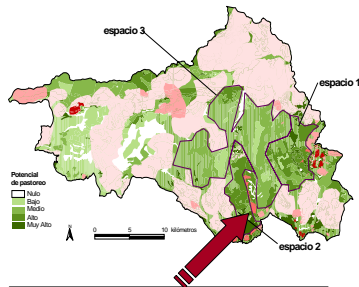




## 15th Meeting of the FAO-CIHEAM Mountain Pastures Network

### Activity patterns and diet selection of beef cows on Mediterranean mountain forest pastures

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#### Use of pastures in Sierra de Guara Natural Park (N Spain)

- **Actual vs. Potential use**
- **Pilot cow herd**
  - technical viability
  - use as environmental tool



Private 464 ha range + 25 Pirenaica cows:  
... *pasture conditioning, management design*

#### **Objective:**

Analyze the feeding behaviour and diet selected by beef cows in Mediterranean forest pastures.



#### Monthly controls (Annual cycle)

- **Activity & diet selection:** Visual appraisal, 15-min intervals
  - Activity: Grazing, Walking, Resting, Suckling
- **Pasture quality:** samples of selected pasture
  - Selected pasture type:
    - FORAGE CROP: cultivated meadows, rye-triticale
    - DRY GRASSLAND: understorey, open grasslands, gr. in cultivated areas
    - BROWSE: several species
- **Actual diet quality:** faecal N content

#### *Analysis of seasonal effects*

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

- The **diversity of forage resources and their seasonal offer** conditioned cow activity patterns and diet selection through the annual cycle
- **Browse** had a significant contribution to cow diet, particularly in the winter, on days when no supplement was offered indoors.