



CASE STUDY N°17



The Living Lab in Los Alcornocales Natural Park (Cádiz and Málaga, Spain) focuses on revitalising the cork oak sector while strengthening **climate resilience** and sustainable land management. The park hosts one of the world's largest cork oak (**Quercus suber**) forests, a strategic ecosystem of high environmental, economic, and social value. However, the sector faces important challenges, including declining productivity, limited industrial processing capacity, lack of traceability systems, shortage of skilled labour, increasing climate stress from drought and pests, and the need to better adapt **herbivory pressure to the real carrying capacity of the territory**.

Led by the **Dirección General de Espacios Naturales Protegidos**, the Living Lab aims to align scientific research with practical forest management and local knowledge to co-create an integrated roadmap for the conservation and sustainable use of cork oak landscapes. By strengthening the cork value chain and fostering local processing capacities, the initiative seeks to generate employment, enhance competitiveness, and **secure long-term ecological and economic sustainability**.

The project also explores complementary pathways such as **carbon and biodiversity credits**, biomass valorisation, sustainable livestock integration, and nature-based tourism linked to cork landscapes. Through collaboration among producers, public authorities, researchers, entrepreneurs, and civil society, the Living Lab positions cork oak forests as **strategic natural assets** capable of delivering biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, economic development, and social cohesion at territorial scale.



Organisation: Head of Los Alcornocales Natural Park (Territorial Delegation of Sustainability and Environment in Cádiz – Regional Government of Andalusia), in collaboration with Cesefor Foundation and IUCN

Sector: Forestry

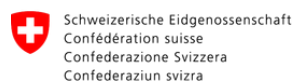
Location: Los Alcornocales Natural Park, Cádiz and Málaga, Andalusia, Spain



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