

WEBINAR



Date 28, July, 2025



Time 16:00 CET (15:00 Lisbon)

Wildfire Damage and Economic Approaches to Manage Landscape and Valorise Ecosystem Services

This webinar is organised by the Forest Fire Research Centre of ADAI at the University of Coimbra (PT) and is chaired by Dr. Simone Martino, a Senior Researcher in Natural Capital Valuation at the James Hutton Institute in Craigiebuckler, Aberdeen (UK). The event will focus on the design and implementation of two new solutions aimed at reducing wildfire risk. We will discuss the importance of Payments for Watershed Services (PWS) programs on protecting multiple values at risk in Colorado, and the implementation of Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) in Spain to compensate extensive graziers for their contributions to reducing fuel load.

Attendance is free, but registration is individual and mandatory at
<https://bit.ly/webinar28jul>

Time	Title	Speaker
16:00	Welcome	Domingos Xavier Viegas <i>CEIF/ADAI, University of Coimbra, PT</i>
16:10	Introduction to the webinar	Simone Martino <i>The James Hutton Institute, UK</i>
16:15	Ecosystem services and return on investment from fuel treatments: Insights from Colorado	Kelly Jones <i>New Mexico State University, USA</i>
16:35	Q&A	
16:45	Targeted Grazing and Landscape Management for Wildfire Resilience in the Mediterranean	Elsa Varela <i>Institute of Public Goods and Policies (CSIC), ES</i>
17:05	Q&A	
17:15	Wrap up and conclusions	Chaired by Simone Martino
17:30	End of the webinar	

The Speakers



Kelly Jones is a Professor at New Mexico State University and affiliated with the JTH Forestry Research Center. Trained in environmental economics, her research focuses on understanding the anthropogenic drivers of land use change and biodiversity loss and measuring the impact of conservation and restoration actions on land cover change, ecosystem services, and human wellbeing outcomes.

Abstract:

Severe wildfires can be costly to society, impacting human lives, built infrastructure, and ecosystem services. In the western United States, there has been increased investments in reducing hazardous fuels to restore ecological integrity and reduce wildfire risks to the public. While the biophysical effectiveness of fuel treatments has received a lot of attention, research on the economic efficiency of fuel treatments is less developed. This talk will present results from a benefit-cost analysis conducted for a payments for ecosystem services program in the forests around Denver, Colorado that was aimed at protecting downstream watershed services. Our results illustrate the potential return on investment from fuel treatments and the complexities inherent in measuring the economic efficiency of fuels reduction programs.



Elsa Varela is Associate Research Professor at the Institute of Public Goods and Policies (CSIC). Her work focuses on promoting sustainable, wildfire-resilient landscapes through biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service provision. She applies economic valuation and behavioral science using a multimethod approach—including surveys, interviews, expert panels, and deliberative methods—to address land abandonment, forest expansion, and wildfire impacts from a socio-ecological perspective.

Abstract:

This seminar will explore a range of initiatives aimed at fostering wildfire-resilient landscapes in Mediterranean regions, with a particular focus on the role of traditional grazing practices—especially targeted grazing—in achieving this goal. Drawing on case studies from various parts of Spain, the talk will examine efforts to restore and sustain landscape management through integrated approaches that combine ecological, economic, and social objectives. Special attention will be given to emerging payment schemes that compensate extensive graziers for their contributions to fuel load reduction. The discussion will address both the opportunities these schemes offer to align wildfire risk mitigation with traditional land uses, and the challenges they face in terms of design, additionality, and impact assessment, offering insights into how these instruments can be strengthened moving forward.

Note: A certificate of attendance will be issued in September to those assisting for the full duration of the webinar.