



Euromountains.net Project – theme III
INTERREG III C

Defence and Management of the Fragile Rural
Areas, Landscape and Natural Resources in
Mountains

Theme co-ordination

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THEME III

Theme III seeks to explore the relationship between economic activity and sustainability in mountain areas and the need to protect rural areas, landscapes and natural resources. In addition to exploring the relationship within each region the component aims to identify a range of best practice models that could be adapted for use across mountainous areas to maximise the potential that the environment has to support sustainable development.



Mountain areas face a number of challenges to cultural, economic and environmental development, not least depopulation and the decline of traditional mountain agriculture. Yet despite these issues, mountain areas have a number of advantages and strengths to help boost economies and drive sustainability. Theme III is aimed at exploring one of these – land management in areas of exceptional landscapes.



2. BRIEF SUMMARY OF LOCAL CASE STUDIES

Each partner undertook a local case study, researching the effectiveness of different policies and initiatives in protecting fragile mountain environments and maintaining the cultural landscape of mountain areas.

These covered a wide range of initiatives implemented by state, regional and local government, by local development agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs) and by the local rural community acting collectively to further the sustainable development of their area and the management and protection of the natural resources within their control.

In order to assist in understanding the successes and failures of each initiative, each case study discussed the policy context in which the activity operates, including any specific instruments for mountain areas and described the local and regional delivery mechanisms through which it was implemented and the policy put into effect. The results of each initiative were reviewed against their aims and objectives and factors for success and failure identified.

A strict typology of initiatives is difficult because of varying degrees of involvement of different stakeholders. However, in general terms, the initiatives may be grouped as follows:

- 1) Direct public sector intervention in a land management initiative: Four initiatives involved direct creation of a scheme or initiative which land managers could access to support particular management activities. The involvement of local stakeholders in the design and implementation of the initiative and its subsequent management varied across the case studies.
 - **Sogn og Fjordane (Norway):** The case study looked at the effectiveness of a scheme put in place to encourage the continuation of grazing in a landscape protected area. Funded by modulating the national agriculture budget, yet implemented at regional level, the scheme provides a payment per head of livestock as a tool for landscape management.
 - **Torino (Italy):** The case study highlighted the use of income from a water tax, which is returned to mountain communities in return for maintenance work on watercourses and the surrounding landscapes. The scheme combines national and regional laws and local implementation, with land managers invited to tender for work contracts drawn up locally. Unlike other interventions studied, funding for this initiative is available in perpetuity.
 - **Trentino (Italy):** The case study discusses the effectiveness of a partnership approach in supporting economically viable activity on the land and maintaining a particular environment and cultural landscape. Implementing a financial tool for regional development in a participative way, significant investment has been made in farms in the studied area, from both public and private funds.
 - **Val d'Aoste (Italy):** The case study explored how investment in improved facilities on mountain summer farms, encourages the practice of transhumance, with positive impacts on the environment and the economy through the production of a recognised type of cheese. Regional funding is provided at a high level and complemented by private investment.

- 2) Intervention by a partnership, voluntary or non-governmental organisation: In Highland (Scotland), support for particular land management activities was made available by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and community groups though, in both cases, partly funded by the public sector. The Alto Tâmega (Portugal) and Palencia (Spain) case studies demonstrated partnership initiatives between local communities and local government/development agencies to achieve particular protection and development goals.
 - **Highland (Scotland):** The case study focused on two alternative approaches to filling in the gaps left by national land management support. In one example, a national environmental charity developed a land management initiative; in the other, the local community developed initiatives to support environmentally beneficial land management practices. Both examples drew some support from the public sector.
 - **Alto Tâmega (Portugal):** The case study looked at an initiative put in place by the public/private development partnership for the region, to create a centre for land management innovation and learning on an abandoned farm in the region. The project has created a demonstration farm for land management skills in an attempt to prevent abandonment of land and to enhance the economic viability of farms in the region. The initiative has benefited from national and European funding.
 - **Palencia (Spain):** The case study looked at the partnership between the regional government and the local community tourist body for the protection

and sustainable development of a spectacular cave. The local need for economic development in order to support wider land management is balanced with the importance of protecting an important landscape and environment.

- 3) Resolution of environmental protection issues: The process of formal environmental protection and the alternative use of the planning process to integrate environmental and economic aims were scrutinised in three case studies.
- **Buskerud (Norway):** The case study looked at the process of dialogue between the private company running Norway's biggest ski race (which is supported by huge volunteer effort) and the authorities responsible for the environmental protection of the national park in which it takes place.
 - **Oppland (Norway):** The case study analysed the effectiveness of a regional management plan, agreed by the municipalities, aiming to protect wild reindeer habitat from development. The key issue was whether locally-based management within the planning regime is an adequate option for the sustainable use of mountain areas, or whether national regulations are necessary to preserve natural resources and ecosystems that are regional in character.
 - **Telemark (Norway):** The case study concerned the impact of environmental protection designation on the opportunities for the sustainable development of a large wild land area in communal ownership, and highlighted the need for dialogue between the protection administration and local stakeholders.

Each case study is summarised briefly below.

ALTO TÂMEGA: PORTUGAL

RURALIS - Freixeda's Farm



ADRAT – (*Associação de Desenvolvimento da Região do Alto Tâmega*), the public–private institutional partnership of Alto Tâmega's region, is implementing a project called RURALIS, on a farm, near Vidago. The project has two components: the creation of a centre to encourage and promote new agricultural activities and a centre focusing on the qualification and training of rural actors including agriculture producers, technicians, cooperative and associative managers. Alto Tâmega is a region situated in the North of Portugal, bordering Galicia, in Spain and agriculture has an important role in economic activity in the region. The type of agriculture practised here is traditional, with ancient techniques and a non-innovating culture.

Freixeda's Farm was an abandoned farm, owned by the Municipality of Chaves, but not used. Through a 25 year contract ADRAT is attempting to create the conditions to transform the way to look at and to work the land. For that, with the support of national and European funding the two different centres were created: the qualification centre and the experimental centre. In the qualification centre, known as the Promotion and Rural Dynamisation Centre, exhibitions for farmers, cooperative and associative managers and technicians about themes linked to rural activities are run along with training courses leading to qualifications. Experiments in the introduction of new methods, activities and crops are being carried out in the experimental centre known as Sustainable Centre for Applied Ecology. These are looking at ways of combining sustainable activity with the protection of the environment.

The financing of the activities at Freixeda's Farm is through national and European programmes and until now ADRAT had the support of INTERREG III, LEADER + and ON to implement the actions launched. So far, the amount of investment is 287.500.00€, match-funded with 108.541.67€.

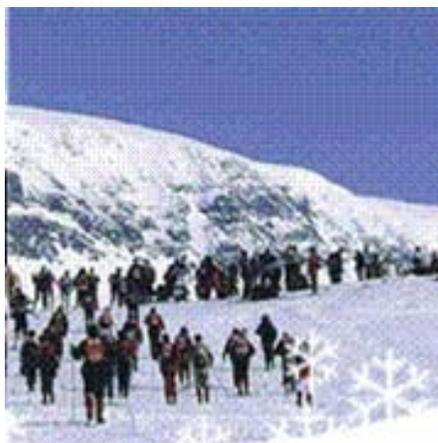
There are further projects to be developed, but ADRAT is waiting new opportunities to implement them, namely the approval of new national and European programmes to get an area that will have a demonstrative effect throughout the region.



BUSKERUD COUNTY: NORWAY

“Skarverennet”

“Skarverennet”, Norway’s largest ski race with up to 15 000 participants, has since 1974, been arranged by Geilo IL. The ski race runs in the high mountain terrain from Finse to Ustaoset, within Hol commune in Buskerud county.



In the last 5 years a process has been developed for the establishment of Hallingskarvet Nationalpark. 70% of the course for “Skarverennet” will be situated in the new national park.

“Skarverennet” creates a turnover in the local community of 50 million NOK. Of this 40% is generated from the event itself and the remainder from transport, over night stays, catering and retail. “Skarverennet” has, in all its operational years adjusted the event within the limitations that the high mountain terrain naturally sets, for example, by limiting the use of motorised traffic, actions that consider potential wild reindeer in the area and actions against general littering.

It has been a big challenge to work out a manageable framework condition within the administration rules of the new national park.

Early in the protection process, “Skarverennet” represented by the organiser Geilo IL with good support from local political and administrative forces, achieved acceptance for their demands for future existence within the new national park.

Crucial for this acceptance was both massive local pressure and the fact that the organiser during 30 years of “Skarverennet” has developed an environmentally friendly and future oriented event. The regular and professional dialogue with the protection administration and environmental protection administration has also had a positive influence on this work.

The recipe for success is regular and professional dialogue with the protection administration, long-term environmental profile and cooperation with all the players involved (organiser and local political/administrative players).

HIGHLAND : SCOTLAND

The effectiveness of Land Management Contracts as a policy tool for the protection of mountain landscapes; comparisons with other local approaches

A newly introduced Scotland-wide rural development measure – the Land Management Contract (LMC) - was assessed for its impact and effectiveness in supporting land management in two different mountainous areas in the Highlands. These areas are Skye and Lochalsh and North West Sutherland.



In both areas, land management, which is mostly carried out by crofters, is of environmental, landscape and cultural significance as well as providing a part-time income for a household.

The study found that only limited use was being made of the LMC scheme in spite of it being non-competitive. In many instances crofters were accessing the scheme only for socio-economic measures in animal health and quality assurance. The land management measures in the scheme were not felt to be particularly relevant to mountain or upland areas. Furthermore, common grazing land – which is the bulk of the land area in a crofting township – was excluded from the scheme for administrative reasons so payments for land management on very small land areas are often not worthwhile applying for.

In Skye and Lochalsh, land management on two different estates was contrasted. On the Sconser estate, crofters have access, like all other land managers in Scotland, to the Scottish LMC scheme, of which they are making limited use and a Natura 2000 incentive scheme for maintaining grazing. On the Balmacara estate the landlord – an NGO - with support from the public sector has developed a local management scheme tailored specifically at the beneficial land management practices they wish to see continued on the estate, which relate particularly to maintenance of traditional cropping and the retention of cattle. Uptake is high, suggesting that due to local design, the rates are attractive and the scheme fits with what is possible and appropriate on the land.

In North West Sutherland, the community have decided to address concerns about the management of land and the rural economy through voluntary initiatives, carried out through collectives. Much of the land in the area has been taken into community ownership with private and public funding assistance and is managed by collective decision-making. Voluntary effort to sustain cattle numbers, enhance woodland, encourage local food production, provide economic development and record and market the cultural heritage of the area is backed up by public sector funds and assistance from environmental NGOs. Local determination to see their area flourish, their land looked after and population retained is the basis for the immense and dedicated effort put in by volunteers in the area.



OPPLAND : NORWAY

Regional plan for Rondane massif: Protection of wild reindeer and/or development of second homes?

Rondane is a mountain plateau with several peaks higher than 2000 metres. 14 municipalities have territory within the planning area. Rondane is particularly important as the home of one of Norway's last herds of wild reindeer.



At the same time, Rondane is a very popular recreation area, and there is a strong pressure on tourism development, especially second homes. Development of second homes is important for the local economy, but causes increased traffic into the grazing areas of the wild reindeer. To balance protection of the wild reindeer habitat and continuing tourism development, a regional plan for the area was set up in 1991 (revised in 2000), allowing for continued local management.

The local management has been a partial success. The municipalities have been allowed to continue development of second homes and other tourism activities, but the plan has also restricted the development in different ways in order to reduce the negative impacts on the wild reindeer. However, recent recommendations from wild reindeer researchers imply that “the limit of acceptable change” for the reindeer habitat are or soon may be reached. This poses a great challenge for future enforcement of the regional plan, as we seem to approach a more definite limit of development. It is an open question whether the municipalities are able to agree on such a limit, and how the remaining development quota should be distributed. How this challenge is solved, will however be a very important test on whether locally based management within the Planning and Building Act-regime can be an adequate option for sustainable use of mountain areas, or whether national regulations are necessary for preserving natural resources and ecosystems that are regional in character.



PALENCIA: SPAIN

Management of alternatives in the development of sustainable tourism in the mountainous area of Palencia; ‘Cueva de los Franceses’ and its surroundings



In *Páramo de la Lora*, between *Palencia*, *Burgos* and *Cantabria* (NUTS 3), with a relief characterised by the big hung synclines, a spectacular biological karstic landscape has been developed. The natural space of *Covalagua* (2500 hectares) is situated within this moor and belongs in its totality to *Pomar de Valdivia* (NUTS 5).

The case study chosen takes into account the sustainable environmental management developed by the *Diputación of Palencia* in this area, to focus on a concrete example such as *Cueva de los franceses*, situated within the natural space of *Covalagua*, just in the middle of *Páramo de la Lora*.

The previous management to the current one carried out by *Diputación de Palencia* started in 1970 as part of a private initiative. The management started from a neighbourhood tourist board (inhabitants of the community NUTS 5), that with all the possible efforts and without the support of other neighbourhoods, nor the municipality to which they belong, decided to make the area known and specially the cave.

The management of the area has been carried out by different institutions and private agents (such as residents, *Gobierno Civil*, *Diputación Provincial*, regional Administration, neighbourhood board, etc) with the main aim of developing the tourism in the area. In 1992 the *Plan de Ordenación de recursos naturales del espacio natural de Covalagua* started by the Regional Administration NUTS 2, without having being passed a formal protection figure for this area at the moment.

The *Diputación de Palencia* (NUTS 3) decided in 2002 to begin a sustainable management project for the cave *Cueva de los franceses*, formed by different proceedings regarding the cave conservation and its surroundings as a main objective, and being at the same time a tourist resource.

SOGN OG FJORDANE : NORWAY

Grazing scheme for domestic animals in protected areas

In 2005 a new regional economic support for farmers was introduced in the county of Sogn og Fjordane, Norway: Additional economic support to farmers who keep grazing animals in protected areas. Four protected areas were selected for such extra support. The case study deals with one of them: The grazing scheme in Nærøyfjord Landscape Protected Area.

The main objective of the scheme is to stimulate grazing with animals in order to maintain the cultural landscape in the protected area. A subsidiary objective is to study the impact of the scheme for use and sustainable management of a protected area.



One significant aspect of the Nærøyfjord area, and which was an important factor for its designation as a protected area, is the near complete absence of modern technical encroachments, as well as the variety in the cultural landscape along the shoreline. The cultural landscape is mainly a result of agricultural activity with animal husbandry and grazing animals as a traditional production.

Today traditional small scale farming in the area is at risk. A downward trend in number of active farmers leads to more and more land being marginalised or left completely fallow. Gradual succession where shrubs and trees are growing into formerly cultivated land can be observed as a result. This development also has a negative effect on the open cultural landscape in the protected area.

Last year about 4350 animals, mainly sheep and goats, were let out to graze in the actual study area. The main objective of the scheme will be achieved if the farmers in the area keep up their present number of grazing animals in the years to come.

An important factor for success of the grazing scheme is the level of the extra economic support. The farmers may find the present yearly rate of 7-8 Euros per animal too low and not fully rewarding. Another critical factor for maintaining the open cultural landscape is the grazing pressure. The present number of grazing animals might not be enough to keep the vegetation at bay and give the desired effect.

TELEMARK: NORWAY

Mårfjell sameige*

Mårfjell sameige have at their disposal, approximately 360 km² of mountainous area in Tinn and Vinje kommuner within Telemark county. The 22 land owners live mainly in Tinn kommune. The traditional utilisation of the area's resources are hunting, fishing and grazing.

With the establishment of Hardangervidda National Park in 1985, 70% of the area became part of the national park. After the establishment of the national park, most of the area has been centrally administered by the state (some at county level). This entailed that everything to do with building and maintenance of cabins in the mountain and motorised traffic in outlying fields, has been administratively moved away from the local level.



Mårfjell sameige has, in a future oriented way, managed to develop hunting and fishing in a commercial manner. Financially, this utilisation of the resources enables valuable contributions to the total economy for the co-owners of the sameige. This is definitely a factor in securing the residency in the area. But the sameige also claims that the same future oriented and sustainable way can further utilise these resources and secure a larger financial profit.

A fundamental understanding of business development, based on the usage of natural production in the national park is lacking within the state's central administration of the national park. Either this understanding needs to be developed, or financial compensation must be given for those who have rights in the national park.

(* Sameige is a common ownership of land or things regulated by special laws.)

TURIN: ITALY

Ordinary land maintenance plans

The aim of “ordinary land maintenance plans” is planning ordinary maintenance works for a six-year period. Each plan concerns a secondary basin.

Ordinary maintenance works are small-scale works such as:

- selective cutting of trees or bushes along river banks;
- removal of rock material, plant material or rubbish from river crossings;
- maintenance of rural roads and paths.

Each work is described in terms of quality and quantity by means of a specific form which enables the public authority to assign works directly (without public tenders).

In the Province of Turin grants are paid every year and, unless regulations change, in the future they are going to be paid every year as well, thanks to the following regulations:

- a national law of 1994, stating that water is an important resource, to be safeguarded according to solidarity principles;
- a regional law of 1997, establishing that at least 3 per cent of the hydric rate must be granted to mountain areas for hydro-geological maintenance interventions;
- a local rule of 2003, establishing that the above mentioned 3 per cent must be granted to mountain areas to support the drawing up of “ordinary land maintenance plans” and the execution of works.

The innovative aspect of the project is not the execution of ordinary land maintenance works but their planning and their continuance in time. In the past they used to be performed occasionally, depending upon the available financial resources. Now a whole frame of needs, priorities and timescales is set, and continuous economic support is guaranteed.

The operational planning of ordinary works began in 2003. 82 out of the 124 plans forecasted in the Province of Turin have been drawn up already. Assignment and execution of works began in 2005. Works have been assigned directly (without public tenders) to farmers and agro-forestry cooperatives.



TRENTINO: ITALY

Biological agriculture, rural tourism and a participatory approach. The case of Gresta Valley

Italy is the fourth producer in the world of organic products, and leaders in the European market. Organic agriculture has gained importance in recent years in Italy, generally for conservation interests as well as commercial ones. The case presented here describes the role of agricultural land management, applying the biological and biodynamic approach, for the preservation of a traditional landscape.



The Gresta valley is renowned for the open-field cultivation of fresh vegetables (22 species from cabbage to carrot) in a unique location where the fields are cultivated between 700 and 1,300m. This was possible through the widespread application of organic agriculture (introduced by some young farmers in 1980 and largely adopted in 1986), with small size enterprises but working under a “brand” promoted by a Cooperative consortium.

In Gresta Valley, where there are 4 part-time farmers to every full-time one and agriculture is culturally perceived as an action of landscape maintenance, there is a need for alternative activities to provide a liveable income.

The maintenance of traditional landscape was as well enhanced with a large participatory approach which started a few years ago. This was promoted by an administrative and financial tool called “Patto Territoriale” (namely “Pact of territorial development”). In the case study area, despite it only being 1,300 Ha, more than €30 million was circulated in 7 years, with about 17 million directly financed by private stakeholders. Those were mainly in intervention in rural tourism (chosen as a main topic of the development project) and enhancement of the agricultural businesses and infrastructures.

One of the main achievements, apart the large private financial involvement and the capacity of work with different stakeholders, is the participation and commitment of young people and women.

The Territorial Pact helped to increase the awareness and involvement of local population in the management and development of its native land (even if the percentage of delegation approach is still high), turning a marginal area to a place of great attractiveness of the valley as well as a “living space”.



VALLÉE D'AOSTE : ITALY

Construction, reconstruction and enlargement of summer mountains farms

The studied project is the I.A.1.2 action of the I.A.1 measure of axe I of State Aids (Rural Development Plan). The project runs across the whole Region, it started in 2000 and it will finish in 2006. All the phases of the project are managed by the Regional Agriculture and Natural Resources Department.

The project finances interventions on structures and infrastructures including hygienic and sanitary adaptation and animals welfare actions.

The main aims of the project are:

- to improve mountain grazing management and to increase the local hay availability;
- to maintain summer mountain farms and “mayen” (structures used in a short period between wintering and use of the summer grazing);
- to improve the competitiveness and revenue of agricultural enterprises.

The project aims to protect high mountain pastures through an economic measure to reinstate or create new summer mountains farms to allow the use and maintenance of the high mountain pastures.

The management of high mountains territories is very important for both environmental and agricultural reasons. On one hand the land use guarantees habitat conservation for flora and fauna and reduces the hydro geological risks; while the high mountain hay sustains the Fontina (DOP cheese) which is the main agricultural product of the Region.

The Agriculture and Natural Resources Department interpreted the measure widely taking into account not only infrastructural aspects but also land management aspects. The investment in holdings makes management easier for farmers, encouraging them to continue their agricultural activities and thus guaranteeing the management of these high pastures which are difficult to work due to location and terrain.



Until now there were 6 calls and 180 interventions were financed with a regional contribution was of €37,618,000 and private contributions of €10,539,000. The total intervention area is 40,000 m²

3. BACKGROUND TO AREAS AND INITIATIVES

The studied areas are located in quite different parts of Europe. Locations studied vary from high mountain plateaux and massifs through to steep-sided fjords and mountains rising from sea-level. In between are areas of more rolling agricultural landscapes in the lower hills and foothills of mountain ranges. Climates vary from almost polar in Norway with long cold winters and summers with long daylight hours, to alpine climates with cold winters and longer warm summers. In Spain, Portugal and Scotland, Atlantic weather patterns signify more temperate climates with significant rainfall and in Scotland at least, frequent exposure to strong winds which leads to alpine vegetation being found at sea level.

Significant geological and botanical differences shape land use in each of the study areas and different cultural and historical factors have influenced patterns of land use and settlement.

In spite of these differences, common trends can be identified throughout the mountain areas studied. This section examines some of the common factors and some of the differences influencing the objectives of development of mountain areas and the protection and management of natural resources in the mountains.

➤ High environmental and landscape importance

Much of the studied area is under international, national or local forms of protection for geological, botanical or landscape importance. For example, the protected area in Sogn og Fjordane is described as

“representing the most extreme, dramatic and magnificent fjord landscape in the world and having an exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance”.

Significant proportions of the study areas in Buskerud, Telemark and Oppland are included in National Parks, while EU and national environmental designations are to be found in many of the study areas in Italy as well as in Highland. The importance of the natural resource is not always visible above ground - the cave in Palencia is designated as a ‘protected natural space’ and the importance of clean water resources provided by mountain areas is highlighted particularly in the case study from Torino.

➤ Declining economic returns from agriculture

Across all regions studied the effect on the natural resource of declining agricultural incomes and hence decline in agricultural activity was apparent. In some parts of Norway – Buskerud and Telemark - the primary sector accounted for only around 2% of employment, although unlike other study areas, the importance of hunting and fishing in addition to grazing in these areas was highlighted. In most areas the figure was higher than this, with the economic importance of the primary sector highest in Alto Tâmega, where around 20% of the population are engaged in agricultural and land management activity. It is noticeable from the studies that in those areas where agriculture still has greater economic importance in terms of employment, initiatives are more directly related to retention and improvement of this sector. In almost all regions, agriculture is a part-time activity providing a part-time income.

In Trentino and in Highland in particular, agricultural management of the land was described as being as much about maintenance of the cultural landscape and place as about economic returns. The need for other economic activity and employment is common to most studied areas. In all of the study areas, the increasing economic importance of tourism and recreation was highlighted and will be discussed further below.

➤ Change in land use leading to landscape change

Many studies highlighted the effects of the downturn in traditional land-based activity and in particular the effects of abandonment due to loss of grazing in higher areas, as farmers concentrate on the land nearer settlements and in valley bottoms that is easier to manage. In some cases the alternatives to traditional use - development of hydropower and quarrying - are also having negative impacts on the natural resources. Changes in land use are giving rise to landscape change, with succession to woodland taking place below the treeline in Norwegian study areas, loss of alpine pastures and an increasing threat from natural disasters such as forest fire being highlighted in Alto Tâmega. In Highland and in Telemark, the loss of grazing is not yet being seen to have dramatic effect as grazing by red deer or reindeer continues to occur. In Trentino grazing activity has declined, leading to succession to woodland in some formerly grazed areas but the production of vegetables retains open cultivated land.

Patterns of transhumance and seasonal use of land differ across the different regions. The practice of summer grazing, all but disappeared in Scotland and Norway, remains an important objective of land management initiatives in the alpine region.

The maintenance of traditional management is a key feature of many of the initiatives studied, in all cases for landscape, environmental, economic and cultural reasons. This is particularly true of the initiative described in the Vallée d'Aoste case study where addressing the loss of high pasture management is a priority and similarly in the Highland study where traditional crofting management maintains a particular landscape. In the Sogn og Fjordane study, the retention of active agricultural management is linked directly to the protection of the landscape in a Landscape Protected Area.

➤ Population – change in demographics

Many of the areas studied are experiencing loss of population on account of the declining fortunes of traditional rural sectors and the lack of other employment opportunities. In Alto Tâmega, for example the region has experienced depopulation by 50% in the last fifty years, although the link to the land inherent in semi-subsistence agriculture might help explain the still comparatively high population density. In many of the areas studied in Norway – for example in Oppland and Buskerud - population has been decreasing in the outlying areas while remaining nearly steady or only showing a slightly negative trend nearer to population centres. In Alpine regions, where there is generally a higher degree of industrial development and hence other employment opportunities, the population is increasing through in-migration to the area and increasing urbanisation. In the Vallée d'Aoste, although the population is increasing overall, the indigenous population is aging and experiencing a decline. In Highland, trends in population tend to show a slight increase in more accessible areas, although not generally among the land managing population. This slight increase appears to be driven mostly by those seeking retirement or semi-retirement in the area. In Palencia, in spite of depopulation happening in some of the more mountainous zones, the actual area

studied showed a recent population increase and regeneration of the village, which while not being directly attributed to the initiative is certainly worth noting.

The desire to retain population is a key factor in many of the initiatives studied. In Alto Tâmega for example, the principle purpose of the initiative undertaken by ADRAT is the creation of employment and the retention of population. However, they recognise that the land-based primary sector is very significant and that people lost to the land, rather than becoming absorbed in some other activity, are lost to the region. Hence the initiative aims to retain the link to the land.

« It is important to maintain the ancestral liaison to the land in activities that may induce the creation of new employment ».

In Palencia, also, one of the general objectives of the project relates to trying to halt desertion of the land through the creation of alternative opportunities.

In Telemark too, a principle objective of the *sameige* is to retain population through the management and use of natural resources to generate economic returns as well as looking after the environment in the longer term and promoting the well-being of shareholders.

In general, northern study areas are significantly less densely-populated than iberian or alpine study areas. This creates quite different tensions – in some of the Norwegian study areas, the tensions seem to relate to people being in the area at all and the impacts this has on the natural environment. Land management objectives here are different from in more populous regions.

➤ Demand for second home and pressures from recreational use

In each area studied there is demand for second and holiday homes as well as for increasing use of the areas for recreation. The increasing accessibility of mountain areas from urban centres is partly the cause of increasing development of second homes. For example, in Alto Tâmega new road infrastructure means that a journey that used to take up to 5 hours can now be accomplished in an hour. Similar infrastructure development in Highland is a reason for increasing numbers of second homes in the area.

This has both positive and negative impacts on the environment and the rural economy.

Increasing demand can generate pressures and impose costs on the rural population from urban areas and create problems with infrastructure such as water supplies. The Trentino case study highlighted that where the area is close to limits of development the desire for second homes can create problems for young people who cannot then find or build a home. In both Spain and Portugal increasing recreational use creates problems with increasing use of cars as well as impacts on the environment.

The strain placed on the environment in particular through increasing use of wild areas and the development of road infrastructure largely as a result of more second homes being built in the area, was highlighted in Buskerud and Oppland. The possibility of too significant an expansion in tourism and recreation threatening the very thing that tourists come to experience was raised as a concern.

While on the one hand, there are potentially negative environmental impacts of increasing second home and recreational use and costs of this to be borne by mountain communities, it is also evident that there are benefits to both urban and rural communities. Having a home in the mountains can promote well-being and enhance the quality of life of urban dwellers, while the economic benefits of second home ownership and recreational use can lead to enhanced services and opportunities for the rural community. The Palencia study highlighted the effect that stimulation of the local economy through tourist activity can have on sustaining and enhancing land management in areas where loss of the rural population is a possibility.

Both the Oppland and Buskerud studies highlighted the importance of second homes to the economy of the area, for example in Oppland each second home brings around 4200€ per annum to the local economy and between 3 and 5% of total employment is associated with holiday homes.

➤ Importance of land management for maintaining the cultural landscape

In all of the study areas tourism is a major mountain sector, dependent to a greater or lesser extent on the landscape and environment on offer. The Oppland, Highland and Palencia studies all highlighted the increasing economic importance of tourism, given the decreasing returns from traditional rural sectors.

The importance of maintaining a living cultural landscape was highlighted particularly in the studies from Sogn og Fjordane and Trentino, where a direct link is made between agriculture and tourism in terms of integrated rural development. The Landscape Protection Area in Sogn og Fjordane, while not explicitly linked with tourism recognises as an important resource the “beautiful and up to now well maintained cultural landscape with meadows, open pasture areas and mountain summer farms”.

Similarly, in Alto Tâmega, ADRAT recognises the need to “improve Alto Tâmega’s environment...preserving one resource which attracts many visitors – the landscape.”



4. EMERGING THEMES

From the case studies presented a number of main strands of discussion have become apparent. This section discusses these main highly-interlinked themes.

➤ Tensions – protection versus development

While the need to protect the mountain areas and their natural resources are felt throughout the mountain areas by those living there and having a link with the land, a number of the studies highlighted sources of tension between protection legislation and the opportunities for economic development. The Oppland, Palencia and Telemark studies highlighted this theme in particular.

The protection of the environment, as well as being of local interest has much wider implications and national and even international interests and obligations come into play. Economic development and the creation of opportunities for enhancing the quality of life of people living in mountain areas are generally, however, more of local and regional interest.

For example, in Oppland, protection of reindeer habitat is an international obligation, but development of second homes is a benefit to the local economy. This gives rise to conflicting desires at local level and between municipalities - who share responsibility for the county plan – to ensure the protection of the natural resource but also to allow development beneficial to the economy of the area, in areas outwith the formally protected area of the National Park.

“From the individual municipality’s point of view it is, for tax and employment reasons, rational to keep the economic activity within their municipality, and as high as possible. This implies for example to build as many second homes as possible. Despite the fact that municipalities have societal goals, such as wild life conservation, it is tempting to favour own economic activity and ignore added regional consequences for reindeer habitats”

It was recognised in all studies that there is a balance to be found between ensuring viable rural communities and rural businesses and protecting the natural resource. In fact, in many cases - Trentino, Vallée d’Aoste, Alto Tâmega and Palencia for example – it was recognised that land management could best be achieved by supporting economically sustainable enterprises. In Palencia, where the Diputación de Palencia is attempting to develop management which will conserve the natural resource and at the same time allow economic development of the area through tourism, an upsurge in rural fortunes has sustained and enhanced local land management, as a by-product of the cave-generated economic activity.

Likewise in Buskerud, environmental protection and commerce have been successfully integrated through a process of discussion, mitigation of impacts and the building of trust and good relationships between the protection administration and the organisers of the race. The overwhelming economic importance of this race and the limited number of days on which use is made of the protected area, must however be strongly influential factors in arriving at this sensible compromise.

➤ Securing positive externalities – investment and land management support
There is recognition in a number of studies that the most effective way to deliver public goods is through supporting and retaining those already there and carrying out the management.

« It is difficult to imagine a public service for the maintenance of these areas which are so difficult to reach and difficult to work. It is in this context that the {Agriculture and Natural Resources Department} wishes to improve the working conditions and quality of life during the months spent working in the high mountains in order that the farmers choose not to abandon the mountains » (Vallée d'Aoste)

This recognition is the basis of attempts to support existing activities and land actors; attempts which to be successful must recognise that this is a living cultural landscape, not a museum and that people need to adapt and make changes to make a living.

Several of the studies focused on the concept of supporting economic development to have land management effects. The Vallée d'Aoste example shows how capital investment can be used to maintain a style of land management and contribute to quality production. The contracting of public works to mountain communities in Torino aims to improve the employment and multifunctionality of farmers in addition to managing water resources. This diverts money back upstream in recognition of the positive externalities delivered by the mountain area. In Trentino, it is recognised that investment in agricultural and tourism infrastructure will help ensure the increased efficiency and viability of enterprises and hence the continued maintenance of the cultural landscape.

The approach taken by ADRAT in Alto Tâmega recognises that in addition to looking for innovative crops and methods to enhance the returns of land management, skills and knowledge are also important in securing ongoing management. This is particularly the case on account of a history of abandonment in the area which leaves many land actors requiring new management skills.

In some cases, where the desired effect is the continuation of existing practices, support is being made available on the basis of specific land management continuing. This is particularly the case in Highland – Skye and Lochalsh and in Sogn og Fjordane, although to an extent in Torino, Palencia and the Vallée d'Aoste as well, although in the last of these, as discussed, the support is more in the form of capital assistance than directed at land management actions.

There is debate over how this type of intervention should be funded. In Highland some measures are funded through the Land Management Contract (part of the Rural Development Programme). The shortfall in specific management support relevant to the interests of the mountain area is being met by others, in this case NGOs and environmental organisations and to a certain extent by the governments' environment body. In Sogn og Fjordane, as already discussed, this is coming from funds modulated directly from agricultural support.

Support can sometimes be harder to justify when it is to maintain what is already there, rather than promote change, e.g both in Highland and in Sogn og Fjordane the scheme will be a success if it retains the type of land management activity currently practised i.e. livestock numbers remain constant and / or cropping is continued and land use maintains the cultural landscape. This does not however, detract from the importance of these measures in supporting particular practices.

➤ Designation or sustainable development - the best approach ?

A number of studies discussed the pros and cons associated with the formal protection of land for environmental and landscape purposes.

In Palencia, for instance, it was felt that the slow progress in categorising the type of protection for the cave has impeded greater legal protection for the area and precluded funding being available from the EU to assist in the management and protection of the site. This funding gap has been filled instead by the regional administration.

The effect of designation in limiting the choices and options of land managers was highlighted in several studies and the effect this can have on the economic viability of land management and mountain communities. In Telemark, the restrictions imposed by the National Park, particularly in relation to transport infrastructure, limit the use that can be made of the resource.

« The saviour for many people {in the decline of traditional agriculture} comes in utilising the land for increased cabin construction {as an alternative way of exploiting resources}. However this development is problematic for those with their resources in and around the border zones of the national parks. »

A number of the studies suggest that when no management incentive scheme or compensation for restriction is made available, bad feeling can be generated in the local community (this was especially mentioned in the Telemark study).

“A fundamental understanding of business development, based on the utilisation of natural production in the national park, is lacking in the State’s administration for the national park. Either this understanding must be developed, or it must be given that financial compensation for those with rights in the national park should be administered.”

There is an issue about whether such support should be made available and if so from which source it should come. For example, in the Sogn og Fjordane study, there was initially reluctance for the funding to be modulated from the Agriculture Agreement and the feeling was that it ought to come from the Ministry of the Environment, which has responsibility for the protection of the area.

On the other hand, the existence of a land management incentive mechanism alongside the designation – as for the Special Protected Area on the Island of Skye – seems, unsurprisingly, to increase local acceptance of the designation.

Questions were raised as to whether designation – which is aimed at high level protection of the natural resources - is too one-sided a process and always delivers the best outcome in terms of sustainable development. For one thing, formal protection may sometimes be too strong a mechanism to allow for the development and change in living cultural landscapes. There is also an issue with the effect of drawing strict boundaries on a map which may in effect simply move the development issue outside the line, with impacts still being experienced inside the protected area.

The need to recognise the impacts both positive and negative of second home development on protected areas and the areas around them is an example from Alto Tâmega of a sustainable development issue which is not being addressed fully in the formal process of zoning some land as a protected area.

On account of the lack of flexibility that can exist in strict environmental protection legislation there are also examples of decisions to use other protective mechanisms. An example is in Oppland, where the local need for economic returns for tourism meant that a planning mechanism was put in place to protect reindeer habitat from development instead of using the powers of the Nature Conservation Act because imposing definite planning quotas might have meant that the plan wasn't approved at all.

“This national designation is strict and almost solely aimed at protection of the natural environment, with very limited possibilities for development. The Nature conservation Act is therefore poorly suited for sustainable management, if sustainable management is to comprise also development and influence of local communities”

Some of the studies questioned whether the use of sustainable development principles can be used to address some of these concerns.

➤ Community-led development

The importance of community-led development has been highlighted in a number of studies and is based on a number of slightly different models, all involving agreement and dialogue with public sector bodies. In Palencia, the initial impetus to develop the cave as a tourism resource came from the local community and was taken on by the Diputación de Palencia. In Trentino, a combination of a bottom-up participatory approach and top-down provision of a funding stream to support ongoing development have successfully contributed to the development of the area.

The participatory approach to development in Trentino has led to greater inclusion of women and young people. In the example from Highland – NW Sutherland, the impetus for community development appears to be provided by the peripherality of the area, both politically and geographically and a feeling that if retention of land management and development in the area is to happen, it will need to be stimulated from within the area.

The desire to do this relates to the connection of people to their area and heritage and is well described in the Palencia study

”The protected natural space *Covalagua*, and especially the cave is a symbol of fight by a village, Revilla de Pomar, to make its resources known. They are proud of the cave and the whole area considers it a symbol of identity and fight.”

➤ National / regional / local decision making

The various levels at which resource management decisions are made was explored in many of the studies, which looked at how particular needs were identified and then at what level action was taken.

Direct comparisons can be made within the Highland example, contrasting the effectiveness of the local croft management scheme instituted at Balmacara with the nationally-designed Land Management Contract Scheme. In Sogn og Fjordane, decisions on appropriate actions are made at county level.

“Under the Regional Management Programme a portion of the total governmental support is distributed and managed at county level. An objective of this change was to give room for local differentiation and adaptation to special conditions and the challenges in each county”

In the Vallée d’Aoste, the region can decide on priorities and beneficiaries of support, while in Trentino, the Patto Territoriali operates at the level of 3 municipalities working in consultation with stakeholders. ADRAT’s close connection with stakeholders has also led to local priorities being identified and acted upon.

However, it is perhaps not always the case that local decision-making produces the best outcome for the natural resource. In Palencia, the local feeling was most supportive of economic development, so it was at regional level that the efforts were made to integrate resource management with economic development issues.

This was echoed in Buskerud ;

“Political objectives regarding protection of different nature qualities are often controversial and there are often conflicts between state administration and local public administration/local business interests”

In the Oppland study it was suggested that there might be a role for the national government to take a more strategic approach to spatial planning in areas of important natural resources to avoid the issue of ‘free riders’.

➤ Integration of economic and environmental interests

This issue was common to nearly all studies and a common feature was the local level at which these concerns were integrated. (*Palencia, Oppland, Buskerud, Alto Tâmega*). The actual institutions involved differed slightly - a joint approach involving the municipality and county governments being used in Oppland, with the regional administration being the driving force in Palencia, while in Alto Tâmega this was the local development agency. In Buskerud this was done by the private sector in negotiation with the state protection administration.

Investment in targeted economic measures can have land management effects and play a role in maintaining the cultural landscape. (*Vallée d’ Aoste, Torino*). The need to ensure the viability of enterprises in order to achieve sustainable land management was highlighted.

5. FACTORS FOR SUCCESS, FAILURE AND TRANSFER

The case studies exhibited a range of different approaches to ensuring defence and management of fragile rural areas, landscapes and resources. Differing development models and relationships between actors are apparent in each study and provide useful points of comparison although it must be noted that there is a good deal of common ground and similar experiences between the studied initiatives in spite of institutional and cultural differences and differing land management objectives. No single model is completely adaptable, nor should it be, given these differences and the need for locally-appropriate design of policies and initiatives. It is however, worth looking at some of the factors which have affected the results of the initiatives studied in order to find transferable lessons.

These form the conclusions of this report.



- **Communication**

The importance of communication and establishing trust and good relationships between different actors – environmental interests, landowners, institutions, land managers - was highlighted as a factor for success and the key to resolving potentially conflicting concerns. (*Buskerud, Alto Tâmega, Palencia, Trentino, Oppland*)

Similarly, when there are poor relationships and lack of communication between parties (*Telemark*) this can create feelings of frustration and of being obstructed by bureaucracy which can be a factor limiting the success of initiatives. Good communication would help foster understanding and create certainty - the lack of it was highlighted as a problem in planning business development if there is no guarantee that e.g. licensing of a particular activity will last for more than one year.

In Torino, the insufficiently close relationship between Province and Region is a reason why, although the plan doesn't conflict with law, it doesn't actually completely fit.

In conclusion, policy and initiatives need to be developed on the basis of the right information, in order to ensure that there is no mismatch between the aims of the policy and

reality of what is required and being achieved by the initiative or policy. This requires good communication between all actors. The transfer of information, knowledge and views must be structured, respectful and representative of different views. In addition to good vertical communication between state, regional and local administrations, there is also a need to ensure good horizontal communication so that e.g. municipalities know what is happening in their neighbouring municipality and examples of good practice which are locally relevant can be transferred.

- **Stakeholder influence and ‘buy-in’**

The involvement and inclusion of local stakeholders in the design and operation of an initiative has been highlighted as a critical factor for success and the main innovative factor in a number of the cases studied. Where a project is being led by public sector organisations, inclusion in the partnership of private institutions and representative groups helps ensure ‘buy-in’ and leads to better decision-making. (*Alto Tâmega, Sogn og Fjordane, Buskerud, Palencia*). In the case of a regulatory regime, sanctions rather than commitment to the plan might be partially the reason for success. (*Oppland*)

In conclusion, the better the genuine stakeholder buy-in and involvement in the development of the policy or initiative, the more likely it is to be successful. It should also be remembered that outsider user groups (e.g. those taking recreation in the country) have the right to be considered as stakeholders – a point which highlights questions about how stakeholders are defined and identified. Subjective, different or unexpected views from stakeholders cannot be ignored but efforts should be made to understand what colours and gives rise to these views.

- **Voluntary effort**

Communities with a strong sense of place and cultural identity will take on more than the basic responsibility for looking after their place, their local economy and cultural landscape. (*Highland – NW Sutherland, Buskerud, Palencia*). Triggers for voluntary community effort of this type might be the fragility of the local economy and remoteness - both geographical and political - from decision-making processes. (*Highland – NW Sutherland*). It is necessary to consider this type of voluntary effort, which is concerned with local improvement and development, in quite a different light from charitable efforts carried out by people in their own time.

The role of a key local actor in getting a project up and running and establishing dialogue was highlighted also. (*Palencia, Highland – North West Sutherland, Oppland*).

This voluntary effort requires supportive structures and nurturing, as too great a reliance on voluntary effort in the long term without support from the public sector or NGOs can also be a weakness (*Highland - NW Sutherland, Buskerud*). A combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches is required, which recognises the desires of the local community for particular actions (*Palencia*). A participatory approach combined with a top-down provision of a support structure can be seen to have worked well and has also led to inclusion of rural actors wider than the ‘usual suspects’.(*Trentino*)

In conclusion, voluntary effort can achieve excellent results, but there must be a recognition of the limits in terms of time input and capacity that will become apparent in the longer term. The community group needs to know how to elicit support for their actions or initiatives and

how they must organise themselves if they are seeking public or other support. In order for public sector organisations to support voluntary effort properly, it must be clear to all parties at which point assistance should be provided and there should likewise be a clear handover process if public sector organisations, social firms or cooperatives are going to take on responsibility for a project.

- **Policy decentralisation**

The adaptation of policy, and specifically support mechanisms, to local conditions has helped provide targeted, appropriate support for land management. This ties in with the need, outlined above, for engagement of local actors in order to develop appropriate and well-supported mechanisms. (*Sogn og Fjordane, Vallée d'Aoste, Alto Tâmega*)

The example of policy misfit for mountain areas can be seen in the Scottish Land Management Contract system, where centralised measures are not sufficiently tailored to reflect local circumstances. This can be contrasted with the suitability of the locally-designed scheme, reflecting local conditions, practice and priorities. (*Highland*)

Environmental interests, however are not necessarily always best served by local decision-making (*Oppland, Palencia*) particularly where environmental protection requires a degree of restriction

In conclusion, it seems clear that in general, policy decisions made at as local a level as possible tend to be based on better knowledge than those made more distantly. There could however, be an issue with capacity and available people if the area on which the policy or initiative is centred is too small or too sparsely-populated ; the scale at which the policy is translated is therefore very important.

A key point is that responsibility cannot be delegated without the money and policy tools to make an initiative effective.

A model which seems to offer some scope for replication is where an overall national or regional framework, which carries funding with it, is implemented at a more local level, thus delivering central support to locally relevant measures.

- **Structure and infrastructure**

The effect of land ownership patterns gives rise to a number of issues. In one example, a system of co-ownership was set up in order to retain local control of natural resources (*Telemark*), while in another role of co-operatives was highlighted as a way to help maintain small scale part-time enterprises (*Trentino*).

The fragmentation of land ownership was raised as an issue impeding success, with encouragement in some areas to amalgamate and create viable holdings (*Trentino*). Cultural and historic factors as well as different ways of thinking about land may mean that this is not a solution transferable to all areas. (*Highland*)

Water shortage and other infrastructural issues were also highlighted as problems for development, suggesting the need for integrated planning across all sectors to ensure that the

cultural landscape can be maintained in the face of changing demographic pressures. (*Trentino, Alto Tâmega*).

In conclusion, a locally-designed package – including access to land for young people, training, skills, advice on business models and facilitation - to support and encourage land use is required in some areas to help address barriers to land use and prevent abandonment. Local design of such a package, based on a participatory approach, is crucial in order to be successful in identifying and overcoming particular local issues. (*Alto Tâmega, Highland, Trentino*) Models to get round fragmentation of ownership and ‘land blocking’ by the older generation or absentees would need to be highly adapted to local circumstances and sensitive to the cultural connection between people and their land.

- **Funding**

Many of the initiatives require support from public funds.

The potential for funding streams to be quite fragmented is a weakness in some areas. Success seems to be best achieved where land managers need only one interface with funding sources for integrated development, helping ensure integration of economic and environmental interests (*Alto Tâmega*). Drawing down of funding from a number of sources in this way seems to be best done by public bodies, perhaps through the municipality or local government structure or local development agencies. (*Trentino*)

A number of studies dealt with the issue of financing for initiatives and in particular the levels of intervention to ensure effectiveness – rates of intervention need to be set at appropriate levels – too low and the objectives will not be achieved (*Sogn og Fjordane, Highland*) and if they are too high this can also cause problems

The availability or lack of availability of funding is highlighted as a factor for success in a number of projects (*Alto Tâmega*).

The longevity of funding and the effect this has on the effectiveness of programmes was also raised in a number of studies, including that from Highland. The Torino case-study highlighted the benefits of a fund existing in perpetuity and the beneficial effect this can have on planning and implementing an initiative. Funding secured only in the short-term is a weakness of some initiatives

The ability to secure favourable activities through long-term tie-in was raised by Vallée d’Aoste and Trentino. The need for helpful mechanisms in the Rural Development Regulation, which can be adapted for local need was highlighted (*Alto Tâmega*).

In conclusion, the case studies have demonstrated the benefit of funding being drawn down as an integrated package – even if it comes from a variety of sources – by local or regional authorities, thus providing one interface for funding.

Small amounts of money, properly targeted at the right place can have a big effect in mountain areas. The level of funding support needs to be right, the timing must be right and funding streams must exist for the right length of time with a clear exit strategy.

- **Administration of project**

Issues about who administers the project, the level at which it is administered and the connections between differing levels of administration were highlighted.

If the project is led by a steering group, effectiveness depends on having someone with delegated decision-making authority (Alto Tâmega).

Except for the need for good communication at all levels, already mentioned, there were few conclusions that could be drawn from the examples presented on account of the small survey size presented any different nature of the initiatives, actors involved and institutional set-up in each region.

The various models provided some interesting points for further exploration. A more substantive study at Member State or regional level to examine the effect of who administers a project on its success would be beneficial. This would compare like with like a little more closely and findings might provide a better opportunity for comparison.

- **Involvement of NGOs**

The involvement of NGOs was a critical factor for success in Scotland, but not highlighted particularly in other areas; in fact in the Oppland study an NGO was refused a role in the planning process on the basis that it should only be representatives of public bodies.

The reason for this dependence on other organisations in Scotland might be a feature of the weaker system of local governance to be found here than in other studied areas. Control for many more aspects of life rests with central governments and NGOs and charities see to have a role in filling in when local desires and needs are not influencing national / state policy. This is an example of how alternative solutions must be found in countries that do not have the same strong local governance structures as exist in some of the studied areas.



In conclusion, the term NGO and the type of organisation that this describes has many different meanings across the mountain areas studied. In some areas, the term describes simply a local voluntary organisation, while in others applies to national level lobby groups.

The reliance or otherwise on voluntary, charity or single interest organisations in supporting management of mountain landscapes depends on a number of factors including political interest in securing appropriate management, the strength of local governance and opportunity for local input in the design of initiatives.

6. WHERE TO NOW?

The studies have highlighted a number of questions for further discussion and investigation. This section briefly raises these.

- Can we resolve tensions between economic development and protected areas without creating definite boundaries and barriers between protection and development? Can an approach based on sustainable development principles work in this regard or will there always be a need for defined boundaries for high level protection?
- How do we deal with the lack of integration in thinking about land management between institutions concerned with the economy, the environment or agriculture? Do the positive examples of integration all involve resource management policy and funding decisions being made at local level?
- To what extent should we continue to pay for maintenance of activities and systems which go against market and economic trends? Are there criteria - e.g. landscape importance, cultural landscape interest, habitat or species requirements – which justify support to unviable systems? How do we measure, however, in current economic thinking, the value of sustainable communities, self-sufficiency and human well-being?
- How can mountain areas recoup the costs that are being imposed on them by urban communities? What mechanisms are best at recognising the positive externalities provided to the wider community by mountain areas?
- How do regions with different strengths best learn from each other – for example where strong local governance is a feature of existence driving success in mountain areas, how can this be transferred to areas without the same culture or institutions in order to arrive at the same benefits? Similarly, how do we transfer to other the examples from regions with strong cultures of entrepreneurship and independence and get the balance right between supporting activity and fostering entrepreneurship so that people are empowered to act?
- What should the role of national government be in spatial planning? Does the role of national government in making definite rules fit with the principles of sustainable development, when decisions should be taken locally but yet local interest is also a significant factor?
- How can the needs and aspirations of communities be recognised and nurtured in the development of mountain areas? How do we drive the change of culture necessary in some places that give communities the confidence to decide what they want? How can this be facilitated and encouraged by supportive mechanisms and support?