



Mapping the spatial impact of livestock grazing activity in Pico Island (Azores, Portugal) in a 15-year period (1998-2013)

Artur Gil (1), Catarina Fonseca (2), and José Benedicto-Royuela (3)

(1) CE3C - Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes & Azorean Biodiversity Group, Faculty of Sciences and Technology, Department of Biology, University of the Azores, 9501-801 Ponta Delgada, Portugal (arturgil@uac.pt), (2) CICS.NOVA - Centro Interdisciplinar de Ciências Sociais, Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1069-061 Lisboa, Portugal (caterinafonseca7@gmail.com), (3) Universitat de Valencia, Facultat d'Economia, Departament d'Anàlisi Econòmica, 46022 Valencia, Comunitat Valenciana, Spain (jose.benedictor@gmx.com)

This study describes a land use / land cover change (LULCC) detection approach aiming to identify and map spatial changes in Pico Island (Archipelago of the Azores, Portugal) directly or indirectly due to livestock grazing activity, in a 15-year period (1998-2013). These LULCC mapping and assessment procedures were developed by using a GIS-based procedure supported by airborne remote sensing data with very high spatial resolution (orthophotomaps) and field work. All relevant land use / land cover trade-offs and their respective drivers were also identified and characterized. Livestock grazing activity is proven to be a major driver of LULC change in Pico Island.