

Spain – innovation example

## PASTANDO GARGANTA – A LOCAL HNV-LINK INITIATIVE

European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism [www.efncp.org](http://www.efncp.org)

- Location: Garganta la Olla, La Vera, Extremadura
- HNV system: Extensive goat and cattle grazing on common pastures
- Scale of operation: Municipality
- Timespan: 2017-2018
- Keys to success: HNV-Link was able to employ a project officer to engage with all the pastoralists in the municipality, and with other key actors, to understand the current situation and challenges and to work up a set of practical proposals for sustaining pastoral activity into the future. HNV-Link resources were crucial, but equally the dedication of specific individuals who executed the project and the positive response of the local pastoralists and institutions.



Problems addressed by this example:

Extensive grazing is in severe decline in the Municipality. Natura 2000 grassland habitats are present on a large scale but are being lost at an alarming rate. The number of pastoralists declined by 25% in the past 3 years, and goats by 40%. Only about ten pastoralists remain, all are over 50 and only one has a possible family successor. Reversing these trends depends very largely on the regional and local authorities, as the pastoralists have limited options to innovate in the current regulatory framework (e.g. dependence on rented common grazing land, hygiene and land-use restrictions on activities such as cheese making, environmental restrictions on scrub control, devastating campaign by authorities against TB, lack of support from CAP and RDP, etc.).

Story in a nutshell:

Pastando Garganta ("*Grazing Garganta*") is a local project within the HNV-Link Learning Area. It targets one Municipality with two large areas of common grazing, one public and one private, covering a total of 3,666



ha, of which the great majority is within Natura 2000. A project officer was employed to engage with all the local pastoralists and also with hunters, foresters, and with local and regional authorities. The aim was to find out the current situation of pastoralism and also of the Natura 2000 habitats in the Municipality.

What does Pastando Garganta achieve for HNV farming?

- Reveals for the first time with facts and figures the crisis facing extensive pastoralism and Natura 2000 habitats in the Municipality.
- Gives pastoralists the opportunity to make their own proposals for change, including practical measures for improving pastures and living/farming conditions.
- Transmits the critical situation and proposed solutions to the local and regional authorities who have the competence to implement them.
- Physically brings the different authorities together with pastoralists in the field to discuss together for the first time.

The process that made it happen and critical factors for success:

- HNV-Link was the catalyst, providing resources (though very limited) and the context and approach of a wider project in La Vera and at EU level (credibility with authorities).
- A very suitable and motivated expert was available locally to work as part-time project officer.
- The Municipality is a suitable scale for working with limited resources, as one person can easily engage with all pastoralists and there is only one local authority to deal with.
- Garganta la Olla was especially suitable as the grazing area is dominated by only two units of grazing land.
- Local pastoralists are in a desperate situation and have been largely ignored by the authorities and society generally until now. They were willing to respond positively to this initiative.
- Different authorities showed willingness to listen and engage in dialogue.

Lessons learnt from this innovation example, and its potential replication:

- Very good potential for replication in all areas of extensive livestock grazing, especially where there have been no previous initiatives (starting from zero).
- Lack of continuity and very limited resources are weaknesses with this project approach. It requires funding over a much longer term in order to deliver solid results.
- Needs dynamic and committed individuals with a clear vision and ability to convince and collaborate with different institutions

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