

The European project FOREST-IN holds its first international forum on healthy forests and forests managers

During these days is being held in Lousã (Portugal) the International Forum *Healthy Forest, benefits for all*, which has been organized by the European project INovative and Educational INformation for the Sustainable FOREST Management by Smallholders (FOREST-IN), of which are partners various organizations and institutions from Spain, France and Portugal, with the University of Aveiro as coordinator of this transnational initiative.

The forum - held on 2 and 3 March and bringing together more than 120 participants - was preceded by a new working meeting between the members of the FOREST-IN project, which aims to promote good practices and forestry education among private forest owners, their managers and technicians, and other agents involved in the sustainable forest management of forests.

This international forum has had the important support of the Portuguese Government, being the Secretary of State for Forestry and Rural Development, Amândio Torres, one of the protagonists of the inaugural event yesterday at the Center for Forest Operations and Techniques (COTF), where the forum takes place.

This technical meeting will serve, among other aspects, to address the main problems related to forest management in some territories of partner countries, all with very similar characteristics: predominance of private forest ownership with very small areas, and in many cases under the management of owners without technical training, where it is urgent to promote good practices and forestry education for sustainable management of resources.

The forum also aims to gather information on the needs and concerns of these forest owners in their daily lives, and will explain some of the actions to be undertaken by the FOREST-IN project to help them make decisions for sustainable forest management. In addition to the technical sessions of yesterday, Thursday 2 March, a field trip of forest interpretation and silvicultural practices is planned for today.

About the FOREST-IN project

The FOREST-IN project aims to promote good practices and forestry education through workshops and international technical visits, tutorials and the creation of a mobile application aimed at helping in the decision-making process for sustainable forest management. All this integrated in a concerted strategy that involves the forest community and the general public. The pedagogical techniques will be innovative and personalized for the recipients of the project, and will be based on a model of horizontal and participatory learning.

FOREST-IN has been established as an international strategic alliance for forestry education and is funded by the Erasmus + Program, the main financial mechanism of the European Commission in the field of Education. The coordinator of this project is the University of Aveiro (Portugal), with these partners: Cesefor Foundation (Spain), PEFC Spain, FSC International, Unimadeiras (Portugal), the Forest Association of Galicia (Spain) and the Forest Model Association of the Provence (France).

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