A NETWORK OF CORK PRODUCING TERRITORIES

The cork sector is undergoing major changes caused by the present economic situation, by new closures, alternative products and by the growing necessity of managing Mediterranean forests sustainably. In order to succeed in these new challenges actors and resources have to be mobilised. Towards this end the creation of an International Network of Cork Territories has been proposed. The proposal was officially put forward by the Diputació de Girona, the city councils of Palafrugell, Mont-ràs and Cassà de la Selva (Girona, Spain), the city council of Los Barrios (Cádiz, Spain), and the regional authorities Consell Comarcal del Baix Empordà and Consell Comarcal de la Selva (Girona, Spain) at the First Meeting of Cork Territories held in Palafrugell last October. Representatives from Portuguese, Italian, French and Spanish municipalities attended the meeting as well as people related to the forestry sector, the environment and cork sector. During the meeting, the present status of the sector was clarified and examples of other networks were presented to show the advantages of this kind of initiative. The objectives of the Network of Cork Territories would include scientific, technological, economic, cultural and social exchange and communication between territories, the establishment of common strategies and actions to ensure the future of the cork sector. Public administrations and institutions would be involved to enhance and facilitate the necessary adaptations for the welfare of cork communities. As a result of this meeting the Charter of Palafrugell was approved, along with a declaration of intent, a proposal for the Statutes of the International Network of Cork Territories and the formation of a steering committee that will organise the assembly for the constituency, scheduled for February 2007.
FAMOUS CHEFS SUPPORT WWF

WWF Spain, thanks to the collaboration of Institut Català del Suro (a public research institute depending on the Catalan Government), gathered together 22 international celebrities of Spanish cuisine. These outstanding chefs, including the famous innovator Ferran Adrià, lent their images for promotional use in support of WWF Spain’s informative campaign “Corcho Sí. Alcornocales Vivos”. They also provided statements in favour of the use of cork. With their pictures and declarations, WWF Spain prepared leaflets that are being distributed to around 2500 Spanish wineries, plus specialized stores. WWF Spain held a public event in a Barcelona restaurant last June to present this initiative to the media. As a first result of the initiative, doors have been opened within the cooking sector which will be further explored as potential levers in the future to reach restaurants, wineries and the general public.

Pdf and hard copies of the leaflet are available upon request.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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Image used for the promotion of WWF Spain’s informative campaign “Corcho Sí. Alcornocales Vivos”. ©WWF-Mediterranean / WWF-Spain
UPDATE FROM TUNISIA: HARVESTING TECHNIQUES

The second training course on sustainable cork harvesting techniques took place in June in the centre RIMEL in Bizerte, Tunisia. The national expert Khamel Mettichi from the Direction Général de Forêts (DGF) and Ramon Santiago from the Instituto de la Madera, el Corcho y el Carbón Vegetal (IPROCOR, Spain) implemented a training module based on traditional knowledge and innovative European techniques. The course was organised in five days of lectures, ten days of practice in the field and a day of discussion with members of the DGF and the Régie d’Exploitations de Foret (REF). Fifteen participants benefited from this second course, making a total of 30 people trained on sustainable techniques of cork harvesting. In parallel and for the first time, a standard model of axe adapted to local requirements was presented. The axe has been tested by workers and by technical staff of the DGF with positive results. In addition, the local community of Gouaria successfully applied for a licence for the harvesting and piling of cork in the area through the local GFIC (Groupement Forestier d’Intérêt Collectif). The trained workers guaranteed the success of this application, and it is the first time in the country that a local community group has organised the autonomous harvesting of cork. This is a very positive example for other community groups in the sustainable management of resources.

These activities took place within the framework of the programme Aumento de la sostenibilidad de los medios de vida de poblaciones rurales vulnerables, run by WWF and IPADE in Tunisia. This programme is funded by the Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECI) and the Cork programme funded by WWF UK.

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Testing the new axes, Bizerte, Tunisia
©WWF-Mediterranean / F. MAAMOURI
VIVEXPO 2006: PEOPLE AND CORK

Forest engineers, researchers, historians and ethnologists met in Vives in the French Pyrenees last June for Vivexpo 2006 – cork and the Mediterranean forest. This year the theme was People and Cork, giving space to some very interesting anthropological studies. It seems that cork oak has been present in the Maures Mountains for around 8,000 years, which would prove that cork oak is indigenous to the south of France, as proposed by Marie Bergaglio, IMEP-CNRS Université Marseille III. Cork’s long history as an insulation material for buildings was explained by Agostino Pintus, Director of the Stazione Sperimentale del Sughero from Tempio-Pausania in Sardinia, Italy. The historian Hubert Delpont, specialist in the industrial era, examined the social changes brought about when cork began to be used to produce stoppers. A more political view of the same period was given by Veronique Moulinié, ethnologist from the CNR in Paris. The closing session was conducted by Miguel Elena, director of IPROCOR, who compared the vices and virtues of cork and synthetic as materials in the present context of the cork stopper market.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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GLA D’OR CEREMONY

Every year, the Association of Cork Industries of Catalunya (AECORK) presents the Gla d’or award to companies, entities or individuals for their contribution to the world of cork in terms of innovation, communications, support or any other discipline. WWF Spain received this award in 2004. This year’s edition of Gla d’or (golden acorn in Catalan) had some special recipients: Prince Felipe and Princess Leticia of Spain. The Catalan organization hosted an event to which WWF Spain was invited. Raquel Gómez was able to give a panda-labelled cork stopper to both the Prince and Princess and talk to them about the WWF Cork Oak Landscapes Programme.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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RECYCLING CORK STOPPERS IN CATALONIA

Suber, a local NGO in the Barcelona area, is promoting Cork stopper recycling. The public library Can Mulà in the town of Mollet del Vallès has been the first to join the initiative and has already placed a container to collect stoppers and printed a poster explaining the campaign “Suro amb Denominació d’Origen” (cork with denomination of origin). The collected stoppers will be used to produce isolation panels and cork boards. The processing will be done by Cork 2000, an industry from Palafrugell. Suber has also started to collaborate with the Faculty of Enology of the University Rovira i Virgili, to collect cork stoppers and disseminate the campaign of cork recycling. More information on Suber and their initiatives can be found at www.suber.org (in Catalan, Spanish and partially in English).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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PRESS TRIP TO PARQUE NATURAL LOS ALCORNOCALES

Even in a cork producing country like Spain, with the second most extensive cork oak area worldwide, the majority of people are not aware of the importance of using cork stoppers. Neither are they aware of what is behind a cork stopper: the wealth of biodiversity, the cultural heritage, or the economic values that cork oak landscapes represent. This is the reason behind the celebration of a press trip last July, organised by WWF Spain with the collaboration of the Junta de Andalucía. During two busy days both national and international journalists attended the cork stripping activities in Los Alcornocales Natural Park and visited some cork stopper factories and wineries in Seville and Jerez. We hope their features will contribute to letting readers know more about why it is so important to use cork and conserve cork oak landscapes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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Participants of the press trip in Los Alcornocales natural park (Spain). ©WWF-Mediterranean / WWF-Spain
EVENTS

The next issue of Cork Land News will report further on the following activities:

**International congress on cultivated forests**: Planted Forests and Sustainable Development. With a Scientific Forum on Ecosystem Goods and Services from Planted Forests
Bilbao, Spain, 3 - 7 October 2006
For further information: http://www.waldbau.uni-freiburg.de/bilbao.html

**Workshop on cork and holm oak forests**
Evora, Portugal, 25 - 26 October 2006
Contact Ana Meyer: ana.meyer@dgrf.min-agricultura.pt

**Algerian cork oak forests: importance and sustainable management**
Wilaya d’El Tarf, 30 - 31 October 2006
Organised by the Forest Conservation Agency of Wilaya d’El Tarf
Contact Houari Djardini: houari50@yahoo.fr

**INRGREF’s scientific days on the integrated management of cork oak and Aleppo pine forests.**
Hammamet, Tunisia, 15 - 17 November 2006
For more information: http://www.iresa.agrinet.tn/jsingref2006/index.php

**Watershed rehabilitation techniques in degraded areas**
Antalya, Turkey, 20 - 24 November 2006
Contact Mevlut Düzgün: duzgunmevlut@yahoo.com
or Erdogan Ozevren: eozveren@cevreorman.gov.tr

RESOURCES

**Guía para el cultivo de la trufa negra**
Oliach et al. Centre Tecnològic Forestal de Catalunya (CTFC) 2005.
Highly detailed technical guide, in Spanish and Catalan, from the experts of the CTFC on *Tuber melanosporum* cultivation. Tables including costs and benefits and all the requirements and the processes to produce black truffle.
ISBN: 84-689-5025-4
For copies, contact: Centre Tecnologic forestall de Catalunya
www.ctfc.cat

**Website of the Institut Mediterraneen du Liège** (IML)
(In French) contains lots of information about the IML including useful publications such as *La levée du liège* (explaining how to extract cork from trees without causing damage to them) and a very useful French dictionary of cork terms.
http://www.institutduliege.com