

ASSESSMENT OF THE LANDSCAPE VISUAL QUALITY OF MARGINAL AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

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In the present study we assess the visual quality of the olive plantations based on a survey. The methodology used in this study is based on Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) approach.

Key words: assessment, landscape, visual quality.

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ОЦЕНКА ВИЗУАЛЬНОГО КАЧЕСТВА ЛАНДШАФТОВ ПРИГРАНИЧНЫХ СЕЛЬСКОХОЗЯЙСТВЕННЫХ СИСТЕМ

Дана оценка визуального качества оливковых плантаций. При проведении исследований использовался аналитический иерархический процесс (АИП).

Ключевые слова: оценка, ландшафт, визуальное качество.

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ОЦІНКА ВИЗУАЛЬНОЇ ЯКОСТІ ЛАНДШАФТІВ ПРИКОРДОННИХ СІЛЬСЬКОГОСПОДАРСЬКИХ СИСТЕМ

Дана оцінка візуальної якості оливкових плантацій. При проведенні досліджень використовувався аналітичний ієрархічний процес (АІП).

Ключові слова: оцінка, ландшафт, візуальна якість.

The upland olive plantations extend on a vast area of Andalusia (some 200,000 ha). These agricultural systems are characterized by their high environmental value and low profitability. From a physical point of view, some 20% of these plantations can be considered as marginal and be under risk of abandonment (Guzmán-Álvarez, 2004), specially after the decoupling of the olive oil subsidies. Since in most cases these agricultural systems neighbour Protected Natural Parks, like in the present study, their environmental functions, and the risks derived from the agricultural abandonment (MacDonald et al., 2000), must be taken into account in order to determine which type of management, including a controlled abandonment, meets both the Society demands and the profitability of the farming activity. In the present study we assess the visual quality of these olive plantations based on a survey. Then, the Society's visual preferences for different types of olive plantations in mountain areas have been integrated into a Geographical Information System (GIS).

The methodology used in this study is based on Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) approach (Saaty, 1980). The AHP belongs to the family of multicriteria decision-making techniques. The principal interest of this method lies in the possibility of measuring as tangible relatively intangible commodities during the decision-making process and hierarchical structuring of the decision making problem (Saaty et al., 2003). The measurement of the different objectives is reached via pair-wise comparisons between all of them. A review of applied studies that have employed this technique can be found in Vaidya and Kumar (2006).

According to these results the highly visible areas occupied by olive farming system with grass vegetation cover between the trees and olive plantations on the way of transformation to Mediterranean forest are most value by the population. Conversely, the areas occupied by conventional olive farming in low visible places obtained the lowest valuation.

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