



FORUM ORIGIN, DIVERSITY AND TERRITORIES

Agroecology: Multiple transitions the territories

Lausanne, December 4th-6st 2019

Workshop 4. The answer of GIs and territorial labels to the citizen's demand for an ecological transition: How are the principles of agroecology identified, discussed, codified and guaranteed?

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Context

Parma ham, Gruyère, Roquefort, Colombian coffee, Darjeeling tea, Kobe beef, Penja pepper, etc. On all continents, geographical indications (GIs) protect products whose quality, characteristics or reputation are attributable to their geographical origin. This system gives to local producers' communities the ability to build their own rules on the definition of the geographical area, the product and its production and processing methods. At the same time, local authorities, cities or regions, wishing to promote their territory and strengthen their attractiveness, are creating regional territorial trademarks. These are developed on the basis of an identification of the territory's offer and identity by involving a large number of actors in the territory. Territorial trademarks are often umbrella brands and can include labelled products (GI, Organic). They reflect a vision, a project for the territory.

In the context of the agroecological transition, there is no systematic legal basis for GIs or territorial brands that provides environmental criteria to be respected beyond mandatory national and international regulations. GI applications are examined for the existence of a link between the product and its origin (the link to the place that confers specific characteristics to the product). The regulations governing the use of territorial trademarks are not examined by the public authority since they are not official proceedings but private proceedings (even when they are initiated by territorial authorities). But facing global (global warming, global warming, biodiversity collapse, etc.) and local issues, producers' groups are well integrating these concerns into their specifications. These environmental measures may relate to the preservation of biodiversity (choice of local varieties and breeds), water management, the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, food authorised for animal production (prohibition of GMOs), production methods (in agroforestry, etc.).

Public institutions are also concerned about taking agroecology into account in quality signs. In France, for example, the INAO (Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité) has launched a project to promote the inclusion of agroecological principles in official quality mark specifications at the request of the Minister of Agriculture. At the international level, FAO and oriGIIn defined in 2017 a "Geographical Indications Sustainability Strategy" to help producers to better identify, prioritize and respond to their sustainability challenges in its three pillars.



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Objectives of the workshop and themes treated

Taking environmental issues into account can lead to a double GI certification or territorial brand and organic agriculture, or to a greening in the specifications. This leads us to question this grey area of GI specifications or "agroecological" territorial trademark - but not organic - and their assessment methods.

- What innovations have been introduced by producer/processor groups in the elaboration of specifications and in any subsequent amendments to take agroecology into account?
- Do these innovations meet the demand of citizens? How are they communicated to them? How are they translated into the marketing strategies of the economic actors in the sectors concerned?
- Do these innovations mark a real commitment on the part of producers/processors or a simple green-washing approach?
- What are the guarantees provided by the public institutions in charge of recognizing and registering GIs and trademarks and defending them against fraud?
- What is the most effective/adapted: a codified regulatory approach or a voluntary territory-specific approach?
- What role can the inspection and certification bodies for GIs and trademarks play?
- Advantages / Disadvantages / Complementarities of officially certified GIs and territorial brands from the point of view of this problem?