



Completion of the Feasibility Study: Agricultural Species Diversity in the Alps – Conservation and Use of Traditional Knowledge



Cereals in the alps

The feasibility study “Agricultural Species Diversity in the Alps – Conservation and Use of Traditional Knowledge” undertaken by the SAVE-Monitoring Institute shows that the current, publically available systems for recording data about agricultural praxis are very rudimentary. Approaches to collecting experiences, traditions and customs are, if undertaken at all, only for limited subjects or local or regional in nature.

The interest in collecting information and knowledge about livestock breeds and cultivated plants in the Alps is, however, large. Nature conservationists seek interdisciplinary cooperation with agriculture. Within agricultural production, niche products with regional or local identity are increasingly of interest. Young, motivated farmers in the Alps notice often that it is not so easy to work with the traditional varieties. Knowledge about, for example, growing winter cereals in the mountains was nearly lost. Interested laymen but also farmers are often not aware that the robustness of the old breeds and varieties is tightly bound to knowledge and use of the

correct cultivation and husbandry. The goal of an information platform for traditional knowledge is, therefore, to bring this knowledge back into use. It is useful for farmers to know that some apple varieties were brought to the Alps and grafted by the Romans, that frost protection irrigation of fruit plantations to prevent blossom damage can be conducted using simple methodology or when mountain cereals should be planted out.

The feasibility study of the use of traditional knowledge in the Alps showed clearly that, in order to build up a lively, useful system, the commitment of many people will be necessary. The basis of a future project would be a wiki content management system within which authorised people could make entries and changes. Alongside text entries, pic-

tures, animated clips, graphics etc can also be integrated. Test runs have shown that, particularly the necessary research in old annuals, calendars etc requires a large capacity. Direct interviews will probably only be rarely used, as the generation that still farmed traditionally is gradually dying out.

A further, important pillar of a successful main project will be the collaboration and interest of experts who are prepared to contribute their experiences.

If you are interested in reading more, the full report can be read here http://www.save-foundation.net/pdf/Bericht_AlpWissen2011.pdf (in German language only). Sources of funding are currently being sought for a future main project with the name “**Fundus Agri-Cultura Alpina**”. Please contact the SAVE Team if you have any suggestions, comments, questions or are in need of further explanation.

(The feasibility study was supported by Swisslos St.Gallen and Sur-la-Croix Foundation, Basel)



Frontpage of the testsite

Eurolactis is reviving the Tradition of Donkey's Milk

Donkey's milk is an age-old product whose most precious characteristic is the fact that it is the closest to human breast milk in terms of protein composition and lipid fraction of all available milks. The Italian EUROLACTIS GROUP is a vertically integrated supply chain that produces, transforms into freeze-dried powder, and markets Donkey's milk on a large scale since 2007. The company is developing a social, ecological and sustainable program devoted entirely to the use of Donkey's milk in pediatrics, food & beverage (Onalat[®]), and premium cosmetic (Câlinesse[®]), mainly distributed in pharmacy or health and wellness sales channels.

EUROLACTIS.COM

With almost 1'000 animals, the company represents the most extended milk production in Europe. As one of the most experienced and important manufacturers worldwide with a production of almost 52'000 L - a donkey produces about 1.5L per day during 7 months after the foal's birth. Donkeys range freely in verdant hills and are exclusively fed with organic products made up of alfalfa, barley and oat fodder.



Milking with a specially designed system ensures very high hygiene conditions. The animals are rigorously subject to prescribed health checks to determine if they are suitable to produce milk. Powder is the result of years of research and development. The production quality chart planned by Eurolactis fully respects the European Commission regulation No. 1441/2007, standardizes microbiological criteria for foodstuffs and infant powder. Moreover, with the merit of its uniqueness, the supply chain avoids any third contamination by other types of milks during the processing. In fact, the presence of another type of milk containing allergen components could deteriorate the natural value of this beverage (Allergies to Goat and Cow's milk proteins are represented in about 5% of the western population).

Following the industrial revolution, Donkeys have been replaced by machines on farms and therefore greatly decreased in numbers. Donkey's milk is part of the history of the Mediterranean region. We all know the story, full of legendary tones, about how important women from the Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquity had understood the inestimable virtues of this milk and had used it as an elixir of life and beauty. Donkey's milk evokes sweetness, delicacy and lightness, which is why the company tries to keep these qualities present in the nature of all products.

Eurolactis team has mainly focused on the treatments for allergic reactions in babies caused mainly by cow's milk proteins. It has examined in detail the value and beneficial effects of Donkey's milk in many aspects. There are several formulated milks available in the market whose effectiveness has been clearly demonstrated. These milks are generally made out of bovine or vegetal components and have been technologically and chemically modified in such a way that they have lost their true biological value. During the last decade, the medical world has paid close attention



to the use of Donkey's milk in feeding babies. Indeed, the intrinsic physical and chemical values of Donkey's milk are precious: as mentioned previously, it is very similar to Human Breast Milk, it is rich in Lysozim and Omega 3, and has a large amount of vitamins and minerals.

The company is now engaged in intense collaboration with Donkey breeders, scientific researchers and many other professionals in Switzerland, France and Italy. Eurolactis' mission consists of constantly promoting the innovative agricultural centers that operate with complete respect for the animals. To preserve the exceptional nature of Donkey's milk it is fundamental to work in a humane environment where key values are preserved. Eurolactis is also very rigorous in the sustainability of the development and in the organic growth of the milk production. Eurolactis seeks to allow the agricultural and commercial development of Donkey's milk on a bigger scale while respecting Nature, and has developed a program of European dimension involving the biggest experts in this field.

5th European Seminar on AgroBiodiversity: “Preservation or Adaptation? – Conservation in the face of a changing environment”

The next SAVE annual meeting and Seminar on AgroBiodiversity will take place **23-25 Sept. 2011** at the occasion of the “Regional Fair of Balkan Agro-Biodiversity” (Rare Breeds Exhibition) in **Dimitrovgrad, Serbia** (at the border to Bulgaria).

Included will be a livestock and rural development study tour to the Stara-Planina Nature Park, the visit of the Fair and several other points of interest in the region. Beside the Seminar SAVE Foundation and the European SAVE Network will hold its Annual Meeting, as well as DAGENE, the regional partner in the Danube area.



Provisional Agenda:

Thursday, 22 September:

- Arrival and registration
- Open project discussions

Friday, 23 September:

- 5th Europ. Seminar on AgroBiodiversity “Preservation or Adaptation?”
- Visit of the Regional Fair of Balkan AgroBiodiversity
- Social dinner with local products
- Determination of the Arca-Deli Awards

Saturday, 24 September

- Study Tour to Stara-Planina Nature Park
- Evening (parallel SAVE and DAGENE sessions):
 - Combined session of the Project Commission and the Council of Cooperation Partners
 - DAGENE Board Meeting (et altera)

Sunday, 25 September

- Visit of Interactive Farm Dimitrovgrad
- (parallel) SAVE Board of Directors Meeting
- Farewell



The Seminar will be organized by SAVE Foundation and the Serbian partners: Serbian Association of Old Breeds Breeders, Natura Balkanika Nature Society, Municipality of Dimitrovgrad, STADO ltd Breeding Organization.

COP 10 Convention on Biological Diversity: the Nagoya Protocol

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) was held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, from 18 to 29 October 2010. Parties adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization. The historic agreement creates a framework that balances access to genetic resources on the basis of prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms with the fair and equitable sharing of benefits while taking into account the important role of

traditional knowledge. The Protocol also proposes the creation of a global multilateral mechanism that will operate in trans-boundary areas or situations where prior informed consent cannot be obtained.



The Nagoya Protocol is expected to enter into force by 2012, with support from the Global Environment Facility of 1mUS\$ to support early entry into force. The protocol will be opened for signatures in 2011. This Protocol arises from a long and complex series of negotiations and provides a framework for further development. It leaves room for specialised ABS instruments to be developed for specific sectors and also recognises the already existing Plant Treaty.

The Protocol reaffirms the sovereign rights of States over their natural resources and recognises that public awareness of the economic value of eco-systems and biodiversity is an important incentive towards conservation. It also recognises the need to share any benefits with the custodians of biodiversity in order to promote conservation, sustainable use as well Millennium Development Goals. The Protocol recognises the importance of providing a clear legal structure for with respect to access and benefit sharing. This will also aid negotiation of terms of use. The need for an innovative solution to regulate use of genetic resources that occur trans-boundary is recognised.

Relevant to the work of SAVE and the Network members, the Protocol recognises “the special nature of agricultural biodiversity, its distinctive features and problems needing distinctive solutions”. This, coupled with the recognition of the importance of indigenous and local communities and traditional knowledge in conservation activities, means that the interrelationship between genetic resources and traditional knowledge, culture, eco-systems and livelihood is clear. The Protocol suggests that the creation of ‘community protocols’ should be supported by the parties to the convention. Community Protocols are the outcome of a facilitated process in which a community reflects about and puts on record its role in the management of biological diversity, not only its livestock breeds, but also its contribution to general eco-system management. That these points are recognised by the international community should be of great assistance to in-situ/on-farm agrobiodiversity conservation in the future.

The Reform of the CAP towards 2020



SAVE Foundation took part in the European Commission consultation on the impact of CAP reforms 'towards 2020'. In this consultation three policy scenarios were introduced: adjustment scenario which proposed gradual changes to the CAP policy; integration scenario which proposed a thoroughly revised framework; re-focus scenario which proposed support to foster sustainable growth. These scenarios were presented along with a 'no policy' and a 'status quo' option. The answers provided by SAVE to this consultation were based on the following argument: The three policy scenarios are consistent with the objectives of the reform. However, they appear to be geared towards large and medium scale farms rather than the small scale farms found in much of the EU12. These farms are extremely important as they mainly practice extensive, traditional (in some cases, therefore, high nature value) using the indigenous livestock and cultivated plants of Europe. These farms contribute a great deal to biodiversity conservation, habitat protection, restoration and landscape protection. Making it attractive to continue farming in such conditions can reduce the rural-urban migration and therefore discourage land abandonment. Greater support of activities to promote rural vitality will be of benefit to all. Therefore the small scale farms need more support. Often, holding sizes in EU12 are too small to receive 1st pillar CAP payments. However, these farms provide employment and products in rural areas. Without support for these farms, land abandonment will increase albeit in small parcels. It is essential that there is policy in place to protect these 'micro-farmers' and their activities. Supporting the fusion of small scale farmers into cooperatives for a better utilization of production facilities and materials is also necessary to enliven rural economies e.g support through low-administration grants should be given to pre-finance innovative ideas. Incomes in all areas should be secured in order to keep people working the land. However, income support should not be at the expense of innovation as it is this that will secure long-term economic stability in rural areas.

The autochthonous livestock and cultivated plants especially in Traditional Agro Ecosystems of Europe are ideal for high nature value, extensive farming. Support for the utilisation of these animals and plants should be within the environment-targeted payments in the first **and** the second pillar of the CAP. This support would go some way towards fulfilling the EU's commitments to international agreements on conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture. The scenario 'no policy' would mean a return to national governments ignoring the economic and developmental problems of rural areas. Only those states with enough money will be prepared to invest in rural infrastructure. This will mean that farmers are forced to increase competitiveness,



which will lead to environmental degradation, reduction in quality of product and of life, health and incomes. The CAP has moved many rural areas in Europe away from this scenario; it would be irresponsible to move backwards again. International agreements and aims (e.g. 2020, Nagoya, Kyoto etc.) cannot be fulfilled with a “no policy” scenario. Also other EU policies concerning nature protection, landscape protection and climate change cannot be realized.

Over administration, especially that expected from farmers should be avoided at all costs. Farmers are not administrators! Especially in the case of small-scale farming, administration is a massive problem due to low literacy rates. There is a great need for independent experts and consultants who can give advice and support in applications. Reality today shows that in many countries possible support for (small scale) farmers cannot be provided because of the high bureaucratic obstacles.

Indicators for success could include the rate of rural-urban migration, land abandonment, higher rural incomes, strength of local markets etc. Furthermore the state and indicators of the biological diversity (and also the Agro-Biodiversity) can show the progress of the measurements. The commitment of national governments to take their role seriously within these scenarios is essential. Lack of interest in farming from younger generations leads to aging rural populations, a revitalisation of rural areas is essential for making rural life attractive. Consumer desire for cheap, imported products rather than high quality local products is a real problem. Consumers need to be made more aware of the linkages between rural economies and biodiversity. It is only through sustainable use and regeneration of rural areas that biodiversity and agrobiodiversity can be protected.

Seminar on Semi-Subsistence Farming in the EU

The small farm debate has taken on special significance with the last two enlargements of 2004 and 2007, more than tripling the number of subsistence and semi-subsistence farmers to 11 million in the EU-27. As testimony to mounting interest in this area, some 140 people attended a recent seminar entitled ‘Semi-subsistence farming in the EU: current situation and future prospects’, in Sibiu, Romania, on 13-15 October, 2010.

The principal aim of the seminar was to assess the current situation and policies directed towards semi-subsistence farms across the EU. “These farmers face particular challenges, as a considerable amount of their production is for self-consumption and so they are often not integrated into agricultural and/or product markets,” said Sophia Davidova, Reader in European Agricultural Policy, University of Kent, who wrote the main background paper for the event. The seminar focused on the on-going debate about the role of small and semi-subsistence farms as providers of food to poor households, suppliers of environmental services, contributors to the diversification of the rural economy and guardians of cultural traditions in rural areas.



Speaking at the seminar, Mr. Dacian Ciolos, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, praised the value of these farms and stressed that the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013 will support both the diversity and the performance of European agriculture. Referring to the second Pillar of the CAP, he noted that rural development programmes will give more importance to the transfer of know-how, training programmes and the mobilisation of local initiatives. Mr Ciolos also said he envisaged the creation of packages of measures that respond to the specific needs of small farmers or farmers in mountain areas. "I am convinced that as long as small farms are in a position to market their production and contribute to maintaining landscapes and the vitality of rural areas, they must be supported," he said. See: <http://tinyurl.com/5vml3h9>
Video-Clip (4 min): http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en-rd-library/media-gallery/en/video_002.cfm

Newsflash

United Nations Declare UN-Decade for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020.



The UN Decade aims to make a contribution to achieving the revised and updated global biodiversity targets agreed at the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the Convention of Biological Diversity. The biodiversity targets and a new strategy take into consideration the ongoing biodiversity loss on a global scale. The Decade builds on the 2010 International

Year of Biodiversity and is intended to support the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity that was adopted by Decision X/2 of the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10) in October in Nagoya. The Decade coincides with and supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting held in Nagoya, Japan. PAR (Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research):

<http://agrobiodiversityplatform.org/par/2011/02/16/united-nations-declare-un-decade-for-biodiversity-2011-%E2%80%93-2020/> More information: <http://www.cbd.int>

"European Wool Handling", a Meeting on 6-8 April 2011 in Biella/Italy:



The new EU regulation 1069/2009 "laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption" came into effect on 1st March 2011. The greasy wool is classified as an animal by-product. The consequences of this new regulation will be discussed by the participants: veterinary health authorities, sheep breeders associations and cooperatives, sheep shearers, wool merchants, wool transport, import-export companies, wool processing enterprises, pedagogical farms,....

See: ftp://DADnet:Mobile45@ext-ftp.fao.org/ag/reserved/dad-net/Invitation_Biella.pdf

20 Years “Fête de l’estive” at Allanche (FR)

On May 28, at Allanche in the French Auvergne the big annual alpine transhumance takes place. Because of the 20th anniversary of this event, 14 different mountain breeds will take place at the biggest transhumance in France with a parade through Allanche. From Maillargues the “transhumance du Cantal” leads to the Volcano plateau of Cézallier 1000 to 1300m above sea level. There about 100'000 cattle will spend the summer on a 80 ha area. At this occasion at Allanche there will take place a big farmers' market with local products and events: www.ilaca.info/2010/06/04/fete-de-lestive-a-allanche-2011/

Sowing the Future - Harvesting Diversity



International Day of Action “For Seed Sovereignty – against the new EU legislation on seeds and plant propagating material” On 17th April, the world-wide day of protest for farmer's rights and for food security from Via Campesina, there will be actions taking place all over the world (www.viacampesina.org). The Seed Campaign for seed sovereignty, along with many people from throughout Europe, will take their protest to Brussels to campaign against the strengthening of the EU legislation on seeds and plant propagating material. The

protest will take place on the 17th and 18th April in Brussels. More information can be found here: <http://www.seed-sovereignty.org/>

Consultation on Future EU co-financing of Natura 2000

SAVE Foundation took part in the European Commission consultation on the future EU co-financing of Natura 2000, which closed on 17.02.2011. Natura 2000 is the largest network of protected areas in the world. Although it includes many nature reserves it is based on a much wider concept of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The next funding period will be critical to making the network fully operational, this will not happen without adequate financial investments in Natura 2000. The current approach is to integrate the funding needs of Natura 2000 into different EU financial instruments. This has met with limited success and the purpose of the consultation is to assess whether the integrated approach has been adequate for the effective implementation of the network



NATURE Congress 2011 Basel

Thanks to the participation of high profile speakers, experts and decision-makers innovative approaches on nature and consumption could be done on February 11, 2011 and specified. Carriers, with more than 650 decision-makers and professionals, which are committed to sustainable use of nature the sixth NATURE Congress was a sign of a sustainable consumption. SAVE Foundation was represented at this conference with a workshop on biodiversity and the diversity of our livestock and crops. The results of the congress are documented in the Basle Manifesto of NATURE Advisory Board for Sustainable Consumption. See: <http://www.natur.ch/kongress> (de and fr).

Important dates (extract)

4-6 April: Conference "Current problems of preservation of bioresources, selection and reproduction of animals", Kyiv, Ukraine. krozgen@ukr.net, Web: <http://udau.edu.ua>

5-7 April: Internat. Conference "To Serve and Conserve - genebanks exploring ways to improve service to PGR users and effectiveness of PGR conservation", at Wageningen/ Netherlands. Web: <http://www.epgrc2011.nl>

6-8 April: European Meeting "European Wool Handling" at Biella, Italy.
Web: ftp://ext-ftp.fao.org/ag/reserved/dad-net/Invitation_Biella.pdf

8-10 April: Annual Meeting of the European Federation of City Farms; Zoetermeer, the Netherlands. Web: <http://www.cityfarms.org>

15-17 April: Agrotavel 2011, 3rd Internat. Rural Tourism and Agritourism Fair. At Kielce, Poland. Web: http://agro.travel/en/fair/agrotavel_fair_2011/

15-19 April: CBD Regional Workshop for Europe on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies & Action Plans. Isle of Vilm, Germany. www.bfn.de/0604_veranst_vilm.html

17-18 April: "Free seeds for all!", International Days of Action. Conference, International Seed Swap and multilingual exhibition on seeds. Brussels, Belgium. Contact: info@seed-sovereignty.org; Web: www.seed-sovereignty.org

27-29 April: Biennale of sustainable mountain development; Chambéry, France.
<http://www.alpipro.com/salon-montagne.html>

6-7 May: Internat. Workshop on Conservation of autochthonous Buffalo breeds in Southeast Europe. Brasov, Romania. Contact: office@save-foundation.net



13-16 May: 18th BioCultura Fair for ecological products and responsible consumption. Barcelona, Spain. Web: <http://www.biocultura.org>

16-18 May: IDF International Symposium on Sheep, Goat and other non-Cow Milk, Athens, Greece. Contact: ndcg@aua.gr, Web: <http://idfsheepgoatmilk2011.aua.gr>

28 May: 20th "Fête de l'estive": biggest transhumance in France with 14 mountain cattle breeds. Allanche (Auvergne), France. Web: <http://www.ilaca.info/2010/06/04/fete-de-lestive-a-allanche-2011>

20-22 June: OECD Workshop on Evaluating Agri-Environmental Policies, Braunschweig, Germany. Contact: dimitris.diakosavvas@oecd.org

24-26 June: International Pomology Meeting on Sweet Cherry. Bistrita, Romania. Contact: bilegan.mihai@bilcop.ro

15-17 July: ICCPC-Week Discover healthy Polish peasant foods and farming. Potocek, Poland. Contact: biuro@icppc.pl, Web: <http://icppc.pl/eko-cel/eng/index.php?id=creative>

11-14 Aug: IV. Hungarikum Festival at Szeged, Hungary. palmareklam@palmareklam.hu
Web: <http://www.hungarikum-fesztival.hu>

28 August: 15th Rare Breeds Expo in the "Living Heritage Park" in the Provincial Domain Puyenbroeck in Wachtebeke, Belgium. All Belgian rare breeds will be present. Contact: staf.vandenbergh@skynet.be, Web: <http://www.sle.be>

29 August - 1 September: 62nd EAAP Annual Meeting, Stavanger, Norway. Contact: eaap2011@umb.no, Web: <http://www.eaap2011.com/>

6-9 September: Regional Forum of the IUCN Pan-European Region. Bonn, Germany. Contact: susanna.soderstrom@iucn.org.

8-11 September: 23rd International Exhibition of Natural Products, Bologna, Italy. Contact: sana@bolognafiere.it, Web: <http://www.sana.it>

16-18 September: International Conference "Organic Agriculture and Agro-Eco Tourism in the Mediterranean". Zakynthos, Greece. Contact: abm.conference.2011@gmail.com

22-25 September: 5th European seminar on Agrobiodiversity: "Preservation or Adaptation? – Conservation in the face of a changing environment". Annual Meeting of SAVE Foundation and the European SAVE Network in Stara-Planina Nature Park, Dimitrovgrad, Serbia. Contact: office@save-foundation.net



23 September: Regional Fair of Balkan Agrobiodiversity (Rare Breeds Exhibition). Dimitrovgrad, Serbia. Contact: balkanika@ptt.rs

24-25 Sept.: Allitalian Organic Fair "Piante e Animali Perduti" (lost crops and livestock) at Guastalla, Italy. Web: <http://www.pianteeanimaliperduti.it>

29 September: European Agrobiodiversity Day (EAD); Topic 2011: "Agrobiodiversity and Climate Change". PR event for Agrobiodiversity with various activities of all kind of stakeholders in their respective countries. Web: www.save-foundation.net/EAD/EAD_en.htm, Contact: info@monitoring.eu.com,

1-2 Oktober: ProSpecieRara Livestock Fair "National Show of Rare Swiss Breeds" at Brunegg (AG), Switzerland. Contact: info@prospecierara.ch

4-8 October: RBI 8th Global Conference "Sustainable Conservation of Livestock Breeds Diversity for the Future: Impact of Globalisation of Animal Breeding and the Loss of Farm Animal Genetic Diversity - a Conflict? Tekirdag, Turkey. Contact: ozemel@hotmail.com

9-12 October: 5th Balkan Symposium on Vegetables and Potatoes. Tirana, Albania. Contact: aballiu@ubt.edu.al, Web: www.5bsvp.ubt.edu.al

22-30 October: EUROPOM 2011 "1'000 fruit varieties – international fruit exhibition, Zug, Switzerland. Contact: fructus@bluewin.ch, Web: <http://www.fructus.ch>

=> Further dates see: <http://www.save-foundation.net/english/actual.htm>