



Press Release

Mountain network calls on lagging States to implement mountain products legislation but 'EU Logo would boost the impact'

The EU mountain products legislation is alive, now it is time for producers and Member States to really seize this opportunity to give more added value to mountain areas.

On 18th October 2017, around 100 mountain actors from all over Europe participated in a conference on "How to better valorise mountain food products – Launch of the European Charter for Mountain Quality Food Products" organised by Euromontana in Brussels.

Euromontana has always considered important to help better valorise mountain food products and after years of hard work on the introduction of an optional quality term protecting mountain products, in 2014 welcomed the adoption of the delegated act implementing 1151/2012 Regulation.

Now, three years on from the adoption of the delegated act, only a few countries (like Austria, Romania, France and Italy) have totally defined the conditions to use the scheme in their areas. With the backing of the conference, Euromontana therefore is calling upon the other **Member States to implement this legislation** and **develop simple procedures** for farmers to be able to use this new tool while putting in place **sound monitoring systems to avoid misuse of the term**. Euromontana stands by for further exchanges and dialogue to help this implementation in all Europe.

Many participants bemoaned the **lack of EU logo** for the optional quality scheme for mountain products which could increase the visibility and recognition by consumers. *'The Austrian, French, Italian and Romanian positive implementation delivers a real economic opportunity for their mountain areas'* said Euromontana President Juanan Gutierrez, *'but other States must follow their lead or watch their mountain dwellers lose out. And, yes! The impact of this excellent EU legislative initiative could be transformed if a related EU Logo could be authorised'*.

Some producers like Alberto Pecorari, from the Consortium of Parmigiano Reggiano in Italy are successfully using the optional quality term for mountain products and many more like Christophe Léger, President of Suaci Alps, see the advantages of this optional quality term, especially for the mountain areas where there are not a lot of PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)/PGI (protected Geographical Indication) so far.

To facilitate the uptake by producers, Branka Tome, Deputy Head of Unit, in DG Agri encouraged farmers to use the tools already available, notably the **promotion policy programme, the information policy measures about the CAP and the measures on quality of the Rural Development Programmes** which can all help to make the optional quality scheme better known by farmers and consumers.

Beyond the optional quality scheme for mountain products, different possibilities exist to better valorise mountain products and create added value in mountain areas. One way to better valorise mountain products is also to **increase links between producers and well-known chiefs** that could promote local products as explained Jean-Pierre Saint Martin, Master Chief of France.

'We should all become ambassadors of the promotion of mountain farming' explained Juanan Gutierrez, *to do so, we invite all participants to join the already 560 signatories and to support Euromontana's Charter for Mountain Quality Food Products.'* This Charter aims notably to further valorise mountain food products and more specifically to stimulate development of mountains and create added value through the protection of mountain quality food products, to avoid misleading consumers from inappropriate use of the word « mountains » and to increase the competitiveness of traditional mountain farming systems.



EUROMONTANA

2, Place du Champ de Mars – B-1050 Bruxelles

The European Commission (DG Agri) will present its Communication on the future CAP on 29th November 2017. Then, during the second half of 2018, the legislative proposals for a new CAP will follow. In the expected difficult financial framework for the CAP, Euromontana calls upon the European Commission, the Member States and the Members of the European Parliament to show **their support for Areas with Natural Constraints in particular for mountain areas**, as they are in most need of strong support to be able to maintain mountain farming.

*'To maintain viable mountain farming, the next CAP should strongly focus on promotion and communication of quality schemes and on family farming explained Juanan Gutierrez, President of Euromontana. And yes, the CAP should provide the adequate tools to do so, in particular **the compensatory allowance scheme for areas with natural handicaps, a better recognition of ecosystem services provided by mountain farming and a promotion policy focusing more on quality schemes**'.*

Note for editors:

Euromontana is the European Association for mountain areas. Founded in 1996, it assembles around 70 organisations (regions, universities, chambers of commerce, of agriculture, development and environmental agencies) from around 20 European countries in and out of the EU. Dedicated to the improvement of the quality of life of mountain people, Euromontana is working on different themes of crucial importance for mountain areas, such as mountain products, agriculture and forestry, cohesion policy, rural development, climate change, innovation, tourism, transport, youth... Euromontana is also officially supporting the RUMRA (Rural, Mountainous and Remote Areas) intergroup of the European Parliament.

More information:

On the event (with presentations and pictures): <https://www.euromontana.org/events/how-to-better-valorise-mountain-food-products-brussels-belgium/>

On Euromontana's Charter for Mountain Quality Food Products 2.0: <https://www.euromontana.org/en/the-european-charter-for-mountain-quality-food-products/>

On Euromontana's work on mountain products: <https://www.euromontana.org/en/working-themes/mountain-products/>

Contact :

Euromontana Secretariat : Marie Clotteau, Director, 2, place du champ de mars, B-1050 Brussels www.euromontana.org, Email: marie.clotteau@euromontana.org, Phone: +32 2 280 42 83