

LandLife Workshop Report



Date: 29–31 May 2013 Location: L'Avenc, Tavertet, Barcelona, Spain Hosted by: XCT





BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

This workshop was organised within the LandLife project, which is funded by the European Commission under the LIFE+ programme (LANDLIFE_LIFE 10/INF/ES/450). The aim of the LandLife project is to communicate the value of land stewardship as an effective and successful tool for the conservation of nature and biodiversity. The project includes a wide variety of activities, including the publication of a European manual for land stewardship, the celebration of the European Week of Land Stewardship in the autumn of 2012, the creation of an online website for land stewardship, an online course on land stewardship, regional seminars and workshops and a European Congress to be held in Catalonia in 2014 to close the project.













These workshops are key activities of the LandLife project and contribute to boosting land stewardship as a conservation tool for Europe's nature and biodiversity. Through these workshops we are able to draw upon and share the best of good practices being developed and applied across Europe, increase knowledge on land stewardship and existing legal and policy frameworks (e.g. Natura 2000) and to facilitate contacts and synergies between entities to define opportunities and cooperation in the framework of the LandLife project and on land stewardship initiatives.

The results gathered during these workshops feed directly into the European Land Stewardship Congress that will take place in Barcelona in November 2014. The key messages and conclusions gathered will help shape the programme of next year's Congress.

PARTICIPANTS - NUMBERS & FIGURES

Over the course of two days, 48 participants from 7 different European countries attended this workshop.

The vast majority of participants belonged to some sort of NGOs, mainly land stewardship organisations and networks. Public administration (local and national), individuals and companies were equally represented.

- The workshop gathered a range of actors interested in nature and biodiversity conservation, more particularly:
- Land stewardship organisations (public, private, non-profit);
- Volunteers working to conserve nature on a local and/or regional level;
- · Stakeholders from local communities;
- Local and national authorities:
- Biodiversity conservation experts;

The participants of the workshop in l'Avenc were mainly experts in land stewardship and nature conservation from different European organisations, in order to provide a high level of detail and knowledge on land stewardship, widen up the European perspective and explore the future steps of the LandLife project, especially the Congress to be held in Barcelona in 2014.

WORKSHOP PURPOSE

The main purpose of the workshop was to share information and build a theoretical framework and practical know-how to apply land stewardship agreements and improve their management, more specifically:

- To communicate land stewardship as an effective tool for nature and biodiversity conservation;
- To exchange experiences and best practices;
- To increase knowledge on land stewardship and existing legal and policy frameworks;
- To facilitate contacts and synergies between entities to define opportunities and cooperation in the framework
 of the LandLife project and on land stewardship initiatives;
- To explore how Natura 2000 policy is an instrument that encourages land stewardship approaches to be applied.

In addition, two other objectives were established:

- Identify potential opportunities for European joint projects between participants (bi- and multi-lateral), and
- Define important issues for the European Land Stewardship Congress in 2014.

A participation process (the World Café) took place to stimulate the engagement of participants in a co-creation of an action plan to successfully develop land stewardship in EU countries. The workshop also served to introduce some practical tools created in the LandLife project, such as an online help-desk and the European Land stewardship Manual.

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

With the title "Exchanging on Land Stewardship and Natura 2000: experiences and networking in Europe", the workshop took place in L'Avenc, Tavertet, Barcelona, Spain, from 29 to 31 May 2013.

Designed and organised by the Land Stewardship Network (xct) in partnership with the rest of the LandLife partners, this workshop was the last of three European land stewardship workshops organised by the LandLife project. Previously two were held in Montpellier (France) in 22-23 April and Giussago (Italy) in 10-11 May. Each of the three workshops had its own specific perspective relevant to the audience targeted and the country in which it took place.

The **first day** aimed to present the LandLife project and the Catalan and Spanish experience on land stewardship. This session dealt with the participation of local and regional authorities and also of Catalan and Spanish experts on land stewardship.

After the presentation of the workshop and the different ongoing LandLife actions, the following methodological sessions were held:

- Legal and technical mechanisms for land stewardship agreements, with presentations by Montse Masó and Hernan Collado (Land Stewardship Network, xct), Marc Ordeix (Centre d'Estudis dels Rius Mediterranis -Museu del Ter) and Belinda Parris (L'Avenc - property in land stewardship agreement).
- LANDLIFE: boosting land stewardship in Europe, with a presentation by Pilar Rodríguez (Land Stewardship Network, xct).
- Land Stewardship in Catalonia and Spain: The creation of public-private partnerships, with presentations by **Jordi Pietx** (Land Stewardship Network, xct), **Marta Subirà** (General Director of Environmental Policies. Government of Catalonia) and **Amaya Sánchez** (Fundación Biodiversidad. Government of Spain).

The **second day** focused on networking activities in order to incentivise the exchange of experiences and knowledge between Spanish and other European organisations. The aim was to generate a space where participants could work together in order to analyse the context in which these land stewardship agreements are developed, identify different methods of access and management of land stewardship, increase knowledge on land stewardship agreements, exchange models and procedure actions and facilitate contacts and synergies between entities to define opportunities and cooperation on land stewardship initiatives.

To achieve these aims the session was organised around two mechanisms: a round table where experts and representatives from Catalan and European entities presented experiences from Catalonia, Spain and Europe, and the World Café, an innovative methodology aimed to boost the exchange of ideas and knowledge around different thematic tables.

During the round table, the land stewardship experiences of the following European countries were presented:

- United Kingdom (Naomi Oakley, Natural England): "European tools and strategies: Opportunities for land stewardship in Natura 2000";
- Italy (Simona Colombo, Legambiente Lombardia): "Land stewardship experience in Italy";
- Spain (Victor Gutierrez, Fundación Biodiversidad): "Fundación Biodiversidad & Spanish Land Stewardship

Network. A public-private partnership example";

- Germany (Marie Kaerlein, German Association for Landcare DVL): "Landcare in Germany facilitating cooperation with farmers, nature conservation and local authorities";
- Croatia (Iris Beneš. Brodsko ekološko društvo BED & ICCA Consortium): "Community conserved areas as pools of biodiversity - Croatia's study case";
- In addition, Merijn Biemans (Eurosite) offered a European-wide perspective: "Land Stewardship in Europe: Now and in the future?".

Throughout the whole workshop a permanent work station - the **coffee shop** - was ready for any participant desiring to propose items to be discussed during the World Café or the workshop. This work station consisted of a large panel on which to stick post-its with comments, questions and queries. The panel encouraged contributions regarding the four topics to be discussed in the World Café, and there was also an offer/demand section to promote interaction amongst participants (working as a networking station). The facilitator team collected all contributions for consideration during the World Café.

Four **coffee tables** were set up, each one with a specific subject and questions to contribute to the debate. All participants had to pass around the four tables over the course of the exercise. Random movement between the different tables was encouraged with the aim that the same persons did not always join the same table. Subjects of the World Café:

- 1. European policies
- 2. Networking opportunities
- 3. Land stewardship best practices
- 4. Information and communication

Each session took 20 minutes. Each table was led by a facilitator who encouraged the debate and ensured the focus remained on the table's subject. During the conclusion sessions, the main conclusions of the workshop and the World Café were presented.



Photo 1. Participants debating in the tables of the World Café (Day 2).

At the end of the second day, the presentation of the land stewardship market and some ecotourism initiatives
took place, and the writer Elisenda Queralt presented the children's tale "What's going on at the pond?",
which explains what land stewardship is in a clear and accessible way.

The **third day** was devoted to field visits to understand how land stewardship is applied in different sites in Catalonia. The area around Tavertet is characterised by high natural and landscape values and has a high number of land stewardship agreements.

Visits were paid to agricultural and forest land stewardship initiatives, showing how stewardship can be applied to different situations and presenting the process and the land stewardship model. Three places were visited:

- The Avenc Masia (Tavertet). The Avenc's masia is itself an experience of stewardship, through an agreement between the property and the Foundation Catalonia la Pedrera. Participants were shown how the land is managed and natural elements conserved.
- Masnou de Sa costa (Tavertet). Masnou the Sacosta has a land stewardship agreement and is part of the
 Natural Interest Area (NIA) of the Guilleries and Collsacabra, and is promoting the project "The enchanted
 forest", the Selvans project (Diputació de Girona). The Selvans project aims to create a network of old-growth
 forest managed through land stewardship agreements.
- Estany del Coll (The Coll's Pond) (Rupit). The Estany del Coll is a Natura 2000 site with two land stewardship agreements with the aim to harmonise agricultural activity and nature and increase ecotourism resources.



Photo 2. Visit to the Estany del Coll, Rupit (Day 2).

KEY MESSAGES

The Workshop of l'Avenc stimulated a lot of discussion and debate on the theoretical and practical issues of land stewardship, its main outcome being the exchange of experiences in different parts of Europe and the identification of key issues regarding EU policies, networking, quality of stewardship, and communication. It was also useful to identify the main issues to bear in mind when preparing the 2014 Workshop in Barcelona.



METHODOLOGICAL SESSION

During the methodological session on the legal and technical mechanisms for land stewardship agreements, the experiences in Catalonia by the XCT and a video about the land stewardship quality system was presented. The Catalan Land Stewardship model was presented by different representatives of the Government of Catalonia, the Biodiversity Foundation (Fundación Biodiversidad) and land stewardship organisations. The session was completed with an explanation of the LandLife project and activities.

PRESENTATION BY	TITLE	KEY MESSAGES
Montse Masó, Hernan Collado, Marc Ordeix, Belinda Parris	Legal and technical mechanisms for land stewardship agreements	 xct has developed the "Monitoring protocol for land stewardship agreements" PSAC, a tool to monitor agreements, and a "best practices" document, including the management of the organisation itself, and the management of land stewardship initiatives. The next step for xct is to establish a "quality system" for organisations and agreements. Stewardship can also be applied on other resources such marine, river or urban, one example of river stewardship is the Riberes del Ter project which was presented by Marc Ordeix. Most of the river stewardship agreements in Catalonia have adopted best practices from the PSAC. The working group of the xct on River stewardship organises different activities to boost river stewardship.
Pilar Rodríguez	LANDLIFE: boosting land stewardship in Europe	 LandLife is based on communication and formative actions to boost land stewardship in Europe. Actions developed: comparative study on land stewardship, first European manual on land stewardship, regional workshops. All the documents are available on the website www. landstewardship.eu First European land stewardship week (2012): 420 events and the involvement of more than 230 organisations around Europe from 22 different countries. The second edition is planned for 2014. The "Connect with nature" campaign was planned to launch the LandLifeweek. A photography contest was defined and the best 30 pictures are taking part in an itinerant exhibition. Next actions: Online course in coordination with the University of Vic (2014); Help desk: an online platform wherein a team of advisors answers questions and resolve doubts on land stewardship, first European Congress 05th -07th November 2014 in Barcelona.

Jordi Pietx, Marta Subirà, Amaya Sánchez	Land Stewardship in Catalonia and Spain: The creation of public-private partnerships	 The mission of xct is to promote land stewardship as a strategy and as a practical means to achieve the participation of society in nature conservation and management. The Montesquiu Conference, held in November 2000 in Catalonia, was a milestone in the history of land stewardship in this region and in the rest of Spain. xct celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2013 as a network, bringing together more than 160 associations, foundations, government institutions, town councils, companies, universities & research centres and individuals. The Spanish Land Stewardship Platform contributes to the promotion of the development of land stave and his in Capin and the discount restriction.
		land stewardship in Spain and the dissemination of this conservation philosophy.

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ROUND TABLE

The round table offered a broader vision of how land stewardship is applied around Europe, with experiences from the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Croatia and Spain. The speakers also answered questions about the link between land stewardship and Natura 2000. A wider European perspective was provided by Naomi Oakley and Iris Benes, the land stewardship approach was discussed and the future steps explored, as a starting point to the debates that took place in the afternoon during the World Café session. The key message of the round table was that there is not only one way to work with land stewardship: there is a huge diversity of approaches throughout Europe.

PRESENTATION BY	TITLE	KEY MESSAGES
Naomi Oakley	European tools and strategies: Opportunities for land stewardship in Natura 2000	 The Environmental Stewardship scheme was introduced in 2006 to better manage Natura 2000 sites. Stewardship is successful when the agreement matches management options to features. Stewardship works when the farmer understands and 'buys into' the scheme's objectives, and has the knowledge and motivation to monitor the management and adapt it as required. It is vital to success that the advisor communicates well with the farmer, and provides technical knowledge to adapt to each case, taking time to make the necessary follow up visits.
Simona Colombo	Land stewardship experience in Italy	 Land stewardship in Italy has been developed over 5 years, starting from Retenatura network in Lombardy region, begun in 2001. Italy still has a very traditional concept of land as a private good, not a common one. Difficulties found on how to point out the benefits of being a land steward, and on public Institutions' lack of enthusiasm. It is crucial to focus on the promotion of Land stewardship to farmers and supporting the new CAP. Legambiente is preparing agreements with trade unions to support Land stewardship.

Merijn Biemans	Land Stewardship in Europe: Now and in the future?	 Many Eurosite members have experience with land stewardship. Many principles of land stewardship are key to achieving Europe's nature conservation objectives (e.g. N2000). Successful land stewardship practices involve close partnerships and cooperation with landowners. Involvement of volunteers helps landowners and makes cooperation easier and stronger. Management coordinators/steering committees/ facilitators are important. It is important to focus on common grounds/key principles of land stewardship across Europe, if it is to be developed further at the European level. This is also required to create relevance to the EC. In the nature conservation field at the European level there is a great demand for working solutions such as land stewardship initiatives.
Victor Gutierrez	Fundación Biodiversidad & Spanish land stewardship. A public-private partnership example	 Fundación Biodiversidad is a non-profit foundation established in 1998 by the Spanish Ministry of Environment. Its mission is to promote conservation, restoration and sustainable use of natural heritage and biodiversity as a vehicle to create jobs, and wealth. It works in partnership with the public sector, civil society and the business community. One example of these partnerships is the Spanish Land stewardship network that contributes to the promotion of the development of Land Stewardship in Spain through different resources such the Spanish Land Stewardship Census or the online platform www.custodia-territorio.es. Fundación biodiversidad also accounts with a specific line to fund Land Stewardhsip projects.
Marie Kaerlein	Landcare in Germany - facilitating cooperation with farmers, nature conservation and local authorities	"Landcare" is a concept very close to "land stewardship".

		 Landcare associations (LCAs) are founded by farmers, environmentalists and representatives of local municipalities, working in cooperation. LCAs act as advisers on private and community land, plan measures to improve the ecological value of man-made landscapes and open up financial resources and co-ordinate the implementation. Funding mechanisms are crucial for nature
Iris Beneš	Community conserved areas as pools of biodiversity – Croatia	 Land stewardship is an unknown concept in Croatia, as are community conservation or Natura 2000 outside conservation circles. Mutual understanding between actors involved is very weak but vitally important for finding viable solutions. Economic support most important but should be followed with sets of measures aimed at sustaining social and cultural values. The knowledge collected in the last generation of pastoralists and other traditional users will be gone if we do not react jointly.

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WORLD CAFÉ - TABLE 1. EUROPEAN POLICIES AND LAND STEWARDSHIP: OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Table leader: Jordi Pietx, xct

Land stewardship is a tool available for use by organisations and landowners anywhere in Europe, no matter the legal framework. Currently, many European policies and legal instruments proactively promote participatory approaches, contractual measures and other actions that directly involve landowners, civic society and the private sector.

The main ideas and conclusions from this table were:

- Land stewardship is seen as a useful tool to achieve different European policy objectives such as the CAP and Natura 2000, and related directives, but it is necessary to develop a communication strategy to make this strategy better known and more wide-spread.
- Despite land stewardship being a non-regulatory tool (it does not need a directive nor a recommendation), the EU can play a facilitating role promoting its use.
- It is important to offer guidelines of how land stewardship helps achieve Natura 2000 objectives from both local and European perspectives.
- Stewardship organisations and networks should work closer with the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and invite them to learn about land stewardship initiatives on the field, and how land stewardship works.
- More field visits are needed to show the benefits of applying land stewardship measures for nature conservation and to increase knowledge of this conservation strategy.
- There are huge connections between agriculture and nature and very positive opportunities arising from the new financial framework of the EU related to the CAP reform.
- It is necessary to encourage contacts with different levels of government, as well as farmers and landowners organisations, and to promote networking amongst organisations.

WORLD CAFÉ - TABLE 2. LAND STEWARDSHIP NETWORKING NEEDS AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

Table leader: Pilar Rodríguez, xct

Working at an international level may empower land stewardship organisations and networks, and give projects an innovative, transnational, comparative and broader scope, and access to a wide variety of new possibilities. This is one of the key aims of the LandLife Project. The LandLife website acts as a base point to promote land stewardship internationally. The session also identified different tools to incentivise networking.

The main ideas and conclusions from this table were:

- Networking may seem difficult but it offers many benefits and is a necessary tool for land stewardship organisations, including:
 - Resource sharing (coworking);
 - Lobby resources and exchange of experiences: creating learning opportunities and identifying (common) challenges and solutions;
 - New projects and opportunities;
 - Coordination to avoid competitions and duplication.

- LandLife provides an excellent opportunity to promote networking amongst land stewardship organisations in Europe. In order to achieve this objective, a common plan could be developed amongst all organisations and a European working group on land stewardship created.
- Leadership and coordination is needed in order to boost land stewardship in Europe. The groups agreed on the need for an organisation to lead this process.
- Online platforms can help networking, to share information and experiences and to offer opportunities to communicate land stewardship. The LandLife website can play this role after the end of the project.
- Some ideas to promote networking through the online platform were proposed, such as the creation of an organisation database in order to identify similar organisations and projects.
- Although everybody agreed on the need for this coordination, there was no consensus on who could assume this role and the level of networking needed to achieve it. In this sense, more workshops like this one are needed to keep on working on these issues.

WORLD CAFÉ - TABLE 3. IMPROVING LAND STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES IN EUROPE

Table leader: Montse Masó, xct

Stewardship organisations must be prepared to use different mechanisms and work in partnership with many different actors to meet biodiversity and heritage protection goals. To do so, a land stewardship organisation must count on a well-prepared and trained professional or volunteer team, with good knowledge of nature and heritage features and their management, and also of the territories where the organisation is active.

The main conclusions were:

- It is difficult to establish a standard on land stewardship because it is applied differently and with different tools in different areas. However, the main strategies are not different, and there are some key, shared principles that represent crucial success factors in land stewardship initiatives. It is thus possible to find common grounds and create mutual understanding to further develop land stewardship in Europe.
- Best practices should focus not only on land management (the best practices would not be very different from other Natura 2000 sites management guidelines), but especially on how agreements are reached, set up and what the success factors in this process are.
- Best practices can be useful to better explain land stewardship and to achieve social recognition and the involvement of stakeholders.
- Best practices can help in communicating land stewardship, boosting the involvement of new stakeholders and making land stewardship attractive for them.
- It is important to promote monitoring, with a minimum set of indicators, to measure the performance of land stewardship initiatives and organisations.
- It is necessary to strengthen the network, focusing on common characteristics and defining the key indicators to be used and how to adapt them to any situation and local conditions.
- The groups identified a need for training and to learn from others, something that can be done through best practice analyses, and wide communication of said best practices (e.g. through the LandLife website).

WORLD CAFÉ - TABLE 4. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES TO ENGAGE EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Table leader: Hernan Collado, xct

Since land stewardship is a strategy that tries to connect people with nature, communication is a crucial tool for land stewardship organisations. Not only landowners, but the public in general, need to be aware of the services such organisations provide to local communities and society.

The main conclusions of this table were:

- The use of the name "land stewardship" and its translation to all European languages remains an open question. Some participants commented that land stewardship can be fully communicated without even using the term "land stewardship", but only stating the advantages of partnering for nature.
- It is important to clearly distinguish between what we do (land stewardship) and why we do it (nature and landscape conservation, maintenance of environmental services, etc.).
- The communication strategy should include some key ideas such as the voluntary approach, the concept of caring for the land, and the win-win solutions offered by land stewardship to help to understand the meaning of land stewardship.
- What and how you communicate very much depends on the target audience. Land stewardship means working with people, therefore communicating with people. However, finding the appropriate, effective communication strategy for land stewardship is still a huge challenge.
- The communication strategy should integrate the different perspectives and needs of all stakeholders involved in land stewardship.
- LandLife communication tools have proven useful so far, e.g. the European Land stewardship week.
- The approach to communication is more important than the tools themselves. Internet may be a good tool to inform and communicate, but now we need to be more cool and attractive for our audience (developing an app, for example).

TOWARDS THE FIRST EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON LAND STEWARDSHIP (BARCELONA, 2014)

Regarding the Congress to be held in Barcelona from the 5-7 November 2014, the attendants discussed several issues:

- Regarding its goals: at the Congress we should explore what is needed in different EU countries and
 what land stewardship common grounds exist, on which we can build a strategic basis for further
 development of land stewardship at the European level (and on the applicability of land stewardship
 to wider society, especially to implement Natura 2000, the CAP and other EU policies).
- Regarding its participants: There was debate on the need to focus on a broad range of organisations to assist in the workshop: environmental EU lobby organisations (e.g. agriculture, nature, environment), small land stewardship organisations, public administration bodies, networks and even organisations from other continents. The Congress should also give a voice to the landowners and other stewards (and users), and also to other kinds of stewardship groups, i.e. marine stewardship.
- Regarding its communication: The group convened on the importance of making a concerted effort

to communicate the Congress, i.e. finding an appealing title such as "Working with nature", "People for nature", "Cooperating with and for nature" or "Caring together for nature".

- Regarding its organisation: The Congress should include some innovative workshops (e.g. a communication lab), to boost co-creation amongst participants, and should also include field trips.
- **Regarding its outcomes**: The Congress should deliver some sort of conclusions, and especially a programming of next steps to be done after the LandLife project has ended.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The workshop was a meeting point for people and organisations from all across Europe. It was a very lively workshop with enthusiastic participants, who were especially keen to make a success of the First European Land Stewardship Congress that will be held in Barcelona (Catalonia) in November 2014.

These are the main conclusions of the workshop, as discussed by participants at the end of day 2:

- There is a wide recognition of land stewardship as a complementary tool for nature protection and land conservation by political representatives, public officers and experts.
- Diversity is a reality and a strength for land stewardship in Europe.
- There are different ways of implementing a similar concept, there is not only one way to apply land stewardship (different approaches to a common aim).
- Focus on land stewardship as a tool to achieve the different European policy objectives.
- Agriculture and nature must collaborate. There are huge connections between agriculture and nature and very positive opportunities arising from the new programming period of the EU (2014-2020).
- European funds and existing policies will play an important role.
- We need to work more closely with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).
- Land stewardship means working with people.
- Finding an effective communication strategy for land stewardship is still a huge challenge.
- We still have training and information needs.
- Networking works and is worthy, we learn from each other.
- We should see each other more often!

In conclusion, the objectives of the workshop have been thoroughly achieved, by sharing information and building a theoretical framework, practical know-how to apply land stewardship agreements and improve their management, by identifying potential opportunities for land stewardship in Europe, and by defining important issues towards the European Land Stewardship Congress 2014. In addition, by exchanging experiences and showcasing best practices, the network of land stewardship organisations has been strengthened.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful for the time and expert contributions realised in particular from the participants to the workshop, XCT staff and all speakers, and especially Belinda Parris and l'Avenc's staff, whose hospitality made the stay in l'Avenc very pleasant.

Copies of all presentations and associated materials can be downloaded from: www.landstewardship.

In addition we would like to thank the European Commission and the Government of Catalonia, without which support (LIFE+ programme) this valuable, successful workshop would not have been possible.



Photo 3. Group photo outside of the Avenc Masia in Tavertet

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PHOTO GALLERY:



























