

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE CODE OF PRACTICE

C3.5

Society, culture, traditions, natural environment and local resources have direct consequences on the quality and the image of GI products and their preservation affects the possibility to produce with the same specific quality over time.

Objectives

The definition of the rules in the code of practice (CoP), with reference to natural and human resources, can play an important role in their preservation and have a positive impact on rural and sustainable development.

Key concepts

Including rules related to the protection of environmental and human resources in the Code of Practice is necessary to guarantee their reproduction and improvement for the sustainability of the GI system. This is particularly true when these resources form the basis of specificity of the GI product.

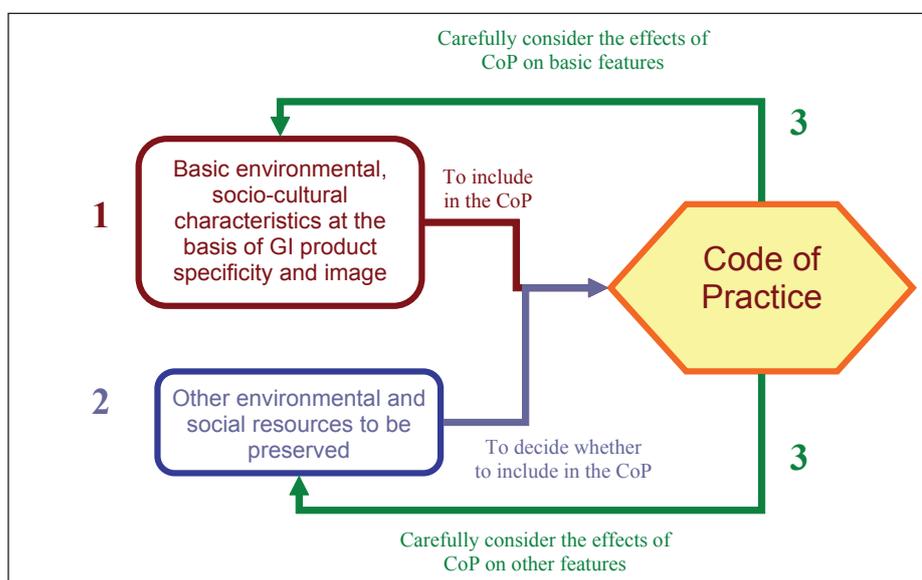
Process

The following aspects should therefore be taken into consideration when setting up the CoP:

- Biodiversity preservation
- Preventing overexploitation of natural resources
- Preservation of culture and traditions
- Socioeconomic and territorial effects

Local actors may consider other environmental and social resources to be worth protecting, by means of appropriate norms in the CoP or more informally through coordination among their organization, as this will contribute to the image of the product and its territory. Careful consideration should be given to the effects that the norms written in the CoP may have on the environmental and social resources that should be preserved (see figure below and table next page).

Taking into account environment and social aspects in the CoP



Source: Linking People, Place and Products

Environmental and social components	Inclusion in the CoP?	Contribution or risks
Biological resources at the basis of the specific quality (plant variety, breed, feeding,...)	Mention of the specific biological resources	Use and management of this resources within the GI system; contribution to their maintenance and reproduction
	If no mention	Risk of using only modern biological resources and lose the genetic patrimony of the native ones.
Diversity (heterogeneity) of genetic resources	If only one resource is mentioned	Risk of specialization and loss of diversity
Traditional practice and know-how	If mentioned	Conservation and transmission of traditions and know how
	If not included	Too modern techniques may dilute the image of product authenticity. More modern and competitive firms may push the more traditional ones out of the market
First stage of production (farming)	If included and mandatory in the delimited area	Primary producers (farmers...) could be part of the GI value chain (distribution of adding value, bargaining power)
	If not included	Risk of disappearance
Specific (handicraft) methods for small-scale producers	If mentioned and/or mandatory	If only mentioned the industrial-produced methods can crowd-out the artisanal one; if mandatory risk of blocking the evolution of the GI product, rules too costly to comply with.
	If not mentioned	Social exclusion of small-scale producers

Summary

Rules defined in the CoP have an important impact on rural development and the sustainability of the GI system and it is important to analyze these positive or negative impacts and make necessary adjustments (see module 5).

In addition to the local resources influencing directly on the final specific quality, other resources may have indirect influence or influence on the image of the production system for consumers (for example through the landscape). In this case it may be interesting to consider some rules for them too, either formally in the CoP or informally outside the CoP.