

1st Multifunctional Farming Conference: Food, People, Ecology, Landscape, University of Rzeszów, Poland, 16-20 September 2025

Contributors:

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Phot. Karol Skrobacz

Multifunctional Farming Conference

*Traditional farming supports sustainable tourism in mountainous areas
and grazing is its main component*



Pasture in Beskid Śląski. Phot. Małgorzata Pociask

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Conference Questions:

Why is “traditional” or “multifunctional farming” important?

What values has and can it provide?

What immediate action can we take to support it?

The first interdisciplinary conference on



MULTIFUNCTIONAL FARMING



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Conference discussion: What is needed?

Recognition that cultural landscapes/ traditional agriculture provide:

Rural livelihood (economic)

Biodiversity (ecological)

Belonging, cultural connections and knowledge (social)

Economic opportunity

Valorisation (pride, retain youth)

Creative initiatives to train, retain, connect, and support farmers, shepherds, herders



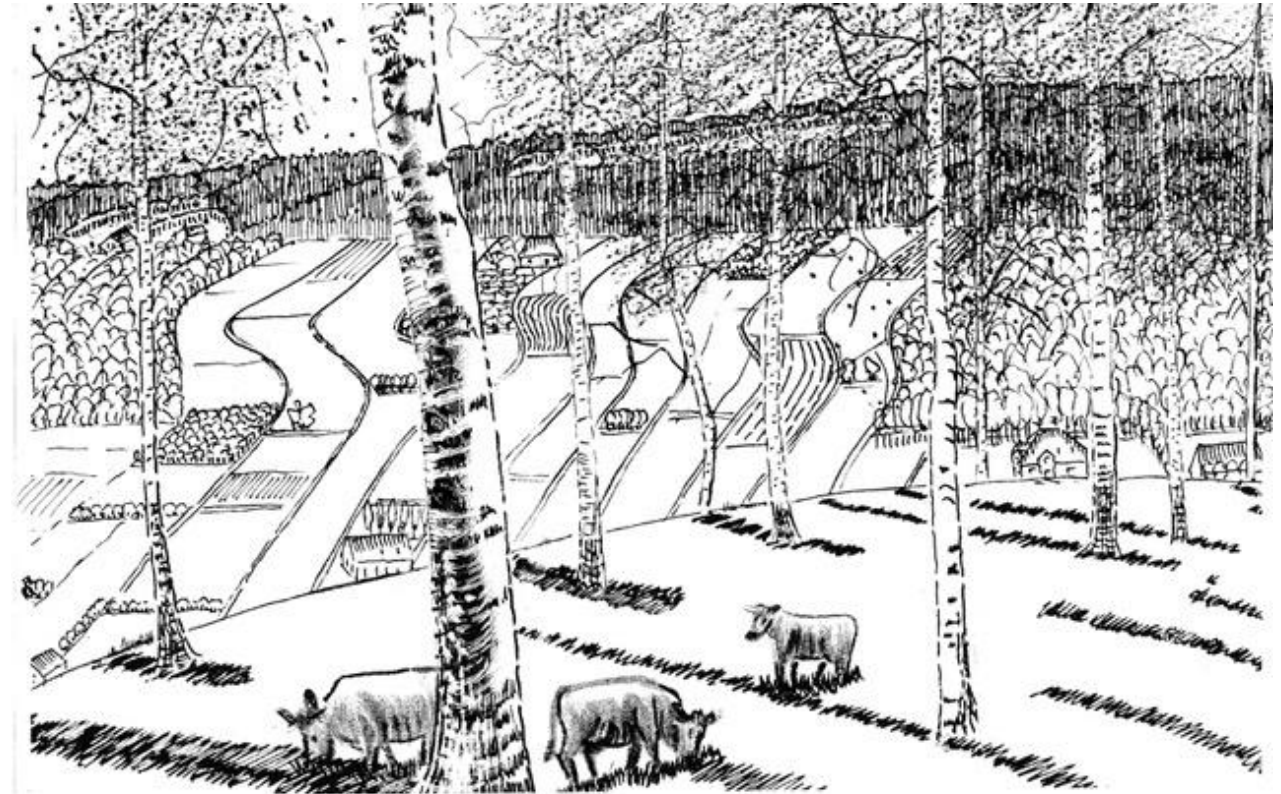
Phot. Stephen Bramwell

Multifunctional Farming Conference

Key messages

Traditional agriculture - whether smallholder, mixed or pastoralism - nested in the landscape and tradition, should be protected and revitalised as an indispensable contribution to food security and ecological resilience of the greater Carpathian region.

In areas, where the revitalisation of mixed family farms is unlikely (e.g., due to poor soil quality), the introduction of extensive grazing should be considered as an irreplaceable tool for the active protection of landscape diversity, and at the same time a source of sought-after healthy food and valuable “wild tree” timber (such as of the Jay-dispersed oaks).



Johan Meeus, Conference Presenter & Landscape Illustrator

Multifunctional Farming Conference

Key messages

Building of public awareness, recognition, and appreciation of the role of traditional agriculture as a unique provider of a wide range of biocultural benefits are required. This awareness should be reflected in an appropriate legal and economic framework that provides traditional agriculture with the necessary autonomy and freedom from bureaucratic constraints.



Wood pasture near Rzeszow. Phot. Gantuya Batdelger

Multifunctional Farming Conference

Key messages related tourism

Message from post-conference workshop: Encourage wise (“real”) agritourism

Tourism development should be subordinated to the primary values and uses of rural areas, such as farming and pastoralism, forestry and woodmanship, local and regional tradition, conservation, etc.

One of the most important missions of tourism should be raising awareness of the importance of traditional farming for sustaining and developing of the countryside's biocultural richness.

Wherever tourism becomes the major industry, it leads to disneylandisation and cultural colonisation of rural communities.



Fanal pasture, Madeira, Phot. Agata Ćwik

Actions at the Conference

Petition Traditional farming for better future: A Rzeszów Manifesto



The screenshot shows the top of a petition page. On the left is the iPetitions logo with the tagline 'YOUR VOICE COUNTS'. The main title of the petition is 'Traditional farming for a better future: The Rzeszów Manifesto'. Below the title, it states '73 people have signed this petition. Add your name now!' with a green arrow pointing to the right.



“...we, the undersigned, are convinced that multifunctional, family-based farming holds great value: economic, social, environmental, as a provider of high-quality food, and as an important factor in shaping rural landscapes and culture - an indispensable factor of the sense of community and identity”

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