

<p>WORLD GATHERING OF NOMADIC & TRANSHUMANT PASTORALISTS</p> <p>Spain</p> <p>From 8-16 September 2007</p>	<p>PRESS RELEASE</p> <hr/> <p>Tel: +34 915 192 194 or +34 921 445 480 Mobile: 630 43 80 93 Fax: +34 913 896 273 E-mail: prensa@nomadassegovia2007.org Web: http://www.pastos.org</p>
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Press Release 2 – Sent out on 12/07/2007

PASTORALISTS FROM THE PICOS DE EUROPA TEACH THEIR PROFESSION TO YOUNG APPRENTICES

This summer, the pastoralists from the Picos de Europa will become teachers. Yesterday, the organisation RedPastor began its Pastoralist School project for young apprentices. The absence of a new generation who will continue the profession is a worrying issue. This topic will be dealt with at the World Gathering of Nomadic and Transhumant Pastoralists which will take place in La Granja, Segovia, from 8 to 16 September. It has been organised by several NGOs and will be supported by the United Nations and the Spanish Government.

Cangas de Onís, Asturias, 12 July 2007. *“He will be like my own son, wherever I go, he will come with me”*. Yesterday, these were the emotional words spoken by an old pastoralist when he found out that a young pupil would be staying with him for the duration of the course in his cabin at the Gumartini fold, which is in the port of Cangas de Onís. The three pastoralist’s apprentices are Eneko who is 28 years old; Miguel who is 33 and Nadine, a young pastoralist aged only 19. They come from Navarre, Cantabria and France respectively. They are all very excited at the prospect of learning about mountain pastoralism as a profession, first hand from the very best teachers.

Pupils and pastoralists as well as the Councillor for Agriculture and former Governor of Pastures, Alberto Valle and employees of the Consortium for Rural Development in Eastern Asturias, met together at the Casa de Pastores de la Vega in Enol, in the heart of the National Park of the Picos de Europa for the preliminary presentation, interview and approval of the aspiring candidates. They will spend one month living in the Gumartini and Fana folds (Cangas de Onís) and the Las Fuentes fold (Onís). The pastoralists offered a great deal of advice including the following: *“Be careful in fog and if there is a storm, the pastoralist should find safety first and then worry about the animals”*.

This course represents the main training initiative of the Pastoralist School project. Its objective is to pass on this remarkable legacy of knowledge, which the pastoralists have, to a new generation so that they can take over a profession which attracts fewer and fewer people. This is part of the PASTOR project, in which the regions of Eastern Asturias, Montaña de Navarra (Navarre Montaña region), Sierras de Albarracín and Maestrazgo de Teruel (the Albarracín and Maestrazgo mountain

ranges, Teruel), and Sierra Norte de Madrid (the northern mountain range of Madrid), supported by the LEADER+ program, try out different strategies to revitalise grazing activity. This is the only way to guarantee the conservation of the landscape and the rich environmental, gastronomic and cultural heritage of our land.

RedPastor is one of the leading organisations supporting the announcement of a national gathering of Spanish pastoralists which will take place in September, before the World Gathering of Nomadic and Transhumant Pastoralists in Segovia. Here, they will discuss the need to help new generations take over pastoralism which is a problem also encountered by nomadic communities in Africa, Asia and America. Several delegations attending the World Gathering in Segovia will be coming from these areas to tackle these and the other problems that affect them.

Apart from training new active pastoralists, the Pastoralist School of the Picos de Europa project is trying to test out different ways of approaching this kind of work. It is aimed at people who are interested in this sort of activity and have no previous experience. It operates in a similar way to the Pastoralist Schools in the Basque Country, the central Spanish Pyrenees and France.

The objective is to facilitate the insertion of new pastoralists, help older, active pastoralists by providing them with support in their day to day work and obtain social recognition for the training courses.

The theoretical part of the course began this summer at the Pastoralist School of the Picos de Europa and includes subjects like "A Cultural Introduction to Pastoralist", taught by an expert in the field, Gonzalo Barrena. "Zootechnics and basic veterinary care for sheep, goats and cows" is taught by a well known researcher from SERIDA, Koldo Osoro. "Cheese Making" is taught by Jesús Gutiérrez who was the president of the Spanish Association of Artisan Cheese Makers. Staff at the National Park will introduce the aspiring pastoralists to subjects like the ecology of the mountain and current legislation. However, after spending time with the flocks and in the cabins, the bulk of the knowledge will be passed on directly by the pastoralist-tutors who are at the very heart of the school. The pupils will be doing practical work with them until mid August.

"We looked for people who were interested in the subject and from here in Asturias but in the end we had to find them in other regions" explains the coordinator of the Pastoralist School who also adds: "The opportunities involved in being a pastoralist are fantastic and unique given that now, the cheese making facilities and the milking rooms of the enclosures involved in the Plan Piloto de Recuperación del Pastoreo (Pilot Scheme to Revive Pastoralism) will soon be fully functional. All this will be available to anyone who wants to take up this profession which has already received investment." He is also of the opinion that "we are confirming the agrarian and livestock rearing potential of Asturias with the launch of this Pastoralist School at a time when it seems that the tourism and service industries are offering the only possible livelihoods. Therefore, it is important to promote and support this through training for example. There are still people who want to live in the countryside, let us not forget that".

For more information please contact: Fernando García-Dory, Director of the Pastoralist School of Picos de Europa. Tel. 675964867 (please leave a message with a contact number or call in the afternoon due to the lack of network coverage in the harbour area). The Consortium for Rural Development in Eastern Asturias.

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The NGO Transhumancia y Naturaleza (Transhumance and Nature), with the help of RedPastor and other NGOs, is organising the “World Gathering of Nomadic and Transhumant Pastoralists” which will take place from 8 to 16 September at La Granja de San Ildefonso (Segovia) and will bring together about 300 representatives from nomadic communities. It will be a unique opportunity for pastoralists from all over the world to exchange experiences and look for solutions. For more information please visit:

The following institutions have collaborated in the World Gathering of Nomadic and Transhumant Pastoralists:

United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP)
Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
Ministerio de Presidencia del Gobierno (Prime Minister’s Office)
Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)
Ministerio de Medio Ambiente (Department of the Environment)
Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (Department of Foreign Affairs)
Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation)
CENEAM – Organismo Autónomo de Parques Naturales (Autonomous Organisation for National Parks)
Fundación Biodiversidad (Biodiversity Foundation)

Institutions which have been involved in events related to the World Gathering of Nomadic and Transhumant Pastoralists:

Autonomous Community of Madrid
Ayuntamiento de Madrid (Madrid City Council)
Diputación Segovia (Segovia Regional Council)
Ayuntamiento de Segovia (Segovia City Council)
Ayuntamiento de La Granja de San Ildefonso (La Granja de San Ildefonso Town Council)
Christensen Fund
WATU Acción Indígena (WATU Indigenous Action)
Fundación Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente (Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente Foundation)