

The **Observatory for a Culture of the Territory (OCT)** is a not-for profit SME whose core mission is the better integration of human societies with their land and its resources. OCT develops this mission principally by promoting knowledge co-generation and negotiation to achieve consensus between different social domains and communities in the territory such as scientists and policy makers, farmers and consumers, rural and urban dwellers. OCT is based in Spain but has a wide area of international operation, with collaborators and scientific committee members in the UK, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, United States among others. OCT works across sectors and scales in **research, education, innovation and outreach** in the following key areas:

- Land and natural resources planning
- Rural development appraisal and evaluations
- Geographical analysis and modelling
- Agroecology
- Heritage, tradition and landscape

### **Professional Experience**

OCT has been involved in, or is currently involved in, the following European research projects:

1. *Time Geographical Approaches to Emergent Sustainable Societies (TiGreSS)*, EU 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (2003-2006)
2. *Integrative Systems and the boundary problem (ISBP)*, EU 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (2006-2009)
3. *Knowledge Based Climate Mitigation Systems for a Low Carbon Economy (COMPLEX)*, EU 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (2012-2016 – ongoing).
4. *COST Action TU0902 – WG1 Methods for Integrated Assessment* (May 2009 to March 2014)
5. *COST ACTION TD1106 - Urban Agriculture in Europe* (2012-2016 - ongoing)

OCT has also carried out numerous projects at the national level, for example:

1. *Ecos del Tajo* (Ecological agriculture as a model of sustainable development in the Tagus basin) funded through the National Rural Network (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment) (2009)
2. *Participatory strategy for the cattle trails of Baja Alcarria – Know your past*, for the Cattle Trials Area (D.G. Environment, Regional Government of Madrid. (2010)
3. *Modelling land use dynamics in the Spanish National Parks Network and its environment (DUSPANAC)*; in collaboration with the University of Alcalá, funded by the Autonomous

4. Body for National Parks (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment). (2010-2013)  
*Appraisal of the use of pasture and livestock management in the municipality Hermandad de Campoo de Suso (Cantabria) for the Association País Románico.*
5. *Rural Heritage valuation public works (VAPROP)* where OCT acts as a reference and dynamic agent in the territory of Cantabria for this Pilot Project within the National Rural Network (National Rural Development Programme, 2011-2014)
6. *Qualitative evaluation of farmers' perceptions about agrarian practices in Madrid* (IMIDRA, Regional Government of Madrid, 2013-14)
7. *Sistemas Agroecológicos en Azuqueca de Henares. Education in agroecology for population at risk of social exclusion* (Town Council of Azuqueca de Henares, Madrid region). (2014-ongoing)
8. *Simulaciones Geomáticas para modelizar dinámicas ambientales II. Horizonte 2020. Comparison of simulations from various international land use models, publication of an edited volume. Spanish National Research Programme grant, BIA2013-43462-P.* (2014-ongoing)

### **Collaborations**

At an international level, OCT collaborates with the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (ICCHS), Newcastle University, United Kingdom, the Department of Governance and Technology for Sustainability (CSTM) and the Faculty for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC), both at the University of Twente, Netherlands, Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Austria, the Stockholm Resilience Centre, Sweden, the Amsterdam Global Change Institute, Netherlands and the Research Institute for Knowledge Systems (RIKS), Netherlands.

At a national level, OCT works with the ecology and landscape research group at the Madrid Polytechnic University (UPM), with the international observatory for the citizen and the environment (CIMAS) of the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), the Basque Centre for Climate Change (BC3), the socio-ecosystems laboratory of the Madrid Autonomous University (UAM) and the Geographical Information Technologies and Territorial Analysis research group (TIGAT) of the University of Alcalá.

### **Profile of key staff**

**1. Veronica Hernández-Jiménez** holds a PhD from Newcastle University, United Kingdom (*Participatory Planning in the region of Madrid: an integrative approach; 2007*) is International

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Project Coordinator of OCT and an associate researcher at the Polytechnic University of Madrid within the School of Forestry Engineering. Her main focus in this organization is building processes of stakeholder engagement for better territorial planning, involving stakeholders in the decision-making processes. Key publications include:

Rojo, M. S., Moratalla, A. Z., Alonso, N. M., & **Jimenez, V. H.** (2014). Pathways towards the integration of periurban agrarian ecosystems into the spatial planning system. *Ecological Processes*, 3(1), 1-16.

**Hernandez-Jimenez, V.**, and Winder, N. Knowledge integration and power relations: Pathways to sustainability in Madrid. (2009) *Beyond the rural-urban divide: Cross-continental perspectives on the differentiated countryside and its regulation. Research in rural sociology and development* 14: 305-322.

Cartledge, K., Dürrwächter, C., **Jimenez, V. H.**, & Winder, N. P. (2009). Making sure you solve the right problem. *Ecology & Society*, 14, 3.

**2. Lara Román Bermejo** is PhD Candidate in Agroecology at International University of Andalusia and the Institute of Sociology and Peasant studies of the University of Córdoba. She holds a first degree in Agricultural engineering, with specialisms in Plant Science from Madrid Polytechnic University and comparative agriculture and agrarian development from the National Institute of Agricultural Engineering in Paris-Grignon, France. She is a qualified expert in Participatory processes planning and holds a Masters degree in Agroecology, Sociology and Sustainable Rural Development.

Guzmán GI, López D, **Román, L**, Alonso AM; 2013. Investigación acción participativa en agroecología: construyendo el sistema agroalimentario ecológico en España, *Agroecología*, 8, 2, 89-100

Guzmán, Gloria I; López, D.; **Román, L.**; Alonso, AM.; 2013. Participatory Action Research in agroecology: building local organic food networks in Spain. *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 37,1,127-146,2013,Taylor & Francis

**Román, L.**; Guzmán G.; 2009. El desarrollo rural agroecológico frente a la despoblación. Un proceso de investigación acción participativa en Villasur de Herreros (Burgos). *Revista Documentación Social*. Editorial Caritas Española.

### 3. Blanca Ocón-Martín

Is an Agricultural engineer. She works as National Project Coordinator of OCT and has more than 15 years of experience in different areas related with rural and periurban development: particularly around land use change, governance structure and participatory processes.

Hernández-Jimenez, V.; **Ocón, B.**; Encinas, M.A.; Pereira, D.; Winder, N. (2009) “Planificación territorial participativa en el entorno de las grandes ciudades. Madrid y sus relaciones urbano-rurales” Cohesión e Inteligencia Territorial. Dinámicas y procesos para una mejor planificación y toma de decisiones. *Joaquín Farinos, Joan Romero y Jujia Salomón Eds.* Publicaciones de la Universitat de València. ISBN: 978-84-370-7593-8

Hernandez-Jimenez, V., **Ocón, B.**, Pereira, D. (2008) “Receptivity in governance structures for a better land planning”. *Environmental Justice and Global Citizenship* (Oxford) < <http://Www.Inter-Disciplinary.Net/> >

Pereira D.; **Ocón B.**; Márquez O. (2004) Las zonas rurales en España. Un diagnóstico desde la perspectiva de las desigualdades territoriales y los cambios sociales y económicos. *Ed. Fundación FOESSA.* Madrid

**4. Richard Hewitt** holds a PhD in Geography (Incorporating stakeholder knowledge in Cellular Automata models of land use change; 2014) from the University of Alcalá, Spain. He has over ten years of research experience in diverse disciplines related to land and landscape, such as heritage management, land planning and land use modelling. He is currently research director for OCT on the FP7 project COMPLEX. Up until 2008, he worked primarily as a heritage manager and landscape archaeologist.

**Hewitt, R.**, Van Delden, H., & Escobar, F. (2014). Participatory land use modelling, pathways to an integrated approach. *Environmental Modelling & Software*, 52, 149-165.

**Hewitt, R.**, & Escobar, F. (2011). The territorial dynamics of fast-growing regions: Unsustainable land use change and future policy challenges in Madrid, Spain. *Applied Geography*, 31(2), 650-667.

**Hewitt, R.**, & Hernandez-Jimenez, V. (2010). Devolved regions, fragmented landscapes: the struggle for sustainability in Madrid. *Sustainability*, 2(5), 1252-1281.