

## Unit3. Joint management

### Forestry groups: Somos Cuns



#### Description

The rural areas have been changing during the last twenty years. Currently a big portion of the countryside has more abandoned farms and a less active but aging population. This boosted conversion of agricultural land into forestland either by action or, in many cases, merely by natural evolution. Additionally, a generation of new forest owners has emerged. These are, frequently, absentees, due to their residence far from their properties, and they have little experience as producers in rural areas. This increasing abandonment constitutes one of the structural factors that triggers the growing intensity and size of wildfires. Land consolidation programs may help counter ownership and management unit fragmentation. Land swapping has proved to being an efficient means for moving towards more efficient and hence less costly forest management whilst increasing wood supply.

In 2006, a wildfire affected the village of Cuns, in Outes municipality (A Coruña province). Firefighters and inhabitants could do little more than save the houses of the village. 60% of the forest around was burned. After two years, another fire occurred near Cuns again and the neighbors became aware that any summer the it would burn again, so they got together and talked about doing something to manage the plots together, with the main idea of lowering the risk and intensity of a potential future wildfire.

#### Goals

The main objective is created the Cuns Sustainable Forestry Society (Somos Cuns). They opted to be a SOFOR (society of for forestry promotion) a particular model of limited company created by small forest owners who cede the use of their plots -not the property- to make a joint use of them.

Each partner has a share, based on which he has a share in the investments and in the distribution of benefits of the Sofor. In Cuns, 85 residents entered the Sofor, contributing 1.367 plots to the society, with a total area of 114,70 hectares. There are have numerous enclaves in between that correspond to plots of neighbors who did not want to participate in society, or are of unknown property

#### Activities

- The upper part of the mountain, above the town, is dedicated to the production of wood, mainly pine and eucalyptus;
- The part below the town, near the river, was dedicated to the planting of hardwood trees, especially chestnut trees for the production of chestnuts.
- To reduce costs in the periodic cleaning of the forest, it is proposed to carry out perimeter closures of part of the company's plots with the aim of introducing animals into the forest;
- The funds obtained from the payment of the companies that want to offset their emissions will be used in the silvicultural treatments of the forest (clearing, pruning, thinning).

#### Impact

- This project has the support and coordination of the Asociación Forestal de Galicia, and is included in the restoration plan for degraded surfaces that this entity is developing at regional level
- Reduction of the carbon footprint :9 hectares of their grouped plots in the Spanish Registry of Carbon Footprint, Offsetting and CO<sub>2</sub> Removal. The objective of the registry is to promote the calculation and subsequent reduction of the carbon footprint of Spanish organizations. as well as to encourage projects, which improve Spain's sink capacity and, therefore, become a tool to tackle climate change. This way interested companies may to offset their carbon dioxide emissions while allowing forest restoration in burned or previously non forested areas.

#### Social Media

<https://somoscuns.wordpress.com/>



**SOMOSCuns**

Sociedad de MOntes Sostenibles de Cuns