



Association of European Regions for Origin Products (AREPO)

AREPO aims at promoting and defending the interests of the European producers and consumers committed to enhancing quality agrifood products. AREPO is currently composed of 30 European regions from France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain, and includes representatives of producers under the PDO and PGI schemes from the same Regions, who form a «producer» board. AREPO is highly representative of the quality and origin agrifood product sector, since it brings together 40% of the European geographical indications (56% in Spain, 84 % in France, 60 % in Italy).

✚ AREPO strives to:

- Strengthen the European policy for geographical indications and quality products.
- Seed information about specific attributes of quality and origin products along the value chain.
- Develop the promotion of PDO and PGI logos and products with consumers.
- Support producer organisations holding geographical indications.

✚ AREPO's interest in international cooperation arises from the possibility of:

- Promoting a European model of sustainable development linked to quality and territory valorisation.
- Providing local responses to global socio-economic and environmental challenges (e.g. high price volatility, long-term declining trend of agricultural prices, and loss of biodiversity).
- Establishing economic, knowledge and cultural relations between North and South to improve the livelihood of rural areas.

A NEW APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION:

Decentralised cooperation "seeks to put stakeholders at the centre of the cooperation process and involve them throughout the activity cycle, setting out each party's role and responsibilities, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity" (UNDP, 2008). The decentralised approach has been increasingly recognised as pivotal to development cooperation in various official EU documents, such as the Fourth ACP-EC Convention (EC, 1998).

Five main features should distinguish such an approach: "a) active involvement of all the various groups of stakeholders, b) seeking consultation and complementarities between stakeholders, c) decentralising management, d) introducing a process methodology, e) giving priority to capacity building and institutional development" (UNDP, 2008).

This form of cooperation distinguishes itself for promoting sustainable development by drawing on the capabilities, innovative operating methods and resources of the agents of decentralised cooperation itself (UNDP, 2008).



✚ **What AREPO Regions are doing in the field of international cooperation in the agrifood sector (3 examples):**

Twining	Locality	Year	Object	Action
Aquitaine - Morocco	Souss Massa Drâa	2002	Quality programme for Argan oil in Morocco.	Valorising <i>terroir</i> products through the PGI certification for Argan oil, in particular improving quality at the processing and bottling phases and developing product commercialisation and marketing. Replication of such a strategy with other products from Souss Massa Drâa, such as Saffron of Talioune.
Puglia-Palestine	West Bank	2003	Fair trade and organic olive oil	Micro projects generating income at the household level in Palestinian villages in animal and vegetable productions. In particular, improving the quality of organic olive oil production and its commercialisation at local and international levels.
Navarra-Peru	Nororient	2008	Coffee quality differentiation	Improving coffee quality standards in the North East of Peru through a better commercial management, especially exploring new export markets.

✚ **AREPO looks for partnerships in order to:**

- Offer our technical knowledge in the field of GIs, in particular on the implementation of EC regulations, and expand our experience in international cooperation.
- Acquire good practices for improving the implementation of current cooperation projects and launching new ones.
- Upgrade from generic agrifood cooperation projects to GI-based ones.
- Have a greater impact both at the local level (e.g. higher incomes for local communities) and global one (e.g. WTO negotiations) by creating management and financial synergies.

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