Mountain products – opportunities and challenges for the Carpathians

Guillaume Corradino, Director, EUROMONTANA

5th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD)

17 March 2022, online
What is Euromontana?

► European **multisectoral** association for cooperation and development of mountain areas (since 1996)

► Around 65 members from 17 countries

► Comprising:
  – regional and local authorities
  – regional development agencies
  – chambers of commerce and industry
  – agriculture organisations
  – environmental organisations
  – research organisations
  – training institutes...

**Diversity of members = strength ➔ increased interest from institutions**
Euromontana in the Carpathians

➢ Czech Republic
   – Svaz Marginalnich oblasti – Union of Marginal Areas

➢ Romania
   – CEFIDEC – Training and Innovation Centre for the development of the Carpathians
   – FAMD Dorna – Mountain Farmers Federation Vatra Dornei
   – Forumul Montan din România – Romanian Mountain forum
   – OPEN FIELDS Foundation
   – ROMONTANA
   – Highclere Consulting
   – Maramures County Council

➢ Poland
   – Pokarpackie Region
   – Malopolska Region

➢ Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine => no member….yet!
EUROMONTANA
History 1996 - up to now

**Founding members**

- Albania, Bulgaria, UK (Scotland), Spanish Basque Country, France, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Czech Republic)

**Constitution**

- “non-profit and scientific organisation, with international vocation, neutral in terms of religion and politics”
- NGO Law 1901 (registered in France)

**Object: Improving the living conditions of the mountain populations of Europe**

- expression, promotion and defense of the cultural, economic, political and scientific interests of the mountain populations
- valorisation of research in mountainous areas
- informing public opinion on mountain problems
- encouragement of training and research in mountainous areas
- development of international cooperation to reduce inequalities between the mountain regions of Europe
Working themes: all working topics

- Climate change adaptation & mitigation
- Social and digital innovation
- Rural Development
- Territorial cohesion
- Research (with NEMOR)
- Environment, biodiversity, ecosystem services
- Services of general interest
- Youth & education
- Sustainable Energy
- Sustainable Tourism
- Agriculture
- Mountain products
- Forestry
20 years of work on mountain foods: From research to European legislation to implementation

1999-2000
- First working group
- DG AGRI study
- EMC Trento on Quality

2002-2004
- FP5 project “European Mountain quality food products”
- Mountain foods are specific
- Strong territorial impact

2005
- European Charter for mountain Quality Food products
  - European Parliament
  - 69 signatories from 12 countries

2007-2010
- FP6 EuroMARC
  - Consumers interested in a mountain sign
  - Need to strengthen the offer

2010-2012
- EU Policy debate
- Impact assessment
- IPTS study (ISARA-EM-UHI)

2012-2013
- Regulation CE 1151/2012, article 31: an optional quality term “mountain product”

2014-2015
- Delegated act 665/2014
- European Mountain Convention on Mountain products (New CAP – Mountains of Opportunities Project)

2016-2017
- Study on the implementation of the legislation
  - 2016 Charter
  - 2017 event on the follow-up of the legislation

What’s next?
- Support development on the ground
- Further legislative support
- MOVING: external advisor
What are the options to valorize mountain products?

European Policies

Promotion of EU farm products

EU Optional Quality Terms
Voluntary certification schemes
EU Quality Logos (PDO/PGI)
What is an optional quality term?

► European Commission definition:
Optional quality terms help farmers to market products made in difficult natural conditions, such as mountainous regions or islands, while others are used to promote local farming and direct sales.

► Not to be confused with voluntary certification schemes (private / national)
Art.31 Regulation 1151/2012: definition of an optional quality term “Mountain products”:

- both the raw materials and the feedstuffs for farm animals come essentially from mountain areas

Products of animal origin:
- 2/3 life in mountain areas
- at least ¼ life in transhumance grazing on pastures in mountain areas

Feedstuffs:
- % of annual animal diet (expressed as a % of dry matter) produced in mountain areas should be 50% for all animals but 60% for ruminants, 25% for pigs

- in the case of processed products, the processing also takes place in mountain areas

Precised in the Delegated Act 665/2014
A legislation: the New Optional Quality term for Mountain Products

- Derogations for processing outside mountain areas (area of 30 km)
- Conditions for controls
- Use of logo
A legislation: How is it implemented?

Implementation of the Optional Quality Term "Mountain Product" in 2020

- Yes
- NO
- Not concerned
Romania

- Pre-authorisation for farmers
- No derogation – processing has to be done in the mountains
- Whole process to obtain the OQT is centralised by the National Mountain Agency
- Strong dissemination campaign
- 573 products registered
- Use of a national logo
Czech Republic

- Pre-authorisation for farmers from the Ministry of Agriculture of Czech Republic.
- Full derogation – processing can be done up to 30km away from mountains
- No specific logo nor requirements for the words “Mountain product”
- No uptake of the OQT so far (2020)
Poland

- OQT “mountain product” is not implemented in the national legislation and that there is no current plan to do so.
Farmers have to notify the regional authority, then they can use the term.

Reduction of the distance for milk and milk products (10 km) but not for the rest.

615 producers in Spring 2020.

A national logo.
Combines Mountain Products requirements with animal welfare, sustainability and traceability.
- Farmers can use the term
- Distinction with drinks and non-food agricultural products
- Distance not reduced (30 km)
- No official logo
Some examples

► **Mont Lait**
- “classic” OQT
- 100% producer brand
- Supports the whole mountain dairy sector
- Raises awareness about the challenges of maintaining the full value chain in mountains
- Plans to go beyond the regulation

► **Origine Montagne**
- Promotes professionals of the mountain pork industry and fair remuneration
- Promotes good agricultural practices
- Promotes sustainable practices in mountain territories
To go further

- EUROMONTANA study on the implementation of the EU optional quality term –2020

To go further

▶ “Labelling mountain food products in Europe“, Alice dos Santos, Wageningen University – 2017

What’s next? 1/2

► **Update of the 2020 study on the OQT uptake**
  - Update figures on legislative and farmers uptake
  - More concrete examples of uses for the OQT
  - More countries

► **What is the actual impact of the OQT?**
  - Have the expected advantages been realised?
  - Impact on consumer perception?
  - Impact on revenues for farmers?
  - Incentive to relocate or develop value chains in mountain areas? (to comply with OQT geographical criteria)
  - Best use cases for the OQT? As standalone quality term or together with other quality terms?
What’s next?  2/2

► **Opportunities with the EU promotion policy**
  - Make use of EU Promotion calls to promote “Mountain Products” OQT in one or more countries (it is eligible even if only “quality schemes are mentioned)
  - Lobby for clear mention of those OQT in future promotion calls.

► **Complementarity or overlap with possible Alpine or Carpathian product quality terms?**
Thank you!

www.euromontana.org
info@euromontana.org
+32 (0)2 280 42 83
Euromontana
Place du Champ de Mars, 2
1050 Brussels

Let’s keep in touch