



RETECORK

EUROPEAN NETWORK OF CORK-PRODUCING TERRITORIES

PRESENTATION DOSSIER





RETECORK

European Network of Cork-Producing Territories

The concept of cork goes beyond what is strictly industrial. As the Palafrugell author and journalist Josep Pla expressed, it is a civilisation, a world that includes, among many other things, an ecological system and a series of specific cultural statements.

Thanks to this initiative, we are promoting dialogue and strategic collaboration between territories which understand cork as a strategic element which needs to be defended and promoted.

Our proposal is to work so that, in a jointly agreed upon way, our network becomes consolidated and extended, to guarantee the sustainability of what has been a source of wealth for our towns for more than two centuries, in such a way that the cork-producing activity continues to be an important resource for our local development.



Origin and purpose of the network



CAN MARIO SQUARE IN PALAFRUGELL. PHOTO: ÀLEX CEBOLLERO.

RETECORK came into being thanks to an initial meeting of cork-producing territories which was held in Palafrugell in October 2006, formed by 46 members of the public and 11 speakers and where the **Palafrugell Charter**, was approved, which promoted the constitution of an Association of Cork-Producing Collectives at a European level.

In April 2007, **RETECORK**, the **European Network of Cork-Producing Territories** was formally constituted in Cassà de la Selva. It was initially formed by 23 members from Spain, Portugal, Italy and France with the objective of constituting a platform for the knowledge, promotion and development of the cork culture, from the local administrations and for the social and economic development of the towns, with representatives of communities traditionally linked to cork production, transformation and commercialisation.

Mission

To represent and defend the interests of the territorial collectives with presence in the cork sector.

To contribute to the valuing and dissemination of the cultural and heritage legacy linked to this activity.

To try and ensure local sustainable development at an economic and social level.

Legal structure

The network is structured around a public law association, pursuant to Law 1/2002, of 22nd March, regulating the law on associations.

Objectives

The aim of this platform is to work on:

1. Defending the interests of cork-producing territories with the aim of contributing to their sustainable development from a social, economic, cultural and environmental perspective.
2. Ensuring that the cork-producing activity, which has been a source of wealth in our towns for more than two centuries, continues to be an important resource of local development.
3. Setting up joint work strategies in the area of economic promotion, promoting employment and competitiveness and the reciprocal opening up of international markets.

All these work dynamics must be based on dialogue, coordination, the studying and development of common actions between the municipalities and the cork-producing regions.

Lines of work

To comply with the objectives, the following lines of work are proposed:

- To propose and defend the adoption of support and improvement measures with regard to the competitiveness of this activity before the public administrations.
- To create platforms which facilitate the relationship and the scientific, technological, economic, cultural and social interchange between the associated territories.
- To promote studies and preliminary reports for launching community initiatives, directives, etc. concerning cork.
- To provide members with periodical information about announcements for programmes, subsidies, etc. promoted by national, european and international institutions and to facilitate the submitting of joint projects.
- To promote actions in the areas of professional training and the labour market, as well as actions linked to industrial development, town planning, culture and the environment.
- Take part and/or to promote campaigns to inform about the values of this product (quality alimentary health and safety respect to the enviroment...).

¿Who should be a part of it?

In an initial phase, the association is promoted at a Western Mediterranean level, in which the regions and/or autonomous communities of Spain, Portugal, France and Italy participate and later, the network will be extended to other European countries. Also to other countries, particularly the north of Africa (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia).

Types of members

• Territorial groups (local and supralocal administrations, with their different forms of organisation):

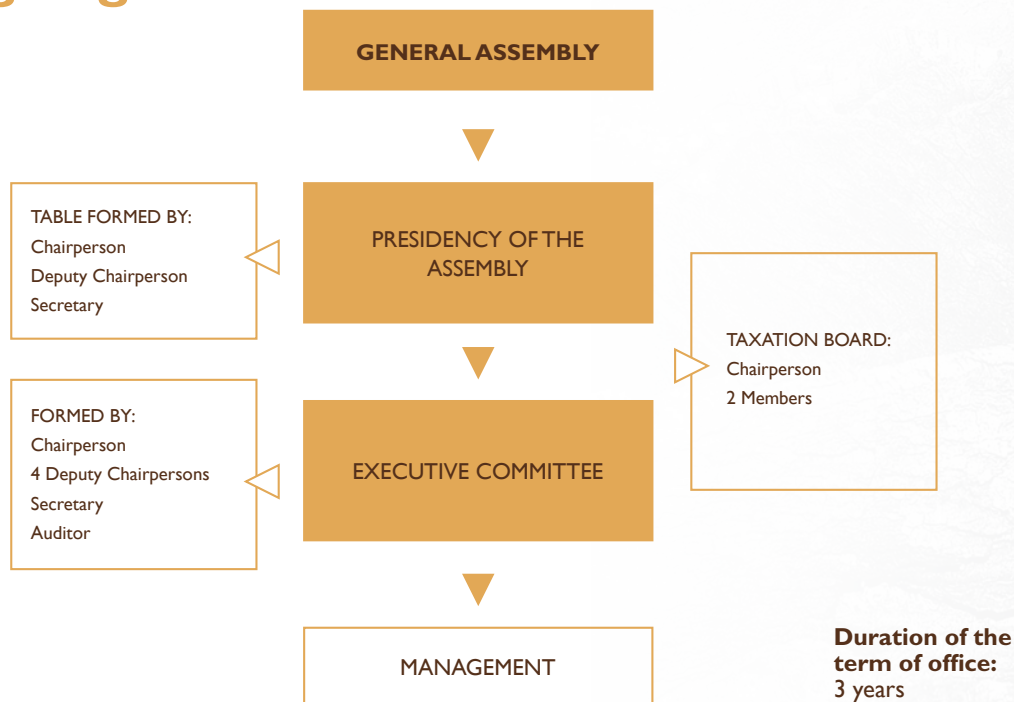
- Founder members
- Effective members

• Non-territorial institutions (boards, syndicates, chambers of commerce, universities, schools, local and regional development agencies, environmental organisations, etc.):

- Associate members

All members have the right to voice an opinion and to vote, as well as to submit proposals.

Organigrama



Governing bodies

The governing bodies of the RETECORK network will be made up in the following way:

RETECORK General Assembly

- Chairperson: Municipio de San Vicente de Alcántara – Mr. Andrés Hernáiz de Sixte
- Deputy Chairperson: French partner, pending from designation
- Secretary: Comune di Calangianus – Mr. Pier Mario Inzaina

RETECORK Taxation Board

- Chairperson: Câmara de Vendas Novas – Mr. José Maria Rodrigues Figueira

RETECORK Executive Committee

- Chairperson: Câmara de Coruche – Mr. Dionísio Simão Mendes
- Deputy Chairperson: Municipi de Palafrugell – Mr. Guillem Genover Ribas
- Substitute: Municipio de Hornachuelos – Mrs. María del Carmen Murillo Carballido
- Deputy Chairperson: Associação de Municípios Portugueses do Vinho -AMPV – Mr. José Arruda
- Substitute: Associação Portuguesa da Cortiça - APCOR – Mr. João Rui Ferreira
- Deputy Chairperson: Comune di Calangianus – Mr. Gio' Martino Loddo
- Substitute: Comune di Ala' dei Sardi – Mr. Mario Carta
- Deputy Chairperson: Commune de Vivès – Mr. Jaques Arnaudès
- Substitute: French partner, pending from designation

The structure of RETECORK is of a federative nature as each country is represented on the Executive Committee by a national deputy chairperson, which means that the actions of the network at a general level will be compatible with the development of the specific projects of each country.

RETECORK Head Office

Centre Cultural Bassa Rocas

C. Irene Rocas, 1
17124 Llofriu. Girona, España
T. +34 972 303 360
F. +34 972 302 804
retecork@retecork.org

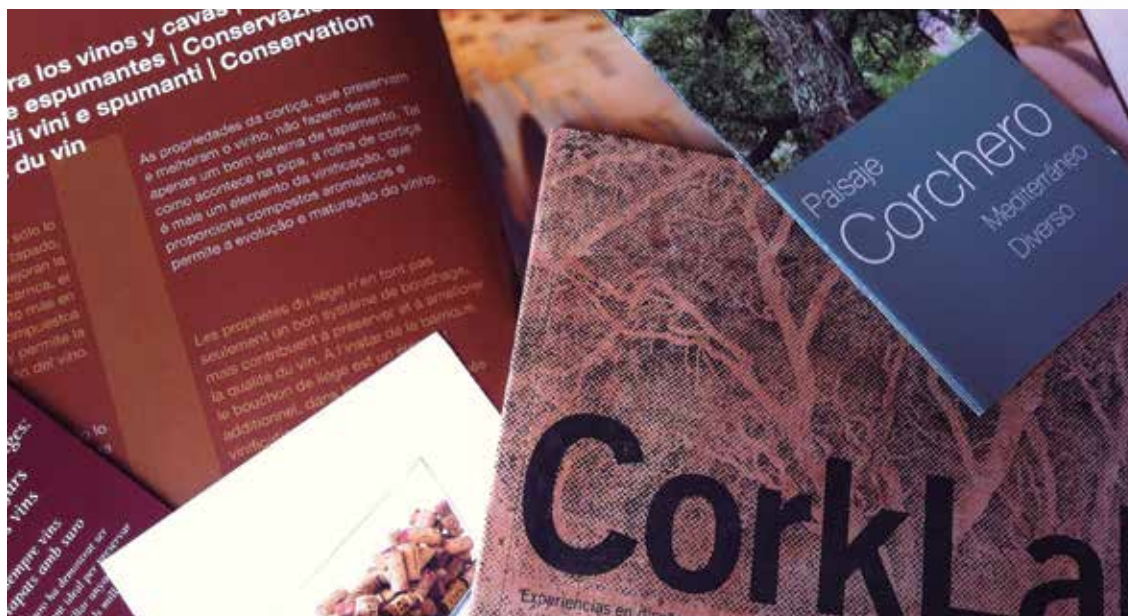
www.retecork.org

The Association's sources of funding


- Annual fees set by the General Assembly
- The creation of its own resources: offering services, activities, etc.
- Obtaining subsidies, donations or sponsors

Annual members fees

• Towns with less than 1.000 inhabitants	240,00 €
• Towns with 1.001 to 5.000 inhabitants	800,00 €
• Towns with 5.001 to 20.000 inhabitants	1.200,00 €
• Towns with 20.001 to 50.000 inhabitants	1.600,00 €
• Towns with more than 50.000 inhabitants	2.000,00 €
2nd grade and regional territorial associations (provinces, regions, departments, counties, etc.)	2.000,00 €
Non-territorial institutions (associate members)	400,00 €



PROMOTION MATERIAL PREPARED AS PART OF THE CORK TERRITORIES. CORK AND CORK LANDSCAPES AS THE BASIS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS PROJECT, CO-FUNDED BY THE SPANISH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT AFFAIRS AND BY THE EAFRD.



**MAIN CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE CORK-PRODUCING
SECTOR**

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CORK-PRODUCING SECTOR

The extraction and use of cork, in addition to its environmental function, has been and continues to be a feature of territorial cohesion and of the generation of wealth for many rural areas. It has enabled sustainable forest management to be developed and has created an economic structure of reference in the territories with cork oak forests. Thanks to this, it has prevented the emigration and the loss of population from these rural territories.



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This situation did not start in our times, it is a very old activity: cork is documented as having been used as stoppers for Roman amphorae. However, it was the appearance of “champagne”, thanks to Dom Pérignon, that made cork and its use become normalised and turned it into an economic motor.

During the initial period, immediately after Dom Pérignon, a craftsmanship dedicated to manufacturing highly appreciated cork stoppers started to grow. From France, following the supply of the raw material, there was a systemised use of Catalan forests. From there, it gradually spread throughout the Iberian Peninsula and Italy. The evolution from artisanal work to industry increased the economic value of the raw material and its manufactured products. New applications appeared which, throughout the 19th century, led to deep changes in the sector and, above all, in the municipalities involved. In all of them, there was a genuine industrial revolution that favoured the appearance of cosmopolitan towns due to the progressive spread of the cork business. An authentic cork civilisation was created.



ARCHIVE OF IMAGES FROM THE CORK MUSEUM (MUSEU DEL SURO) IN PALAFRUGELL. PHOTO: RICARD MUR 1920.

The first half of the 20th century saw the culminating moment of the cork sector: cork stoppers for still wines and sparkling wines was just one of the subsectors together with two others: the discs for crown seals for beer and soft drinks and industrial applications in paper for cigarette filters, refrigeration, insulating material and car parts which were obtained from agglomerated cork. The cork industry broke the barriers of the cork territories and semi-prepared raw material was exported to industries introduced in the rest of Europe and in the New World.



CROWN SEALS



CIGARETTES WITH CORK PAPER FILTERS

However, it was the last third of the 20th century when a new double evolution in the sector took place: on the one hand, the growth of the Portuguese industry which became the leading cork power in the world and, on the other hand, the appearance of synthetic products which made cork disappear from the beer and soft drinks subsector, as well as from an overwhelming part of other industrial applications. Cork stoppers alone have remained the mainstay of wine markets of all kinds to the present. Nevertheless, in recent years, synthetic materials (plastic and aluminium) have started to undermine the role of cork stoppers. Today, it is estimated that 70% of wine bottles are sealed with cork stoppers and 30% with alternative materials.

Nevertheless, unlike the last century, the current situation may (and, in our opinion, should) lean towards cork. There are an increasing number of studies that show that under no circumstances do metal or plastic stoppers improve wine in the way that cork does, confirming cork as the ideal material to ensure the correct evolution of wine in the bottle.

At the same time, there is growing concern for and need to manage the environment correctly. In this field, the advantage of cork over synthetic materials is even greater; astoundingly so.

This allows us to believe that cork is moving into a new era: not just because cork stoppers are winning the battle against the alternatives, but because the quality and environmental values of cork products enable us to observe that the way is slowly being opened up to new uses that recover some of those which caused the market share to drop dramatically; flooring, insulating material, accessories and traditional craftwork are in a good position to gradually win back new ground.

However, today's cork sector must face some challenges which, if they are not dealt with, could limit it being able to make the most of the opportunities and its own potentials.



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ECOLOGY ROOM OF THE CORK MUSEUM (MUSEU DEL SURO) IN PALAFRUGELL. PHOTO: JORDI MESTRES

AN ECOSYSTEM OF GREAT WEALTH AND BIODIVERSITY

The Cork Oak, *Quercus Suber*, in its various forms and locations, makes up an ecosystem of great wealth that is only found in the Western Mediterranean: Portugal, Spain, the South of France, Italy, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Its location is strategic in stopping desertification by improving water balances and being resistant to forest fires. It also efficiently acts against the climate change as a CO₂ sink.



CORK OAK FOREST IN AÏN DRAHAM WITH THE DESERT IN THE BACKGROUND, TUNISIA (SOURCE: IPROCOR)

It is also home to a varied biodiversity, in which species of great wildlife value, protected by European directives, live, such as Spanish Imperial Eagle (*Aquila adalberti*), Bonelli's Eagle (*Hieraetus fasciatus*), Eurasian Black Vulture (*Aegypius monachus*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Black stork (*Ciconia nigra*) and Eurasian Eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*). Mammals include: Grey Wolf (*Canis lupus*), Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardina*), Wildcat (*Felis silvestris*) and Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*).



GOLDEN EAGLE
PHOTO: PHARAOH HOUND

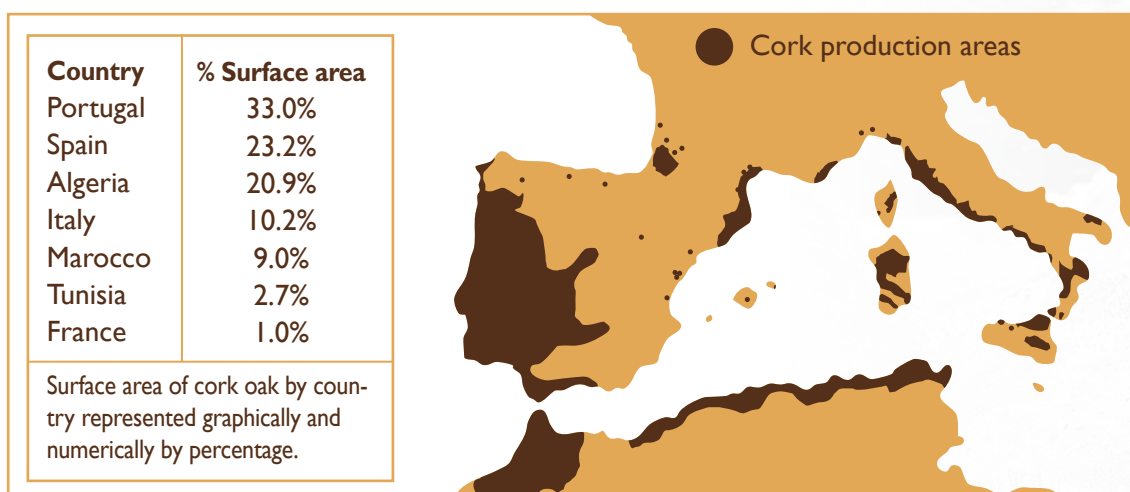


IBERIAN LINX. PARQUE DE DOÑANA.
PHOTO: JOSÉ MARÍA ALVAREZ

CORK, A DRIVING FORCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Together with this environmental value, the physical and chemical properties of cork have meant that a very important economic activity has been developed in rural areas, linked to the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors.

Of the approximately 2.7 million hectares of cork oaks that exist in the world, 1.48 million are in Europe, and the remaining, 1.22 million, in North Africa. The Iberian Peninsula has the greatest mass of cork oaks in the world; Portugal is the leading producer, followed by Spain.



The entire productive chain of cork is found in the rural environment. It is formed by three main agents: the owners of the cork forests, the people who prepare the sheets of cork and the manufacturers of the final products, mainly cork stoppers. In addition, the cultural and heritage legacy of this activity, with more than 200 years of history, together with the unique nature of cork oak landscapes, make up an excellent resource to create new opportunities in these territories, linked to the development of new sustainable models of tourism.

According to data from IPROCOR, el *Instituto del Corcho, la Madera y el Carbón Vegetal* of Extremadura and the C.E.LIÈGE, *Confédération Européenne du Liège*, the estimated production of cork is 340,000 tonnes per year. Full time forestry work and “stripping” (annual) work represent about 2 million working days a year in the forests. The industry of preparation finishes and commerce in Europe represents between 90,000 and 100,000 jobs and an overall invoicing (exterior and interior market) of €1.7 billion a year.





CORK STOPPERS, THE BACKBONE OF THE SECTOR

The physical and chemical properties of cork (compressibility, elasticity, oxygen permeability, durability, etc.) help the wine-producing process in a decisive way. This is why cork stoppers, in their wide variety of types, have become *the backbone of the sector*, as defined by the Portuguese researcher María Carolina Varela. Currently, in a setting of worldwide stagnation in the consumption of wine, the annual world production is estimated to be about 14,000 million stoppers.

Therefore, we are looking at a sector that works with a raw material that is notably local but which has consolidated a worldwide market.



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The industry is characterised by the coexistence of some large groups, with strong capital, and an industrial fabric of small, dynamic companies with local capital, deeply rooted in the territory, with an average of approximately 15 employees per company and an enviable level of *know-how*.

THE CHALLENGES THAT THE CORK SECTOR FACES

This sector is currently having to face some problems of an internal and external nature of which we would like to highlight:

In the first place, the cork oak is facing diverse problems of a biological order, which are more notable in certain formations such as in pastures. For example, problems of regeneration and plant health have been detected, such as root rot which is caused by a *Phytophthora cinnamomi* infection.



The particular nature of the cork oak is worthy of a mention with regard to its performance, as it requires long periods of time until one is able to obtain the first economically profitable “stripping”. Therefore public policies to help set up exploitations need to be developed and they are currently not sufficiently well funded. However, it is necessary to maintain and, whenever possible, increase the production of cork in cork oak forests.

In the second place, there is a high dependence on a single product: cork stoppers for wine. This creates uncertainty for companies and cork-producing territories. Changes in consumption could reduce the demand for wine and the emergence of new wine-producing companies which do not have cork easily available could facilitate the appearance of alternative products. As an example, we should mention that the current market share for cork stoppers is 70% of the total bottles produced in the world, with a loss of approximately 10 points in the last decade, in calculated values.

Despite the joint efforts carried out to ensure quality (*International Code of Cork Stopper Manufacturing Practices and SYSTECODE certificate*), the value of cork stoppers as a natural, biodegradable product with food safety and traceability guarantees has not had sufficient repercussion amongst consumers and opinion makers, therefore we need to make a very significant effort to create awareness and to communicate.



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The extraction of cork is a sustainable activity, which respects the tree, which makes the most of a renewable resource which, together with responsible management, does not affect the ecosystem or its environmental services (supplies services, climate regulation, conservation of biodiversity, water retention, protection of land, cultural, etc.).

In the third place, the cork sector, despite its importance, has had and still has a low political relevance, among other reasons due to its particular nature and due to the fact that the activity is focused on small companies and micro-companies. Partly as a result of this, there is a progressive loss of cultural heritage, of social recognition of its object values, and a commoditisation of the fact that its use is being replaced by synthetic products.

MODERNISATION OF THE SECTOR AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CORK LEGACY

However, cork has key elements in its favour that can influence its development as a sector. On the one hand, there is its sustainable character, as it is a natural, organic, renewable, recyclable (which is what allows for different industrial uses), biodegradable material, the production of which does not contaminate, which consumes little energy and minimises the waste as it can be used to generate renewable energies. The cork-producing industry has carried out and continues to carry out a complex, integral modernisation process.

In addition, the importance of cork oaks to combat climate change makes their use a strategic factor. In this sense, we should mention that, taking into account its life in the cork oak forest, cork stoppers present a total balance of CO₂ that is negative whereas plastic and aluminium stoppers have positive balances, which means that these non-renewable and non-biodegradable materials leave a greater ecological print. Considering only stoppers, Luís Gil, a researcher at the INETI (*Instituto Nacional de Engenharia, Tecnologia e Inovação of Portugal*), calculated the CO₂ balance as per the following table:

	CORK STOPPER	PLASTIC STOPPER	ALUMINIUM STOPPER
			
BALANCE CO₂:	2,5 kg per tonne	4,3 kg per tonne	10 kg per tonne

In addition, if we consider the entire life cycle of the cork stopper, it fixes a quantity of CO₂ that is double its weight.

Finally, knowledge about the sector should be an economic motor for the territory. The sector currently maintains employment in rural areas and can create new employment related to different possibilities: nature, cultural and industrial tourism, eco-tourism, etc.

Taking into account the economy of the services and the fact that the quality of the territory is its economic capital and a factor of competitiveness, the quality of cork oak landscapes is a motor in local development and a territorial marketing instrument to confer value on its products.

To make the most of the opportunities that there are and to be able to deal with the weaknesses and threats to which the sector is subjected, we need a joint, coordinated action from all the agents in the productive chain and the value chain of the sector: from the companies, technological centres, business associations, areas of economic promotion and local development, natural protected open spaces and museums and interpretation centres. It cannot be forgotten that local administration plays a decisive role in maintaining and increasing the quality and competitiveness of the territory.



ENCONTRO INTERNACIONAL | INTERNATIONAL MEETING

PATRIMÓNIO CULTURAL,
A CORTIÇA E OS MUSEUS
CULTURAL HERITAGE,
CORK AND MUSEUMS

AUDITÓRIO MUNICIPAL — FÓRUM CULTURAL DO SEIXAL
MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM — SEIXAL CULTURAL FORUM

2 - 3 JULHO | JULY 2010 | SEIXAL - PORTUGAL

SECRETARIADO | ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
Comissão Municipal do Seixal — Praça da República — Praça 1.ª de Maio, n.º 1
2840-485 Seixal — Portugal — Telefones: (+351) 210 976 111 — Fax: (+351) 210 976 113
E-mail: ecomuseu@cm-seixal.pt — www.cm-seixal.pt/ecomuseu

ORGANIZAÇÃO | ORGANISATION

ACOMUSEU MUNICIPAL DO SEIXAL
CÂMARA MUNICIPAL

PARCEIRO | PARTNER

RETECORK



ENCUENTRO SOBRE LA GESTIÓN DE ESPACIOS NATURALES CORCHEROS
TROBADA SOBRE LA GESTIÓ D'ESPÀIS NATURALS SURERS

PALAFRUGELL - GIRONA - Del 1 al 3 de diciembre 2009
TEATRO MUNICIPAL DE PALAFRUGELL

Due to the importance that this activity has on local development, the cooperation between cork-producing regions and towns is a fundamental feature for introducing common strategies that defend a model of sustainable development, based on the maintenance of cork production and the increase of its competitiveness.



**ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION
OF THE EUROPEAN
NETWORK OF
CORK-PRODUCING
TERRITORIES**

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF CORK-PRODUCING TERRITORIES

CHAPTER I (GENERAL DISPOSITIONS)

FIRST ARTICLE (Name and territorial scope)

1. The European Network of Cork-Producing Territories is hereby constituted, to be known as RETECORK and hereinafter called the Network, which will be governed by the following articles of association and the rest of applicable legislation.

2. The action of the Network spreads throughout the entire European territory. It will also be open to the participation and collaboration of associations in third countries and particularly countries related to cork production such as the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, etc.), through producing collaboration agreements.

3. This Network has a public character and no official language; however these articles of association must be translated into the languages of the members that make up the association, by each of its members.

SECOND ARTICLE (Head Office)

1. The registered office is established in Palafrugell, Girona, Spain in the premises that Palafrugell Town Council assigns for this purpose, for a minimum period of 3 corporate terms of office (nine years). The registered office is in the Bassa Rocas Social and Cultural Centre, at Calle Irene Rocas number 1, Llofríu (postcode 17124), Girona, Spain.

2. The head office may be moved only when the three terms of office have been completed and on the agreement of the absolute majority of the General Assembly.

3. Delegations of the Association may be created, through proposals from the Executive Committee and with the approval of the General Assembly.

THIRD ARTICLE (Object)

To represent and defend the interests of the territorial collectives, understanding the diversity and specific nature of the organisations of each country and body adhered which represent territories with presence in the cork sector.

To contribute to the dissemination and to confer value on the cultural and heritage legacy that the cork activity has left in our territories.

FOURTH ARTICLE (Activities)

To collaborate with the aim of achieving:

- Economic promotion and fostering employment.
- The reciprocal opening of international markets.
- Promoting business competitiveness and that of local production systems.
- Environmental respect and the application of the local Agenda 21 promoting sustainable development.
- Respect for the business clauses and the fostering of sustainable consumption.
- To tighten links of collaboration and interchange of experiences, in particular in the areas of culture, heritage, training, the environment and social relations.
- To stimulate relations and interchanges between members, in particular favouring study initiatives, publishing and disseminating information, as well as organising and promoting conferences and meetings.
- To foster cooperation to development, in particular with the territories with historic relations or with the original areas of emigration that currently exist.
- To promote training and to encourage employment in the cork sector.
- To promote candidatures for projects that are co-funded in the framework of European programmes in all the areas of action of the associated members.

CHAPTER II (MEMBERS)

FIFTH ARTICLE (Members and Adhesion)

Types of members

a) Territorial collectives: local and regional administrations:

Have status of:

1. Founding members: will be those who present the documents showing their desire to adhere approved by the plenary sessions and agreements of the relevant bodies.
2. Effective members: will be those who adhere later.

b) Non-territorial institutions

Have status of:

3. Associate members:
 - Territorial Groups of the Industry and of the Cork Companies
 - Workers' unions and organisations
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Universities
 - Higher Education Centres and Research Bodies
 - Associations and agencies of local and regional development
 - Organisations that can offer experience and knowledge to the objectives of the Association
 - Official Associations of Professionals
 - Non-governmental organisations that protect the environment

Right to express an opinion and to vote

All members have the right to voice an opinion and to vote, as well as to submit proposals.

Adhesions

The proposals for new adhesions will be submitted to the Executive Committee in each case and to the approval of the General Assembly.

SIXTH ARTICLE (rights and obligations of the members)

a) Members of the association have the following rights:

- To receive the maximum information about the association's activities, financial state and yearly budget.
- To participate in the General Assembly, carrying out their right to express an opinion and to vote, in the terms established in the fifth article, differentiating between territorial and non-territorial members.
- To choose the positions that will represent the association.
- To offer themselves as candidates for the positions on the association.

b) Members of the Network have the obligation to pay the yearly fee and to actively participate in the Network's activities.

CHAPTER III (SOCIAL BODIES)

SEVENTH ARTICLE (Bodies)

The Network is made up by the following bodies:

- A General Assembly
- An Executive Committee
- A Taxation Board
- National Association of RETECORK

EIGHTH ARTICLE (National Associations)

1. Composition

It will be formed by a representative of each member association and accredited by it or by the people delegated by means of a document issued by the representative or by the greatest authority in the association.

The General Assembly is directed by a Table composed of a chairperson, deputy chairperson and secretary, who are chosen from a joint list by the member bodies at the General Assembly. The chairperson is substituted by the deputy chairperson if unable to attend. The chairperson will have the decisive vote in the case of a draw.

2. Meetings

The celebration of one ordinary meeting every year is obligatory, which must rotate among the member countries and in keeping with the order established in the internal regulations of functioning of the member bodies. When the circumstances require it, extraordinary meetings may be held, at the request of the chairperson or of a quarter of the members of the General Assembly.

3. The quorum for constituting the General Assembly

The quorum must be half the members plus one for the first convocation of the members of the Network. If a quorum is not reached for the first convocation, an hour later a second convocation will be called for which the attendance of a 4th of the members of the network with the right to vote will be necessary. On the second convocation, agreements of special importance, such as modifying the articles of association, the head office or the composition of the bodies may not be adopted.

4. Method for adopting agreements

As a general rule, the agreements that are adopted in the General Assembly will be by simple majority, with the exceptions established in the articles of association, with qualified majority.

NINTH ARTICLE (Responsibilities of the General Assembly)

The Chairman of the table of the General Assembly will have the following responsibilities:

• To analyse and approve

- The annual report on the activities carried out and the financial report
- The proposal for activities and the budget for the following financial year
- The yearly fee that members of the Network will have to pay
- The modification of the articles of association
- The ratification of new memberships of the Network at the proposal of the Executive Committee
- Withdrawals of membership
- The creation of delegations of the association
- The nomination of the auditor

• To proceed with the election of positions

The Chairman of the table of the General Assembly will have the following responsibilities: To initiate and preside over the meetings, ensuring the correct functioning of the General Assembly and to call the General Assemblies.

The closing date for the budgetary financial year and the accountancy of the association will be 31 December of each year.

TENTH ARTICLE (Executive Committee)

1. Composition

The body responsible for the administration, called the Executive Committee, chosen by the General Assembly, will be made up of five members (a chairperson and four deputy chairpersons) and five substitutes. The presidency may be held on a turn-taking basis from the end of the first term of office by agreement of the absolute majority of the members of the Network at the General Assembly. The Chairperson is substituted by the Deputy Chairperson in the case of being unable to attend.

If the deputy chairpersons are absent, they will be substituted by the substitutes.

The Executive Committee is chosen from the joint list by the social bodies of the General Assembly, by the majority of its members.

2. Meetings

The Executive Committee will usually meet at least twice a year, in a different place which will be decided on a turn-taking basis between the member states, and one of them will coincide with the holding of the Annual General Assembly.

3. Functions of the Chairperson

- The Chairperson is the highest representative of the Network with the capacity to take on commitments for the management of the Network, both in the field of activities as well as the budget.
- The Chairperson will make sure that the agreements adopted by the Executive Committee will be carried out, as well as those adopted by the General Assembly.
- The Chairperson may delegate his representation to a member of the Executive Committee.
- The post of Chairperson will be given on a turn taking basis between the member states, with a limit of two terms of office.

4. Functions of the Deputy Chairperson

The deputy chairpersons will have as their main mission, among others, that of coordinating the national network of cork-producing territories in their own country, and may have responsibilities delegated.

5. Adoption of agreements

The agreements adopted by the Executive Committee will be by simple majority. The Chairperson is authorised to certify the agreements of this Executive Committee.

ELEVENTH ARTICLE (Responsibilities of the Executive Committee)

It will have the following responsibilities:

- Follow-up on the agreements adopted by the General Assembly
- To ensure the management of the Network in the field of the responsibilities delegated by the General Assembly
- Proposals for new adhesion of members
- To draw up the annual report on activities and the economic report
- To execute the annual proposal of activities and budget
- To define the attributes of the members of the Executive Committee
- To propose the creation of delegations of the Network to the General Assembly

The Executive Committee will draw up and will approve internal regulations for the functioning of the member bodies that will define the ways in which the Network will function and may not violate what is established in these articles of association.

TWELFTH ARTICLE (Technical Structure)

The functions of the Executive Committee will be defined in the internal regulations.

THIRTEENTH ARTICLE (Taxation Board)

1. Composition

The Taxation Board will be made up of three members: one chairperson and two members, chosen by the General Assembly from the joint list of the social bodies.

2. Responsibilities

- It is authorised to request the documentation that it sees fit and/or necessary for the supervision of the Network's accounts.
- It must issue an annual report in which it audits the accounts of the association, which it will present to the General Assembly. The Taxation Board's report will be submitted 15 days before the General Assembly, it may contain as many judgements or proposals as it sees fit to improve and to classify the state of the annual accounts.

3. Meetings and adoption of agreements

The meeting of the Taxation Board will coincide with the AGM of the General Assembly.

The agreements adopted by the Taxation Board will be by simple majority.

THIRTEENTH ARTICLE b (National Associations)

1. The members of a state may group together in an Association, if they so wish, so that, within the framework of the general objectives of the network, they can reach the members that pertain to them and are specific to each state, as well as execute the lines of work approved at the General Assembly, in keeping with the reality of their state.
2. The National Associations will have the ability to act exclusively within their state, and their responsibilities are:
 - Institutional relations within the framework of their state.
 - To formulate and manage projects and resources obtained within the framework of their state.
 - To sign pacts and agreements and any other action in keeping with the general objectives of RETECORK in the case that these actions are carried out and/or have their origin in all or part of the territory of their state.
 - Any others that they are delegated at the General Assembly at the proposal of the Executive Committee.
3. Each National Association will designate a registered office which must be in one of the municipalities that is a member of the network. The municipality assigned will be responsible for the coordination of the network in its state. The assignment of the registered office will be notified at RETECORK's General Assembly.

4. The National Associations shall be renewed every three years, coinciding with those of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Taxation Board.
5. To constitute itself as a National Association, the majority of the member municipalities in the state will need to reach agreement on this at the General Assembly. The Chairman of the General Assembly will be informed about the meeting.
6. The obligations of the National Associations are:
 - To develop the agreements of RETECORK's General Assembly.
 - To mandatorily inform the Ordinary General Assembly of its actions, so that it is aware of them.
 - To inform the President of RETECORK's Executive Committee, who shall act as the coordinator of the National Associations, about its activities.
 - Without affecting the obligations of each state, to render accounts to RETECORK's Taxation Board.
7. All members of the European Network of Cork-Producing Territories - RETECORK must join the National Associations of their state, if such an association should exist. In the same way, if a municipality or association should wish to join the RETECORK National Association, it must also join the European Network of Cork-Producing Territories - RETECORK.

FOURTEENTH ARTICLE (Voting and duration of the terms of office)

The boards of the Social Bodies (Executive Committee, Table of the General Assembly and Taxation Board) are chosen by the General Assembly for a three-year period, and maybe re-chosen for further three-year periods but may not exceed two terms of office.

CHAPTER IV (DIVERSE DISPOSITIONS)

FIFTEENTH ARTICLE (Patrimony and Funds)

The Association's sources of funding are:

- The annual fees set by the General Assembly
- Donations, subsidies, sponsorships
- The results of its activities

Adhesion to RETECORK is conditioned to the payment of the annual fee. The amount of this fee will be set by the AGM, by absolute majority.

In addition to the fees, the Network may obtain resources from subsidies from public or private bodies or associations.

The funds made available to the Network may only be used to carry out the objectives defined by its articles of association.

SIXTEENTH ARTICLE (Fees)

The fees to sustain the functioning of the association will be paid annually, in accordance with what is established in the internal regulations, differentiating:

- a) First-degree territorial associations (municipality) according to the number of legal inhabitants.
- b) Second grade and regional territorial associations (provinces, departments, counties, etc.).
- c) Non-territorial institutions (adhered members).

The amount of the fees will be reviewed annually in accordance with the proposal of the Executive Committee.

The 10% of each RETECORK member fee will pass to the National Association concerned, if it exists. The transfer will take place when the member has duly paid its entire fee to RETECORK.

SEVENTEENTH ARTICLE (Amendments to the Articles of Association)

The General Assembly may carry out amendments to the articles of association.

These amendments should be accepted by the absolute majority of members present with the right to vote, as long as there is a sufficient quorum.

EIGHTEENTH ARTICLE (Dissolution)

The Assembly is dissolved by the decision of two thirds of the legal number of the members present at a General Assembly which has been called expressly for this purpose.

In the case of dissolution, the patrimonial assets of the Network will be reinvested in the institutions determined by the General Assembly that decrees the dissolution, without affecting the non-profit-making character of the association.

NINETEENTH ARTICLE (Unforeseen cases)

Cases that are not envisaged in the Articles of Association will be governed by the internal regulations approved in the Executive Committee.

TWENTIETH ARTICLE (Right of separation)

Any member may leave the Network, as long as the general public interests are not negatively affected:

1. At the request of the member, if the following requirements are met:

- a. Request to be unsubscribed from the Network, with the relevant agreement from the body which decided on the initial membership.
- b. Be up to date with payment.

In this case, the unsubscription shall be dealt with after verifying compliance with the pre-established requirements, within a month from receiving the documentation.

2. Due to one of the following reasons decided by the Network:

- a. Non-payment of the membership fee during two consecutive years.
- b. In the case of actions being carried out that are contrary to the general public interests of the association.

In this case, the member shall be unsubscribed from the moment of the notification of the relevant agreement made by the General Assembly. Nevertheless, the unsubscribed member shall continue to owe the amount accumulated until the date of the agreement.

In both cases, the fee for the financial year in which the unsubscription occurs shall be calculated pro rata by semester.

TWENTY FIRST ARTICLE (Credit operations)

RETECORK may enter into debt in the short- and long-term to fund projects, investments and other programmes that bear a direct relation on the business object and purpose. The conditions of credit operations (exclusion period, rate of interest, duration of the credit and amount) will be approved by the General Assembly by absolute majority.

TWENTY-SECOND ARTICLE (Secretary)

The secretary of the RETECORK Association will hold the function of a notary and legal consultant, with powers to certify the business agreements that the executive committee, the General Assembly and other complementary boards adopt.

FINAL DISPOSITION

The regime of associations that is applied to this association is that contained in Organic Law 1/2002, of 22nd March, regulating the law on associations.







Head Office

Centre Cultural Bassa Rocas

C. Irene Rocas, 1

17124 Llofriu. Girona, España

T. +34 972 303 360

F. +34 972 302 804

retecork@retecork.org

www.retecork.org

