

# Outlook, Perspectives, and Future of Conservation Grazing

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# What Influences Adoption of a Conservation Grazing

## What Can Be Done to Improve the Future

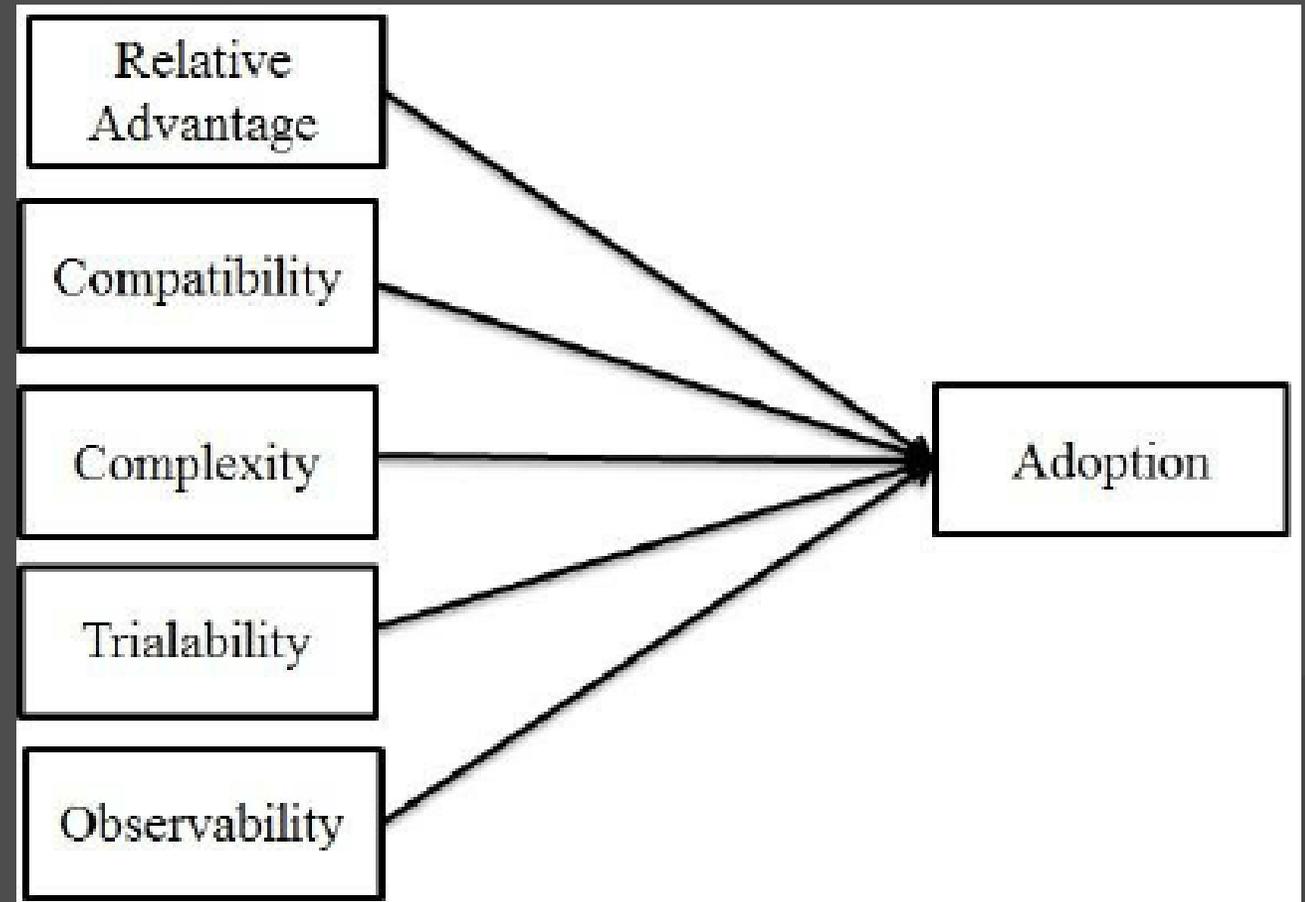


- What would make it easier to integrate conservation and grazing (including conservation *of* grazing and pastoralists)?
- What are the potential advantages?
- Disadvantages?
- What supports should exist?



# Diffusion of Innovation Theory

- Innovation Attributes
- Factors that influence adoption
  - Type, social, communication, change agents
- Stages of adoption
  - Knowledge ->
  - Taking action ->
  - Continue / quit...





# Diffusion Attributes

- **Relative advantage** - whether an innovation is viewed as better than the idea it supersedes.
- **Compatibility** - the degree to which an innovation is viewed as consistent with the current values, previous experiences, and needs of prospective adopters.
- **Complexity** - whether an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and to use.
- **Trialability** - the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a restricted basis.
- **Observability** - the degree to which the outcomes of an innovation are visible to others



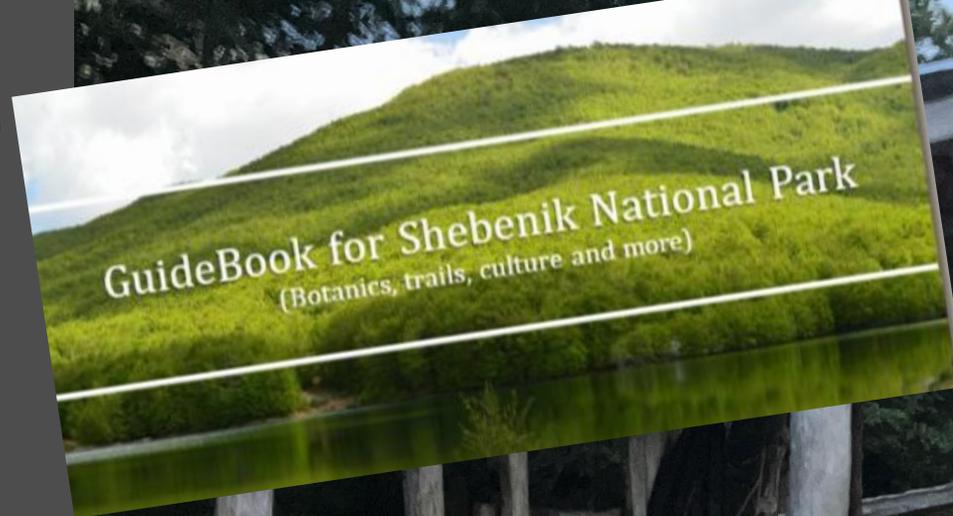
# Relative Advantage of Conservation Grazing

## Possible, if:

- If story and markets exist
- Lower costs/lower input

## No, if:

- Inadequate compensation
- Compensation too complex
- Costs increase more than returns



- "Stani I Urimit (Sheep hut) offers a unique and authentic experience in the heart of the Shebenik National Park. Urim and family warmly welcome visitors...far from luxury but rich in authenticity"

# Trialability of Conservation Grazing



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## Farmer perspective on derelict area:

- Break into smaller sections
- Graze cattle with movement
- Let areas rest
- Block areas for corncrake
- Keep wetland surface open with summer grazing
- “Could you come up with a plan [with a conservation manager]?”

“yes”

- The longest running trial in agricultural history (“traditional grazing systems”)
- Seldom “trialed” in name and conservation intent
- Currently not well defined
- Few models
- Too few “thought partners”
- Lacks personnel support (Park staff, technical support, community coordination)
- Few associations

# Complexity of Conservation Grazing



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Reliant on subsidies  
Out of sync with technology (e.g. silage dates)  
Rooted in tradition/what has been

- Use complexity varies
- Difficult to understand
- Relies on technical knowledge and abstract language
- “Conservation”
- “Biodiversity”
- “High nature value”
  
- What pasture management makes good cheese?: “top pasture, top sanitation, top milk”

# Complexity - Compatibility of Conservation Grazing (farmer/herder language)



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- “We take care of the land and it takes care of us”
- “We want to live in a nice place, and it’s nice that people like to be here.”
- Some farmers will acknowledge the high quality of a pasture with lots of species on another farm, but less willing to say their own is good when it is within 20-30% of the species richness of the other.
- “It is human nature to take out what is, and put something there. We like what grows on it’s own.”
- “Naturalness is a value in this system”
- “Why not ask farmers, because we should carry on doing what helped it get this way [species rich grasslands]”

# Compatibility of Conservation Grazing



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*Is it true? the conservation worldview needs to expand to accommodate different types of 'conservation'*



Photo: Ádók Zsanett

- Usually defined outside of local context
- Feel left out (lack consultation with local practice/history)
- Potentially rule-based changes to long-held practice

*"They don't ask the question: what did farmers do to get habitat to this point"*

*"The National Park do not care about livestock (jóság) as living beings"*

*"They write rules that never existed."*

# Observability of Conservation Grazing

Type	Observable
Economic survival	Yes, but what you see is discouraging
“Pure” conservation grazing	Yes
Landscape	Potentially
Flavor	Yes
Transactional	Yes
People	Potentially



# Diffusion of Innovation Theory



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- Does DOI theory for Conservation Grazing adequately explain potential for adoption?
- Does it provide insight or value?
- “It” (conservation grazing) is a *different concept* for different groups
- Grazing groups are very different:
  - Perceptions, starting points, social conditions, norms, traditions, politics, economics, identity



# How to Improve Adoption?



- What would make it easier to integrate conservation and grazing (including conservation *of* grazing and pastoralists)?

## Consider

1. Relative Advantage
2. Complexity
3. Compatibility
4. Trialability
5. Observability

## Take a specific type:

- Economic survival
- Pure conservation grazing
- Landscape
- Flavor
- Transactional
- People



# Relative Advantage

## *People on the Land*

- People as conservation value
- What additional “relative advantage” could be provided to producers in areas where just “keeping the landscape open” is the priority?





# Reflections on Adoption Support

- Low-input, diversified, pastoral systems could gradually increase in relative profitability (Spain, UK organic, UK fells)
- Support new areas for “neo-reciprocity” (Northumberland e.g.)
  - Building back reciprocity in individualized agricultural systems
- Technology, on-farm sales, new urban-rural connections (“disruptive innovation”)
- Collective investments to improve relative advantage



WHAT ACTIVITY OR WORKSHOP COULD YOU ORGANIZE IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY TO EXPLORE BETTER COOPERATION BETWEEN GRAZING  
AND CONSERVATION?

..TO FIND WAYS FOR CONSERATION AND GRAZING TO BE ALLIES  
(‘charismatic [mega]fauna or flora’ might not be the ally, something  
smaller, less political might be. If not, ok)

# Thank you



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Conservation  
Grazing Toolkit



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