding that certain European farming systems are of high nature conservation and cultural value.
- To ensure the availability, dissemination and exchange of supporting information, combining research and practical expertise.
- To bring together ecologists, nature conservation managers, farmers and policy makers to consider problems faced by these systems and potential solutions.
- To develop and promote policy options which ensure the ecological maintenance and development of these farming systems and cultural landscapes.

The EFNCP is a pan-European non-profit organisation, bringing together non-governmental and governmental participants from several interest areas. It is a network to exchange information, identify conclusions, and inform policy development. To achieve its aims, the Forum organises conferences, workshops and seminars and produces a new newsletter (*La Cañada*) which is widely distributed within Europe. The EFNCP also conducts research into the ecological relationships on high-nature-conservation-value farmland and into the development of appropriate policies for such areas.

Between 1988 and 1996, the Forum developed a network of European scientists, conservationists, and policy makers which interacts with farmers, land managers and agricultural departments through biennial conferences (the Fora), a six monthly newsletter and a series of targeted seminars and workshops. The period 1996-2002 saw the further development of these activities, a crucial time for nature conservation on farmland with the second phase of CAP reforms and subsequent Mid-Term Review of the CAP, enlargement of the European Union and development of Natura 2000. This work has continued in 2003, as detailed below. The report is structured around the five main headers which encompass the Forum's work.

ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

- The Forum was successful in obtaining a grant for 2003 from DG Environment under their programme providing support for NGOs working in the field of environmental protection (from which, with the exception of 2002, the Forum has otherwise obtained funding in every year from 1997). Although the overall amount awarded by the Commission for 2003 was lower than the Forum applied for, it was nevertheless very welcome. However in a change from previous years, the Commission awarded the grant with the condition that it represented a maximum fixed percentage of only 19.75% of the Forum's overall spend on eligible activities. The low percentage grant offered meant (because time was too short to find additional external funding and Forum resources were too limited to fund all the balance from its own funds) that a number of the activities the Forum had wished to conduct in 2003 had to be deleted from its planned

programme of work. Nevertheless, the remaining content of this report serves to indicate that the Forum was still able to achieve much during the year.

- In line with EFNCP policy, during 2003 the Forum secured an increasing amount of the Forum's budget from project-specific activities - as indicated below.
- The Forum has always tried to minimise the proportion of resources put into management and administration. In line with this, the Forum currently relies on input from the network participants, in either a part-funded or voluntary capacity.

BIENNIAL CONFERENCES

- The EFNCP held in September 2003 a three-day conference in Montpellier and Les Causses Meridionaux (France) organised jointly with Services Interchambres d'Agriculture Montagne Elevage (SIME), Conseil Regional Languedoc Rousillon and Conseil General Herault. The meeting focused on *Rural development measures and the future of pastoralism: regional problems, future management possibilities and policy realities*. Papers connected with the conference were also placed on the EFNCP website <http://www.efncp.com>

The Forum's conferences fulfil a major part of the role as a forum. These review progress on basic scientific work and identify further research needs in order to fulfil the requirements of informing policy development and awareness raising. A further role of main Forum meetings is to use the location to bring into the network a new range of contacts as well as maintaining earlier ones - as well as to see, on the ground, examples of high-nature-value farming systems. The 1998 meeting was held in the Czech Republic to facilitate the development of contacts in central and eastern Europe. This was successful and the Forum now counts many participants from central and eastern Europe. Further work in this region, related to EU accession has also been stimulated. The meetings in 2000 (in Ireland) and 2003 (in France) maintained that wide involvement, but was also integrated into the Forum's work on high nature conservation value (HNV) farmland.

RESEARCH

During 2003, the Forum completed input to:

- *PASTORAL: the agricultural, ecological and socio-economic importance of free-ranging livestock rearing in Europe*. This Concerted Action was funded under the European Commission's 5th Framework programme and conducted in collaboration with partners from throughout Europe. During the course of the project, the Forum assisted in the organisation, contribution to and dissemination from four workshops: *Extent & Characteristics of Extensive Grazing Systems* (Spain, July 2001), *Impact of Scale & Accession on Biodiversity Value* (Romania, October 2001), *Ecological principles and nature conservation value* (Scotland, June 2002) and *Rural Policies in Europe: Delivering More for Pastoralism?* (France, December 2002). A series of eight Information Notes (see publications section at end of this report) and accompanying video were produced as part of the output from the project and are intended to provide a brief introduction to some of the issues facing pastoralism in Europe today. Further detailed information on the PASTORAL project and European pastoralism can be found at: <http://www1.sac.ac.uk/envsci/external/Pastoral/default.htm>
- *Developing a High Nature Value farming area indicator* This project was funded by the European Environment Agency and involved a number of partners from throughout Europe, coordinated by the Danish Centre for Forest, Landscape and Planning. The objective of the project was to develop and test a suite of High Nature Value farming area indicators at EU level

and to analyse the possibilities for extending the indicators to all EEA member countries. The Forum assisted with the conceptual development of relevant indicators and with the testing of the relevance of these in a variety of areas throughout Europe. An overview of the findings from this project is available from the EEA website

New research projects to which the Forum contributed to in 2003 include:

- *PAN: Thematic Network on Cultural Landscapes and their Ecosystems*. This Thematic Network is funded under the European Commission's 5th Framework programme. The project is coordinated by the University of Bergen and is conducted in collaboration with partners from throughout Europe. The Forum will assist with the organisation of two of six workshops over a three year period and will contribute to these and help with the dissemination of the outputs. During 2003, meetings of the network were held in Portugal (March 2003) and in Marseille (November 2003). Further information on the project can be found at <http://pan.cultland.org/>
- *Transhumance: A review of the role of transhumance in mountain ecosystem processes and dynamics*. This Accompanying Measure is funded under the European Commission's 5th Framework Programme. The project is coordinated by ALTErrA in the Netherlands and is conducted in collaboration with a number of partners from throughout Europe. The overall objective of this project is to summarise the current status of transhumance in European mountains and its influence on the component fragile ecosystems. The Forum will assist with the organisation of one workshop and one larger conference and with the production of a book summarising the outcomes of these meetings. The workshop for this project was held in Madrid, Spain in September 2003. Further information on the project can be found at http://www.alterra-research.nl/servlet/page?_pageid=793&_dad=portal30&_schema=PORTAL30

Much of the research work of the Forum in recent years has revolved around trying to address one issue - the lack of a structured classification, from an environmental perspective, of European farming systems. What is required is a broad typology which can be related to farms - since farms are the units that are the target of policy and through which management decisions are made. Without such a "common currency" it is very difficult to make progress on policy issues regarding farming and the environment, such as maintaining the status quo, environmental cross compliance, environmental enhancement, or appropriate developments. If we do not have a clear idea of whether European pastoral farming can be divided into more or less discrete systems (from our nature conservation perspective), how can we begin to understand (or influence) management which impacts on these systems through incentives to farmers?

DISSEMINATION

During 2003, the Forum:

- Produced and distributed issues 16 and 17 of the Forum newsletter *La Cañada*, whose distribution is now 1200 and rising. *La Cañada* is sent to those active in Forum activities, appropriate officials in governments and the Commission, and as part of information provided in response to enquiries about the Forum. It has proven a very effective tool.
- Maintained contacts with a wide variety of interested parties throughout Europe through involvement and representation on other networks (e.g. GAP, Eurosite) and through participation of Forum representatives at a wide variety of meetings, seminars and input to project proposals.
- Maintained a flow of papers and articles for a range of audiences to illustrate the importance of these farming systems (see list at end of this report)

- Continued to develop the Forum site on the internet (<http://www.efnccp.org>). It has been recognised that the Forum website has been rather inactive in recent years and the Forum is currently investigating ways of increasing activity and effectiveness of the site.

ORGANISATION OF SEMINARS & REPRESENTATION ON EC COMMITTEES

During 2003, the Forum:

- Held a seminar in Brussels on *The integration of forestry, biodiversity and agricultural concerns on High Nature Value open grazed land* (February 2003). This one-day seminar was mainly aimed at European Commission officials and was organised by EFNCCP with support from DG Agriculture's Information Action programme. Papers connected with this workshop are available on the EFNCCP website <http://www.efnccp.com>
- Contributed to a seminar in Brussels on *Roles and Instruments for the First Pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy* (March 2003) This one-day seminar was organised jointly by WWF European Policy Office, EFNCCP and Stichting Natuur en Milieu. It provided an opportunity for experts from a range of interests (economic, farming, environment and national implementation of policy) to present their views interests and concerns on the Commission's proposal to introduce the single payment scheme. The report arising from this workshop is available on the EFNCCP website <http://www.efnccp.com>
- Held a seminar in Stornoway (The Western Isles, Scotland) on *The environmental expectations from crofting agriculture* (December 2003). This one-day seminar was organised by EFNCCP with support from WWF Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage. The meeting focused on some of the issues that led to the reform of the CAP and on some of the likely impacts on local agriculture and the environment of these reforms.
- Set in motion the preparations for two seminars in Brussels in early 2004 aimed at *Exploring the impact of the Mid Term Review (MTR) of Agenda 2000 and Accession on High Nature Value farming systems*. These seminars will be organised by EFNCCP with support from DG Agriculture's Information Action programme. There has been strong encouragement from European Commission officials, particularly in DGs Agriculture and Environment, to develop further the successful formula of seminars held in Brussels and elsewhere
- The Forum has continued to have representatives nominated to attend meetings of the Consultative Committees on 'Rural Development', 'Agriculture and Environment' and 'Animal Products' established by DG Agriculture. Following the decision of the Agricultural Commissioner, Dr Fischler, DG Agriculture restructured its consultative committees, with one of the procedural changes being the incorporation of environmental NGOs into many of the committees. Four networks (World Wide Fund for Nature, BirdLife International, European Environment Bureau and the Forum) are working together to provide this input. Regular cancellation and short-notice rescheduling of these Committees by DG Agriculture has, however, made it difficult for the Forum representatives to attend.

PUBLICATIONS

In addition to the newsletter *La Cañada*, publications arising from the work of the Forum during 2003 include:

- Anderson, E, Baldock, D., Bennett, H., Beaufoy, G., Bignal. E., Brouwer, F., Elbersen, B., Eiden, G., Godeschalk, F., Jones, G., McCracken, D.I., Nieuwenhuizen, W., van Eupen, M., Hennekens, S. & Zerva, G. (2003) *Developing a high nature value farmland indicator*. Report for the European Environment Agency, Copenhagen.
- Beaufoy, G., Guttstein, E., Bignal, E. & Jones, G. (2003) *2003 Reform of the CAP: A Long Term Perspective for Sustainable Agriculture*. Stichting Natuur en Milieu, WWF and the European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism.
- Jones, D.G.L., Bignal, E., Lysaght, L., Baldock, D. & Phelan, J. (2003) *A review of the CAP Rural Development Plan 2000-2006: implications for natural heritage*. Dublin, The Heritage Council.
- PASTORAL (2003) *An introduction to European pastoralism*. PASTORAL Project Information Note 1. 4 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *The need for a typology of European pastoral systems* PASTORAL Project Information Note 2. 5 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *The nature of European pastoralism* PASTORAL Project Information Note 3. 6 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *Examples of European pastoral systems* PASTORAL Project Information Note 4. 9 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *Trends and threats to the viability of European pastoral systems* PASTORAL Project Information Note 5. 6 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *Potential policy approaches to support European pastoralism* PASTORAL Project Information Note 6. 5 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *Gaps in the understanding of European pastoralism* PASTORAL Project Information Note 7. 5 pp.
- PASTORAL (2003) *European pastoralism: farming with nature* PASTORAL Project Information Note 8. 8 pp.

CUMULATIVE BREAKDOWN OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Between March 1995 and April 2003, the Forum operates on a 1 April - 31 March financial year. The following Table shows the relevant information from each of the EFNCP's Financial Statements for the last 8 financial years (1995-1996, 1996-1997, 1997-1998, 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003) and the period 1 April 2003-31 December 2003. The financial figures provided are in £ sterling.

	Year ended								1 April 2003 to 31 December 2003
	31 March 1996	31 March 1997	31 March 1998	31 March 1999	31 March 2000	31 March 2001	31 March 2002	31 March 2003	
Balance brought forward from previous year/period	-	26,875	-	24,227	52,167	45,539	46,435	50,812	43,121
Income during year/period	44,705	61,710	118,069*	159,840	176,079	180,576	92,596	63,794	103,637
Expenditure during year/period	18,147	60,540	95,031	133,111	183,497	180,544	88,509	71,756	112,361
Operating Surplus/(Deficiency) during the year/period	26,558	1,170	23,038	26,729	(7,418)	32	4,087	(7,962)	(8,724)
Interest during the year/period	317	565	1,189	1,211	790	864	290	271	197
Retained Surplus/(deficit) for the year/period	26,875	1,735	24,227	27,940	(6,628)	896	4,377	(7,691)	(8,527)
Balance carried forward	26,875	28,610	24,227	52,167	45,539	46,435	50,812	43,121	34,594

* Income for 1998 also included an exceptional item relating to a gift by resolution of the net assets of the EFNCP unincorporated, amounting to £28,610

In 2003, the Forum's financial year changed to a calendar year (1 January - 31 December). The following Table shows the relevant information for each of the EFNCP's Financial Statements for the 2003 financial year. The financial figures provided are in £ sterling.

	Year ended
	31 Dec 2003
Balance brought forward from previous year	46,055
Income during year	132,126
Expenditure during year	143,784
Operating Surplus/(Deficiency) during the year	(11,658)
Interest during the year	197
Retained Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(11,461)
Balance carried forward	34,594

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