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REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA
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Experimental Cork Oak Forest
Cusseddu Miali Parapinta

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The cork forest, belonging to Agris Sardegna - Dipartimento della Ricerca per il Sughero e la Silvicoltura, lies near Tempio Pausania (www.comune.tempiopausania.ss.it), a little town in the North of Sardinia island.

Its surface of about 67 ha is divided in 12 areas, each of them homogeneous as far as the number and the age of the trees; as average, the altitude is of 450 m a.s.l., the annual temperature is of 13.8°C, and the rainfalls are of 862 mm/year. The forest is crossed by a river and by many brooks and is a natural plantation of *Quercus suber L.*, occasionally mixed with *Quercus pubescens Willd.* and *Fraxinus ornus L.*

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The parent material is made of a substrate of Paleozoic granites and granodiorites; the soils are homogeneous and can be ascribed to the association of brown earth and lithosols on granites and porphyries.

Since 2005, the Sughereta Cusseddu-Miali-Parapinta has been the first cork forest certified (SA FM/COC-001436) according to the Forest Stewardship Council Standards (www.fsc.org): the forest management is according to the sustainability criteria, and free of pesticides; the only intervention is the area-wide use of *Bacillus thuringiensis* for the control of leaf eating insects. The last cork harvest was done on summer 2010, with a production of about 150 tons of cork certified according to the FSC Standards (www.fsc-italia.it/fnews-ed-iniziative/news/205-arrivano-in-italia-i-primi-tappi-di-sughero-certificati-fsc)

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The main research activities on the cork oak forest are about:

- multifunctional management, with reference to the natural regeneration of uneven-aged stand
- recovery after a fire
- study of methods for the optimisation of the artificial regeneration
- analysis of the most relevant pests and diseases and their management.

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The forest was selected as an internal negative control (being a natural non-contaminated environment) in the Nato Project SfP (ESP.MD.SFP 981674): “Preventive and remediation strategies for continuous elimination of poly-chlorinated phenols from forest soils and ground waters” (http://www.unicatt.it/nato).

In collaboration with:

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