



Permanent pastures and meadows - an overview

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EUROPEAN FORUM ON
NATURE CONSERVATION
AND PASTORALISM



Outline of the presentation

- *The range of agricultural land within 'permanent pastures and meadows*
- *Their relationship to Community nature policy and other environmental values*
- *Different ranges of values and different threats to their future.*
- *General objectives and a rational approach?*





Much more than that....



New Forest, England

Burren, Ireland



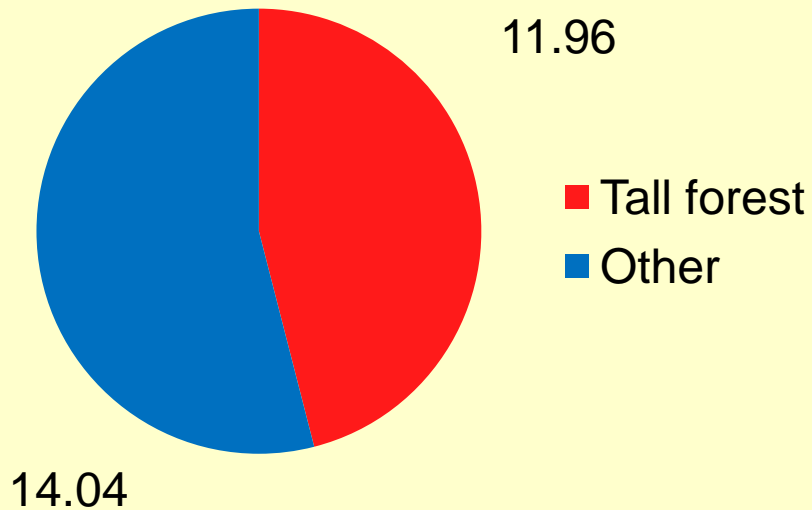
Navarra, Spain



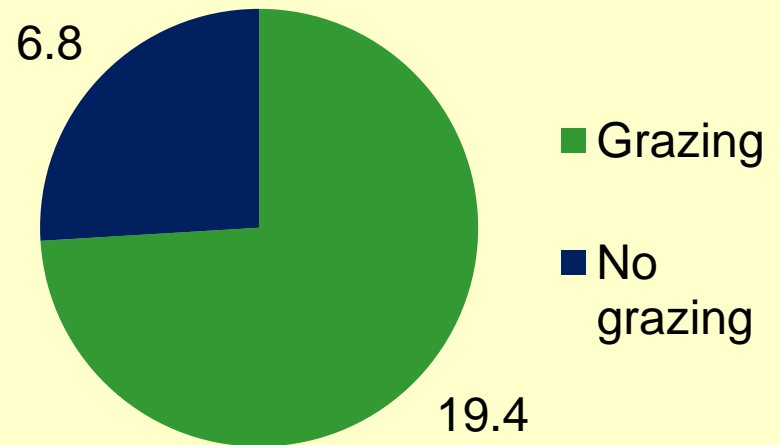
Stara Planina, Bulgaria

Spanish National Forest Plan – ‘forest’ (monte) in Spain

Character



Use





“Land that you have re-sown with grass or other herbaceous forage during a five-year period is still counted as permanent pasture.” (Scottish Government guidance to farmers)

“Land used to grow grasses, clover, lucerne, sainfoin or forage vetches” (Northern Ireland Government guidance to farmers)







Diet Preference Differences (% of diet)

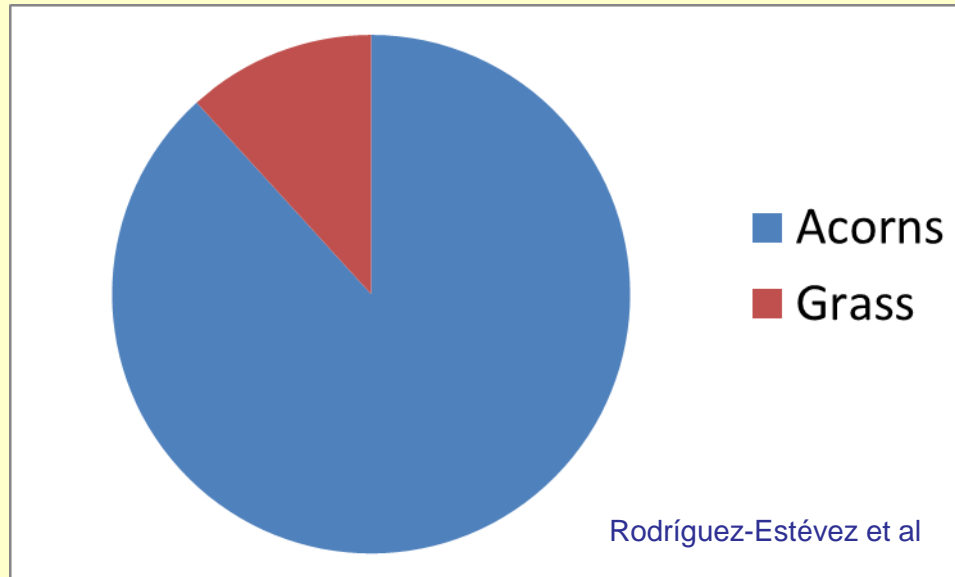
	Grass	Weeds	Browse
Horse	90	4	6
Cattle	70	20	10
Sheep	60	30	10
Goats	20	20	60

Adapted from "Diversified Specie Grazing For Brush, Range and Pasture", An Peischel, 1999



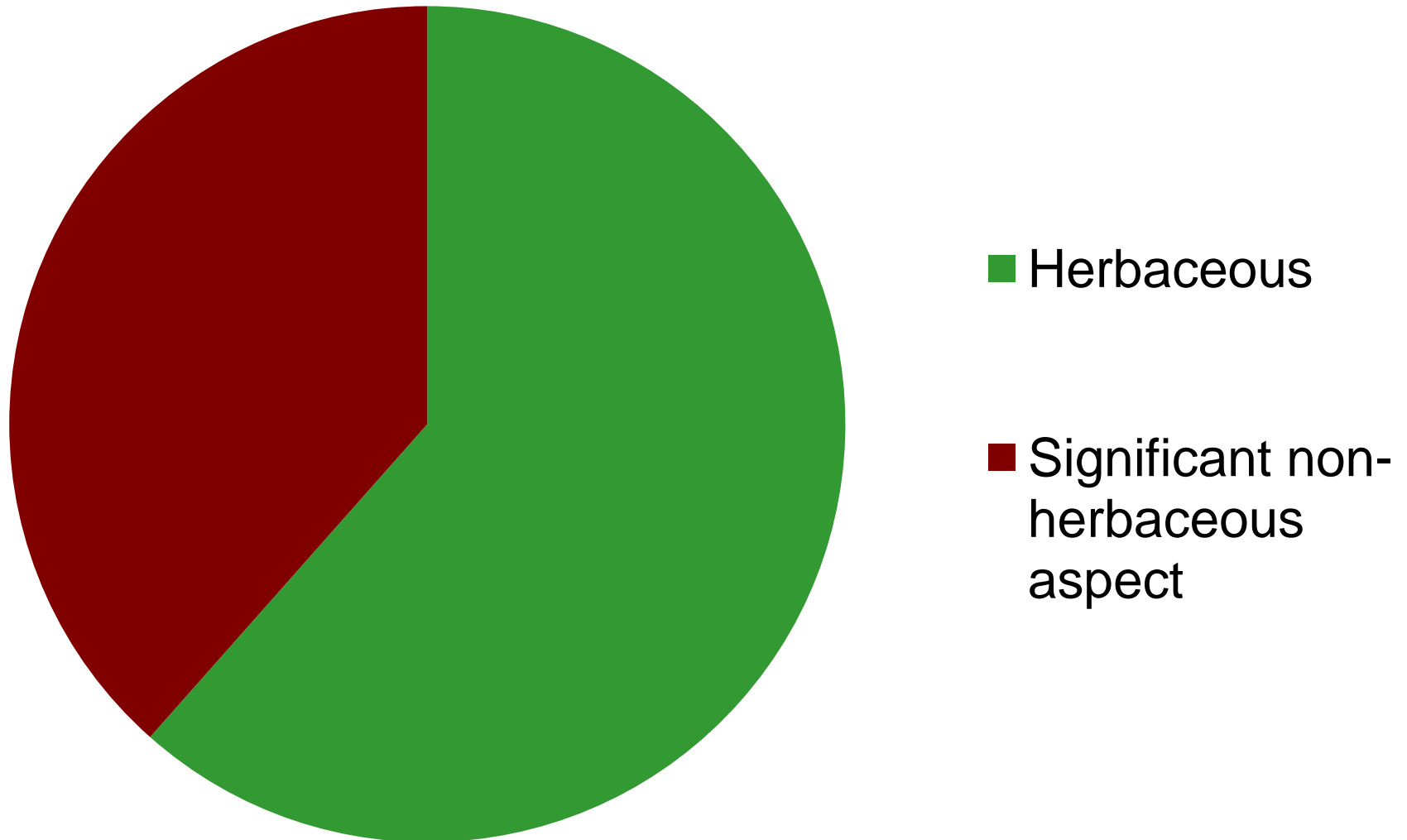
Acorns in Iberico pig diet

- *Mast season – early Nov to late Feb*
- *Dry matter intake:*





Ostermann list of Annex 1 biotopes dependent on agricultural management





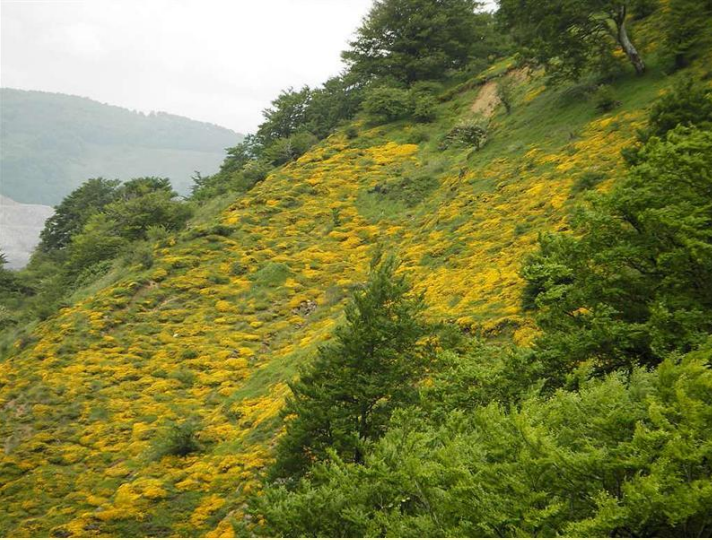
6530 Fennoscandian
wooded meadows

6280 Alvar



8240 Limestone
pavement





4090 Endemic oro-Mediterranean heaths with gorse



4030 European dry heaths





51 Temperate and submediterranean matorrals



52 Mediterranean arborescent matorrals



53 Thermo-Mediterranean and pre-steppic matorrals





6170 Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands



5130 *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands



5210 Arborescent matorral with *Juniperus* spp



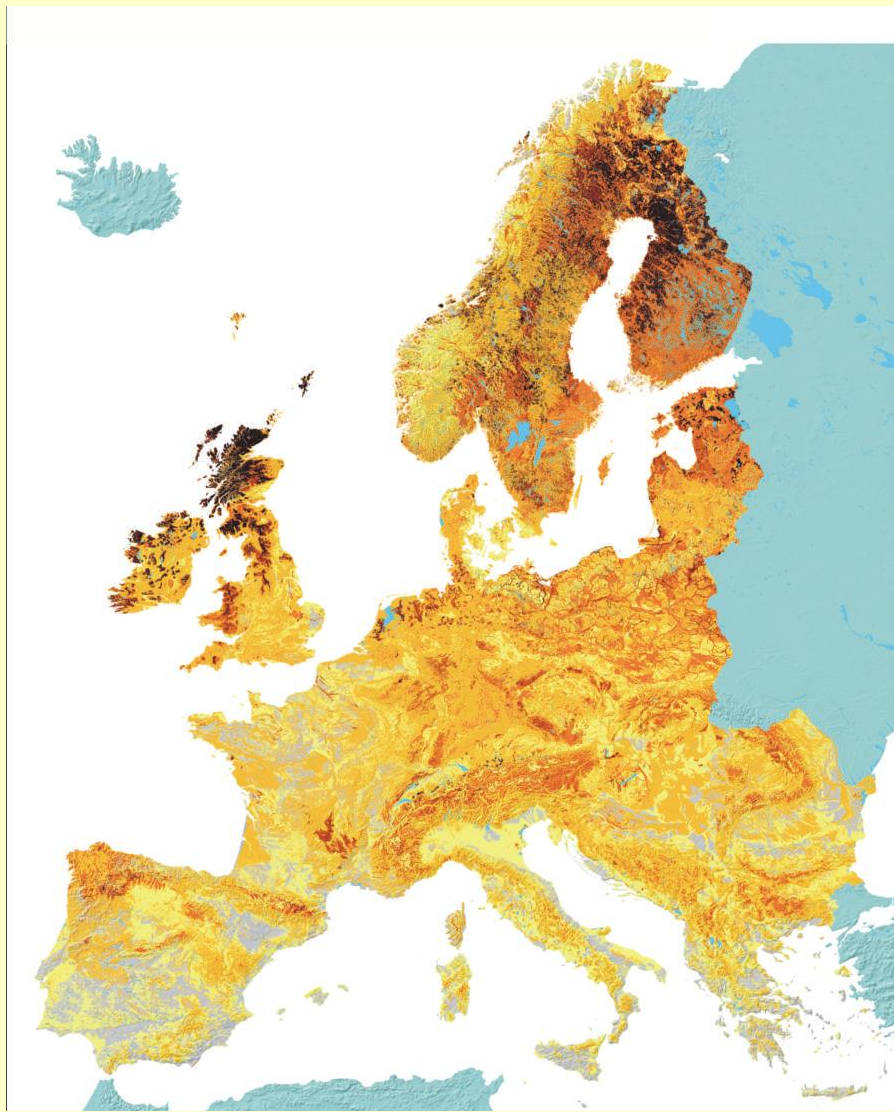
9120 Atlantic
beechwoods with
Ilex or *Taxus*
understorey



9430 Alpine and
subalpine *Pinus*
uncinata forest



6310 Dehesa



Carbon store – on farmland it is mostly in pastures

Soil biodiversity – temperate grasslands have c. 100 t/ha: equivalent of 2000 sheep



Protection of soil structure



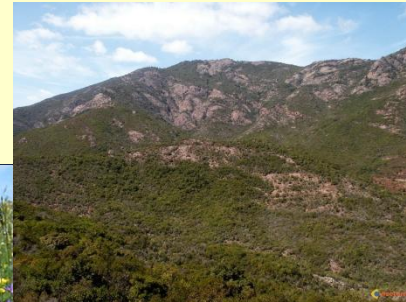




Spectrum of permanent pasture

(according to definition)

Marginality
Public goods delivery



Some conclusions about pastures

- *Pastures and meadows are more than herbaceous vegetation in enclosed fields, more even than just grazing*
- *The use of forests, matorrals, heaths is not an anachronism – it's real farming today over vast areas of Europe (e.g. 3.5-4 mill. ha of dehesa is Spain alone)*
- *They are central to EU nature objectives*
- *They are key to the new environmental agenda*
- *Not all pastures and meadows of equal value*

Some conclusions about values

- *There is a range of values:*
 - All pastures probably provide higher services than e.g. silage maize
 - Difference between some 'PP' and some arable very slight
 - Maybe truly permanent pastures provide higher services than the occasionally ploughed?
 - But pastures/meadows under low-intensity management **definitely** provide highest overall levels of public goods

Some conclusions about needs

- *There is a range of threats*
 - Intensification
 - Conversion to arable
 - Abandonment
 - Loss to other land use (e.g. afforestation)
- *And of how significant these threats are*
 - Not all PP deliver high biodiversity
 - Not all even deliver C storage
 - Conversion not an issue in sown legumes etc.
 - Abandonment not a threat to most intensive
- *Protection and maintenance efforts*
 - Should reflect public benefits actually there
 - So one size does NOT fit all

Starting to think about policy.....

- *Policy (and statistical definitions!) should reflect agriculture, not vice versa*
- *Policy should encourage farming which benefits the environment **wherever** it happens*
- *Policy should certainly not discourage positive management or give signals which lead to damage*
- ***Permanent pastures and meadows of high public benefit should be maintained in active use across the EU, by means which are sufficient to conserve their environmental value***



Diolch yn fawr!
Thank you!
Tānan!
Tack så mycket!
Благодаря!
Merci!



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