

# The Green Heart of Cork

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GHoC is the new project of WWF about conservation of the largest patch of oak in the world. It is located in the Lower Valley of the Tejo and Sado, in an area of half of a million hectares where is situated the largest Iberian aquifer and includes some of the most biodiverse habitats of the Mediterranean.



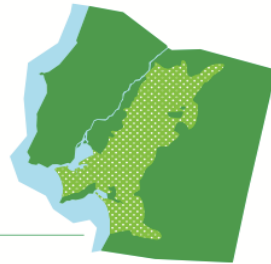
WWF®

**GHoC**

GREEN HEART of CORK

## A PROJECT OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

The GHoC aims to compensate landowners who contribute to the improvement of basic services that ecosystems provide to us all: the carbon sequestration, soil formation, regulation of the water cycle and biodiversity. The GHoC will reward good farming and forest practices at the heart of the world's cork oak forests - the Lower Valley of the Tejo and Sado.



Vale Inferior do Tejo e do Sado.

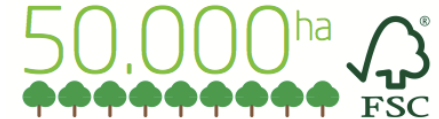
### WHY?

This area offers many benefits for businesses and people, combining the high economic value of cork production and agriculture with high biodiversity values and natural resources - particularly carbon and water. At this basement is located the largest aquifer in the Peninsula Ibérica, called basin of the Tejo-Sado, which provides water to about one million inhabitants, tens of thousands of hectares of irrigated land, and one of the most important industrial band of the country. With good agricultural and forestry practices, these mounted contribute significantly to the improvement of water quality and to the increase of the aquifer recharge.



## Taking sustainability further

The owners of the region have taken important steps to make their practices more sustainable. For example, about 50,000 ha of cork oak forests of the region (10% of total) are certified by FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) - ie, they are managed sustainably. However, despite its undeniable value environmental, economic and social, this territory is under pressure due to increasing rate of exploitation and pollution of the aquifer and loss of economic value of cork.



### HOW?

It is precisely in this area, the center of the world's cork production, which WWF has promoted the sustainable management of cork oak forests as a way of ensuring conservation. Since 2004, through the Cork Oak Landscapes, WWF has promoted FSC certification as a mechanism for verification the good forestry management practices in cork oak. The GHoC project establishes a platform for companies that supports WWF to implement new environmental solutions to protect its own business.

### WHO?

GHoC can be join by public or private entities who benefit from ecosystem services mounted at the Lower Valley of the Tejo and Sado, and/or by who want to help preserve this resource. By participating in this project, these entities contribute to the viability and sustainability of its own economic activity, to the water conservation and biodiversity ecosystems associated, and to promote its public image, as a result of social and environmental responsibility and the creation of one shared value. Examples of business areas covered are: forest, food and beverages, cement and infrastructure, public services, etc.



Learn more about business solutions with WWF at:

Global Forest and Trade Network : <http://gftn.panda.org/>

Forest Stewardship Council : <http://www.fsc.org/>

High Conservation Value Network : <http://www.hcvnetwork.org/> Water Stewardship <http://www.allianceforwaterstewardship.org/>

Ecosystem Services market <http://www.habeas-med.org/>

For more information: [http://www.wwf.pt/o\\_que\\_fazemos/](http://www.wwf.pt/o_que_fazemos/)

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