

BETTER NETWORKING AND STRATEGIES FOR VIBRANT MOUNTAIN SUPPLY CHAINS



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Mountains of opportunities



Improving networking and cooperation among mountain supply chain actors

In the context of the new regulation of the optional quality term “mountain product”, the latest discussion of the Board of Directors of Euromontana highlighted the need of the establishment of a European network of mountain supply chains. This network should act as an instrument to connect mountain supply chain actors to strengthen their competitiveness, to explore the potential and spread the uptake of the optional quality term “mountain product”. It should also be an instrument that lets the stakeholders to exchange on common issues and find common solutions to strengthen the mountain supply chains.



Developing better synergies between mountain value chains and tourism

Mountain areas have a wide tourism potential: 95 million long-stay tourists and 60 million day-trip visitors visit the Alps every year for instance. Tourists are looking for local or typical products to eat or bring back at home. The cross-fertilising effects between promotion of territories and promotion of mountain products produced in these territories can be very important. To increase the economic profitability of tourism for local communities, it is essential to make the most out of the potential synergies between local economy and territory. This requires the encouragement of agri-tourism (tourism at the farm) in the different forms that it can take (full accommodation and board, or just ‘coffee at the farm’, or visits to educational farms).



Preparing local development strategies integrating ambitious plans for mountain products development

In the new programming period, Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) has been proposed as a tool for involving citizens at local level in developing responses to social, environmental and economic challenges. The new CLLD approach allows LEADER-type support to be better coordinated with local development support from other EU funds and should reinforce the links between rural, urban and fisheries areas. While the rural development programmes are being approved at regional level, the European Mountain Convention is a great opportunity for mountain Local Action Groups (LAGs) to discuss about the implementation of the new Rural Development Programmes and the use of the new instruments.



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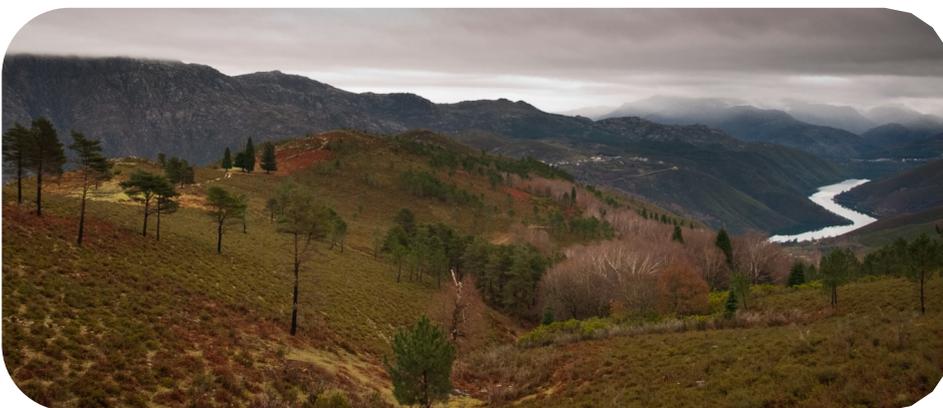
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Douro Region Wine Cluster

The ADVID association has the objective of studying, conducting experiments and demonstrations on and promoting wine producing techniques adapted to the specific characteristics of the Douro region (Portugal). Since 2009, ADVID has developed and implemented an action plan, aiming to innovate, train and modernise businesses in this industry. This action plan is made up of different elements which support the management of good agricultural practices in the regions, development strategies, individual or cooperative projects, promotional and marketing actions, the promotion of communication, the dissemination and publication of knowledge and the development of partnerships and institutional relations. Thanks to this action plan ADVID has boosted the visibility and credibility of the Portuguese wine sector internationally, minimised the genetic erosion of certain grape varieties, enabled the emergence and strengthening of a new generation of oenologists and experts and fostered international recognition of the wines of the Douro Region.

The Pyrenees brand project

Nowadays different regions must strive to stand out from others to attract new investors and find intelligent new ways to remain competitive to improve and consolidate their attractiveness. For this reason the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Pyrenees decided to create a banner identifying the region and mobilising local stakeholders to support the economy of the Pyrenees by using a form of communication based on information and communication technologies, taking advantage of a rich brand equity (481 individual uses of the term “Pyrenees”) and supporting local businesses in this process. The Pyrenees brand was created as a marketing tool to promote a credible and attractive image of the Pyrenees. It is not just about a logo and an image however: it will create a branding code which is an educational tool targeting all those parties who want to promote the Pyrenees. This code will be customisable and available for use by any local business.





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Mountain Products Road in Croatia

In Gorski kotar mountain area (Croatia) typical food products are marked as "Product of Gorski kotar" and are promoted through "Mountain products road". The main **problem** faced by the area is how to economically valorise **this road and develop new products** for the sustainability of the area. For this purpose several activities were carried out **focusing on local SMEs** and on the improvement of their cooperation, such as the creation of a **database of local producers, preparation of tourist road signalisation, creation of the local brand "Product of Gorski kotar", establishment of a typical product store**, launching of a marketing campaign, widening space for tasting local products and connecting with local tourism attractions. As a result, the **tourist road is now appropriately marked**, a local brand has been created, a store of typical products has been opened and local tourist sites have been promoted.

Promoting agricultural and artisanal business in the Alpine region tourist industry

To meet clients' new expectations, the development of the tourist industry in the Alps should rise to the challenge of this turning point in its evolution: it must evolve from "a mountain to visit to a mountain to experience". From 2010 to 2013 the SYTALP (Agricultural Tourism Synergy in the Alps) programme provided support to a range of Alpine regions in projects to diversify tourism by promoting agricultural and artisanal business. The support entailed expertise on: assessing potential areas relevant to tourism, assessing the scope of the project and the stakeholders to be involved, organising involvement and managing partnerships between communities and local stakeholders, and assessing and supporting tourism projects which promote local agriculture and artisanal businesses. Numerous tourist facilities and services have been created, diversified and promoted in the different Alpine regions. At the same time a methodological guide has been published with recommendations and good practices as well as specific training.

More information: <http://www.suaci-alpes.fr/-Sytalp->

Marketing Tourist Farms in Brkini and Kras (Slovenia)

The areas of Brkini and Kras decided to **join forces to promote tourism farms** and thus reduce the overall costs of campaigning separately. The particular objectives considered were to **compile a list of basic tourism services for providers and visitors, to educate on marketing, to increase the number of visitors, and to build ties with tourism agencies** and other partners. The **project organised workshops and conferences on the marketing of tourism farms**. The joint activities included cooperation with interested farms and tourism agencies on the specification of services, recognition of the area and development of marketing products. Further promotion involved the creation of a joint catalogue in different languages, development of websites, participation in fairs, and advertisements in the media. Tourism farms received proper training and became prepared for joint marketing. As a result, **they developed together tourism offerings, a catalogue and further marketing tools**.

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Supporting Cross-border Economic Development of Agri-food Businesses and Chains

A survey among 32 local agri-food companies and chains, carried out in the **border area between France and Spain** in 2008, showed a keen interest of economic actors to get involved in the implementation of cross-border-cooperation activities. To answer to this interest, a project was developed through the following activities: 1) **Cross-border consolidation of Basque pig supply chains**, (2) **Supporting cheese processing cooperatives in difficulty**, exploiting synergies to develop business & professionalise management. (3) **Add local value to raise farmers' income, training & exchange**.

Prompted by common issues, **agriculture and food sector actors from a mountainous border area engaged themselves in networking**, collective action, the identification of synergies and the pooling of resources.

Renewing d'Aubrac - Production and Marketing of a Traditional Herb

Thé d'Aubrac is produced in the Aubrac Lozerien region from the local plant Calamintha Grandiflora. This herb has always been traditionally employed for several uses in both medicine and cuisine in the region and is still commonly consumed. A project financed through LEADER, aimed to **enquire into the scientific benefits of Thé d'Aubrac** and its present uses in order to **assess the feasibility and economic viability of growing the plant in the region**. The study demonstrated the feasibility of the product, which enabled access to additional funds when developing a short food chain for the production and sale of Thé d'Aubrac. Being also possible to: 1) **organise production and ensure the quality of the product** thus increasing the value of the production line and local resources; 2) share the findings of the study, which will help **preserve the origins of the region**; 3) **create/maintain job opportunities in the area**.

"This is our land": a farmers' retail outlet rooted in the local region!

In 2011 the town of Seynod (in the Haute Savoie region, France) launched a call for tenders for food supplies destined for use in school canteens. **13 local producers**, with the technical support of the Chamber of Agriculture, **submitted a bid** for this call. The town was encouraged by the success of this initiative and decided to offer the suppliers the chance to set up a producers' shop. The producers, who already worked together, then set up an association and carried out the necessary procedures in order to set up the retail outlet. **In October 2012 the shop "C'nos terroirs"/"This is our land" opened**. The producers progressively worked to diversify their activities. In addition, they also understood the **key role played by communication with society**. They therefore **cooperated** with the Association of Friends of Old Seynod (association Les amis du vieux Seynod) to **set up tasting sessions for local produce, as well as events and exhibitions to promote the agricultural industry**.



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