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Survey of Forestry MSc. Graduates of the Polytechnical University of Valencia

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Abstract: MSc. studies in Forestry exist in Spain since the middle of the XIX Century but limited to Madrid. Only in the early 1990s new faculties offered forestry studies at MSc. level, in all cases strongly linked to agriculture studies (Lleida, Palencia, Lugo or Cordoba). In 1999 Valencia was the last University that provided the old Spanish MSc. studies in forestry (Ingeniero de Montes).

The region of Valencia is generally considered a poor forest region regarding the main forest features (i.a., small forest areas, low level of fellings and economic performance of forestry, high forest fire risk, low growth and quality). Even in the UPV strong voices doubted and still doubt of the viability of forest studies in Valencia.

Since 2003 more than 150 students have graduated. Early 2009 the new study plan for BSc. in forestry according to Bologna was drafted and supported by the responsible boards of the UPV. Just before that, a survey of 2/3 of the graduates was conducted. The main results of it will be presented in this paper.

The survey has two main parts, one reviews the studies and another is focusing the labour market and employability. The main findings show a high employability, at least until end 2008, a great spectrum of professional areas though always in some way linked to the studies and a broad geographical dispersion. It is surprising that the employment for MSc. forest graduates could suddenly grow from 0,5/p. a. up to 25 p.a in the region of Valencia in few years without a labour collapse. New labour market niches like with the municipalities or wood industry and bioenergy, as well as landscape and land planning are emerging labour fields.

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