The current status of transhumance systems in the province of León (Spain), towards a multi-dimensional evaluation

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A brief introduction

Trashumance
An extensive traditional livestock breeding system based on recurrent movements.
Cañadas Reales de La Mesta

Principales cañadas
1. De La Vizana o de La Plata
2. Leonesa occidental
3. Leonesa oriental
4. Segoviana
5. Soriana oriental
6. Soriana occidental
7. Riojana
8. Conquense
9. Del Reino de Valencia

Fuente: Pedro García Martín, *La ganadería Mesteña en la España Borbónica (1700-1836)*
Transhumance has suffered a recession since the XVIII century, when an agriculture based productive model was favoured.
The functional unit of Transhumance

Specific mountain pastures historically devoted to transhumance uses, integrated on common lands, property of municipalities.

“Puertos de Merinas”

Gómez Sal and Rodríguez Pascual, 1992
A half of their surface is now occupied by shrubs.
Agricultural and rural context

Important changes on the land use and industrialization of the activity. Application of the Common Agrarian Policy.


Grain Crops on León Province

Rural depopulation

Heads of Cattle
Numbers of Transhumance on the province

Movements of livestock to "Puertos" 1990-2015

Gómez Sal and Rodríguez Pascual, 1992. REMO, 2015
Objetives

Evaluate the current status of Transhumance in León

Identify the changes that have occurred and present problematics.

Assets the sustainability of the different types of Transhumance livestock system.
Methodology


Sustainability Assessment

Based on the farmers’ opinion

Theoretical model based on expert’s criteria

Ecological

Productive

Social

Economic

Cultural
Methodology

Sustainability Assessment

Based on the farmers’ opinion

Theoretical model based on expert’s criteria

Based on the farmers’ opinion

Ecological

Agroecosystem degradation

Productive

Intensification

Economic

Low profitability

Social

Rural transformation

Cultural

Loss of heritage
Results

Farmer's Opinion Assessment

Long transhumance farmers

Long Transhumance Movements

Short "Transterminant" Movements
Results

Systems comparison

Social Dimension

Ecological Dimension

Productive Dimension

Cultural Dimension

Economical Dimension

Systems comparison

Social Dimension

Ecological Dimension

Productive Dimension

Cultural Dimension

Economical Dimension

Long

Cattle

Short

Cattle
Transhumance is highly adapted to the characteristics of the territory and available resources in the province of Leon.

The suffered recession has not affect Transhumance to adequate to new contexts, the shorts movements are an example.

A new agent, whose effects were not sufficient evaluated in former studies, has appeared: the beef cattle short transhumant raising spreading. This system has also a negative impact and displaces the traditional sheep based Transhumance systems.

The mountain pastures have suffered an abandonment process, with serious changes in their ecological integrity and coherence.

The mountain society increases the lack of opportunities and the depopulation trend.
Conclusions

Transhumance shows a **potential to promote** a transition to more **sustainable scenarios on the region**.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION