

SARD-M Project: PES

FAO Report “State of Food and Agriculture 2007, Paying farmers for environmental services” outlines the growing importance of Payment for Environmental Services (PES) as innovative financing in the future, and addresses different unaccounted economic benefits remunerated through PES schemes.

Mountain regions’ potential is significant: for example, about half of world’s fresh water comes from them.

Quality labels are an other example: in the Jura Mountain (France), the Protected Denomination of Origin for “Comté” cheese has remunerated the positive externalities provided by farmers and mountain ecosystem: the farm milk price is 64% higher in Comté farms (0.36 €l versus 0.22 €l average in France, April 2009). In 2007, the Comté supply chain (47,700 tonnes/year) included more than 7,600 employments. This PES offered people the opportunity to maintain their farms in difficult conditions.

In 2008, the global carbon markets transacted over \$100 billion dollars; one part impacts mountain regions, like for example Uganda Mountains, where the “trees for global benefits” programme based on a 600ha area allowed payment of 300,000\$, as of December 2007, to 200 individual smallholder farmers for reforestation services.

The SARD-M project published a discussion paper (Robinson, 2007), analysing mountain externalities through a comparative review of existing methods and tools from case studies. Aimed to policy actors, this overview of the key principles and the situation in different regional and local cases draws relevant elements related to PES.

In its statement from October 2007, the Adelboden Group considers that specific actions are required to valorise the mountain positive externalities: the capacity for the valorisation of externalities of the private sector and communities should be strengthened; the PES in mountain need to be developed in a participatory manner to ensure they benefit to mountain populations.

Project for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in Mountain Regions: Policies and Laws

SARD-M Project aims to assess the strengths and weaknesses of mountain policies, institutions and processes (PIP) including social, economic, institutional and environmental aspects. Rapid assessments of SARD-M PIP have been conducted in the Andes, Carpathian Mountains, Central America, Hindu Kush-Himalayas, Mediterranean Basin, and South East Europe. A full report, published in august 2007 (www.fao.org/sard/sard-m), provides an interregional analysis of the major findings and outlines principal areas of concern. It identifies key issues for the future: positive externalities that mountains provide have to be taken into account; the importance of the cultural heritage of mountain regions such as indigenous knowledge has been outlined; the rural/urban migrations, and gender and equity policies are critical issues. It also provides relevant knowledge to integrate mountain sustainable development in national and regional policymaking and to develop specific mountain policies. One country of North Africa, one Region of Central Europe are referring now to this knowledge in designing mountain policies.

Since 2008, the project focuses on Sub Saharan Africa, and is assessing the PIP to SARD in East African Mountain regions.

SARD-M project also encourages Regional Focal Points to establish databases, to facilitate communication exchange, partnerships and capitalize on knowledge, for instance CIHEAM IAM-Bari, launched an electronic platform on SARD with mountain section (<http://sard.iamb.com>), to facilitate the exchange of information and promote networking among Mediterranean stake holders: one-line discussion forum were driven in Morocco and in Balkan countries.

An e-platform is also to be built for Carpathian region (by UNEP Vienna, acting interim secretary of the Carpathian Convention).