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## Conservation, Management, Products and Challenges for the Future

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*Sughero d'albero fatto a pezzetti,*
*tipi di tappi , quelli che vuoi.*
*Tagliali lunghi, tagliali stretti,*
*tipi di tappi, fatti da noi.*
*Taglialo bene, taglialo tondo,*
*tipi di tappi, quanti ne vuoi.*
*Tappi di sughero per tutto il mondo,*
*tipi di tappi fatti da noi.*
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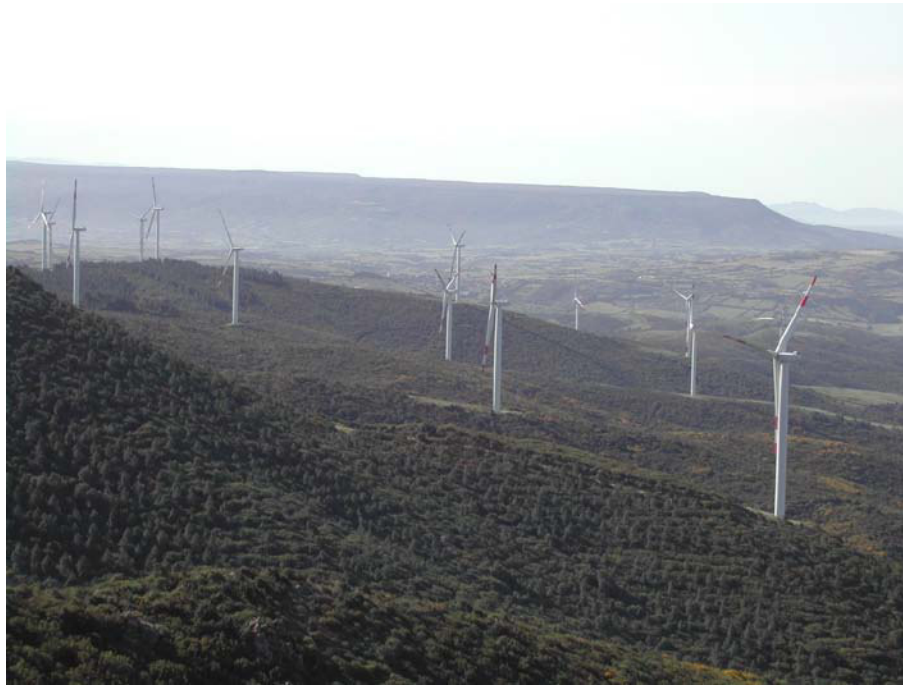

# CORK OAK MANAGEMENT SUSTAINABILITY: INDICATORS FOR A CERTIFICATION PROTOTYPE

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The key feature of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) is the maintenance of biodiversity, regeneration and vitality of forest ecosystems without compromising their ecological, economic and social functions. SFM is particularly important in managed forest ecosystems such as cork oak stands, where human influence is considerable. Nonetheless, cork oak forest management may be highly sustainable and a few cases of certification occur. Cork certification can increase the product price but the lack of information on suitable indicators and experiences on their applicability at the management level limit its adoption. In this study we tested a set of indicators of sustainable cork oak forest management in Sardinia (Italy). First, we defined a list of specific indicators derived from attributes collected during the conventional management planning process. Secondly, we selected threshold values consulting a panel of experts on cork forest management. Thirdly, we applied the set of proposed indicators and related thresholds to a database of 361 sample plots and 285 forest compartments, representing 2% of the Sardinian cork oak forests, to test its potential suitability. Results show that structural and biometrical attributes can be easily exploited as SFM indicators. This approach drastically reduces the SFM information needed for a forest to get certified. Also the indicator spatial scale proves to be relevant: indicators up-scaling from tree to plot and to compartment level can be applied to overcome the influence of small areas which are out of certification standard.

Keywords: Cork oak forest, Sustainable Forest Management, Certification, Forest management planning, indicators, Sardinia