

Foreword

European landscape is changing with an unpredictable and increasing speed. In the 21st century we live our everyday life so fast that we miss a tremendous number of valuables in our life that worth living for. We have to admit that besides nature conservation and densely populated areas, agricultural land is covering most of the Earth's surface so its importance is not questionable. Agriculture plays an important role in people's life and in the life of all terrestrial creatures from fungi to predators. In different languages agriculture is expressed with varying emphasis on its meaning (i.e. in Hungarian it is – with mirror translation – field-economy), mainly concentrating on its function of production. In this manner, agriculture loses its cultural aspect that could be misleading, concerning the functions of agriculture that is more than simply producing crops and meat, creating food. Misinterpretation of agriculture leads to super-intensive farming systems where the important cultural aspects are lost together with all agro-related services, such as ecosystem services, nature conservation services etc.

According to my understanding this explains the main scope of the Eucaland Project – that we are going to introduce here – and also of the Eucaland Network (partly). So, Eucaland Project is focuses mainly on the cultural aspects of agriculture.

The introduction is written by Gloria Pungetti who is, we can say, together with Alexandra Kruse was the mother, the engine and the heart of the project. The introduction is followed by short descriptions of the work packages of the Eucaland Project so each reader might have an idea of what we achieved during these two years of the project period. After the work package descriptions we find the contribution of those participants of the Eucaland Project's final conference whose presented material is not in the project book (edited by Gloria Pungetti and Alexandra Kruse). This is the reason why most of the participants are not authors in this special issue; however most of them are on board of the editorial board.

I would like to take the opportunity to say thank to all the authors for their efforts of writing the work package descriptions and for those writing original articles, to the reviewers who were working hard to finalize this special issue and also to our guest editor, Alexandra Kruse, who was initiator of the article about the glossary and made the biggest effort to keep the authors and the special issue on track so we do not miss the message of the Eucaland Project. I hope that this special issue will be informative from the point of view of introducing the Eucaland Project and will also be an exciting material for reading about researches and new ideas. We – I might say it in the name of the whole project team – see this work as a stage of a long term work that can be and should be continued. And may be, never finished . . .

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