Advantages, constraints, and key success factors of establishing quality signs linked to the origin and traditions in Albania: The case of chestnuts from Tropojë

Case study on quality products linked to geographical origin in the Balkans carried out for FAO, by:

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The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

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Summary

For this paper we used the
following exchange rates:

1 euro = 137 lek
1 US dollar = 108 lek

List of acronyms and organisation

AGRIDEA	Swiss resource and capacity building organisation for professionals working in rural and agricultural development
Albinspekt	Private certification body – Albania
ALPTO	Albanian Patents and Trademarks Office
AMLA	Chestnut company, Bajram-Curri – Tropojë – Albania
ANIH	Albanian Foreign Investment Promotion Agency
BioAdria	Association of organic farmers – Albania
CARDS	Community Action for Rural Development Society
CERAI	Centro de Estudio Rurales y de Agricultura Internacional Rural Studies and International Agriculture Centre
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CIHEAM	Centre International des Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies
CIRAD	Centre International de Recherche pour l'Agriculture et le Développement International Centre of Agricultural Research for Development
DSA	Development Solutions Associates
EPO	European Patent Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FiBL	Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau Research Institute for Organic Agriculture
GI	Geographical Indication(s)
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit German cooperation for technical assistance
HDI	Human Development Index
HPI	Human Poverty Index
IAMM	Institut Agricole Méditerranéen de Montpellier Mediterranean Agricultural Institute of Montpellier
ICSTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
IDDRI	Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales Institute of Sustainable Development and International Relations

IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSTAT	National Institute of statistics – Albania
INRA	Institut National de Recherche sur l'Agriculture French National Institute for Agricultural Research
IPA	Instrument for pre-accession assistance
IPARD	Instrument for pre-accession assistance for rural development
ISEE	International Society of Ecological Economics
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession
MADA	Mountain Area Development Agency
MAFCP	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
QOL	Quality Of Life
REC	Regional Environment Centre
SAPARD	Special accession programme for agriculture and rural development
SASA	Sustainable Agriculture Support in Albania
SINER-GI	Strengthening INternational Research on Geographical Indications
SNV	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers / Netherlands Development Organization
TSG	Traditional Speciality guaranteed
UNCTAD	*United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WIIW	Wiener Institut für Internationale Wirtschaftsvergleiche The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies

Introduction

Albania, a small mountainous country lying along the south-eastern seashore of the Balkan Peninsula, is in transition after two decades of reorientation toward a free market economy. A distribution of the land and means of production to the families, after the collapse of the communist regime, was followed by institutionalisation of free market principles. Nowadays, Albanian agriculture is characterised, among other aspects, by small sized and fragmented farms[1] , a high proportion of active population[2], poorly mechanized farms and low integration of the farms in the market, but with the perseverance of farmers to keep their (economically) unprofitable land[3]. These aspects, combined with difficult topographic conditions, indicate that tools other than the promotion of foreign direct investment for agro-industries of export and increase of productivity[4], should be seriously taken into account in the agricultural policies, promotion and practices. Indeed, as stated by Dominique Barjolle globalisation of agricultural trade modifies the condition of competition within differentiated production zone. The zones which are favoured by pedo-climatic conditions, farm structure, land cost, access to technologies are able to compete in commodity markets. Whereas, disadvantaged zones related to theses factors need to reposition their products on the market. This repositioning can come from relocalisation of their market trough identification. An identity that allows consumers to express their preference by paying a price premium (Barjolle 2006: 3)

In this sense, GI might be a relevant option for the maintenance an agricultural sector in Albania, especially in mountainous areas where the difficulty of the topographic conditions barely allows competitive mass production.

Origin-linked products correspond to differentiated (or differentiable) products deriving from their local identity. This identity may be the result of specific local natural characteristics (such as particular pedo-climatic characteristics, local/native varieties) as well as local culture (such as local know-how and tradition). Most of the time a combination of the two, which give to the products specific quality attributes and a typicity linked to its geographic production zone, which over time built a reputation. Consumers are more and more concern about those quality attributes leading to an increasing remunerating demand (Vandecandelaere 2009). The specific characteristics linked to the place they originate justify an identification of the products as a GI to allow consumers to express their preference (and have the guaranty that the product has effectively been produced in the zone and with specific methods). It improves the transfer of informations from the producer to the consumer and protect them against usurpations.

If GI, as a collective intellectual property right, has traditionally been defended as a tool for the reduction of *information asymmetry* between producers and consumers considered as one of the *market failures*, GI are nowadays seen as having wider potential. Indeed, within EU quality policy, especially Geographical indications a wide range of positive impacts have been observed such as, added value increase, limitation of de-localisation and land abandonment, tourism opportunities, better marketing, diversification and competitiveness conditions, biodiversity and natural resources conservation, local know-how preservation and valorisation as well as better land management. Moreover, for enlargement countries the same

[1] 1.2 ha on average, ten times smaller than European (27) average and divided into 3.9 plots per farm on average.

[2] 58% of the active population is employed in agriculture (INSTAT National institute of statistics; see annexe 1 for a list of acronyms and organisations)

[3] By finding external revenues, notably by emigration to big Albanian cities or overseas of one or more of the family members. The new generation might not be as attached to their land as their parents.

[4] Which has mainly been the case during recent years (see later).

positive impacts are expected as a natural process (Estève, Vandecandelaere and Le Coent 2009).
This explains that a growing number of stakeholders are interested in this topic in Albania[5]. Indeed, difficult topographic condition, marginal mechanisation, high diversity of local products and strong concerns of consumers about the origin and typicity of agricultural products *a priori* show strong potentials of GI promotion. This report aims at evaluating the potential of GI development in Albania by first making an inventory of origin-linked products, which could potentially be promoted as GI (Part 1). Secondly, a product within the inventory will be subject of a deeper analysis in order to estimate the potential and possible impacts of a GI and serve as a pilot case to promote GI qualification of other products in Albania (Part 2).

Part 1: Analysis of origin-linked products in Albania and potential for GI development

1.1. General context

A small Mediterranean country, Albania lies along the south-eastern seashore of the Balkans. Its 478 km Adriatic and Ionian coastline faces southern Italy, which is less than 100 km away in some places. The northern border is shared with Montenegro and Kosovo, the eastern border with Macedonia and the southern border with Greece. The average altitude is 708 m[6] and 75 % of the land is considered mountainous (above 300 m), which largely explains why only 24% of the 2'875'000 ha of Albania is arable; an additional 15% is pastoral land. Major plains are situated to the west, stretching from the coast to the foothills and valleys on the east and surround the main cities such as Shkodra, Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan and Lushnje[7]. If the Albanian Alps constituting the highest zones of the country[8] are found in the north, major mountain chains are also found in the eastern and southern regions. Topographic conditions lead to multiple micro-climatic zones, which are affected by a typical Mediterranean climate in the west and a moderate continental climate in the east. The average rainfall is 1'480 mm[9]. Snowfalls occur in almost every part of the country; while it may snow for only one day per year in low and coastal regions, it may persist more than 100 days per year in central and mountainous areas. Average temperatures range from 7.5 °C in northern regions to 17.5 °C around the southern cost. These large differences lead to highly varied micro topo-climatic zones and hence to different types of agriculture. The lowlands, mainly in the western depression are the most favourable for agriculture. The hilly regions are favourable for arboriculture and the mountains for animal breeding.

The total agricultural surface area of approximately 697'000 ha consists of 577'000 ha of arable land (see figure 1), 60'000 ha of orchards, 40'000 ha of olive groves, 20'000 ha of vineyards and is completed by approximately 424'000 ha of pastures (MAFCP 2008).

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5 Some Albanian and foreign NGOs such as SASA, MADA, BioAdria, FiBL, AGRIDEA, private bodies such as Albinspekt, DSA Consult, cooperation agencies such as GTZ, Swiss cooperation and public bodies are starting to work on (or consider) this issue (see annexe 1 for a list of acronyms and organisations).

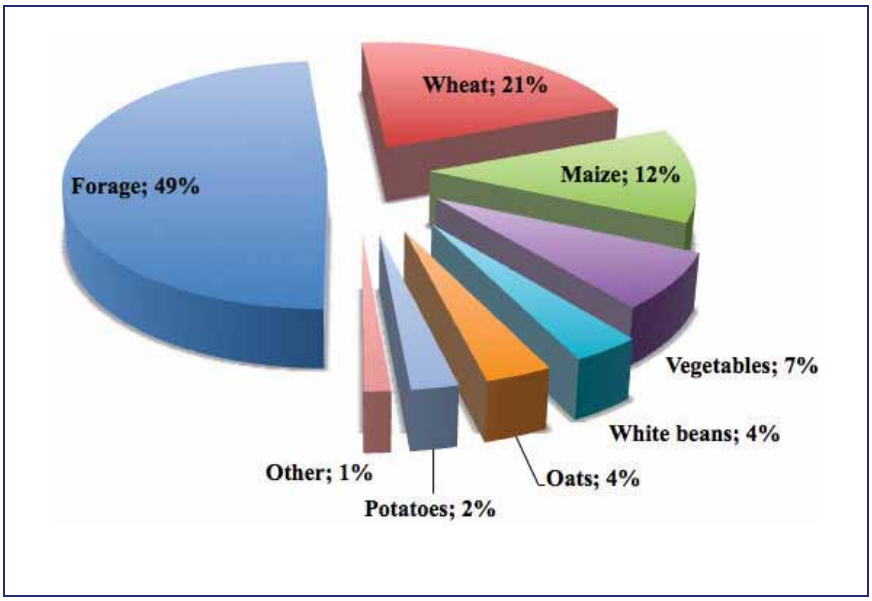
6 Around 300 m on average for Europe.

7 See maps of Albania annexe 2.

8 The highest mountain being in the east part of the country

9 If in coastal areas the rainfall is around 1'000 mm, it reaches 3'000 mm in some mountainous areas. Even if annual rainfall is high, the summer period, when agricultural water needs are highest, is almost without rain, meaning that water scarcity is a limiting factor for agriculture for some regions of the country.

Figure 1 - Structure of field crop plantings, Albania 2008



Sources: Author from MAFCP 2008.

In 2009 the population of Albania was 3'194'417[10] (INSTAT[11]) of which 51% live in rural areas**.** Albania is the poorest country in Europe. In 2008, 12.4% of the population was living below the poverty line[12] and extreme poverty represented 1.2% of the population (UNDP[13]). Poverty is especially present in rural areas. 29.6% of the rural population was considered poor in 2008, with the northern mountainous areas being the poorest of the country; in such regions, almost 50% are considered poor and 80% of total income comes from social insurance schemes[14]. Unemployment reached 13.4% (2007 INSTAT); however as stated by the CIA, this is the official rate and real unemployment may be as high as 30% if near subsistence farming is taken into account (CIA World Factbook). The percentage of the active population working in agriculture was 58.9% in 2007[15] (INSTAT).

The collapse of the Communist regime in the late 1980s led to a radical reorganisation of the Albanian agricultural sector. The totally collectivised land and means of production organised around 652 state farms of 1'050 ha on average, was divided into more than 460'000 family micro-farms of 1.3[16] ha on average (Civici 2001). The land was given in an relatively egalitarian way to the members of the former state farms or to the villagers where the farms were located[17]. After the distribution[18] was initiated the liberalisation of the agricultural market and of the land. This led to a *dualisation* of the agricultural sector. On one hand, market oriented farms mainly in the plains surrounding Tirana and other big cities. On the other hand, family production oriented farms partially or completely outside the market

[10] According to CIA: 3,659,616 (July 2010 est.) which show the high complexity of evaluating the population in Albania: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/al.html

[11] National institute of statistics: http://www.instat.gov.al

[12] Which in Albania is 4'891 lek per month derived from the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), and is supposed to guarantee a basket of goods satisfying basic needs?

[13] http://www.undp.org.al/index.php?page=MDG/mdg_albania

[14] IFAD: http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/web/guest/country/home/tags/albania

[15] And remained in a range from 57 to 59% from 2001 to 2007.

[16] Probably 1.1 ha according to MAFCP 2008.

[17] 0.1 ha per farmer and 0.4 ha per family

[18] Which was decided by the Democratic Party, and as a compromise between the socialists advocating maintenance of state ownership of the land with simple *usufruct* for the farmers, and the republicans asking for the restitution of the land to the pre-Communist era owners (Civici 2001).

(Skreli, Kunkell et Biba 2001). Moreover, Despite the non-profitability of the farms and the liberalisation of the land and means of production - which should logically (or at least was expected to) lead to the disappearance of the less productive farms and the enlargement of the most productive ones - the concentration of the land has been surprisingly low. Instead of the concentration of the land by the disappearance of uncompetitive farms and enlargement of the others, peasant families preferred to diversify their sources of income with non-farm activities in order to keep their land[19].

According to Davis (2009) if 84% of rural farms record positive sales in the market, only 40% of production is sold. Most of the families are oriented toward subsistence farming. According to Dashi and Guri (2008) while 73% of families involved in agriculture use partial mechanisation and 24% use animal traction, 75% of mountain farms are worked uniquely by hand. In addition to the fact that the farms are especially small (only 10% of the farms exceed 2 ha) and fragmented (3.9 plots per farm on average), the topographic conditions are particularly disadvantageous. Infrastructures in the remote areas are still weak. This situation leads to very difficult conditions for the peasant families, and revenues from farming activities are generally inadequate. Agriculture still represents 58% of the active population (INSTAT) and more than 20% of GDP. However since the collapse of the communist regime, state allocation to the agricultural sector has never exceeded 2% of total government expenditure (MAFCP 2007a). At present, the process of EU accession[20] is leading to major changes in agricultural policies[21]; in other countries this process has led to radical changes in the agricultural sector, notably a drastic decrease in the number of farms[22]. The increase of non-agriculture job opportunities may not be as high as the decrease in the number of farms. If this is the case, the will (or necessity) of the new generation to escape from agriculture may lead to increasing unemployment or further migration.

Large-scale studies on traditional/local/"terroir" products are lacking in Albania. The few existing studies give overviews of specific zones (See for example Kokthi 2008 and Hoxha 2009). They reveal a high variety of local and traditional products. MAFCP is planning to conduct a large study on traditional products (see later).

1.2. Institutional context

GI is a quite new and unknown topic in Albania. However the EU integration process necessitating the transposition of the *aquis communautaires* implies a growing recognition and interest toward GI. Nevertheless, the will of GI qualification implies a series of pre-requisites. There is a need for a legal basis allowing GI registration and protection. But a legal basis should also be accompanied by institutions permitting the implementation of the law.

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[19] This particular aspect could be explained by several factors. The sale of land is still difficult (lengthy procedure, absence of accredited persons in remote areas, heavy bureaucracy, etc.). The land is also seen as a security issue for the families. Indeed, this was the case during the civil war of the late 90s when most of the peasant families returned to autarchic production. Instead of selling their land, the families tried to diversify their revenues by outside work or migration of one or more of the family members (to big Albanian cities or overseas).

[20] Albania officially applied for EU membership on 28 April 2009. This leads to a progressive transposition of the acquis communautaires into Albanian policies.

[21] As shown by the growing number of new "Euro-harmonised" laws.

[22] In Hungary, the active population in agriculture decreased from 20% to 8% from 1990 to 2005. In the Czech Republic, small farms (less than 5 ha) decreased considerably and farms surpassing 1'000 ha occupy 80% of the land. In Poland the same phenomena occurs (albeit at a slower rate) and diminution of number of farms is around 3% per year. The same phenomenon is also seen in Slovakia and Baltic countries' (Bazin 2007). Considering that those countries already had an average farm size much greater than in Albania, EU integration may lead to a drastic decrease of the number of farms.

1.2.1. Legal framework and Institutions related to GIs

The main Albanian articles of law concerning GI[23] are found in the more general law *Nr. 9977 dated 07.07.2008 on Industrial Property.* Part V, Chapters XXX to XXXII, Articles 176 to 188 are especially dedicated to GI and are the basis of the definition, conditions and rights of protection, the procedure for registration and execution of the rights. This law was established with the help of the European Patent Office (EPO) and so harmonised with EU legislation. *De jure*, it allows proper registration and protection of PDO, PGI and TSG.

According to the Head of the Legal, International Relation and Training Department of the Directorate of Patent and Trademarks, which is the only organism allowed to accredit GI, the law is at present applicable. As stated in the article 177 of the law on industrial property, any person who produces processes or prepares, in a designated geographical zone, a product for the definition of which a geographical indication is used, has the right to file an application for the registration of this indication but the boundaries of the geographical locality, the particularities and characteristics of the goods, and the relation between the particularities and characteristics of the goods in the geographical environment or geographical origin should be defined by respective authorities (MAFCP and local authorities). The Patent Office, to deliver a GI need to have the consent of the local authorities, and of the *Ministry of Agriculture Food and Consumer Protection* (MAFCP). According to MAFCP representatives, in Albania, general provisions for GI are not yet fully developed. The laws on food guarantee some protection of GI and particularly of designations of origin, but there is a need to establish a procedure for registration of applications for products and official control of registered products. There is a need of collaboration between MAFCP and local authorities to define the zone and examine the specificity of the products and its link to the origin of production that will allow the Patent Office to register producers and processor of the zone.

According to different NGO and representatives of private bodies, another major problem is the weakness of the government to fight against usurpation in general, which is confirmed by the large amount of counterfeit products that can be found in Tirana markets. This leads to a dual disadvantage for GI. First, the difficulty to efficiently protect GI makes applicants sceptical of the utility of obtaining them. Second, this leads to a strong distrust of brands and other labels by consumers.

If Albanian consumers give a strong importance to the origin of agricultural products most of them do not know GI. There is a serious need of information and marketing about the interest and meaning of GI. The same for producers which make strong statement about the specific quality of local products but are not aware of GI.

1.2.2. Agenda

If it seems somewhat early to set up GI qualification, the legal and institutional frameworks are on good track. Indeed a strong legal basis exist within the Patent office and MAFCP is settling up internal legal basis regarding GI which will allow procedure of registration and support[24]. MAFCP began to deal with wine this year (2010), and plan to address olive oil by the end of the year. They are also going to conduct a wide identification of traditional products and will start this year. However, the importance that origine-linked product will take in this inventory is not clear. They hope that next year, the legal basis within the MAFCP and proper financing will allow them to start seriously with GI. Before this they are going to

[23] See annexe 7 for relevant parts of the laws related to GI.

[24] The MAFCP has not been implicated in the elaboration of the GI section of the *law on Industrial Property*. This fact shows a lack of communication and collaboration between ministries and even between departments within the ministries expressed by several representatives.

organize working groups on GI. However, local authorities should be make aware of GI procedure and legislation in order to support initiatives of GI qualification, control of typicity (natural and cultural aspects) and accreditation (delimitation zone and procedures of production).

1.3. Inventory of origin-linked products and GI potential products

In Albania, as in most Mediterranean countries, the link between people and origin-linked products is very strong. Consumers generally prefer domestic products that, according to them, are free of pesticides and other chemicals and also tastier. Moreover, they do give strong importance to the origin of specific products such as apples, honey, raki, cheese, meat, olive oil, olives, onions, potatoes and beans. The retailers and sellers are well aware of this fact and usurpation is widespread. The selection of an origin-based products according to this high diversity of products, had to be made in different stages.

1.3.1. Methodology, criteria

GI qualification is justified for a product when its link with its origin leads to specific quality attributes which differentiate it from similar products from other geographic zones of production. Local natural and cultural resources give to the product an identity, a typicity that consumers want to recognise when they buy such products. The first criteria to justifies a GI qualification is, therefore, the existence of a strong link between the quality of the products and its origin. In Albania, as well as many Mediterranean countries', such products are widespread and consumers do give a strong importance to the origin of the agricultural products they buy. This preference is well known by food sellers leading to widespread usurpation. Usurpations show a need for qualification of origin-linked products to settle up fair competition for producers and guaranty to consumers to recognise the specific quality they are buying for. Therefore we make an inventory of origin-linked products showing a potential of being promoted as GI.
Unfortunately in Albania figures, statistics and case studies on traditional and local products are almost inexistent making the inventory and the choice of a more precise case study problematic. In order, to overcome the absence of hard data it was decided to interview experts aware of GI and local and traditional products in Albania.

First a list of products was defined from the literature[25] and exploratory interviews[26]. A second selection was made with the help of persons aware of GIs in Albania (Mainly representatives of Albinspekt (Albanian certification company), SASA (Sustainable Agriculture Support in Albania – NGO working in rural development, promotion of organic production, notably supported by FiBL and Swiss cooperation), and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection. In the following map the results of the two selections are shown (the second in red).

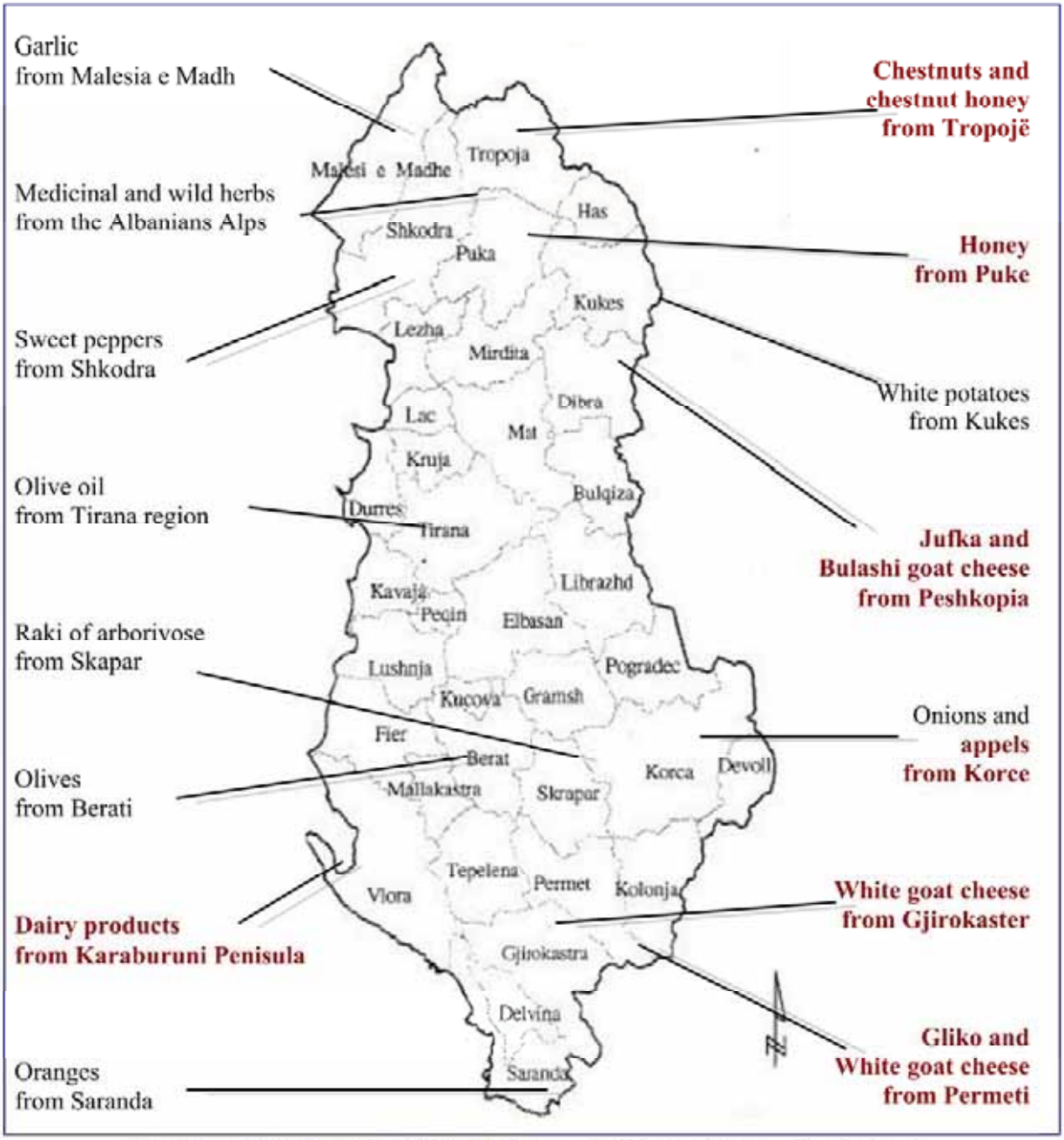
More than the existence of a strong link between the quality of the product and its origin of production, several criteria were used to define the inventory and then select a pilot-case. Indeed GI qualification should be feasible, which implicate a series of factors. A market which will allow to cover the registration costs, an organisation able to settle up a GI and existing specific characteristic linked with its origin. But it should also show potential in social economic and environmental domains.

[25] Such as Kokthi 2008 and hoxha 2009.
[26] Mainly with MAFCP, Albinspekt, SASA, Agricultural university of Tirana representatives. See later and annexe 1 for a list of acronyms and organisations.

- **Feasibility**
  - Market
    - High national/international demand
    - Expandable market
    - Organised distribution channels
    - Adequate production scale
    - Possibility of high grade product
    - Stable/growing market
  - Collective organisation
    - Existing organisation (association, cooperative,…) able to sustain the qualification process
    - Collaboration between farmers
    - Collaboration between stakeholders of the supply chain
  - Specific characteristics
    - Typicity linked with its origin
    - Quality
    - Reputation
    - Definable localisation
    - Tradition
    - Local varieties

- **Potential**
  - Poverty reduction is a major stake in Albania where rural poverty is lasting.
    - Linkage between the poor and the product
    - Increase, and potential for stabilisation of, the income of poor families
    - Limited investment needed for poor families).
  - Rural development
    - Potential in creating job opportunities
    - Maintenance of traditional practices
    - Synergies with other sector of the local economy
    - Fight against rural exodus
  - Environment
    - Conservation of local varieties
    - Environment-friendly production

Figure 2 – Origin-linked products



Sources: Author (map: http://www.dunav.org.il/maps/maps_albania.html).

1.3.2. Description of the products

1) **Jufka from Peshkopia** - home made pasta, typical product of Peshkopia (Dibra) region which is characterised by a traditional way of processing. The artisanal work, the cooking recipe and ingredients (eggs, milk and flour provided in the zone) and the cooking time (5 minutes) is what adds value and gives a competitive advantage toward competitor products (Jufka from Macedonia). There is a high demand for this product in the Albanian market (Peshkopi, Bulqize, Shupenze, Tirane, Durres, Elbasan), especially from the community of the Dibra region located in different cities.

2) **Honey from Puke region** - produced in Puka region where the pure nature and the diversity of medicinal herbs contribute to the nutritional values of the honey. These specifications position the product well in Tirana and Durres markets.□□

3) **Chestnuts from Tropoja**- collected in Tropoja forests where the characteristics of the Albanian Alps contribute to the freshness and special taste of the product (sweet). Certified internationally as organic, these chestnuts have good potential to succeed in Tirana, Elbasan and Durres markets as well as the international market.

4) **Dairy products from Karaburuni** – Two varieties of sheep and goats: Black sheep of Dukatit and goats of Dukatit give characteristic taste to the dairy products (such as goat and sheep white cheeses). The *Karaburuni shepherds association* ensures the maintenance of the varieties, the promotion of the products and organises competition of farm animals.

5) **Goat cheese from Peshkopia (Diber)** - produced in Peshkopia from a traditional race of goat (Bulashi; originating from the region) which gives a special and unique taste to the cheese. Very much preferred by consumers, as shown by the fact that the entire quantity produced is already sold at the dairy-farm. The cheese from "Bulashi" race of goats is recognised as having a specific quality, and has been awarded prizes in various competitions.

6) **Apples from Korce** – The apples from Korce have a high reputation. 90% of fresh apples consumed in Albania are imported. Natives varieties of apples from Korce are well appreciated by consumers because (according to them) they are considered tastier and jucier. As the amount of imported apples is very high and the consumer preference for apples from Korce well known, usurpation is widespread.

7) **Gliko of Permeti region –** Type of jam mde from the entire fruit, gliko is a well known and appreciated product. In the region of Permet, a variety of gliko is traditionally made by women. The combination of the good quality and variety of fruit from this region and the long tradition in producing gliko have made this product famous for consumers.

8) **White goat cheese from Gjirokaster** and **White goat cheese from Permeti** – Emblematic cheese of the Balkans, the white goat cheese is a product found in every Albanian refrigerator. The white goat cheeses of the two regions are particularly appreciated by consumers for their specific taste. The particular mountainous pedo-climatic conditions and know-how have led to well differentiated cheeses. The white goat cheese faces a huge competition in Albania. Usurpation of the two names is widespread.

9) **Olives from Berati –** According to market sellers, Olives from Berat are the best ones to eat fresh. According to them it comes from a perfect climate for olive trees, which lead to large production of olive oil and olives in middle and south Albania. They are generally the most expensive found in vegetable markets.

10) **Garlic from Malesia e Madh** – Local variety of garlic grown in Malesia e Madh and supposed to have a particular and well appreciated taste. It was reintroduced and promoted by an Albanian NGO “Permacultura”.

11) **Raki of arborivose from Skapar –** As for the white goat cheese, raki (Brandy) is an emblematic spirit found in every house. Home made in almost every rural household, there is

a high demand for raki in cities. In the region of Skapar, families make raki from arborivose which is unique and famous. Most raki is made from grapes, plums, apples and pears.

12) **Olive oil from Tirana region** – A specific variety of olives found only in Tirana region produces a characteristic, bio-certified olive oil. The specific taste and good quality allows a group of producers to access foreign markets (e.g. Switzerland).

13) **Medicinal and wild herbs from the Albanians Alps** – Wild Herbs (such as calendula, wild sage, origan, parsley, etc.) for tisanes, medicine and cooking are found in every corner of Dürres, Tirana and other big cities. Herbs from the Albanian Alps are thought to have the highest qualities (taste and medicinal properties).

14) **White potatoes from Kukes** – Variety of potato characterised by a white colour (even after cooking) and specific taste, grown in Kükes region and well appreciated. It is often known as "country potato".

15) **Oranges from Sarande** – According to street vendors and small shop sellers, oranges from Saranda are the best. Hot and sunny summers in this extreme south district may explain partly this better quality.

1.3.3. Potential for development

The difficult topographic conditions, the sensitivity of consumers toward origin of agricultural products, the high diversity of products, the growing integration of farms in the market and the consolidation of legal and institutional framework regarding GI registration and protection indicate that GI are a very pertinent option for the maintenance of the agricultural sector in Albania and especially in mountainous areas. GI could be a powerful tool to combat rural poverty and for the creation of job opportunities in rural areas.

1.4. Synthesis and general recommendations

According to the previous part, if we believe that GI represent a pertinent option in Albania in a perspective of sustainable rural development, we can point the major challenges and opportunities regarding GI that will allow us to make some general recommendation. More specific recommendations for the pilot case will be made at the end of part 2.

Challenges:

- Albanian agriculture is characterised by:
  - Small size and fragmented farms,
  - Difficult topographic conditions,
  - Marginal mechanisation.
  - Growing integration of the farm in the market but low competitiveness of the farms

- This is worsened by
  - High rural poverty
  - Low collective organisation
  - Fast moving and fragmented market

Opportunities:

- High diversification of products of which many have a strong local identity. We proposed a list of products with potential to be promoted as GI; however difficult access to statistics and other data regarding traditional/local/ "terroir" products indicates that this list is far from exhaustive
- Sensitiveness of consumers toward quality and origin of products
- EU integration process (implying technical and financial support and transposition of the *aquis communautaires*) Moreover, Albania's recent application for EU integration[27] gives it access to the *Instrument of Pre-accession assistance* (IPA[28]) which can provide considerable financial support to introduce the political, economic and institutional reforms to reach the *acquis communautaires*[29]. Strengthening GI legal framework and GI promotion could fall into this program if the government has an interest in it.
- Growing interest toward GI from NGOs, Cooperation and MAFCP offering possibility of synergies and joint project
- The FAO could also become involved in technical support for GI implementation if the government makes a request in this direction. The growing number of interested stakeholders, and the possible financial and technical support, indicates that GI issues in Albania will soon come under much more discussion.

General recommendation:

In order to improve the feasibility and effectiveness of GI qualification; several pre-requisites should be fulfilled:

1) Finalisation of procedure legislation and provision regarding GI within MAFCP is necessary, as well as proper financing and support.

2) Inventory of traditional products that MAFCP is going to conduct should also give strong importance to origin-linked products, in order to identify products that could possibly be promoted as GI and reinforce previous knowledge about identified products.

3) Widespread marketing and information on GI for consumers and producers should be made. If consumers do give strong importance to the origin of agricultural products and are aware of usurpation, they generally do not know GI labels and meaning. Widespread information should be done to show the importance of GI to effectively guaranty the origin of the product. It is also necessary to inform producers of the pertinence of a GI approach for the maintenance and improvement of their activity.

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[27] Albania officially applied for EU membership on 28 April 2009.

[28] Especially the rural development component (IPARD). For countries aspiring to membership, IPA is the new instrument replacing the previous instruments such as SAPARD, CARDS, ISPA.

[29] Moreover, "*EU offers active promotion of the Geographical Indication policy in third countries, either through a multilateral level approach (improving the protection level, facilitating international registration) or through bilateral level approach, with rapid "en bloc" registration of each other's GIs. Financial and technical supports are also available through IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance), ENPI (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument), and European Development Fund (ACP). Direct registration of foreign Geographical Indications in EU registers is also possible*" (Esteve, Vandecandelaere and Le Coent 2009 8).

4) Improvement of collaboration channels between MAFCP, local authorities and the Patent office allowing efficient GI qualification procedure and support.

Part 2: Pilot case of Tropojë chestnuts:

2.1. Choice of the pilot case

In order to choose between the listed origin-linked quality products that one to be used for a deeper analysis of the potential and importance of developing a GI, we use different additional criteria:

- *α) related to the **potential** degree of the product to be a GI (market, specific, quality, pre-existence of collective actions in the territory for the product, up-grading quality capacity, local will to develop an value-adding process)*
- *β) related to the **interest** for institutionalising a GI from the social and ecological point of view, according to territorial issues to address, and capacity of federating projects and actors*

a) Potential:

Market / Large demand: According to a study made for SNV (Dutch cooperation), as well as several interviews, the demand for chestnuts in quantity as well as quality exceed the offer, both for internal and international markets. With the help of the participation of AMLA (unique formal chestnut company in Tropojë) in different international fairs such as "Biofach" in Nuremberg, the demand for Albanian chestnuts (especially in Italy at present) is growing. As internal production is more or less equivalent to domestic chestnut consumption, the increase of export leads to the replacement of domestic chestnuts by imported ones, mainly from Macedonia and Greece (and China through Greece). Expansion of the market is possible as there is a lack of domestic chestnuts and the price of imported chestnuts is still much higher (around 50% higher). A GI for Tropoja chestnuts could be a good tool to stabilise the supply chain in Tirana, Dürres, Elbasan, Fier which have big deficits of chestnuts.

Quality, reputation: Tropoja chestnuts have a high reputation in Tirana and Dürres and usurpation in widespread. This reputation comes from the size (big) and special taste (sweeter than other domestic chestnuts or imported ones). Those specific characteristics come from native varieties, particular soil and climatic conditions (S-E oriented massive, windy valleys, altitude, fresh winters) and long tradition.

Increase of quality and quantity is relatively easy: The actual quantity of harvested chestnut (even if the reliability of the statistics is weak) is much lower than it could be without profound and costly changes. Simple cleaning of the forest and basic care of trees may improve the quantity and quality of the chestnuts if the incentives increase. For example, the "farine de châtaigne corse AOC" specifications correspond to a maximum yield of 6 tonnes/ha[30]. Actually in Tropojë the yield is less than 1 t/ha! This indicates a possible increase of production without deep changes, and feasible in a sustainable way. Many derived products

[30] Corsican chestnut flour PDO (agriculture.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/cdc_aop_farine_chatai.pdf). However the effective yield of Ardêche chestnut forests (France) is approximately 1 t/ha on average.

are possible (chestnut flour, pastries, chestnut paste, beer, etc.); some of them which in other countries have acquired a high grade market position such as "marron glacés". Some of them could be made directly by families from flour bringing a larger amount of the added value directly to the family.

Existence of a chestnut producer association: As a part of the Albanian forestry project[31], an association of chestnut producers was created for sustainable management of the forest and increase of capabilities of producers. This association may be used as a base for the collective organisation of farmers for the implementation of a GI and aspects of the forestry project may be used for the elaboration of specifications (The existence of such an association was a priori a very interesting point. However, as we will see later, for the chestnut case it is not of any help).

Owner of unique formal company very motivated by a GI qualification: The chairman of AMLA is a very motivated person and has a wide view of its activity regarding sustainable rural development. He has a large knowledge about GI and is very interested by its perspective. He is conscious of the importance of developing a quality focussed strategy. Moreover he has a wider view than just his company's profit and sees also his activity as a territorial development opportunity.

b) Interest:

Socio-economic condition of the targeted group:

High level of poverty in the region: As shown by several reports and statistics, Tropojë remains one of the poorest district of Albania. More than 79% of the active population is employed in agriculture (Dashi and Guri 2008). Rural exodus is still a major concern for the region even if it has been dramatically decreasing during recent years (Halili 2008). More than a third of the population lives below the poverty line.
High amount of families concerned: In Tropojë 8 communes, 50 villages, 3'000 farms with 18'000 inhabitants benefit from chestnut production (Halili 2008) for a total population estimated in 2004 at 28'000!

High dependence of chestnut harvesting revenue: Poor families are especially dependant on chestnuts for direct consumption and sale. The proportion of total agricultural revenue from chestnuts is high. For many poor households it is often the only one.

Disappearing tradition: Some traditional ways of conservation and drying (for flour or boiled chestnuts) are still known and some still used, such as conservation in Gazhnjet (big hole in the ground in a dry, fresh and aerated place, where first a layer of ferns is placed, then the chestnuts with their husks, and finally a covering layer of leaves). These practices are now disappearing. Drying chestnuts requires very simple tools, and small mill factories are still working in Tropojë.

[31] Joint project of the World Bank, FAO, Swiss cooperation and Albanian government started in 1997 aiming at restore the state-owned forest and pastures and promote their sustainable use, notably through capacity building.

Ecological aspects:

Fight against erosion: Massive deforestation in the transition period and late 90's has lead to a dramatic increase of erosion. The chestnut forests are mostly free of erosion. In some regions of Kosovo some new plantations of chestnuts are even used to rehabilitate parcels victim of erosion.

Sustainable management of the forests: The chestnut forests, having value other than for timber, have lead to relatively good conservation in comparison with other forests of the region. However, increases of disease and illegal cutting are still of major concern. The increase of the value of non-timber outputs from the chestnut forest leads to better conservation, increased disease prevention, more selective cutting and even regeneration or plantation of new parcels. Many components of the forest are of use for the population, such as chestnuts, wood, herbs, berries, landscape and so one. It is possible to benefit from all those aspects in a sustainable way. At present, little care of forest is carried out. Most of the families simply harvest chestnuts. Simple care could improve the quality and quantity of chestnuts if the incentives coming from a GI increase.

Harmonisation between actors and coordination between project:

Few projects linked to chestnuts or agriculture in this region: In comparison with other regions of Albania, Tropojë has been surprisingly overlooked regarding cooperation and governmental planning in past years. Agriculture has been particularly overlooked, which is most surprising considering the amount of people employed in agriculture (near 80%). MADA (Mountainous Area Development Agency) has a project for chestnuts for Kükes Region (including Tropojë) but most of the project concerns Has and Kükes districts.

Possible combination with other project: The implementation of a GI for chestnuts and more generally the addition of value for chestnuts can be linked with several other rural development projects. Agro-tourism is probably the most significant. The mountainous area with its beautiful landscapes and still well preserved nature offer a lot of opportunities for expansion of tourism. GTZ (German cooperation) has been working in promoting tourism, especially in the now famous Valbona valley, where tourists can find accommodation in farm houses, eat traditional food and discover the life of the peasant families. Tourists coming to this area are in demand of traditional products that are almost absent in the market place. The chestnut forests are emblematic of the landscape, but apart from fresh chestnuts in the local market, it is not possible to buy products derived from chestnut (flour, bread, etc.).

Capacity of demonstration and reproducibility for other products

The chestnut pilot case might be a precious example to be used as a learning process and serve as a model for other products. It may help to show “good practices” and “difficulties” and give a methodology for GI qualification of other products.

2.2. Geographic zone and specific resources

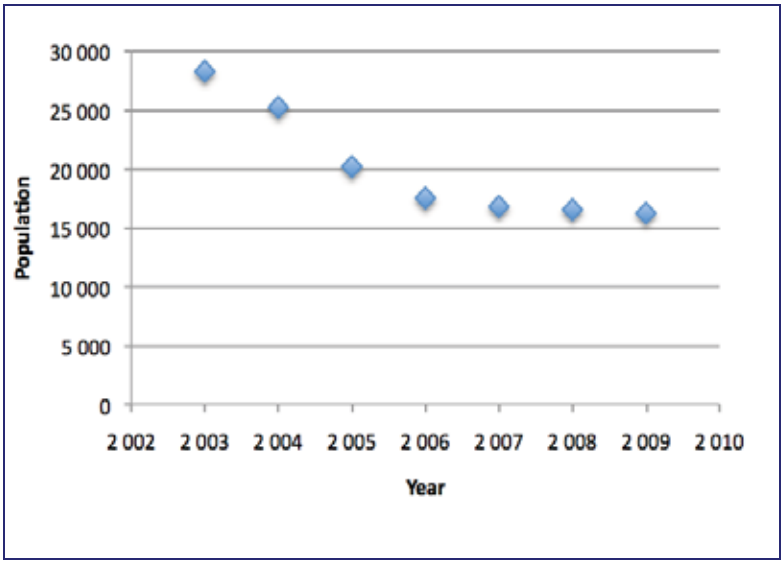
2.2.1. General context

Albania is divided into 12 regions, which are themselves divided into districts for a total of 36 districts. Tropojë district[32] is a part of the Kukës region, which contains also Häs and Kukës districts. Whenever possible, data on Tropojë will be used. However, since data for regions are generally more accessible than those for separate districts, where such data are not available, those for Kukës region will be used given the similarities of the three districts.

Photo 1 Markaj - Tropojë with chestnut forest in the background

Tropojë is a particularly mountainous district, with 72% of the population living in rural areas (2009 INSTAT) and more than 79% of the active population employed in agriculture (Dashi and Guri 2008). Rural exodus is still a major concern for the region even if it the speed of migration has been decreasing over recent years (Halili 2008), as shown by figure 3.

Figure 3 - Population evolution of Tropojë district



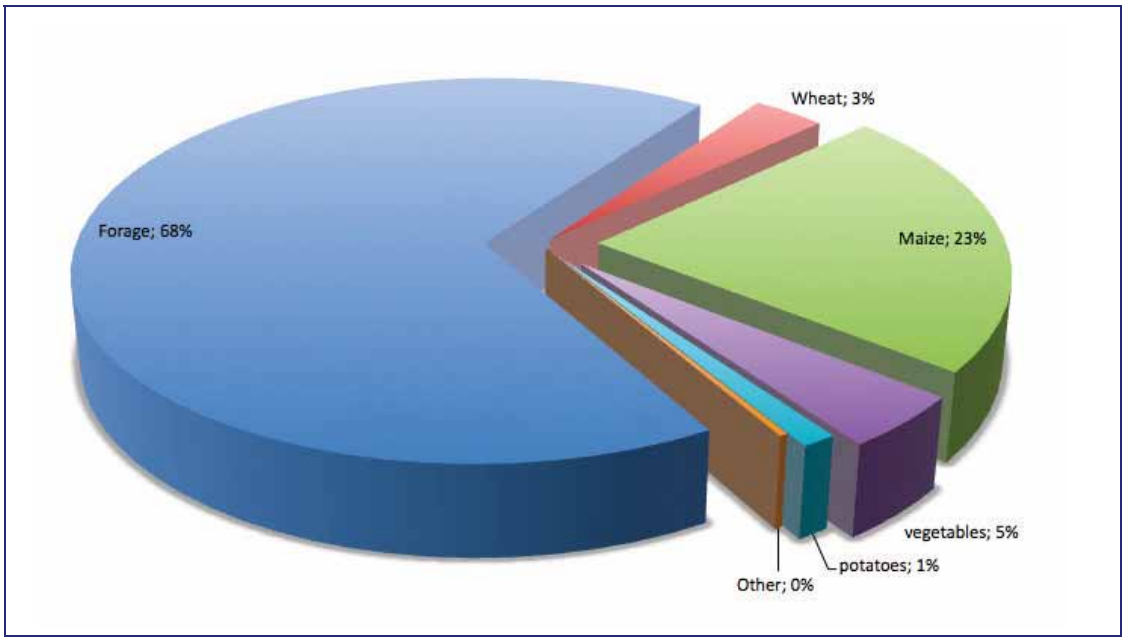
Sources: Author from INSTAT.

[32] Tropojë is also the name of the commune, and gave its name to the district when it was still the major commune of the zone. Nowadays the administrative centre of the district is Bajram-Curri, which is the most populous city.

The difficulties encountered by the agricultural sector in Albania seem to be even more severe in Tropojë. Indeed, more than a third of the population lives below the poverty line.

The topographic conditions are particularly difficult, and the mountainous climate combined with weak infrastructures means that some villages are inaccessible for months during winter[33]! According to Halili (2008) 95% of the farms are principally dedicated for self-use. If in general in Albania farms are small (1.2 ha), in Kukës region they are 0.5 ha on average (MAFCP 2008). 96% of farms have both crops and livestock (generally one or two cows and/or 8 to 10 small ruminants), which explains that a large amount of the arable land is used for forage production (see figure 5).

Figure 4 - Structure of field crop plantings, Tropojë 2008



Sources: Author from MAFCP 2008

Of peasant families interviewed, 2/15 have no cows, 2/15 have one cow, 6/15 have two cows, 2/15 have three cows and 3/15 have five cows. 2 families have one horse and one family has 10 sheep. Most of families (10-13/15) have some hens (3-7), produce maize, potatoes, beans and some other vegetables, have some fruit trees and produce home made raki[34]!

2.2.2. Local resources

In Tropojë the chestnut massif of 2'400 ha is oriented toward the SE and divided by rivers and valleys into smaller plots (see figure 4[35]). The main forests form a half moon at the foot of the Albanian Alps, between 360 and 1000 m; but smaller plots can be found from 200 up to 1100 m. The average slope is 20-25%. Forests are quite old as the average age of trees is 90-100 years. According to a study done for MADA, 8 communes, 50 villages, 3'000 farms with 18'000 inhabitants benefit from chestnut production (Halili 2008) which is certainly somewhat of an overestimation considering that the population in Tropojë, according to INSTAT, was 16'257 in 2009, but gives a good idea of the importance of chestnut production

[33] During interviews, snow was the main problem cited by peasants in the north.
[34] Which didn't help to finalise some interviews, which often lasted more than 4 hours.
[35] Those maps have to be considered as informative. Indeed their precision is limited considering that delimitation zone of chestnut forests has been made from a hand made map (Lushaj et al. 1999).

for peasant families of the zone. Several factors have lead to a superior quality of Tropojë chestnuts: autochtonal varieties (according to forest engineer about 10 local varieties) , SE orientation increasing the hot summer effect, but windy valleys and fresh climate during harvesting time leading to better conservation, soil conditions: acidic and well drained (as most of the forests are on slopes), good quality of forest (although ageing): non-mixed forest, limited (but growing) diseases. A major quality added is also made by a company carrying out proper selection (see next section). Quality might be further improved by relatively cheap means of conservation (see point 2.6.1). Families harvest chestnuts from mid-September to mid-November. The sell the chestnut fresh. For their own consumption they use traditional way of conservation such as gaznhet (see 2.6.1) or dry them. Those practices are disappearing and when used only for self consumption or Bajram-Curri market. They use to make flour to make bread but this practice is disappearing as it is nowadays more interesting for them to sell fresh chestnuts and buy weed flour. They eat chestnut fresh, grilled or boiled.

Photo 2 Tropojë soil

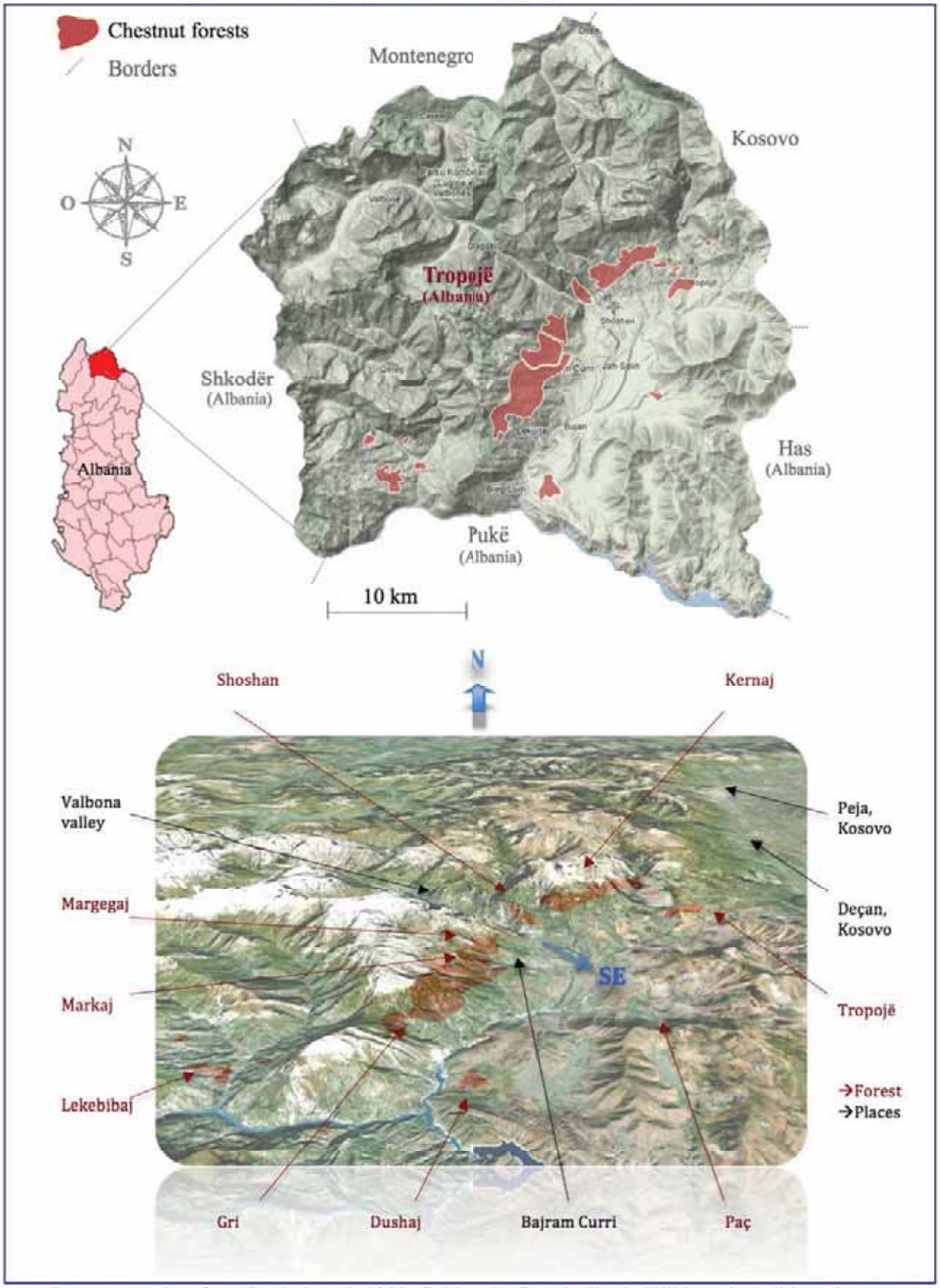
2.2.3. Delimitation of production and processing zone

In order to delimitate the zone for a GI, Vandecandelaere et al.[36] (2009) give several criteria's that gives us an idea of the possible delimitation zone. Chestnut forest are well delineated and are generally free of other trees than chestnut. It is then possible to make a relatively precise map of the chestnuts forests in Tropojë. During interviews in different forests no big variations have been found in quality of forests or harvesting/caring practices. It is still necessary to make further investigation on varieties present in the different forests, soil characteristic, landscapes impact and local know-how in order to define a more precise (or more general) zone. Other forests in apparent similar conditions can be found in Pukë district (south of Tropojë) as well as in Kosovo. It is necessary to compare the characteristic of those forests (soil, know-how, landscapes) to see if the zone should be extended. However, Tropojë has a reputation to extend the zone to other district/country might be confusing for consumers. Some zones such as Dushaj and Lekbibaj which are detached from the principal massive should nevertheless been taken into account considering the relative exclusion they already face and the higher amount of poverty.

[36] See part 2.3 Vandecandelaere et al 2009: 61-69

Photo 3 Chestnut forest, Dushaj

***Figure 5 - Chestnut forests in Tropojë**, plane and inclined view*



Sources: Author from Lushaj et al. 1999, fieldwork, Google Earth, Wikimapia (wikimapia.org), Wikipedia (AlbaniaTropoje.png).

2.2.4. History

In Albania, chestnut trees are considered by experts as native varieties. Documents about the pre-communist history of chestnuts in Tropojë are rare. Different stories, myths and symbols are related to chestnuts. In many forests, old catholic churches can be found which has led several persons to think that the catholic monks have, in order to feed the community, extended the forest by making new plantations and cutting other families of trees. For most of the peasants interviewed, God planted the trees. For some others, the Turks brought them and planted them, as per the story of a famous sultan eating three chestnuts a day to stay healthy. For someone else, a Spanish friend of Skanderbeg[37] gave him some chestnuts, which he planted and spread around Albania. As we see, the origins of the chestnut are not well defined. Chestnut forests are surrounded by symbols, myths and stories. It is deeply rooted in the imagery of people of the zone and everyone has stories to tell about. What is probable is their importance as a staple food for the population of the region for centuries. More precise information can be found from the communist period. At that time they rationalised production and made large-scale forest regeneration and fought against diseases. Care of forest was administered by a few experts in chestnut production, and harvesting was done by peasant families for the cooperative. It was forbidden to keep chestnuts for the family. Chestnuts were sent to other parts of Albania, and to foreign *friends* such as Hungary. At that time, according to some peasants, production in Tropojë reaches 7'000 t in good years. After the collapse of the regime, traditional owners took back their land even if *de jure* they remained in state hands. In the early 2000e chestnut forests (as main forests) where transferred from state ownership to communal property. Until now communes let traditional owners take care of the forest and harvest them. It is for the moment an implicit right-of-use. Communes are supposed to take care of the forest and control illegal cutting. Unfortunately, meagre financial support and the number of workers do not allow proper protection of the forests which are still victim of illegal cutting (especially on plots that are not anymore harvested).

2.3. Product and market

2.3.1. Specificity, reputation and product differentiation

Chestnuts from Tropojë have a good reputation in Albania and in some foreign markets. The street vendors and the green market sellers in Tirana and Durres pretend most of the time that their chestnuts come from Tropojë (whether or not they really come from Tropojë or from China!). This reputation comes first from the fine physical quality of chestnuts: According to a number of interviews, chestnuts from this zone are bigger and sweeter than other domestic chestnuts, in addition to process qualities[38] such as natural forests[39], biological production[40] and a more general representation of the freshness of the Albanian Alps.

[37] Albanian national hero that fought against the Ottoman empire in the XVth century.

[38] As stated by Barjolle (2006) quality is divided between final physical qualities (such as colour, taste freshness) and process qualities (such as geographic provenance and production modes), both of which comprise qualities that are known and unknown at the time of purchase.

[39] Tropojë chestnuts sold through AMLA (see later) have a natural forest certification (i.e. they are considered as natural forest harvest and not agricultural production) from Albinspekt (Albanian certification body).

[40] Tropojë chestnuts sold through AMLA (see later) received a Bio certification from Albinspekt and Bio-inspekta (Swiss certification body) but *de facto* all the forest is bio.

2.3.2. Present and target Markets, Supply chain

Both domestic and international demand for chestnuts surpass the offer in quantity as well as in quality (Imami 2008). International demand for high quality chestnuts has been growing since the second half of the 1990s. According to Pettenella (2001) demand from highly industrialised countries is increasing partly because of growing interest of consumers toward environmentally friendly and traditional products. After having been seen as a *food for the poor* not to say a *food for the pigs*[41], chestnuts are more and more seen as a high-grade product. Domestic demand is also high. If only three regions have a surplus in chestnuts[42], four regions have a deficit of over 500 t[43], four regions have a deficit of 250 to 500 t[44] (Imami 2008). As quantities produced and consumed are more or less equivalent and export is growing - notably with the export by AMLA and Orchidea (see stakholders later) of Tropojë chestnuts to Italy - the domestic chestnuts are replaced by imported chestnuts (Macedonian and Greek chestnuts, and Chinese chestnuts through Greece). Tropojë chestnuts are the only Albanian chestnuts fulfilling the quality required for export to Italy and other European countries. Tropojë chestnuts are also exported informally to Kosovo, and apparently Bosnian sellers buy large quantities in Kosovo. The market is moving quickly and a single new buyer such as "Orchidea" may have a considerable impact on the overall market. Kosovo and Italy are for the moment the two main markets for Tropojë chestnuts followed by Tirana, Durrës and other big Albanian cities[45]. The total amount of chestnuts harvested is difficult to estimate considering the large part of production sold informally. Imami (2008) reports production of 1650 t for 2006, while Shuti (2008) reports 1680 t for the same year. Considering that the forest covers 2'400 ha, this represents an approximate yield of 690 kg/ha, which is confirmed by the interviews and which indicated a yield of 650 kg/ha (see figure 7). The number of trees per ha varies according to the forest, but according to Shuti (2008), there are approximately 80 - 100 trees/ha, indicating a yield of approximately 7.5 kg/tree[46].

The price paid to farmers[47] varies generally from 40 to 80 lek/kg, with an average of around 50-58 lek/kg[48].The price to consumers varies from 50 to 220 lek/kg with an average of 98 lek/kg for domestic chestnuts and from 100 to 300 lek/kg with an average of 158 lek/kg[49] for imported chestnuts. The price of chestnuts in the markets in Kosovo is around 1 euro/kg. High demand for quality chestnuts and the high price difference between domestic and imported chestnuts[50] leads us to think that the cost of institutionalising a GI could be covered by a price premium.

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41 See the excellent chestnut ethno-history of Bruneton-Governatori (1999) to have a presentation of the cultural devaluation of chestnut production in Europe during the XIX and beginning of XX centuries.

42 Kukës and Shkodra have a surplus of over 1'000 t each whereas Diber has a surplus of over 500 t.

43 Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan and Fier.

44 Berat, Korce, Vlore and Lezhe.

45 Transport to Tirana takes one day; to Djacova in Kosovo one can make 5 trips a day!

46 In comparison, specifications for Corsican chestnut flour PDO (France) indicate a maximum of 60 trees per ha and a maximum yield of 150 kg/tree ! or 6 t/ha ! However for Chestnuts forest of Ardèche (France) the yield is approximately 1 t/ha.

47 The prices vary according to the season and location of the farmers. The price is higher at the beginning and at the end of the harvest season. So low (beginning of the season) and high (end of season) forests may be advantaged by this fact.

48 Imami 2008, SNV 2008 confirmed by interviews, see figure 8.

49 This higher price is also due to the fact that domestic chestnuts leave the market earlier (because of lack of proper conservation techniques) causing the price of imported chestnuts to increase considerably at the end of the season. This shows the importance of implementing conservation units (directly by families or at collection points).

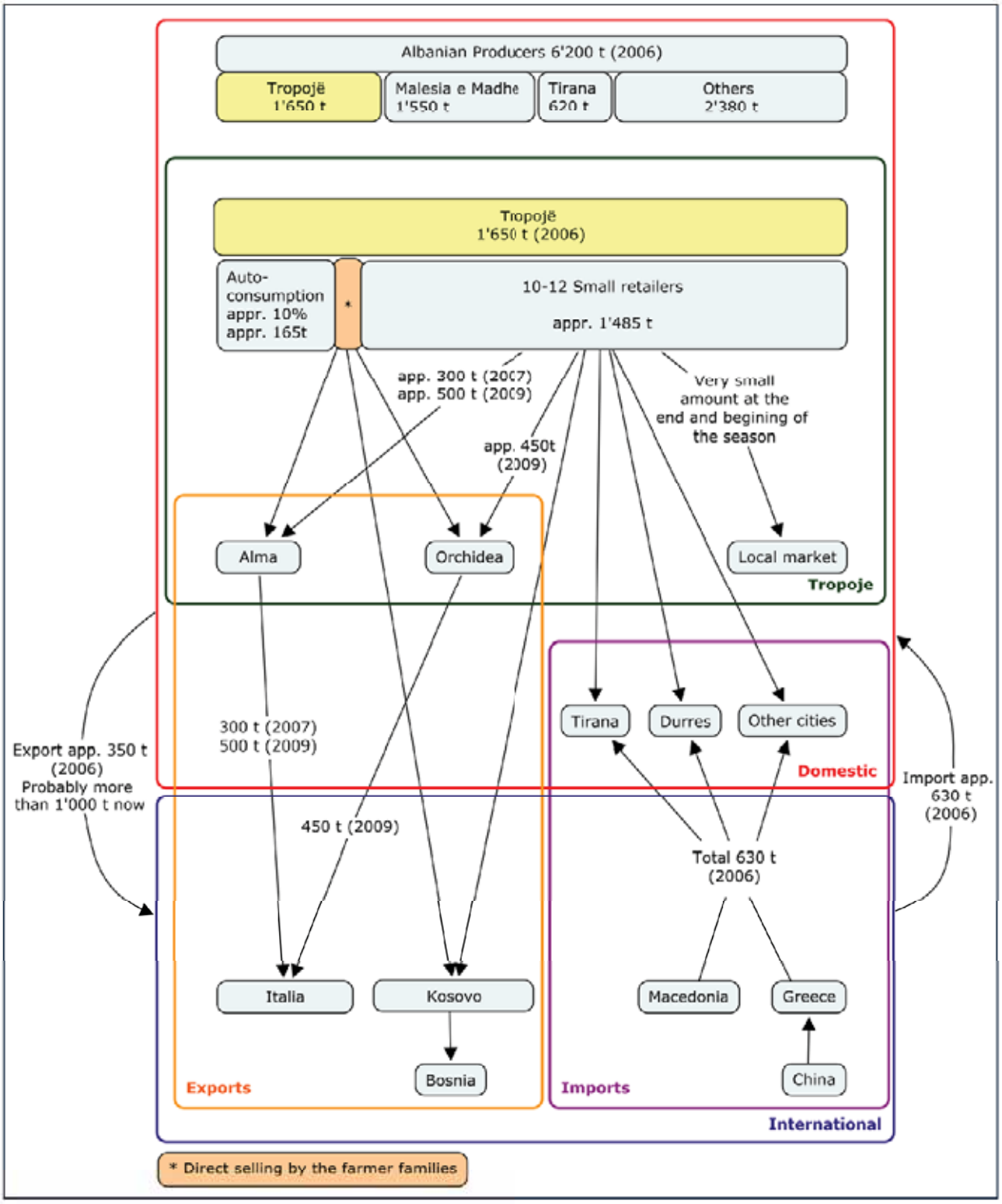
50 Imported products are still 50% more expensive on average.

If the price/quality ratio is for the moment still competitive in local and international markets, according to Pettenella (2001), recent years have been characterised by high international improvement of chestnut production technologies in the three stages of production (forest management, harvesting and processing) allowing mass production. Considering the difficult topographic conditions of Tropojë chestnut forests and marginal application of these technologies, orientation toward quality, extensive production [51] and diversification seem good approaches to maintain production in the long run. The main competitors in the mid-term are likely to be Greece and Turkey[52]. Considering probable increases in labour costs in Albania and relative decreases in production costs from new technologies abroad, imported chestnuts from those two countries might become more competitive in Albania. Attachment to national production by Albanian consumers and recognition of the high quality of Tropojë chestnuts has to be sustained in the future for the maintenance of their production. GI represent a good step in this direction. As stated above, improvement of conservation methods is also necessary to maintain relative competitiveness.

[51] Which is actually more than extensive.

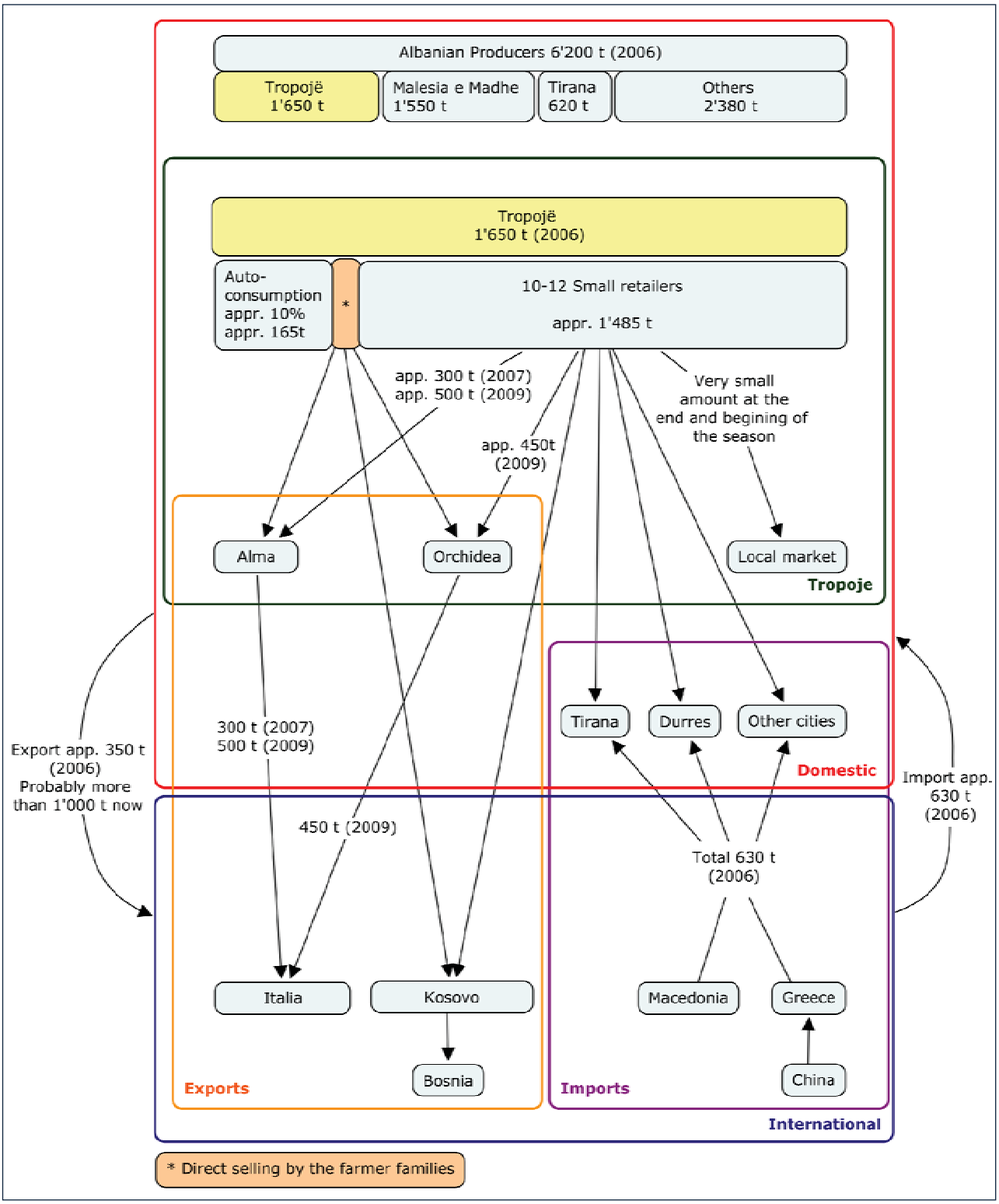
[52] Chestnuts produced in China are mainly *castanea mollisima*, which are very different from *castanea sativa* produced in Europe. Although they may become cheaper than domestic products, their quality is very different. *Castanea mollisima* are bigger but much less sweet. Wholesalers in Europe are not really worried about Chinese competition (interview).

Figure 6 - Tropojë chestnut supply chain



Sources: Author from Imami 2008, Interviews, INSTAT.

Figure 6 - Tropojë chestnut supply chain



Sources: Author from Imami 2008, Interviews, INSTAT.

2.4. Stakeholders and collective organisation

2.4.1. Type of actors involved according to their roles and objectives

Generally stockholders are not aware of GI. Except chairman of AMLA nobody know this topic. However, many of them (such as wholesalers and businessmen) are aware of the importance of orienting the market toward quality and of the high reputation of Tropojë chestnuts.

Producers

Most of families living in proximity of the forest own small part of it. At harvest time (mid-September to mid-November) they go daily to harvest chestnuts and sell them at their house or on the road to small businessman (see later). Some of them, which have cars organise themselves to sell their chestnuts directly to AMLA and Orchidea and to Kosovo.

Figure 7 - Statistical results of peasant interviews

	Family size	Surface chestnuts	Surface agriculture	Harvest Chestnuts	Yield	Self-consumption		Price	Revenue chestnuts
unit	Hab.	ha	ha	kg	kg/ha	kg	%	leke	leke
Moy	7.3	3.5	0.7	2'253	648	107	5	60	136'680
Med	7	3	0.35	2'000	833	100	3	60	87'000
min	4	0.1	0.2	100	200	0	0	40	5'000
max	14	10	2	5'000	1'333	300	20	80	388'000
Other sources	Moy 4.7[1]	Moy 0.8[2]	Moy 0.5[3]	Moy 550[4]	Moy 687[5]	Moy 165[6]	Moy 10[7]	Moy 50[8]	Moy 30'000[9]

1) 2006 INSTAT. 2) 2'400 ha / 3'000 families. Imami 2008, SNV 2008. 3) MAFCP 2008. 4) 0.8 ha * 1'650t / 2'400 ha. Imami 2008, SNV 2008. 5) 1'650t / 2'400ha. Imami 2008, SNV 2008. 6/7/8) Imami 2008. 9) SNV 2008.

Sources: Author from interviews, Imami 2008, SNV 2008, INSTAT, MAFCP 2008.

Processors

AMLA – Bajram-Curri

AMLA is the unique formal company dealing with chestnuts. It is based in Bajram-Curri and employs around 20 people during the harvest period. Small businessmen bring the chestnuts directly from the families. After a first manual selection, chestnuts are put in fresh water (bad ones rise to the surface and are removed). Then chestnuts go through the calibration machine (they are divided in >30 mm, 27-30 mm, 25-27 mm and 23-25 mm). They go then into the spin-drying and cleaning machine. They are finally dried with

Photo 4 Ramiz Jahaj, AMLA's chairman

ventilators and put into bags. Chestnuts are sent to Italy in refrigerating trucks via Kosovo and Durrës (ferry to Bari). A small amount is also sold in Tirana through small retailers. AMLA is trying to develop chestnut flour to work with the big "Thethi" pastry and bread shops chain in major cities of Albania.

Orchidea – Bajram-Curri

A businessman from Bajram-Curri was asked in 2009 by Orchidea (Italian Company) to collect, select, pack and send to Durrës 450 t of fresh chestnuts (which was then sent to Italy with the ferry Durrës – Bari). Below is some information about the costs incurred in order to deliver this order.

Costs	**Per day (Lek / Euro)**		**For 3 month (Lek / Euro)**	
Salaries	22'500	165	2'025'000	14'890
Rent	1'813	13	163'200	1'200
Fuel	3'000	22	270'000	1'985
Chestnuts	300'000	2'206	27'000'000	198'529
Transport	13'600	100	1'224'000	9'000
Bags	2'418	18	217'600	1'600
Total	**343'331**	**2'524**	**30'899'800**	**227'204**

It employed 15 workers at 1'500 lek (11 euro) per day. Rental for the place used for selection and packing was 400 euro per month. To collect chestnuts in villages, it cost 22 euro a day for fuel. A refrigerated truck to Durrës cost 300 euro for 15 tonnes. It goes to Durrës via Kosovo and Tirana. If we take the total costs, it comes to 68.66 lek/kg (50ct d'euro/kg) for fresh selected chestnuts in Durrës. At chestnut stands in Switzerland, it costs 3 CHF for 100g (21 euro/kg)!

Businessmen

From 10 to 12 small informal *businessmen* (as they are called but correspond to intermediaries) go to every village and buy chestnuts directly from families. They sell without any selection or processing in Kosovo, to AMLA, Orchidea, and in Tirana and other big cities. They buy chestnut from 40 to 80 lek/kg and sell them 3 to 10 Lek/kg higher.

Wholesalers

In Tirana, almost all chestnuts are sold to retailers of *Uzina Dynamo*, which is a big wholesale market furnishing the quasi-totality of fruit and vegetable markets and shops of Tirana (Imami 2008). They make only a visual control of quality. Small shops sellers and street vendors come directly to them to by chestnuts. Domestic production was enough to cover the demand but in recent years the needed to find imported ones.

Small shop sellers, green markets

Traditional general market and green markets buy their chestnuts from wholesalers and sell them fresh to consumers.

Street vendors

Street vendors also buy chestnuts from wholesalers and then sell them grilled in the street (peeled or not)

Photo 5 Street vendor

2.4.2. Collective actions

Probably the most difficult obstacle to the qualification of a GI for Tropojë chestnuts is the complete lack of collaboration between stakeholders of the supply chain and between farmers. Collaboration between different actors of the supply chain only concerns transactions. An association of chestnut producers was created within a forestry project[53]; this association didn't work. Generally, peasants do not want to hear about cooperatives or associations and react strongly when we address the topic. As explained by several authors[54] this fact arises from the bad experience of the state farm cooperatives of the communist period. If this is without any shadow of a doubt a part of the explanation, I do think that several other factors indicate a more general *fear of the neighbour*. More than the bad experiences of collective work, the general spy atmosphere of the communist period leading to denunciations and imprisonment have left serious scars. This has even been worsened by the civil war of the late 1990s where (especially in northern region) crime and "settling of accounts" have been widespread. This has lead to serious conflict between families that is worsened by the fact that traditional laws[55] are longer lasting in this part of the country.

Conflicts between families are a matter of honour and are difficult to overcome. If peasants from the same village do not want to collaborate with their neighbours, their relations with businessmen are not much better. While interviewing farmers, they used to refer to them as *lice* or *pirates* showing the high respect they have for them!

2.4.3. Importance of external support

The lack of collective organisation and rivalry between families shows the importance of external support for a GI qualification for Tropojë chestnuts. Bernet et al. (2006) show the importance of external (and neutral) facilitators in order to enhance stakeholder collaboration

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[53] A large forestry project supported by the World Bank, FAO, and different international cooperations endeavour to implement sustainable management of the forest, notably by the increase of the capabilities of farmers (see www.esteri.it/MAE/doc/6_40_175_e.pdf). In Tropojë as well as in other parts of Albania, it had only marginal success. According to several interviews, the main reason was the low benefits that the rural population could expect from such an approach.

[54] See for example, Kokthi 2008, Guri 2008

[55] Traditional customary oral laws that have been probably functioning since the warriors of the bronze age are still widespread in Albania and especially in northern regions. *The Code of Lek Dukagjin* is the most famous of five *Kanuns* (set of laws linked with the era of the figure that codified it). It was supposedly codified by Lek Dukagjin in the 15th century. Present in Kosovo and northern Albania, it persisted through religious changes and invaders. It is often seen as preceding modern state laws and covers every aspect of social life. If blood feud is the best known part of this code because of innumerable articles and documentaries showing people victim of blood revenge blocked in their house for years, other parts of the code are of major concern. Gender roles are well defined and do not give women the same value or power as men. Hospitality is an omnipresent result of the Code. Guests are holy and untouchable. *Besa* (given word) is inviolable and sacred. Marriage, inheritance and property are also well defined in the code but nowadays have less importance than the other aspects cited above.

and trust within market chains in order to improve poor farmers' livelihoods. More recently Paus (2010) showed the importance of facilitators for GI qualification and the multiple competencies and knowledge they need to combine considering the interdisciplinary concepts covered by GI[56]. Vandecandelare et al. also show the importance of mediation considering the different aims of each stakeholders in order to entails the risk of exclusion and the risk additional costs that may leads from technical requirements. Moreover they show the need of external public support in the various stage of GI settling up (Identification, Qualification, Remuneration and reproduction see Vandecandelaere et al. 2009 part 5.2). External support is notably precious for information and sensitization for different stackholders of the supply chain, to conduct studies, to elaborate collective rules, information and marketing to consumers and ensure the sustainability of the GI and evolution of the code of practice.

2.5. Potentials

2.5.1. Socio-Economic

One of the major human needs is certainly the guarantee of subsistence. A GI for Tropojë chestnuts may have considerable impact thereon. Indeed, chestnuts represent a large proportion of family revenues; for poor families it is often the only revenue (complementing social assistance when existing). Of the families we interviewed, only three have agricultural revenues other than chestnuts[57], the average revenue from chestnuts being around 137'000 lek per family per season with a median of 87'000 lek. However this is most probably not a realistic amount[58]. If we consider that 3'000 families have chestnut forests of 2'400 ha with an average yield of 687 kg/ha and earn 58 lek/kg[59], we obtain an average amount of 32'000 lek per family per year. If we consider that average revenue from agricultural activity is 77'468 lek per household per year (Kilic 2009), chestnuts represent more than 40% of agricultural revenue[60]. If we consider that total average revenue is 462'653 lek per household per year (Kilic 2009), chestnuts represents 7% of total revenue. If we take the time related to chestnut production proposed earlier (13 days[61]), it represents 5.4% of working days[62] and is thus theoretically a good investment. However it is only subsidiary revenue. The share of revenue that it should represent to make it sufficiently attractive to take care of the forest properly and continue the activity is difficult to estimate. Figure 8 helps us to estimate the

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[56] Indeed : "*GI facilitation requires a broad range of skills: technical skills (to elaborate the code of practice and legitimacy among producers), social skills (conflict resolution, negotiation), commercial skills (to address the need of a marketing strategy), management skills (meeting deadlines, project elaboration), and networking skills (external support). Nevertheless, these skills are not fundamentally distinct from those expected to characterise facilitators involved in group-based supply chain development. GI facilitators must help structure the group, catalyse the process and identify and mobilise external resources. However, contrary to some external facilitation processes where knowledge of the content is not required, GI facilitators must handle the interdisciplinary concept of GI and acquire both knowledge and competencies. Eventually, in developing and transition countries a large effort has to be dedicated to strengthening institutional networks, and facilitating changes not only in the group process, but also at the institutional level. Providing a favourable and credible context (legal framework, certification and controls) is necessary for the producers to make sense of their joint representation to collectively protect and promote their product under a GI*" (Paus 2010: 40).

[57] One family sells milk in Bajram-Curri which accounts for a quarter of agricultural sales (the rest is from chestnuts). One family was selling calves. Another one was selling apples and raki representing half of total sales.

[58] Considering the limited amount of interviews.

[59] SNV 2008.

[60] Moreover this amount is an average of all Albania, Tropojë being one of the poorest districts, the percentage of chestnut revenue in overall agricultural revenue is probably much higher.

[61] 16 days * 0.8 ha.

[62] 365 days * 5/7 (weekends) – 20 (vacation). In order to please the unionist that I am.

share of revenue according to yield, price and surface. We divided those revenues according to one, three, six and nine months of minimum wage. This amount also represents one month of revenue to rise above the poverty threshold for 4.5 persons (average of households members). For example, if we consider that 25% of annual minimum wage is sufficient to continue the activity, with the current yield and price, 1.4 ha is needed, or 3 ha for 50% of an annual minimum wage. If the price rises to 70 lek/kg and the yield to 800 kg/ha then for a 25% annual minimum wage, 1 ha is needed. And 2.2 ha for 50%. It is then obvious how small variations in the price of chestnuts may have considerable impact over household revenue. If the price rises to 80[63] lek/kg and the yield to 1 t/ha[64] then 1.4 ha will guarantee 50% of annual minimum wage. If the yield has been growing in recent years, this tendency might reverse considering the very limited care and combat against diseases being carried out. There is obviously a need for external support to organise training of farmers to keep their forest healthy[65]. There is also a need of support for conservation methods. This will allow extending presence in the market throughout the season leading to an increase of the average price of chestnuts. Considering that for most peasants, chestnut-related activity represents only a part of overall revenue, the will to continue chestnut production will also depend on the evolution of job opportunities in non-farm sectors as well as evolution of remittances. If for the moment job opportunities are almost inexistent and remittances and social assistance allow this situation to continue, major changes may happen in the future[66].

Figure 8 - Revenue according to surface, yield, prices and time.

[63] SNV 2008 makes the projection of 89 lëke for 2015. However projections of this type require high precaution considering variability of price increases in a free trade system and high uncertainties in the evolution of factors influencing prices in the long run.

[64] Which is realistic considering that during the communist Regime the yield probably surpassed 3 t/ha.

[65] According to interviews made by SNV (2008), 89% of nut producers in Kukes region are in demand of information for pest and disease treatment measures while 85% need information on thinning.

[66] Of which it is difficult to estimate the respective evolution.

	Surface	price 50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
	0.2	6870	7557	8244	8931	9618	10305	10992	11679	12366
	0.6	20610	22671	24732	26793	28854	30915	32976	35037	37098
yield	1	34350	37785	41220	44655	48090	51525	54960	58395	61830
687	1.4	48090	52899	57708	62517	67326	72135	76944	81753	86562
	1.8	61830	68013	74196	80379	86562	92745	98928	105111	111294
	2.2	75570	83127	90684	98241	105798	113355	120912	128469	136026
	2.6	89310	98241	107172	116103	125034	133965	142896	151827	160758
	3	103050	113355	123660	133965	144270	154575	164880	175185	185490
	Surface	price 50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
	0.2	7000	7700	8400	9100	9800	10500	11200	11900	12600
	0.6	21000	23100	25200	27300	29400	31500	33600	35700	37800
yield	1	35000	38500	42000	45500	49000	52500	56000	59500	63000
700	1.4	49000	53900	58800	63700	68600	73500	78400	83300	88200
	1.8	63000	69300	75600	81900	88200	94500	100800	107100	113400
	2.2	77000	84700	92400	100100	107800	115500	123200	130900	138600
	2.6	91000	100100	109200	118300	127400	136500	145600	154700	163800
	3	105000	115500	126000	136500	147000	157500	168000	178500	189000
	Surface	price 50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
	0.2	8000	8800	9600	10400	11200	12000	12800	13600	14400
	0.6	24000	26400	28800	31200	33600	36000	38400	40800	43200
yield	1	40000	44000	48000	52000	56000	60000	64000	68000	72000
800	1.4	56000	61600	67200	72800	78400	84000	89600	95200	100800
	1.8	72000	79200	86400	93600	100800	108000	115200	122400	129600
	2.2	88000	96800	105600	114400	123200	132000	140800	149600	158400
	2.6	104000	114400	124800	135200	145600	156000	166400	176800	187200
	3	120000	132000	144000	156000	168000	180000	192000	204000	216000
	Surface	price 50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
	0.2	9000	9900	10800	11700	12600	13500	14400	15300	16200
	0.6	27000	29700	32400	35100	37800	40500	43200	45900	48600
yield	1	45000	49500	54000	58500	63000	67500	72000	76500	81000
900	1.4	63000	69300	75600	81900	88200	94500	100800	107100	113400
	1.8	81000	89100	97200	105300	113400	121500	129600	137700	145800
	2.2	99000	108900	118800	128700	138600	148500	158400	168300	178200
	2.6	117000	128700	140400	152100	163800	175500	187200	198900	210600
	3	135000	148500	162000	175500	189000	202500	216000	229500	243000
	Surface	price 50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
	0.2	10000	11000	12000	13000	14000	15000	16000	17000	18000
	0.6	30000	33000	36000	39000	42000	45000	48000	51000	54000
yield	1	50000	55000	60000	65000	70000	75000	80000	85000	90000
1000	1.4	70000	77000	84000	91000	98000	105000	112000	119000	126000
	1.8	90000	99000	108000	117000	126000	135000	144000	153000	162000
	2.2	110000	121000	132000	143000	154000	165000	176000	187000	198000
	2.6	130000	143000	156000	169000	182000	195000	208000	221000	234000
	3	150000	165000	180000	195000	210000	225000	240000	255000	270000

18000	One month of minimum salary	Yield (kg/ha)
54000	Three months	Surface (ha)
108000	Six months	Price (Lekë)
216000	Nine months	Time (days)

Sources: Author.

But revenue is not the only thing that matters. Chestnuts allow poor families to have good quality food[67] for several months (up to 6 months under good storage conditions). Families

[67] Chestnuts have an interesting composition from the nutritional point of view, despite considerable variability of composition values due to differences in analytical methodology. For example, according to the USDA food composition tables (http://www.nutritiondata.com/facts/nut-and-seed-products/3143/4?mbid=NDNL), a 100g serving of roasted chestnuts provides 245 kcal, 3g of protein,

keep on average around 10% of their harvest (Imami 2008). Traditionally, the price of chestnuts and wheat was the same, which is still very present in the peasants' mind. They give the same value (monetary and non monetary) to chestnuts and wheat. Chestnut wood is also used for cooking, construction and fencing. Several other products can be found in the forest such as blueberries and wild herbs. Bringing small ruminants into the forest could be very interesting for forest cleaning but is practiced by only one peasant interviewed. Forest maintenance provides large amounts of food, wood and revenue but also vital ecological services such as water supply control, fight against erosion[68], local (and wider) climate regulation, maintenance of direct usable biodiversity and protection against floods.

Subsistence also has to be guaranteed into the future. The maintenance of chestnut production through GI may help the strengthening of stewardship of nature to ensure subsistence in the long run. Another aspect of security is that of predictable rules of conduct. A small part of it can be provided by collective specifications that provide clear rules of production and risks if those are not respected. High variation in prices resulting from fast moving markets was described by some peasants. A GI could stabilize the market and allows peasants to observe that forest care represents a good opportunity in the long run. As stated above, if nothing is done, major damage to the forest may compromise their security (erosion, floods, water supply, etc.). Long-term stewardship of nature implemented by specifications may help to guarantee both sustainability of the forest and subsistence into the future.

The transmission of culture is also of major concern, and thus many families prefer their children to study in cities and escape from agriculture. It is striking how in one generation, knowledge and know-how are disappearing. Asking a girl to show me the tool used by her parents to prepare the white cheese she eats every day, and seeing that she doesn't have a clue, is only one example of the rapid erosion of traditional knowledge. As peasants often do not see any future in agriculture, they encourage their children to study in the city, which is understandable. However, they also refrain from transmitting their vast knowledge because they consider it old-fashioned. Restoring the worthy prestige of chestnut production may reverse this tendency, and may give meaning to their activities and give them the will to transmit this inestimable treasure. GI most probably represents a step in this direction.

Worldwide, agriculture is generally considered as low-level work leading to low self-esteem among peasants. This amazing fact, considering the importance of the sector as a base of subsistence for the entire population, can be fought through self-esteem amelioration and reinforcement of local identity. GI can contribute in several ways to the revalorisation of Identity. It is the recognition of the high quality of the product coming partly from their work. It reinforces the sense of place by giving more importance to local characteristics leading to high quality products. This increases the sense of belonging and the will to transmit it. It allows a feeling of differentiation.

More than feeling degraded, peasants often have the impression of having no control over their future leading to a fatalistic attitude. Participating in collective action having high impact on their day-to-day life brings them to rethink their power and their place within the society

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2g of fat, 53g of total carbohydrate including 5g of dietary fibre. The protein quality is high with an amino acid score of 108. Chestnuts are rich in complex carbohydrates and dietary fibre. The level of saturated fat is low whilst that of essential fatty acids is quite high. Chestnuts are rich in vitamin C, thiamine, vitamin B6, folic acid, potassium, copper and manganese. Chestnuts are also rich in antioxidants, which are increasingly shown to be associated with lower risk for chronic degenerative diseases (Blomhoff R, Carlsen MH, Andersen LF, Jacobs DR Jr. Health benefits of nuts: potential role of antioxidants. Br J Nutr. 2006 Nov;96 Suppl 2:S 52-60).

[68] Chestnuts are even used in some parts of Kosovo to rehabilitate plots victim of erosion.

and the world. It could bring them satisfaction about the meaning of their life and work and the control they have over it[69].

According to most of the peasant interviewed the lack of social relations outside the family and the *clan* is a very difficult condition. As stated above, the Communist period with the generalized spy atmosphere followed by the civil war of the late 90's have led to very tense relations between families. According to the author, one of the main issues related to GI for Tropojë chestnuts is the potential that it represents in recreating social relations. A common project, such as a GI, could be of help to overcome tension and old grudges. However, some caution is needed considering that blood feuding is still wide-spread. Such strong rivalry may partly prevent any collective action and may force them to wait for the new generation less interested in the "code of lek Dukajini" but probably less attached to the land also!

Understanding the surrounding world is important to make sense of our life and make informed choices. Participating in the qualification of a GI leads to a better understanding of our activity, of the place we have in the supply chain. Where do the chestnuts go, how they are transformed, who eats them are questions that few peasants can answer. As they are ashamed to go to the market, they generally have no idea what happens to their chestnuts once they leave with the minibuses of the *pirates*.

During interviews with farmers it became quickly obvious how chestnut forests and chestnuts are deeply rooted in the imagery and symbolic of peasants in the zone. Their discourses are full of myth, stories and symbols related to chestnuts. The link with ancestors is quite strong in Albania. A GI approach implies giving importance to those aspects. Chestnut production is highly embedded in the history and social practices of the zone. The little available historical data allows a wide variety of hypotheses, myths and romantically embellished history.

Peasants of Tropojë often feel stuck in their place, role and practices. If GI may be a powerful tool to maintain traditional know-how, it brings also a fertile ground for Innovation (Jorge 2007). Innovations are notably needed in the continuous improvement of quality, in the marketing organization, in the collective organisation in a synergic way.

2.5.2. Environmental

Most of the families simply harvest chestnuts without giving any care to the forests (only 2 peasants interviewed engage in activities other than harvesting). Some families that have found sufficient income outside agriculture have stopped harvesting their chestnuts. Generally, the young generation has a very low interest in agriculture. Emigration is still a major issue. Those four tendencies lead us to think that if nothing is done, the abandonment of large proportions of the forest is inevitable. As almost no care has been given since the collapse of the communist regime, chestnut forests may become too old and be dramatically infected by various diseases. The value of chestnuts (both economic and non-economic) combined with *de facto* ownership resulted in relatively good conservation of the forests in comparison with other forests of the region[70] and partially prevented illegal cutting[71];

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[69] "*Studies highlight that the written code of practices is the master piece of collective action. Building it according to a participative process creates strong links between partners, who learn to negotiate and work together*" (Reviron and Paus 2006 34).

[70] Even if large numbers of fruit trees planted during the communist regime were cut after its collapse.

[71] Indeed: "*The traditional adherence to clan boundaries enabled villagers to meet their domestic needs more efficiently than the cumbersome official system could have done. By contrast, the coexistence of state and customary law, once a state decree granted certain areas of the traditionally communal forest to licensed wood fellers, was a source of conflict. The notion that simply instituting an appropriate legal regime will*

however decrease of interest toward their plots leading from diminution of the value of chestnuts may lead to dramatic damage. With the exception of high alpine forests and fruit trees, dramatic damage has been done to Tropojë forests after the collapse of the communist regime and during the late 1990s. As forest protection is inadequate (insufficient financial support and amount of workers, low integration of local population on forest management) major illegal cutting might occur; otherwise ageing of the forest (they are already quite old) and the spread of diseases will engender considerable costs in order to rehabilitate the forests[72]. If forest protection is supposed to be guaranteed by the commune, it is very difficult to ensure given the small amount of finance and forest guards implicated. Moreover, chestnut wood is greatly appreciated because of its aesthetic, resistance and acoustic characteristics. A GI may have several effects against this tendency. Increase in chestnut value (and other non-timber value such as chestnut honey) may encourage harvesters to continue their activity and take more care of the forests[73].

Photo 7 Virulent cancer

The specifications should clearly indentify the practices needed for ecosystemic management of the forest in order to secure this priceless resource for the future. GI might be a powerful tool to combine timber and non-timber values as well conservation of the forests as a strong additional quality. GI may help to collectively choose adapted practices in specifications. However, GI are probably insufficient without external support for training in the combat against diseases, thinning, and in conservation methods.

2.6. Prerequisites, difficulties, needs and joint projects

2.6.1. Conservation and collecting points

Conservation is a major issue for chestnut commercialisation (see for example Conedera et al. 2004). Indeed, fresh chestnuts without conservation should be in the mouth of consumer within 10 days and the cold chain must not be broken. Several ways to improve conservation exist. Modern conservation methods such as controlled atmosphere will not be discussed here

establish a set of property rights that can undergird a modern economic system is deeply implausible, because most property rights can only be marginally enforced by the legal system. The core of the institution of ownership is a matter of unquestioned and largely unconscious social and economical practices that must be rooted in non-legal developments. This is the old Hobbesian problem: when most people obey the law, the government can enforce it effectively and [relatively] cheaply against the few individuals who break it. But when obedience breaks down on a large enough scale, no authority is strong enough to police everyone. In such a setting, with enforcement becoming less and less effective, individuals have an incentive to follow their own interests, regardless of any paper constraints. Compare the fact that villagers following the precepts of the Kanun in the 1990s, and indeed to this day, respecting each other's boundaries, are unlikely to take each other's wood, with the anarchic approach of the illegal sawmill businesses illicitly enriching themselves under the blind eye of state jurisdiction " (De Waal 2004: 46).

[72] The Swiss case about this issue is quite relevant. Almost total abandonment of chestnut forests followed by the realization of its landscape and ecological importance lead to rehabilitation of part of the forest causing very heavy costs. For example, one village of Ticino (Swiss canton) had to spend 360'000 Sfr for a surface area of 28 ha (Barjolle 2008).

[73] Indeed as stated by Pettenella (2001: 512) "*chestnut cultivation represents an exemplary model of multi-functional forestry. Indeed, from a marketing perspective, chestnut products are extremely diversified* ".

as they seem unrealistic for the Tropojan case. However some simple conservation methods should be implemented in order to improve shelf life. The first traditional methods of conservation called *gaznjet* used in Tropojë consists of making a big hole (70-80cm deep and wide depending on quantity) in a dry, fresh and aerated area. A first layer of fern is put on the ground. It is then filled with chestnuts still in their cupule (spiky capsule). Finally it is covered with leaves, branches and fern (at least 30-40 cm) and sometimes a last layer of earth is put on top. It is possible to find good chestnuts (even if they are close to germination) conserved with this technique until late April in Bajram Curri (this technique is however disappearing). With this technique they have to be eaten very quickly after removal. Thermotherapy consists in putting chestnuts for 45 minutes in 45-50°c water and then 8 to 12 hours in fresh water. Hydrotherapy consists in leaving chestnuts in fresh water for 5 to 8 days (until the end of foam at the surface). Most of bad chestnuts rise to the surface and can easily be removed. Water has to be changed every two days. To leave them in running water is good but it is then difficult to see when foam stops. These methods can allow good conservation for up to 90 days. The two latter techniques do not exist in Tropojë but could be implemented considering the low cost and knowledge required. Many producers have springs making conservation possible directly by farmers, however, many region have limited amounts of water (such as Dushaj where limited water is a major issue for families of the zone. In this case collection and conservation points seem necessary.

2.6.2. Reinforcement of collective organisation, cooperatives

Several actors, such as the Spanish Cooperation and the NGO Cerai, are promoting cooperatives and farmer associations. Cerai is notably working on cooperative promotion of chestnut producers in Shkoder. They try to settle up collecting points and collective management of it. They organise meeting, formations and support for legislative recognition of the cooperative. Several stakeholders and public representatives are also encouraging this process for different reasons[74] (non of them in Tropojë). According to Guri (2008 15-16):

"In the mid-term the development of agricultural cooperatives will improve the quality of life of farmers and rural families, increase efficiency of labor, offer more and better opportunities for rural employment within and outside of agriculture. Chances for better, more and different employment will have a long-term effect on the socio-economic development of the rural area and will increase social cohesion"

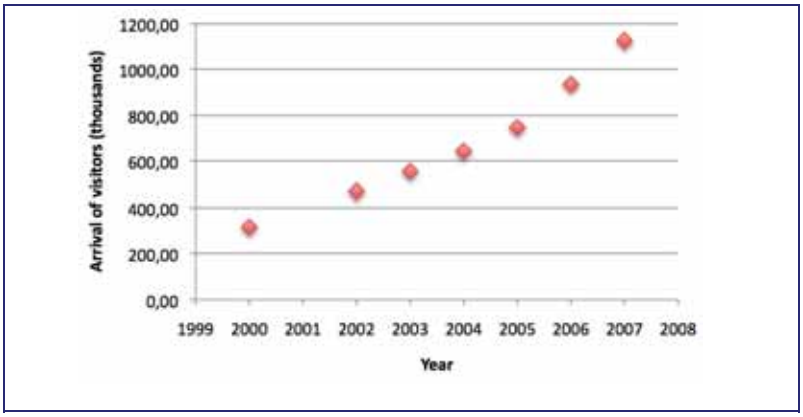
As we saw in the previous section, collective organisation of farmers is a major issue (and probably the main obstacle) for GI qualification. Based on the knowledge and know-how acquired by previous cooperative support programs, a joint project of GI qualification and cooperative creation might be fruitful.

[74] Given the size of the farms, promotion of cooperatives is a major concern for Albanian agriculture. However different stakeholders have different objectives regarding promotion of cooperative. For industry representatives, the creation of cooperatives is necessary to respond to the demands of the raw material industry. As they cannot deal with too small and fragmented farms, they would like agreements with larger scale cooperatives. Cooperation (such as AECID) sees it as a way to reduce costs permitting market access and making farms sustainable. Some researchers and politicians see it as a first step to modern European farms by facilitating the concentration of farms. Finally some NGOs (such as Cerai) see it as a way to recreate social relations and solidarity. If those objectives are at the very least divergent, they may be convincing for a wide range of stakeholders having influence over agricultural policies and practices.

2.6.3. Agrotourism, ecotourism

As stated by Vandecandelaere et al. : « *Local tourism and GI products present clear synergies, the development of one contributing to the other*[75] » (Vandecandelaere 2009 : 152). Tourism is growing year by year in Albania[76]. Agro-eco-tourism is also entering into the offer proposed to tourists. In recent years the German Cooperation Agency GTZ developed accommodation in peasant houses in Valbona valley (Tropojë District) and Thethi national park[77] (Shkodra district), with the collaboration of farmers and tour operators (such as *outdoor Albania*). Tourists can taste traditional foods and see the day-to-day life of their hosts. Linking a GI with the promotion of this kind could be fruitful[78].

Figure 9 - Arrival of visitors in Albania



Sources: Author from UNCTAD 2009

Trying to implement the same concept to chestnut-growing villages could be a great opportunity. Linking such accommodation with forest visits and tasting of chestnut products with a dressing of QOL improvement and forest preservation marketing may certainly find its adepts. According to the owner of *outdoor Albania* and a representative of GTZ, tourists going in rural areas are seeking traditional products, which are difficult to find. While Valbona

Photo 8 Valbona

[75] Indeed, "This interaction is particularly evident in cultural events organised around products representing a region, as it links traditions, culture or gastronomic itineraries [...] GI reputation can benefit from the local economic and social development. On the other side, local resources participating in building the specific quality of a product constitute significant resources for tourism as well. Remarkable landscapes shaped by agricultural systems over time, specific native animal breeds or plant varieties, production know-how and traditions can serve as vehicles for tourism attraction […] adding value through tourism can facilitate the collective promotion of a product and exploration of new marketing channels ». (Vnecandelaere 2009 : 152-153)

[76] As shown in figure 13.

[77] Two sectors one-day apart on foot.

[78] Indeed as we are reminded by Reviron and Paus:"The association of different GI products and synergies with tourism activities may be very helpful to increase impacts in the concerned areas " (Reviron and Paus 2006 35).

valley is now famous, for the moment the rest of the district is seen more as a transition zone between the spectacular ferry on the Koman Lake[79] and Valbona. Considering the numerous and beautiful landscapes offered to the visitor spending some time in between the two, this is certainly because of the lack of tourist infrastructure. The chestnut forest is emblematic of the zone and offers beautiful scenery. As they are in the middle of two famous destinations (i.e. Koman and Valbona) it would be worthwhile promoting a stopover with a rest under a chestnut tree to eat chestnut honey on a slice of Tropojë chestnut PDO bread and a Tropojë chestnut PDO bear brewed with Valbona river water![80] There is no such practice for the moment in Albania but the variety of products found in Tropojë could be linked in the establishment of a basket of goods[81]. The plums most widespread in Albania are known as Tropojë plums, which are still grown in Tropojë. Various wild products in the chestnut forests such as wild herbs (for food, spices or medicinal purpose), blueberries, and mushrooms can be found. Chestnut honey is a very specific and appreciated honey Tropojë chestnut honey has a high reputation. Some dairy products might be also proposed, as well as some meats.

Photo 9 Koman

2.6.4. Diversification of derived products

If fresh chestnuts are well appreciated boiled or grilled accompanying certain meals, a wide range of products can be derived from chestnuts. Chestnut flour allows production of a wide variety of pastries, breads and biscuits but chestnuts also allow making beer, jams, liquor and other products increasingly seen as higher-grade products such as *Marron glacés.* Chestnut honey is also a very specific and well-appreciated product in Albania.

2.7. Synthesis and recommendations about chestnut case

In this part we make a synthesis of part 2 (see 1.4 for a synthesis and general recomandation for the institutional context and marketing) by showing the challenges and opportunities allowing us to make some recommendations' for the chestnut case.

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[79] Ferry on the road to Tropojë from Tirana or Shkodra.

[80] Indeed as we are reminded by Mussong : "*In Switzerland as well as in Italy it has been shown, that the commercialisation of the fresh fruit is very difficult if infrastructure and proximity of market are missing. However, other products made of dried chestnuts are relatively lucrative. In the region of Malcantone dried chestnut, chestnut flakes, chestnut flour, chestnut honey any other products are successfully commercialised as ecological local goods. Especially the integration of the chestnut culture in the touristic concept is very lucrative. However, this concept is based on an identification of the local population with the chestnut".* Translation of the author from: " *Sowohl in der Schweiz wie auch in Italien ist demonstriert worden, dass besonders die Vermarktung der Frischfrucht bei fehlender Infrastruktur und nahen Absatzmärkten sehr schwierig ist. Allerdings sind weitere Produkte aus getrockneten Kastanien relativ lukrativ. In der Region Malcantone werden getrocknete Kastanien, Kastanienflocken, Kastanienmehl, Kastanienhonig und viele weitere Produkte als ökologische Erzeugnisse lokal erfolgreich vermarktet. Besonders die Integration der Kastanienkultur in das touristische Konzept ist sehr lukrativ. Allerdings basiert dieses Konzept auf einer Identifizierung der lokalen Bevölkerung mit der Kastanie "* (Mussong 2006 8).

[81] Combination of selected local products. Indeed, "The development and promotion of a GI product can serve as a starting point for the development and promotion of the entire geographical heritage and related products within a basket of goods » (Vandecandelaere et al. 2009 : 153).

Challenges:

- Fast moving and segmented market. A single new buyer may have considerable impact on the supply chain
- Weak collective organisation and strong rivalry between families
- Only one company make conservation treatment
- Ageing and increase of diseases coming from insufficient care
- Informality of market channels except for AMLA

Opportunities:

- Demand in quantity as well as quality exceeding the offer so the market could be extended
- Chestnuts from Tropojë have a good national/international reputation coming from specific characteristics linked to their origin
- Chestnut forest well delineated
- Improvement in quantity and quality relatively easy and under affordable costs (it is nevertheless necessary to be careful of exclusion of producers: self exclusion as this is a new topic and many producers may not see the interest of the dynamic and financial exclusion as it concerns extremely poor families)
- GI may have considerable impact over socio-economic and environmental aspects
- Several projects could be synergistically linked with GI qualification (Such as eco-agro-tourism or cooperative promotion)

Recommendations for pilot case:

- **External support is needed in different domains:**
    - For the improvement of collective organisation in order to set up rules of the code of practices there is a need of external and neutral **facilitators** to conciliate the aims of the different stakeholders and overpass the rivalries between families.
    - Large scale **information** on GI (meaning, potential and procedure) for producers should be made
    - In order to maintain (and improve) the quality it is needed **trainings** in:
        - Fight against diseases
        - Care / Thinning
        - Conservation methods
    - In order to ameliorate the access and stay longer in the market**, collection points** could be supported for a better selection and conservation

- **Joint project and collaboration:**
-
    - Synergies with **eco-agro-tourism** should be settle up.
    - **Cooperative promotion** might broader the effectiveness of GI
    - **Cooperation between MAFCP, local authorities, Patent Office and collective organisation** should be promoted since the beginning of GI qualification

- **For the Code of practice (COP)**

-

- **Native varieties** should be used
- **As Bio certification** already exist it should be introduced in the COP
- **Care of trees** (fight against diseases, cut of dead branches and regeneration) should be fixed as well as **sustainable management** of the forest
- **Conservation and selection methods** has to be collectively defined

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FAO: http://faostat.fao.org/site/291/default.aspx

National institute of statistics (INSTAT): http://www.instat.gov.al/

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer protection (MAFCP): http://www.mbumk.gov.al/index.php?lang=en

IFAD: http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/web/guest/country/statistics/tags/albania

UNDP-MDG: http://www.undp.org.al/index.php?page=MDG/mdg_albania

Annexes

a1. Maps of Albania

Sources : http://www.vmapas.com/Europa/Albania/maps-es.html (big), http://maps.grida.no/go/graphic/albania_topographic_map (small).

a2. Questionnaires

All interviews begin with questions about the background and current position of the interviewee, followed by a semi-directive interview (i) and finalised with more structured and quantitative questions (ii). Questions are indicative and have been modified according to the background of the interviewee. Interviews were conducted with:

a. politicians, public officials (Local, National)
b. NGO representatives, supporter (non-governmental)
c. researchers
d. farmers
e. processors/final producers, producer representatives
f. Retailers; small and large, wholesalers; different types – local, (inter)national
d. Consumers and consumer representatives

a. politicians, public officials

Politicians and public officials may come from different public bodies. Mainly from the Ministry of agriculture, Ministry of forestry and environment, Ministry of statistics, Ministry of economy, head of communes. Questionnaires may vary depending on the ministry of the interviewed person.

ai)
Have you heard about geographical indications?
What is the actual legal framework on GIs?
Which institutions are involved?
Which conditions are required to obtain a GI?
What is the position of your country in the WTO regarding this question?
Have you any agreements with other countries regarding this question?
Are changes expected in the future?
Do Albanian GI already exist? (Which ones?)
What could be the expected outcomes of a legal protection of a GI?
What do you know about chestnuts in Albania?
And about Tropojë chestnuts?
What are the main difficulties encountered by Albanian farmers?
What is the government doing to improve the quality of life of farmers?
How is the actual property or rights of use of chestnut forests working?
How is the governmental interest in promoting GI?
What are the marketing channels of chestnuts and their relative importance?
How did it change in the past? What are the expectations?
What are the main problems of chestnut production (disease, losses, low conservation, absence of adapted technologies, etc.)?

aii)
General data on Tropojë (demography, agriculture, social, environmental, etc.)

General data on chestnuts (delimitation zone, volumes, prices, imports, exports, history, culture, traditions etc.)
Why did the government implement a GI law in the overall trademark law?
What are the means to fight against usurpation?
What quantity of chestnuts is produced each year?
Which parts are directly consumed by families, sold in the country, exported?
From where are the chestnuts imported?
What was the importance of chestnut forests in the Albanian Forestry Project?

b. NGO representatives, supporter (non-governmental)

NGO representatives working on different issues will be interviewed. Mainly environment and rural development.

bi)
How is your organisation related to agriculture/rural development?
How is your organisation related to traditional/origin-based products?
How is your organisation related to chestnut production?
What is the importance of chestnuts for peasant's families?
What do you know about the environmental impact of chestnut production?
What are the main difficulties for peasant families?
How is your organisation trying to ameliorate the quality of life of peasant families?
What are the major obstacles encountered by your organisation?
What do you know about geographical indications?
Is your organisation involved in the promotion of GI? Why?
What are your objectives in promoting origin-based products?
What are you expecting for the future?
Which kind of governmental/international support do you have?

bii)
General data on Tropojë (demography, agriculture, social, environmental, etc.)
General data on chestnuts (delimitation zone, volumes, prices, imports, exports, history, culture, tradition etc.)
How many families are you working with? where?
Which impact have you already seen?

c. researchers

Researchers from different fields will be interviewed. Forestry, agriculture, development, political and social science, European policy and integration. Questionnaires will highly depend on the field of each interviewed person.

ci)
What do you know about traditional/origin-based products?
What do you know about chestnuts?
And chestnut from Tropojë?
What are the main environmental, cultural and social aspects linked to Tropojë chestnuts?
What do you know about the tradition in chestnut production, conservation, products?
Which aspects are still seen, have been lost, new practices?
Who did plant the chestnut trees? why?

Which are the actors involved in the production process?
What are the marketing channels and their relative importance?
Are there by-products of chestnuts production?
What are the main difficulties encountered by peasant families?
What do you know about GI?
What is the institutional and legal framework on GI?
Does the geographical name make sense for consumers?
How do you see GI and what do you think of their possible integration in Albania?
What is the position of your country in the WTO regarding this question?

cii)
General data on Tropojë (demography, agriculture, social, environmental, etc.)
General data on chestnuts (delimitation zone, volumes, prices, imports, exports, history, culture, tradition etc.)
Which products are the main competitors?
Which markets are at risk, and which markets remain to be conquered?
What are the marketing channels and their relative importance (volumes + corresponding profit margins)?
Which diseases are found in the chestnut forests?
Which ones are of major importance?

d. farmers

Every time (when possible) different interviews will be mad with male, female and young persons of the family to see the different perceptions and expectations in order to make a gender and inter-generation analysis.

di)
What are the main difficulties encountered by your family?
What does chestnut mean for you?
What do you miss for a good quality of life?
Which part of your time/your revenue does the chestnut production take?
Can you explain the different activities that the chestnut production implies and when?
How did the chestnuts production/conservation/selling change in the past?
What does it mean for you? (time, labour, inputs, productivity).
Is the farming activity sufficient to live? (if not: Why do you continue?)
Are one/some of your kids interested to continue?
How is your relation with processors/retailers?
How do you collaborate with your neighbouring farmers?
Does a chestnut/farming association exist?
Are you a member of this association and why?
Do you have any agreement on the processing?
To whom do you sell your chestnuts?
Which resources and know-how are involved in the production process?
What do you know about the history of chestnuts in your region?

dii)
General data on farm and family (age, family members, property, etc.)

General data on production and revenue (products, volumes, revenues, remittances, etc.)
How many ha/trees do you take care of?
Who owns the trees?
How much (price) do you sell 1 kg of chestnuts?
What is the revenue per year of chestnut production?
What is the overall revenue of farming activity?
Which other revenues does the family have?
How many kg of chestnuts do you harvest each year?
Which means of conservation do you use?
What other kinds of production do you have?
How many ha of each?
Which part do you keep for your own consumption?
Where or to whom do you send your products?

e. processors/final producers, producer representatives

ei)
When and why did you start working with chestnuts?
How do you choose producers?
Which valorisation (processed products?) do you do?
What are the characteristics of your product and how is your product different from other products sold in the market?
Which quality attributes does your product have in comparison to similar ones? From where do these specific attributes come from?
Which resources and know-how are involved in the production process?
Which attributes do you want to improve in the future?
How do you promote your products?
Does the geographical name make sense for consumers?
What is the reputation of Tropojë chestnuts?
What kind of retailer do you work with?
How do you encourage producers to improve the quality of their chestnuts?
Which improvement projects are you expecting in the future?
How do you show specific quality and origin of your product?
What are the main difficulties encountered by your company?
Did you already face usurpation?
What problem do you face concerning packing, labelling?
What problem do you face with safety issues?
What can you do against them?
What do you know about legal protection?
What are the internal mechanisms for quality control and volume control?
Who is interested in implementing a value creation process?

eii)
General data on volumes, prices, production zones, location of processing and selling...
How many producers do you work with?
How many retailers or wholesalers do you work with?
How many tonnes do you buy each year?
To whom and where do you sell them?
How much do you pay for 1kg of good quality (and bad quality) chestnuts?

How much do you sell them?
What are the costs of processing/transport?

f. Retailers; small and large, wholesalers; different types – local, (inter)national

fi)
Where, to whom and why do you buy your chestnuts?
How do you choose them?
Which kind of traditional/origin-based product do you deal with?
Where do you sell them?
Which are the characteristics of a good chestnut?
Do you buy/sell valorised chestnut (flour, chestnut past, pastries, etc.)?
How is your relation with producer, processor, vendors and other retailers?
What drives consumers to buy your product?
Who are the consumers?
What is the level of notoriety of Tropojë chestnuts?
Does the geographical name make sense for consumers?

fii)
General data on volumes, prices, quality, location of production, selling places...
How much do you pay for 1kg of good quality (and bad quality) chestnuts?
How much do you sell them?
What are the costs of processing/transport?
Which products are the main competitors?
Which markets are at risk, and which markets remain to be conquered?
What are the marketing channels and their relative importance (volumes + corresponding profit margins)?

a3. List of interviewed persons

The list of interviews below contains only the relevant ones. Short interviews (small list of relevant questions on quality, reputation and prices) made with consumers, street vendors, small vendors in Bajram-Curri have not been listed. Some interviews, according to the will of the interviewed person, such as informal chestnuts businessmen have not been listed.

a. Politicians, public officials (Local, National)

1. **Mrs. Fatmira Allmuça**
   Head of the Crop Production Department
   General Directory of Agricultural Policies
   Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection
   "Sheshi Skenderbej", N0.2,
   Tirana, Albania

2. **Ing. Daut Brecani**
   Director
   Forestry service directorate, Tropojë.
   Head of Chestnut Producer Association
   Bajram-Curri – Tropojë – Albania
3. **Ing. Flamur Cerra**
   Head of cadastre unit
   Directorate of forest sector Pogradec
   Pogradec – Albania

4. **Ing. Verxhi Cinari**
   District Forest Sector of Pogradec
   Pogradec – Albania

5. **Ing. Hysni Elezaj**
   Forest warden of Cerrave Commune
   Directorate of forest sector Pogradec
   Pogradec – Albania

6. **Ing. Ragip Elezaj**
   Responsible for information and technical assistance for Bujan, Fierze and Lekbibaj
   Agricultural information center
   Bajram-Curri –Tropojë – Albania

7. **Mrs. Sonila Elezi**
   Head of Legal, International relation and Training Department
   Directorate of Patent and Trademark
   Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy
   Blv. "Zhan D'Ark", Nr.3,
   Tirana - Albania

8. **Mr. Grigor Gjeci**
   Rural Development Policy Director
   Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection

"Sheshi Skenderbej", N0.2,
Tirana, Albania

9. **Mr. Ylli Hoxha**
   Chief of Transfer Technology Department
   Agency of Environment and Forest
   Rruga "Halit Bega" Nr. 23

10. **Ing. Ylli Kortoci**
    Forest engineer, Forestry development
    Ministry of Environment, Forest and Water
    Rr. "Durresit" No. 27.
    Tirana – Albania

11. **Mr Sali Metani**
    FAO-correspondant
    Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection
    "Sheshi Skenderbej", N0.2,
    Tirana, Albania

b. NGO representatives, supporter (non-governmental)

12. **Mr. Eduart Cani**
    Project Manager
    Regional Environmental Center
    Rr. Ismail Qemali, N° 27, P. Fratarit, 3rd floor, P.O. Box 127
    Tirana – Albania

13. **Mr.Tofik Fugarini**
    Permacultura
    Rita Cuni, L. Perlat RexhepiRr. Filip Shiroka Nr. 19/1
    Shkoder - Albania

14. **Javier Gonzales-Skaric**
    Project coordinator
    CERAI – Centro de estudio rurales y de agricultura internacional
    Rita Cuni, L. Perlat RexhepiRr. Filip Shiroka Nr. 19/1
    Shkoder – Albania

15. **Mr. Enver Isufi**
    Director
    IOA - Institute for Organic Agriculture
    Durrës – Albania

16. **Ms. Iris Kazazi**
    Project coordinator
    SASA – Sustainable Agriculture Support in Albania
    Tirana - Albania

17. Pr.As. Thimaq Lako
National Coordinator
National Association of communal Forest and Pastures
Blv. Zogu I Godina zp Kati II
Tirana – Albania

18. Mr. Shkelzen Marku
Executive Director
MADA- Mountain Area Development Agency
Rr. Shinasi Dishnica, n° 100
Tirana - Albania

19. Mr. Sergio Vargas Mulas
Environmentalist
CERAI – Centro de estudio rurales y de agricultura internacional
Rita Cuni, L. Perlat RexhepiRr. Filip Shiroka Nr. 19/1
Shkoder – Albania

20. Mr. Rexhep Ndreu
Chairperson
National Association of communal Forest and Pastures
Blv. Zogu I Godina zp Kati II

21. Dr. Fatmir Voci
Stategic Investment Programming Specialist
MADA- Mountain Area Development Agency
Rr. Shinasi Dishnica, n° 100
Tirana - Albania

c. Researchers

22. Pr. Beqir Balaj
Margegaj Commune official
(Used to be professor of biology and geography at the high school of Bajram-Curri)
Margegaj - Tropojë – Albania

23. MSc. Ledia Boshnjaku
Department of Agribusiness Management
Faculty of Economy & Agribusiness
Agricultural University of Tirana
Kodër Kamëz
Tirana - Albania

24. Dr. Stefan Dano
Faculty of agriculture and environment
Agricultural University of Tirana
Kodër Kamëz
Tirana – Albania

25. MSc. Etleva Dashi
Department of Economy & Agrarian Policies
Faculty of Economy & Agribusiness
Agricultural University of Tirana
Kodër Kamëz
Tirana - Albania

26. Dr. Fatmir Guri
Department of Economy & Agrarian Policies
Faculty of Economy & Agribusiness
Agricultural University of Tirana
Kodër Kamëz
Tirana - Albania

27. Prof. Dr. Eng. Dip. Bashkim Mal Lushaj
Vice Director, Responsible for foreign relations and Permanent representative of Albania with World Meteorological Organisation
Institute of Energy, Water and Environment
Polytechnic University of Tirana
Rr. Durrësi, P.O. Box N° 219 or 74
Tirana – Albania

28. Pr. Vjallca Malkurti
History professor
High school of Bajram-Curri
Bajram-Curri –Tropojë – Albania

29. As. Dr. Vasillaq Mine
Faculty of forest science
Agricultural University of Tirana
Kodër Kamëz
Tirana - Albania

d. Peasant families

30. Family Arifaj
Margegaj - Tropojë – Albania

31. Family Gzimi Breçani
Markaj - Tropojë – Albania

32. Family Adem Regja Dalermaj
Deçan – Kosovo

33. Family Sherif Demaliaj
Pac - Tropojë – Albania

34. Family Sadik Dusha
Dushaj - Tropojë – Albania

35. **Family Shaban Dusha**
    Dushaj - Tropojë – Albania

36. **Family Uk Dushaj**
    Dushaj - Tropojë – Albania

37. **Family Gjevalim Gjeloshaj**
    Lekbibaj - Tropojë – Albania

38. **Family Sali Gjonleci**
    Bajram-Curri – Tropojë – Albania

39. **Family Eva Avdyl Kortoci**
    Muhejan - Tropojë – Albania
40. **Family Pashk Lekaj**
    Lekbibaj - Tropojë – Albania

41. **Family Kujtim Memia**
    Muhejan - Tropojë – Albania

42. **Family Adem Panari**
    Dushaj - Tropojë – Albania

43. **Family Gani Pecmarkaj**
    Gri - Tropojë – Albania

44. **Family Drrilan Toskaj**
    Margegaj - Tropojë – Albania

e. Processors/final producers, producer representatives

45. **Mr Ramiz Jahbala**
    Chestnuts manufacturer
    AMLA
    Rr. L. Dardania
    Bajram-Curri – Tropojë - Albania

46. **Mr. Fatbardh Zemelaj**
    Businessman - fruit, vegetables and chestnuts.
    Bajram-Curri - Tropojë – Albania

Two other informal collectors have asked not to be listed.

f. Retailers; small and large, wholesalers; different types – local, (inter)national

47. **Mr. Erlis Hamzai**
    Retailer Fruit and vegetables
    Uzina Dynamo
    Rr. Ferrit Xhajko

Tirana - Albania

48. Mr. Albert Vasili
Retailer Fruit and vegetables
Uzina Dynamo
Rr. Ferrit Xhajko
Tirana - Albania

Different specific questions were asked to several small vendors and street vendors in a systematic way such as: What is a good quality chestnut? (for you and consumers), What is the price of a kg of good/bad quality chestnut? (buy and sell / beginning, middle, end of the season), Where do the best chestnuts come from?

g. Cooperation

49. Mr. Ismail Beka
Deputy Country Director
GTZ (German Technical Cooperation)
Rr. « Skenderbeg », Nr 21/1
Tirana – Albania

50. Mr. Agron Hetoja
Country manager
Western Balkans Infrastructure Projects Facility
WYG International Limited
Rr. Ismail Qemali, 34/1, 5th floor
Tirana – Albania

51. Mr. Lulezim Kadiasi
Project Manager
AECID (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development)
Rr. « Lek Dukagjini » P11/1
Apt. 7, Kati 3
Tirana – Albania

52. Mr. Janaq Male
SNV - Netherlands Development Organisation
Rr. Deshmoret e 4 Shkurtit P.O Box 1735
Tirana – Albania

53. Mr. Javier Mendez-Ruiz
Marketing specialist
USAID
Ismail Qemali St. 2nd floor, Fratari Bldg
Tirana – Albania

54. Mr. Isuf Omuri

Forestry Advisor
SNV - Netherlands Development Organisation
Rr. Dituria, Hotel Gjallica
Kukës – Albania

h. Others

55. Mr. Drini Imami
Value chain Analyst
DSA Consult – Development Solutions Associates
Rr. Lek Dukagjini, No. 11/1, Kati 4, Ap. 2
Tirana, Albania

56. Ms. Elena Kokthi
Author of a study on traditional products in Albania

57. MSc. Enilda Lama (Doko)
Quality Manager
Albinspekt
Rruga Ded Gjon Luli, Pall. 5, Shk.1, Ap.8
Tirana, Albania

58. Mr Luciano Leoneti
Consultant
DSA Consult – Development Solutions Associates
Rr. Lek Dukagjini, No. 11/1, Kati 4, Ap. 2
Tirana, Albania

a4. Fieldwork schedule

From	To	Location	Activity	Main Informations expected
18.01. 2010	29.01. 2010	Tirana	Exploratory interviews with experts, ministries representatives.	Inventory of origin-based products – GI potential in Albania. Institutional context.
01.02. 2010	12.02. 2010	-	Literature review.	Inventory of origin-based products – GI potential in Albania. Institutional context.
17.02. 2010	19.02. 2010	Nuremberg - BioFach	Interviews with Albanian products representatives.	Inventory of origin-based products – GI potential in Albania.
22.02. 2010	26.02. 2010	-	Fieldwork preparation. Literature review.	General information about selected origin-based products – finding of relevant contacts. **→Choice of origin-based product to be analysed deeper.**
01.03. 2010	12.03. 2010	Tirana	Interviews with experts, ministries representatives retailers, wholesalers, NGO representatives, cooperation and collect of documents.	Institutional context, legislation, statistics, Market aspect, reputation, supply chain, environmental and social aspects, tradition, quality, etc.
14.03.2010		Elbasan	Summer day where different agricultural products where presented.	Information about selected list of origin-based products.
15.03. 2010	16.03. 2010	Shkodra	Meeting with representatives of Cerai and Permacultura. Visit of chestnut forests of the zone.	Information about cooperative promotion and collective organisation strengthening. Quality of chestnut forests of the zone.
15.03. 2010	09.04. 2010	Tropojë	Interviews with farmers, local stake-holders and local authorities.	Collective organisation, stake-holders, geographic zone and specific resources, degree of importance of chestnut in overall production and revenue of peasant's families, market, problems and constraints faced by the families, property and rights of land use, expectations of the new generation, ecology, gender issues, , etc.
12.04. 2010	27.04. 2010	Tirana - Durrës	Interviews with experts, ministries representatives, retailers, wholesalers, NGO representatives.	Applicability of the legislation, agenda of the different organisations, market, etc.

28.04. 2010	30.04. 2010	Shkodra	Visit of chestnut forests in the zone.	Comparison with chestnut from Tropojë.
03.04. 2010	07.04. 2010	Tirana	Last meetings in Tirana with different stakeholders. Ministries.	Sharing of results, Measure of the interest of government and other stakeholders in this field, figure out eventual weakness and missing information of my study.
17.05. 2010	30.07. 2010	-	Analysis and redaction	Submission of the report on the 01.01.2010

a5. GI most relevant part of the law food and on industrial property

LAW Nr. 9977 dated 07.07.2008 ON INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

PART V GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

CHAPTER XXX DEFINITIONS, CONDITIONS AND RIGHT OF PROTECTION

Article 176 Object of Protection

1. Geographical names and designations of origin that are used in the market to show the geographical origin of products are protected by this Law and the implementing regulation as geographical indications.
2. Designation of origin means the name of a region, a specific place or, in exceptional cases, a country, used to describe a product:
a) originating in that region, specific place or country, and
b) the quality or characteristics of which are essentially or exclusively due to a particular geographical environment with its inherent natural and human factors, and the production, processing and preparation of which take place in the defined geographical area.3. Geographical indication means the name of a region, a specific place or, in exceptional cases, a country, used to describe a product:
a) originating in that region, specific place or country, and
b) which possesses a specific quality, reputation or other characteristics attributable to that geographical origin and the production and/or processing and/or preparation of which take place in the defined geographical area?
4. Certain traditional geographical or non-geographical names designating an agricultural product or a foodstuff originating in a region or a specific place, which fulfil the conditions referred to in the second indent of paragraph 2 (b) shall also be considered as designations of origin.
5. By way of derogation from paragraph 2 of this article, certain geographical designations shall be treated as designations of origin where the raw materials of the products concerned come from a geographical area larger than or different from the processing area, provided that:
a) the production area of the raw materials is limited, b) special conditions for the production of the raw materials exist, and c) there are inspection arrangements to ensure that those conditions are adhered to. For the purposes of this paragraph, only live animals, meat and milk may be considered as raw materials.

Article 177 The Right to File an Application

1. Every person who produces processes or prepares, in a designated geographical zone, a product for the definition of which a geographical indication is used, has the right to file an application for the registration of this indication.
2. The boundaries of the geographical locality, the particularities and characteristics of the goods, and the relation between the particularities and characteristics of the goods in the geographical environment or geographical origin are defined by the respective authority. When the designated geographical area lies outside the Republic of Albania, the respective determinations are made by the GDPT or the authority designated by it.

Article 178 The Rights that Come from Registration

1. The right of ownership over geographical indications is gained through registration in the GDPT. The registration of a geographical indication gives the owners the right to use it. They do not have the right to give use licenses for geographical indications.
2. The owners have the right to prohibit: a) every commercial use of a geographical indication for goods that are the same as, or similar to, those for which the geographical indication is registered, or any use for goods, even when they are dissimilar to those for which the geographical indication has been
registered, if unfair advantage is taken of the reputation of the geographical indication goods;
b) every inappropriate use or falsification of the geographical indication, even when the true origin of the goods has been specified, or every use of the translation or use accompanied by such terms as "kind," "type," "style," or other similar ones;
c) every other inexact and false use of the geographical indication, the origin, the nature or the fundamental qualities of the goods specified in the packing, the materials of advertisements and correspondence about the products, when such indications create misinformation about the true origin of the products;
ç) every use of the geographical indication that identifies wines or beverages that do not have their origin in the country indicated by the geographical indication even in cases when their true origin is indicated, or every use of a translation or use accompanied by such terms as "kind," "type," etc.;
d) every other action that might create misinformation of the user about the true origin of the goods.
3. Geographical indications will not be turned into ordinary names so long as they enjoy protection according to the provisions of this law.
4. A registered geographical indication is a collective right and may be used as such in the market only by those who, in conformity with the definitions of points 2 and 3 of article 176, produce, process or prepare the product.

Article 179 The Right of the User

1. A registered geographical indication may be used only by the persons registered as users.
2. A registered user may use the geographical indication only for the goods for which it has been registered and put it on the goods or packaging or use it in advertisements or in business correspondence.

Article 180 Bases for Refusal of Registration

A name is not registered as a geographical indication if:
a) it has been turned into a general name in the market, in the territory of the Republic of Albania, for a specific product, regardless of whether the product has its origin in the country specified by the indicator in question;
b) it is the same as the name of an agricultural product or animal variety previously registered, when this creates misinformation of the user about the true origin of the goods;
c) it is the same as a geographic indication or mark previously registered for the same products;
ç) it is the same as a geographical indication or mark previously registered for products that are similar or the same, when this causes misinformation of the user.

Article 181 Time Extent of Protection

1. The protection of geographical indications begins with registration in the GDPT, with effects from the date the application was filed.

2. The legal protection of a registered geographical indication is unlimited in time and ends when there no longer exists a connection between the particularities and characteristics of the goods and the geographical environment.

CHAPTER XXXI PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION OF A GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION

Article 182 Filing the Application

1. An application for the registration of a geographical indication is filed in the GDPT.
2. An application is made only for one geographical indication and one type of product.
3. The application contains: a) the name and address of the applicant; b) the definition of the product; c) the definition of the boundaries of the geographical locality; ç) a report about the particularities and characteristics of the goods and their connection
with the geographical environment and geographical origin; d) a document issued by the respective authority according to point 2 of article 177 of this Law; dh) a document issued by the local authorities certifying the performance of the productive activity of the applicant in the defined geographical region.
4. The application is accompanied by a document of the payment of the respective tariff.
5. Other procedures and additions for the application are defined in the implementing regulation.

Article 183 Revocation of a Geographical Indication

1. On the request of an interested person, the court revokes a registration when it does not meet the requirements defined in article 176 point 1 and 2 and article 180 of this law, at the time when the application for registration was filed.
2. The registration of a foreign geographical indication is considered revoked when it is de-registered in the country of origin.
3. The revocation of a geographical indication has effects from the filing date of the application.
4. The revocation of a geographical indication cannot be done without the registered user of the geographical indication being called as a party in the court proceeding. The court notifies the GDPT on the decision of revocation of a geographical indication.
5. The GDPT registers the decision in the respective register.

CHAPTER XXXII EXECUTION OF THE RIGHTS

Article 184 Procedures for Infringement of Rights

1. The applicant and the registered user of a geographical indication may bring a lawsuit in court for an infringement of rights.
2. Every unauthorized use, limitation, imitation or joint accompaniment that is against the provisions of this law is an infringement of the right of a geographical indication or an indication for which there has been an application for registration according to this law.
3. A person within the meaning of point 1 of this article has the right to turn to the court against another person who violates his rights, seeking:
a) the prohibition of the commission of further acts of infringement of the rights;
b) the removal of the objects that constitute an infringement of the rights from the channels of commerce or, if there is no other way to cease the infringement, their destruction;

c) the removal of means used exclusively or almost exclusively for the creation of the products that constitute an infringement, or if there is no other way, their destruction;
ç) the publication of the final decision of the court in the public media at the expense of the infringer, in the manner determined by the court.
4. The infringer shall be responsible for all damage that has been caused to the plaintiff. In conformity with the provisions of the legislation in force, the court shall determine the compensation of damages, except when it is otherwise specified and based on the case may:
a) take into account all appropriate aspects, such as the negative economic consequences, including lost profits, which the injured party has suffered, any unfair profits made by the infringer and, in appropriate cases, elements other than economic factors, such as the moral prejudice caused to the rightholder by the infringement; or
b) in appropriate cases, set the damages as a lump sum on the basis of elements such as at least the amount of royalties or fees which would have been due if the infringer had requested authorisation to use the intellectual property right in question.
5. A lawsuit for an infringement of rights may be filed in the court within three years from the date when the plaintiff became aware of the infringement and the identity of the infringer.

Article 185 Right of information

1. In the context of proceedings concerning an infringement of a geographical indication, and in response to a justified and proportionate request of the claimant, the court may order that information on the origin and distribution networks of the goods or services which infringe the geographical indication be provided by the infringer and/or any other person who:
a) was found in possession of the infringing goods on a commercial scale; b) was found to be using the infringing services on a commercial scale; c) was found to be providing on a commercial scale services used in infringing
activities; or ç) was indicated by the person referred to in letters “a”, “b” or “c” of this paragraph as being involved in the production, manufacture or distribution of the goods or the provision of the services.
2. The information referred to in paragraph 1 of this article shall, as appropriate, comprise:
a) the names and addresses of the producers, manufacturers, distributors, suppliers and other previous holders of the goods or services, as well as the intended wholesalers and retailers;
b) information on the quantities produced, manufactured, delivered, received or ordered, as well as the price obtained for the goods or services in question.
3. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article shall not apply if
a) on the basis of the information available to it, the court has reason to assume that the right to information is misused;
b) providing the requested information would force the person referred to in paragraph
1 to admit to his/her own participation or that of his/her close relatives in the infringement of the geographical indication, or
c) disclosure of the information cannot be requested pursuant to rules protecting the confidentiality of information sources or the processing of personal data.

Article 186 Evidence

1. On application by a party which has presented reasonably available evidence sufficient to support his claims, and has, in substantiating those claims, specified evidence which lies in the control of the opposing party, the court can order that such evidence be presented by the opposing party, subject to the protection of confidential information.
2. Under the same conditions, in the case of an infringement committed on a commercial

scale, the court can order, where appropriate, on application by a party, the communication of banking, financial or commercial documents under the control of the opposing party, subject to the protection of confidential information.

Article 187 Temporary Measures

1. The court, based on the request of an interested person, orders the temporary measures when such a person:
a) is an owner according to the definition of this law and enjoys the rights defined in article 180 of the law;
b) submits documents that create the possibility for the court to decide that his right has been infringed or there is a great possibility that such an infringement will happen;
c) request the temporary measures without unjustified delay after he has learned of the declared infringement.
2. In ordering temporary measures, the court may: a) impede imminent violations or violations that have begun to be committed; b) prohibit the entry of the goods into the channels of commerce; c) order the preservation of relevant evidence in respect of the alleged infringement, subject to the protection of confidential information. Such measures may include the detailed description, with or without the taking of samples, or the physical seizure of the infringing goods, and, in appropriate cases, the materials and implements used in the production and/or distribution of these goods and the documents relating thereto;
ç) confiscate, take out of circulation or take under safe-keeping, for the period of the civil procedure, the objects that constitute a violation of the rights according to this law;
d) order, in the case of an infringement committed on a commercial scale and if the injured party demonstrates circumstances likely to endanger the recovery of damages, the precautionary seizure of the movable and immovable property of the alleged infringer, including the blocking of his/her bank accounts and other assets. To that end, the court may order the communication of bank, financial or commercial documents, or appropriate access to the relevant information.
3. The court orders the above-mentioned temporary measures without hearing the other party, in particular when any delay might cause irreparable damage to the owner of the right, or lead to the destruction of evidence. The party against whom the lawsuit has been brought is notified of the measures taken without delay, at the latest immediately after the measures have been executed. A review, including a right to be heard, shall take place upon request of the defendant with a view to deciding, within a reasonable time after notification of the measures, whether those measures shall be modified, revoked or confirmed.
4. When ordering temporary measures, the court also sets a time limit for the person who has asked for them to submit a lawsuit in court according to the definitions of article 184 of this law. The time limit begins on the date the temporary measures start and no later than 15 days after this date.
5. The temporary measures mentioned in paragraph 2 letters “a” and “b” of this article can be issued against the alleged infringer of a geographical indication as well as, under the same conditions, against an intermediary whose services are being used by a third party to infringe a geographical indication.
6. The issue of temporary measures mentioned in this article is subject to the lodging by the claimant of adequate security or an equivalent assurance intended to ensure compensation for any prejudice suffered by the opposing party.

Article 188 Measures at the Border

1. If the owners of a registered geographical indication submit a complaint about goods imported into the Republic of Albania or the goods inside the market that violate their rights defined in this law, the customs authorities or the authorities responsible for the supervision of internal market, whichever the case, are obliged to make the neccessary inspection and according to its result, to decide not to release the goods from the custom regime or to remove them from the market and in both cases to store them in a secure place, except when the importer or the seller has authentic documents about the production of these goods.
2. The owners of a registered geographical indication are obligated to submit a guarantee for the damage that might be caused by the taking of the measures described in point 1 of this article.
3. The customs authorities or the authorities responsible for the supervision of internal market immediately notify the importer and the recipient of the goods about the measures taken.
4. The customs authorities or the authorities responsible for the supervision of internal market interrupt the measures determined in point 1 of this article if the owners of the registered geographical indication do not file a lawsuit in court for the violation of rights within 20 days (working days) from the day of the notification of the measures taken by customs authorities or the authorities responsible for the supervision of internal market.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INDICATION OF THE TRADITIONAL REPUTATION OF FOOD

Article 32 The indication of the traditional reputation of food

1. A designation of origin shall be the name of a region, specific place or, in exceptional cases, the name of the country used to describe the food:
a) which originates from that region, the specific place or from that country;
b) whose quality and characteristics, essentially or exclusively incur under the influence of specific natural and human factors of a specific geographical environment and the production, processing and preparation of which entirety take place in that geographical area.
2. The geographical indication shall be considered the name of the region, specific place or, in special cases, the name of the country used to describe food:
a) which originates from that region, the specific place or from that country;
b) which has specific quality, reputation or some other characteristic which is assigned to its geographical origin and the production, processing and preparation of which take place in that geographical area.
3. Food with designation of origin, geographical indication as well as the methods for their control shall be determined by the Decision of Council of Ministers with the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection.

CHAPTER IX

THE INDICATION OF THE TRADITIONAL REPUTATION OF FOOD

Article 33 The indication of the traditional reputation of food

1. Food may be marked with the indication “traditional reputation” if it is produced through the use of traditional raw materials, has a traditional composition, has been produced or processed in the traditional way and it id distinguished by its special characteristics regarding other similar food from the same category.
2. Foodstuffs from the paragraph 1 of this article shall be determined by the ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection.
3. The producers and processors and the Associations of Producers and/or Processors (hereinafter referred to as Associations) shall have the right to apply for a request to receive the indication “traditional reputation”, regardless of the legal form or composition of the Association, which produce or process such food. The applicants must enclose along with the request a specification for the food product.
4. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection shall determined by ordinance conditions and procedure for recognizing specific character of food, the contents of the specification and establishes a Commission for issuing the “traditional reputation” indication. The composition and the manner of function of this Commission shall be determined by ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection.

Article 34 The register of foodstuffs with “traditional reputation: indication

1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection keeps a register of food products that refer to the "traditional reputation" indication.
2. The content, form and way of keeping the register from paragraph 1 of this article shall be determined by the ordinance of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection.

Article 35 Registration of foodstuff with "traditional reputation" indication

1. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection with ordinance shall approve the decision of the Commission about the registration on the register of the food with "traditional reputation" indication.
2. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection based on the proposal of Commission, with ordinance, erase from the register the food with "traditional reputation" indication in the cases of non meeting the requirements gave in the paragraph 1 of the article 33 of this law.

a6. List of figures

a7. List of photo

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