Field-based grazing evidence proxies livestock stocking rate in alpine pastures

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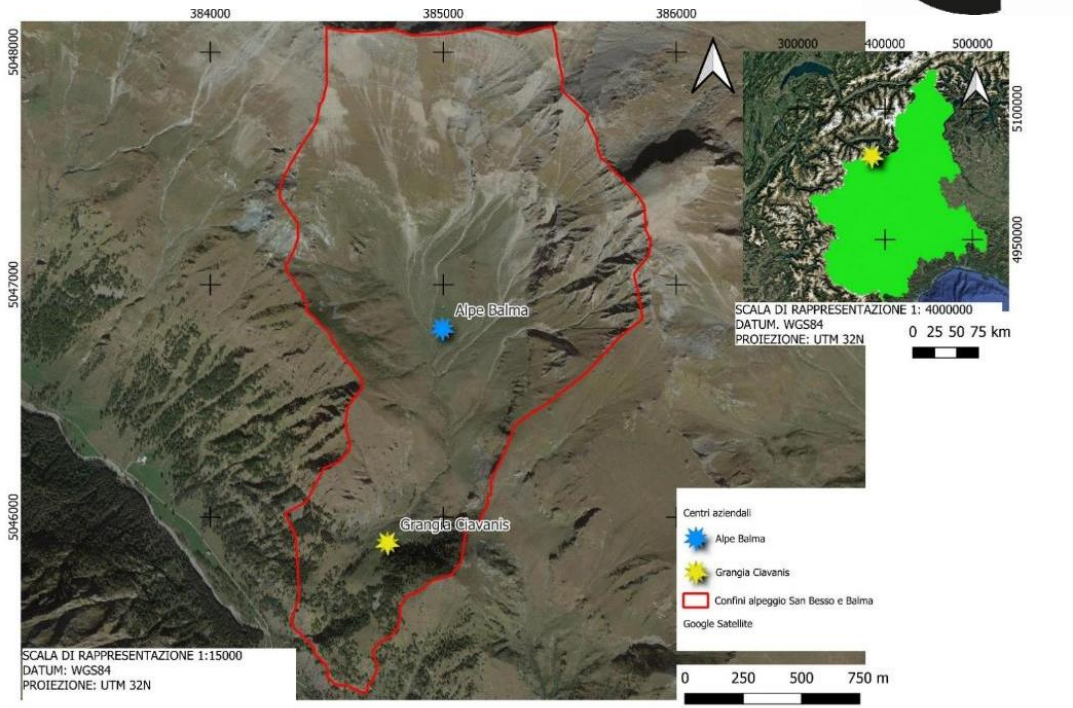
Aims and Materials and methods

San Besso e Balma pasture
Gran Paradiso National Park, NW Italy

83 ha · 1800–2400 m a.s.l. · 100 Pustertaler-Barà cattle (87 LU)



GPS reference

10 GPS collars

number of fixes = true site-use intensity

Field evidence

715 points

Field-based scores

Validation

5-m buffers

Indicator scores related to GPS fixes around each point

1 = absent · 5 = extreme


Defoliation


Dung deposition


Trampling

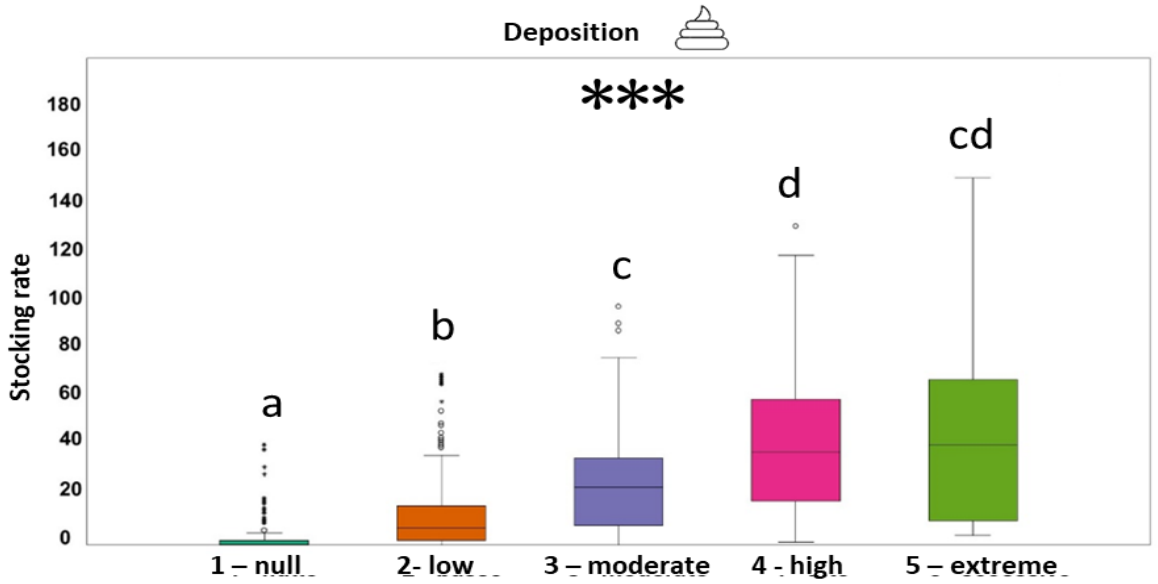
Test whether defoliation, dung deposition and trampling can proxy livestock site-use intensity in extensive alpine pasture management.

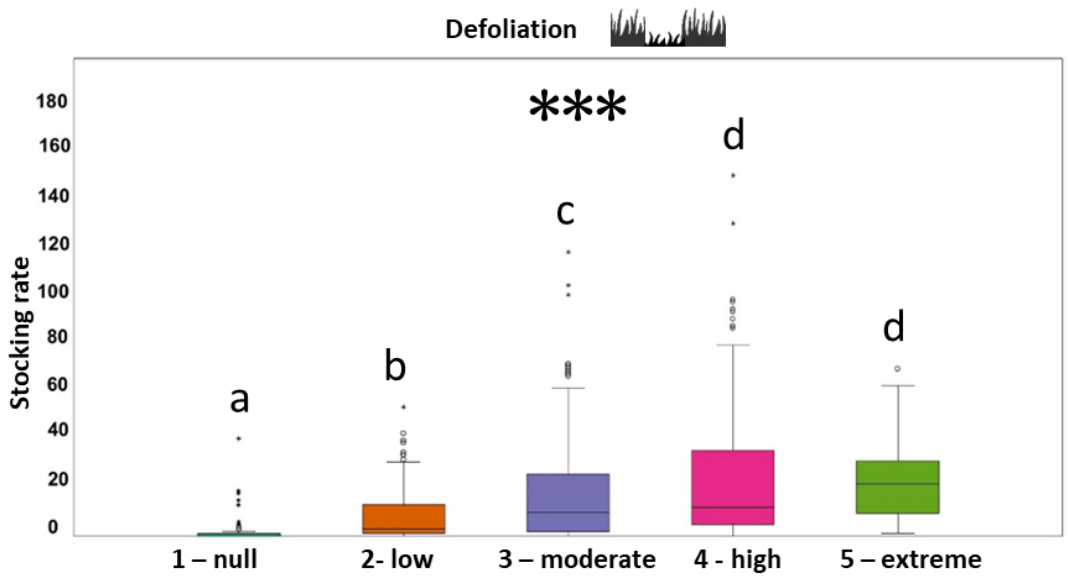
Results

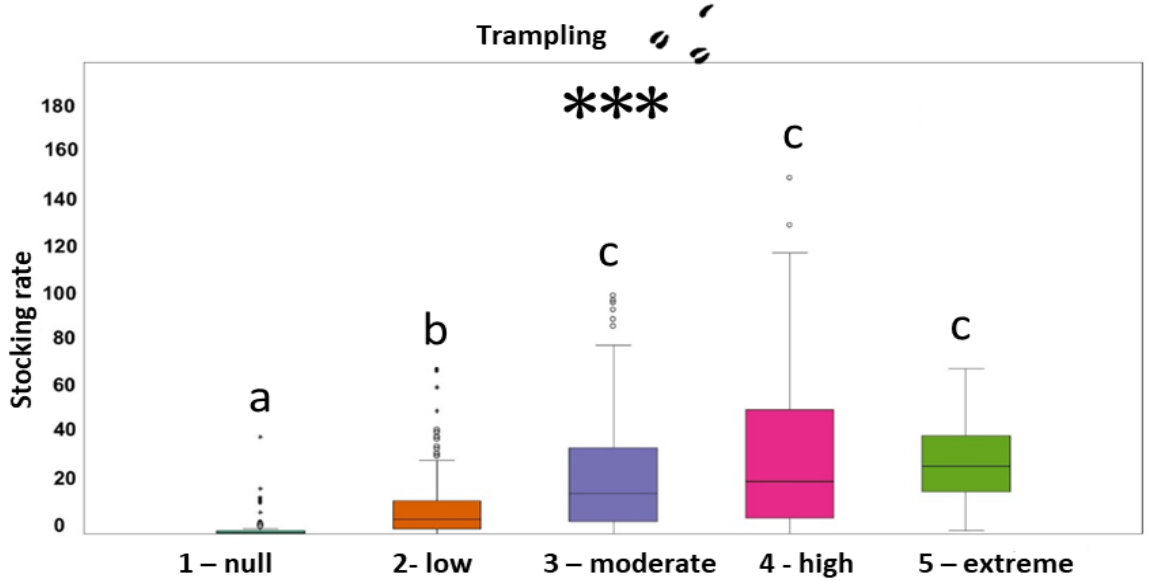
All indicators reflected GPS-derived site use, but **defoliation** and **dung deposition** were the most reliable.

Take-home

A simple end-of-season field survey can map livestock site-use intensity when GPS monitoring is not feasible.








Thank you for your attention