



General synthesis of the project



Mediterritage

Economic valorization of the natural and cultural
heritage of the Mediterranean mountains



EUROPEAN UNION

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
INTERREG III C



VOLUME I

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THE MEDITERRANEAN MOUNTAIN HERITAGE, INSTRUMENT OF PEACE AND ECONOMIC REBIRTH

In an ever increasingly enlarged and integrated Europe, committed to advancing a policy that aims at consolidating relationships of good neighbourliness and profitable collaboration with other countries, the Mediterranean has come to cover and rediscover, an incommensurable role of bringing together peoples, cultures and different peoples. First and foremost, between the East and the West. This, nowadays, is a function that has become necessary and irreversible also in the light of the Declaration of Barcelona adopted during the Euro-Mediterranean conference of 27-28 November 1995. Among its cornerstones it provides for the establishment of a political and security partnership, for the definition of a shared line of conduct pervaded by peace, wellbeing and stability and for the creation of a common space of free exchange by 2010.

It is clear, therefore, that in a scenario defined in this way the necessity is imposed, an extremely important inescapable and fundamental fact, that the *Mare nostrum* should rediscover its historical, traditional and natural potentiality, an indispensable condition to the full execution of those functions that the European Union and the international community have assigned to it. Indeed, it is in this framework that the project *Mediterritage* (fusion between *Méditerrané* and *héritage*: Mediterranean heritage), within the community initiative programme Interreg III C, South Zone, 2005-2008. This is an ambitious programme that, as has been correctly stated, « started badly but arrived safely at the pre-established destination ». In the sense that in the end the twelve regions that supported it from the start (eight of them are members of the EU, four from the Mediterranean shores) have been capable of elaborating new and farsighted policies able to produce strategies and methods to capitalize to the maximum on the opportunities both economic and cultural that the Mediterranean mountains afford.

The team leader of this project is Calabria, a region which has made its flagship the rediscovery and complete valorization of its mountain *asset* from the outset. In fact, we are all convinced that this can release a notable driving force capable of making a decisive breakthrough, in terms of productive capacity and, economic, social and, in the final analysis, occupational competitiveness. Calabria and mountain: without doubt it can be stated that the binomial has not always been



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idyllic, indeed, perhaps there has been a love-hate relationship. The whole history of this land is studded with events, both natural and human, which forced the populations, in various phases, to flee the impervious heights only later to resettle and cultivate them again. Therefore, it is a phenomenon which we can observe once more today, abandonment in favour of the coast and its seaside resorts.

It should be said, in all truthfulness, and paraphrasing a famous story by Corrado Alvaro, that life in the Calabrian mountains has never been nice and easy. In fact, there has been no era when wars, invasions, famines, floods and earthquakes have not destroyed all that the hard-working hand of man, the Calabrian, had patiently constructed. Most symbolic are the historical vicissitudes of the mountain most representative of Calabria, the Sila massif (the *Silva bruzia* of the Romans), which has always been a land of conquest and depredation by every peoples or domination associated with this land. From the Romans who demolished a large part of its forests to build ships and erect temples, to the Normans who predisposed their first interventions in the XII century and ceded part of the territory to the Cistercian monks, to the controversy of the XVI century between the supporters of the abbatial Sila and the regal Sila which still in 1790 had not been resolved, when Giuseppe Zurlo, the then minister of Finance and the Interior of the Kingdom of Naples, was charged with, in that year, of controlling the respective assignations and in merit of the usurpations of demesne lands at the hands of local landowners.

So it was that, from the French decade, Bourbon restoration to the Unification of Italy the Sella law was enacted for the Sila of 1876 but which did not substantially alter the medieval layout. This changed, finally, in 1950, when the work for the valorization of the Sila and the Fund for the Development of Southern Italy attempted to address rationally, and with conspicuous financial incentives, the Sila question that had dragged on for centuries. Appreciable results were achieved, certainly, but not without limits and errors for which perhaps still today we are paying the consequences and which herein we cannot list and analyze.

What we are seeing today is a slow decline of the traditional activities connected to the mountains, the primary sector (farming, forestry, grazing, animal breeding) which is giving ground to the tertiary sector. All in all the economic typology of the region has undergone a drastic mutation in favour of the tertiary sector, more or less advanced, which once more is driving the inhabitants to abandon the countryside giving rise to a further process of urbanization and transfer to the plains and the coast. This is a process that obeys conjunctures, social lifestyles and



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a market logic from many inescapable aspects. The most immediate consequences are the depopulation of the of the old inhabited towns and villages and the consequent disappearance of traditional activities, above all crafts, associated with bygone country life.

Calabria however has to live together with its mountains, the very geographical layout demands as much. It is indeed a spur that stretches into the Mediterranean, with its 780 kilometres of coast, but it is equally true that 42.3% of the territory is occupied by mountains and another consistent percentage (49.3%) by hills more or less undulating and dropping down to the plain. Another singular characteristic is that in just thirty kilometres the region is crossed from one side to the other and the route is decidedly short from the sea to the highest peak. All this means that sea-hill-mountain should become a single attraction of specificity that goes by the name of Calabria. If only we were able to trust in and actuate projects like *Mediterritage* which has the purpose of gathering into a single basket everything that the Mountain can supply today (farming, animal breeding, environment, culture) and blend it and make it interact with other economic and touristic components so as to become an effective fly wheel of development.

There are all the necessary conditions to succeed in this objective. Nevertheless, the civilization of the region, and by deduction, that of Italy and Europe, partly began, and partly passed through the Calabrian mountains. I refer to the permanence of scholars and centres of study, of contemplation and prayer that have had great influence on western culture, such as Joachimite, Basilian, Carthusian and Cistercian monasticism. With special regard to prestigious figures such as Joachim of Fiore, St. Nilo of Rossano, St. Bruno, St. Gregory of Cassano... whose both spiritual and cultural message spread beyond regional and national borders affirming themselves throughout Middle Europe. The binomial mountain-culture can proceed by recalling the affective bonds between the above-mentioned Alvaro and the Aspromonte, between Nicola Misasi and the Sila, between the said St. Bruno and the Serre, Giuseppe Berto and Mount Poro... All people who in the course of their lives and their works knew how to embrace the importance of the mountain and the charm that it emanates.

To us, today, more prosaically but more concretely, the task of knowing how to seize the opportunity that they are capable of offering on the touristic and economic plane, conceiving and creating specific areas on which to insist to free resources that allow them to be protagonists in Europe and in the Mediterranean. I think, in



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extreme summary, of the Sila, in its three parts *Grande, Greca* and *Piccola*, and its national Park with all that can come of it; of the resources of the Serre and of a possible circuit to be shaped around the territory once the responsibility of the iron foundry of Mongiana and of the possibility of creating a geo-mineral park on the territory on which so many mines were located and which the industry profited from. And so to the Pollino national Park and that of the Aspromonte where among the components to be valorized are the naturalistic ones such as (*rafting, hiking, birdwatching*, ecological oasis etc) and those relative to religious tourism rediscovering old and very popular Marian devotions: among the widespread ones it is sufficient to mention that of Polsi. All of this is needed in order to succeed, certainly by using well the available resources with the new Community programme 2007-2013, to re-establish a harmonious, benevolent and above all more productive relationship between the present generations and our mountains.

Dott. Vincenzo Falcone
Undersecretary for Affairs of the Presidency
Calabria Region



MEDITERRITAGE A FARSIGHTED PROJECT FOR ENDURING AND QUALITY DEVELOPMENT

If there is a fact that should be emphasized immediately, also to clear away any over simple triumphant and judgements, it is that *Mediterritage* did not have an easy start. Indeed, the start was rather eventful and uncertain, so much so that it was even suggested that it could fail. Fortunately, this was not the case, and that is thanks to the determination and the strong will of those working on it, and who, like the Calabria Region, from the start believed in the goodness of the end product and the objectives pursued with a certain amount of farsightedness and tenacity managed to bring it to a conclusion. Today, everyone can see the results achieved and the first to be pleased with them are the partners who at first demonstrated a certain reluctance and lack of conviction.

Undoubtedly *Mediterritage*, a project framed in the context of the Community initiative programme Interreg III C, South Zone, which characterized the period 2000-2006, and which in the 2007-2013 programming will be entirely absorbed in Objective 3, European Territorial Competitiveness, completely fulfilled the objectives set for it. And that is, the valorization, in economic and employment terms, of the natural and cultural resources of the Mediterranean mountain through the actuation of policies and initiatives tending to the promotion of relationships of cooperation and partnership among countries of different geopolitical areas, both belonging to the European Union and aspiring members and those extraneous, but with whom reciprocal relations of collaboration and economic and cultural exchange have been maintained for a long time. And in this, in full coherence with the provisions established by the Declaration of Barcelona, tending to encourage good relations with the countries gravitating around the Mediterranean and also as a function of the forthcoming institution of the free exchange zone of the said basin. In this way a transnational network of full and proactive collaboration was created among the twelve partners within which experiences were matured valid and useful to corroborate in the immediate future policies that can consolidate the spirit of peace and solidarity. And at the same time make the Mediterranean a sea where peace and civil living together reign among all the people who line its shores. Calabria, since it is a natural outpost in the *Mare Nostrum* and entry port among the first regions of Europe for



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those coming from the East, is team leader of this project. The rest of the partnership is composed of the Italian regions of Basilicata and Liguria, Thessaly and Western Macedonia (Greece), Corsica (France), Andalusia (Spain), and Vratsa (Bulgaria), the latter at the time that the project began was not a member of the EU and therefore took part as an external country; in the same way as Marrakech (Morocco), Vlora (Albania) and Mugla (Turkey).

Mediterritage developed through five components. These are the management activity whose responsibility was assigned to the Calabria Region; regional policies and exchange of experience among the mountain areas whose responsibility was attributed to the Liguria Region; the structuring of the mountain territories, selection and implementation of pilot projects among the component of the respective mountain territories, under the supervision of Thessaly; systems of integrated development of the villages as pilot project whose responsibility was assigned to Corsica; and finally, everything falling within dissemination activities, this also was the task carried out by Calabria.

The strong point of this project has undoubtedly been the ambition, if we can say so, to repopulate the Mediterranean mountains and confer on them dignity both in economic terms and also in terms of touristic attractiveness; in other words, bringing them out of their state of isolation and degradation and making them soar to a role of protagonist. Also because their potentiality is indeed not inferior to that of other well-known mountain localities in the north of Europe. For this reason there was the necessity to assign them new tasks and new goals to reach to overcome the delays accumulated over the years. The driving force of all this is the eleven pilot projects expressed by means of the same number of subprojects, each of which concentrated its efforts, for the most part with more than satisfactory results, on identifying and pointing out all those peculiarities able to trigger a development process self-sufficient, enduring and offering unique quality in the respective regions of actuation. The above-mentioned subprojects, in seven of which Calabrian Municipalities and Mountain Communities participated (Sila Mountain Community Fossa del lupo, from the pre-Sila area of the Province of Catanzaro, of Mounts Reventino-Tiriolo-Mancuso; the Municipalities of Santo Stefano in Aspromonte, Girifalco, San Cosmo Albanese) embracing themes and arguments on different matters of interest. In fact, they range from the exploitation of biomasses for electrical energy, to the use and valorization of the chestnut and its fruits; the valorization of natural and cultural



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mountain resources for the construction of networks for sustainable tourism concerning the naturalistic and scenic heritage; the search for new employment opportunities for the young; valorization of the territory limited to its peculiarities and values, with offers connected to oenogastronomic tourism. And again: from typical local products to integrated touristic development; the valorization of products and the territory that they come from; the conservation of the system of cultivation on terraces to the promotion of mushroom farming and finally, to the integrated development of the mountain villages. As can be easily imagined they are all initiatives of great potential and energy, in economic and employment terms, which can be released in the years to come. This all resides in the ability to fully exploit the studies and results so far achieved.

Satisfactory, all told and despite the difficulties, as already mentioned, encountered when commencing *Mediterritage*, are the considerations to be made as the project draws to its close. What has been produced concretely? In the meantime it should be said that this was a really exhilarating experience for the twelve Mediterranean regions that participated, in the course of which there were many occasions to socialize, exchange experiences, certainly useful to solving various problems that were addressed one by one, to discuss the respective strategies adopted, each different and specific according to the characteristic cultural, geographical and climatic policies. It was a rewarding occasion, we hope repeatable in the new programming just launched, to construct common directions in a fully harmonious climate, of real friendship, of fraternal solidarity. From the first pilot committee to the last, work took place in a fecund spirit of collaboration, cooperation and respect, overcoming the language, cultural, religious difficulties of each of the participants and overcoming the institutional structure and political orientation of the respective countries of origin. Definitively, work took place in an ideal climate that the European Union eloquently indicated with the Strategy of Lisbon and which it never ceases to repeat in each of its official acts: democratic and peaceful cooperation among the peoples of the Mediterranean in order to succeed in becoming forever the crossroad of civilization and wellbeing for everyone.

Dott. Rocco Mercurio
Director Interreg 2000-2006
Calabria Region



MEDITERRITAGE

Economic valorization of the natural and cultural heritage of the Mediterranean mountain.

The project has brought together the exponents of twelve regions; seven of these, at the time of beginning the project, belonging to the European Community: Calabria, Basilicata and Liguria (Italy), Thessaly and Western Macedonia (Greece); Corsica (France); Andalusia (Spain). Five exponents from other countries: Marrakech (Morocco), Souk-Ahras (Algeria), Vlora (Albania), Vratsa (Bulgaria) and Mugla (Turkey).

START: October 2004 – END: March 2008, put back to June 2008

ROLE CALABRIA REGION: **Team leader**

OVERALL FINANCIAL RESOURCES: 4,697,249 euro

FESR-CNP RESOURCES CALABRIA REGION: 1,097,249 euro

First pilot Committee: Camigliatello Silano, CS, 5-6 November 2008

Last pilot Committee: Villaggio Mancuso, CZ, 13-14 June 2008



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**VALORIZATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN MOUNTAINS CALABRIA
REGION TEAM LEADER OF MEDITERRITAGE**



Mediterritage was a Regional Framework Operation promoted in the context of the community initiative programme Interreg III C, South Zone, 2000-2006. The project had the objective of the economic valorization of the natural and cultural heritage of the Mediterranean mountains. This is a theme that framed the *Mare nostrum* as a shared space of cultural and geographical homogeneity, and which for years has been extremely topical without however Community policies or those of single States successfully defining common directions that tend to create the preconditions for an effective and sustainable development of the whole basin.

The intention of Mediterritage was precisely that of inverting this tendency and searching for development methods and strategies, embodying both economic and cultural components, while taking advantage of a wide partnership that has in



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common geographical, social, economic and cultural affinities. So that in a historical phase strongly characterized by notable population shifts from the mountains and the hills to the plains and the coast, with a consequent drastic town planning and building impact, the European Union has decided to reclaim through decisive recovery action, all that is the heritage of the Mediterranean heights. Hence the definition of the project which is the fusion of the two terms that make it up: *Méditerranée* and *Héritage*.

The project brought together exponents from twelve regions, of which, at the time it began, seven were part of the European Union and another five were from other countries. The seven European regions are: **Calabria, Basilicata, Liguria** (Italy); **Thessaly, Western Macedonia** (Greece); **Corsica** (France); **Andalusia** (Spain); the others are **Marrakech** (Morocco); **Souk-Ahras** (Algeria); **Vlora** (Albania); **Vratsa** (Bulgaria), **Mugla** (Turkey). Calabria is the team leader of the project. This in itself is sufficient to point out how the government of this Region has strongly believed, from the start, in the goodness and the potentiality of Mediterritage and this is further proof of how Calabria places not a little hope in the opportunity that its mountains (something like 42% of its whole territory, another considerable 49.3% is covered by hills) affords.

The action of Mediterritage was carried out over five component. They were: Component 1 – Management activity, directed by the Calabria Region; Component 2 – Tools for regional policies and exchange of experiences among mountain areas, directed by the Liguria Region; Component 3 – Structuring of the mountain territory, selection and implementation of pilot projects involving the actors of various mountain territories, directed by the Thessaly Region; Component 4 – Integrated development systems for villages dealing with, as for Component 3, pilot projects involving different regions and partners, directed by Corsica; Component 5 – Dissemination activity; directed by the Calabria Region.

Regarding the pre-established objectives, at the centre of its attention Mediterritage placed the economies of the natural and cultural heritage, which the « mountain territories and villages conserve as testimony and memory ». This really happened thanks to an aware and deeply felt cooperation that contributed to improving the regional policies of the respective components and to achieving an excellent level of reciprocal collaboration and of profitable exchange of experiences matured during the many meetings that were held over the period of the project. Among the results achieved, certainly should be numbered the creation



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of a stable network of regions in the Mediterranean basin, with the development of the mountain villages and territories as its aim, as well as the definition and sharing of new methods and directions in favour, broadly speaking, of the touristic, oenogastronomic and employment offer.

The technical-administrative and financial management was entrusted to a pilot Committee presided over by the Calabria Region and composed of a representative for each partner Region. The respective meetings of the Committee, during the progress of its activity were carried out in all the countries of the partnership. The first meeting is worth mentioning, above all, held at Camigliatello Silano, in Calabria, in November 2004, and the last one, held at Villaggio Mancuso, in Sila Piccola, also in Calabria, in June 2008.



The real strong points of Mediterritage were the eleven subprojects (seven of which involved Calabrian municipalities and mountain communities of which account is made in a *dépliant* published separately) which highlighted and developed economic, social, cultural aspects emerging from the specificity of the respective regional situations. In extreme summary, they were the following:

Meditour, whose intention was the setting up of a transnational partnership with the capacity to produce cultural exchanges aimed at the definition of an integrated



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touristic development model for all the other existing sectors; **Biomass**, which aimed at the definition of a standard model for all the partners aimed at the economic valorization of the primary resources present on the territory. Its objective was the reduction of dependence on traditional energy sources; **Waste management**, which felt the need to explore waste management strategies for greater protection of the environment and the valorization of the territories; **Typical local products**, which aimed at the definition of behavioural models to adopt to promote and valorize the typical local products of the territory; **Winolive**, whose purpose was the promotion of local products (wine and oil, in particular) and tourism through the active involvement of the local inhabitants and the exchange of experiences among the respective participants; **Terramed**, had the target of the valorization of terraces, understood as natural, economic and cultural resources of the Mediterranean mountain landscape; **Mycomed**, was interested in the promotion of the resource and every kind of potentiality associated with the mushroom, including good picking practices, production and processing; **Pasamme**, aimed at balanced socio-economic development through the promotion of the local scents, flavours, and tastes of the Mediterranean mountains; **Chestnut**, had the purpose of promoting and economically valorizing the chestnut and its fruit in all its many varieties and specialities; **Nest**, felt the necessity of making a contribution to the evolution of the touristic sector, considering that the customers of this service have begun to change their taste and to diversify their holidays; **Village**, had the objective of the definition of a strategy of economic and human re-launching of the Mediterranean mountain villages.

Another aspect that notably characterized Mediterritage was that which concerned the so-called eco-villages, which according to one of the greatest theorists of this kind of social aggregation, the Australian ecologist David Holmgren, aim to compensate for both the disintegration of the family, social and cultural fabric consequent on the phenomenon globalization, and for the tendency in progress to the spoliation of the internal situation of the mountain, with special attention to small mountain and hill villages combating the serious problem of extinction. This is a phenomenon, which is greatly felt in Calabria where there is a high percentage of inland villages (population prevalently below 5000) with a worrying demographic situation at risk.

The Research of the title “The creation of a network of eco-villages for the Calabrian mountain territories”, developed within the *Mediterritage Project*



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promoted by the European Union, was effected in the context of a suitable congress between the *Calabria Region* project Unit of “International Relations Euro-Mediterranean Policies, special EU Programmes Objective 3” and the *Department of Environmental and Territorial Sciences* of the *Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria*. The final seminar held 15 February 2008, whose outcomes have been gathered in the publication of the Proceedings in course of elaboration, was inserted in the *Cultural Activities* of the Faculty of Architecture.

The definition of actions and projects aimed at upgrading the mountain areas settlements and the naturalistic-environmental systems making them up, in fact requires an awareness of the principal problems relative to these contexts and of the possible directions of eco-sustainable development already undertaken or still to be undertaken. These themes, above all in the last few years, have drawn growing attention and a different degree of examination. A critical analysis of the effects produced on the socio-economic and territorial elements, which the main tools have set in motion and the different modalities of intervention activated have determined, concerning the Calabrian mountain areas and rural contexts, provides a strategic operational framework on which to plan innovative forms of intervention on the naturalistic-environmental settlement systems that constitute the Calabrian mountain territories.

The creation of a network of eco-villages, as a planning action and tool of territorial, town planning, environmental and socio-economic upgrading, arises to address a *depopulation* phenomenon that has struck many small villages in the inland areas, with the consequent loss of territorial identity and socio-economic-environmental quality. It is useful to remember that the eco-villages are a community of people with a strong sense of identity and belonging; normally they are small-sized places, in which it is easy to activate participative decision-making processes. The eco-villages, present on the international panorama, display characteristics of different kinds: urban, rural eco-villages, built ex-novo or the fruit of recovery and upgrading projects of the existing building heritage, all however motivated by the same objective, to set off actions aimed at ensuring sustainable interventions.

Among the various examples the case of Auroville should be mentioned, the largest eco-village in the world, located in south-east India and founded in 1968. The whole village (housing about a hundred heterogeneous communities for language, culture and religion) is structured around the *Matrimandir* (Temple of



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the Mother), this is a town setting a remarkable example of energy, water and transport management. Some Calabrian mountain villages, and in particular those involving the Mountain Community of Mounts Tiriolo-Mancuso-Reventino, the object of study, are suitable for similar initiatives to the extent that the creation of a network of eco-villages can be theorized to join in the Global Network of Eco-villages (GNE), in such a way as to have continuous comparisons and cultural exchanges with the other countries taking part in the network.



From the context of Mediterritage also emerged the situation, still to be completely discovered and capitalized on in all its potentiality, of the rural districts. They also, together with eco-villages, are a form of social aggregation, not necessarily restricted to just the family context, dictated however mainly by economic necessity and consequently by the working activity exploiting the opportunities afforded by the mountain heritage. As can be imagined, the activities could be various so that the conditions are created for the birth and consolidation of similar associative phenomena: including farms and breeders as well as farm



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holiday centres, also the rediscovery of artistic crafts or of old trades or the valorization of healthy oenogastronomic traditions; the valorization of a past with a wealth of history and culture and the creation of suitable industrial archaeology museums.

The Calabro-Lucano rural district includes a good seventeen municipalities, of which four belong to Calabria and thirteen to Basilicata. The population involved numbers more than 40000 people (54% working in agriculture) distributed over a mountain surface area of almost a thousand square kilometres. The farms (about 8600) are very scattered while the more precisely primary sector remains rather limited, which means that slightly fewer than 20000 people are involved directly in prevalently ecological farming, as well as in animal breeding and grazing. The areas of Calabria interested in rural districts are those of the pre-Sila in the Province of Crotona and the high plateau of Aspromonte in the Province of Reggio Calabria.

Finally, regarding the initiatives relative to Component 5 it should be noted how the communication of the Mediterritage project has been done in an integrated and coordinated way by the “e-bag” (www.e-bag.it) company, who developed a portal dedicated to the generic information of the project, together with everything involving a newsletter, extranet, system of publication, graphics and design. In particular the portal of the project is interactive with the user and up to the month of June 2008 85000 hits were recorded from 46 countries from all over the world. Users visiting the site on average have consulted 8 pages per visit, and the most visited sections are those of the subprojects, the photographic galleries and that of the “participants” who have thus been exposed to the thousands of visitors to the site.

Moreover, all the official articles regarding Mediterritage (approved by the directors and published in the official press) have used the vehicle of the official website. On the portal, since it was opened, there have been constant insertions of content and news regarding the project which means that the public interest is ever growing and that the portal is always updated. This also contains a much-visited section of “photographic galleries” and an “idea gallery”. To this is added the “Newsletter”, the new electronic publication that has already been rapidly and statistically packaged per partner and stakeholder. The *newsletter* regards the general description of the project and some of its details and all the other sites are monitored. The reception of requests for specialized information is managed through the portal. This activity was carried out by creating a mail to the



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portal service for the users of M e diterritage. The inform a t i o n service is directed by the Calabria Region.

Regarding the Extranet system it should be pointed out that the internal system between the regions and partners of the subproject is greatly used and allows the direct loading of m aterial into the system . At present, photos, presentations and reports are loaded. It is used as a work platform by the project partners and partners of the subprojects so that in this way they have exchanged m aterial and presentations. Finally, it should be stressed that the new graphics of M editerritage have allowed the conception of a new logo and new graphic *concepts* used during all the conferences and local meetings of M editerritage. Since it is an im portant project at European level the construction of a general graphic creativity w a s necessary for the project that can be used from a small *brochure* up to the 6x3 posters on the territory. The final publication of the project has seen the involvement of many “participants” so it was decided to develop a com plex system of publication in order to make the insertion of the contents homogeneous before printing.



ANDALUSIA





THE RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE FOR THE REGION OF ANDALUSIA

The Regional Government for the Environment is responsible for the preparation and the execution of the central Government policy regarding the proficiency of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia in matters of the environment. It is responsible for the correct definition and follow-up of the Andalusian Lasting Development Strategies. Among its functions are also the planning and promotion of the sensitization of the citizens in environmental issues, to favour social participation in everything regarding the environment and guaranteeing the integration of the social, productive and recreational use of the natural resources of the region. The Regional Government for the Environment is also responsible for the protection and the management of the Natural Protected Spaces of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, as well as establishing them and carrying out all the functions and skills relatives to the National Parks to be found in Andalusia.

The great biological, geological and scenic diversity of Andalusia makes it one of the richest and best conserved regions of Europe. This diversity, the degree of conservation and the possibility of making conservation compatible with nature by the reasonable use of natural resources and economic development, were sufficient motives for the creation in 1989 of the Network of Natural Protected Areas of Andalusia (RENPA).

The priorities on which the activities of RENPA are based are the lasting use of resources, the improvement and the scientific knowledge of the natural and cultural values, the impulse of new development actions, the protection and the conservation of ecosystems, communities and of biological or geological elements in the context of its Natural Areas. These activities go side by side with a rapprochement of the local inhabitants to the Natural Areas for their better understanding of the natural resources available to them, by the planning of activities of an interpretative, educational and participative nature.

Considering the interdependence between the natural and cultural diversity and the actions that can be correctly begun in the areas that involve the RENPA, the aim is to maintain a mixture of natural and cultural values that can favour conservation of the biodiversity as well as the ecological and cultural integrity of the territory.



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Actions must be geared to attaining a balance between development and conservation that translate into an interdependent balanced and lasting economic development.

One of the tools therefore available to Andalusia to achieve these objectives is that of the Lasting Development Plans (PDD), destined to the municipalities included in the Nature Parks of our region and in their areas of socio-economic influence. The object of these plans is to make the socio-economic structures of the municipalities dynamic in safeguarding the stability of the ecological environmental.

The PDD pursues the improvement of the level and the quality of life of the inhabitants in the context of the influence of the Nature Parks, in a way compatible with environmental conservation and taking into account the Protected Natural area as an important value for local economic development. It is one of the actions that contribute to the Lasting Development of Andalusia, by maintaining the durability of the environment and its integration into the whole set of policies of the regional administration.





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In its turn, MEDITERRITAGE arose as a project whose aim is to identify the solutions with a view to the promotion of new lasting development strategies for the Mediterranean mountain regions. These strategies are based on the integrated and participative development of the local Communities, to improve regional policies and to integrate the economic use of the heritage of the Mediterranean mountainous areas, as a fundamental axis of their development. It is a project aiming at the Economic Valorization of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Mediterranean mountain areas.

The participation of Andalusia in MEDITERRITAGE, principally through the Nature Parks of « Sierra de Huetor », « Sierra Mágina » and « Sierra de Tejeda, Almijara and Alhama », allowed the extension and consolidation of the necessary compromise by our region regarding cooperation oriented to the solution of environmental problems on a regional and global scale, in making the lasting conservation and use of the natural surroundings compatible with the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the rural population.

It is very important for Andalusia to succeed in achieving a more participative society model also involved in the conservation of natural resources, for the improvement of the environment and the search for new proposals and lasting alternatives. That is why participation in the subprojects of further Protected areas of the Nature Parks belonging to the Network of Natural Protected Areas of Andalusia (RENPA) was sought.

The experience of the participation of the Nature Park of Sierra de Huetor in MEDITERRITAGE

The « Sierra de Huetor » Nature Park is an example of Mediterranean forest and it is the lung of the city of Grenada. The sector possesses beautiful scenery, given the wealth of its natural resources and very rugged heights, which offer beautiful, sweeping views from the many viewpoints of its footpaths, trails and observation towers.

Besides this wealth of resources it should not be forgotten that we are in very close proximity to the city of Grenada. Just a few minutes by car awaits a touristic city of indisputable international fame, one of the main destinations of national tourism. To visit the Alhambra and the Generalife, getting to know the « tapas » and the



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Grenadian cuisine, to lose oneself in the maze of streets of the Albaicín (World Heritage Site) and attend a flamenco show in one of the caves of the Sacromonte, are among the many choices that one can make in Grenada.

owing to its great diversity of scenery and its closeness to the capital of Grenada the « Sierra de Huetor » Nature Park is traditionally considered as an enclave for the benefit and entertainment of the population with a metropolitan air, as well as an important source of natural resources.

This heterogeneity of resources without doubt makes this area of Andalusia a very attractive destination for all kinds of tourist, those looking for peace and quiet and those who want activities. The touristic sector however remains little developed in the Park as well as in the socio-economic influence, as the poor offer of accommodation testifies, in contrast with the development of the activities of leisure time and adventure activities.

With its participation in the MEDITOUR subproject, Andalusia has had the opportunity to join a transnational partnership for the exchange of experiences and knowledge with the view of defining an integrated touristic development model with all the other existing sectors. This model is shared with the local actors the correct setting up of new economic initiatives (touristic guides, interpreters, experts in communication and information technologies, sale of typical local products).

With this integrated touristic development model a contribution has been made to the socio-economic development of the mountain areas, in valorizing their cultural and natural heritage by the optimization and the promotion of all their resources at the local level (cultural, historical, natural, ethnographic and gastronomic). Strategic lines of a participative nature have also been developed, with the formation of local groups involved in the realization of an analysis of the starting point for the touristic sector, sessions in common and propositions coordinated with a view to elaborating a product for the promotion of tourism.

All of this should be centred on the provision of a quality touristic service, which will be added to a scrupulous follow-up of customer satisfaction, which could enable guidelines to be drawn for future rural regional development plans. In this way an equitable economic dynamism in this area will be obtained, as well as an educational and touristic resource, both well inside and outside the Nature Park.



The experience of participation of the Sierra Mágina Nature Park in MEDITERRITAGE

The « Sierra Mágina » Nature Park is situated to the south-east of the province of Jaén with a mountainous massif which has shaped a particular social, economic and cultural structure over the centuries, and which is kept alive by the isolation that the inhabitants have suffered up to recent times. The inhabitants of the area are affected by an economy with limited resources, very dependent on a subsector, olive growing, which provokes seasonal migratory flows.

The granting of DOC to « Sierra Mágina », for extra virgin olive oil, favours the revaluation of the sector by the marketing of specific brands providing the capacity to enter in competition on the market with parameters of quality.

Another traditional local farming activity is the growth of fruit trees and legumes, which have always been present in the area, even though it has been seen as a minor activity and most often conducted for home consumption.

In the services sector, in the course of the last few years rural tourism has made up an important economic resource of the area, by presenting an interesting offer on the environmental, ethnological, historical, architectural and recreational level.

The participation of the Sierra Mágina in the TYPICAL LOCAL PRODUCTS subproject gave rise to an exchange of experiences among its participants, to establish the bases of a promotional and valorization model of typical local products of the Mediterranean mountain territories.

The aim of the participants consisted in exploring together the possibilities of the development of new analyses, which enable the valorization of the products with the territories themselves to be combined.

This work materialized in a valorization of the cultural heritage and the natural resources, through the conception of self-guide routes in the « Sierra Mágina » Nature Park. For this, 9 itineraries of routes were devised in the « Sierra Mágina » Nature Park and its surroundings. These routes offer the discovery of different values, historical, artistic, natural, cultural, ethnological, etc., destined to a large range of public, and each visitor can choose the option that best suits him according to his possibilities.

For this reason efforts were focused on realizing the innovative experience of applying new technologies (PDA, GPS, Internet, cell phones, etc.) to create an



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improvement of the products and services dedicated to adding value to the cultural heritage and the natural resources of the Nature Park.

This was carried out by applying new information and communication technologies to the development of a web guide for the creation of the self-guide routes, by means of – the systematisation of the existing information on the cultural heritage and the natural resources of the « Sierra Mágina » Nature Park.

This allows an approach to the visitor with offers of cultural tourism existing in « Sierra Mágina ». Moreover, at his disposal is a useful and free tool allowing him to optimize his visit and this has given rise to new models and new sources of touristic exploitation. Advanced information services have also been supplied: guided visits adapted to the choice of the tourist, cultural information, historic and artistic multimedia, on the place and at a hoped for level of detail, access to advice to take advantage of his holiday, information on special events. This has also allowed all the needs of tourist information to be satisfied: useful addresses and phone numbers (accessible simply by pressing a button), timetables, transport, automatic cash points, accommodation, restaurants, typical local products and establishments, various information (weather, traffic, ...), etc

The experience of participation of the Sierras de Tejeda, Almjara and Alhama Nature Park in MEDITERRITAGE

Axarquía is an area situated in the most easterly part of the province of Malaga and it is separated by the province of Grenada and the city of Malaga by the « Sierras de Tejeda, Almjara and Alhama » Nature Park and the Nature Park of the Malaga Mountains. The main resource allowing the establishment of human settlements in the territory of the Nature Park is water, and its use for systems of terrace cultivation. Its historical and artistic « mudéjar » heritage and its natural and scenic wealth give this territory great potential of resources for touristic activities. The towns and villages inside the nature park fall into four sectors and farming is their main productive activity.

But owing to the natural conditions of this mountain region, breeding is also an important activity, while also over the years rural tourism has become an economically important activity.



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For these reasons, Andalusia participated in the development of a project destined to acquiring a better knowledge and valorization of terrace cultivation systems. A project aiming at the exchange of experiences around these ways of using the land and at the projection of their cultural, social and economic value in the area of the Nature Park and in the other participating regions. The aim of the project was to be well able to compare the state of these cultivation systems at the level of the Mediterranean Mountain and to help the exchange of experiences among the partners on the valorization of this resource.

Through participation in the TERRAMED subproject, the aim of valorization of the traditional terrace cultivation system, as a component of the cultural, economic and heritage of the Park, and a descriptive element of the scenery, was centred on the realization of the following activities: the identification of touristic trails through traditional the vegetable gardens; the exchange of experiences on the use of these systems, the sensitization and dissemination at local level of farming practices suitable to a modern context, as well as the valorization of traditional farming techniques.



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The primordial aspect of the subproject is to be able to use the terraces as a resource from the point of view of the nature park as a « vital element » of the sector, in inviting respect for the environment and in incorporating this concept from the angle of touristic and environmental promotion of the area. This is the key in order that the inhabitants become aware of the importance of terrace systems at a cultural and historic level, eliminating the negative view of limitations generally imposed in protected areas. This would allow the conception of concrete projects for the use of terraces in incorporating the environmental component into their economic exploitation, for the elaboration of new products respectful of the surroundings and having an economic perspective).

The benefits drawn from MEDITERRITAGE for Andalusia

In having taken part in these three subprojects, in the different work sessions and days of cooperation and exchange of experiences in the course of the development of MEDITERRITAGE, and in having had the opportunity to collaborate in such a varied and complete partnership, covering a large part of the Mediterranean, Andalusia has really had the opportunity to work on very useful activities for the lasting development of the local communities situated in Protected Natural Areas.

These activities allowed the local populations, represented by their local development groups, to familiarize themselves with work of cooperation at European level. They provided the opportunity to better evaluate the natural resources available thanks to exchanges of experiences with other local situations throughout the Mediterranean which MEDITERRITAGE allowed.

All these works have definitively succeeded in creating and maintaining a mixture of natural and cultural values of very great interest in our region. They have enabled an outline to be drawn of the orientations necessary to attain a balance in the valorization and conservation of our resources, which must be translated into an interdependent economic development, balanced and sustainable, conforming to the work axes of the RENPA.



BASILICATA





THE RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE IN BASILICATA

PRESENTATION OF THE REGION OF BASILICATA – PRESENT SITUATION OF THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS

Basilicata is one of the partner regions in the Mediterritage project. Situated in the south of Italy, this region has about 9992 hectares with a total population of about 600000. Almost all the territory is made up of mountains or hills with few heights above 2000 metres, it has just 8% of plains situated above all at the level of the coasts bordering the Ionian sea. This is a region disposing of vast terrain essentially due to its geographical position in relation to the urbanised areas of the peninsula and to the particular orography of its territory. The latter has also been an obstacle to the realization of infrastructures and communication routes, it has also negatively influenced the possibility of the spreading of a real flourishing industrial sector.

Basilicata is characterized by the presence of many small villages. Out of a total of 131 municipalities, 97 have a population of more than 5000 and 59 a population of more than 2000. This is a region with a low population density and the tendency is rather to leave than to enter. The depopulation and the general aging of the population are two of the most worrying phenomena, which always lead more to emigration and to the isolation of the rural communities, above all in the mountainous areas. In return, a marked improvement in the level of education over the last ten years can be noted, which could be a driving force for the growth of the area.



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The limited presence of the activities of man on the territory has however allowed the survival of a large range of natural habitats and quality farming landscape. The Lucanian territory has a wealth of diversified scenery, mountains populated by wolves and centuries-old beech and oak forests (among them can be found the extraordinary white fir *Abies alba* woods, and the loricata pines *pinus loricato* of the Pollino massif) down to the valleys incised by the rivers and torrents (natural habitat of the otter - *Lutra lutra*) flowing down as far as the small volcanic lakes of Monticchio (jealously and carefully watched over by the « caldera » of Mount Vulture, a geographical area that the pellegrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* dominates unchallenged).



STRATEGIES OF THE BASILICATA REGION FOR THE MOUNTAINOUS AREAS BEFORE THE SETTING UP OF THE MEDITERRITAGE PROJECT

After a long time, the Basilicata Region became aware of its heritage in terms of environmental resources and biodiversity. And that is why it engaged actively in a protection and valorization process by adopting a specific development policy.

The Region aims to promote the vocation of a terrain where the natural characteristics were, in the past, considered as brakes; where the farming landscape modelled over the years, the infrastructural heritage and the rural manufactured products are a starting point to valorize the typical local resources, the specificities and the means of production can add a supplementary value to the environmental, agricultural and cultural heritage of the region.

The condition sine qua non of the success of all the activities to safeguard and valorize the rural mountain scenery is the presence of a stable local population, which has the possibility of organizing and shaping its own living space in an autonomous and responsible way. As a consequence it is necessary to seek to contain the phenomena of depopulation, emigration and isolation of the rural communities, and notably of the Mediterranean mountain areas.

The lasting development, to be called such, must therefore involve all the sectors. It must also be sustained by an evolving cultural model. That necessitates a change of direction in the information and education processes that allow a different orientation of the behaviour of the communities.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEDITERRITAGE TO BASILICATA

The participation in the Regional Context Operation Mediterritage in 2004 was an important challenge in terms of cooperation, improvement of regional policies, definition of a common strategy for the economic development of the Mediterranean mountain areas for the valorization of the natural, historic and cultural heritage. After almost four years' intense and satisfying work, it can be affirmed that Mediterritage has offered Basilicata great opportunities to add value to the fundamental role of the mountain in its regional territorial balance and good opportunities for the lasting development of the mountain territories.



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Many operations were set up. They were aimed at making the inhabitants' perception increasingly aware of the resources that the mountain can offer in terms of growth and competitiveness for the whole regional territorial system. They also aimed at developing, in the context of a general action of protecting and safeguarding the territory, a culture that would also be capable of determining a valorization policy of the territory in which the particularity of the places, the quality of the typical local products, the attractiveness of the scenery and the cultural and environmental heritage can make up the main driving force for the development of agricultural, touristic, craft and commercial activities.

Moreover, a strong cooperation was encouraged among the public and private actors, always with the aim of promoting the valorization actions and integrating the various heritages characterizing each local territorial system.

The Mediterritage experience contributed, moreover, to creating a stable and lasting network of national and above all international relations that make up a



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good starting base to undertake new partnership actions in the 2007-2013 scheduling. For Basilicata this remains an occasion to open to new territorial contexts, to acquire and to share experiences and good practices, as well as to transmit them.

Certain weak points unfortunately always present in the territorial system of Basilicata region, now must be diminished, in order to be able to enter into competition in Europe, which mean the adjustment to the community regulations and to the success of the quality of the territorial offer (agriculture, trade, tourism, typical local productions, services, etc.).

The new POR and PSR 2007-2013 provide for actions and measures aimed at promoting innovation, improving the quality of farm productions, diversifying the rural economy, promoting a lasting local development.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF COOPERATION

Continuing work in a NETWORK constitutes a privileged tool for the growth and affirmation of the rural development policy; for the local territorial situations it is the opportunity to experiment in different innovative investment areas and it assures the possibility of mobilizing the economic and social actors excluded from other forms of intervention.

Mediterritage has the great merit of having initiated mechanisms of setting up a network that allowed cooperation to be sustained among actors and territories ; but we must capitalize on and relaunch this experience to further valorize the mountain and rural territories in terms of cooperation among the territories and among nations, to create a synergy with the complementary modes of intervention.

The spreading in constant evolution of integrated-type approaches implies – in the context of rural development strategies – the need to experiment and consolidate effective intervention procedures relative to different planning levels (local, regional, national, international) to make the Mediterranean rural world – the area of interest of Mediterritage – a real and proper « Mediterranean Rural System ».



CORSICA





THE RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE IN CORSICA

PRESENTATION OF CORSICA AND THE SITUATION OF ITS MOUNTAINS

The biogeographical situation.

Corsica is a Mediterranean isle. Its surface area and its perimeter are respectively 8720 km² and 1020 km of coastline. It is a veritable mountain in the sea, with the majority of its surface occupied by mountain, an average altitude of 568 m and its highest point 2710 metres. The areas of plain are limited except for the eastern plain extending along the east coast.

In the Mediterranean context, it benefits from irregular but relatively important water resources (snow-capped mountain peaks, mean rainfall of 500 mm at low altitude, 800 to 1500 mm higher up). Working the land is divided into 10% of farmland on the plain (vines, orchards and arable land), 40% scrubland and trees, 50% forests (ilex, cork oak, maritime pine and larch higher up).

Corsica offers a great diversity of scenery which depends not only on the climatic conditions relative to height affecting the vegetation, but also on the geological diversity, on inequalities of rainfall and the works of man that have not been carried out in the same way over the whole territory.

The result is a remarkable fauna and flora characterized by their biodiversities, and their endemism offering important economic potentialities (herbs, timber, local species).

These biogeographical and historical parameters have led to the differentiation of real and proper micro-regions, with their cultural specificities, urban heritage, traditions and local productions.



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Photo 1 - YC : Fango Delta and Mount Paglia Orba

The demographic, economic and social organization.

A population of 278,000 on 1st January 2006 (32 people/km²) was counted, but very unequally spread over the territory with only 15% of the total population in mountain areas and a very low density of 9 people/km².

The average age of the population is 41.3, being 2.3 years over the national average. One inhabitant in ten is of foreign origin of which half of Moroccan origin. The demographic growth is one of the most important in metropolitan France but comes essentially from migrations.

In 2006, the GDP per head was 22,660 Euros. It is inferior by 10 to 20% to the French provinces and to the whole of France, this justifies classification as a disadvantaged area outside objective 1 of the EU criteria.

The tertiary sector represents 78% of the GDP with a large part dedicated to public services and to touristic activities. The secondary sector follows (industries and construction) with 15.9% and then the primary sector (agriculture, forests and fishing) with 6.1%.



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Photo 2 - YC : Ancient wheat threshing area – Girolata

The compartmentization of the mountains, lack of infrastructures, dissemination of services to the inhabitants contribute to the isolation of the villages and their relative abandonment. The deficient demographic base associated with important land problems (joint ownership, speculation) have brought about a subexploitation of the land. Despite recurrent fires, a important biological comeback can be noted that maximises the risk of fires, damages the scenery and threatens the biodiversity. In addition, the insularity and the low population level make local production exportation difficult.

Nevertheless, the population of the island is growing slightly and different elements favour the installation of new rural activities: the great reserve of areas that can be valorized, their agronomic potentialities, a strong demand for traditional products (cheeses, cooked meats, chestnut flour, olive, essential oils), the new agro-environmental requirements of the inhabitants, the search for touristic products that can be inserted into lasting development.

The different Corsican farming chains have begun quality labelling and certification of their products. With the emergence of collective projects carried out on the territorial scale the aim is to consolidate the future of the mountain



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territories: a future that might move from the preservation of natural and cultural resources to an occupation of balanced areas and a control of the land; a future that must count on a return to solidarity based on the complementary potentials of sea/mountain production and on ambitious and voluntary policies.



Photos 3 a & b - ODARC : Corsican casgiu cheeses and Chestnut

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT OF MEDITERRITAGE INTERVENTION: A THEMATIC AND STRATEGIC INTEREST FOR THE REGION.

The theme of the MEDITERRITAGE programme addressed to the economic valorization of the natural and cultural resources of the Mediterranean mountains corresponds particularly to the biogeographical situation of Corsica and above all, it is strategically apace with the island's necessities of economic development.

The priority of lasting development

In the first place, like many regions concerned or affected by the ecological problems of the planet engaging the responsibility of our civilisations, the development strategies from now on must enter into a lasting perspective, implying a dual environmental and social balance.

In addition, during the period in which MEDITERRITAGE was progressing, the opportunity arose to rebuild the regional plans in the Corsica region.



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The first is specific to Corsica : being the Corsican Lasting Structures Development Plan (PADDUC) a future scheme involving multi-sectorial economic development strategies and their transformation into regional infrastructures.

The priorities of the Region must be defined here, according an important place primarily to the environment (natural, social and cultural) as a development support. That must become a central theme of innovation and competitiveness policies: the issues of touristic reception, assets for the valorization of the natural resources, support for renewable energy policies ...etc.



Photo 4 - YC : Dry stone walls



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« Identity and quality » : endogenous agricultural and rural development factors.

The second, common to all the European regions entitled FEADER : the Rural Development Plan (Corsican) concerns farming and the rural world.

This field of action is the direct responsibility of the Farming and Rural Development Office of Corsica (ODARC) an establishment of the region (Territorial Body of Corsica) involved in the MEDITERRITAGE cooperation.

As well as taking account of the situation of the island's inland area and the competitive difficulties of Corsican farm produce, the PDRC elaborated a valorization objective of « identity and quality » : the qualification and the recognition of local production and know-how was included in a research strategy for added value, both on the local market and that outside the island.

There is also a theme which should be assembled socially around re-appropriation measures on the part of the inhabitants regarding the heritage of the villages and the countryside, and must be transformed into actions to add value to these resources by a redevelopment of the farmland and forests.

THE MAIN ACQUISITIONS FROM MEDITERRITAGE.

Impact on the regional and local level

The cooperation with the 11 partner regions, allowed the discovery of specific situations that are generally faced by the rural populations of the Mediterranean mountains: the importance of the forestry and water resources, social and economic isolation, rich cultural heritage but often in escheat,... etc.

The different visits gave the chance to discover remarkable examples of territorial or village community development.

What was surprising, was to note the conceptual wealth of solutions set up: each case confirming an almost unique specialisation, not strictly reproducible, but all based on one progressive approach, integrating the following virtuous elements:

- affirmation of an identity or a personal aim for one's village or micro-region, sometimes with a search for excellence.



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- importance of the bottom-up participative approach allowing the guarantee of the governance of the project and its sustainable character for the inhabitants.
- degree of involvement of the promoters : locally elected or animators,
- search for innovative technical solutions,
- importance of the property and economic organization
- chronologies of successive phases
- investment in education and training of the actors
- support of regions in the context of their action policies.

On the methodological level, the ODARC, has been strongly involved in Corsican farming and rural development, and especially attentive to these elements, notably in the setting up of the subprojects in which the Corsican participants collaborated. Besides their contribution to interregional cooperation, the participants involved in Corsica also began individual local projects in this sense: such as Lama with its territorial approach, the Prunelli valley with its apples and oranges production, the agricultural high school in Sartène with cheeses, the town of Nonza through its work on citron terraces, or other participants.

On the local level these projects were all able to progress, at first owing to the benefit of cooperation but also to the dialogue set up with the regional authority, allowing their planning to be envisaged in the context of the setting up of regional policies such as those defined in the PDRC 2007-2013.



Photo 5 - JD : Meeting BIOMASSE Subproject at the University of Corsica



Consequences of the strategic regional choices

In parallel with the elaboration of the PDRC for Corsica 2007-2013, cooperation with the partners and participants of MEDITERRITAGE, to which the ODARC contributed, led to the identification or to the reinforcement of key areas of rural development for the Corsica region.

Moreover, the European nomenclature of FEADER, which is specified in each of the regions, gave rise to the conception of specific measures in Corsica integrating these areas:

- safeguarding and adding value to rural areas with a considerable heritage;
- priority registration of restoration of the scenery in terraces or by planting herbs as investments of the agro-environmental axis;
- strengthened support to the quality regime of farm produce and organic farming
- setting up of management units for territorial real estate adding value to the landscaping of the valleys, slopes, massifs, or terrains;
- more added value to the collective approaches to infrastructures or property, translating them into a degree of preferential action.
- on the methodological plan: systematic recourse to the selection on request to the project, allowing the favouring of the approaches of small partners or based on a larger adhesion of the inhabitants.



Photo 6 - YC : Terraces – municipality of Piana



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Notable examples susceptible to repercussions for the Corsica region

In the course of the cooperation carried out with the different partners, various contributions can serve as notable examples and reference for Corsica both from a methodological and educational point of view, owing to their innovative or technological character. In particular:

- Varese Liguria : social and environmental certification processes: certification EMAS
- Pollino Park (Basilicata) : “certified basket” of local products
- Arnasco : olive oil producers’ cooperative and dry stone wall repair centre
- Kastoria : environmental education centre
- Haut Atlas : innovation des fours à double foyer double burner ovens for the de bois economy
- Cinque Terre : the recuperation of terraces and their valorization for tourism
- Basilicata and Liguria : wood-fired energy system enlarged to the territory : territorial energy (cf. workshop component 2).
- Lama : rural film festival and the operation of group B & B
- Andalusian Parks: planning and valorisation of resources...

**CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR THE PURSUIT OF
COOPERATION FOR THE REGION :**

The priorities in terms of future cooperation at different levels.

Methodological recommendations.

In a general way, the aim is to promote phased cooperation or trying to find extensions with the policies of the region, for the ODARC regarding agricultural and rural development.

On a tactical level the particularity associated with the subprojects was to have tried an effective modality to obtain quick results – on the scale of the beginning of a participative development– and to have accelerated the transfer of skills, all involving a larger number of people.

These expenses seem relatively low in our opinion compared to the benefits one could reap, on condition that they are accompanied elsewhere by the funding of



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investments necessary to the project; underlying which is that they should be eligible for a pre-existing plan or one to be set up, like FEADER for example.

Identification of new priorities for the pursuit of cooperation.

On the thematic level, it would be useful for the region and the Corsican participants – as actions favouring agricultural and rural development – to examine more deeply in an operational way the subprojects already achieved and notably TERRAMED (on the valorization of terraces), BIOMASSE (on territorial energy systems) for which a lasting bilateral collaboration has been set up with Liguria, TYPICAL LOCAL PRODUCTS and VILLAGES.



Photo 7 - YC : Abandoned Village of Tasso, municipality of Marignana

I In terms of enlargement of the field of cooperation, Corsica is naturally interested in the theme of « insularity ». This implies in effect specific difficulties and Research & Development requirements adapted to its peripheral situation.

Another area that should be explored regards exchanges on regional policies and in particular on the modalities of regulations existing in the different regions (for example the possibilities of land-tenures offered to the national park of the Cinque Terre in Liguria) which could notably open up the proposal of a « regional agrarian organization plan adapted to each region ».



LIGURIA





The MEDITERRITAGE project contribution to the Liguria region

The project : main characteristics

The Liguria Region participated in the European project MEDITERRITAGE with the aim of improving, thanks to cooperation and exchange of experiences, the regional policies of economic valorization of the natural and cultural resources of the Mediterranean mountains.

The title of the project « MEDITERRITAGE », that is to say the « Mediterranean heritage », expresses the importance of the mountains in the patrimony « heritage » of the Mediterranean, as much from the natural as the cultural point of view.

In the case of Liguria, the interest of the project lies in the possibility of creating concrete synergies among the participating countries, thanks to the subprojects. These activities, in the different phases of realization, have allowed the innovation efforts to be conjoined to the protection and valorization of the territory, to the growth of agriculture and the promotion of new forms of tourism, in addition to the valorization of the cultural heritage of the mountain areas.

The transnational partnership

C12 Mediterranean regions, belonging or not to the European Union, have participated in MEDITERRITAGE. The partnership, owing to its extension and diversity, inevitably made the management and organization of the project complex. It constituted however a veritable added value: allowing real exchanges of experiences and marked evolutions of mentality. These contributions, notably in terms of know-how and practices provide a wealth of new elements of knowledge equally for all of the partners, including the Liguria Region.

The partners, throughout the work, made their points of view felt with exchanges of information on their experiences in the spheres relative to the project, also sharing actions, good practices, collaborations with other organisations and participating in common actions (conferences, thematic days, etc.). The presence of the Liguria Region in these activities was effective both in terms of participation



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and in terms of organization, notably being the coordinator of the activity sessions of component n°2 of the project « exchanges about tools for regional policies »

In addition, the acquisition of new practices and results of experimentations realized by other public actors in other contexts, brought about a real enrichment. It allowed the comparison of methodologies of approaches the themes of the « reading of the context », of « the analysis of a territory ». These elements represent for all the participants, from now on, a methodological know-how and applicable skills, to solve the specific problems of the local situations, both in the medium- and long-term.



This dynamic, and as a result the added value in terms of contributions for the Liguria Region, is clear from the working relationships realized in the setting of component n°2, dedicated to « the study and improvement of the tools for regional policies and the exchange of experience among mountain areas ». Being the partner



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in charge of the component, the Liguria Region identified and proposed modes of work organization, suitable to the particularities of the partnership and to the objectives of the project.

The activities coordinated by the Liguria Region –component n°2 : transfer of tools for regional policies and for the mountains.

All the partners of the MEDITERRITAGE project, including those who did not develop subprojects, participated in component n°2.

The main aim is the study and comparison, thanks to transnational cooperation, of existing experiences that allow the identification of good practices for the development of the mountain areas and more specifically of the safeguarding of the territory, forests and the valorization of their typical local products. The objective provides for both the evaluation of the transfer and adaptation of the tools from one region to another.

The contents of component n°2 are divided into three study phases:

Comparative studies of the territories of the twelve partners : each region gathered data, the regulations in force and good practices, in accordance with a reading and analysis grid created ad hoc,

Definition of the model and the structure of the in-depth studies on three identified themes: instruments for the valorization of the resources of the mountain territories and for the safeguarding and upkeep of the territory; tools for the management of mountain territories to avoid their degradation and create new productive activities and/or diversify the existing activities; promotion tools for typical mountain products.

Here we prefer not to enlarge on the meetings which were held in this phase (since details will be presented in the second volume) :

- The 26 and 27 March 2007, at Alassio (Liguria), 1st seminar of component n°2, entitled « Integrated economic valorization of the products and the territory » ;



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- The 27 and 28 September 2007, at Grevena (western Macedonia), 2nd seminar of component n°2, entitled « territorial management » ;
The 24 and 25 January 2008 at Genoa (Liguria) , 3rd seminar and conference of closure: all the partners and local representatives of the subprojects in which Liguria participated, were present.

At each meeting, as in the various workshops that were held at the time of the seminar of closure, all the partners, bearing the experiences of the local communities, the small producers and cultural and touristic actors, in common put their own « Histories » together, pointing out strong and weak points. Often, these points proved to be the same, from one participant to another.

Within the Mediterranean mountain territories of the areas involved, are found many niche productions, not very remunerative owing to the high production costs, mainly caused by the unfavourable orographic conditions of the terrains. From which emerges the necessity to develop a valorization policy of farm produce capable of creating an added value to the product, in strengthening its anchorage in the territory. Itineraries appear to be the most suitable solution: thematic routes are a means of valorizing a territory in its entirety. They integrate scenic, natural, historical, cultural and architectural heritages and the local high quality productions, both farming and craft products. They also develop cultural, environmental and gastronomic tourism, improving the local economy and structuring the quality of the offer. They allow both the discovery of centuries-old flavours of the country tradition to new generations.



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This approach favours the establishment of a short chain and dialogue among the local economic actors. It also encourages an increase in the professional skills of local businessmen. It encourages conservation and biodiversity and the rediscovery of traditional products and flavours. It facilitates the introduction and the development of new information and communication technologies.

This short summary presents the articulation of the work. The Liguria Region played a double role in it: it brought its skills in terms of organization and techniques. These contributions in terms of transnational cooperation, exchanges of experience and know-how, have participated actively in achieving the objectives. It has acquired and developed new working methods also in cooperation with a methodological approach which enabled the passing from the definition of a model to the definition of practical action plans.

In conclusion, the experience of MEDITERRITAGE in our region, has allowed the spreading of knowledge; the knowledge has led to comparisons, and out of these comparisons arise the exchanges. From there, emerges the strong desire to continue to collaborate and work together to establish systems of cooperation which make of Europe and the Mediterranean basin a vast area of social, political and economic development. This desire is indisputably the best and greatest result attained.



The subprojects and the local partnership

The subprojects were selected at the time of the pilot committee in Genoa (Liguria), 21 and 22 July 2006. They allowed the meeting of participants of several partner regions of the MEDITERRITAGE project. In this sense, they had a real transnational character. Also, they strengthened the contributions of the transnational approach at the regional level and translated them into a real working force. The works which progressed within the framework of the subprojects grouped together the participants of at least three regions and of at least three countries. The partners really managed to work on common goals together, going beyond the simple exchange of experiences and succeeded in making the results and the impacts in each region bear the fruit of the work realized with the partners of the other regions involved.





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Reviewing the particularities and the objectives that characterized the subprojects, what the advantages have been in terms of contributions at the local level can be easily pointed out:

- conformity to the principles of lasting development for the joint promotion of economic effectiveness, social equality, environmental integrity and cultural diversity;
- real participative approach and involvement of all the interested local actors;
- promotion of the organization and economic solidarity of the territories, villages and their inhabitants, through all the possible forms of partnership, cooperation and association;
- integration of the different poles and sectors that participated in the development of a territory or a village;
- development of new activities, to increase the inhabitants' incomes, to combat discrimination and poverty within the territories and/or the villages;
- creation of cultural synergies among the partner regions of the project and, consequently, between the shores of the Mediterranean;
- promotion of the identity of the regions, territories and villages with a view to economic development, thanks to the setting up of original, specific and individual actions;
- pre-establishing long-term cooperation among the villages, territories, regions of the Mediterranean ;
- development of actions with a view to favouring the rediscovery and understanding of the rural and mountain world rural by the urban population;
- encouragement of the valorization of human resources for concrete projects, developing new activities and bringing in supplementary income in order to anchor the inhabitants in the territory ;
- promotion of quality management systems, paying special attention to quality management of touristic destinations, notably those which lead to the valorization of the natural and cultural heritage of the villages.

The subprojects had both the benefit of actively involving the local partnerships, also allowing the participation of many actors spread widely across the regional territory.



The « BIOMASS » subproject

Around the Regional Park of Aveto (in charge of setting up the project partnership) were assembled the organizations in charge of the exploitation of the forests, the businesses of the forestry sectors, the actors of the timber chain. All the partners worked on the valorization of the bioenergetics chain through a virtuous use of biomasses. The project resulted in the construction of two heating plants operating exclusively on woodchips, one for a sports school, the other for a touristic and sports centre.



The « CHESTNUT » subproject

Led by the province of La Spezia, the project involved the businesses and farm holiday centres of the Val di Vara. The aim of the project was to relaunch chestnut cultivation and to improve the quality of the production and marketing of the chestnut chain. The project provided for the organization of specific information and sensitization programmes destined to the farmers, the identification of new surfaces to improve and expand cultivation and finally the drafting of specifications for the production of chestnut flours, a basic ingredient in the traditional cookery of the valley.

The « MYCOMED » subproject

Realized and coordinated by the Comunità Montana Alta Valle del Vara, the aim of the project was the valorization of mushrooms, the improvement of their cultivation, their conservation and the realization of marketing actions. The results were achieved thanks to an effective census of the mushroom species and the realization of a technical guide.



The « NEST » subproject

Coordinated by the Comunità Montana del Giovo, the project involved hotel structures, guest houses and restaurants of the territory to develop a lasting and alternative tourism model, in opposition to mass tourism. The touristic operators were engaged to offer reception in respect of the environment and local traditions.

The « PASAMME » subproject

Coordinated by the Comunità Montana Alta Val Scrivia, the project benefitted both from the participation of the Comunità Montana Aveto Graveglia Sturla and the main agricultural companies, businesses of sweets and confectioners, beekeepers, and small breweries. The aim of the project was to promote and valorize the scents and flavours of the Mediterranean mountain, through the production and use of traditional alimentary roses in and of the local honey. The actions on the territory were carried out by the realization of a study on the local varieties of roses and their conservation, the creation of a web-GIS (geographic information system) for the promotion of the products and the territory, the creation of a demonstration apiary and a hive for teaching purposes.

The « TYPICAL LOCAL PRODUCTS» subproject

Around the Comunità Montana Valli Stura e Orba (Group leader), the partnership assembled the businesses adhering to the association « Le Valli del latte ». The project had the aim of promoting touristic itineraries based on the culture and knowledge of animal produce of mountain areas, in particular the rediscovery of the « slim volume of the Valle Stura ». Specifications composed for this production, to encourage the conservation and promotion of the traditional product. The « products route », a concrete network established among the local actors, is the instrument for improving the sale of products and the knowledge of the territory.



The « TERRAMED » subproject

The project was set up on the territory of the Comunità Montana Argentea. The aim was to valorize cultivations systems on terraces, the typical Ligurian rural architecture, through the cultivation of wild strawberries, herbs and cherries. Also, the exploitation of farm holidays in the area participant in the project, holding twice monthly markets of local products and creating three theme trails in respect of the uniqueness of the rural scenery and cultures.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the achievement of the subprojects constitutes an important added value, regarding the number of actors involved (private and public), the number of contacts and comparisons established among well-circumscribed local situations and the transnational dimension of the range offered by the project. Moreover, the management effort requiring the realization of the many activities and therefore the large number of important actors involved should also be appreciated. The skills acquired and capitalized on in terms of « governing » of the project are considerable and constitute a solid base for launching further initiatives.

Finally, the balance in terms of contributions of the project in Liguria is very positive, as the various analyses here presented demonstrate.

In summary, the encouraging results of the project, the know-how acquired and capitalized on notably in terms of the management capacity of a complex project (both of the institutional network and in terms of relations with the territory) allow a positive consideration of the opportunities offered for the new community planning 2007-2013.



MACEDONIA OCCIDENTALE





The MEDITERRITAGE project contribution to the Western Macedonia

Presentation of the Region of Western Macedonia and the present situation of its mountainous regions

The Region of Western Macedonia is situated in the North-West of Greece, bordering with the regions of Central Macedonia (East), Thessaly (South), Epirus (West), as well as with the regions of Bitola (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and Korçë (Albania) to the North. Its administrative structure consists of 4 prefectures (Kozani, Grevena, Florina and Kastoria). It is a mountainous, a low-density populated and geographically isolated region where its 82% of the total surface are mountainous and semi-mountainous areas. It has a total population of 301.552 inhabitants (2,9% of the country's total) and its major population (56%) lives in rural areas.

The natural environment of the region consists of 65% of the total expanse of terrestrial waters along with the 11 eco-sites of the Natura 2000 net: Vasilitsa (Pindus's peak), peaks of the Mount Smolikas, Pindus's natural park, - Valia Kalda in Grevena, Kastorias's lake, peaks of the mount Gramos in Kastoria, mountain Vourinos in Kozani, the natural park of Prespes, peaks of the mount Varnoutas, Vegoritida's and Prespes's lakes, also Chimaditida and Zazari's lakes and the mount Verno- the peak of Vitsi mountain in Florina.

In the Region the continuous improvement of its structures is evident (for example, the national highway Egnatia has been completed to great extent while vertical routes leading to Albania and FYROM are under construction) in a way that the non-stop efforts of development are supported and the Region is to reach the average European level.

Regional Strategies for the mountainous regions before the realization of MEDITERRITAGE

The economical characteristics of the Region as far as the primary sector is concerned include the production of krokos, apples and cereals. The secondary sector is characterized by the exploitation of mines, the production of fur and leather, the production of marble, lignite and electric power. It is worth mentioning



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that the 70% of the country's total production of electric power is produced in the Region of Western Macedonia by the Public Power Corporation of Greece (PPC S.A.). The tertiary sector is characterized by the function of financial and insurance companies, transport and storage services and by touristy services. The tourism sector and especially the alternative tourism is a very important source of wealth for the region.

The Western Macedonia's Region development strategy is being focused on issues such as the expansion of occupation opportunities and decrease of unemployment, the use of trans-European nets by the urban and productive centers of the Region, the reinforcement of the urban regions and the restructuring of local economy, the continuous development of the countryside and the complete development of the mountainous regions and those by a lake. These actions were placed among special measures which materialized through the Regional Business Program of the Western Macedonia's Region during the period 2000-2006.



Furthermore, the Western Macedonia's Region as a beyond-borders' region has successfully materialized programs through the European initiatives INTERREG I and II, promoting in this was the beyond-borders', national and among regional collaboration. The main target was and still is the development of the beyond-



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border's regions through the reinforcement of socio-economical abilities and resources at their disposal, leading to the collaboration of small and middle businesses of this region.

Another important regional policy applied in the Western Macedonia's Region which had a direct impact on the mountainous regions is the European initiative LEADER I and II in the past years and today's initiative LEADER +. Local action organizations in Prefectures of the Region have organized common strategies for the development of rural areas according to Common Agricultural Policy, aiming the limitation of the rural areas' depopulation through the promotion of interventions which assure the viable development of these areas. Such interventions also offer the opportunity of an extra income and not only do they contribute to decrease unemployment rates but also help to conserve the natural sources and protect the environment.

Before its participation to the program MEDITERRITAGE, the Region took also part in the communal initiative INERREG III C through other European programs. The base of interest of the Region included programs concerning the continuous development of tourism, the protection of the environment, the promotion of innovative actions, the spread of knowledge and the exchange of know-how techniques having as an objective the financial development of the region, the creation of new economic opportunities, the increase of the competition and the exchange of experiences of regional and local land-planning design and organization.

The main results of MEDITERRITAGE in a local level:

Perception of the Region's present situation by the Region itself: new visions, strong and weak points, problems and solutions...

The participation in the program MEDITERRITAGE has been proved to be useful not only for the Region but also for all the local parties involved in the programme...

The participation of the local factors of the Region, of the Municipalities and of the communities in sub-programs of the MEDITERRITAGE has offered them the opportunity to co-operate with each other, to exchange ideas and experiences with foreign counterparts and to find common solutions to the problems they are facing. There has been an important exchange of information between colleagues (in most



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cases) who shared the experience and their valuable know-how and found applicable ideas concerning the promotion and the development of their regions. During the realization of the program and especially during the interaction with the rest of the participants, a new perception has been formed as far as the situation of the Region is concerned while there have been found the strong and the weak points and there have been offered suggestions about possible solutions to the problems faced by the Region.

Specifically one of the strongest points of the Region is the rich natural landscape of the region with its most beautiful mountains and lakes. The sub program WASTE MANAGEMENT concerns the development of strategies about the waste management for the protection of the environment and the development of the mountainous ground. The most important problem which had to be dealt with was the institutional organization of the waste management in a local level. The solution suggested was the promotion of the inter-municipality co-operation aiming the protection of the environment and the definition of the Region's development tools.

The differentiation of the agricultural economy and the production of renewable energy sources are also one of the main goals of the Region. A brilliant example of the effort on behalf of the program's participants is the sub program BIOMASS. The main problem in Greece is the lack of an official policy concerning the biomass production by using agricultural residues a method which can be a balanced practice to avoid the demotion of bio regions. Through this sub program and the sessions between the participants came to light the local and the national difficulties and also the common belief that people are hesitant towards the biomass and its use. So the solution suggested by all partners was the information through the use of biomass and the creation of exhibits which would describe the usefulness of it.



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Another strong point of the Region is tourism and in particular the winter tourism and the alternative forms of tourism with the promotion of the local traditional products at the same time. For the best tourist promotion of the region and the improvement of its present model has been decided that the co-operation between the local tourist businesses is necessary. The sub program NETS became in charge of completing this task with the creation of tourist business net in the region of Prespes. The biggest problem faced was the fact that the communication with the parties involved has been extremely time-consuming. As a result, we are searching a new means of communication with the businesses concerned which would guarantee the direct communication but in less time. As for the sector of the alternative tourism is concerned, the sub-work WINEOLIVE offer which dealt with the wine tourism, has been important. Within the framework of action of promotion of this alternative form of tourism there have been organized wine festivals through which were promoted and benefited the regions involved. Once more, there has been faced the problem of cooperation between the local factors and businesses for a common result as every participant had his own approach of strategy. The solution adopted was to make all opinions and approaches to be



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heard. As far as the local products are concerned the sub program MYCOMED dealt with the mushrooms , a local product of the Region , and through this program there have been found new ways of promotion and processing of mushrooms and also the reinforcement of the local region's identity.

Through the program MEDITERRITAGE has also been examined the problem of the region's depopulation and the demographic decrease of the population which lead to high levels of unemployment in the region. The sub program VILLAGES has functioned as a means of applying good practices in the mountainous and underdeveloped regions which are plagued to great extent by all problems mentioned above.



To sum up, MEDITERRITAGE through the sub programs has functioned as a useful tool to trace common problems and to find common solutions about important problems like the depopulation of mountainous areas, the low educational level of the inhabitants, the difficulty to create alternative ways of employment, the low productivity and the high functional expenses, the lack of money in the field of businesses which means high cost on behalf of small and medium businesses, the weaknesses presented in the field of research and development due to the small size of the businesses and the developing and the



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social inequalities produced by the changes in common Agricultural Policy. Through the program have also been stressed out the strong points of the participants and as for Western Macedonia these are the importance of the primary sector in the Region's activity and the farmers' interest, the local traditional products, the increase of winter tourism in the area caused by the development and the right exploitation of winter ski resorts in the Region and also the priceless cultural and historical heritage of the region.

Reconsideration or enrichment of the regional strategic choices:

introduction of new measures or instruments, modification of the measure or instrument application, reconsideration of priorities, introduction of new ideas, meanings, models of organization and development , new practices of promotion within the framework of the regional policy concerning the mountainous areas.

The vision about the future of the mountainous areas and the regional policy and also the main direction of their course of development is the application of completed programs aiming the viability of the regions and the population's stay in them along with the reinforcement of the chances of employment and the improvement of the standard of living.

Basic measures are:

Improvement of basic technical structures

Improvement of the quality level of the social and other services offered to the inhabitants and to the visitors

Enrichment of business activity using local sources and commercial products of high quality

Protection of the environment

Reservation and promotion of the historical and the cultural heritage

Imposition of a multi-level employment which will be completed with the professional specialization

Creation and development of nets and clusters (of space and sectors) which will exchange good practices and will promote the extroversion of the region and,

Application of new technologies of communication and information guarantee the success of developing policies.



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Discovery of new situation which could have as a result the continuation of the cooperation in the area: invention of new promotion practices inspired by the experience of others (continuation of the collaboration) discovery of new associates able to satisfy the Region's needs for a future exchange of experience.

The experience of MEDITERRITAGE is very important for the Region of Western Macedonia. Through this program has been offered the opportunity to the participants to try more for the development of their region, to contact foreign counterparts and to materialize in common their projects.

The interaction of the participants of the MEDITERRITAGE and of the sub programs has brought to light the perspectives of a further collaboration after the program's completion. Despite the fact that many times there has been discovered a difference of opinion between the members in a level of development and experience, the ties between them have been strengthened and new ideas of collaboration have started to develop. The sub programs and their results are the beginning of new activities and ideas.

The sub program WASTE MANAGEMENT is a typical example of promotional practice. The object and the activities of the program have triggered the interest of certain participants of a different sub program (PASAMME) who were present in the meetings of WASTE MANAGEMENT creating important ties between the two programs. So a future collaboration between the participants who were interested is a possibility.

In the case of the sub work BIOMASS the associates decided to continue their collaboration with the realization a new program relevant with the "smart energy". The same disposition for a further collaboration has been observed in the sub programs WINEOLIVE and VILLAGES.



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Il seguito della collaborazione non si limita soltanto ai sottoprogetti. Più partners del programma MEDITERRITAGE considerano anche di continuare la loro cooperazione per il nuovo periodo di programmazione su progetti simili (protezione dell'ambiente, delle foreste, etc).

Recognition of new priorities for the continuation of collaboration and finding of associates

The best methodological management of the organization of the wine festival of WINEOLIVE is an important priority and a good practice which can be applied in other type of national festivals concerning the promotion of local products. So, there are made efforts to achieve further organization of festivals along with the cooperation of the existing and of new parties involved.



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Moreover the methodological approach of DIADYMA has been recognised as an important priority in the administrative issues of waste management in a local level. The promotion of the intra municipality communication offers a clear more productive and healthier institutional framework of collaboration. The final study written about the region is a methodological tourist guide which can easily be adjusted in other frameworks.

Another important priority for the region is the installation of an “energy fireplace” which will burn biomass in the Centre of Information about Arktouros in Florina. In this way the public will be informed about the energy usefulness of biomass.

Finally, as for tourism, the promotion of new practices for its development is a priority. These new practices include the creation of new eco tourist organization based on the collaboration between individuals in Greece and abroad and the creation of a national tourist net. The alternative tourism may also be promoted through the development and the promotion of innovative actions like the tourism of mushrooms.

Conclusions and suggestion for the continuation of the collaboration by the Region:

As mentioned above, the Region of Western Macedonia is a typical Mediterranean mountainous region. The special characteristics of the region the problems which face the inhabitants, the local producers and the villages and also the efforts for a viable development have made the participation in MEDITERRITAGE necessary. There has been a strong promotion by organizations and individuals occupied with issues like agro tourism, waste management and production of wine, olives and mushrooms to contact other regions of the Mediterranean which share the worries, the thoughts and their plans for the future.

The separation of the program in three theme units (exploitation of local products, use of land and tourism) has given flexibility to the program.

So, the conclusions and the action which will follow are:

Promotion of multi function of forests (by the MEDITERRITAGE and not only)

Use of land is impossible without the participation of human resource (farmers and individuals who deal with the environment and the land).



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Demand for competition as for the environment and its use in the field of education where the information and the innovation have a high place.



From all mentioned above, it is clear that there are common elements despite the lack of homogeneity in the regions. While the policy applied by the European Union is common and does not deal with the lack of homogeneity in the regions, it is necessary to have a common methodology and platform for all the regions. Despite all the weaknesses there are the sources and the right experience for the exploitation of the regional land. For this reason it is necessary to create a common strategic framework of reference based on the common elements of the regions. Even regions which are not so developed can use the experience of the older ones



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to reach a satisfactory level of development. So the main base is one and common-the multi-function of the ground.

It is essential that the problems and the emergencies be traced so as –through the MEDITERRITAGE –to create a certain collaboration between the regions. As a result it is suggested a model of joint action in the Mediterranean.

The common heritage is a Chapter itself. This chapter has to be found and become an object of management. So, it is vital to create schemes and strategies for the renaissance and the constructive development of this Chapter.

MEDITERRITAGE is an original and ambitious program through which not only did the similarities between the participants become known but also their characteristic differences. It is important to realize how the exchange of experience has led to the adoption of practical solutions and the application of right practices. On the other hand, it should be made clear that such ambitious programs should be organized perfectly so as to receive the desirable feasible results.



MUGLA





THE RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE IN THE REGION OF MUĞLA

Introduction to the region and its mountain areas

The region of Muğla is situated to the western part of Mount Taurus, which is the largest mountain chain in southern Turkey. The region includes the provinces of Muğla and Aydin that count 27 towns (districts) and 728 villages.

The total population close to 1.7 million (figures refer to 2000), of which 392,000 inhabitants live in rural surroundings and notably in mountain areas. The total surface area of the territory is about 210,000 hectares of which 110,000 (about 56%) are forested.

This region abounds with natural resources, with a wealth of fauna, while the dominant vegetation is the pine (*Pinus brutia*, et *P.nigra*) and Mediterranean scrub. It has both an interesting cultural heritage with many historical remains and archaeological sites of ancient civilisations. The Muğla region is one of the most famous in Turkey, for its climate, scenery, water resources and its range of natural environment.

In the lower altitudes, particularly in the coastal area, the economy is partly based on farming and tourism. In the medium altitude areas and the mountains, the local rural inhabitants are mainly employed in the exploitation of forestry, animal breeding, farming (olives, figs, lemons, etc.), beekeeping and mining ...These activities are not always sufficient to fulfil the primary needs of the local people. This is why emigration persists.

The inconveniences of life in the mountains in the region of Muğla are the same as those in certain other mountainous regions of the globe : poverty, difficulties of accessibility, depopulation, underdevelopment, etc.

Nevertheless Muğla possesses a great variety of local products that can be considered as the promise of local regional development. Honey, mushrooms, fruits, olives, the « non-timber products » and nature tourism, are the most common. They play an important role at the level of regional development but not only, because they are also for the inhabitants primordial a means of subsistence.



**The main points of interest in the region for the mountain areas before
MEDITERRITAGE**

The natural resources, such as water, forest, natural pastures and the mountains, the activities of tourism in the mountain areas of the region are managed by various institutions separately in the context of their responsibilities and their duties. All the same there are many development opportunities for the region, there is no integration, nor any cooperation beyond simple relations among institutions/sectors and activities. There is both a lack of multi-sectorial and multi-disciplinary approaches in order to favour the lasting management of these mountains.



As for the majority of mountain areas the main problem is unemployment. It is for this reason that the inhabitants, and especially young people, emigrate seasonally to the territories of the north to the towns or dynamic centres to work in the tourism sectors and the agricultural greenhouses.



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The governmental institutions inform and train the farmers, the villagers and schoolchildren about the lasting management of farming, the forest, and the environment, etc. For example, the state forestry service contributes a financial subsidy to the inhabitants of mountain areas by means of small incomes generated by the activities, in the sale of timber for house building and heating at subsidized prices as well as privileges with hiring labour in the forestry sector.

The contribution of the project MEDITERRITAGE to the Muğla region

The MEDITERRITAGE project allowed the promotion of the importance of mountain resources in terms of the lasting development of the mountain areas.

It both allowed the people involved in the project to gain knowledge of other similar mountain situations, and of different development challenges that the partners of the programme had established for the regions and countries of the Mediterranean basin.

This allowed a rich and pertinent exchange of experiences and knowledge. In effect, this sharing supplied useful understanding, applicable to the local situations and allowed meetings with many experts working within a perspective of future projects in common. This collective work and the meetings involved, reinforced the local awareness of the importance of cooperative work between the local population and the local institutions, the different sectors of activities as well as with external partners, experts, academic bodies and non-governmental organisations,...

The local population was greatly involved and MEDITERRITAGE brought them information theories and techniques concerning actions of protection of the environment, hygiene, ecotourism, etc.



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Conclusions

Also the MEDITERRITAGE programme enabled the Muğla region to integrate a certain number of official reports and recommendations.

The first essential point was to understand which mountain areas of the Mediterranean regions have great importance in terms of cultural and natural values as well as historical remains. Addressing this official report, the work in common enabled the assertion that the cultural heritage of the Muğla region must be maintained, restored and valorized. This adding value to the heritage will allow thereafter a diversification of the mountain economy, a condition without which it is not possible to maintain its population and its activities.

The different development approaches employed by certain partners in similar situations have both allowed the definition of those recommendations to apply to certain areas of the region. In effect, it appeared primordial to reinforce the multi-sectorial and multi-disciplinary approaches for the management of mountain areas.



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In the course of setting up the work of the project, certain action strategies and certain methodologies were discovered. And certain among them were especially retained useful:

- following the official reports and developing already existing cooperation with all the partners and the villages with the aim of pursuing a sharing of knowledge and therefore development,
- integrating knowledge and experiences received from the subprojects (plans, projects, programmes),
- informing the public decision-making bodies (national, local) of the project and promoting it by means of communication material such as brochures, prospectuses
-,
- following , checking, involving and seeking to communicate with other Mediterranean programmes being carried out, such as the Alpine Convention, Mediterranean Woodlands, the Blue Plan, Mediterranean Strategies for Lasting Development (SMDD) of the convention of Barcelona,...
- setting up a participative rural evaluation (Participatory Rural Appraisal) and surveys following the same technique, in selecting the study areas: working parties with municipal administration, local population, etc. Work will be carried out with suitable tools identifying local specificities (natural, cultural, human...) and development opportunities.



THESSALIE





RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE IN THESSALY

PRESENTATION OF THE REGION OF THESSALY – PRESENT SITUATION OF THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS

The region of Thessaly is one of the 13 regions of Greece. It is situated in central-eastern continental Greece . It includes the provinces of Karditsa, Larissa, Magnesia and Trikala. Its surface area covers 14.036 km² (being 10.6% of the total surface of the country). Surrounded by high peaks, the Thessaly plain – the largest plain in the country – is crossed from west to east by the river Pineous, the third longest river in the country. Its mountains are the Olympian range, the southern part of the Pindus, Itamos, Peleus and Othris mountain chain. The Tavropos reservoir was created immediately by the construction of a dam on the bed of the river Tavropos, a tributary of the Acheloos.





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The population of the region of Thessaly is 737,583 habitants (2005 census), being 7.1% of the total population of the country. Thessaly is the third largest region in terms of population. The mountain massif is 45.6% of the total surface of the region while its population is 109,660 habitants, being 14.9% of the total population of the region. The Thessaly mountain massifs divided into three areas: to the east Kissavos-Mavrovouni - Peleus, to the west Pindus, to the north - north-east, Olympia - Chassia and Antichassia. Tendencies to the depopulation of the mountainous areas and the abandonment of craft activities have been observed.

Regarding the infrastructures, they are in general little developed. Moreover, during the last few decades there has been a degradation of the environment along with a demographic decline associated with the ageing of the population and of the abandonment of the activities which have brought about marked regional and territorial inequalities. The mountainous area of the south-east has been the hardest hit. To all these problems should be added that of poor accessibility to this area.

In addition, a recent tendency to the « renaissance » of certain mountainous regions has been observed, in the massif deà Peleus, in particular, but also in certain isolated regions of the west of Thessaly. This renaissance is in reality linked to a tendency to the transformation of the mountainous region, from a producing region to a region of consumption, with the development of new relations among the original people of the region and the local community remaining in the country (phenomena of secondary residence and seasonal stays in the birthplace). It should also be stressed that the places of residence and the centres of activities of most of the population subjected to census in the mountainous areas are in fact situated in the lower part of the territories of the municipal areas, in the urban and rural areas of the plain.



STRATEGIES OF THE THESSALY REGION FOR THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS BEFORE THE SETTING UP OF THE MEDITERRITAGE PROJECT

In the context of its development strategies, the Thessaly region puts the emphasis on specific forms of integrated action aimed at the mountainous regions and the marginal rural areas of the region. These forms of actions concern local initiatives, interregional programmes of exchange of experiences as well as other parallel or complementary actions.

The above-mentioned integrated actions fall into the context of specific measures set up by the regional action Programme for the Thessaly region in the period 2000-2006 and articulated around priority axis 2 for « integrated rural development ». In the context of this axis integrated development Programmes for the rural space have been set up which make up an innovative initiative favouring rural development and they have been applied in certain mountainous and disadvantaged areas of the Thessaly region with a population of less than 3,000 inhabitants. These programmes led to the setting up of integrated actions in these regions.

The categories of actions carried out by the private projects were notably centred on :

- The strengthening of the orientation to international markets and economies;
- The improvement of competitiveness in the agricultural exploitation of farm holidays and of food processing.

The categories of actions carried out by the public projects were notably centred on:

- The rational management of the water resources and of the territory;
- Specific actions favouring rural development;
- The management of natural and cultural resources as well as of built up areas of the rural areas of Thessaly;
- The protection and management of the forests;
- The improvement of accessibility and the setting up of infrastructures with the aim of valorizing the touristic mountain areas and villages.



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The contribution of the integrated development Programmes of the rural spaces, financed by the ministry of Agriculture, has also been important. It was centred around the following main axes:

- The marketing of quality processed foods;
- The performance of basic services for rural economies and the population;
- The restoration and development of villages and protection of the rural heritage;
- The diversification of rural activities regarding agriculture with the aim of creating other activities allowing the acquisition of alternative income;
- The promotion of touristic and craft activities.

Moreover, the launching of many actions in the context of the community initiative LEADER + has also contributed to the development of the mountainous areas of Thessaly. The main actions carried out:

- The funding of investments and the promotion of a business spirit;



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- The protection, adding value and valorization of the natural and cultural Heritage;
- Cooperation among local communities, but also interregional and transnational cooperation.

Finally, in the context of the THISSEAS programme which concerns the actors of the local bodies, actions were carried forward notably in the spheres of road building, water supply, irrigation projects, the protection and adding value to the natural environment and the rehabilitation of the built up areas.

All these actions were an important step forward favouring the further protection of disadvantaged areas from the economic and social point of view (mountainous – disadvantaged areas) and of their reintroduction into the national system of production so that they are no longer set aside.

THE MAIN RESULTS OF THE MEDITERRITAGE PROJECT

Improvement of the regional policy and the creation of new objectives

The MEDITERRITAGE project constitutes an important heritage for the Thessaly region because it comprises innovative/original elements in terms of the mobilisation of the population and local actors. This project was made possible thanks to the realisation of the subprojects that have given the opportunity to local actors of different areas to cooperate.

Moreover, this project brings notable results with regard to development carried out:

- The improvement of the competitiveness of local economies;
- The widening of markets (creation of conditions favourable to the development of the marketing of local products);
- Adding value favouring local and regional development;
- The suppression of inequalities through the creation of conditions propitious to sexual equality and/or to the social integration of groups of the population marginalized by society;
- The improvement of the environment and the quality of life;
- the contribution of knowledge, to innovation and research.



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More particularly, thanks to the subprojects TYPICAL PRODUCTS and WINOLIVE, the mountainous regions of Karditsa, Trikala, Peleus and Skopelos, have been provided with a local identity which, associated with the promotion of quality local products and tourism, should lead to an increase in productivity through the creation of new jobs.



Regarding the mountainous area of Karditsa, new jobs could be created, jobs which, unprofitable at the moment, should quickly become so. The new jobs will be created through the setting up of wine making laboratories, businesses providing support services to wine production, but also by means of the performance of marketing services, the setting up of actions associating wine and tourism and favouring a greater number of cultures.

Redefinition and enrichment of strategic regional choices (introduction of new ideas and tools)

The realization of the actions relative to the project, both at the level of cooperation among the partners and the regions, and among the different participants in the subprojects, has allowed useful conclusions to be drawn .



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The results of MEDITERRITAGE are the following:

- Creation of cultural itineraries in the mountainous area of Thessaly;
- Creation of an interactive map containing cultural itineraries and sites of historical interest in the mountainous areas;
- Creation of a web site containing an interactive map and cultural itineraries;
- Inventory of products of the land, production methods, means of the promotion and organization of the producers of the areas of Trikala, Peleus and Skopelos;
- Inventory and possibilities of valorizing the mushroom products in the mountainous area of Trikala - inventory study and publication of an information brochure;
- Inventory and possibilities of valorizing the chestnuts produced in the mountainous areas of Larissa (Kissavos) realization of a study aimed at combating the diseases affecting chestnut trees;
- Organization of a wine competition in the mountainous area of Karditsa (Plastira, Itamos, Nevropolis);
- Setting up of a network of wine producers of the Karditsa area;
- Elaboration of a rehabilitation methodology for built up areas in a state of abandonment (Paliourion- Magnesia);
- Studies leading to the possibility of using biomasses in the municipality of Mouressi – study of the economic viability of its application concerning the energetic use of biomasses for the heating of three municipal buildings;
- Willingness manifested by the partners in favour of continuing the WINOLIVE, MYCOMED, BIOMASS subprojects;
- Sensitization of the local population (organization of information days at Skopelos, Melivoia, Mikani, Elati, Karitsa, Almiro and Messenikola);
- Exchange of experiences among the partners on questions regarding the local products and the exploitation of the land;
- Registering of waste management processes in the mountain municipalities of the Province of Magnesia, inventory of good practices and proposals for the future.

The above-listed results enable the Thessaly region to valorize through capitalisation of actions and to opt for new regional strategic choices. One should mention, indicatively:



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1. the enrichment of the know-how and communication of complete information to potential beneficiaries in the sphere of local product certification processes;
2. the elaboration of a common concept in accordance with which tourism must be developed in the rural areas in the light of a single regional geographic entity;
3. the creation of cultural, environmental and ecotouristic itineraries;
4. the architectural and cultural valorization of mountainous built up areas in a state of abandonment, the first stage of rehabilitation which will serve as the basis for complementary future development actions;
5. the strengthening of chestnut production and the battle against diseases that affect chestnut cultivation, in creating cooperation and suitable conditions aimed at developing exportation, and at encouraging the installation of a processing plant for the production of various products derived from chestnuts;
6. the valorisation of local gastronomic specialties and land produce fairs (mushrooms, wine, traditional cakes, chestnuts, apples and trahana) at the local and regional level;
7. the pursuit of research for alternative energy forms, such as biomasses for their use in mountain municipalities;
8. the development of female cooperatives and the AOC certification of products, actions that enable the strengthening of production and the competitiveness of the products on the market. The next step will be the creation of a European Network of local products;
9. in the wine-growing sector, the following measures are proposed:
 - mechanisation of production, integrated farming management (creation of a growers dossier containing all the history of wine production), bottling of wines and progressive disappearance of bulk wine;
 - 10. in the sector of mushroom cultivation, the development of tourism linked to the mushroom is proposed, to connect production and rural tourism, to exploit the medicinal properties of the mushrooms and to set up information and sensitization programmes of the population to fungi.



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New practices susceptible to having a positive effect on the pursuit of cooperation in the Region

The partners have noticed the effectiveness of good, innovative practice, like that of integrated routes of local products, such as the « wine and olives from the Alps to the Sea » route, a tool applied by the Liguria Region. For the participants, the routes are an essential development tool for valorizing the products of the mountainous areas. Adopting this tool is a common objective for everyone. The wine and olive route created by the Liguria Region, valorizes dozens of sites (traditional hotels, cooperatives, food processing plants, sales outlets for local wines and olives) which stretch from the coast to the Alps. This route was created with the aim of promoting employment and tourism (in association with the local products) and more generally the local economy of the mountain areas. All the local actors participating in this project use the same logos and their establishments are always open to the public.





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In addition, the willingness to develop future cooperation among the mountain municipalities of the provinces of Larissa (Melivoias, Eurimenon, Lakereias, Agias, Kato Olympia, Ampelakia) and the local actors of the Corsica Region in exchanging experiences on questions of chestnut exportation have been confirmed.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS OF THE REGION FAVOURING THE PURSUIT OF COOPERATION

The MEDITERRITAGE project contributes to regional development beyond the local level, putting the emphasis on methodologies of approach (interdisciplinary, entrepreneurial supra-local and inter-professional approach, public debate and participation / cooperation) along with the local-regional dimension and the impact of the project.

In addition, the MEDITERRITAGE project embraces the notion of « repeatability » in the sense that the use of the model to similar actions could be aimed at another geographic region to carry out a different theme.

Moreover, it implies a durability / continuity component in assuring that the action lasts beyond the initial funding through the setting up of suitable provisions.

The main conclusions on the following thematic axes, products of the land, exploitation of the land and tourism are very useful.

Acting on all these spheres, it is clear that the bottom-up approach was particularly positive in the elaboration of a policy. Therefore, the experiences and the good practices of the actors directly implies the constitution of a precious tool for the elaboration of a policy at a higher level (municipalities /districts, prefectures, regions, etc..). At the same time, it is necessary to disseminate information in developing communication and promotion systems. Regarding local products, the necessity to improve the forms of cooperation is manifested in the setting up of the means and tools for advice to small and independent producers. Special attention must be paid to biodiversity and to methods for combating diseases.



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In the sphere of exploitation of the land, the cultural and natural resources need to be valorized, to establish synergies with the partners and ensure continuous training to all the interested parties.

Regarding tourism, it is necessary to capitalize on actions aimed up to now, such as the MEDITOUR touristic-cultural itineraries, in order to further valorize them.

In the context of synergies among projects and subprojects, the Thessaly region has evaluated the results of the MEDITOUR subproject carried out on touristic-cultural itineraries in the mountain areas. The Thessaly Region has taken the initiative of gathering these itineraries into a DVD and an album.

The integrated action project in the wine-growing sector should also be noted, which is the result of consultation between the Karditsa development Agency (AN.KA.SA) and the local producers and that makes up a potentially important capitalization programme for the Thessaly region. The said project can be used in the context of prefectural and regional working programmes.



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In summary, these subprojects present many important advantages for the Thessaly Region (local communities, municipalities, local populations). Besides the exchange of experiences among the participants, contributing to promote new approaches favouring the integrated development of the country and built up mountainous areas.

The table below shows the tangible results of the subprojects.

SUBPROJECT	RESULT	BENEFICIARIES
MEDITOUR	Cultural and touristic itineraries and creation of a DVD	All the mountain municipalities of the Thessaly Region
WINOLIVE	Working plan for the wine-growing sector, and the creation of a network of producers	Mountain municipalities of the province of Karditsa
CASTAGNA	Study of the diseases affecting chestnut trees	Mountain municipalities of the province of Larissa
BIOMASS	Study of the potential and use of biomasses	Municipalities of Mouressi
VILLAGE	Method aimed at the revitalization of the built-up area of Paliourion in a state of abandonment	Municipality of Aisonia
WASTE MANAGEMENT	Registering of the current situation of waste management	Mountain municipalities of the province of Magnesia
PRODUCTS TYPIQUES	Study of the valorization of local products	Mountain municipalities of the province of Trikala, of the Peleus massif and of the isle of Skopelos
MYCOMED	Study of the current situation in the sphere mushroom cultivation	Mountain municipalities of the province of Trikala



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The perspectives of cooperation among the partners of the MEDITERRITAGE project remain positive, since the participants have already expressed their willingness to assure the continuation of this project.

This cooperation could be based on the following actions:

- Creation of a « Mediterritage » label, the fruit of this cooperation, which corresponds to a local quality chart aimed at bringing together the mountainous massifs of the Mediterranean. It will assure the quality of the heritage of the mountainous massifs of the Mediterranean distinguished by the managerial capacity for a lasting development.
- Creation of a Mediterritage working party responsible for the continual improvement of regional policies, development of mountainous rural areas. This working party could use communication and information technology to assure timely training and exchange of experiences.



VRATSA



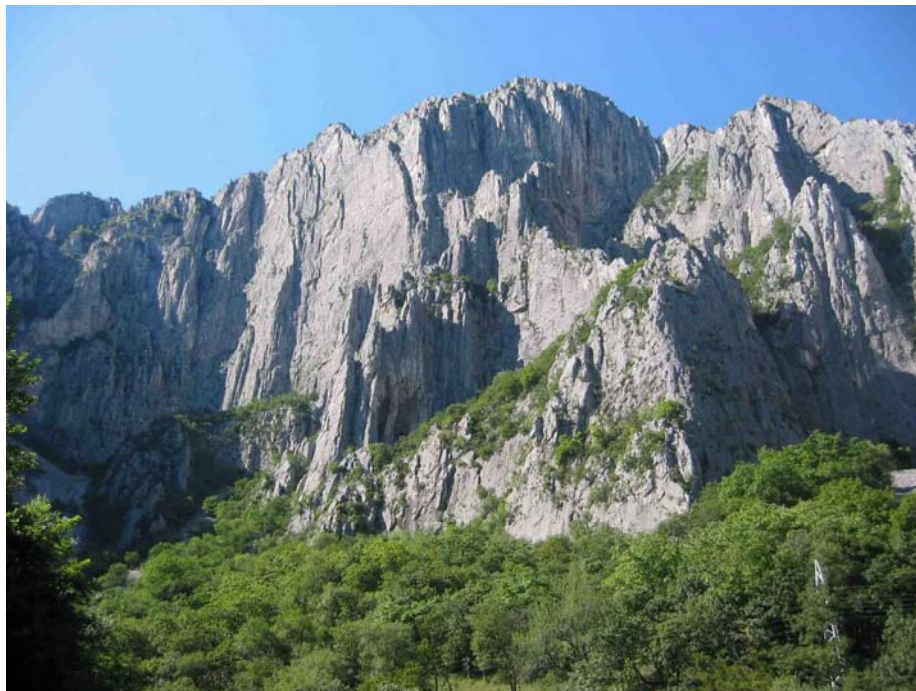


THE RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE IN THE VRATSA REGION

PRESENTATION OF THE VRATSA REGION AND ITS MOUNTAINOUS AREAS

The Vratsa Region is situated in the north-west of Bulgaria. Vratsa constitutes the regional centre and the largest and the largest town in the north-west of Bulgaria. The surface area of the region is 3 619.8 km², with the population divided among the 10 municipalities of the region, numbering 205797 inhabitants.

It developed in the past, as a centre of centre social, commercial and cultural importance.





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The mountainous areas are found in the southern part of the region and their natural resources are one of their strong points.

The natural surroundings are very picturesque, in particular the nature reserve and Mount Vratsa, which make up part of the Stara Planina (the old mountain) mountains and which is the longest mountain range in Bulgaria.

The Vratsa Region is like a fascinating mosaic of mountains, rivers and valleys, caverns and rocks, gorges and waterfalls. The biological diversity is another asset of the territory. Here can be found the Ledenika “Glacial” grotto which is the most important grotto in Bulgaria, in which a touristic infrastructure has been constructed, the defile of the river Iskar with a length of about 97 km, Skaklya waterfall – the second highest waterfall in Bulgaria, Bozhiat Most “The Bridge of God” 100 metres long and 20 metres high.

Here is also located the village of Pavolche, a lovely little rustic village, with a superb view over the mountain and with the merit of having a craft centre.

All around Vratsa there is the most important massif for climbing and alpinist activities in Bulgaria - « Vratsata » massif with a height of about 400 m, with more than 116 alpine itineraries of medium category (classes 5 to 7).

With its very beautiful, diversified and unique natural surroundings the Vratsa Region has the possibility of developing tourism of ecological and rural knowledge.

STRATEGIES OF THE VRATSA REGION FOR MOUNTAINOUS AREAS BEFORE THE SETTING UP OF THE MEDITERRITAGE PROJECT

In Bulgaria, the strategies relative to the development of mountain areas and the mechanisms of action in these territories were not yet set up. The integrated mountain policy is in the process of being created on the French and Italian model. However, it has not yet been ratified by the legislator.

A small number of projects concerning mountain areas in the national rural development Plan is supported by the SAPARD programme in Bulgaria.

Certain recent programmes encouraging the development of small- and medium-sized commercial activities were set up, particularly in the mountain regions, but they ceased to exist at the end of their funding.



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The impact of subsidies accorded to the development of mountain areas is still modest. Funding at the level of municipalities and regions is insufficient – the mountain municipalities and villages have great difficulties in acceding to funding with the current legislation in force. Following the integration of the Republic of Bulgaria into the European Union since 2007, new possibilities and an improvement in the situation are expected thanks to the mobilization of energies.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEDITERRITAGE TO THE VRATSA REGION

The participation of the Vratsa Region was mainly motivated by the search for and identification of new approaches to the development of the mountain areas of Vratsa. The valorization of the natural resources in this Region is at a start regarding the organization and measures necessary to identify the strong points in the regional development strategies and all its efforts are concentrated on this field.

The MEDITERRITAGE project offered a very good opportunity to the region to take advantage of the examples of good practices of other European regions for models of intervention in relation to the development of mountain areas and on the other hand, to evaluate the strong and weak points of its mountain policies. Thanks to the project the participants of the Vratsa region have identified the main themes to address in the future and have taken advantage of the experience and the methodologies of other European regions to solve the problems of the mountain areas .

The exchanges of information together with networking in the region and among the partner regions, are important elements in terms of exchanges of policies, knowledge and experiences regarding the development of the mountain areas.



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CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS OF THE REGION FAVOURING CONTINUATION OF COOPERATION

The project gathered together regions from different countries all with a very rich heritage, but each region has its identity and stress was placed on the strong points of the heritage for sustainable development.

The new priorities for the continuation of cooperation are connected to the good practices of the other regions which have had the possibility of achieving the subprojects. The Vratsa Region has had the chance to take advantage of the experience of other municipalities and mountain communities in the partner regions of the MEDITERRITAGE project. It has collected the ideas, the methodologies and the analyses of the activities. There are points in common and quite clearly differences among the regions but certain methods could be used to improve the situation in the Vratsa region for its mountain areas.

The reinforcement of links among the networks, the regional alliances and initiatives and the local actors in order to share their development experiences must be effected, because it contributes to improving the management of regional policy and to making it more flexible.



VLORA





THE RESULTS OF MEDITERRITAGE FOR THE REGION OF VLORA (ALBANIA)

The Vlora Region and the situation of its mountains

The Vlora Region is situated in the south of Albania and includes the provinces of Vlora, Saranda and Delvine. With the town of Vlora as its capital, it includes twenty-six municipalities, where there are 199 villages with a population of 322000.

Its territory of 270600 hectares is composed of 23.3% - 63282 hectares – farmland, 48% - 130927 hectares – forests, plains and pasturage, and the rest built-up or non-utilized areas. The farmland itself is made up of 67.4% - 42642 hectares – of worked land, and 32.6% - 20642 hectares – of plantations. The most important fruit produce are olives, citrus fruit and grapes, whereas animal breeding is essentially sheep and cattle.

Through a decision of the Council of ministers, 30% of the forests and pasturage were transferred to the local authorities. A third of this land is given over to protected areas.

By transferring a part of the forests and pasturage to the local authorities, the law has increased their responsibilities towards them, including the issue of fire prevention.

The priorities of the Vlora Region

The priorities in general

One of the priorities of the region is precisely to review the obligations that derive from this transfer of responsibility from the State for the forests, plains and pasturage, which are mainly situated in mountain areas. For this reason it must create relations among the forestry Service, for technical assistance, the local authorities, owners, and nongovernmental organizations that defend the interests of the communities.



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Regarding the second-level local authority, which defines regional policies in synergy with national policies, the Vlora Region produced a database in relation to the priorities of regional strategy.

The Region has obtained good results in its collaboration with an international partnership in many projects, such as those supported by the European Commission, the World Bank, including the MEDITERRITAGE project, in which it participated in the NEST subproject, for the development of tourism.



The priorities for the mountain area of Llogara, the area of application of the project

The environmental importance of the region is attested by the presence of five protected areas, three of which for birds, and three others particularly protected. Among these should be mentioned the Llogara national park (1010 ha), the Butrinti national park (2900 hectares), the nature reserves of Pisha-Poro (1770 hectares)



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and of Karaburini (2000 hectares), together with the Blue Eye natural monument (200 ha).

On the basis of a decree of the Council of ministers n.96 of 21 November 1966 the forested part of Llogara was declared « national forestry park », under the administration of the Vlora forestry service management.

Since 1999 a series of laws have been adopted dealing more or less directly with the environment. Among them should be mentioned those bearing on « the forests and the forestry service police », « the wild fauna and hunting », « the protection of aromatic and medicinal plants », together with the many documents of a legislative character on the safeguarding of protected areas.

Law n. 8906 of 6 June 2002 « on protected areas », dedicated to the protection, administration of human and natural resources of the protected areas and to the assurance of a continuous development of these resources, highlighted a series of shortfalls as well as the necessity of visible improvements to the logistical and institutional infrastructures of these areas.

For fifteen years the Llogara national park has lacked technical silviculture studies. The last forestry management project of the park was carried out in 1982-83.

The Llogara national park was the object of a series of small investments, which consisted of small changes to the infrastructure of the park, like the creation of recreational environments, the improvement of footpaths, information panels, etc. In the park area thirteen private actors exercise their activities in the context of public service (hotels and restaurants). Three of them also offer 300 beds, whereas the ten others are involved in catering.



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Up to now the local government has not developed any kind of activity in the area of the park. At present it raises tax on household rubbish, but does not exercise any kind of activity relative to the collection of urban waste. The latter is the responsibility of the local authorities, and some of them dump their waste on the territory of the park itself. It is in the light of this situation that the project for the construction of an information centre in the Llogara national park has been conceived. Making reference to article 8652, of 31 July 2000, «on the organization and functioning of local government », to article 13/1 on the functions of the District, the Vlora regional Council conceived the project for the construction of an information centre in the Llogara national park, as an important element of the Vlora District. This regards an area rich in fauna and attractive flora, to protect, and which must be the basis of the development of environmental tourism.



The contribution of MEDITERRITAGE to the Vlora Region

The Vlora region participated in practically all the project meetings, and in those of its pilot committees. And from being a simple spectator, it became a participating actor in a concrete manner.

The work done in the case of NEST to construct an information centre at Llogara should be mentioned, for the promotion of the flora, of the fauna and traditions of the Vlora region, and to make sure that this very beautiful area is not known only as ideal for the health because of its climate, but also for the riches of the territory of Vlora.

The results of NEST

NEST is a project dedicated to tourism, and especially to the development of touristic reception respectful of the local culture and territory, and this in a reciprocal way between the local touristic operators and the tourists coming to visit the territory.

NEST also aims to stress the host-visitor relationship, since it is the visitor himself, who returning from his holiday becomes the ambassador of the territory, best capable of promoting the visit.

Starting from this subproject, the Vlora region gained information and knowledge for the development of respectful tourism respectful of the environment and the local traditions, in particular for the sector of safeguarding products and the local cuisine, of sports and cultural tourism.

Within NEST, the Vlora region attempted to experiment this new kind of tourism in the Llogara national Park, in the context of collaboration which also led to developing contacts with the Pollino national park in Basilicata.

The project developed within NEST the study of a visitors' reception centre and the publication of an information booklet on the Llogara national park. The booklet was published with the decisive contribution of Basilicata, through the A.L.L.B.A.



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LAG, a NEST partner, for the technical part, and the Basilicata Region for the strategic part.

Vision for the future

Through training courses in which it participated, the Vlora region trained its personnel capable of carrying out the projects, and of being ready to participate in future funding and investments in the context of programmes between Albania and Greece, between Albania and Italy, with the ADRIATIC and CARDS programmes.

The region can arrive at this by being aware of the necessity :

- to develop very clear visions for these new operations,
- to create and maintain institutional links, for certain already sustainable ones,
- valorize the experience acquired in the management of funds,
- to develop collaborations with both local and international partners.

MEDITERRITAGE has been an excellent experience, which has contributed to making Albania enter a large network of future collaborations and new contacts, among which should be cited in particular the fully established relationship of collaboration with Corsica and the municipalities of the Vlora Region, in addition to the fruitful collaboration with Basilicata which has already provided the first concrete results.

MEDITERRITAGE also allowed the establishment and deepening of contacts and exchanges of information and experiences with other partners, with those of Western Macedonia and Thessaly in Greece, Liguria and Calabria in Italy, Vratsa in Bulgaria, without forgetting the rich opportunities of discussion with the partners of Marrakech in Morocco and of Mugla in Turkey.

Mediterritage



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