

# SMART MOUNTAINS

**XII** European  
Mountain  
Convention

25 – 26 – 27  
October 2022

How to make our territories attractive and  
future- oriented?

F. Javier Pérez Pérez

*Hazi Foundation*

**“Sustainable management of mountain  
grasslands: LIFE OREKA MENDIAN”**



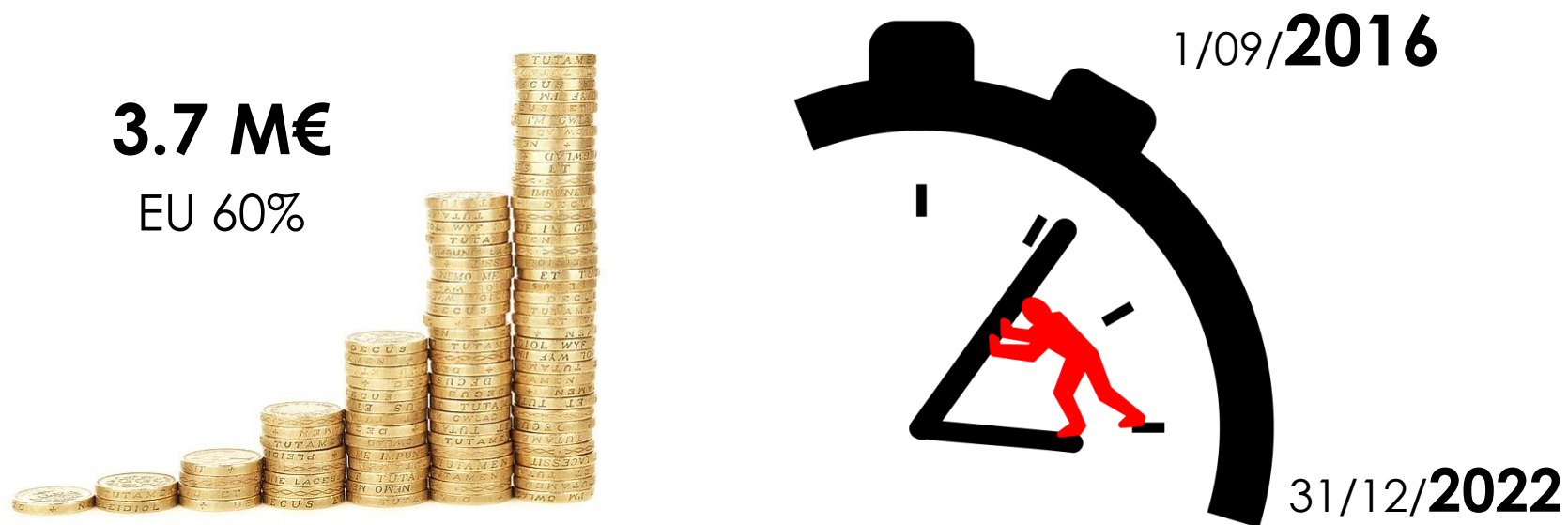
**OREKA  
MENDIAN**

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# LIFE15 OREKA MENDIAN

## NAT/ES/805

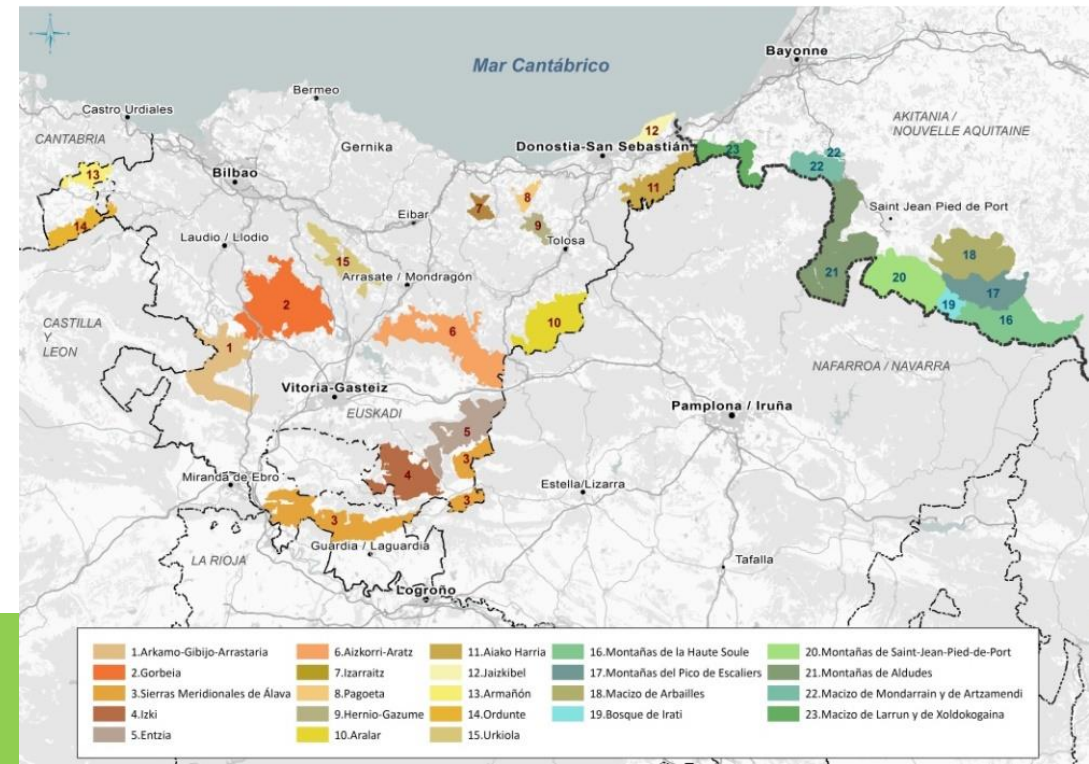
### Conservation and Management of Mountain Pasture Habitats in the Basque Country



The OBJECTIVE is to achieve the

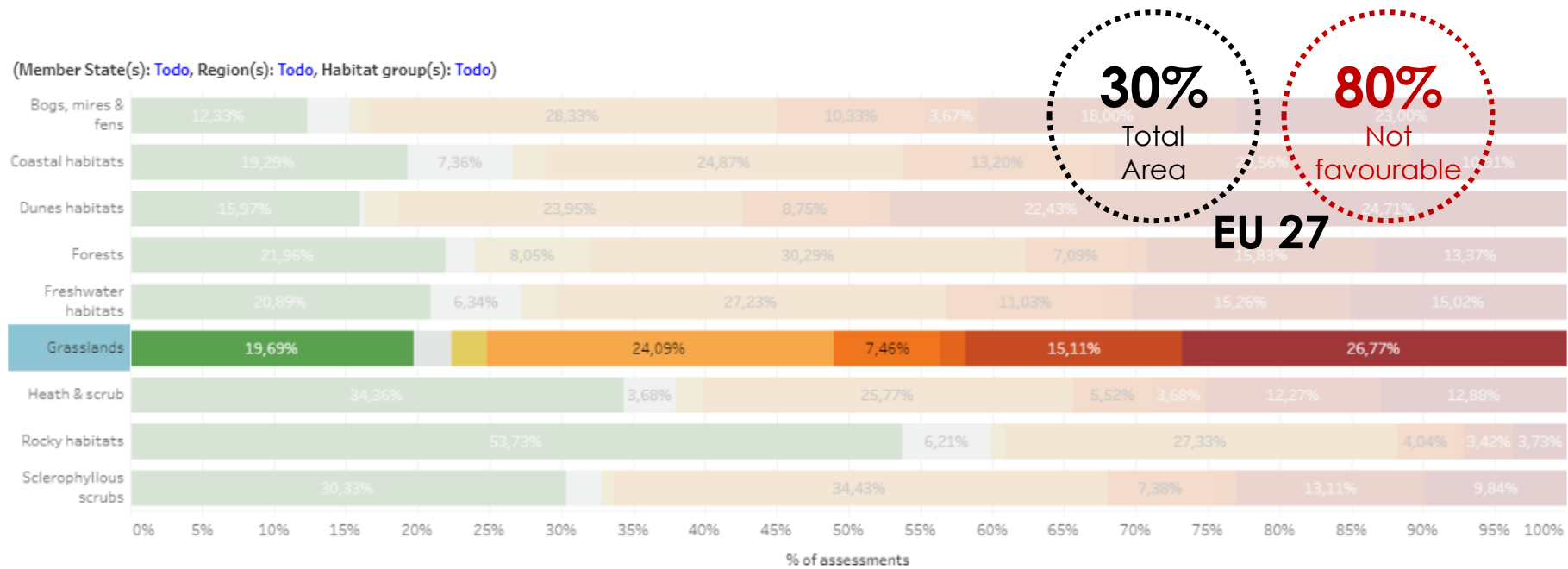
## SUSTAINABLE BALANCE

in the environment of mountain pastures to combine  
**CONSERVATION** and **SOCIOECONOMICS** with the  
participation of partners from both sides of the Pyrenees.



# A global problem

The management of mountain pastures is a **complex task**, since ecologically it is a **heterogeneous environment**, with a notable number of habitats and species of interest, interrelated temporally and spatially and, on the other hand, it depends on **extensive mountain stockbreeding** for its maintenance.





# A local problem

# Changes in vegetation

General increase in taller vegetation:  
**scrublands** and **forests**

**Forests**  
Increase of 559 ha

## Grasslands

Loss of 913 ha



19 % CIH 6230\* Species-rich *Nardus* grassland

## Scrublands

Increase of 140 ha

Important increase in ferns and gorse

+ Increased risk of fire

+ Invasive species

# Review of the Conservation Status of grazing habitats of Community interest / SAC

Grasslands

Heath & scrub

Mires

Favorable or Inadequate due to surface losses (fern)

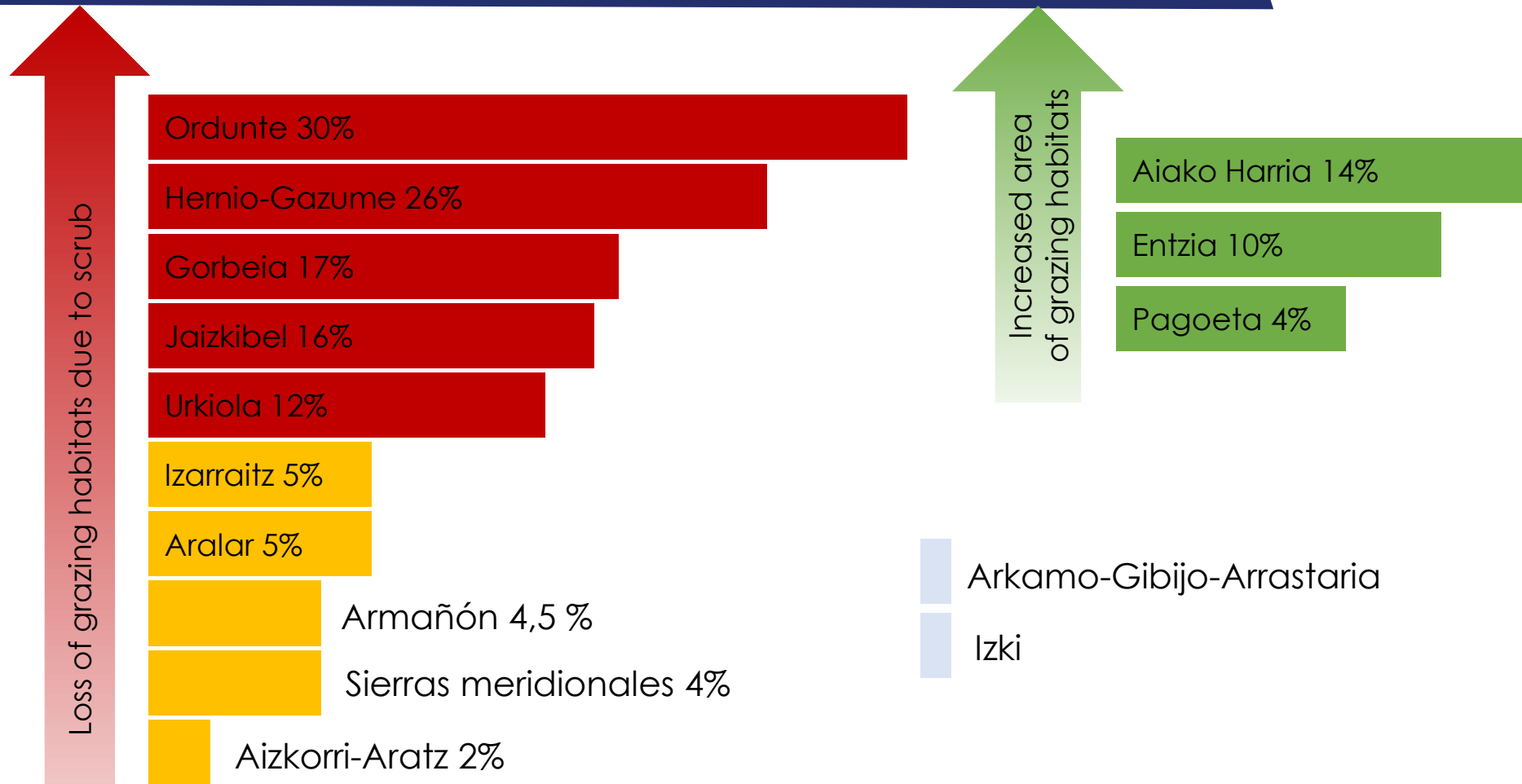
Inadequate, evolution to *Ulex* or thorn

Bad, excessive livestock trampling



# TRENDS IN VEGETATION / SAC

## Increase in scrub



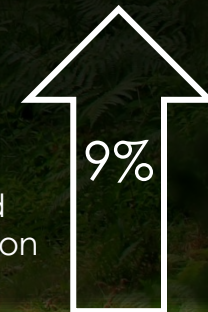
# A local problem

General trend of **abandonment**  
of extensive mountain farming

## Management changes



**data from  
authorizations**



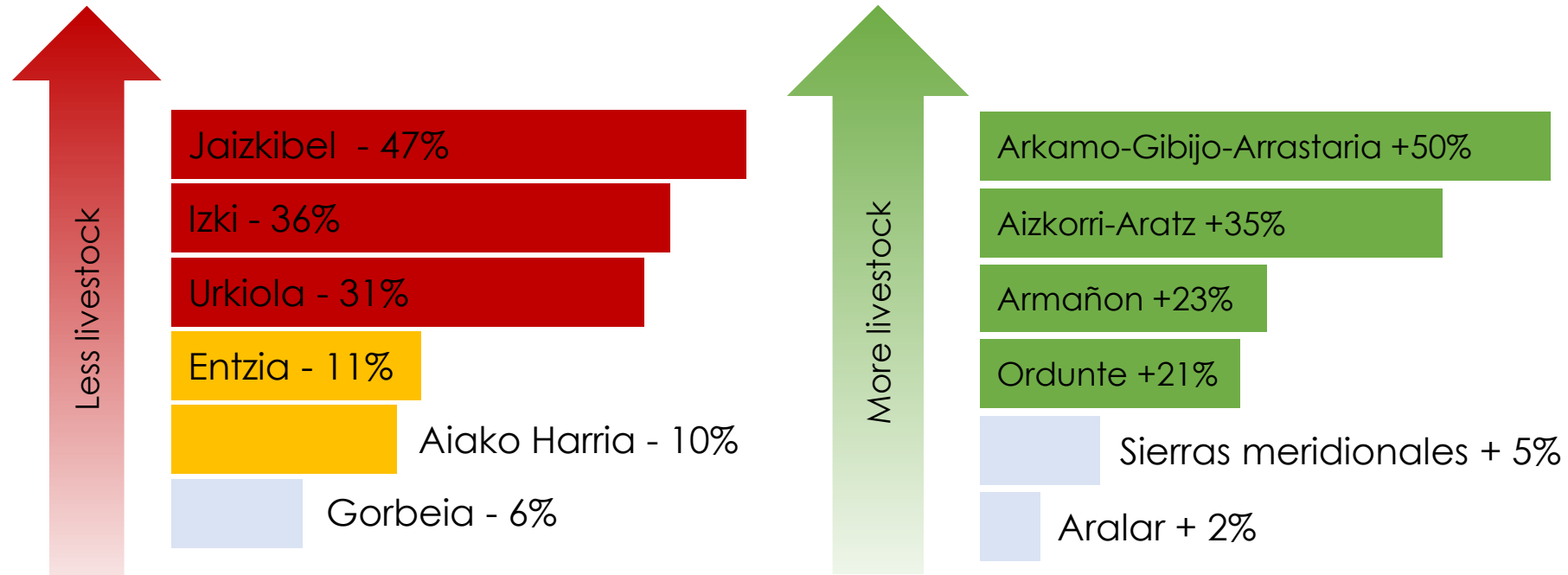
Higher total load  
Uneven distribution  
Species change

Study of changes in livestock loads in the last 10 years

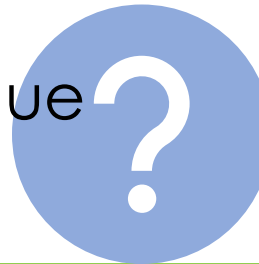


# Livestock authorized in the mountain pastures (Public property)

Trends in the last 10 years



data distortion due to CAP subsidies



Real

gain by livestock:

Surveys & forms:

- Animal quantity and species
- Use throughout the year
- Areas of use
- Traditional management
- Limitations/problems
- Needs
- Action proposals

BIENKA MENDIAN

FECHA Y LUGAR: 14/06/13 (Murgilla) S. LAZAROLA

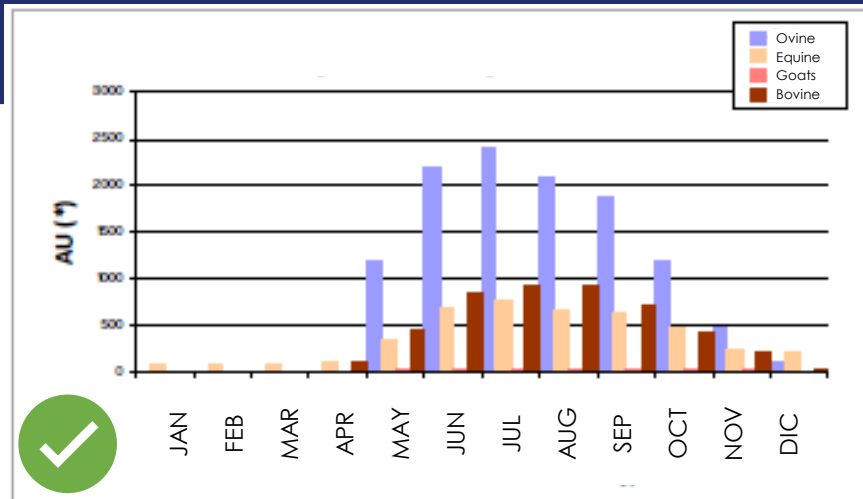
TALLERES CON GANADEROS		Necesidades
Características	Limitaciones	
PARTICIPANTES DEL TALLER 3 GANADEROS	GANADEROS DEL MUNICIPIO ENTRENADO POR SU VECINO EN USO DEL TERRENO	NINGUNA
TIPO DE ACTIVIDAD REALIZADA MANEJO DEL TERRENO Y USO DEL TERRENO	FORTALECIMIENTO DEL MANEJO DEL TERRENO	NINGUNA
ACTIVIDADES REALIZADAS EN EL TALLER TIENEN TALLERES (AEROS DE MONTAÑA) LINDA RECIBIR DE LA DETA CALA	GANADO MANTENIDO EN CERCA	NINGUNA
	UN UNICO DE SERVICIO GANADO EN SU USO DEL TERRENO	NINGUNA

BIENKA MENDIAN

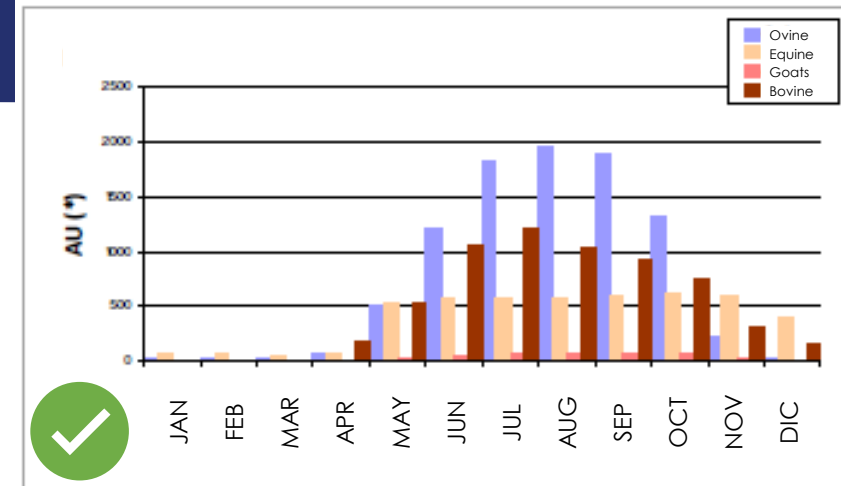


# Real use of public pastures - 2017

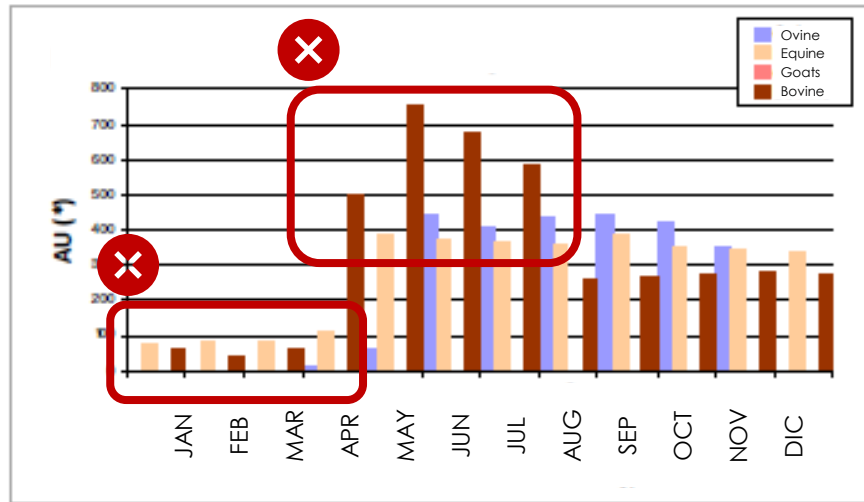
Aralar



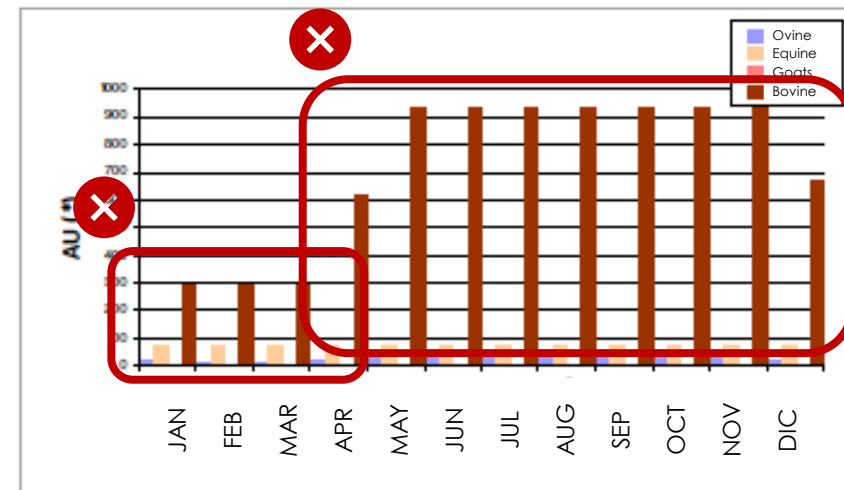
Aizkorri-Aratz



Entzia



Ordunte



# Relationship between habitat degradation and changes in livestock management



CONCLUSIONS



Difficult to generalize: more accurate down the scale

Basque Country - SAC - Grazing Unit



Overload can change the typical species (adapted to trampling, nitrophilous) or very specific impacts.

Farmers adapt the calendar to:

Availability of pasture

Good physical condition of the animals



Overgrazing limited to specific spots



Direct correlation in some SAC (Jaizkibel, Urkiola)

Clear insufficiency of livestock



Fast deterioration of grazing habitats

# Data distortion due to CAP subsidies



In some SACs the actual livestock in the high pastures  $\neq$  authorized



Authorization for more livestock than is actually taken to the mountains



Request to the public owner for more clearings than needed



CONCLUSIONS

# Ideal state

- Sufficient livestock density to control the scrub.
- High presence of sheep and, to a lesser extent, horses.
- Directed grazing.
- Good annual distribution of the livestock density.

**Great!**

**But it's not enough...**

Control of invasive  
species

Fencing to avoid impacts / facilitate  
livestock management

Attraction points to relocate  
the load

Water

Scratching  
points

Salt

# Scrub clearance in mosaic

Monitoring to assess its effects:

- Lepidoptera
- Vegetation





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Much, much more  
information at

[www.lifeorekamendian.eu](http://www.lifeorekamendian.eu)

**Mila esker !  
Grazie!**

# THANK YOU / MERCI / GRAZIE!

