WildFood

PRIMA
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

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WP2: PILOT PROJECTS FACT SHEETS (3/8)

Establishing mycological parks to assess and control mushroom collection and guarantee a sustainable mycological use with appropriate mushroom collection, while integrating social function in this activity

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Location: Tarragona, Catalonia, Spain

Context:

Mushrooms are probably the most popular non-wood forest product in Spain. In certain regions such as Catalonia, it is estimated that more than 15% of the population picks mushrooms at least once a year. The motivation for mushroom pickers far exceeds the economic value of the collected edible fungi, increasingly seeking a recreational, close to nature activity. This activity has been named mushroom tourism or mycotourism (Büntgen et al., 2017) and tries to connect the fungal discovery with gastronomy and fungal related tourism activities (Latorre et al., 2021). Parallel to this, the figure of mycological parks has appeared. Mycological parks are areas in which the managers try to combine mushroom productivity, fungal conservation and the promotion of mycotourism. However, there is still no specific agreed rules on how the mycological parks can be created, supported and monitored.

Objective:

The objective of this pilot project is to establish the basis for the creation of a mycological park, aiming to make compatible mushroom picking with fungal conservation and the development of mycotourism.

The evaluation of mushroom yields will be done through weekly inventories of the fungal fruitbodies in permanent mushroom plots established in the PNIN of Poblet (Tarragona) (Bonet et al. 2012). The inventory will allow us to have an approximation of the quantity and diversity of the fungal community. In parallel, we will list the mycotourism facilities in the surrounding area that will be benefited by mushroom related activities.

Expected Results:

The combination of mycotourism facilities (i.e: restaurants, information panels, tour guids, etc..) with the mushroom species catalogue, will optimize the different mushroom related services that will be offered in the mycological park.

The pilot experience of PNIN of Poblet will allow us to generate a set of rules and procedures for the creation, improvement and monitoring of a mycological park. We expect that the obtained results in the pilot area will be transferred to the other areas in the Mediterranean.

Figure 1. Saffron milk cap (*Lactarius deliciosus*), the most popular mushroom in Catalonia (Photo: Juan Martínez de Aragón).

Figure 2. Mycotourists (Photo: Juan Martínez de Aragón).

Figure 3. Permanent plot for the inventory of mushroom yields and diversity Photo: Juan Martínez de Aragón).

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