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Florjan Bombaj

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THÈSE POUR OBTENIR LE GRADE DE DOCTEUR DE MONTPELLIER SUPAGRO

En Sciences Économiques

École doctorale EDEG – Économie et Gestion
Portée par l'Université de Montpellier

Unité de recherche INNOVATION

**Quality products valorisation for the Albanian mountains
territories. What conditions to improve endogenous rural
development?**

**Présentée par Florjan BOMBAJ
Le 14 novembre 2018**

Sous la direction de Dominique BARJOLLE

Devant le jury composé de

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Foreword

I'm very glad to present my thesis, entitled **“Quality products valorisation for the Albanian mountains territories. What conditions to improve endogenous rural development?”**

This thesis was written to comply with the requirements of “Grande Ecole Montpellier SupAgro” and the Doctoral School of Economic and Management (EDEG) from Montpellier (France), in order to obtain the title of Doctor in Economics. The process of research and writing of this thesis started in October of 2014.

This thesis is the continuation of my research started during my Master Research at Montpellier SupAgro, of my overall view of the integration of disadvantaged mountain territories and the important role of the collective action in order to identify the socio-economically vulnerable actors and improve their economic conditions. But also to the territorial identities which are essential to help governments implement public policies that promote sustainable and desirable development of marginalized rural communities.

The research work, due to numerous reasons, has not always been easy, but studying this theme in-depth was very interesting and enriching, personally and academically. Very fortunately, Dominique Barjolle, Jean-Marc Touzard, François Casabianca, Claire Cerdan, Theodosia Anthopoulou and François Lerin, in particular, were always available and able to answer my questions. A specific section will be dedicated to all acknowledgments.

This thesis is presented in the form of articles, with 3 parts corresponding each to the elaboration of one scientific article, encompassed in a set of 8 parts including a general introduction, discussion, and conclusion.

I hope that you will enjoy your reading!

Florjan Bombaj,
Montpellier, 14 November 2018

(Avant-propos)

*Je suis très heureux de vous présenter ma thèse de doctorat, intitulée « **Valorisation des produits de qualité pour les territoires des montagnes albanaises. Quelles conditions pour améliorer le développement rural endogène ?** ».*

Cette thèse a été rédigée selon les exigences d'obtention du diplôme de doctorat en Economie de Grande Ecole Montpellier SupAgro et de l'Ecole Doctorale Economie et Gestion (EDEG) de Montpellier (France). Le processus de recherche et d'écriture de cette thèse a commencé en Octobre 2014.

Cette thèse est la suite de mes recherches entamées lors de mon Master Recherche à Montpellier SupAgro, de ma vision globale de l'intégration des territoires de montagne défavorisés et du rôle important de l'action collective pour identifier les acteurs socio-économiquement vulnérables et améliorer leurs conditions économiques. Mais aussi aux identités territoriales essentielles pour aider les gouvernements à mettre en œuvre des politiques publiques favorisant le développement durable et souhaitable des communautés rurales marginalisées.

Les travaux de recherche, pour de nombreuses raisons, n'ont pas toujours été faciles, mais étudier ce thème en profondeur s'est avéré très stimulant et enrichissant sur le plan personnel et académique. Fort heureusement, Dominique Barjolle, Jean-Marc Touzard, François Casabianca, Claire Cerdan, Theodosia Anthopoulou and François Lerin, en particulier, se sont toujours montrés disponibles et à même de répondre à mes questions. Une section sera spécifiquement dédiée à tous les remerciements.

Cette thèse se présente sous la forme d'articles, avec 3 parties correspondant chacune à l'élaboration d'un article scientifique, s'insérant dans un ensemble de 8 parties incluant notamment une introduction, discussion, et conclusion générale.

En vous souhaitant une bonne lecture !

*Florjan Bombaj
Montpellier, 14 Novembre 2018*

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Abbreviations

ADPIC	Accords sur les Droits de Propriété Intellectuelle liés au Commerce
AOP	Appellation d'Origine Protégée
CEEC	Central and Eastern European Countries
DYNTAR	Dynamique Territoriale et Aménagement Rural
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAOSTAT	FAO Statistical Databases
GI	Geographical Indication
INRA	National Institute of Agronomic Research (France)
LAFS	Localised Agrifood Systems
MAAPC	Ministère de l'Agriculture, Alimentation et Protection du Consommateur
MAFCP	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OMC	Organisation Mondiale du Commerce
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PGI	Protected Geographical Indications
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
SYAL	Systèmes Agroalimentaires Localisés
TCT	Theory of Cost Transactions
UMR	Mixed Research Unit
UPRA	Unité Nationale de Sélection et de Promotion de Race

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Abstract

This thesis analyzes questions and develops a methodological approach to local development based on the mobilization and activation of local and specific territorial resources by studying the role of collective action in the organization of local actors and the increase of the value added productions. On the basis of an overall analysis of these economic conditions, the objectives of this thesis are to (1) characterize the situation of rural communities in a mountainous area of southern Albania; 2) to study the particular context of the post-communist era and its consequences for rural communities; (3) identify local products with particular characteristics and assess trends in their potential markets; and (4) discuss local farming practices and community governance structures and analyze their capacity to support a virtuous circle of rural development; in order to (5) formulate recommendations tailored to local and national decision-makers.

We chose Korçë district, in southeast Albania, to conduct our case study. This search site was the main territory on which the research questions of the thesis were verified. The first article analyzes the milk and meat value chains at national and local level. Through the study of the value chains and the theory of transaction costs, we analyzed the institutional and governance aspects of the national and local milk and meat value chains. We conclude that the governance of these two value chains in Albania is weak from the economic point of view due to an inefficient institutional and legal framework, but that collective initiatives for the valorisation of emerging pastoral products can, under certain conditions, become vectors of local economic development.

The need to adapt the approach to the local context made it possible to enrich the methods at each stage. The second article analyzes local farming systems. The results show that the majority of farms are small subsistence farms that self-consume the majority of their production. Land fragmentation is important, resulting in low competitiveness and low production efficiency. The results confirmed that after 1991, local agro-farming systems gradually adapted to the new political and economic context. Pasture is an important specific territorial resource for local farmers. The status of pastures that has evolved over the course of history and their management modalities are key elements in the dynamics of different local farming systems. In order to study the impact of institutional changes and pastures' governance modalities during fieldwork, the analysis has been deepened to a very local level, such as the village.

The third article explores local actions after the evolution of the governance modalities of communal pastures. Frequent changes in the management of communal pastures have complicated access to resources for local farmers. The results of the Albanian case in Korçë district only partially validate the hypothesis. By analyzing the factors that did not validate the hypothesis, the general conclusions and implications for further research are discussed.

Key words – Local Development; Mountain Territory; Specific Resources; Methodological Approach; Albania.

(Résumé)

Cette thèse analyse, questionne et développe une approche méthodologique du développement local basée sur la mobilisation et l'activation de ressources territoriales locales et spécifiques en étudiant le rôle de l'action collective dans l'organisation des acteurs locaux et l'augmentation de la valeur ajoutée des productions. Sur la base d'une analyse globale de ces conditions économiques, les objectifs de cette thèse sont de (1) caractériser la situation des communautés rurales d'une zone montagneuse du sud de l'Albanie; 2) étudier le contexte particulier de l'ère postcommuniste et ses conséquences sur les communautés rurales; (3) identifier les produits locaux présentant des caractéristiques particulières et évaluer les tendances de leurs marchés potentiels; et (4) discuter des pratiques agricoles et des structures de gouvernance collective locales et analyser leur capacité à soutenir un cercle vertueux de développement rural; afin de (5) formuler des recommandations adaptées aux décideurs locaux et nationaux.

Nous avons choisi le district de Korçë, au sud-est de l'Albanie, pour mener notre étude de cas. Ce site de recherche a constitué le principal territoire sur lequel les questions de recherche de la thèse ont été vérifiées. Le premier article analyse les filières du lait et de la viande au niveau national et local. À travers l'étude de la filière et la théorie des coûts de transactions, nous avons analysé les aspects institutionnels et de gouvernance des filières nationales et locales du lait et de la viande. Nous concluons que la gouvernance de ces deux filières en Albanie est faible du point de vue économique en raison d'un cadre institutionnel et légal peu efficace, mais que des initiatives collectives de valorisation de produits pastoraux en émergence pourront, à certaines conditions, devenir des vecteurs du développement économique local.

La nécessité d'adapter l'approche au contexte local a permis d'enrichir les méthodes à chaque étape. Le deuxième article analyse les systèmes d'élevages locaux. Les résultats montrent que la majorité des exploitations agricoles sont des exploitations familiales qui auto consomment la majeure partie de leurs produits. La fragmentation des terres est importante, ce qui se traduit par une faible compétitivité et une faible efficacité de la production. Les résultats ont confirmé qu'après 1991, les systèmes d'élevages locaux se sont progressivement adaptés au nouveau contexte politique et économique. Le pâturage est une ressource territoriale spécifique importante pour les agriculteurs locaux. Les statuts des pâturages ayant évolué au cours de l'histoire et leurs modalités de gestion sont des éléments-clés de la dynamique des différents systèmes d'élevages locaux. Afin d'étudier l'impact des changements institutionnels et des modalités de gouvernance des pâturages au cours du travail de terrain, l'analyse a été approfondie à un niveau très local, tel que le village.

Le troisième article explore les actions locales après l'évolution des modalités de gouvernance des pâturages communaux. Des changements fréquents dans la gestion des pâturages communaux ont compliqué les modalités d'accès aux ressources pour les agriculteurs locaux. Les résultats du cas albanais réalisés dans le district de Korçë ne valident que partiellement l'hypothèse. En analysant les facteurs qui n'ont pas permis de valider l'hypothèse, les conclusions générales et les implications pour les recherches ultérieures sont discutées.

Mots clés - Développement Local; Territoire de Montagne; Ressources Spécifiques; Approche Méthodologique; Albanie

Extended Summary

General introduction and state of the art (part 1 & 2)

As a global trend well identified in the literature, the demand for "local" products and other "typical" products is well-established and even growing. Since the global increase of food markets, the strategies of sustainable rural development are often based on developing quality food in the mountains, and related services like gastronomy and more broadly, tourism.. Mediterranean mountain territories, such as Albania, have great potential in terms of territorial resources but they are not sufficiently competitive and resilient in the current socio-economic context. However, generally, producers face difficulties in unlocking this potential

This thesis test, analyze and develop methodological approach to local development based on mobilization and activation of local and specific territorial resources by analyzing the role of collective action in organising local actors for bringing added value to their production. Based on a global to local analysis of these economic conditions, the objectives of this thesis are to characterise the situation of the rural communities a mountain area in South Albania; to reflect on the particular context of the post-communist era and its consequences on the rural communities; then to identify if the local products show particular characteristics and if their markets show similar growing trends as identified globally; finally to discuss if the farming practices and the local collective governance structures and decisions are sustaining a virtuous circle of rural development; and then, to formulate related recommendations to the local and national policy-makers.

The general objectives of the thesis are as follows:

- (1) To analyze the brakes and opportunities for developing quality products at national and local level. A mixed-method is developed for this purpose. This objective is addressed in the first article in part 4.
- (2) To analyze the local farming systems, with the goal of indentifying local actors and dynamics that contribute to the economic development of the selected case study. This objective is addressed in the second article in part 5.
- (3) To analyze, in depth, the local dynamics and the territorial resource governance mechanisms that affect farmers in the selected case study. This objective is addressed in the third article in part 6.
- (4) To question the global relevance and contribution of the different results and methodological developments (resulting from the objectives 1, 2, and 3) in analyzing if the collective action of the local actors can contribute to more resilient and sustainable mountain territories by safeguarding the specificity of food products through locally adapted practices and a better distribution of the territorial rent within the value chains (by adding value at farm level). This objective is addressed in the discussion part (part 7).

A state of the art on territorial development approaches and methodological aspects is made in part 2. We assume that territorial development approaches lacks global analysis at the territory level. The municipality of Vithkuq research site (southern Albania) is explored in

this thesis. The chosen research site constituted the main set on which the research questions of the three articles have been tested.

Methodology (part 3)

The objectives of the thesis are discussed in more details together with the research questions and hypothesis. We also specify the conceptual and theoretical framework, which is based on the territorial development methodological approach, by applying it in a particular context such as the Albanian case. In order to better understand the case study we take a dynamic view and, more importantly, a mixed-methods approach to analyze local dynamics. Furthermore, a short description of the case study is made (Municipality of Vithkuq, southern Albania) and the rationale of selecting it is specified. The municipality of Vithkuq has a long history in livestock production. It has to a rich flora and fauna of pastures producing animal products of high flavor and quality that are well known by local and Albanian consumers. Finally, the structure of the thesis on the following parts is specified: the three articles (part 4, 5 and 6), the general discussion (part 7), and the general conclusion (part 8).

First article (part 4)

The first article analyzes the milk and meat value chains at national and local level. The value chain approach and the theory of cost of transactions have analyzed legal and institutional aspects of the national and local milk and meat value chains. We conclude that data at national and local level show that the lack of an efficient legal and institutional framework has caused low development of the milk and meat value chains. These two value chains show that law enforcement on food security standards remains low. Furthermore, contrarily to the literature (Maestre et al. 2017; Gereffi et al. 2005), results show impossibility for a clear determination of the value that farmer perceive along these value chains. Local farmers selling their products in a low structured value chain, face difficulties to add more value at the farm level. Through this analysis we defined the need to better identify and analyse the selected case study at a very local level.

Second article (part 5)

The second article analyse the local farming systems. Results show that the majority of farms are subsistence farms and they have high level of land fragmentation resulting to a low competitiveness and low production efficiency. Farmers, by selling only small amounts of milk and meat and without quality labels, face difficulties to access better financial resources for investments aiming a better distribution of the market value. Differences in terms of farming systems and incomes are observed between farmers of different villages. This farming systems differentiation depends on the capital available to purchase land and livestock and to build a barn. In the current context, families having labour force available are adapting faster to the new market challenges. The results verified that after 1991, the local agro farming systems have gradually adapted to the new political and economic context. The pasture is an important specific territorial resource for local farmers. As the statuses of pastures have evolved over the course of history their management modality is a key element of the dynamics of the different local farming systems. The institutional changes on the pastures governance modalities during the fieldwork has made compulsory to a deeper analysis at a very local level such as the village.

Third article (part 6)

The third article explores the local actions after the change in the communal pasture governance modalities. Frequent changes of the management of communal pastures have resulted on unclear resource access situation for local farmers. Anyway, only one village arranged a combination of local rules that allowed farmers to benefit from a change initiated at national level. In fact, farmers of this village are acting together to rent pastures using the attributes that has changed the use rights of the communal pastures after 2016, giving to the authorized beneficiaries “exclusive use rights” access. So, in the current unclear institutional arrangements, the exclusivity right attribution is governing the common resource. We show that this new context has created the initial conditions for the creation of a common. It can be the start condition for improving the territorial capital and engage in the future in collective action for the collective marketing of their animal products. We advocate that the current momentum seems to have created new modalities that may be the ferment for market common strategies in the future, especially for their meat products.

General discussion and conclusion (part 7 & 8)

We show that the territorial development methodological approach applied successfully adapts existing methods by identifying and analysing the selected case study at a very local level. Some aspects are the recognizing of (1) the local agro farming systems specificities that have gradually adapted to the new political and economic context, the analysis of (2) communal pastures that are an important specific territorial resource for local farmers, the identification of (3) the institutional changes on the communal pasture governance modalities that has made complex the use rights attribution for this resource, and in the current unclear institutional arrangements by identifying that (4), the exclusivity right attribution is governing the communal pastures.

Based on the application of the approach developed in the municipality of Vithkuq (see part 4, 5 and 6), some recommendations for policy makers, researchers, and stakeholders, were drawn and discussed.

The key recommendations are as follows:

- To sustainably govern common pastures a better adaptation of the local collective organization is needed by promoting interactions at the local level and by articulating community, public and private management policies better harmonized with the local needs.
- To improve the quality signals that consumers perceive, the development of a national traceability, labelling and certification system is needed.
- To improve the legislation on certified products and labelling rules in order that the product can be unequivocally recognized by consumers.
- To motivate farmers to cooperate and to strengthen supportive state policies and incentives for cooperative movements.
- To improve the development of an efficient land market that can increase the efficiency of farms in the future.

We show that the specificity of the products exists but there is no safeguarding of the specificity through locally adapted code of practice and, consequently, no added value of reputation. Furthermore, territorial rent didn't happen very clearly so far because farmers have low capacity to add value at farm level. They have high production costs because of the high

prices of animal feed, lack of knowledge on modern production techniques, lack of adequate technologies and lack of high food quality standards. More attention is needed on the local practices of the farmers who produce quality products but not valorised by the markets.

We conclude that the complete understanding of complex and dynamic value chains and local farming systems through a set of methods remains limited. This thesis shows apply different methods according to economic context and value chains products but further adapted methods might be desirable. The qualification process of a product in the particular context of the Albanian case can only appear if economic environment and national legal and institutional framework are friendlier for such a process. Such a qualification process can be important to consumers and actors in the regional and national level especially for the food security issues, recognition and better valorisation of specific local products, creating a transition from a smallholder farming systems-food insecure type to quality certified products in more or less sustainable ways. Giving the limitations of the research identifying more research sites that shows great potential in terms of products whose quality is linked to origin might be desirable in the future to test the results of this thesis.

(Résumé approfondi)

Introduction générale et état de l'art (parties 1 et 2)

En tant que tendance mondiale bien identifiée dans la littérature, la demande de produits "locaux" et d'autres produits "typiques" est bien établie et même croissante. Depuis l'augmentation mondiale des marchés alimentaires, les stratégies de développement rural durable reposent souvent sur le développement de produits alimentaires de qualité dans les montagnes et sur des services connexes tels que la gastronomie et, plus largement, le tourisme. Les territoires de montagne méditerranéens, tels que l'Albanie, présentent un grand potentiel en termes de ressources territoriales, mais ils ne sont pas suffisamment compétitifs et résilients dans le contexte socio-économique actuel. Cependant, les producteurs rencontrent généralement des difficultés pour libérer ce potentiel.

Cette thèse teste, analyse et développe une approche méthodologique du développement local basée sur la mobilisation et l'activation de ressources territoriales locales et spécifiques en analysant le rôle de l'action collective dans l'organisation des acteurs locaux pour apporter une valeur ajoutée à leur production. Sur la base d'une analyse globale de ces conditions économiques, les objectifs de cette thèse sont de caractériser la situation des communautés rurales dans une zone montagneuse du sud de l'Albanie; réfléchir au contexte particulier de l'ère postcommunisme et à ses conséquences sur les communautés rurales; ensuite, identifier si les produits locaux présentent des caractéristiques particulières et si leurs marchés montrent des tendances croissantes similaires à celles identifiées au niveau mondial; ensuite, se demander si les pratiques agricoles et les structures et décisions de gouvernance collective locales entretiennent un cercle vertueux de développement rural; et enfin, formuler des recommandations connexes à l'intention des décideurs locaux et nationaux.

Les objectifs généraux de la thèse sont les suivants:

(1) Analyser les freins et les opportunités pour développer des produits de qualité au niveau national et local. Une méthode mixte est développée à cet effet. Cet objectif est abordé dans le premier article de la partie 4.

(2) Analyser les systèmes agricoles locaux dans le but d'identifier les acteurs locaux et les dynamiques qui contribuent au développement économique de l'étude de cas sélectionnée. Cet objectif est abordé dans le deuxième article de la partie 5.

(3) Analyser en profondeur la dynamique locale et les mécanismes de gouvernance des ressources territoriales qui affectent les agriculteurs dans l'étude de cas sélectionnée. Cet objectif est abordé dans le troisième article de la partie 6.

(4) Remettre en question la pertinence et la contribution globale des différents résultats et développements méthodologiques (résultant des objectifs 1, 2 et 3) pour déterminer si l'action collective des acteurs locaux peut contribuer à la résilience et à la durabilité des territoires montagneux en sauvegardant la spécificité des produits alimentaires à travers des pratiques adaptées localement et une meilleure répartition de la rente territoriale au sein des chaînes de valeur (en ajoutant de la valeur au niveau de l'exploitation). Cet objectif est abordé dans la partie discussion (partie 7).

Un état des lieux des approches de développement territorial et des aspects méthodologiques est présenté dans la partie 2. Nous supposons que les approches de développement territorial manquent d'analyse globale du territoire. Le site de recherche de la municipalité de Vithkuq (sud de l'Albanie) est exploré dans cette thèse. Le site de recherche choisi a constitué le principal ensemble sur lequel les questions de recherche des trois articles ont été testées.

Méthodologie (partie 3)

Les objectifs de la thèse sont discutés plus en détail avec les questions de recherche et les hypothèses. Nous spécifions également le cadre conceptuel et théorique, qui repose sur l'approche méthodologique du développement territorial, en l'appliquant dans un contexte particulier tel que le cas albanais. Afin de mieux comprendre l'étude de cas, nous adoptons une vision dynamique et, plus important encore, une approche par méthodes mixtes pour analyser les dynamiques locales. De plus, une brève description de l'étude de cas est faite (municipalité de Vithkuq, sud de l'Albanie) et les raisons de sa sélection sont précisées. La municipalité de Vithkuq a une longue histoire dans la production de bétail. La richesse de la flore et de la faune des pâturages produit des produits animaux de grande qualité et de grande saveur, bien connus des consommateurs locaux et albanais. Enfin, la structure de la thèse sur les parties suivantes est spécifiée: les trois articles (partie 4, 5 et 6), la discussion générale (partie 7) et la conclusion générale (partie 8).

Premier article (partie 4)

Le premier article analyse les filières du lait et de la viande au niveau national et local. L'approche des filières et la théorie du coût des transactions ont analysé les aspects juridiques et institutionnels des filières nationales et locales du lait et de la viande. Nous concluons que les données au niveau national et local montrent que l'absence d'un cadre juridique et institutionnel efficace a entraîné un faible développement des chaînes de valeur du lait et de la viande. Ces deux filières montrent que l'application des normes de sécurité alimentaire reste faible. De plus, contrairement à la littérature (Maestre et al. 2017; Gereffi et al. 2005), les résultats montrent l'impossibilité de déterminer clairement la valeur perçue par l'agriculteur dans ces filières. Les agriculteurs locaux qui vendent leurs produits dans une filière peu structurée rencontrent des difficultés pour ajouter plus de valeur à la ferme. A travers cette analyse, nous avons défini le besoin de mieux identifier et analyser l'étude de cas sélectionnée à un niveau très local.

Deuxième article (partie 5)

Le deuxième article analyse les systèmes agricoles locaux. Les résultats montrent que la majorité des exploitations agricoles sont des exploitations de subsistance et que leur fragmentation des terres est élevée, ce qui se traduit par une faible compétitivité et une faible efficacité de la production. Les agriculteurs, en ne vendant que de petites quantités de lait et de viande et sans étiquettes de qualité, ont du mal à accéder à de meilleures ressources financières pour les investissements visant une meilleure répartition de la valeur marchande. Des différences en termes de systèmes d'exploitation et de revenus sont observées entre les agriculteurs de différents villages. Cette différenciation des systèmes agricoles dépend du capital disponible pour acheter des terres et du bétail et pour construire une grange. Dans le contexte actuel, les familles ayant une main-d'œuvre disponible s'adaptent plus rapidement aux nouveaux défis du marché. Les résultats ont confirmé qu'après 1991, les systèmes agropastoraux locaux se sont progressivement adaptés au nouveau contexte politique et

économique. Le pâturage est une ressource territoriale spécifique importante pour les agriculteurs locaux. Les statuts des pâturages ayant évolué au cours de l'histoire, leur modalité de gestion est un élément clé de la dynamique des différents systèmes agricoles locaux. Les changements institutionnels sur les modalités de gouvernance des pâturages au cours du travail sur le terrain ont rendu obligatoire une analyse plus approfondie à un niveau très local, tel que le village.

Troisième article (partie 6)

Le troisième article explore les actions locales après le changement des modalités de gouvernance des pâturages communaux. Des changements fréquents dans la gestion des pâturages communaux ont entraîné une situation d'accès aux ressources peu claire pour les agriculteurs locaux. Quoiqu'il en soit, un seul village a organisé une combinaison de règles locales permettant aux agriculteurs de bénéficier d'un changement initié au niveau national. En fait, les agriculteurs de ce village agissent ensemble pour louer des pâturages en utilisant les attributs qui ont changé les droits d'utilisation des pâturages communaux après 2016, en donnant aux bénéficiaires autorisés un accès aux «droits d'utilisation exclusive». Ainsi, dans les arrangements institutionnels peu clairs actuels, l'attribution du droit d'exclusivité régit la ressource commune. Nous montrons que ce nouveau contexte a créé les conditions initiales pour la création d'un commun. Ce peut être la condition de départ pour améliorer le capital territorial et s'engager dans une action collective pour la commercialisation collective de leurs produits animaux. Nous préconisons que l'élan actuel semble avoir créé de nouvelles modalités qui pourraient faire fermenter les stratégies communes des marchés à l'avenir, en particulier pour leurs produits carnés.

Discussion générale et conclusion (partie 7 et 8)

Nous montrons que l'approche méthodologique de développement territorial appliquée avec succès adapte les méthodes existantes en identifiant et en analysant l'étude de cas sélectionnée à un niveau très local. Certains aspects sont la reconnaissance de (1) les spécificités des systèmes agro-agricoles locaux qui se sont progressivement adaptés au nouveau contexte politique et économique, l'analyse de (2) les pâturages communaux qui constituent une ressource territoriale importante pour les agriculteurs locaux, l'identification de (3) les changements institutionnels sur les modalités de gouvernance des pâturages communaux qui ont complexifié l'attribution des droits d'utilisation pour cette ressource et les arrangements institutionnels peu clairs actuels en identifiant que (4) l'attribution du droit d'exclusivité régit les pâturages communaux.

Sur la base de l'application de l'approche développée dans la municipalité de Vithkuq (voir parties 4, 5 et 6), des recommandations ont été formulées et discutées à l'intention des décideurs politiques, des chercheurs et des parties prenantes.

Les principales recommandations sont les suivantes:

- Pour gérer durablement les pâturages communs, une meilleure adaptation de l'organisation collective locale est nécessaire en promouvant les interactions au niveau local et en articulant les politiques de gestion communautaires, publiques et privées mieux harmonisées avec les besoins locaux.
- Pour améliorer les signaux de qualité perçus par les consommateurs, le développement d'un système national de traçabilité, d'étiquetage et de certification est nécessaire.

- *Améliorer la législation sur les produits certifiés et les règles d'étiquetage afin que le produit puisse être reconnu sans équivoque par les consommateurs.*
- *Motiver les agriculteurs à coopérer et à renforcer les politiques étatiques de soutien et les incitations aux mouvements coopératifs.*
- *Améliorer le développement d'un marché foncier efficace susceptible d'accroître l'efficacité des exploitations à l'avenir.*

Nous montrons que la spécificité des produits existe mais qu'il n'y a pas de sauvegarde de la spécificité à travers un code de pratique adapté localement et, par conséquent, aucune valeur ajoutée de réputation. De plus, les loyers territoriaux n'ont pas été très nets jusqu'à présent, car les agriculteurs ont peu de capacités à ajouter de la valeur au niveau des exploitations. Ils ont des coûts de production élevés en raison des prix élevés des aliments pour animaux, du manque de connaissances sur les techniques de production modernes, du manque de technologies adéquates et du manque de normes élevées de qualité alimentaire. Une plus grande attention est nécessaire sur les pratiques locales des agriculteurs qui produisent des produits de qualité mais non valorisés par les marchés.

Part 1: General introduction

The sustainable development of mountain areas and the livelihoods of the communities living there are closely linked to agriculture. At the centre of environmental, cultural and economic issues, agriculture shapes the identity of local communities and their livelihood strategies.

Faced with geographical challenges - distance from markets - agronomic - low productivity and short growing seasons and economic - high production costs, it is difficult for mountain farming to remain competitive in a context of globalization of agricultural production (Commission European, 2009; MacDonald et al., 2000).

The natural characteristics of the Mediterranean mountains and the specific cultural practices of each territory have generated a great diversity of products with a strong identity. However, the demand for "local" and "typical" products continues to strengthen (Burnett et al., 2016; Adams and Salois, 2010; Tropp, 2008) and since the globalization of agricultural markets, sustainable rural development strategies in the mountains can rely on the development of quality products and related services such as gastronomy and more broadly tourism.

Indeed, it has been shown that the quality of agricultural products can be linked to the geographical origin: for example, if producers care about natural and human factors, mountain products may have unique characteristics depending on the terroir (Casabianca et al., 1999). The specificity of the environment - climate, soils, fauna, flora (Euromontana, 2005) - and breeds and varieties used in the mountains can also explain the originality of the products.

However, producers may find it difficult to activate this potential, to obtain fair prices and to remain competitive in the markets (European Commission, 2009). The specificity of the products of the mountain territories can be associated with the creation of added value (higher selling prices). But for farmers to capitalize on this added value proposition, the actors in the sector must engage in collective action and balance their bargaining power (Vandecandelaere et al., 2018; Barjolle et al., 2007).

The conditions required for this virtuous circle to work well are numerous (Vandecandelaere et al., 2018), and the mechanisms governing collaborative structures within sustainable food chains in mountain areas are complex (Streifeneder, 2015). For the actors of the Mediterranean value chains, collective action, as a process of spatial and multi-scale interactions, can contribute to the resilience of farming systems and food chains (Lowitt et al., 2015), particularly through the protection of product identity - and their designation - as governed by European Law 664/2014 and the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications, adopted on 20 May 2015. (Fort, 2014; Antonelli and Ilbert, 2012).

The protection of local products can then allow the various actors of the sector to consolidate the economic fabric and face international competition.

While many economists have seen the effects of globalization as a threat to isolated territories - particularly through offshoring - the proximity relations between local actors can in fact play a determining role in the competitiveness of economic activities (Mediterra, 2008).

Globalization has created favorable conditions for the emergence of localized agrifood

systems (LAFS) through the strengthening of local identity, the formation of social capital and economic development based on territorial resources.

The notion of "territorial capital" was developed in the context of the international character of the Great Recession: the different local structural characteristics had then influenced the economic and social impact of the crisis, the effects on resilience and the risk of recovery (Mazzola et al., 2018).

Recently studied in the literature (Caro and Fratesi., 2018; Mazzola et al., 2018; Perucca, 2014), territorial capital is defined as the system of territorial assets of economic, cultural, social and environmental nature that ensures the potential territorial development (Perucca, 2014). The notion of territorial capital conceived at the crossroads of tangible and intangible local resources emphasizes the coexistence and combination of these resources as characteristic of the different territories. "Each region has a specific territorial capital distinct from that of other areas and generates a higher return for specific types of investments than others because they are better suited to the area and make more efficient use of their land, assets and its potential. Policies with a territorial approach to development should above all help areas to develop their territorial capital" (European Commission, 2005). Camagni (2002) states that the issue of territorial competitiveness is of increasingly central importance for regional development policies

Yet, while some regions aim for effective and sustainable rural development, they do not yet benefit from the virtuous dynamic described above. The objectives of this thesis are to characterize the situation of rural communities in a mountain area in South Albania; (1) to study the particular context of the post-communist era and its consequences for rural communities; (2) identify local products with particular characteristics and assess trends in their potential markets; (3) discuss local farming practices and community governance structures and analyze their capacity to support a virtuous circle of rural development; in order to (4) make recommendations tailored to local and national decision-makers.

The main hypothesis of the thesis is that the collective action of local actors can contribute to more resilient and sustainable mountain territories, by promoting the preservation of the specificity of food products, locally adapted practices and a better distribution of the added value. The chosen case study is the territory on which the hypotheses were tested.

The second chapter analyzes and proposes different approaches to territorial development. An overview of the methodological choices that have been made is given in the third chapter. The fourth chapter develops and analyzes the legal and institutional framework of the milk and meat value chains. It focuses on the descriptive and structural aspects of the national and local food value chains of these two products in order to better determine the factors that influence the governance of these value chains. The fifth chapter of this thesis analyse the local farming systems of the selected case study. The results of the fifth chapter conceptualized and elaborated the sixth chapter of this thesis which deals with the role of national and local governance of territorial resources and its consequences for the mountain communities of the selected case study.

The seventh chapter of this thesis discusses the results of the analysis of the problems of identification and valorisation of local resources, and is illustrated by the experiences of practices of local actors confronted with the results of the literature. This chapter will also discuss the methods that governments could implement to promote endogenous sustainable development of marginalized mountain territories.

(Partie 1: Introduction générale)

Le développement durable des zones de montagne et les moyens de subsistance des communautés qui y vivent sont étroitement liés à l'agriculture. Au centre des enjeux environnementaux, culturels et économiques, l'agriculture façonne l'identité des communautés locales et leurs stratégies de subsistance.

Face à des défis géographiques – éloignement des marchés -, agronomiques - faible productivité et saisons de culture courtes et économiques - coûts de production élevés, il est difficile pour l'agriculture de montagne de rester compétitive dans un contexte de mondialisation des productions agricoles (Commission européenne, 2009, MacDonald et al., 2000).

Les caractéristiques naturelles des montagnes méditerranéennes et les pratiques culturelles spécifiques de chaque territoire ont généré une grande diversité de produits à forte identité. Or, la demande pour les produits « locaux » et « typiques » continue se renforcer (Burnett et al., 2016; Adams et Salois, 2010; Tropp, 2008) et depuis la mondialisation des marchés agricoles, les stratégies de développement rural durable dans les montagnes peuvent s'appuyer sur le développement de produits de qualité et de services connexes comme la gastronomie et plus largement le tourisme.

En effet, il a été démontré que la qualité des produits agricoles pouvait être liée à l'origine géographique: par exemple, si les producteurs se soucient des facteurs naturels et humains, les produits de montagne peuvent posséder des caractéristiques uniques selon le terroir (Casabianca et al., 1999). La spécificité de l'environnement – climat, sols, faune, flore (Euromontana, 2005) – et des races et variétés utilisés dans les montagnes peuvent aussi expliquer l'originalité des produits.

Cependant, les producteurs peuvent rencontrer des difficultés à activer ce potentiel, à obtenir des prix équitables et à rester compétitifs sur les marchés (Commission européenne, 2009). La spécificité des produits des territoires de montagnes peut être associée à de la création de valeur ajoutée (prix de vente plus élevés). Mais pour que les agriculteurs obtiennent une meilleure amélioration, les acteurs de la filière doivent s'engager dans une action collective et équilibrer leur pouvoir de négociation (Vandecandelaere et al., 2018; Barjolle et al., 2007).

Cependant, les conditions pour que ce cercle vertueux fonctionne bien sont nombreuses (Vandecandelaere et al., 2018), et les mécanismes régissant les structures de collaboration au sein de filières alimentaires durables des zones de montagne sont complexes (Streifeneder, 2015). Pour les acteurs des filières méditerranéennes, l'action collective, en tant que processus d'interactions spatiales et multi-échelles, peut contribuer à la résilience des systèmes agricoles et des chaînes alimentaires (Lowitt et al., 2015), notamment à travers la protection de l'identité des produits – et de leur désignation – tels que régis par la loi européenne 664/2014 et l'Accord de Lisbonne sur les appellations d'origine et indications géographiques, adopté le 20 mai 2015 (Fort, 2014; Antonelli et Ilbert, 2012).

La protection des produits locaux peut alors permettre aux différents acteurs de la filière de consolider le tissu économique et de faire face à la concurrence internationale.

Alors que de nombreux économistes ont vu dans les effets de la mondialisation une menace pour les territoires isolés – notamment à travers les délocalisations, les relations de proximité entre les acteurs locaux peuvent en réalité jouer un rôle déterminant pour la compétitivité des activités économiques (Mediterra, 2008).

La mondialisation a créé des conditions favorables à l'émergence de systèmes agroalimentaires localisés (SYAL) à travers le renforcement de l'identité locale, de la formation de capital social et du développement économique basé sur les ressources territoriales.

La notion de «capital territorial» a été développée dans le contexte du caractère international de la Grande Récession: les différentes caractéristiques structurelles locales avaient alors influencé l'impact économique et social de la crise, les effets sur la résilience et le risque de récupération (Mazzola et al., 2018).

Récemment étudié dans la littérature (Caro and Fratesi., 2018; Mazzola et al., 2018; Perucca, 2014), le capital territorial est défini comme le système d'atouts territoriaux de nature économique, culturelle, sociale et environnementale qui assure le potentiel de développement des territoires (Perucca, 2014). La notion de capital territorial conçue au croisement des ressources locales tangibles et intangibles et met l'accent sur la coexistence et la combinaison de ces ressources comme caractéristique des différents territoires. « Chaque région a un capital territorial spécifique distinct de celui des autres zones et génère un rendement plus élevé pour des types d'investissements spécifiques que pour d'autres, car ceux-ci sont mieux adaptés à la zone et utilisent plus efficacement ses actifs et son potentiel. Les politiques avec une approche territoriale du développement) devraient avant tout aider les zones à développer leur capital territorial » (Commission européenne, 2005).

Pourtant, si certaines régions visent un développement rural efficace et durable, elles ne bénéficient pas encore de la dynamique vertueuse décrite précédemment. Les objectifs de cette thèse sont de caractériser la situation des communautés rurales d'une zone de montagne en Albanie du Sud; (1) étudier le contexte particulier de l'ère postcommuniste et ses conséquences sur les communautés rurales; (2) identifier les produits locaux présentant des caractéristiques particulières et évaluer les tendances de leurs marchés potentiels; (3) discuter des pratiques agricoles et des structures de gouvernance collective locales et analyser leur capacité à soutenir un cercle vertueux de développement rural; afin de (4) formuler des recommandations adaptées aux décideurs locaux et nationaux.

L'hypothèse principale de la thèse est que l'action collective des acteurs locaux peut contribuer à des territoires montagneux plus résilients et durables, en promouvant la sauvegarde de la spécificité des produits alimentaires, les pratiques localement adaptées et une meilleure répartition de la valeur ajoutée au sein des filières. L'étude de cas choisie constitue le territoire sur lequel les hypothèses ont été testées. Le deuxième chapitre analyse et propose différentes approches de développement territorial. Un aperçu des choix méthodologiques qui ont été faits est développé dans le troisième chapitre.

Le quatrième chapitre analyse le cadre institutionnel des deux filières lait et viande. Il se concentre sur les aspects descriptifs et structurels de ces filières au niveau national et local afin de mieux déterminer les facteurs qui influencent la gouvernance de ces filières.

Le cinquième chapitre de cette thèse, basé sur les résultats du quatrième chapitre, analyse les systèmes d'élevage de la zone d'étude choisie. Les résultats du cinquième chapitre ont

conceptualisé et élaboré le sixième chapitre de cette thèse qui traite du rôle de la gouvernance nationale et locale des ressources territoriales et ses conséquences pour les communautés en montagne de l'étude de cas sélectionnée. Le septième chapitre de cette thèse discute des résultats de l'analyse des problématiques d'identification et de valorisation des ressources locales, illustrés par les expériences de pratiques des acteurs locaux et confrontés aux résultats de la littérature. Ce chapitre permettra également de discuter des méthodes que les gouvernements pourraient mettre en œuvre afin de favoriser un développement durable endogène des territoires de montagne marginalisés.

Part 2: State of the art

Abstract

In this part, we make a state of the art on territorial development approaches. We first show that these approaches lack global analysis of the territory. Especially the typology of agri-food chains based on the Neo-Institutional Economics theory need to be relocated, preceded or supplemented with the help of other tools and in particular those of the systemic analysis (production or processes). This shift towards a “dynamic” conceptualization of local development approaches occurs in parallel to the shift from the classical economic paradigm to the evolutionary economic paradigm. We assume that sustainable development strategies should be considered in the broader context of the forms of market integration of products derived from specific resources. We show that by only analyzing the events in a linear space time and focusing on the evolution of the use of the resource, other socio-economic changes that could be important factors in this evolution remain unrepresented. Thus, it is fundamental to be combined with other methods to recognize the different actors involved in the management of the territory and to clearly understand their interrelations (similarities in terms of interest, conflicts, neutral relations), to define their motivation in relation with the development objectives of their territory. It becomes crucial to understand the key actors involved in the process and their strategic decisions; to analyze their interests, their strengths, their legitimacy and their influence on the realization of our project is needed when external changes occurred.

(Partie 2 : Etat de l'art)

(Résumé)

Dans cette partie, nous faisons un état des lieux des approches de développement territorial. Nous montrons d'abord que ces approches manquent d'analyse globale du territoire. En particulier, la typologie des chaînes agroalimentaires basées sur la théorie de l'économie néo-institutionnelle doit être relocalisée, précédée ou complétée à l'aide d'autres outils et en particulier ceux de l'analyse systémique (production ou processus). Cette évolution vers une conceptualisation «dynamique» des approches de développement local se produit parallèlement au passage du paradigme économique classique au paradigme économique évolutif. Nous supposons que les stratégies de développement durable doivent être considérées dans le contexte plus large des formes d'intégration des produits dérivés de ressources spécifiques. Nous montrons qu'en analysant uniquement les événements dans un espace de temps linéaire et en se concentrant sur l'évolution de l'utilisation de la ressource, d'autres changements socio-économiques qui pourraient être des facteurs importants dans cette évolution restent non représentés. Ainsi, il est fondamental de se combiner avec d'autres méthodes pour reconnaître les différents acteurs impliqués dans la gestion du territoire et pour bien comprendre leurs interrelations (similitudes d'intérêt, conflits, relations neutres), pour définir leur motivation en relation avec le objectifs de développement de leur territoire. Il devient crucial de comprendre les acteurs clés impliqués dans le processus et leurs décisions stratégiques; pour analyser leurs intérêts, leurs forces, leur légitimité et leur influence sur la réalisation de notre projet est nécessaire lorsque des changements externes se produisent.

2.1 Theory of Transaction Costs and Value Chain

When the quality of a given product is easily measurable, the market is functioning relatively well and products are traded at their equilibrium price. However, when the quality of products becomes variable, costs of measuring quality appear. These measuring costs affect both the seller and buyer in the resulting exchange of goods.. The seller must incur costs of measuring the quality in order to fix his prices and the buyer must incur costs to measure the value of the goods. The principle of measurement cost analysis is that agents will implement particular institutions to minimize measurement costs, sometimes going as far as suppressing information to prevent measurement (Barzel, 1982). Only organizational forms that minimize measurement costs will survive competition.

Quality can be measured according to defined standards between buyers and sellers, for ex. under the auspices of a local, national or international authority. This measure reduces "transaction costs" for actors (Coase, 1937). From a microeconomic point of view, the theory of transaction costs says the choice of the institutional arrangement is primarily based on economizing production and transaction costs (Williamson, 1991; Williamson, 1975). The main explanatory factors for these costs are: asset specificity, asymmetric information, limited rationality and opportunism (Brousseau and Codron, 1998). The last two factors create an information asymmetry between the actors. Some of the information that is held by an economic agent may not be known by others without a significant cost. Achieving the symmetry of information between the parties entails a cost. There are two types of information problems: firstly, the problem of uncertainty related to unanticipated changes during the exchange (the risk of hold-ups, the asymmetry of information, the problem of non-verifiability) and second, the exogenous uncertainty in the contract that includes technological uncertainty, regulatory and fiscal uncertainty, and competitive uncertainty.

According to (Kopman et al., 2014) a value chain can be described as a system of value-adding sources and destinations. It comprises all activities indispensable to bring farm products to consumers, including agricultural production, processing, storage, marketing, distribution, and consumption (Gómez et al., 2013). Literature considers linkages between value chain actors and examines the added value from farmers to distributors and to retailers (Maestre et al., 2017; Gereffi et al., 2005).

The value chain is a matter of coordination and collective choices of the value chain actors for the production and/or the supply of a differentiated product. As a system, the interdependence of agents is crucial. These relationships may be complementary (technical division of labour between operators, construction of the value chain), solidarity (attitude towards the public authorities) and/or competition (ownership of upstream or downstream markets, distribution of added value, control of the management of the sector, etc.). Since the product often serves to name the value chain (milk and meat value chain) it seems appropriate to start from primary production, at the level of farmers or farms, and then:

- to follow the product downstream through the various marketing channels and various stages of processing to the markets for domestic consumption.
- to identify upstream the main suppliers of inputs, tools and services that contribute to production.

We therefore "follow" the product during its successive transformations. When we go downstream, the problems are essentially about the determination of "subsectors" related to different processing techniques and different products or by-products. A typical example is

that of associated channels, of the "milk" subsector type or the "meat" sub-sector, which cannot be dissociated in the case of livestock production activity.

The mobilization of the Theory of Transaction Costs is justified in the analysis of agro-food chains for several reasons. First, in the agri-food chains, we are most often in the presence of hybrid forms (Ménard, 2004), and not of hierarchical or market-based forms of coordination, clearly belonging to the neoclassical economy. Second, agents have a limited rationality. The risks are high because of the climatic hazards and the volatility of the markets. Third, transactions do not occur in a frictionless economic environment (Hobbs, 1997). The high specificity of the assets is also risky, because it leads to high transaction costs and an original mode of governance (Raynaud et al., 2005). The institutional economics shows the driving role of quality signs, in particular labels and geographical indications (Sylvander, 1997, Lagrange et al., 1999), in the functioning value chain links and decisions of agents (Bouhsina et al., 2002). Table 1 below gives a typology of agri-food chains based on neo-institutional theory

Table 2: Typology of agri-food chains based on Neo-Institutional Economics theory

Value Chain Type	Standard (Market)	Contractual (Hybrid)	Coordinated (Integrated)
Products characteristics	Compulsory norms	Standards defined by the dominant agent	Co-defined standards
Regulation type	« Spot » Market	Specific short and medium term contract	Specific medium long term contract
Legal construction	Transfer of ownership	Development of contract chains	Specific structures co-managed
Control agent	State + service companies	State + control companies + internal service	State + specific certifying bodies
Organisational form	Free	By the dominant agent	Cooptation
Risks	Volatility of the market	Minimisation	Taking complexity into account
Economic result	Market Price	Determined by short and medium term contract	Definition of medium and long term partnership rules

Source: (Rastoin & Ghersi, 2010)

The neo-institutional economics approach is considered as static and suffers from the great difficulty of measuring transaction costs. It deals with some problems of organization and coordination of actors in the value chains. Precisely, according to Jaffee (1992) there are some institutional arrangements where each buyer or seller looks for groups of suppliers or customers with whom they have a special relationship. Each party identifies the partners they trust and develops with them personalized and repetitive but “informal relationship”.

Economic exchanges must be analyzed as social relations in whom individual preferences are formed. This reasoning is all the more important in markets characterized by uncertainty (Akerlof, 1978) and illustrated in particular by the food markets for which uncertainty

concerns everything. The short food circuits demonstrate this perspective, in that they can be considered as forms of exchange that favour a dialogue around products where the quality of goods that circulates depends on complex and shared expectations by producers and consumers (Chiffolleau and Laporte, 2004).

The recent evolution of consumer behaviour, with a rise in "food anxiety" and nutritional concerns, reinforces the quality and traceability requirements of the products. This movement could stimulate a revival of the supply chain concept. It is a phase of disintegration/globalization (large-scale model) to a phase of geographic rapprochement (proximity chains). The definition of proximity chains demands a deep analysis of interactions - of a spatial and organizational nature - between actors, between technical objects or between actors and objects.

The organizational proximity analysis the actors who belong to the same space of relations in which interactions are formed and actors who have the same reference space and share the same knowledge, so that the institutional dimension is then important while the geographic proximity deals with separation in space and links in terms of distance. The idea of an articulation between two types of proximity is valid for all that concerns the agricultural production activities at the local level. It is thus important in the analysis of relations maintained at local level between producers and institutional actors.

That's why the typology of agri-food chains based on the Neo-Institutional Economics theory need to be relocated, preceded or supplemented with the help of other tools and in particular those of the systemic analysis (production or processes).

2.2 The Localised Agrifood Systems (LAFS)

The Localized Agrifood Systems approach is well anchored in the sustainable development literature. This conceptualization aims at understanding the territorialisation dynamics and the processes of territorial anchoring of agri-food activities. The territorial anchorage of agricultural and agri-food activities is considered the fruit of a long-term complex process. Territorial anchorage is dependent on the global context, national policies, the choices of the producers and their organizations, and consumer food cultures. In the LAFS study, three categories of links can be distinguished: natural and material variables (nature of the soil, climate, landscapes, and physicochemical characteristics of the products); cultural variables (knowledge, identity and food references); socio-economic and institutional networks. The combination of these three perspectives seems essential to tackle the territorial anchoring of productive activities.

The "territorial" development approach allows local actors to define a development policy based on the realities, strengths, constraints (weaknesses), needs and opportunities of a given area. It is based on a global and concerted approach of the territory, and on the search for integration of local (endogenous) resources (Theys, 2002). According to Bérard and Marchenay (1995), the quality of the products is a social construction, which is based on an evolutionary and historical-spatial logic of the communities. According to Valceschini and Mazé (2000), in terms of differentiation, the distinction between products of specific or higher quality, which use the notion of links at the origin and those manufactured according to industrial standards, tends to be weakened by the integration into the industrial ranges. Sustainable development strategies should be considered in the broader context of the forms of market integration of products derived from heritage resources. The impacts of this

heritage resource on the use of other specific resources, whether natural or human (expertise), are also important for sustainable development strategy.

2.2.1 LAFS and farming systems approach

In disadvantaged rural areas, the LAFS (Localized Agri-food Systems) helps us understand both the industry activity concentration and the spatial dynamics generated by food microenterprises, which are usually considered as backward, informal/illegal and not competitive in the global market (Beber & Cerdan, 2010). Local agri-food products are seen as an alternative response to the global, industrial and massive distribution agri-food systems, and regarded as an essential tool in the development strategy for depressed or marginalized rural territories. Those responsible for rural development consider local or traditional agri-food products to be an important weapon against depopulation, and those in charge of developing tourism see them as instrumental in structuring and preserving the landscape. Moreover, the demand for “quality” as well as for something “local” has been increasing, leading to the creation of real opportunities to revitalize rural economies.

According to (Manoli et al., 2011) understanding the diversity of production systems in a given territory is a key for analyzing the territory as a space when society and institutions interact locally. Thus, a production system corresponds to a "set of farms with access to comparable resources (same range and herd range, level of equipment, and work team size) placed under similar socio-economic conditions, and who practice a given combination of production. (Cochet, Devienne, and Dufumier 2007). The livestock system is defined at the scale of the herd or part of it. It is a set of elements in dynamic interaction organized by the farmer in order to valorize resources by means of domestic animals to obtain various productions or to answer other objectives (Landais, 1992). The activity system includes the production system and other sources of revenue for members included in the system; this may correspond to another occupation, but also to a business activity or the provision of capital such as pensions this aspect is very important because it is an essential element in the logic of many systems and can, for example, explain why farms are maintained while the conditions of their intrinsic profitability are not met.

Manoli et al., (2011) emphasize the importance of connecting spaces and resources to livestock activities when studying a farming system. The farming systems studies focus on "the diversity of existing production systems in a given territory". This type of approach has the advantage of being quite encompassing with respect to the territorial context of farming systems. According to Cochet (2011), it is first and foremost important to have an approach in terms of agrarian systems to create a good dynamic vision at the scale of a territory. Thus, a good agrarian diagnosis is made by going back and forth between the different levels of study - agrarian system, activity system, farming system - of a production system to obtain a full vision of territorial dynamics of the given territory. The concept of agrarian system encompasses the following aspects, 1. The mode of exploitation and reproduction of one or more ecosystems, 2. The social relations of production and exchanges that have contributed to its establishment and development, 3. The modalities of social division of labor and the distribution of value added, 4. The mechanisms of differentiation between basic production units, 5. Overall economic and social conditions, in particular the relative price system, which lay down the modalities for its further integration.

Farming systems approach in the particular context of a marginalized mountain territory, demand to analyse the different spatial, temporal and social organization scales that could explain the current dynamics of occupation/use of pastoral resources. The farming systems

approach lacks the analysis of local development trajectories at the level of rural communities or of a municipality and thus neglects the temporal dimension of transformation processes. Indeed, the interest in terms of development trajectory lies in the fact that these terms allow the temporal and spatial dimensions of territorial dynamics to be represented and integrated in order to give meaning to the complexity of change. According to (Sabourin et al., 2004) the trajectory of development is defined as "the evolution of productive resources and their reorganization, in time and space, by a group of social actors within a defined territory, in order to reproduce or improve their living conditions, determined in part by the influence of external factors and actors".

The LAFS approach combined with the agrarian approach give a historical vision of the factors that affect the development processes of the chosen territory. However, this combined analysis is still lacking. By only analyzing the events in a linear space time and focusing on the evolution of the use of the resource, other socio-economic changes that could be important factors in this evolution remain unrepresented. Consequently, the global analysis can be enriched by identifying and including the break points of this trajectory. This will make it possible to analyze the major changes in the socio-temporal evolution of the territorial resource and the effect that these breakpoints inflict on the exploitation of the resource.

2.2.2 Identifying the territorial resources issues of a given territory

The territorial approach that seeks to identify the social processes of construction and valorisation of territorial resources of a given territory can be a methodological tool to identify the specificities of the resource (Mollard, 2001). A resource refers to the means available to an individual or a group to carry out an action to create economic wealth. We can consider as a "resource" any material object (a product for example) or immaterial (a know-how, a cultural heritage, etc.) whose value is recognized locally, and which can therefore be the subject of an individual or collective valuation (Brunet et al., 1993). A territorial resource is a constructed characteristic of a specific territory as analyzed by its development perspective (Pecqueur and Gumuchian., 2007). Furthermore, the territorial resources are *"specific resources that can be revealed by an intentional process, engaging a collective dynamic of appropriation by the actors of the territory, of different nature depending on whether they are valued market or not"* (Senil et al., 2006).

The development of specific resources achieves a socially constructed organization of the territory such that "specific and typical products make for the consumer a real territorial offer" (Pecqueur., 2001). Logically in a given territory, the resource is not "one and indivisible". It consists of a set of objects or elements that contribute to its specificity: know-how, landscape, agricultural production or livestock (eg cow or sheep's milk), valuation systems (networks of actors associations, cooperatives, etc.). These sets, which can be referred to as resource components, need to be analyzed or evaluated to enable the identification stage where the resources are in their activation processes.

The territorial approach lacks global analysis of the territory. It is a fundamental component to be combined with other methods to recognize the different actors involved in the management of the territory and to clearly understand their interrelations (similarities in terms of interest, conflicts, neutral relations), to define their motivation in relation with the development objectives of their territory. The actors, individual or collective, possess a variable power of action and decision-making, various resources and objectives, and are key elements of the dynamics of the territory. It becomes crucial to understand the key actors

involved in the process and their strategic decisions; to analyze their interests, their strengths, their legitimacy and their influence on the realization of our project is needed when external changes occurred.

2.3 The common territorial resource and its governance

The territorial resource is more than a natural resource; it is a resource that results from the history, culture and specificity of places that transform it into a very specific resource. (Campagne and Pecqueur, 2014). The territorial resource object intentionally constructed can be of material components (material data, fauna, flora, landscape) and/or ideals (values like the authenticity, the historical depth, the culture, etc.). There are two ways of differentiation of the territories. The first way, centred on supply, in the Ricardian tradition is a rent. The second way is the product quality approach that differentiates demand from the Marshallian tradition of the consumer surplus. In the first case, a "*territorial rent*" is formed through the social processes of specification and differentiation of the productive potential of the territories. In the second case, we highlight the "*quality rent*" that emerges from the differentiation of consumer preferences and the existence of a high surplus to benefit from the various attributes of quality products. These two rents are combined when there are reciprocal links between territory and quality, creating the "*territorial quality rent*", which values the potential of these territories. The product is of a superior quality because its source of typicality is linked to the territory thus giving a territorial quality rent to this product (Pecqueur, 2001).

The quality of a product from a specific territory gives this product a differentiation resulting from the conditions of production, the reputation of the territory, tradition and history. This gives an added value of reputation, which exists thanks to the "link to the terroir", and built over time by the management of quality and promotion (Barjolle and Jeanneaux, 2016). Prévost et al., (2014) determine "terroir" as a productive and local cultural system. According to (Casabianca et al., 2011) a "terroir" is a delimited geographical space, characterized by a human community, built in the course of its history, a collective knowledge of production, based on a system of interactions between a physical and biological environment, and a set of human factors. The socio-technical itineraries thus being important, reveal originality, confer typicality, and lead to a reputation, for a property originating from this geographical space. The typicality of a product originating from agriculture is the property of belonging to a type, distinguished and identified by a given human group possessing knowledge distributed among the various actors of the sector: knowledge to establish, to know to produce, to know how to evaluate, to know how to appreciate. It should not be confused with conformity to a standard and admits an internal variety to the type. Among the many expressions of typicality, the typicality linked to the terroir is a particular construction that concretizes the effect of the terroir for a given product.

2.3.1 Defining the common

A common can be defined as:

- a resource in the field of necessity, that is to say the most vital material resources (air, water, earth crust) and those that derive from it: energy, housing, health, knowledge and culture ...
- a collective (or community) interested in this resource and wanting to act on it
- a set of governance rules for this resource co-defined by the collective,
- The above three elements forming a social, economic and democratic whole, integrated in a well-defined territorial environment constitute a common.

A grid of presentation and analysis of a common:

1. Founding principles of a common

- 1.1. Confrontation with a problematic reality and desire to transform it
- 1.2. Affirmed leadership of one or two people gathering around a together
- 1.3. Creation of a collective part of an autonomous movement seeking a solution and cooperative creation

2. Variables of a common

2.1. Territorialization:

How and by whom are the geographical limits of competence of a community defined?

2.2. Legal framework:

- Private or public property?
- Right of use, customary law?

2.3. Self-organization and self-governance:

How to make decisions?

2.4. Polycentrism:

Maximum decentralization of decision-making

2.5. Surveillance:

When "stowaways" appear in a common device, how is it handled?

2.6. Conflicts:

- Internal management of the common device.
- With the outside stakeholders/interests

2.7. Commitment of public actors (official support, subsidies ...) and partnerships with private actors (companies, business foundations ...)?

2.8. Networks:

Nesting with Geographically Related Units and / or Practices

The anchor of a common, its object, is therefore first a resource, whose governance necessarily involves many actors who, although having intentions and projects that may be divergent, cannot usually do without one another (Poteete et al., 2010). One of the main characteristics of the commons highlighted by Ostrom (1990) is that of "polycentric" governance, that is to say, by multiplying the spaces of decisions closer to local realities.

2.3.2 The territorial quality rent

Geographical Indication (GI) labelling and GI collective organisations have the potential to solve various problems in poor rural areas with fragile ecosystems. However, some GI with impressive economic successes, such as Tequila, are not entirely beneficial when we look at the social and environmental production conditions (Reviron et al., 2009). Bowen and Gerritsen (2007) identified negative impacts of tequila sales development on small producers' conditions (access to the market, negotiation power). In fact, the norms that regulate tequila production fail to protect traditional agricultural practices (Bowen and Zapata, 2009).

A remunerative local product can lead to abuses in the "mining" exploitation of territorial resources. As a result, if a given resource in a given territory is a key element of value creation, its optimal and collective management is an important issue for environmental sustainability, and also economic and social sustainability. The collective management of a good must respect management principles that favour the optimal use of resources, knowing

that the market is not the only guiding principle for regulating the use of resources when they are in free and unrestricted access (common good). According to (Hardin, 1968) when a resource is freely accessible, each user can use this resource without limit, which leads to its disappearance. Ostrom (1990) analyzes the keys to success for the management of "commons", which are the natural resources that may be under pressure from local actors, when local governance does not prevent abuses. The agrarian diagnosis (Cochet, 2011) gives an overview of the agrarian system in terms of its functioning and then makes an analysis of the management of the resource through the Ostrom grid.

The commons constitute a historic institutional form that allows collective action by which the protagonists themselves define the common good, the institutional structure that ensures its sustainability, and the rules of access and use, based on a principle of mutual trust and sanction in case of transgression of the commonly accepted rules. Elinor Ostrom offers a very inspiring vision of the commons in her book, published in 1990, "Governing the commons. The Evolution of Institution for Collective Action". Elinor/Ostrom identified eight common characteristics that can serve as principles for maintaining common goods in good condition: (1) clearly defined boundaries that are recognized; (2) rules of access and appropriation that are in line with local social and environmental conditions; (3) collective rules allowing users of the commons to participate in decision-making; (4) a monitoring of the use and the state of the common good realized by users and mandated by the community; (5) a graduated scale of sanctions against those who exceed the community rules; (6) conflict resolution mechanisms that are simple and easily accessible; (7) the self-determination of the community is recognized and encouraged by successive senior levels of authority; (8) through nested governance, common-property resource governance is organized in interconnected layers from local to regional levels. The Ostrom grid of understanding relating to the commons allows us to analyze the conditions in which the state entities - notably the de-concentrated services, the municipalities, and the decentralized communities creates, with other actors, polycentric governance. According to (Fournier et al., 2018) reputation is the resource managed collectively by various actors, state or not, in a polycentric context. Beyond the formal structures of governance, built trust becomes the key factor of success. This trust is concretely manifested by the implementation of a principle of subsidiary made possible by the maturity of the social organizations involved.

2.3.3 Collective governance and market access

In a world where quality is easily measurable, the market is functioning relatively well and products are traded at their equilibrium price. However, when the quality of products becomes variable, costs of measuring quality appear. These measuring costs affect both the seller and buyer in the resulting exchange of goods. The seller must incur costs of measuring the quality in order to fix his prices and the buyer must incur costs to measure the value of the goods. The principle of measurement cost analysis is that agents will implement particular institutions to minimize measurement costs, sometimes going as far as suppressing information to prevent measurement (Barzel, 1982). Only organizational forms that minimize measurement costs will survive competition.

Social construction in a territory contributes to reduce transaction costs between firms and is therefore a relevant factor for coordinating collective actions (Leloup et al., 2005). If in a given territory, the product is managed by a collective organization that brings together local actors, and that organization agrees on a collective specification (social construction of a local standard), the cost of their transaction to access the market is reduced, because the quality of

the product is therefore measurable. By reducing the transaction costs for the group and therefore for each individual, the territorial rent increases. Quality can be measured according to defined standards between buyers and sellers, for ex. under the auspices of a local, national or international authority. This measure reduces "transaction costs" for actors (Coase, 1937). From a microeconomic point of view, the theory of transaction costs is based on the idea that the choice of the institutional arrangement is primarily based on logic of minimizing the costs of production and transaction (Williamson, 1975). The main explanatory factors for these costs are: asset specificity, asymmetric information, limited rationality and opportunism (Brousseau and Codron, 1998). The last two factors create an information asymmetry between the actors. Some of the information that is held by an economic agent may not be known by others without a significant cost. Achieving the symmetry of information between the parties entails a cost. There are two types of information problems: firstly, the problem of uncertainty related to unanticipated changes during the exchange, the risk of hold-ups (Mazé, 2002), the asymmetry of information, the problem of non-verifiability and second, the exogenous uncertainty in the contract that includes technological uncertainty, regulatory and fiscal uncertainty, and competitive uncertainty.

2.3.4 GIs essential to preserve the value potential of products

If the virtuous circle of quality will be established, the product must be legally recognized and protected (Barjolle, 2006) against imitations or other products proclaiming the same quality (due to the asymmetries of information between buyer and seller that result from the inability to reliably report on characteristics, such as origin, at the time of sale of the product). In this case, official quality signs, such as GIs, can signal to consumers the quality of the product even if it is not directly perceptible, and consumers pay a remunerative price which then generates a stable source of income for producers (Fournier, 2008).

A GI thus materializes a resource, protecting the reputation of a specific local product and the name associated with it. This name can only be used by the localized community of producers and processors who have constituted know-how of collective production at the origin of the reputation.

Considering GIs as common territorial resources makes it possible to insist that in order for GIs to be "resourceful" for local economic actors and endure, institutional arrangements must be established around them to ensure successful long-term management. Moreover, this conception of GIs as common goods justifies the frequent public intervention in the construction and regulation of GIs observed in many countries (Belletti et al., 2015; Durand and Fournier, 2017; Marie-Vivien, 2012).

The interdependence of the actors along with the necessary construction of specific rules for the proper management of their GIs requires/necessitates collective mobilization by the actors. Consequently a GI product can be considered as a common resource for the actors. In this case the sustainability of common resources can only be assured by collective and democratic management and the construction of rules of use which will avoid over-utilization (Fournier et al., 2016). This conceptualization is seen as a justification for frequent public intervention in the construction and regulation of GIs (Belletti et al., 2015; Durand and Fournier 2015). The national framework of legal and institutional conditions is crucial for assuring that the institutional conditions for good governance of common resources, and therefore of the GIs, functions as a useful tool for preserving and protecting these resources.

Part 3: Methodology

Abstract

The objectives of the thesis we mentioned in the general introduction are discussed in more details together with the research questions and hypothesis. We also specify the conceptual framework, which is based on the territorial development methodological approach, by applying it in a particular context such as the Albanian case. In order to better understand the case study we take a dynamic view and, more importantly, a mixed-methods approach to analyze local dynamics. Furthermore, a short description of the case study is made (Municipality of Vithkuq, southern Albania) and the rationale of selecting it is specified. The municipality of Vithkuq has a long history in livestock production. It has to a rich flora and fauna of pastures producing animal products of high flavor and quality that are well known by local and Albanian consumers. Finally, the structure of the thesis on the following parts is specified: the three articles (part 4, 5 and 6), the general discussion (part 7), and the general conclusion (part 8).

(Partie 3: Méthodologie)

(Résumé)

Les objectifs de la thèse que nous avons mentionnée dans l'introduction générale sont discutés plus en détail avec les questions de recherche et les hypothèses. Nous précisons également le cadre conceptuel, qui repose sur l'approche méthodologique du développement territorial, en l'appliquant dans un contexte particulier tel que le cas albanais. Afin de mieux comprendre l'étude de cas, nous adoptons une vision dynamique et, plus important encore, une approche par méthodes mixtes pour analyser les dynamiques locales. De plus, une brève description de l'étude de cas est faite (municipalité de Vithkuq, sud de l'Albanie) et les raisons de sa sélection sont précisées. La municipalité de Vithkuq a une longue histoire dans la production animale. La richesse de la flore et de la faune des pâturages produit des produits animaux de grande qualité et de grande saveur, bien connus des consommateurs locaux et albanais. Enfin, la structure de la thèse sur les parties suivantes est spécifiée: les trois articles (partie 4, 5 et 6), la discussion générale (partie 7) et la conclusion générale (partie 8).

3.1 Problem statement

Mediterranean mountain territories have great potential in terms of territorial resources but they are not sufficiently competitive and resilient in the current socio-economic context. Based on a global to local analysis of these economic conditions, this thesis test, analyze and develop methodological approach to local development based on mobilization and activation of local and specific territorial resources, in order to empower the economic conditions of these territories. It seeks to illucidate the role of collective action in organising local actors for bringing added value to their production. In a more theoretical perspective, it aims towards a deeper understanding of farming systems, resource governance issues and added value creation in mountain food chains. The methodological approach is adapted to the variety of methods and varying level of analysis used in current field results, thus enabling a global comprehension of the local communities in order to extrapolate the results and compare them with the national context. At conclusion is a comprehensive discussion of the key elements and issues that this thesis identified in terms of value chains governance, local farming systems and collective governance issues.

3.2 Research objectives

The first objective of the thesis is the analysis of the national value chains of most important animal products, those that are crucial at the national level as well as for local communities. The hypothesis for this first objective was that in a context of economic crisis, and although the governance of pastoral sectors is weak from the economic point of view due to inefficient institutional and legal frameworks, collective initiatives for the valorisation of emerging animal products may, under certain conditions, become vectors of local economic development. The results show that the two most important animal product value chains have evolved due to the recent demand of urban markets for these products, and that the interactions of the actors along these value chains offers the possibility to trigger a virtuous circle of remuneration mechanism (Vandecandelaere et al., 2009) if some conditions are fulfilled. Identifying products by their “potential of valorisation” might thus be more appropriate for the overall objective of the thesis.

Based on the primary/preliminary results for the selected case study, the second specific objective aims towards/at a deep understanding of the local farming systems, with the goal of indentifying local actors and dynamics that contribute to the economic development of the selected case study. Consequently, the second hypotheses of this thesis was that after the collectivization period, the local agro pastoral farming systems of the selected case study have gradually adapted to the new political and economic context. However, the lack of public support has led to weak development of the two most important value chains. In fact, local trajectory developments show that some groups of family farmers have increased their herd size causing some changes in the management and in the intensity of the use of common good pastures. It appears that the lack of specific policies has harmed natural resource management.

Through answering the second hypothesis, it was indentified that the common pastures are crucial for the majority of the local farmers and that the recent public policies for natural resources management have affected the access to and the use of the common pastures. The third objective of the thesis is to analyze, in depth, the local dynamics and the resource governance mechanisms that affect farmers in the selected case study. The third hypothesis of this thesis is that these public policies may weaken or strengthen the local communities according to the communities’ capacities to adapt their local collective governance modalities.

3.3 The research questions

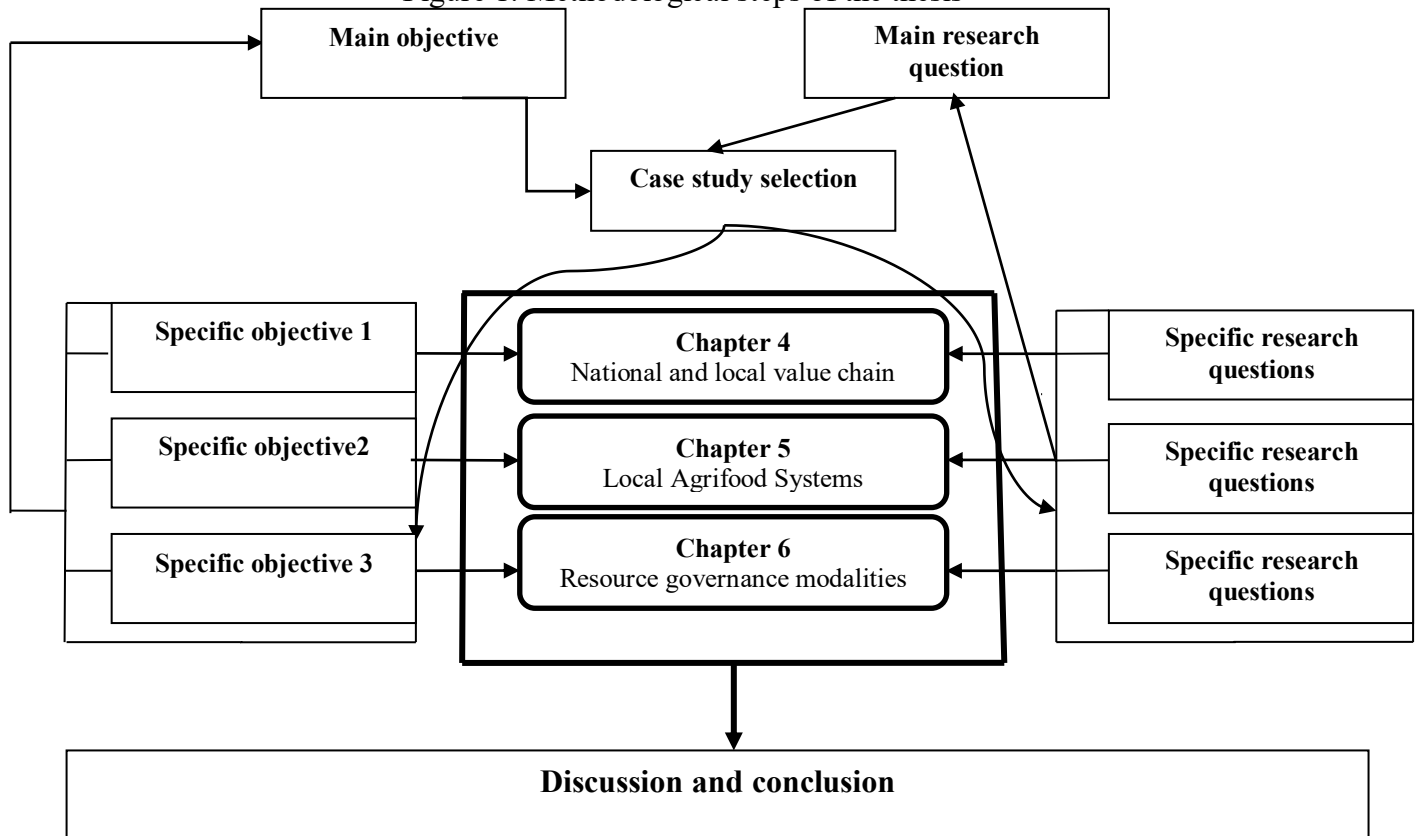
Based on the main objective of the thesis, the main research question was to analyze how in the current socio-economic context, mountain food value chains are constructed and how mountain food actors construct their regulatory resource governance frames? Every specific objective is related to specific research questions.

The first specific objective was to analyze the brakes and opportunities for developing quality products through two main research questions. The first research question was to understand how the nature of the transactions explains the forms of market organization for the pastoral value chains at national level and for the selected case study. The second research question was to understand the factors that local actors can mobilize to increase their income, by improving the valorization and the collective form of governance of one or more specific product(s).

The second specific objective was to analyze the potential of the local agro pastoral farming systems and market integration perspectives through two main research questions. The first research question was to understand the evolution of the family farming model and the specificities of the local agro pastoral farming system in the selected case study after the fall of communism in 1991. The second research question was to understand the market integration perspectives of the local livestock production and the pastoral resource management issues.

The result of the primary and secondary specific objectives lead to the third specific objective, to analyze how the decentralization processes of the pasture management have affected the local communities of the selected case study, through two main research questions. The first research question is: to what extent have governmental and institutional changes in resource use affected pasture management at the local level? The second research question is: how, in this new context of new governmental and institutional changes, among the various communities affected by the same change, does any appropriate resource governance exist. The methodological steps of the thesis are shown in the figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Methodological steps of the thesis



3.4 The Albanian case study

In 1991, Albania (like all the other communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEEC) embarked on a process of economic reforms, after what had been a long period of political dictatorship and planned economy (1945-1991). Albania's reforms are among the most important in Eastern Europe because of their radical characteristics and the type of liberalization they induced. These reforms were aimed at moving from a centrally planned economy to a market economy on the European model. The collapse of Albania's political regime, accompanied by the slowness of the new structural reforms, led to almost total anarchy from 1991 to 1992. In fact, Albania's transition to a market economy, which begun in 1991, caused the collapse of the collectivist system. These economic reforms led to a dramatic change from the old agricultural landscape, composed of 652 agricultural cooperative units and State Farms with an average size of 1,050 ha, to a new agricultural landscape composed of more than 460 thousand micro farms of 1.3 ha each on average (Müller & Munroe, 2008). By seeking equality between the categories of land distributed to rights holders and the conditions of production (irrigated land or not, land in lowland, hill or mountain areas, near or far from the road, etc.), the land distribution commissions (as defined by Law 7501, 1991) further fragmented the land belonging to each family, creating some 1.8 million parcels. This means that a peasant family with a surface area of 1.3 ha can have 4 to 7 small plots of 0.1 to 0.2 ha each, with distances of 1 to 10 km from the house or a plot to the other (World Bank, 1992, p. 60). This radical and egalitarian reform has created a unique "agrarian facies". According to this law, Albania did not recognize old property rights and redistributed agricultural land, proportionally, according to the number of members within the families who lived in the villages.

Like other Mediterranean territories, Albania has great topographical contrasts; relief is the basic component of landscapes and morphological features play an important role in the development of agriculture. Most of Albania's territory is considered rural (about 58%) and most of Albania's human labour potential resides in rural areas. In the course of time, rural residences in Albania have created their physiognomy and originality according to the characteristics of the relief, the dominant economic activity, the relations of production, the administrative-urban organization, etc.,. Albania is principally a mountainous country: 45% of its surface is located at an altitude higher than 1000m. This relief does not make cultivation easy - the vast majority of the country is made up of mountains or hills - more than half of the agricultural land has a slope greater than 5%. Mechanization is difficult, erosive processes are frequent and yields are lower than in lowland crops (Dhimitri et al., 2012). This diversity of landscapes is observed in the Korçë region in the south-east of Albania. The Korçë Plain - the second largest agricultural plain in the country lies between mountain ranges whose peaks reach more than 2000 meters above sea level. The plain is cultivated while these massifs are mainly covered with meadows and forests. It is in these massifs that the extensive breeding of cattle and small ruminants has been developed (Mavromati et al., 2011). Indeed, because of pedoclimatic conditions favorable to the growth of grass (relatively high rainfall, fairly mild temperatures in summer), these massifs have a particularly rich resource: pastures (Bombaj et al., 2017).

The milk and meat value chains take an important place in the Albanian agrifood sector (MAFCP 2016). But the majority of farms remain small and fragmented. They are facing major constraints such as poor physical infrastructure, lack of state support and a non-competitive market situation. Albania is considered as a mountain territory where the small ruminants represent more than 86 percent of the total herd size at the national level (MAFCP 2016). In mountainous areas, livestock production is one of the main economic sources for breeders. According to (Lerin and Marku 2010) during the period 1989-2008 there was a population reduction of 18.69% in the mountainous areas and 5.77% in areas with a strong mountainous predominance. Consequently there was a strong concentration of the population in the urban areas creating an increasing demand for animal products on the national market. Despite farmers' efforts to adapt to markets, great difficulties continue to threaten the sale of local products on the national market. The fragmentation of supply and the absence of product quality control mechanisms and market regulation contribute to this dysfunction (Biba and Kerçuku, 2013). Mountain cheeses benefit from an important potential for consumer recognition (Bourbouze and François, 2001) meanwhile current national data shows that Albanian consumers have a strong preference for local products. Despite this promising opportunity, farmers located in the mountainous areas produce mainly generic undifferentiated products for the consumers in the cities. Although their products have strong potential for developing GIs.

This particular economic transition has affected the farming systems especially in the mountains areas. The frequent institutional changes on the resource use, especially for the pastoral resource, and the richness of the pastoral practices by local farmers are key elements that need to be analyzed and understood. Thus, a global analysis of the national milk and meat value chains at the national and local level accompanied by a local farming systems and resource governance issues analysis can give not only a better comprehension of the Albanian mountains territories development issues but also can enrich the literature about particular contexts when dominant economic theory doesn't completely explain the economic reality of local communities.

3.5 Approach, methods and plan of the thesis

Developing methods and tools for endogenous sustainable development can stimulate the potential of valorization in terms of products whose quality is linked to origin. This thesis test, analyze and develop methodological approach to local development based on mobilization and activation of local and specific territorial resources suitable for marginalized mountain territories. Furthermore, it analyse the role of collective action in organising local actors for bringing added value to their production in order to formulate public policy recommendations which governments can employ to foster development especially in these marginalized territories. Given the complexity of the Albanian mountain livelihood communities and the frequent changing socioeconomic context, this thesis has adapted the global approach and combined several methods to better understand this complexity.

The fourth chapter of this thesis addresses the two research questions of the first objective. The second objective is covered respectively with chapter five. The third objective is covered with the chapter six. Chapter four to six address research questions with a focus on the same case study. Questions addressed in chapters 4-6 are based on a deep analysis of the area of the case study. This thesis and the steps and processes that contributed to the different chapters can be followed with the help of the diagram in figure 2. The process started within a European and Albanian context and literature analysis, including government institutions, national and regional NGOs, stakeholders and expert consultation. The goal was to identify areas of critical importance for the identification and valorisation of local products having great potential for the development of the selected research site (Bombaj et al., 2015).

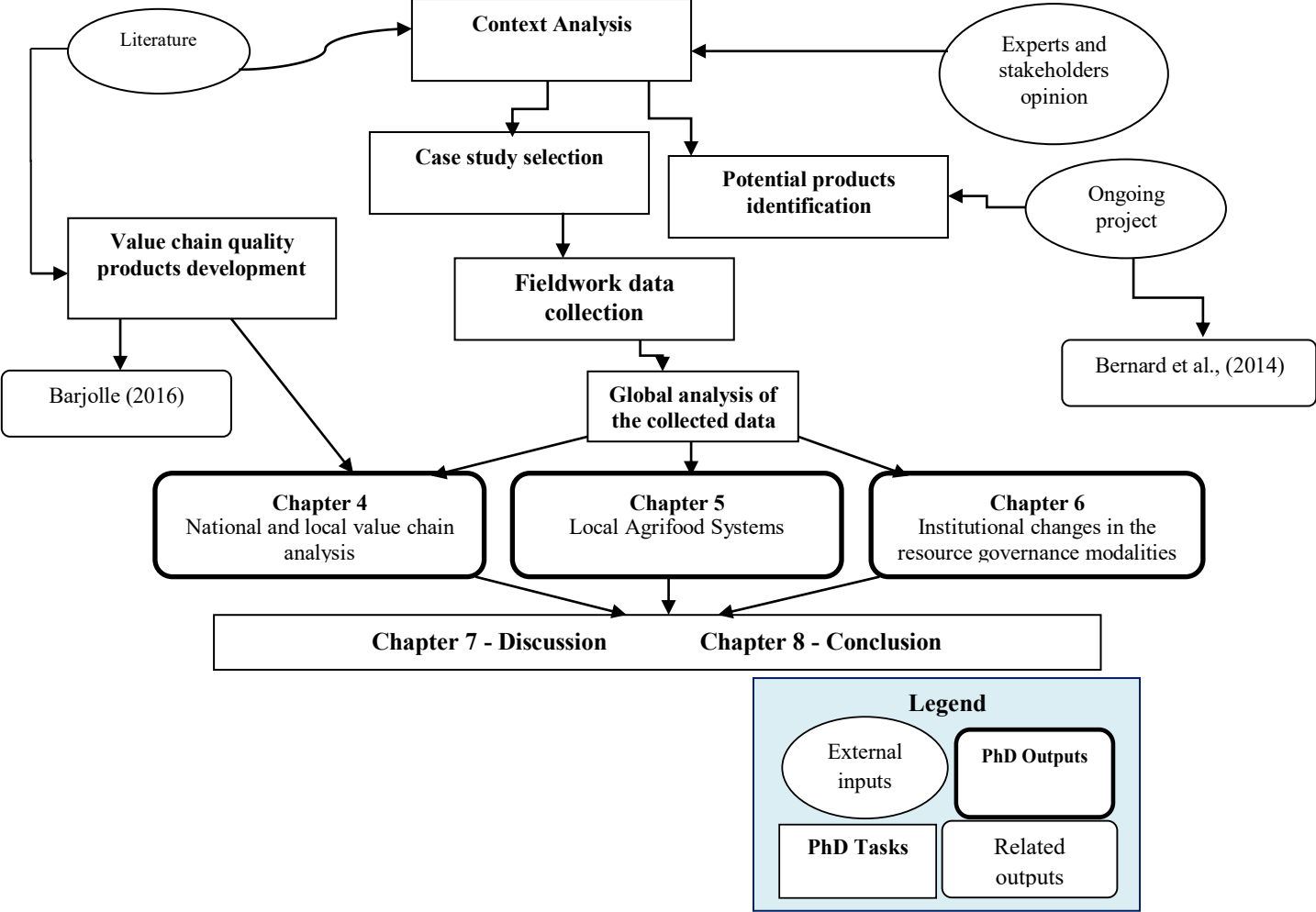
This analytical framework was conducted through many field works. Results from the first field work guided the final selection of the case study, which would form the basis for the entire work of the thesis. Simultaneously, a national level Albanian value chain analysis combined with a local value chain analysis was conducted for the two products having the most potential to be valorised (milk and meat) with the goal to test our methods for robustness and further elaborate the thesis framework (Bombaj et al., 2016).

The chosen research site constituted the main set on which the research questions of chapters two and three have been tested. The results highlighted the need to extend the contextual and descriptive analysis of the selected research site before elaborating the full conclusions of the thesis. This extended analysis looked at the role of the national decentralization governance policies for the common resource identified in the previous chapters and how the local communities react to these frequent policy changes (chapter four). At the local level, stakeholders from all steps of the value chain, from breeders to consumers, have been taken into account, depending on their willingness to participate.

A major analytical effort concentrated on the legal and institutional aspects of the national and local value chains. Through this analysis we defined the need to better identify and analyse the selected case study at a very local level (objective 1). Better defined methods of analysis of local farming systems were thus necessary to position the case study along this continuum. Chapter two goes through a literature review and provides evidence of institutional issues that prevent the development and valorisation of the local products; it also discusses the collective initiatives which may, under certain conditions, become vectors of local economic development. This two factor review demonstrates how we can evaluate and identify products at a very local level with a perspective on the whole value chain. The second part of the chapter two identifies these conditions and includes the results of a stakeholder workshop.

The selected research site constituted the fieldwork for the further field data collection and analysis. The process of selecting relevant products having great potential for their valorisation was conducted within the expertise given by the national and regional institutions while considering selected indicators that fit best to the case study by identifying and linking at best the selected case study. The research site as a case study was selected in the southeast Albania. The data collection was operated mainly with interviews and site visits. The results of the fourth chapter, when compared with the results and data from an ongoing development project in north Albania which aims to valorise the same categories of products, identify critical issues for the valorisation of the given products (Bernard et al., 2014). Chapter five details the case study configurations, through analysing local farming systems and their issues in terms of resource management. Chapter six of this thesis synthesizes the findings of the chapters 4-5. The chapters 4-5 findings are situated on the national-local continuum with the issues defined in chapter three. The methods were used to conduct a deep analysis of the selected research site assessed in chapter three and four, including external references and to complete a global analysis of the case study. This method allows identifying and comparing processes and practices which can catalyse local development based on local resources identification and valorisation. A synthesis chapter including a review of the main findings and an outlook into implications and propositions for future research concludes the thesis.

Figure 2. Steps and workflow resulting in the eight chapters of this thesis



Partie 4 - Article: Freins et opportunités au développement des produits de qualité, cas des filières pastorales - Vithkuq, Albanie

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Résumé

Les ajustements économiques, structurels et les changements majeurs dans le secteur agricole ont conduit à une augmentation significative de la production de l'élevage en Albanie. La forte progression urbaine et la forte concentration de l'activité économique dans les villes font que la demande pour la viande augmente plus vite que la demande pour le lait. Les enquêtes montrent que la viande est très demandée par le marché malgré le fait qu'elle n'ait pas de logo ou marque. En analysant la structure de marché et les initiatives collectives de valorisation de produits au niveau local et national cet article essaie d'analyser les opportunités qui peuvent mobiliser les éleveurs pour augmenter leur revenu, en améliorant la valorisation et la forme collective de gouvernance autour d'un et de plusieurs produit(s) spécifique(s). Au niveau national des rapports, des bases de données, des projets en cours et d'autres données scientifiques disponibles ont été utilisés. Des documents, de la littérature grise et des interviews pour la collecte de données primaires ont été réalisés sur un site spécifique (la municipalité de Vithkuq). Au niveau régional et local, des documents ont été consultés et des entretiens ont été faits pour analyser le fonctionnement des filières lait/fromage et viande de la municipalité. Les résultats ont permis d'identifier les freins et les opportunités impactant le développement de ces filières.

Mots clés: Filière pastorales; Territoire de montagne; Initiatives collectives; Albanie

(Part 4 - Article: Brakes and opportunities for the development of quality products, the case of pastoral value chains - Vithkuq, Albania)

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(Abstract)

Economic, structural adjustments and major changes in the agricultural sector have led to a significant increase in livestock production in Albania. The strong urban growth and the high concentration of economic activity in the cities make the demand for meat increasing faster than the demand for milk. Surveys show that meat is highly demanded by the market despite the fact that it does not have a logo or brand. By analyzing the market structure and the collective initiatives of valorization of products at local and national level this article tries to analyze the opportunities which can mobilize the breeders to increase their income, improving the valorization and the collective form of governance around one and more specific product(s). At the national level, reports, databases, ongoing projects and other available scientific data were used. Documents, gray literature and interviews for the collection of primary data were carried out on a specific site (the municipality of Vithkuq). At regional and local level, documents were consulted and interviews were conducted to analyze the functioning of the milk, cheese and meat value chains of the municipality. The results made it possible to identify the obstacles and opportunities impacting the development of these sectors.

Key words: Pastoral value chains; Mountain territory; Collective initiatives; Albania

4.1 Introduction

Au niveau territorial, la mobilisation des ressources et actifs spécifiques locaux, parmi lesquels les produits du terroir, est une stratégie possible de développement territorial (Barjolle et al., 2007). Dans ce cadre, les signes de qualité tels que les indications géographiques intéressent de nombreux acteurs. L'indication géographique constitue aussi une protection des produits dont la qualité est liée à l'origine géographique contre les imitations trompeuses selon les accords sur les droits de propriété intellectuelle liés au commerce (ADPIC) conclu dans le cadre de l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce (OMC). Selon sa traduction dans le droit communautaire européen (règlement 510/2012), la mise en œuvre de l'IG ne requiert pas seulement l'existence d'un produit dans un territoire donné, mais également celle d'une filière d'acteurs mobilisée pour la protection et la valorisation.

L'Albanie est un pays méditerranéen caractérisé par un développement économique encore difficile, une faiblesse du tissu social et une fragilité environnementale. Après une longue période de dictature politique et d'économie planifiée (1945-1991), le pays s'est engagé dans un processus de réformes économiques visant l'intégration dans l'Union Européenne (UE). Depuis 1991 les régions rurales, qui se caractérisent par une grande pauvreté liée au déficit d'infrastructures et au contexte de faible activité économique, ont connu un exode rural élevé qui est particulièrement marqué dans les zones de montagne enclavées.

Depuis la moitié des années 2000, la progression de la population urbaine provoque une croissance de la demande pour la viande et les produits laitiers. Dans ce contexte, la demande pour la viande a augmenté plus rapidement que celle du fromage (MAAPC, 2016) et ceci surtout depuis 2012. L'un des territoires de montagne les plus réputés pour la viande et le fromage est la municipalité de Vithkuq, district de Korçë, dans le sud-est de l'Albanie. Au niveau du district, l'augmentation de la demande du marché pour la viande suit la même logique nationale. Pourtant, les éleveurs situés dans cette zone proposent aux consommateurs urbains principalement de la viande et produits laitiers génériques indifférenciés. Ces produits laitiers bénéficient d'un potentiel important de reconnaissance du consommateur (Bourbouze and François, 2001). Une meilleure coordination collective des éleveurs pourra valoriser leur production, en améliorant la qualité pour soutenir l'intérêt du consommateur, et en évitant les fraudes sur l'origine.

L'enjeu est de savoir quelles sont les conditions qui sont réunies mais aussi celles qui freinent, une meilleure valorisation de ces produits. Il s'agit finalement de comprendre comment un meilleur accès aux marchés par une meilleure organisation collective locale pourrait aider le développement économique, technique et social de cette zone enclavée.

4.2 Contexte de la recherche

La municipalité de Vithkuq est la plus étendue du district de Korçë, l'un des districts les plus développés économiquement en Albanie. Cette municipalité est particulièrement intéressante en tant que territoire pour notre recherche car c'est un territoire montagneux avec une connaissance et un savoir-faire profond et historique des systèmes d'élevage pastoraux en Albanie, dont les produits sont réputés localement mais aussi au niveau plus large jusque dans les villes albanaises y compris dans la capitale.

La municipalité possède :

- Un fort potentiel des produits pastoraux (lait/fromage et viande) connus pour leurs qualités gustatives en raison de leur origine montagnarde et pastorale.
- Des ressources naturelles diversifiées et de bonne qualité favorisant des activités multiples : agriculture, élevage, exploitation de la forêt, avec une forte importance de la ressource pastorale.

- Un capital social particulier caractérisé par cette tradition pastorale et par un métissage de références culturelles, avec plusieurs religions, origines claniques et ethniques.

Vithkuq, étant une des municipalités les plus grandes en Albanie, regroupe 13 villages sur une superficie de 243,6 km². Le climat méditerranéen, le relief accidenté, la nature des pâturages et les faibles moyens financiers des familles d'éleveurs font que les petits ruminants prédominent dans cette zone montagneuse (altitude entre 1000 et 1500m).

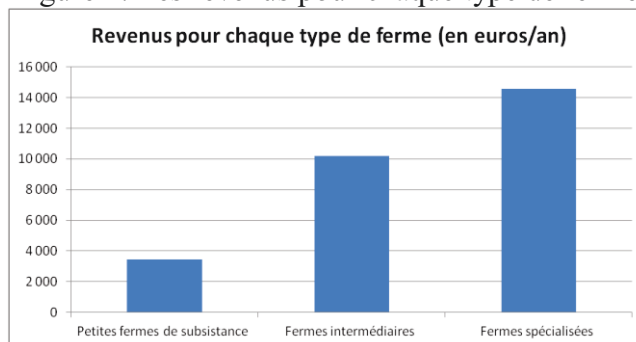
Figure 3. La municipalité de Vithkuq



Élaboré sur SIG par l'auteur

La majorité des exploitations (52% du total des fermes de la municipalité) fonctionnent en autosubsistance sans surplus commercial significatif. Elles comprennent des familles de doubles actifs ou de retraités qui gardent un petit troupeau et un lopin de terre. Les revenus de l'activité agricole ne sont pas suffisants pour le maintien du système (voir figure 4). Les autres revenus de la double activité (salaires ou retraite) sont importants car ils comptent pour plus de la moitié des revenus de la famille.

Figure 4. Les revenus pour chaque type de ferme



Source : (Gontard, 2016)

Les fermes intermédiaires (31% du total des fermes de la municipalité) sont caractérisées par un début de spécialisation accompagné de ventes assez conséquentes. Les revenus de l'activité agricole sont cinq fois plus élevés que ceux des fermes de subsistance. Les deux facteurs principaux qui contribuent à cette évolution économique sont la main d'œuvre jeune disponible et les possibilités de commercialisation des produits.

Les fermes spécialisées (16% du total des fermes de la municipalité) vendent la majorité de la production. Elles ont une orientation purement commerciale avec un revenu agricole en moyenne 7 fois plus élevé que ceux des fermes intermédiaires.

La majorité des producteurs de lait/fromage et de viande ont des coûts de production élevés en raison de leur faible productivité du travail et leur faible niveau technique. En outre, les infrastructures peu développées (et spécialement le réseau routier), l'éloignement des marchés d'écoulement des produits, le manque de capital pour investir dans la modernisation des logements familiaux et des bâtiments d'élevage, les installations et les outils de transformation, sont les contraintes majeures de développement des systèmes d'élevage de la municipalité.

4.3 Cadre théorique et question de recherche

Pour couvrir leurs coûts de production plus élevés qu'en plaine, les éleveurs dans les zones de montagne peuvent apporter des valeurs supplémentaires à leur production en créant une différenciation des produits. En adoptant une stratégie de promotion et de protection contre la concurrence déloyale (Belletti et al., 2014), les ressources territoriales spécifiques (produits locaux) peuvent créer de la valeur ajoutée pour une meilleure rémunération sur le marché (Barjolle et al., 2007). Le processus de qualification s'il est mené de manière participative, peut engendrer des temps de concertation et de formalisation importants (Barjolle & Sylvander, 2002; Tregear, Arfini, Belletti, & Marescotti, 2007). Le cercle vertueux de la qualité (Arfini, Belletti, & Marescotti, 2010), est une manière de représenter des effets bénéfiques au niveau de la mobilisation d'une gouvernance autour d'un produit local, avec un succès possible au niveau des consommateurs, capable d'enclencher un mécanisme de rémunération, en trouvant une niche sur le marché avec un prix rémunérateur, et ensuite, grâce à une organisation collective de gestion du produit, d'organiser une répartition de cette « plus-value d'image et de réputation » (Barjolle & Thévenod-Mottet 2005).

La possibilité pour les petits producteurs d'augmenter leurs revenus par ce mécanisme vertueux dépend de leur capacité à participer avec succès au marché. En fait, ils accèdent difficilement aux marchés pour vendre leurs produits à cause de leur capacité limitée pour participer efficacement aux marchés d'intrants. « *Les petits exploitants sont susceptibles de renforcer leur position sur les marchés en tant que vendeurs de produits alimentaires lorsque ces marchés leur offrent des incitations appropriées, qu'ils aient accès à des actifs qu'ils peuvent utiliser de manière productive et lorsqu'une infrastructure efficace leur permet de transporter leurs produits à des prix raisonnables* » (Arias et al., 2013).

L'analyse de la structure de marché permet d'identifier le régime dominant de concurrence qui va influencer la formation des prix et l'efficacité des acteurs au long d'une filière. La structure du marché se définit comme l'ensemble des caractéristiques organisationnelles qui déterminent les rapports des acteurs (acheteurs et vendeurs) entre eux, qu'ils soient installés ou potentiels. Ces caractéristiques influencent stratégiquement la concurrence et la formation du prix. Selon le principe d'efficacité, les acteurs choisissent le mode d'organisation qui minimise les coûts de production (Jeanneaux et al., 2009) et de transaction. Ainsi, les transactions passent plutôt par un marché « spot » lorsque cela accroît l'efficacité et par d'autres formes d'organisations avec des degrés variables de formalisation (depuis le contrat oral jusqu'à l'entreprise unifiée) lorsque cela minimise les coûts de transaction.

La nature des transactions détermine principalement le type d'arrangement institutionnel

retenu par les acteurs (Ménard, 2003). Williamson (1975) a identifié trois critères qui déterminent la nature des transactions : 1. La fréquence des transactions entre deux partenaires (unique, occasionnelle, répétitive) ; 2. L'incertitude (difficulté d'établir un arbre de décision complet en tenant compte de la rationalité limitée) ; 3. La spécificité des actifs, comme attribut essentiel de la transaction. Un actif est spécifique lorsque sa valeur dans d'autres utilisations possibles est plus faible que son utilisation présente.

En analysant la structure de marché et les initiatives collectives de valorisation de produits au niveau local et national cet article essaie de répondre à la question de recherche suivante : quelles sont les opportunités qui peuvent mobiliser les éleveurs pour augmenter leur revenu, en améliorant la valorisation et la forme collective de gouvernance autour d'un et de plusieurs produit(s) spécifique(s) ?

4.4 Matériel et méthodes

4.4.1 Matériel

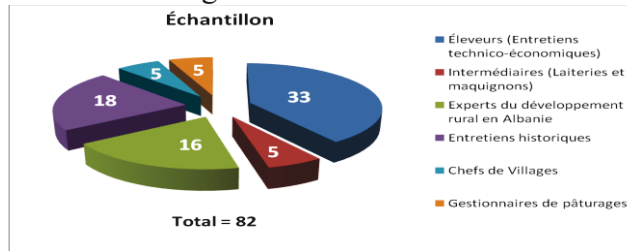
Notre matériel de base repose sur une importante collecte de données qualitatives et quantitatives, primaires et secondaires. Au niveau national des rapports, des bases de données, des projets en cours et d'autres données scientifiques ont été utilisés. Les données ont été recueillies sur les filières lait/fromage et viande au niveau national, pour ensuite mener une étude de cas: des documents, de la littérature grise et des interviews pour la collecte de données primaires ont été réalisés sur un site spécifique (la municipalité de Vithkuq). Au niveau régional et local, des documents ont été consultés et en total 82 entretiens ont été faits pour analyser le fonctionnement des filières lait/fromage et viande de la municipalité. Les résultats au niveau local ont contribué à une meilleure compréhension des freins et opportunités au développement des produits de qualité de la municipalité choisie. En combinant sources statistiques et entretiens préparatoires, le choix des villages a été fait selon le nombre de familles dans chaque village, la taille des troupeaux, la proximité et les liens avec les laiteries de la zone. Les entretiens avec les éleveurs ont été menés respectant un équilibre entre éleveurs spécialisés, éleveurs intermédiaires et éleveurs orientés sur l'autosubsistance. Ils ont été choisis selon l'âge, la taille des troupeaux, spécialisation (bovin/ovin/caprin), mais aussi en consultant une base de données existante pour ce territoire, disponible auprès du Ministère de l'Agriculture.

4.4.2 Méthode

La méthode a suivi quatre étapes :

Etape 1 – Analyse des systèmes de production locaux de la municipalité de Vithkuq qui a été réalisé en trois phases: a) phase exploratoire avec recherche documentaire et choix de la zone d'étude; b) caractérisation de l'échantillon ; c) phase de terrain en deux étapes : 1 - Entretiens structurés, semi-structurés et informations collectées directement auprès des éleveurs. 2 - Entretiens et observations personnelles au marché de gros et de détail de la ville de Korçë (qui est le centre administratif du district de Korçë) et de Tirana (la capitale du pays). La caractérisation de l'échantillon a été réalisée en fonction de la situation des systèmes d'élevage du territoire.

Figure 5. L'échantillon



Source : enquêtes du terrain

Étape 2 – Analyse de la structuration des filières lait/fromage et viande au niveau local et national afin d’analyser leur fonctionnement.

Étape 3 – Analyse des initiatives collectives historiques et existantes de valorisation de produits au niveau local et au niveau national.

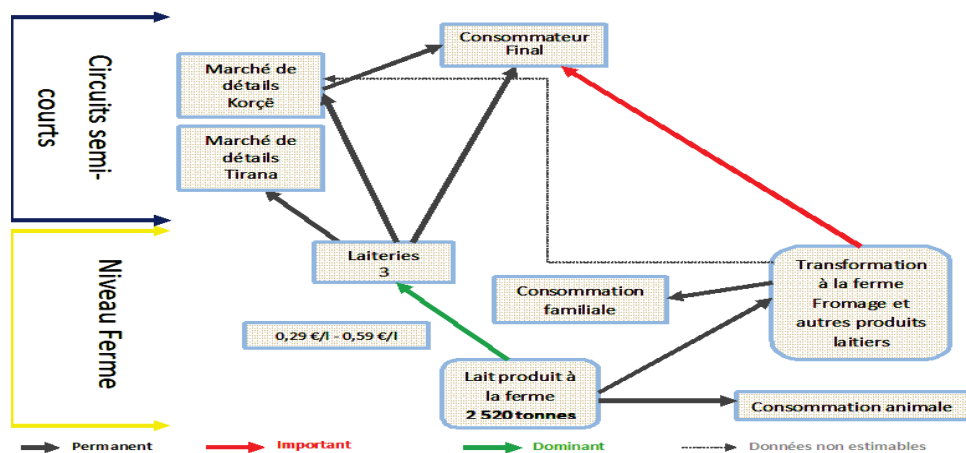
Étape 4 - Analyse des résultats et discussion. Les résultats ont permis d’identifier les freins et les opportunités impactant le développement de ces filières. En utilisant cette approche, il a été possible d’obtenir une description globale et détaillée de la structuration des filières lait/fromage et viande au niveau local et national, pour, ensuite, analyser les facteurs possibles et les conditions qui peuvent déclencher une gouvernance collective autour d’un produit spécifique telle que la viande.

4.5. Résultats

4.5.1 Dynamique de la filière lait/fromage

Dans la municipalité de Vithkuq prédomine l’élevage des petits ruminants. La production du lait, surtout de brebis et de chèvre, est très saisonnière et se fait dans des zones où l’infrastructure est peu développée. Du fait de l’enclavement des villages, la production du lait est destinée à la transformation fromagère. Les laiteries installées dans ces zones ont des coûts élevés du fait de leurs tailles limitées par de faibles volumes de livraisons de lait. Le territoire est organisé selon 3 pôles qui correspondent avec l’existence des 3 laiteries. Les éleveurs, s’ils n’arrivent pas à vendre leur lait, font face à une perte énorme d’argent. Ils n’ont en effet que des alternatives éloignées très peu adaptées à leur type d’organisation.

Figure 6. La filière lait/fromage de la municipalité de Vithkuq, 2017



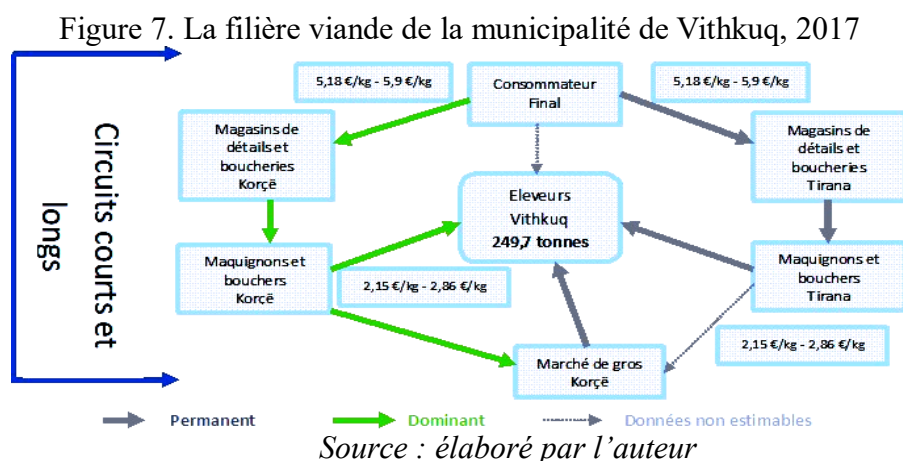
Source : élaboré par l’auteur

Encadré

Dans la municipalité de Vithkuq trois laiteries sont installées et exercent leurs activités. La laiterie la plus importante est celle du village de Vithkuq, village et centre administratif de la municipalité de Vithkuq. La laiterie possède une technologie moderne. Son activité de transformation fromagère débute en mars et finit en novembre. En 2017 le prix du lait de brebis a été de 0,59 euros/litre (0,29 euros/litre pour le lait de vache), alors que le prix de vente du fromage blanc, caillé en saumure, varie autour de 3,2 euros/kg à Tirana (capitale du pays) (en moyenne il faut 4 litres de lait pour 1 kg de ce fromage). Les prix du lait que cette laiterie applique sont bien plus avantageux que ceux des deux autres laiteries de la municipalité. Ces laiteries appliquent des prix qui varient entre 0,52 euros/litre et 0,54 euros/litre pour le lait de brebis. Pour le lait de vache les prix de ces laiteries varient entre 0,24 euros/litre et 0,26 euros/litre. Remarquablement, les prix de la laiterie du village de Vithkuq, même s'ils sont plus avantageux que les autres laiteries, sont bien plus bas que les prix du lait dans la plaine, surtout dans le sud de l'Albanie. Ces prix varient entre 0,6 euros/litre et 0,63 euros/litre pour le lait de brebis et entre 0,32 euros/litre et 0,35 euros/litre pour le lait de vache. Les laiteries situées dans les zones de montagnes imposent donc des prix plus bas pour une qualité meilleure que celle du lait de la plaine.

4.5.2 Dynamique de la filière viande

Au niveau du district de Korçë, la préférence des consommateurs pour la viande « origine Vithkuq » est élevée. Les éleveurs en profitent pour orienter les troupeaux vers la production de la viande plutôt que vers le lait. La chaîne de valeur de la viande est totalement informelle. Les éleveurs vendent les animaux aux intermédiaires qui sont souvent des bouchers. Les marges sont meilleures que celle du lait. La vente des animaux se fait de trois manières: a) les éleveurs vont au marché de gros de Korçë chaque dimanche. Cette manière est difficile pour les éleveurs qui s'organisent en groupes pour payer le coût de transport. b) via les maquignons de la région. La fréquence des ventes entre ces maquignons et les éleveurs locaux est élevée. La coordination est effectuée préalablement par téléphone et les maquignons achètent ensuite les animaux sur place; c) via les commerçants au détail de Tirana. Ceux sont principalement des anciens habitants du district qui achètent les animaux provenant de la municipalité pour ensuite les vendre au marché de gros à Tirana. Les deux premières voies couvrent 80 % des ventes totales d'animaux de la municipalité.



Le coût élevé du transport des animaux, le manque d'informations sur les prix et la demande du marché et la position géographique éloignée des bassins de consommation sont autant de facteurs qui limitent les possibilités de vendre les animaux à de meilleurs prix. De manière encore plus marquée qu'au niveau national, les transactions se font sur place sans contrat et sans facture. La fréquence des transactions entre les éleveurs et les maquignons est suffisante

pour que des relations de confiance se mettent en place. Les transactions sont informelles et le paiement se fait au comptant, ce qui fait qu'elles ne soient pas tracées.

Tableau 2. Analyse SWOT pour la filière viande de Vithkuq

Description	Forces	Faiblesses	Opportunités	Menaces
	Grandes tailles de fermes avec des étables modernes	Le poids vif des animaux abattus est souvent beaucoup trop faible, ce qui entraîne une faible rentabilité; les raisons sont la demande de très jeunes animaux et l'indisponibilité d'aliments bon marché pour les animaux	La demande des consommateurs pour les produits locaux	Aucune exportation possible en raison de l'application insuffisante des lois sur la sécurité alimentaire Infrastructure rurale publique sous-développée
	Les grandes fermes ont des tracteurs et de l'équipement agricole pour le foin	Dans la plupart des cas, les écuries des petites fermes sont dans des conditions primitives	Augmentation du nombre de fermes spécialisées dans la production de viande avec plus de 10 vaches, plus de 100 moutons et chèvres	Production à coût élevé. Aucun système d'information de marché en place

Source : Elaboré par l'auteur

4.5.3 Initiatives collectives de valorisation des produits locaux

Dans la municipalité de Vithkuq, le fort appui institutionnel du département de l'agriculture du district de Korçë, entre l'année 1997 et l'année 2000, a permis la création de la première association d'éleveurs dans la zone (Association des Eleveurs de Vaches, selon le modèle français UPRA). L'association a eu pour objectif de promouvoir la race Tarentaise dans la zone pour une augmentation des rendements de la production laitière.

En outre, en 1999, une coopérative laitière associant douze membres a été créée dans la municipalité. La coopérative a eu une activité de quatre ans avec une forte dynamique locale qui a amélioré le niveau de revenus de ses membres. Agissant collectivement, ces membres ont essayé de créer son propre logo. Après quatre ans d'activité, la coopérative a connu un manque de stabilité et depuis 2003 elle a cessé l'activité (Bombaj et al., 2015). Les conditions initiales pour une action collective efficace n'ont pas été réunies. L'action collective a manqué de ferment social pour continuer la dynamique locale (Bourbouze and François, 2001).

Ces deux initiatives locales ont été soutenues aussi par différentes associations françaises et hollandaises qui opéraient dans la zone à cette période. Entre les années 2005 et 2015 trois associations d'éleveurs ont été créées dans la municipalité. Elles ont eu pour objectifs, en partant des particularités physiques, historiques et économiques du territoire, le développement de l'élevage et de l'agriculture mais sans un impact important sur l'accès au marché des éleveurs (Bombaj et al., 2015).

À l'état actuel, l'évolution du système de production des exploitations de la zone dépend des

pâturages disponibles, surtout pendant l'été. Les nouvelles règles étatiques sur la décentralisation des pâturages communaux en 2016 ont affecté l'activité principale des éleveurs qui doivent adapter leurs stratégies de production et leurs plans de gestion de ces pâturages. Cependant, ces changements institutionnels n'ont pas été accompagnés par des institutions étatiques capables de mettre efficacement en œuvre les objectifs du processus de décentralisation (Bombaj et al., 2018).

Toutefois, des initiatives collectives récentes ont émergé suite à ce changement dans la gestion des pâturages communaux. Dans le petit village de Shtyllë, un collectif d'éleveurs a pris les pâturages communaux en location. Ce nouveau mécanisme de gouvernance de la ressource commune est particulièrement intéressant. La petite taille et l'homogénéité du groupe ont permis d'enclencher une action, favorisée par les limites claires des pâturages communaux. La dynamique actuelle semble avoir créé de nouvelles modalités qui peuvent être le ferment pour des stratégies futures communes de marché pour leurs produits à base de viande (Bombaj et al., 2018).

4.6. Discussion

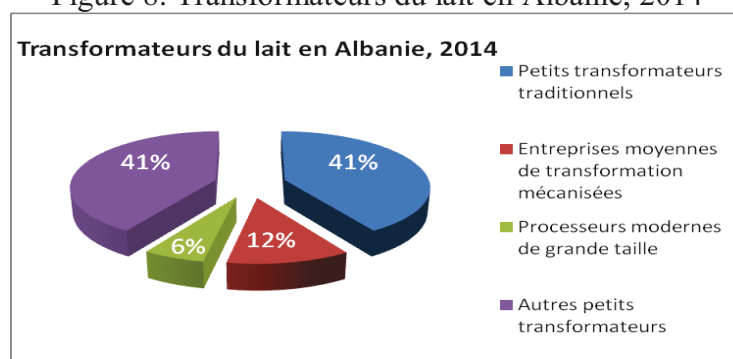
Les éleveurs de la municipalité de Vithkuq font face à des coûts de production élevés et seule une très petite minorité a les moyens d'investir dans des améliorations techniques qui augmentent leur productivité. Généralement, les petites exploitations sont défavorisées en ce qui concerne les économies d'échelle (Jeanneaux et al., 2009) parce qu'elles vendent quotidiennement de faibles quantités de lait. En abusant de leur pouvoir de marché, car ils se savent incontournables, les laiteries et les intermédiaires de viande leur achètent le lait et la viande à des prix très bas qui ne leur permettent pas de développement économique.

Le contexte national des filières lait/fromage et viande

Au niveau national, la production de lait est un système de collecte caractérisé par l'existence en parallèle du marché informel (vente directe par les agriculteurs) et du marché formel (la collecte du lait et la distribution par les laiteries). Par tradition les consommateurs préfèrent acheter le lait bon marché directement auprès des agriculteurs. Les transformateurs préfèrent le lait local parce qu'ils reconnaissent que, malgré des prix plus avantageux, l'importation de lait frais est problématique.

Les transformateurs du lait au niveau national utilisent les technologies de l'artisanat traditionnel. Ils transforment le lait de vache, de brebis et de chèvre pour produire différentes sortes de fromage, du beurre, du lait caillé et du yaourt.

Figure 8. Transformateurs du lait en Albanie, 2014



Source : (MAAPC 2016, INSTAT 2014, élaboré par l'auteur)

En effet, l'atomicité de la production, le caractère périssable du lait et la nécessité de l'acheter/transporter quotidiennement expliquent que les laiteries aient mis en place une chaîne de refroidissement de sa collecte (refroidissement des réservoirs aux points de collecte, les transporteurs de refroidissement aux laiteries) et distributeurs de produits laitiers (Gontard, 2016). La création d'un tel système requiert certains investissements spécifiques qui augmente les coûts de transformation fromagère et qui confère aux laiteries le pouvoir de fixation des prix du lait dans les zones où elles opèrent.

Filière viande

Au niveau national la consommation de la viande est de 43,4 kilogrammes par habitant (FAO, 2013), encore loin du niveau de l'Union Européenne (UE) qui est deux fois plus élevé. Dans la filière viande, outre les exploitations agricoles, il existe également des entreprises d'abattage et de transformation. À côté de quelques installations modernes d'abattage de poulet, il existe aussi quelques abattoirs modernes opérationnels. Cependant, les animaux sont généralement abattus à la ferme ou, dans certains cas, à l'abattoir primitif local des bouchers.

Un panorama différent peut être observé dans le secteur de la transformation de la viande. Il existe plusieurs moyennes et grandes entreprises qui sont très proches des normes de l'UE mais qu'importent la majorité de la viande crue nécessaire parce que la viande locale fraîche est chère et difficilement accessible (INSTAT, 2014). Dans la filière de la viande il n'y a quasiment aucun lien entre les agriculteurs et l'industrie de la transformation (MAAPC, 2016).

La production de la viande génère plus de revenus que la production de lait, ce rend la filière viande plus dynamique et toujours en évolution. Au niveau national, le prix de la viande fraîche locale augmente graduellement. Les intermédiaires de cette filière, étant situés dans les grandes villes et loin des montagnes, se font la concurrence pour acheter les animaux en poids vifs et pour les vendre aux prix favorable au marché urbain. En voulant bénéficier de cette opportunité les éleveurs ont tendance à augmenter leur production. Cependant, leur manque d'organisation collective les privent d'une rémunération réellement intéressante, laissant clairement un créneau pour des démarches locales de valorisation par des démarcations collectives de type indications géographiques ou marques territoriales.

Initiatives collectives de valorisation de produits au niveau national

Au niveau national, une dynamique montrant des initiatives collectives de valorisation de produits est observée dans un territoire au nord de l'Albanie (district de Hasi) où un circuit court de viande de chèvre s'est développé avec succès (Bernard et al., 2014). Des intermédiaires entretiennent de longues relations commerciales avec les éleveurs de Hasi depuis 1994. Ils fournissent cette viande principalement aux restaurants du pays. Le projet BioDivBalkans a soutenu le développement de la viande de chèvre depuis 2012 afin de construire un produit IG pour cette race endémique. La mobilisation collective des éleveurs locaux a fait qu'une demande accrue sur cette viande par les intermédiaires soit observée.

En comparant les deux cas, nous observons que des facteurs externes peuvent dynamiser un produit donné, telle que la viande. Les facteurs sont différents et les modalités la gouvernance collective autour d'un produit dans les deux cas se construisent cependant de manière et à une vitesse différente. Dans la municipalité de Vithkuq, ce sont les changements institutionnels sur la gestion des pâturages communaux qui ont influencé l'organisation collective des éleveurs locaux tandis qu'au nord de l'Albanie initiatives d'aide au développement et de

renforcement des capacités ont accéléré le développement de la filière viande.

Contexte local et national des structures de marché pour les deux filières

En analysant la structure de marché au niveau local et national les résultats montrent que pour les acteurs des deux filières les modes de coordination et de gouvernance sont différentes en termes d'efficacité parce que (1) les intermédiaires de la viande permettent les ajustements en grands volumes et réductions des coûts de transports; (2) les laiteries permettent une meilleure gestion et transformation du lait demandant ainsi des investissements spécifiques bien plus élevés que les intermédiaires de la viande.

Tableau 3. Comparaison des différentes formes de coordination pour les filières lait/fromage et viande au niveau local

	Filière Lait	Filière Viande
Gouvernance	Par les laiteries	Par les maquignons et les bouchers
Actifs spécifiques	Elevés	Faibles
Fréquence des transactions	Elevée	Faible
Coûts de transactions pour les éleveurs	Coûts élevés pour interrompre l'engagement commercial avec les laiteries : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coûts pour rechercher une autre laiterie. • Coût d'opportunité en cas de non vente du lait à cause de sa périssabilité. • Coûts de transactions liés aux problèmes de la qualité. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coûts de transports. • Coûts d'entrée sur le marché de gros (le ticket pour avoir une place dans le marché de gros chaque semaine)
Nature du marché	Monopsonne	Oligopsonne

Au niveau de la municipalité de Vithkuq, l'organisation de la filière lait/fromage est contrôlée par les laiteries. Ainsi, le pouvoir de négociation pour les prix de vente du lait est asymétrique. Il est lié aux coûts de transports, à la dispersion spatiale des éleveurs et sur le manque d'organisation autour d'un marché alternatif (tableau 2 ci-dessus). La filière viande semble être plus concurrentielle, avec plus d'acteurs qui font l'intermédiaire entre les éleveurs et les consommateurs finaux. Cependant, leurs actifs spécifiques, par rapport à ceux des laiteries, sont faibles.

De plus, opérant dans de chaînes de valeur informelles, les laiteries et les intermédiaires de la viande ne sont pas intéressés à aider les agriculteurs à démarquer et donner une identité aux produits. Effectivement, l'étiquetage et la certification des produits pourraient augmenter leur profil sur le marché (Tregear et al., 2007) en les distinguant des articles concurrents et donnant, ainsi, des garanties de qualité cohérentes aux consommateurs.

Enfin, les consommateurs même s'ils ont une préférence marquée pour les produits locaux, accordent plus d'importance à la production traditionnelle qu'aux logos ou aux produits certifiés. Ils recherchent des produits ne présentant aucun risque et estiment que la sécurité alimentaire doit être abordée à la ferme ou pendant la transformation. Les commerçants tiennent pour acquis le désintérêt des consommateurs (Imami et al., 2016) pour l'étiquetage des aliments, de sorte qu'ils ne considèrent pas l'étiquetage pertinent. En comparant les deux filières au niveau local et national, les facteurs qui freinent le développement des produits de

qualité sont les suivants :

- Structure des exploitations agricoles : Le niveau élevé de fragmentation des terres entraîne une faible compétitivité et efficacité de la production (Mavromati et al., 2011). Les exploitations agricoles produisent seulement de petites quantités de lait et de viande. Par conséquent, les éleveurs ont des difficultés à accéder aux ressources financières pour plus d'investissements afin d'augmenter leur production.
- Coûts de production élevés : le manque de connaissances les technologies et les normes, le prix élevé de la base alimentaire pour les animaux et les races de bétail improductives entraînent pour les éleveurs des coûts de production élevés.
- Le manque de coopératives : dans les deux filières au niveau local, les coopératives sont absentes. L'incitation au niveau national de ces formes collectives d'organisation pourrait faciliter les transactions entre les agriculteurs et les transformateurs. Ceci pourra augmenter l'offre de lait cru et de viande fraîche de bonne qualité en améliorant le pouvoir de marché des éleveurs.
- L'enclavement de l'éleveur : les éleveurs qui sont situés à proximité des villes ont tendance à vendre leurs produits en plus petites quantités directement aux consommateurs. Les éleveurs qui sont situés très loin des villes et des marchés n'ont d'autre choix que de vendre leur lait aux laiteries locales, aux collecteurs ou aux transformateurs (van Berkum, 2009).
- Contrôle sanitaire et étiquetage des produits alimentaires : les chaînes de valeur du lait/fromage et viande au niveau national montrent une faible application de la loi sur les normes alimentaires. Les mesures visant à protéger la sécurité alimentaire du consommateur sont mal appliquées.
- Absence du système de traçabilité des produits pastoraux : le niveau élevé de l'informalité rend difficile la construction d'un système de traçabilité pour le lait/fromage et la viande. En fait au niveau national, les consommateurs préfèrent acheter ces produits auprès des agriculteurs et/ou intermédiaires se privant ainsi des signes de qualité officielles. La mise en œuvre du système de traçabilité entraîne un coût pour les intermédiaires qui préfèrent garder le statu quo. La loi nationale (n° 9902, article 8) sur la protection du consommateur vise l'introduction des signes de qualité pour les produits mais elle est mal appliquée. Ces signes doivent fournir des informations précises en albanais pour le consommateur.

Les opportunités au développement des produits « origine Vithkuq »

Les filières lait/fromages et surtout viande ouvrent des opportunités pour le développement économique des éleveurs. Premièrement, la spécificité des produits existe car la municipalité de Vithkuq est un territoire montagneux aux conditions pédoclimatiques très particulières (notamment la montagne « Rrungaja »). Les tendances urbaines de consommation de produits pastoraux, surtout pour la viande, montrent que les consommateurs sont prêts à payer un prix plus élevé pour la viande fraîche locale que pour la viande importée. La viande fraîche est demandée autant sur le marché local par les restaurants/hôtels qu'auprès des ménages de consommateurs (Michaud, 2015). Troisièmement, l'historique des actions collectives de la municipalité montre un potentiel en termes de capital social, essentiel pour un possible processus de qualification d'un produit spécifique telle que la viande.

Conditions pour un possible cercle vertueux qualification-promotion-rémunération-entretien du milieu naturel dans la municipalité de Vithkuq

Il apparaît que la valorisation de la viande, peut déclencher un développement local favorisant le travail coopératif (Maye et al., 2016) et maintenir des emplois dans cette municipalité éloignée et enclavée. Les initiatives collectives de qualification pourront déterminer où et comment la viande est produite donnant ainsi au consommateur un label de confiance. Le cercle vertueux de qualité (Vandecandelaere et al., 2010) pourra enclencher un mécanisme de rémunération pour les éleveurs de cette municipalité, en trouvant une niche sur le marché avec un prix rémunérateur, et ensuite, grâce à une organisation collective de gestion du produit, d'organiser une répartition de cette « plus-value d'image et de réputation » (Barjolle & Thévenod-Mottet 2005).

Les phases, pour un possible cercle vertueux qualification-promotion-rémunération-entretien du milieu naturel dans la municipalité de Vithkuq, pourront être les suivants :

- Dans une phase d'identification, les acteurs locaux et les autres acteurs concernés partenaires peuvent faire une évaluation du potentiel du produit, en termes de spécificité en lien avec l'origine géographique (évaluation du lien au terroir), et en termes de potentiel de développement durable (Barjolle et al., 2012).
- Dans une phase de qualification, les acteurs de la chaîne de valeur et les autres acteurs concernés peuvent discuter de manière collective pour mettre en place des règles collectives qui sont consignées dans un « Cahier de Charges », qui devra être soumis à un examen formel des autorités administratives en charge de la mise en œuvre de la législation autour des AOP-IGP.
- Dans une phase de rémunération les différents acteurs de la filière bénéficient des prix rémunérateurs. Les prix dépendront de plusieurs aspects, tels que l'efficacité de la gestion collective du produit, la qualité mais aussi l'efficacité logistique.
- La phase de la reproduction des ressources locales grâce aux prix rémunérateurs pourra, ainsi, faciliter la durabilité du système (Barjolle, 2016).

4.7 Conclusion

L'analyse de structure de marché pour les filières lait/fromage et viande au niveau local montre que la filière viande est bien plus dynamique et concurrentielle que celle du lait/fromage. La raison principale est la concurrence entre les intermédiaires qui achètent les animaux pour ensuite vendre la viande fraîche aux meilleurs prix sur les marchés urbains. Pourtant, elle n'est pas encore positionnée sur un segment de niche capable d'enclencher un cercle vertueux de rémunération des producteurs et de reproduction des ressources naturelles (Vandecandelaere et al., 2010). Si les éleveurs s'organisent collectivement, ils pourraient différencier leur production sur le marché, et si le consommateur paye un prix plus élevé, l'offre pourrait se développer par l'accès à de nouveaux canaux de commercialisation (Belletti et al., 2014).

La demande urbaine pour la viande fraîche impacte les systèmes locaux de production des éleveurs. Ils y voient une possibilité pour améliorer leurs conditions de vie en se spécialisant plutôt vers la production de la viande (Gontard, 2016). Ces dynamiques ont créé une

opportunité pour mieux valoriser la viande, qui sera d'autant mieux saisie par les éleveurs que certaines conditions sont remplies. La qualification de la viande, comme un processus de construction entre plusieurs acteurs et qui aboutit à un « référentiel produit », pourra être un moyen pour les éleveurs de négocier en leur faveur au sein de leur chaîne de valeur (Barjolle, 2016 ; Maye et al., 2016). Dans ce processus, la capacité d'action collective est cruciale. Comme les initiatives collectives locales révèlent un capital social suffisant. Récemment, les changements institutionnels dans la gestion des pâturages communaux ont enclenché une dynamique de gestion collective au niveau d'un des villages (Bombaj et al., 2018). On entrevoit la possibilité d'enclencher un mécanisme de cercle vertueux de rémunération tel que décrit par Vandecandelaere et al. (2010).

4.8 Remerciement

L'auteur remercie Dominique Barjolle pour les commentaires sur les différents points importants du papier et pour avoir fait des remarques visant son amélioration.

Transition words: From the first to the second article

In the first article a mixed quantitative and qualitative method was developed to analyse the structuring of the national and local value chains of the two most important animal products in Albania. The main objective was to analyze how the nature of transactions explains the forms of market organization for milk and meat value chains at the national level and in the municipality of Vithkuq. Consequently, to identify factors that can be mobilized by farmers to increase their income by improving their collective governance around one or more specific product.

The value chain approach and the transaction cost theory (TCT) was identified as the most relevant existing methods to analyse the evolution of the milk and meat value chains at the national and local level especially in relation to their complementary nature. As it was said, a mixed approach can help to better analyze complex situations where data at national level are not reliable by collecting data at the local level. However there is a debate in the scientific community the use of the typology of agri-food chains based on the Neo-Institutional Economics theory is scientifically robust or not. To overcome limitations of this approach we complemented it with another method such as the value chain approach applied at the very local level. The interest of the mixed approach in exploring and comparing value chains at national and local level was examined to a very little extent. Furthermore, the contribution of the mixed approach in analyzing the characteristics of the different farming systems on the structure of the value chains and their production specificity has not yet been discussed. Lastly but not least, the mixed approach in telling what is the most territorial resource that farmers have, and its influence on the products specificities, should be further discussed.

We therefore identified the need to enrich the methods, in a second article. Our goal is to understand the local farming systems specificities to better understand how the different spatial, temporal and social organization scales explain the current dynamics of use of territorial resource. Anyway, by only analyzing the events in a linear space time and focusing on the evolution of the use of the resource, other socio-economic changes that could be important factors in this evolution remain unrepresented. Moreover, the second article offers the possibility to show how the local farming systems has evolved in the last years by identifying resource governance issues not identified in the previous article.

(Mots de transition : Du premier au deuxième article)

Dans le premier article, une méthode mixte quantitative et qualitative a été développée pour analyser la structuration des chaînes de valeur nationales et locales des deux produits animaux les plus importants en Albanie. L'objectif principal était d'analyser comment la nature des transactions explique les formes d'organisation du marché pour les chaînes de valeur du lait et de la viande au niveau national et dans la municipalité de Vithkuq. Cette étude a permis l'identification des facteurs pouvant être mobilisés par les agriculteurs pour augmenter leurs revenus en améliorant leur gouvernance collective autour d'un ou plusieurs produits spécifiques.

A travers l'étude des chaînes de valeur et la théorie de transaction (TCT) les méthodes existantes les plus pertinentes ont été identifiées afin d'analyser l'évolution des filières du lait et de la viande au niveau national et local, en particulier par rapport à leur complémentarité. En effet, une approche mixte peut aider à mieux analyser les situations complexes, notamment dans le cas où les données au niveau national ne sont pas fiables et des données au niveau local peuvent permettre de les compléter. Cependant, il existe un débat dans la communauté scientifique sur la pertinence de l'utilisation de la typologie des filières agroalimentaires basée sur la théorie de l'économie néo-institutionnelle. Afin de surmonter les limites de cette approche, nous l'avons complétée par une autre méthode telle que l'approche de la filière appliquée au niveau très local. L'intérêt de l'approche mixte dans l'exploration et la comparaison des filières au niveau national et local a été peu examiné. En outre, la contribution de l'approche mixte dans l'analyse des caractéristiques des différents systèmes d'exploitation sur la structure des chaînes de valeur et leur spécificité de production n'a pas encore été discutée. Enfin, l'approche mixte pour déterminer quelle est la ressource la plus territoriale que possèdent les agriculteurs et son influence sur les spécificités des produits devrait être discutée.

Nous avons donc identifié le besoin d'enrichir les méthodes dans un second article. Notre objectif est de comprendre les spécificités des systèmes d'exploitation locaux pour mieux comprendre comment les différentes échelles d'organisation spatiale, temporelle et sociale expliquent la dynamique actuelle d'utilisation des ressources territoriales. En analysant seulement les événements dans un espace-temps linéaire et en se concentrant sur l'évolution de l'utilisation de la ressource, les autres changements socio-économiques qui pourraient être des facteurs importants dans cette évolution demeurent peu représentés. De plus, le deuxième article offre la possibilité de montrer comment les systèmes agricoles locaux ont évolué ces dernières années en identifiant les problèmes de gouvernance des ressources non identifiés dans l'article précédent.

Part 5 - Article: Family farming in the albanian mountainous areas: local agro pastoral farming systems and market integration perspectives

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Abstract

The objectives of this paper are to understand the evolution of family farming in a mountainous area of Southern Albania after the fall of communism in 1991 and to identify the socio-economic developments that characterize this territory in very last years. According to primary or secondary historical data, there is a recent increasing demand for dairy and meat products due to the rapid growth of urban markets. This has pushed for an increase in livestock production. Simultaneously new moving breeders from southern Albania are renting vast good pastures and the management reform of public pastures have put more pressure on common pastures. At the end, the paper discusses the perspectives of improving livestock farming systems in that context.

Key words: Family farming; Livestock systems; Mountainous area; Albania

(Partie 5 - Article: Agriculture familiale dans les zones montagneuses albanaises: systèmes d'agriculture pastorale locaux et perspectives d'intégration des marchés)

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(Résumé)

Les objectifs de cet article sont de comprendre l'évolution de l'agriculture familiale dans une région montagneuse du sud de l'Albanie après la chute du communisme en 1991 et d'identifier les développements socio-économiques qui caractérisent ce territoire au cours des dernières années. Selon des données historiques primaires ou secondaires, la demande de produits laitiers et de produits carnés a récemment augmenté en raison de la croissance rapide des marchés urbains. Cela a entraîné une augmentation de la production de bétail. Simultanément, de nouveaux éleveurs du sud de l'Albanie louent de vastes pâturages et la réforme de la gestion des pâturages publics pèse davantage sur les pâturages communs. À la fin, le document examine les perspectives d'amélioration des systèmes d'élevage dans ce contexte.

Mots clés: *Agriculture familiale; Systèmes d'élevage; Zone montagneuse; Albanie*

5.1 Introduction

Albania is a Balkan country located in the Mediterranean part of Europe but a potential candidate country to enter the European Union. This country was communist until 1991, when the transition into a market economy began. The agrarian reform and this transition have led to the deconstruction of the old economic regime which was characterized by state planning and centralized productive resource management (652 farm units with an average of 1,050 ha per unit). Today, according to MAFCP (2014) around 352,315 farm households still have a high level of land fragmentation (1.16 ha/farm with an average of 4.8 parcels). According to the FAO definition of family farming a family farm is managed and operated by a family and relies predominantly on family labor, including both women's and men's. According to MAFCP (2014) a small farm is managed by a family, relies predominantly on family labor and is characterized by a small area of arable land, lower or equal to the national average (1.16 ha/ land area per farm) as well as a high level of land fragmentation. The agricultural sector is strongly centered on family farming. More than 90 percent of the 352,315 farms in Albania are below 2 hectares and account for about 95 percent of the land used, being the only country in Europe to rely largely on extensive small-scale domestic production (MAFCP, 2014). According to Cochet (2011) the farming system is an operating mode using the current natural, technical, and socio-economic factors, closely related to the evolution history of a given territory. The agrarian reforms towards a market economy have pushed farmers to change their farming systems adapting their production to market demand.

Major changes in the agricultural sector have led to an increase in livestock production, which provides about 57% of the total value of agri-food production, followed by the arable crops with 26% and fruit production with 17% (MAFCP, 2014). At the national level this increase is more accentuated during the period 2012-2014 when small ruminants increased by 22%.

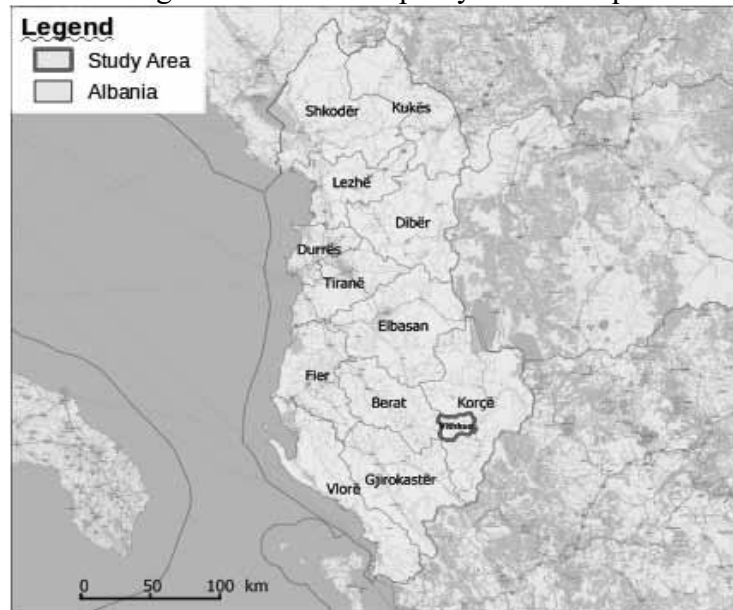
The dairy industry holds an important place in the Albanian agri-food sector (MAFCP, 2014). According to official statistics, domestic production of milk reached 1.1 million tons in 2012 marking an increase of 9% since 2007.

Regarding mountainous areas, between 1991 and 2014, the population migrated massively to the lowlands or abroad. The farming systems have deeply changed but without significant land concentration phenomena.

The natural landscapes and typical Mediterranean pastures mainly explain the predominance of small ruminants in the mountainous area of Albania. As farm size is very small and the alpine pastures quite rich, family livestock farming is one of the main sources of family income in these territories. It is therefore considered as a key resource for local development (Bernard *et al.*, 2014; Garnier, 2013). Yet, the long economic transition and demographic fall (Lerin & Marku, 2010) have nowadays created a binding context to trigger local economic development dynamics.

Albania is organized in 15 regions, which are divided in 36 districts. There are overall 309 rural municipalities and 2,980 villages which are the smallest administrative units in the country.

Figure 9. The municipality of Vithkuq



Source: Elaboration on GIS by Florjan Bombaj

Our study area is located in the region of Korçë, which is one of the most developed economic regions in southeastern Albania. For this region, the development of the urban area of the city of Korçë and the agricultural development of the plain surrounding the city take a much more important place than the mountainous area of our study area. This concerns the selected municipality of Vithkuq (see figure 9) which has a long agro-pastoral tradition. The recent evolution of this municipality is very similar to the one of the country: along with to the demographic desertification of the municipality after the fall of communism, data show a sharp increase in herd size, new dynamics in terms of modernization of the local dairies and issues in natural resources use (Çili et al., 2013).

5.2 Research context and questions

In the mountain areas, changes and unsteadiness caused by depopulation and globalization impact local economies and societies. According to Wymann von Dach *et al.*, (2013), these changes contribute to higher pressure on local resources (Peeters, 2009), unsustainable practices in land use, disintegration of local customs and traditions, and increased vulnerability to global change. Farming activity in mountainous areas is mainly family-based (Crowley, 2013; Varotto & Lodatti, 2014; Wymann von Dach *et al.*, 2013). Family farming in its various forms around the world reflects the heterogeneity of economies and societies (Thirion *et al.*, 2015).

According to Manoli *et al.*, (2011) understanding the diversity of production systems in a given territory is a key for analyzing the territory as a space where society and institutions interact locally

A farming system deals with two important issues: a) natural resource management; b) market integration perspectives. Since livestock production is dominant in mountain areas, their analysis in terms of natural resource management and market integration is crucial.

The principal activity of all farmers in Vithkuq is livestock production; therefore they are all breeders. The management of mountain pastures and resource use access affect the farming systems of these breeders (Bombaj *et al.*, 2015; Çili *et al.*, 2013).

The paper aims to discuss two hypotheses: First: after the collectivization period, the local agro pastoral farming systems have gradually adapted to the new political and economic context. Some groups of family farmers have increased their herds causing some changes in the management and in the intensity of the use of pastures. In consequence the lack of specific policies has harmed natural resource management.

Second: the lack of public support has led to a weak development of the milk and meat value chain. Based on fieldwork in the municipality of Vithkuq this paper aims to respond to the following research questions: a) what is the evolution of the family farming model and the specificities of the local agro pastoral farming system in the territories under consideration after the fall of communism in 1991? Which are the market integration perspectives of the local livestock production and the pastoral resource management issues?

5.3 Methodological approach

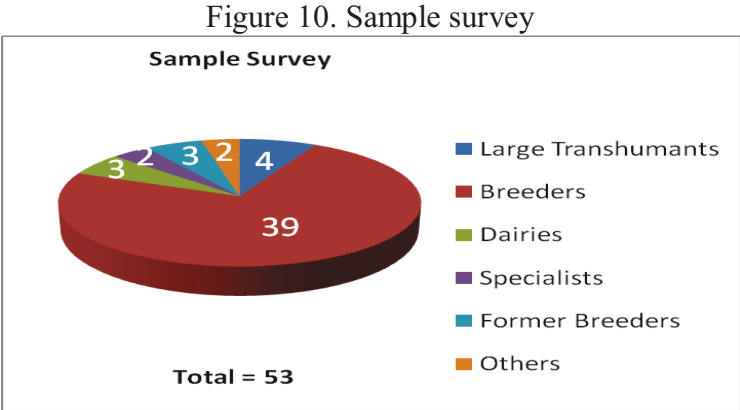
Given the extent of the area (with a surface of 243 km²) and the difficulty of access to some very remote villages, we have chosen a limited number of communities. We studied 3 communities in 3 spatial organizational units, crossing an area of milk collection where the dairies are located with an area of their related summer pastures (see table 4 and 5). Combining secondary data (statistics and documents) and primary data (interviews with local actors and specialists), the final delimitation of the 3 units selected for our research was done according to the number of families in each village, the number of animals, and the proximity and ties to the identified dairies. An important criterion was also the significance of traditions and sources available on the history of the village, and the official written sources on the evolution of the population and livestock production. The sampling for interviews was done with consideration to a balance between large and specialized farmers, medium-sized farmers and very small subsistence farmers according to their respective importance of their pasture use. The purpose of the sampling was to investigate different breeders with different experiences and perspectives, different strategies and their different relationships to resource use helping us understand the pastoral system. Using this approach, it was possible to get a global and detailed description of the farming system and its specificities in the considered municipality. Our approach was conducted in four steps:

1. Analysis of the national and local farming system development dynamics. At the national level we used several documents, including reports, papers and other data. At the local level we studied the municipality of Vithkuq.
2. Characterization of the whole reference population of breeders. The interviewed breeders were described by age, herd size, herd type (cattle/ sheep/goat), according to an existing database of the Albanian Ministry of Agriculture and the European project “PAZA”. (The “improving consumer protection against zoonotic disease – Albania”). This project¹ aims to promote the sustainable control of zoonotic diseases and strengthen institutional and administrative capacity.
3. Fieldwork phase based on semi-structured interviews with key informants, questionnaires addressed to producers, personal field observations, in two phases; first, structured interviews,

semi- structured and informal observations collected directly from the breeders; second, interviews and personal observations on the wholesale and the retail market in Korca and stores in Tirana.

4. Results analysis and discussion.

The “PAZA” project database, the herd size per farm in the municipality, and the subsidies policy of the Ministry of Agriculture determined our sample characterization for all the local breeders of the municipality of Vithkuq.



Source: Author’s field data collection

Consequently in this municipality we considered a farm to be one of self-consumption with 1-10 sheep/goats and / or 1-4 bovine animals; medium-sized farms with 11-99 sheep / goats and / or 5-9 bovine animals; large specialized farms with more than 100 sheep / goats or more than 10 bovine animals.

According to the subsidies policy of the Ministry of Agriculture a large specialized farm must have more than 100 sheep or 10 cows to benefit from subsidies. This was taken in account in our sample characterization to define a large specialized farm. In the studied area (the 3 units), we identified in total 131 small subsistence farms, 142 medium sized farms and 53 large specialized farms. The small subsistence farms are characterized by self-consumption and very occasional or even no sale (see table 4).

Table 4. Livestock Systems of the interviewed breeders in the municipality of Vithkuq

LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS	SH + GO + CO	SH + GO	SH + CO	GO	CO
Self-consumption	0	0	3	2	1
Medium-sized	4	3	4	0	1
Large specialized	7	3	3	2	6

SH = Sheep; GO= Goats; CO = Cows

Source: Author’s elaboration

The medium-sized farm type is a farm characterized by the self-consumption plus some sale and often has multiple other activities. In this category, some farms develop a strategy of

specialization in one type of herd, with fairly consistent sales. The large specialized farms which have specialized in one main type of animal sell the majority of their production.

5.4 Results

5.4.1 Context of Family farming in Albania

In Albania, since the fall of communism, family farming has been a major contributor to national food security by producing food for self-consumption as well as for the market. The reconstruction of the family farming system has faced constant challenges like emigration, the very small size of farms, access to urban markets, the irrigation and drainage systems, the low standard of technologies, the weak organization of farmers, and the low development level of agrifood processing, among others, more general, like the lack of infrastructure, weak educational and medical services and the poor human and financial resources of the public administration.

In 1991, the collectivist system collapsed, the cooperative of the municipality disappeared and some massive and brutal privatization took place. In the context of the land reform (law 7501, in 1991) at the national level, each family has recovered land and some livestock heads. The distribution was not the same in all the villages, ranging from 0,1 ha to almost half a hectare per capita. Until 2000, many villages in the municipality were massively deserted. Those who remained, the most employable members, have often migrated mainly to Greece. In general, during the first decade after the fall of communism, the majority of farms underwent unimportant changes and remained within the subsistence model though some farms have slightly enlarged. Irrigation and mechanization systems were abandoned. The infrastructure of the cooperatives was largely destroyed, many wanting to recover its share of materials.

The farming system evolution depends from the pastures available in the municipality, especially during summer. Large specialized farms demand more pastures during summer which creates competition among breeders for this resource.

The use of pastures is a major resource for the breeders. In fact, during the summer, severe droughts affect the availability of grass under 1200m altitude and a vast majority of the animals go to summer pastures over 1200m. In the winter, the snow and the rigorous climate impose the feeding of the herds with forage based on grass cut over the summer. In fact, the availability of summer pastures and the quantity of forage for passing the winter are actually the main limiting factor both at individual farm level (size of each herd), and at municipal level (total number of animals).

In 2014 in Albania only 51% of the total milk produced was sold to the wholesale market which is equivalent to 530.4 tons of milk sold in 2014 in Albania or exported. Annual consumption of milk by FAOSTAT is 303.72 kg / capita in 2013. Despite the fact that milk production has increased rapidly in the recent years, opportunities for export of these products remain limited. This is due to a number of factors throughout the value chain of these products such as the lack of quality standards, appropriate technology, marketing, etc.

The current national agricultural policy subsidizes the dairy and small ruminants sectors. Subsidies for milk production are given to the farmers who deliver their milk to dairies. Support for dairy cows and sheep is given per animal, support for transhumance of sheep is

paid per farm. The subsidies are precisely 9 € per ewe/per year and 37 € per cow/per year. They are paid only to breeders with more than 100 sheep and / or more than 10 cows.

The alignment of Albania’s agriculture and rural development policy with the Common Agricultural Policy demands new strategies to transform and adapt Albanian family farms to European policies, laws and standards. This transition tends to smoothly transform the fragmented structures of the agricultural sector to become competitive while protecting and valorising local products and developing the disadvantageous territories.

5.4.2 Recent evolution of the value chains of milk and meat in the municipality of Vithkuq

The municipality of Vithkuq numbers 11,500 dairy sheep out of a total of 18,549 ruminants. In fact sheep breeding is ideally adapted to the topographic and climatic conditions of the local natural resources. Breeding was practiced in the area during the communist period, and the knowhow around its milk production persists today. Sheep herd represent 86% of total herds on the territory.

The population of the municipality of Vithkuq has a long history in livestock production and pasture management. It corresponds to a coherent agro-pastoral zone with a rich flora and fauna of pastures producing dairy products of high flavour and quality that are well known by local and Albanian consumers. From the year 1997 to 2000 a severe financial and political crisis stopped the evolution of livestock production in the country. Since the year 2000 some herds have begun to really grow, boosted by the human investment returns from emigration and the support activities of some NGOs in the region.

The specialization was mainly oriented towards sheep “because it’s the tradition” mentioned a young farmer who recently took over the family herd after a few years working in Greece – and because they are adapted to local systems. During the same period many pluriactive breeders, having already more or less moved in this direction, have adapted their livestock system either by reducing the importance of other activities or by reducing their herds to free up their time (oriented to other activities). Table 5 reflects market trends in meat production.

Table 5. Evolution of the animal production in the municipality of Vithkuq

		2005		2011
	Heads	(Production in Quintals)	Heads	(Production in Quintals)
Calves	500	300	800	560
Lambs	12 000	1 200	12 000	1 200
Goats	1 500	105	1 600	128
Total	14 000	1 605	14 400	1 888

Source: (Çili et al, 2013); (Matka 2015) and author's calculation

In 2011 animal production that reached the market had increased by 18 percent compared with 2005. The milk value chain is organized in an oligopolistic way. Only three dairies buy almost all the commercialized milk. The most important and technologically well-equipped facility is the private dairy of Vithkuq, with a processing capacity of 23 quintals of milk per day. In 2014 this dairy produced 150 quintals of white cheese and 20 quintals of cooked cheese “*Kaçkavall*”. The cheese is sold directly in the city of Korçë where the owner has his

own shop. The two other private dairies sell the cheese in Tirana where the owners have stable commercial relations with private retail shops. One of these dairies is located in Panarit and produces only “Kaçkavall” in 2014 72 quintals).

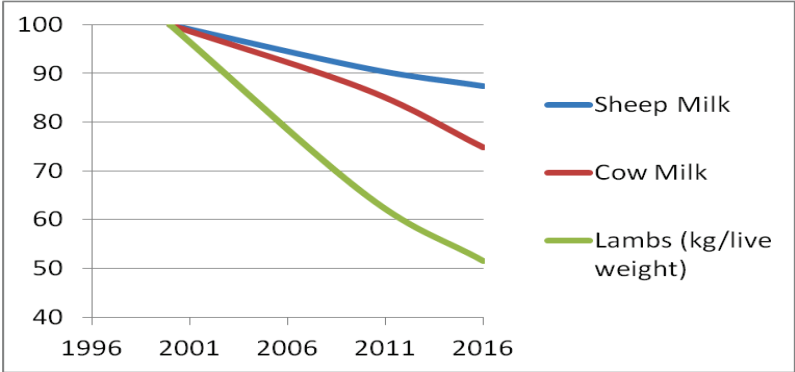
Table 6. Dairies income for the year 2014

	Dairy Vithkuq	Dairy Lubonjë	Dairy Panarit
Dairy Prod Cheese			
(Quintals)	170	100	72
Dairy Capacity			
(Quintals/Day)	23	10	7
Dairy Incomes			
Euros /Year	45 955	25 735	18 529

Source: Author’s calculation

Especially in that very remote village, the breeders suffer because of very dominant position of the owner of the dairy, who pays a very low price for the milk. The total capacity of milk transformation into cheese of these 3 dairies is rather smaller than the ability of the local breeders to commercialize milk. Price was decreasing in constant price (see figure 11).

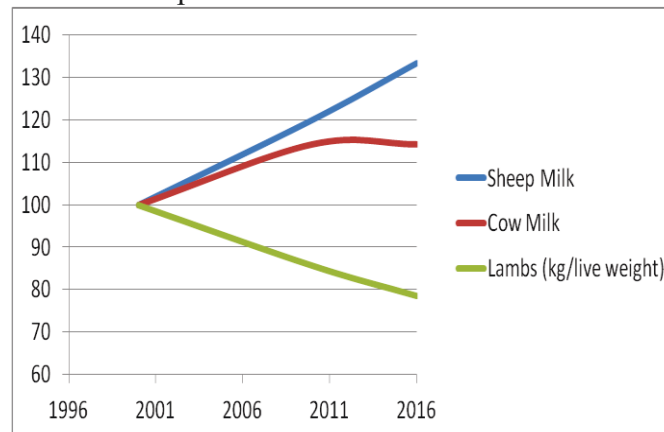
Figure 11. Constant prices of animal products in the municipality of Vithkuq between 2000 and 2016 – price index of 2000 = 100 (indexed with the annual national inflation rate)



Source: (Gontard, 2016)

The determinant factors of this market power are the location and the transport costs. Breeders don’t have the possibility to sell their milk to other nearby dairies. Therefore, the price is set by the buyers, who really pressure the breeders. The low price is certainly linked to the dominant position of the dairies in that area, because in other parts of Albania, the price of milk is much better and is has been increased in the same period of time (Gontard, 2016).The meat value chain is almost totally informal and even almost illegal. The farmers can sell the animals to local slaughterhouses and butchers for better prices compared with milk (see figure 12).

Figure 12. Current prices of animal products in the municipality of Vithkuq between 2000 and 2016 – price index of 2000 = 100



Source: (Gontard, 2016)

Milk does not always cover the production costs and meat production generates more income than milk production. The price for lambs in kg/live/weight in 2016 is lower than in 2000, but lamb production is more economically profitable for the breeders in terms of income. There are three ways in which the lambs/calves/goats are sold: a) the breeders go to the wholesale animal market in Korçë a precise day every week. This is expensive for the majority of farmers who do not have means of transport. They are forced to organize in groups and pay for conveyance. b) via the wholesale traders in the region. This way of selling animals is very usual. The coordination is done by phone and the merchant comes in person to purchase the animals on site, on a live weight basis; c) via the retail traders of Tirana. These are mostly former inhabitants of the area who buy animals in the area and who sell to the wholesale market in Tirana.

Table 7. Pastoral dynamics of Vithkuq (326 families)

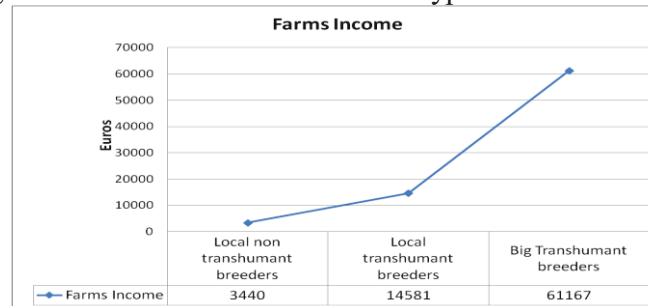
Year	Total Population	Herd Size	Total Milk Production (Quintals)	Total Meat Production (Quintals)
2005	2 939	17 920	27 500	1 605
2014	1 660	18 549	25 200	2 497
Diff				
in %	-56%	+4%	-9%	+55

Source: (Çili et al 2013); (Matka 2015) and author's calculation

The first two ways cover 80% of total sales of animals in the area. The value chain is totally informal and transactions are executed without contract or invoice. According to the legal provisions, animals must be slaughtered in specific slaughterhouses. There is only one public slaughterhouse in the region which works at low capacity because nobody forces traders and butchers to slaughter the animals according to the law. Therefore, the food safety standards are not met, the value chain is poorly organized and the possibility to buy and the prices are very unstable. With regards to the influence of these two value chains structure on the evolution of production in the territory; it is worth noting that in 2014, the total milk production had decreased by 9% compared with 2005 while the meat production had increased by 55%. This trend is clearly linked to the extremely low price of milk, which does not always cover the production costs (see table 7 and figure 12). According to the sample

characterization we have calculated the incomes for three categories of farms. For the first category, we calculated the income for a typical self-consumption farm which does not transhumance. For the second category we calculated the income for a typical medium-sized farm which does transhumance and for the third category, we calculated the income for a typical capitalist large specialized farm. This type of farm was identified this year in the territory because they have large herds which graze on the summer pastures of the Municipality.

Figure 13. Farms incomes for three types of farms in 2016



Source: (Gontard, 2016)

5.4.3 Pastures management

The municipality of Vithkuq has 5,350 ha of summer pastures over 1200 m. They are spread over the whole territory. For breeders, access to summer pastures is really key for their survival and their capacity to invest. Three ways of managing pastures exist. (1) Private pastures: The majority of private pastures are owned by local breeders, who may use and cultivate these pastures. More than 1000 ha summer pastures are owned by a unique very large private owner (descendant from the “*bey*” (ottoman honor title of land owners during the Ottoman Empire regime in Albania: 1463-1912). This property right was given to this owner during the first decade after the fall of communism in 1991. (2) Communal pastures: Common pastures managed by each village: these communal pastures are historically and traditionally managed by the villagers, who consider themselves the legitimate users of this resource. The villagers don’t pay for these pastures. The spring and autumn pastures belong to this category, and the pastures exploited by the breeders of one village correspond to the administrative boundaries of the same village. The small and medium-sized breeders have a farming system with sedentary herds. They benefit from the departure of large farmers to access all communal pastures throughout the summer. Their animals return every night to their barns. (3) State pastures: the Albanian State still owns and manages some parts of the pastures in the municipality. Vithkuq has 1250 ha state summer pastures that are mainly far away from the villages. The Departments of Forests and Pastures of the Ministry of Environment set the price and distribute the pastures to the breeders. These pastures are expected to be distributed in order of priority to the local breeders who need to pay for them. Recently, the large and specialized local breeders have been in competition with “big” transhumants coming from Vlora, Tepelena and Delvina (Southern Albania) over the state summer pastures. The private summer pastures, according to historical data, were always used by the big transhumants coming from southern Albania. They usually pay for the totality of the summer pastures owned by the “*bey*” because their herds are between 500-1500 sheep.

With the new territorial reform in 2016 the status of pastures is changing right now. The communal and state pastures will be public pastures and should be allocated on priority basis

to local breeders. Only if the local breeders are not willing to pay to access the pastures, will the public authorities of the Region offer the land to breeders from outside the municipality.

To sum up: all public pastures will be managed by the public authorities of the Region of Korca and the unique very large private owner (descendant from the “*bey*”) will be the only manager of the private pastures. Therefore, local breeders will need to pay for the communal pastures which were free to access before the reform. The impact of this change could be profitable to the quality of pasture management. For the local transhumant breeders this change can be an incentive to invest in bigger herds and could be a way to organize them and work together. If local breeders have to organize themselves together to rent pastures, this could be a first step in the creation of cooperatives or organization to promote their products together. With the reform, more pastures should be available to transhumant breeders since some communal pastures, reserved for villagers, were undergrazed. But some challenges were identified as well during the interviews: For the non-transhumant local breeders the reform could be complicated, they will have to be organized to rent all parcels of pastures used before as commons. In the villages where this is not possible, big transhumants or other transhumants coming from the region may use them. This year only one village has done this. Breeders of this village have chosen the chief of village to represent them and he can rent the public pastures that were communal pastures belonging to the village before the reform. For the “big” transhumants the challenge will be to obtain the same state pastures they had obtained before the reform. Public pastures will be allocated with priority to local transhumant breeders. This can be an opportunity for them to federate in associations and build new strategies for valorizing their animal products.

5.5 Conclusion

The municipality of Vithkuq is a mountainous territory with a long tradition and know-how, especially in livestock farming systems. The family farming model is adapted to the topographic and climatic conditions of the environment but also to the new current dynamics of the urban markets. The farming system has evolved and adapted to the governmental structural changes that occurred during the transition period. Indeed, breeders specialize according to their physical abilities for livestock production, the availability of the young labor force and the economical and physical environment in which they are located. Our research shows that this territory has suffered from a desertification of the population after the fall of communism in 1991. The reduction of the population has been accompanied by a recent sharp increase in herd size and new dynamics in the local production systems. Livestock breeding, as a tradition and know-how, remains an important economic source for people in this marginalized territory. Market demand for animal products, especially for meat, has increased sharply in recent years. Products “Origin Vithkuq” are highly demanded by the market despite the fact that they have no logo or other brand. The demand for these local products explains the expansion of herds in the area and many farmers see the need to produce in large quantities to flourish economically.

Mountain pastures are an important resource for the breeders of Vithkuq. The exploitation of this resource is a major challenge for the management of both farming systems and the landscape. The large specialized farms need to respect the governmental rules to benefit from the subsidy policy. The medium-size farms are adapting their herds to benefit from public support. Recently, the dynamics of expansion and specialization have involved the reorganization of the pastoral space. This has created an increasing demand for greater pastures that are managed in an unclear way, generating conflict between the local farmers

and the “big” transhumants who obtain contracts to exploit this resource during summer. Although farmers have increased their herd size, they do not really have a favorable bargaining power with the dairies. The bargaining power in the milk and meat value chains is asymmetric and the current dynamics of the value chain do not position the products in a niche market capable of engaging a virtuous circle for the good remuneration of the producers and for the reproduction of the natural resources.

5.6 Suggestions

The chaotic economic transition of the Albanian mountainous territories nowadays demands new strategies in terms of rural development. The Municipality of Vithkuq in particular needs a lot of adjustments and structural changes to support the local breeders. Indeed, the need for agricultural development and pasture management strategies are numerous. From the value chain perspective, the adjustments needed to upgrade to reach the European standards regarding food quality and safety is high. The milk and the meat sectors worth the development because the taste and flavor of the cheeses and the meat produced in that mountainous area are wellknown and meet the expectations of the Albanian consumers as well on the urban markets. These consumers have a high preference for the local milk and meat products but the safety food standards and quality labels still remain rare. At the international level the needs for investing in facilities respecting modern technology, and the enforcement of existing regulations regarding food safety are key to stabilizing access to the urban markets under the European Union legal regime. Access to markets will be profitable to the family farms if there is enough competition within the value chain in order for the breeders to obtain fair prices that compensate them for costs of production. Those costs are quite high due to the natural conditions of a rigorous climate and harsh slopes that are typical in all mountainous area.

If the products are well priced, an increase in production will follow, with the consolidation of medium-sized to large farms, able to invest in better buildings and to modernize their facilities. If these farms can increase their production capacities they will be able to benefit from public support such as subsidies. But the increase in herds needs to be accompanied by a common management strategy of the pastures. This will depend not only on the ability of the regional authorities to effectively implement the recent reform of State and common land management but also on the collective action of local breeders to cooperate for a successful management strategy of their pastures.

Transition words: From the first & second article to the third article

In the first article a mixed quantitative and qualitative method was developed to analyse the structuring of the national and local value chains of the two most important animal products in Albania. The nature of transactions explained the forms of market organization for milk and meat value chains at the national level and in the municipality of Vithkuq. Furthermore, there were identified factors that can increase their farmers' income by improving their collective governance around one or more specific product. Using the mixed value chain and the transaction cost theory (TCT) approach different dynamics occurring along the value chains of the selected products has been detailed well in the Municipality of Vithkuq case study. Still, the original contribution of the research was studied with a certain degree of success. Furthermore, the contribution of the mixed approach in analyzing the characteristics of the different farming systems on the structure of the value chains and their production specificity could be identified, measured, and linked to the research activities and outputs.

The Agrarian Diagnostic Method was further explored in the second article and appeared very beneficial. It could better identify the evolution over time of the local farming systems in the selected mountain territory after the fall of communism in 1991, as well as deepening our understanding on how the pastoral resource access has influenced the livestock activity of local farmers. However, the effect of the recent territorial reform that has decentralized the pastoral resource governance and the local interactions mechanisms by which actors face this new reality, were underexplored.

The third paper further addresses the effects of the decentralization changes on the pasture governance modalities, by analyzing local communities' capacities to trigger collective processes related to the transition of these changes. We test the Agrarian Diagnostic Method relevance by improving the method with social surveys such as the Likert method in exploring these processes. It is applied in the same case study which was selected in two previous articles in order to have a global analysis of the local actions and their diversity in terms of collaboration configurations and local contexts. The results show different capacities to adapt to recent changes on the pasture governance modalities. Only one village has reacted has adapted local collectively actions to face the new context.

(Mots de transition : Du premier et deuxième article au troisième article)

Dans le premier article, une méthode quantitative et qualitative mixte a été développée pour analyser la structuration des filières nationales et locales des deux principaux produits pastoraux en Albanie. La nature des transactions expliquait les formes d'organisation du marché pour les filières du lait et de la viande au niveau national et dans la municipalité de Vithkuq. En outre, des facteurs identifiés peuvent accroître les revenus des agriculteurs en améliorant la gouvernance collective autour d'un ou de plusieurs produits spécifiques. A travers les approches mixtes de la filière et de la théorie des coûts de transaction (TCT), les différentes dynamiques intervenant dans les filières des produits sélectionnés ont été détaillées dans l'étude de cas de la municipalité de Vithkuq. Cependant, la contribution originale de la recherche a été étudiée avec un certain succès. En outre, la contribution de l'approche mixte dans l'analyse des caractéristiques des différents systèmes agricoles sur la structure des chaînes de valeur et leur spécificité de production pourrait être identifiée, mesurée et liée aux activités et aux résultats de la recherche.

La méthode de diagnostic agraire a été explorée plus en détail dans le deuxième article et a été très bénéfique. Cette approche a permis de mieux identifier l'évolution dans le temps des systèmes agricoles locaux dans le territoire de montagne sélectionné après la chute du communisme en 1991. Cette méthode a également permis d'approfondir notre compréhension de l'influence des modalités d'accès aux ressources pastorales sur l'activité d'élevage des agriculteurs locaux. Cependant, l'effet de la récente réforme territoriale qui a décentralisé la gouvernance pastorale des ressources et les mécanismes d'interactions locales par lesquels les acteurs sont confrontés à cette nouvelle réalité a été peu exploré.

Le troisième article aborde les effets de décentralisation des changements sur les modalités de gouvernance des pâturages en analysant les capacités des communautés locales à déclencher des processus collectifs liés à la transition de ces changements. Nous questionnons la pertinence de la méthode de diagnostic agraire en améliorant la méthode à l'aide d'enquêtes sociales telles que la méthode de Likert pour explorer ces processus. Cette méthode est appliquée dans la même étude de cas qui a été sélectionné dans les deux articles précédents afin d'envisager une analyse globale des actions locales et de leur diversité en termes de configurations de collaboration et de contextes locaux. Les résultats montrent différentes capacités d'adaptation aux changements récents sur les modalités de gouvernance des pâturages. Un seul village a réagi en adaptant les actions collectives locales pour faire face au nouveau contexte.

Part 6 - Article: Albanian Municipalities facing decentralisation of pastures' management rules

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Abstract

This paper examines how the mountain communities in the Albanian post-communist period are affected by the recent decentralization process of the management of common pastures, major resource for the development of the livestock activity. The main hypothesis discussed in this paper is that the institutional changes affecting the access and the use of the common pastures may weaken or strengthen the local communities according to their capacities to adapt their collective governance modalities.

Key words: Pasture management; Common good; Local governance; Albania

(Part 6 - Article: Les Municipalités albanaises confrontées à la décentralisation des règles de gestion des pâturages)

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Article publié dans la revue « Food Systems – Systèmes Agroalimentaires »

(Résumé)

Cet article examine comment les communautés de montagne dans la période post-communiste albanaise sont touchées par le récent processus de décentralisation de la gestion des pâturages communs, ressource majeure pour le développement de l'activité de l'élevage. L'hypothèse principale discutée dans cet article est que les changements institutionnels affectant l'accès et l'utilisation des pâturages communs peuvent affaiblir ou renforcer les communautés locales en fonction de leurs capacités à adapter leurs modalités de gouvernance collective.

Mots clés: *Gestion des pâturages; Bien commun; Gouvernance locale; Albanie*

6.1 Introduction

This paper examines how the mountain communities in the Albanian post-communist period are affected by the recent decentralization process of the management of common pastures. Currently, common pastures represent 58% of the total Albanian pastures. Therefore, the issues around their management are very important for the mountain communities and the policy makers because they are the main resource for the development of the livestock activity and consequently, for the livelihood of the mountainous communities. The summer pastures allows feeding the livestock in summer for low cost compared to the winter period. Their rich botanical flora composition gives meat and cheeses a particular flavour and specific quality, which is highly appreciated by the consumers. In Albania, and particularly in the vast pastures in the South, those products have a strong reputation even outside the production area (Bombaj et al., 2017).

Theory on the commons highlights the design principles for a good governance of the commons (Ostrom, 1990). More particularly, the local governance of the commons needs a legal and institutional framework that allows avoiding the “tragedy of the commons” (Hardin, 1968). Precisely, in *vacuum* situation created by incomplete decentralization may emerge a “tragedy of open access resource” (Mearns, 2004). As a consequence, local communities need to build proper resource governance, which allows them responding well to changing conditions and establishing a resilience-based management of their common resource (Bestelmeyer & Briske, 2012).

The decentralization of natural resource management in different countries has different effects according to the context and the way the reforms are designed and implemented. Regarding Albania, all the post-communist governments, following decentralization models of western developed countries, have decided and put into force decentralization policies to adapt the pastures’ management modalities according to “*The European Charter for Equality of women and men in local life*”. Since the fall of communist regime in 1991, there are many issues related to the governance structures at regional and local levels.

Previous researches in Albania have shown that the success of decentralization depends of the ability of the local community to adapt its customary rules and local traditional practices. More precisely, Rama & Theesfeld (2011) have described an effective self-governed forest management system based on the change from free access to exclusive rights for forests, which were previously managed under so-called “customary rules”. In this case, the exclusivity use right has been favourable for the local community independently of the decentralization process. Another research has shown that the property rights may not become institutionalised if social practices are not considered legitimate (Stahl et al., 2009). They may easily change over time, as local actors adapt their strategies to new conditions (Vedeld, 2000).

The pasture management in Albania has faced several changes in the administrative modalities related to the assignment of the rights and the duties which have affected the pasture governance mechanisms at all territorial levels: national, regional, municipalities, and even the villages. Communal pastures, before the decentralization, were managed by the central government. All the successive decentralization processes have given the right to the municipalities to manage their communal pastures which were used freely by the authorized beneficiaries (farmers originating and living in the given municipality). Consequently, the authorized beneficiaries did not have exclusive use rights over these pastures. The recent law

(in 2016) has changed the use rights of the communal pastures, meaning that the authorized beneficiaries will access to “exclusive use rights” by paying them. As a top-down transition policy, the priority for attributing the use rights is given to the old authorized beneficiaries. In case where they are not financially able to pay the given price, the use rights can be given outside the group of previous authorized beneficiaries.

Since the fall of communism, the effects of the changes in the pasture governance mechanisms have never been studied in details. Thus, it is important to analyse how local communities, facing extreme institutional change, under certain conditions, may adapt to the new context by creating appropriate local governance mechanisms. Consequently, greater inclusion of relevant actors, and development of a governance process that is flexible to changing conditions may be a key factor for creating incentives for effective participation and collective action.

The main hypothesis discussed in this paper is that the institutional changes affecting the access and the use of the common pastures may weaken or strengthen the local communities according to their capacities to adapt their collective governance modalities.

This paper examines how the farmers, at a very local level, react to the recent institutional change in the resource use of their communal pastures. The analysis is based on the perception of farmers affected by the legal and institutional changes in the attribution of the rights to use and the obligations related with the management of the common pastures. The discussion is done following the analytical grid proposed by Ostrom (2009) regarding the management of the commons.

This paper is organized as follows: the section 1 analyzes the theory about the decentralization of the management of the natural resources and their impacts for the local communities. The section 2 specifies the Albanian historical and current decentralization context for the common pastures. The section 3 specifies the case study setting and the analytical methods. The section 4 presents the evidence-based results on how local farmers have reacted to the recent changes, and how the recent legal and institutional changes affect the pasture management in the field. In the sixth section, the findings are discussed.

6.2 Theoretical background and research questions

Many natural resources are common-pool resources, and their good governance poses different challenges for public authorities and local communities (Andersson & Ostrom, 2007). That’s why many countries have decentralized the governance of their natural resources (Shigaeva et al, 2016; Marothia, 2010; Mearns, 2004). However, evidences shows that decentralization does not uniformly lead to better or worse local governance (Upton, 2012; Hartter & Ryan, 2010). Consequently, when at the local level expected degree of self-determination has not been realized, local users may create their own practices while official management plans are largely ignored and unenforced (Dyer et al, 2014; Addison et al, 2013).

All successful cases of good self-governance show respecting more or less eight basic principles (Ostrom, 1990). These principles identify, at different levels, to what extend the actors are collectively organised for managing their common resource. Appropriate governance of a common resource seems to be better, if the complexity of rules can evolve and adapt over time. The key to effective governance arrangements lies in the relationships among actors for whom the resource governance is a stake (Andersson & Ostrom, 2007) and for whom building social capital is a key for the future (Pretty, 2003).

Globally, pastures are one of the most important natural resource for mountain communities. They are continuously threatened by the instabilities in the governance modalities. Furthermore, innovative institutional solutions are likely to fail if they are not undertaken in holistic manner, including their perspective as well as the state’s view (Bonfoh et al, 2016). In different countries where the decentralization of the pasture management has occurred, evidences show defensive attitudes of local actors’ excluded of their pastures’ governance. Their reaction has occurred under a weak capacity of the state to provide a coherent legislative framework for sustaining the local initiatives (Upton, 2012).

The process of pasture decentralization may be long, creating gaps for the local communities not allowing them to be part of the resource governance (Shigaeva et al, 2016.) That’s why, in some countries, local communities have created groups to participate in the governance modalities (Addison et al, 2013; Vedeld, 2000; Ho, 2000). Mostly governance institutions are imperfect responses to the challenge of collective-action problems. These “functioning failures” may exist at any level of governance and that’s why complementary back-up institutions at higher or lower levels of governance can help offset some of the failures.

Based on the initial hypothesis the paper aims to respond to the following research questions:

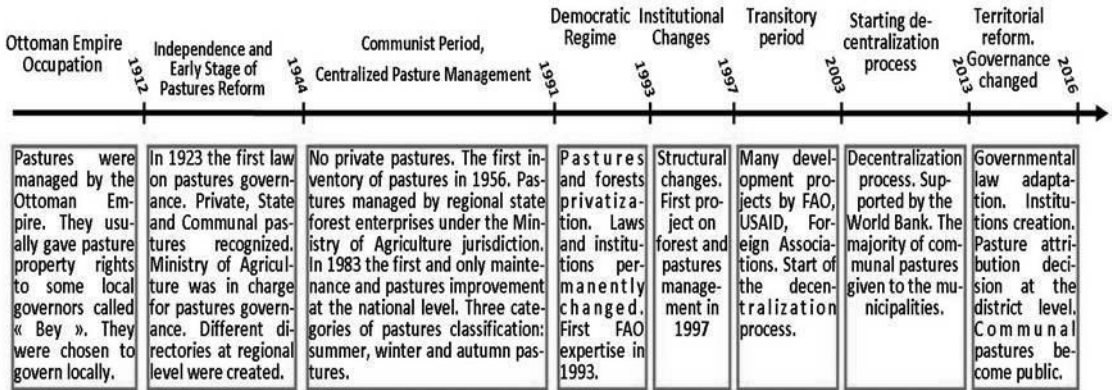
- 1) To what extent governmental and institutional changes in the resource use affect the pasture management at the local level?
- 2) In this new context, among the various communities affected by the same change, is there any resource governance more appropriate?

Using a mixed-methods approach, and drawing on recent research on common-pool resources, this paper provides an empirical analysis of current outcomes of decentralized agro pastoral governance in the Mountains of southeast Albania.

6.3 Context of the common pasture management rules

Albania has known long and frequent institutional changes in pasture management that date since the Ottoman Empire occupation. In figure 14 below, some historical key changes in the pasture management are shown.

Figure 14: Chronological changes in the public policy of the pastures management in Albania



Source: Authors’ elaboration

After the fall of communism in 1991, rapid and frequent changes have caused instability in the modalities of pasture governance mechanisms creating a mixed pasture governance

regime where state, private and communal pastures coexist. From 1993 to 2013, the decentralization process has gradually given to the municipalities the right to manage their communal pastures. Beginning in 2003, the first programs aiming to decentralize the pasture management governance mechanisms started with the support of the World Bank (Weiland, 2010).

The main goal was to complete the transfer of pastures and forests to the municipalities by increasing their capacity to sustainably use pastoral and forest resources. Pastures managed by the municipalities were recognized as communal pastures, which had the status of non-exclusive and free use.

Meanwhile, farmers had to pay to access state and private pastures. The public authorities of the district managed the state pastures. The rule was to attribute preferably the state pastures to local farmers, under conditions of respecting good management practices defined by law. Thus, local farmers needed to rent the pasture, but must also follow the herd sanitary guidelines, appropriately maintain the pasture condition and respect the neighboring pasture boundaries of the other farmers. In case where local farmers weren't able to rent the state pastures, these were allocated to other farmers from neighboring regions. The private pastures were given to farmers who paid the highest price. These were called big transhumant herders. Since 2003, the pastures are classified as follow:

- a) State pastures: owned and managed by the state;
- b) Communal pastures: owned by the state but managed by the municipalities that allocate them to the local farmers;
- c) Private pastures: owned and used by private individuals.

In 2006, state pastures account for 36% of the total pastures, the communal for 58% and the private for 6% (see table 8).

Table 8. Type of pastures according to their ownership

Type/Property	Total	State Pastures	Communal Pastures	Private Pastures
	Surface in Thousand hectares (ha)			
Summer Pastures	294	116	165	13
Winter Pastures	125	36	79	10
Total	419	152	244	23
Percentage	100	36	58	6

Source: (Shundi, 2006)

The Territorial Reform, initiated in 2013 but implemented only in 2016, merged the communal and state pastures into public pastures modifying the pasture governance mechanisms. More precisely, communal pastures are now managed at the district level as a result of the merging of municipalities into larger administrative entities, like the case of state pastures (within decentralization)

They are preferentially given to the local farmers, who must now pay to use them. The access conditions for the communal pastures have not changed. Nevertheless, what has changed is the exclusivity over the right to use the communal pastures.

Looking back to the long history of pasture management, the rules have evolved with time, with only recently a change from free access to payment for exclusive use rights. What is expected from this last reform is a better use of this resource, with long-term preoccupation of the farmers, and less risk of under or over-use of the resource. We will analyse the current situation to discuss if and how those effects are obtained in reality.

6.4 Research design and methods

6.4.1 Research design

Our overall methodology is a collection of qualitative and quantitative, primary and secondary data. At the national level, interviews and documents were consulted to analyze the evolution of decentralization of pastures. After data on general context were collected a case study approach was used: documents, grey literature, and interviews for gathering primary data were done in the municipality of Vithkuq. As source of information on the local context, an agrarian diagnosis approach identified pastures as the main resource for the local production systems. This diagnosis showed that different pasture management modalities in the same agro-pastoral area are crucial to understand the very local pasture governance mechanisms (Bombaj et al, 2017).

For the purpose of this research, the Likert method allows evaluating the actor's perception on the positive or negative external effects of a given policy. The Likert method is used in our approach to evaluate the perceptions of the farmers from different local communities about the future governance of their common pastures, through two sets of questions. The first set is based on their issues concerning pasture reform. The second relates to their visions for their individual and collective strategy to access and share pastures equally. Results are then discussed according to Ostrom's grid for managing the commons (Ostrom, 2009). Ostrom explores the governance mechanisms by comparing and discussing different situations for different communities in the same institutional context.

6.4.2 Methods

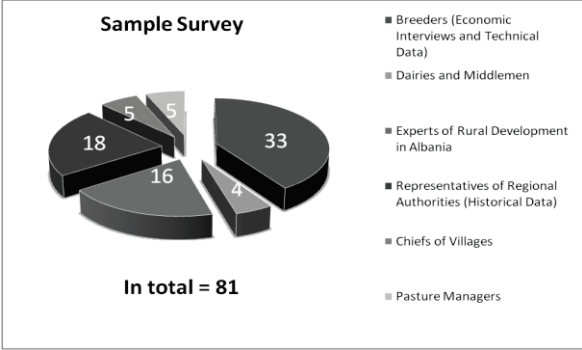
Our research was conducted in four stages:

Stage 1. Literature research on the institutional framework regarding decentralization of pasture management and changing governance mechanisms in different contexts, with a set of documents and reports on national level allowing historical reconstitution of the territorial reform and pasture decentralization processes.

Stage 2. Selection of the case study and sampling of key informants at regional and local level. Literature research and exploratory fieldwork results (stage 1) confirmed the choice of the mountainous municipality of Vithkuq, in Korçë district, as a relevant case to get deeper insights on issues in the study. The selection of key informants was designed to achieve good understanding of the territorial pastoral system and management of the pasture resource through interviews with 33 local farmers (the sample represented all the farming systems present in the area). Using the saturation approach for qualitative survey, interviews with the two dairy stakeholders, the two most important meat middlemen, as well as representative of relevant public authorities (Ministry of Environment and Forests, the National Association of Forests and Pastures and several NGOs working on pasture management issues), made it possible to get a general and a detailed description of the pasture management system and production system specificities in the study area.

Stage 3. Local documentary research and landscape analysis to identify modes of managing pastures. Field data collection and personal observations (see figure 15) were carried out in two phases: i) structured and semi-structured interviews addressed to regional authorities; and ii) structured and semi-structured interviews with key members of the selected villages such as the village leaders and former farmers. The questionnaires addressed the characteristics, and individual and collective strategies of pasture use mechanisms.

Figure 15. Sample survey



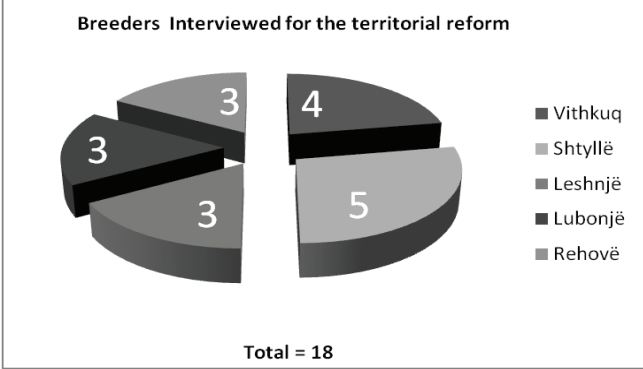
Source: Authors' survey

Stage 4. Structured questionnaires of 22 specific questions with Likert scale, regarding the governance mechanisms after the last institutional changes in the pasture rules. We selected 18 farmers from the 33 already interviewed in Stage 2. Two sets of six questions were dedicated to the reactions of farmers and the future pasture use in association to different situations observed in different villages in the previous stages.

The sampling of farmers (see figure 16) has been set up respecting two criteria:

- From the sampling of 18 farmers 9 was chosen from the two villages of Korçë district which are involved in the collective management of the communal pastures (Vithkuq and Shtyllë) and 9 from the other three villages not involved in the collective management of the communal pastures but which are affected by the reform and will have to pay for what was previously free (3 farmers from each village).
- The 18 farmers in the farming systems already identified in Stage 2, which made use of the communal pastures: the non-transhumant sheep system and the non-transhumant cattle system. This choice has been made respecting a balance between farm systems having different production specialization (sheep, cattle or mixed), precisely 6 farmers from each specialization.

Figure 16. Farmers interviewed for the territorial reform



Source: Authors' survey

6.4.3 Case study

The case study area is located in the most largest and marginalized municipality of the Korçë district: the municipality of Vithkuq. The municipality is composed by 13 villages with a surface of 243.6 km². Our study area has a surface of 75 km² and 5 villages (including the village named Vithkuq) (see table 9). The study area belongs to the Mediterranean, mountainous climate, characterized by relatively high temperatures during the summer and very low during winter. In 1250m of altitude, the yearly average temperature is 9,2°C, while during winter is 0,8°C and during summer is 18,3°C. This area has low precipitation during summer and heavy precipitation during the months of November to February, much in the form of snow; especially above 1.500 m.

Table 9. Population and pastoral dynamics in the study area

Villages with their respective altitudes	2005		2016		Herd Size 2016		
	No. of families	Total population	No. of families	Total population	Dairy Cattle	Sheep	Goats
1. Vithkuq (1220m)	245	908	150	600	200	1 200	180
2. Shtyllë (1550m)	38	163	15	70	70	700	70
3. Leshnjë (1100m)	55	219	40	160	105	1 200	150
4. Lubonjë (1000m)	152	564	80	400	195	1 800	100
5. Rehovë (1100m)	48	204	13	65	50	850	250
Total	538	2 058	298	1 295	620	5 750	750

Source: Authors' survey

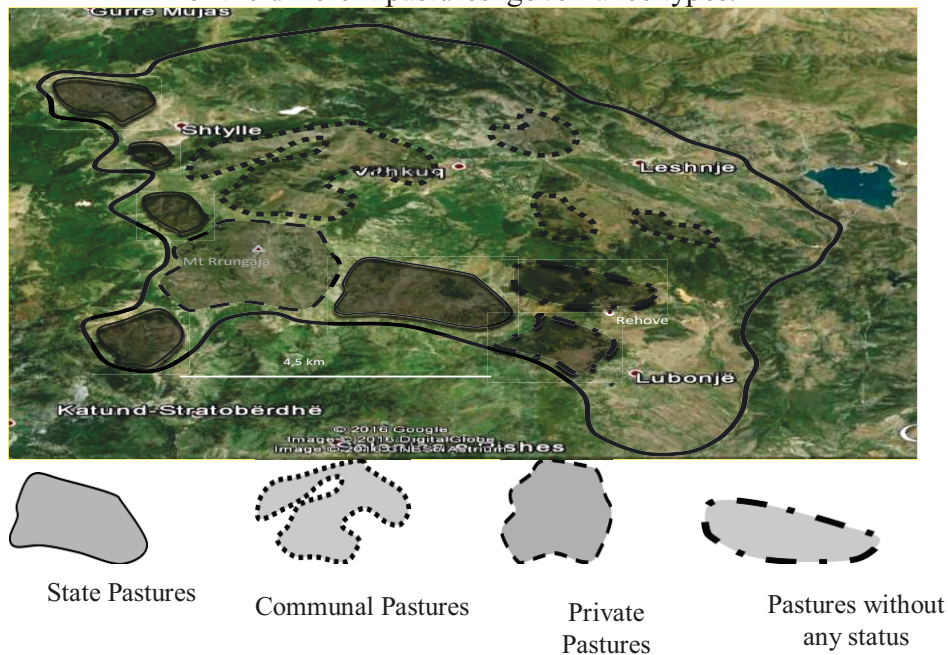
The lowest pastures are found at 1000m of altitude while the highest pastures are found at 1700m of altitude.

Figure 17. In the narrowed selection the municipality of Vithkuq



Source: Elaborated on GIS by Florjan Bombaj

Figure 18. The study area (5 villages) and the territorial identification of the different pastures' governance types.



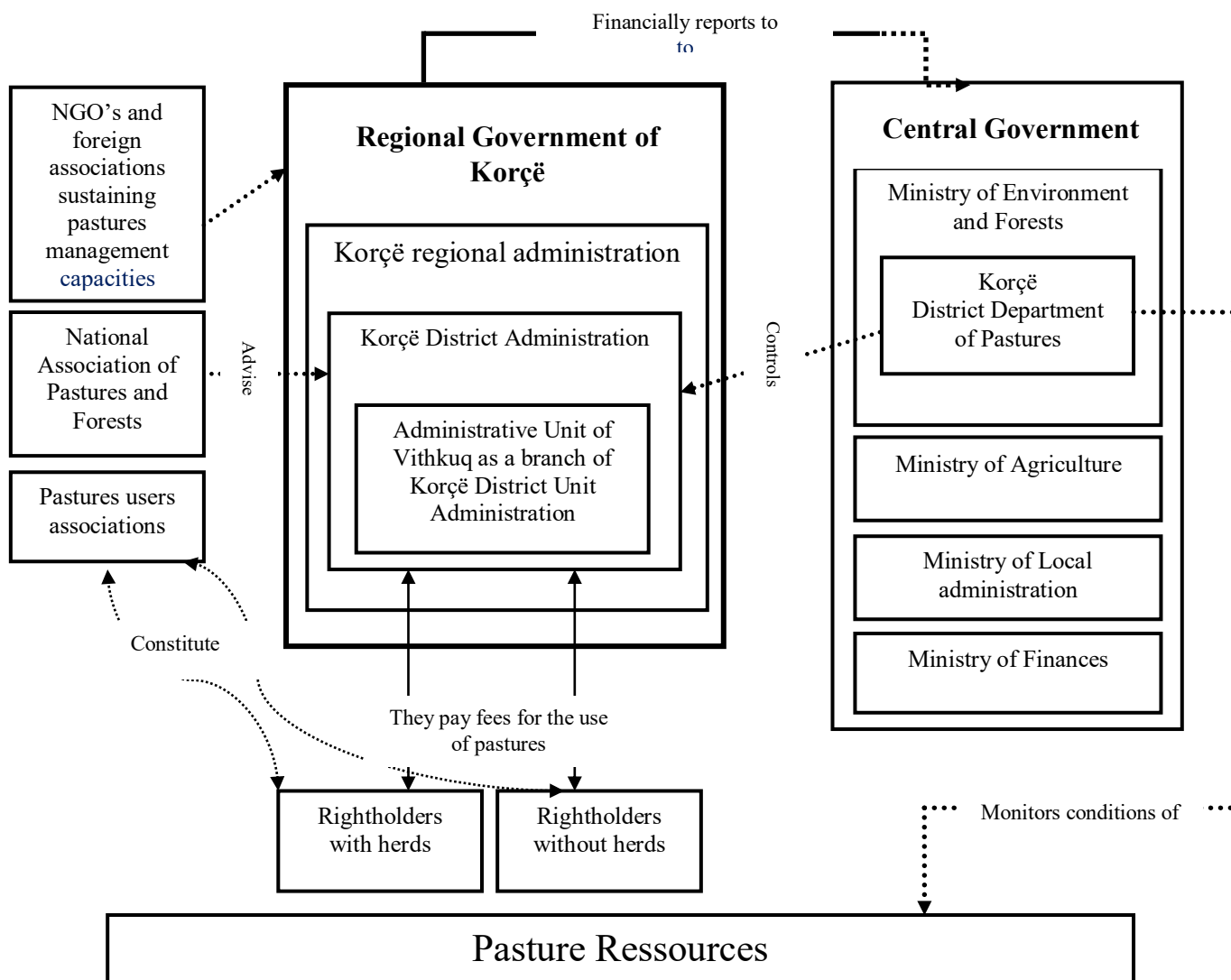
Source: (Gontard 2016; elaborated by authors)

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Governance of pastures at regional level

After 1991, the government of Korçë region has managed the state pastures while the municipality of Vithkuq, has managed the communal pastures. The region has four districts and managed all state pastures contracts. The region managed the contracts through the regional department of pastures that was, until 2013, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The regional department of pastures managed the state pastures contracts and monitored their conditions. After 2013 two major changes occurred. First: each district will manage only the state pasture contracts of the pastoral massifs belonging to the district while the monitoring of the pasture conditions remains under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment and Forests through the Korçë district department of pastures (see figure 19). Second: the management of the communal pastures of the municipality of Vithkuq passed at the Korçë district, one of the four districts of the Korçë region. The district's authority applies the same rules to the communal pastures that the regional department of pastures applied for the management of the state ones. The communal pastures are given in exclusive use to local farmers willing to rent them and able to pay a "good" price. If they are not able to pay, preference will be given to neighbouring farmers of other districts willing to rent them. This policy is seen as fruitful by the district's authority but the institutional vacuum created by the implementation of the reform has made complex the governance of pastures at regional level.

Figure 19. Primary actors and related responsibilities in the agro pastoral system of the AUV



Source: Authors' elaboration

The regional government, elected by the citizens living in the region, is not financially autonomous and the central government subsidizes it. Therefore, the regional government financially reports every year to the central government. The former municipality of Vithkuq (now administrative unit of Vithkuq - abbreviation AUV) is a branch of the district of Korçë (administrative centre of the Korçë region). It is located now in the city of Korçë. The manager of the unit is a political representative chosen by the district of Korçë and does not attribute or support the farmers to find pastures. The unit has no power in allocating pastures to local farmers and did not encourage or support farmers to rent the pastures collectively.

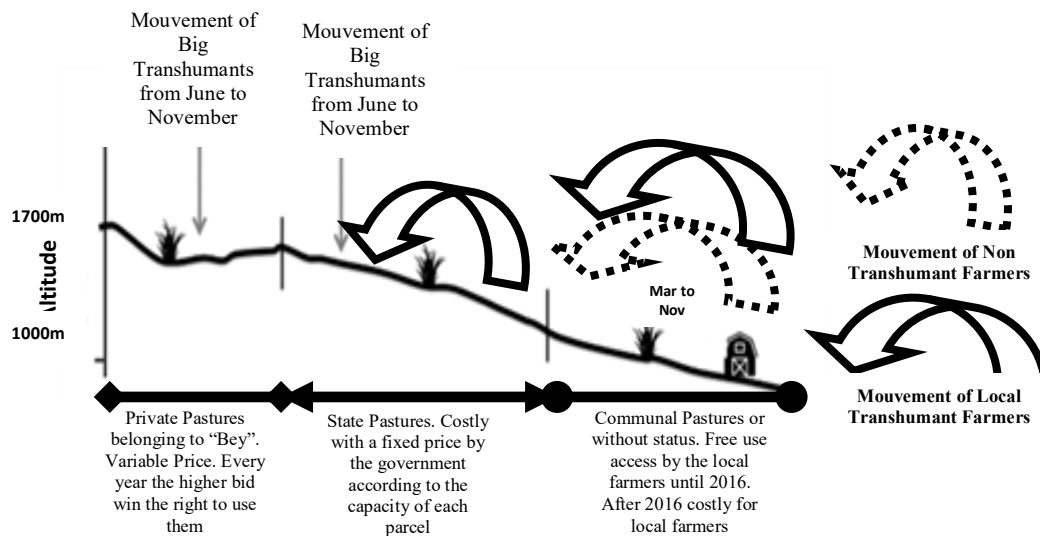
6.5.2 Governance of pastures at the communal level

The territorial and technical logics of the use of pastures

The area around Mount Rrungaja has a rich flora and fauna of pastures giving animal products of high flavor and quality that are well known by local and Albanian consumers. It is one of the rare cases in South Albania mountain area where a single owner (descendant of the “bey”) has more than 1.000 ha of summer pastures. This pasture was historically owned by the “bey”, a Turkish lord, and given back to his descendants after the turn of 1991. According

to literature (Gontard, 2016; Michaud, 2015) and our interviews, the local production system depends from the pastures available locally. Most of the farms have 1–10 sheep or goats, and 1–4 head of cattle. More than half of the farmers do not practice transhumance and bring their flocks daily on the pastures close to the villages, returning them to their stable at night. The other half takes the opportunity to combine their flocks (one breeder take responsibility for more animals than his own flock) or go alone (farmers having more than 50 sheep) to remote communal or state pastures for longer periods, located as close as possible to their village. Big flocks owned by individual farmers come each year from the coast. They settle on the private pastures of “bey” (figure 20), as they did already before the communist period, and partially and more recently on the state pastures, which are located farther away from the villages.

Figure 20. Movements of herds represented on a topographic section



Source: (Gontard 2016; elaborated by authors)

Current communal pastures' governance at the level of the villages

In only two villages (Vithkuq and Shtyllë) do farmers combine flocks to practise collective grazing of the communal pastures (625 ha) from March to November.

Two different systems of collective flocks or herds coexist:

(1) Sheep flocks (large majority): the farmers' families have another activity as farming, or are retired. They keep very small herd (between 12 to 50 animals) and land (between 0, 6 ha and 1, 5 ha). Their collective herds range from 150 to 200 sheep from 15 to 20 families. Each morning, farmers pool their animals in collective herds, and bring them to the communal pasture. There is a rotation for herding according to the number of animals per farmer: one day of herding for 10 animals.

(2) Cattle herds. Each farmer has 1–2 head of cattle. The farmers combine their animals in collective herds that graze the communal pastures every day. The rotation is 1 day of herding for 1 animal.

There are significant differences between the two villages in terms of organizing the collective management of the animals.

In the village of Vithkuq, there are sheep and cattle collective flocks. The diversity in herd size and animal specialization leads to a high heterogeneity in terms of pasture use access. Some farmers have more than 7 cattle and they practise transhumance alone without pooling their animals with the others. All farmers have plots to cultivate cereals to feed their herds, at least partially, in the winter season.

In the village of Shtyllë, there are only sheep. Shtyllë is a small village composed of 15 family flocks of similar size (30–50 sheep). The village is situated at a much higher altitude than the village of Vithkuq. The collective flocks are bigger than the ones of the village of Vithkuq. In addition, Shtyllë has no fertile arable land to sufficiently cultivate cereals to give the sheep as complementary feed in the winter, so access to common pastures is crucial for the summer to reduce the total costs of the animal feed.

6.5.3 Current farmers' perceptions after the institutional changes in the resource use

Applying the Likert method for the farmers' perceptions after the institutional changes in the resource use, the results are as follows:

Figure 21. Opinions of local farmers after the reform

In total = 18 Breeders						
	Territorial reform questions	1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neutral	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
3.1	As a breeder, you are well informed about the modalities of the reform			1	5	12
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)					9
	3 other villages (9)			1	5	3
3.2	You are of the opinion that this reform will have positive effects on the common management of the pastures, that is to say it allows a better management of this resource in association with your breeder colleagues		1	2	7	6
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)				3	6
	3 other villages (9)	2	1	2	4	
3.3	The reform has prompted you to regroup with your fellow breeders to rent pastures together		1	5	7	5
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)			1	3	5
	3 other villages (9)		1	4	4	
3.4	The reform has positive effects on the maintenance of mountain pastures, and on the number of animals you can take there			9	8	1
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)			2	6	1
	3 other villages (9)			7	2	
3.5	The district of Korça is the most efficient institution to manage the common pasture on which you are used to go to your animals	5	7	6		
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)		3	6		
	3 other villages (9)	5	4			
3.6	The reform allows a better cohesion between the breeders to share the estives		2	4	7	5
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)				4	5
	3 other villages (9)		2	4	3	

Source: Authors' survey

In both villages (Vithkuq and Shtyllë) where communal pastures are located, local farmers show more interest in collectively renting pastures. Nevertheless, farmers in Vithkuq village show less motivation to rent pastures as a group (data not shown). Furthermore, in the future, their willingness to rent pastures as a group remains the same (see question 4.6, figure 22). Other minor differences are observed between the opinions of the two villages of positive effects that the reform should have on the pasture management, their maintenance and the cohesion between farmers after the reform to share the pastures.

Figure 22. Resource use plan for the future

Resource Questions		In total = 18 Breeders				
		1 = Strongly disagree	2 = Disagree	3 = Neutral	4 = Agree	5 = Strongly agree
4.1	The group is an effective way to rent pastures			5	2	11
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)				1	8
	3 other villages (9)			5	1	3
4.2	Conflicts between locals and transhumants are lower if renting is done by a group of breeders than by a single one			5	1	12
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)					9
	3 other villages (9)			5	1	3
4.3	The group helps to a better coordination between breeders and local and regional institutions		3	1	13	1
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)				8	1
	3 other villages (9)		3	1	5	
4.4	Renting pastures together cements confidence among the breeders to take care of the problems of management of the pasture of the zone		1	2	3	12
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)					9
	3 other villages (9)		1	2	3	3
4.5	Without ensuring the use of pastures the future of livestock is threatened					18
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)					9
	3 other villages (9)					9
4.6	It will be possible to organize in spite of the conflicts between my family and the neighbor (or neighbors).		1	2	10	5
	Vithkuq + Shtyllë (9)				5	4
	3 other villages (9)		1	2	5	1

Source: Authors' survey

As shown at the figure 22 above, the villages Lubonjë and Rehovë do not seem to be interested in renting pastures collectively. Interviewees gave several reasons:

a) There are some pastures without legal status available for free access, even after the institutional change. According to interviews, these pastures are of poor quality but still are used by the local farmers.

b) The farmers have diverse farming activities (cropping and livestock) and use one part of their own arable land as pastures for their herds;

- c) The size of the population and the heterogeneity of the livestock affect their decision of cooperating with each other;
- d) Farmers tend to have big herds and do transhumance;
- e) There is no cooperation between the farmers, for reasons of neighbourhood conflicts or lack of social dialogue.

In Leshnjë, there are “good” reasons for the farmers to collectively rent pastures but, even after the recent institutional change, collective flocks remain very few. This is due mainly to the geographical conditions. The village is the lowest location of the municipality: it allows diversity in the farming activities (cropping and livestock): the village has a huge plain surface and very favourable for cropping maize and cereals for the feeding of animals in the winter. Furthermore, they use plots in their own possession as pastures during autumn. Also, farmers tend to have big herds and do transhumance.

6.5.4 Strong contrasts in the adaptation’s capacities to change

In the two villages closest to « Mount Rrungaya » (Vithkuq and Shtyllë), a collective organization occurred partially in reaction to the descendants of the « bey ».

Differences between these two villages regarding the reactions to the new context can be explained by the following reasons:

1. The group of farmers in Shtyllë is homogeneous. In the contrary, in the village of Vithkuq the farmers are much more numerous, therefore quite heterogeneous (size and herd composition, pluriactivity).
2. Social ties in the community: the village of Shtyllë has a small population compared to the village of Vithkuq. The social ties between farmers of the village of Shtyllë are many and of good quality, and this supports the collective organisation of the herds.
3. Pasture boundaries and social ties with transhumant herders issues. The village of Shtyllë has communal pastures boundaries very close to the private pastures of the descendants of the bey, rented so far by the big transhumant herders. The boundaries of communal pastures have been historically an issue for the Shtyllë farmers: tensions appear every summer. The solidarity observed between the Shtyllë farmers to face the big transhumant herders for their communal pastures has been helpful for them to come to a collective agreement between them, and to rent the pastures. In the village of Vithkuq no such reaction has occurred, as no big issue was reported on the communal pastures boundaries.

The theory based on other observations explains that what is the key factor is the exclusivity of the right (Taylor, 2006; Gilles & Jamtgaard, 1981) to use the communal pastures: who is legally recognized as the user of the communal pastures has the right to exclude the illegal users. Therefore, we can conclude that the major factor explaining the creation of the group of Shtyllë is the historical threat of communal pasture boundaries by the big transhumant herders reinforced by the fact that they had already developed collegial relationships as employees of the state farm.

6.6 Discussion

Ostrom grid of analysis explores the design principles for managing the commons. We propose to clarify the signification of the differences between the village of Shtyllë and the other villages, i.e. after the most recent changes of attribution of the communal pastures by the public district authority. Analysing the evidences given by the survey on opinions (using

Likert scale) into this grid allows discussing our research hypothesis (see table 10).

For the village of Shtyllë, several Ostrom principles are respected. What makes Shtyllë's group successful is that government rules have been appropriated and used as an opportunity to rent pastures (principle 3). This means that they have been able to transform the financial threat into an opportunity by collectively sharing costs and responsibilities. The opportunity to have the exclusivity right over the communal pastures boosted the principle 1 (clear boundaries). The communal pastures boundaries are meant to be legally recognized by the public district authorities (principle 1) to those who use them and be defended if conflicts will occur. The weakness of their organization is that it is built on delegation of the group's authority to a single member of the group who represent them to the public authorities. He is in the same time the member who rent the communal pastures in the name of all the other members. The group rights are not recognized as such (principle 7). In case of conflicts he should inform the other member and the officials (principle 8). Thus, the interconnection between the group and the public authorities is poorly assured. What works well is that the members of the group can daily control and monitor the pasture conditions (principle 4). Anyway, sanctions (principle 5) are not yet established because the group needs to have strong solidarity to face the disrespect of the pasture boundaries by the big transhumants.

Between the two governance's modalities, some principles show no difference (points 5 and 6) while others are really contrasted (points 3 and 4). Especially low cost conflicts resolution mechanisms are not yet present and sanctions not yet planned. A different panorama is present for the collective action arrangements and local suitability that the group has appropriated to empower its pasture use access.

Table 10. Ostrom's grid applied to the case study

Principles of governance	In the 4 villages (except Shtyllë)	Shtyllë
<p>1. Clear boundaries Both users' boundaries and resources' boundaries are well defined.</p>	<p>The pasture boundaries are well defined by law, history and tradition (figure 18). The private pastures have clear boundaries.</p>	<p>Since 2003, the communal pastures boundaries are clear and legally defined. Exclusive rights to use: only the group renting them can use them.</p>
<p>2. Local suitability Rules governing the use of common goods match to local needs, and local social and ecological conditions.</p>	<p>There is a mismatch between local resource conditions and current usage rules and regulation mechanisms (pasture management plans, no coordination between local breeders and regional government, institutional sanctions). Pasture management plans are not built with the local community. There is no coordination especially for the needs of local communities (e.g. for water</p>	<p>Group rules are adapted to their livestock activity. Every member uses the pasture surface he needs it to its livestock activity Management plans are built according to the needs of every member and collectively.</p>

	points during summer for the animals).	
<p>3. Collective choice arrangements People affected by resource governance rules can participate in modifying them.</p>	Formally, only some pasture users are members of the pasture users association. For the majority of the local breeders the association does not represent their interests but only the interests of those having good relations with the big transhumant herders because they rent to them some part of their own parcels during summer.	<p>The new reform was used as an advantage to legally rent communal pastures which has been the source of many conflicts before.</p> <p>Rules set at national level were locally discussed, accepted and used by the group of breeders as an opportunity to rent pastures. The group has respected the new rules and created their own.</p> <p>Local adaptation was done, in the sense that one member of the group rents the pastures as an individual, but the entire group pays.</p>
<p>4. Monitoring overseen by resource users Monitoring of resource users and resource conditions is undertaken by the users themselves or by nonusers who are accountable to the users.</p>	Only the regional government is responsible for assessing and monitoring pasture conditions. Indeed, the local breeders or the association do not have sufficient motivation, human or financial resources to monitor the users of the pastures.	<p>The group members being in collected herds can daily control and monitor the pasture conditions.</p> <p>The group member who controls shares the information of the pasture conditions with the group every time meetings are held.</p> <p>Disagreement or damage caused by a given member is discussed collectively when necessary.</p>
<p>5. Graduated sanctions People who repeatedly violate resource governance rules face a continuum of increasingly severe consequences.</p>	Local breeders usually try to develop informal agreements to solve conflicts. The local Administrative Unit is unable to resolve conflicts because by law, the resolution has to be done by the regional institutions (the AUV only informs the regional government about the conflict).	<p>Rules about handling the combined herds are adapted to the access to pastures.</p> <p>The group is united, because it faces the arrival of the big transhumant herders. There is no sanction yet, because every member respects the common rules so far.</p>

<p>6. Conflict-resolution mechanisms Accessible and low-cost options are in place for resolving conflicts among users and/or with officials.</p>	<p>Conflicts between the local livestock-keepers and big transhumant herders are solved in many cases by negotiation. No low-cost mechanisms exist to solve problems between local breeders and the local administrative unit regarding the pasture management plan.</p>	<p>The representative of the group is the member who is charge of the legal procedures for renting the pastures. In case of conflicts he is responsible for informing the other members and the AUV. No need for conflict-solving mechanisms is observed at the current stage.</p>
<p>7. Local self-determination The right of communities to organize and make rules is recognized and supported by upper level authorities.</p>	<p>There are no cases in which local breeders have developed their own rules to manage their common-pool resources.</p>	<p>Being legally recognized as exclusive users of the communal pastures, the breeders transformed the rules of the pasture access reform to their advantage by renting as a group. Only the group member who rents the communal pastures is legally recognized: the rights of the community as such are neither recognized nor supported by the upper level authorities. The group does not have a legal status as an association, thus it is not recognized by the public authorities as an institution.</p>
<p>8. Nested governance Common-property resource governance is organized in interconnected layers from local to regional levels.</p>	<p>Local level of common pasture resource governance does not exist Lines of responsibility and ownership between local-regional-national levels are poorly nested. Several NGOs are present in the area but their impact on pasture governance seems to be unimportant.</p>	<p>The communal pasture management plan at the local level is dependent on and interconnected with the regional level. The member who rents pastures is the contact of the group with the authorities.</p>
	Adequate to a relevant mode of governance	
	Inadequate, with significant dysfunctioning of collective governance	

Source: Authors' elaboration

Between the two governance modalities, some principles show no difference (points 5 and 6) while others are really contrasted (points 3 and 4). Especially low-cost conflict resolution mechanisms are not yet present and sanctions not yet planned. A different panorama is present for the collective action arrangements and local suitability that the group has appropriated to empower its access to pasture.

It is interesting to see that, in our case, local communities facing extreme institutional change, under certain conditions, may adapt to the new context by creating appropriate local governance mechanisms. By analysing contrasting reactions in neighbouring villages facing a

very similar context, one village shows that it has been possible for its inhabitants to arrange a combination of local rules that allow the farmers to benefit from a change initiated at national level. Being the only village that has reacted to this new context in this way, studying the conditions that favoured the adaptation of governance modalities for better collective management of the pastures might be fruitful for prospective research in other cases.

This paper advances knowledge about Albanian common-pasture governance by showing that government and organizations' initiatives did not rely on the farmers' perspective at the ground level. There was no dialogue or bottom-up approach, which could have taken communities' and individuals' perspectives into account identifying the best local resource governance mechanisms (Shigaeva et al., 2016; Dyer et al., 2014). This has led to a situation where the collective pastures management is worse than before in all villages, except one.

Institutional changes in the communal pasture management have not been accompanied by institutions capable of effectively implementing the objectives of the decentralization process. Our case study highlights the necessity for greater inclusion of relevant actors, and development of a governance process that is flexible to changing conditions creating incentives for effective participation and collective action (Taylor, 2006; Upton, 2012). Furthermore, as already highlighted in previous research, working together as a group facilitates cooperation and could be a prerequisite for building social capital to get long-term improvements in natural resources governance mechanisms (Pretty et al., 2003). It is interesting to see that the exclusivity right is a necessary condition that might accelerate the group activity to a higher level of collaboration creating models of resilience-based management (Bestelmeyer & Briske, 2012), but this is not a sufficient condition, and several other key aspects have to be set before the benefits of the exclusivity of the rights shows positive effects.

6.7 Conclusion

The recent institutional change in the communal pasture management has been successfully used by one village, which has rented public pastures as a group. Thus, creating appropriate governance mechanisms, this initiative appears to be effective for managing the common resource. The small size of the group and the clear boundaries of the communal pastures (Ho, 2000) have enhanced the group's capacity for collective action. Furthermore, the group homogeneity and the leadership role (Vedeld, 2000) of the chief of village have facilitated the contracting communal pasture modalities with the regional authorities.

Moreover, the current situation has created new modalities that can be the ferment for social capital improvement. For example, the group might be the basis for common market strategies for their milk and meat products in the future. Therefore, it is interesting to understand if farmers may be able to empower their group organization. Further research should analyse the internal composition and functioning modalities of the group allowing deep understanding of the potential to develop further its actions, in broadening the scope of the collective activities.

The scope of these results is limited to the study area. Based on current information, there are no other studies that analyse the farmers' reactions after the most recent Albanian reform on communal pasture use. Applying this method to different cases could give a deeper understanding of what the reform has changed for farmers in different territories, and test the relevance of these results.

In the post-collectivist countries the decentralization policies of natural resources show a high

top-down policy making orientation (Hartter & Ryan; 2010; Taylor, 2006). In many of them, the decentralization of the pasture management has not taken into account the needs of the local communities (Upton, 2012; Folke, 2006; Mearns, 2004) by finding what might have been the most appropriate way for the local pasture governance. Nevertheless, in response to a non-collaborative central government, local communities may create their own resource governance practices (Dyer et al., 2014). In more general ways, it will be very important to understand what might be the conditions where top-down policies meet the local communities' initiatives for resilience-based resource management.

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Transition words: Towards a general discussion on the results

This thesis has been built on the observation that the Albanian mountain territories have great potential in terms of territorial resources but they are not sufficiently competitive and resilient in the current socio-economic context. A methodological approach to local development based on mobilization and activation of local and specific territorial resources was done in a precise research site in southern Albania by combining a mixed-methods approach to analyze local dynamics.

The first article analyzes the milk and meat value chains at national and local level. The value chain approach and the theory of cost of transactions have analyzed legal and institutional aspects of the national and local milk and meat value chains concluding that lack of an efficient legal and institutional framework has caused low development of the milk and meat value chains.

The second article analyse the local farming systems by showing that the majority of farms are subsistence farms and they have high level of land fragmentation resulting to a low competitiveness and low production efficiency. The institutional changes on the pastures governance modalities during the fieldwork has made compulsory to a deeper analysis at a very local level such as the village.

Finally, the third article explores the local actions after the change in the communal pasture governance modalities by showing that the current momentum seems to have created new modalities that may be the ferment for market common strategies in the future, especially for their meat products. We show that this new context has created the initial conditions for the creation of a common.

In the next part of the thesis, i.e. the general discussion, we discuss, based on our experience from the three articles (part 4, 5 and 6), the contribution of the different results and methodological developments, taken together, in testing the initial hypothesis of the thesis. Discussion highlight the fact that complete understanding of complex and dynamic value chains and local farming systems through a set of methods remains limited and that further research is needed to deep analyze the Albanian particular context.

(Mots de transition : Vers une discussion générale sur les résultats)

Cette thèse a été construite sur le constat que les territoires de montagne albanais ont un grand potentiel en termes de ressources territoriales, mais qu'ils ne sont pas suffisamment compétitifs et résilients dans le contexte socio-économique actuel. Une approche méthodologique du développement local basée sur la mobilisation et l'activation de ressources territoriales, locales et spécifiques a été réalisée dans cette (ou notre) zone d'étude du sud de l'Albanie en combinant des méthodes mixtes pour analyser les dynamiques locales.

Le premier article analyse les filières du lait et de la viande au niveau national et local. A travers l'étude de la filière et la théorie du coût des transactions, les aspects institutionnels des filières nationales et locales du lait et de la viande ont été analysés, concluant que l'absence de cadre juridique et institutionnel efficace avait entraîné un faible développement des filières lait et viande.

Le deuxième article analyse les systèmes agricoles locaux en montrant que la majorité des exploitations agricoles sont des exploitations de subsistance et que la fragmentation des terres est importante, ce qui se traduit par de faibles niveaux de production et faible compétitivité sur les marchés. Afin d'étudier l'impact des changements institutionnels des modalités de gouvernance des pâturages au cours du travail de terrain, l'analyse a été approfondie à un niveau très local, tel que le village.

Enfin, le troisième article explore les actions locales liées au changement de modalités de gouvernance des pâturages communaux. Il montre que ces nouvelles modalités pourraient entraîner des stratégies communes pour l'accès au pâturages mais également pour la commercialisation des produits, notamment carnés. Nous montrons que ce nouveau contexte a créé les conditions initiales pour la création d'une action commune.

Dans la partie suivante de la thèse, à savoir la discussion générale, nous discutons à partir de notre expérience des trois articles (parties 4, 5 et 6), de la contribution des différents résultats et développements méthodologiques par rapport aux hypothèses de la thèse. La discussion souligne le fait que la compréhension complète des filières complexes et dynamiques et des systèmes agricoles locaux à travers un ensemble de méthodes restent limités et que des recherches supplémentaires sont nécessaires à une analyse exhaustive du contexte particulier albanais.

Part 7: General Discussion

Abstract

This thesis discuss the main hypothesis that collective action of the actors can contribute to more resilient and sustainable mountain territories by safeguarding the specificity of food products through locally adapted practices and a better distribution of the territorial rent within the value chains (by adding value at farm level). The results of the Albanian case done in Korçë district validate only partially the hypothesis.

The factors that confirmed the hypothesis are (1) Specificity of the local products, (2) Increased demand for local animal products at national and local levels, (3) The local development of short value chains, (4) Local collective actions.

The factors that infirmed the hypothesis are (1) Lack of the safeguard of the specificity, (2) Lack of territorial rent and market power, (3) Value chains are not efficient, (4) Farmers have high production costs.

Further research is needed for different points: (1) Methodological implications, (2) National-regional-local continuum of production and quality issues, (3) Dynamic methodological and multidisciplinary approach, (4) A more global perspective on the local products qualification debate, (5) Implications for policies and stakeholders.

(Partie 7 : Discussion générale)

(Résumé)

Cette thèse aborde l'hypothèse principale selon laquelle l'action collective des acteurs peut contribuer à des territoires de montagne plus résilients et durables en sauvegardant la spécificité des produits alimentaires grâce à des pratiques adaptées localement et une meilleure répartition de la rente territoriale (niveau). Les résultats du cas albanais dans le district de Korçë ne valident que partiellement l'hypothèse.

Les facteurs qui ont confirmé l'hypothèse sont (1) La spécificité des produits locaux, (2) L'augmentation de la demande de produits animaux locaux aux niveaux national et local, (3) Le développement local de filières courtes, (4) Les actions collectives locales.

Les facteurs qui ont entravé l'hypothèse sont (1) L'absence de sauvegarde de la spécificité, (2) L'absence de rente territoriale et de pouvoir de marché, (3) Les filières ne sont pas efficaces (4) Les agriculteurs ont des coûts de production élevés.

Des recherches supplémentaires sont nécessaires pour différents points: (1) Mieux analyser les implications méthodologiques, (2) Sur le continuum national-régional-local des problèmes de production et de qualité, (3) Sur une approche méthodologique et multidisciplinaire dynamique, (4) Une perspective et un débat plus global de la qualification des produits locaux (5) Analyse sur les implications pour les politiques et les parties prenantes.

Part 7: General Discussion

This thesis discuss the main hypothesis that collective action of the actors can contribute to more resilient and sustainable mountain territories by safeguarding the specificity of food products through locally adapted practices and a better distribution of the territorial rent within the value chains (by adding value at farm level). The results of the Albanian case done in Korçë district validate only partially the hypothesis. The first section of this chapter summarizes the main findings that allowed a partial validation of the hypothesis of the thesis. Then the second section discusses factors that contradicted the hypothesis of the thesis. Finally, the last section discusses the wider implications for policies and stakeholders, methodological implications to the literature of the territorial development approaches and propositions for future research. Table 11 summarizes the factors that confirmed the hypothesis, the factors that infirmed the hypothesis and implications for future research needed for the validation of the hypothesis.

Table 11. Factors that confirmed and infirmed the hypothesis

	Confirmed	Infirmed	Implications
Conditions (1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specificity of the local products • Collective action • Other factors 	7.2.1 Specificity of the products (Meat / Cheese) 7.2.2 Increased demand for local animal products with specificity 7.2.3 Short value chains 7.2.4 Collective local actions	7.3.1 Lack of the safeguard of the specificity 7.3.2 Lack of territorial rent and market power 7.3.3 Value chains are not efficient	7.4.1 Methodological implications
Outputs (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output of specificity + collective action Locally adapted practices • output of specificity + collective action + locally adapted practices) Safeguard of the specificity 	Especially sheep breeding is ideally adapted to the topographic and climatic conditions of the local natural resources.	Local practices are subject to changes according to the economic conditions	7.4.2 National-regional-local continuum of production and quality issues 7.4.3 Dynamic methodological and multidisciplinary approach
Outcomes (3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better distribution within the value 	High informality and impossibility to trace the added value in	7.3.4 Farmers have high production costs	7.4.4 A more global perspective on the local products qualification debate

chain • Adding value at farm level	each stage of the value chain at national and local level		
Expected Impacts (4) More resilient and sustainable mountain territories	Lack of public policies for resilient natural resource management	Territorial reform impacts need to be assessed.	7.4.5 Implications for policies and stakeholders

Definitions in the context of this analysis:

(1) Conditions: Combination of factors where the product, having special quality characteristics by the natural and human resources of the local area in which it is produced, motivate producers to engage with other local stakeholders in a value creation and preservation process.

(2) Outputs: Set of rules describing the specific attributes of the product in relation to its geographical origin through a description of the product and its manner of production, laying down requirements regarding not only modes of production but also those of processing, packaging, labelling etc. The degree of specificity and anchorage of the local resources is a measurement of typicity.

(3) Outcomes: A series of collective initiatives and activities undertaken by stakeholders owning different assets along the value chain of the product to create value for consumers and income for producers.

(4) Impacts: Actors are remunerated according to their contribution to the value creation process which is fairly distributed along the value chain between the local production system and the external one and between different actors involved in production, processing and distribution. The fair remuneration ensure the preservation or even the improvement of natural resources, by guaranteeing equilibrium between exploitation and development over time, while maintaining or increasing biodiversity.

7.1 Limitations of the research

This thesis analyzes the Albanian milk and meat value chains at national and at local levels in a particular municipality. The first limitation is that, due to the high informality of the two value chains, it is very difficult to achieve a general understanding of the governance modalities of every link of the value chains.

Second limitation: this thesis is focused on a precise research site. Further research in other sites might bring a broader view of the local specificities valorisation potential.

Third, in Albania, currently, there is no GI product recognised and protected by the national institutions. This hasn't allowed us to analyse a well constructed model of an Albanian GI. It could have been fruitful to compare the local collective organizations between the farmers of our case study with farmers of the GI product. Thus, it could have been resulted in a better comprehension of the conditions missing for the start of the virtuous circle as defined by (Vandecandelaere et al., 2009).

Therefore, there is more research needed in the future, under the new legal conditions, in order to identify the farming systems that are promising for the safeguarding of the specificity of food products.

Fourth, the recent territorial reform initiated by the Albanian central government has caused different changes in terms of communal pastures governance. Further research is needed to analyze how the allocation of the land use of these pastures by local and national institutions

will impact the local farming systems. Furthermore, this last reform has caused a vacuum in creating appropriate institutions capable of having solid database on its impacts. The territorial reform is still in progress and future research is needed to measure how its implementation has changed the economic conditions and livelihood of mountain communities. At the national level, interviews of public officers and policy makers about the impacts of the territorial reform on the Albanian farming systems and especially in our research site could have allowed a better understanding of conditions and implications of the current reforms. These interviews were not possible in this study due to time constraints. Besides these limitations, this thesis is a good start to identifying more research sites that show great potential in terms of products whose quality is linked to origin. Upon this pioneering work, future researchers can build a national database of products showing strong quality valorization potential.

7.2 Factors that confirm the hypothesis

7.2.1 Specificity of the local products

The reputation of animal products of the municipality of Vithkuq dates since the middle age period (Koukoudis, 2003). It was inhabited by Vlachs, well-known pastoral nomads who settled permanently after 1769 and brought their know-how of livestock production. Specificity of the products (defined as specific characteristics linked to the territory, according to the definition of specificity given by Casabianca et al., 2011) exists because the municipality of Vithkuq is a mountainous territory with very particular pedo-climatic conditions (especially the mountain Rrungaja). Its rich flora and fauna of pastures produce animal products of high flavor and quality (Çili et al., 2013) that are well known by local and national consumers. The local products (cf. their analysis in chapter 4), such as in other cases (Goussios & Anthopoulou, 2016; Belletti et al., 2015; Beranger et al., 2005), have high degree of specificity related to their geographical origin.

As in the case of other products, such as “Culatello di Zibello” (Tregear et al., 2007) and “Vitellone Bianco dell’Appennino Centrale – Chianina” (Belletti et al., 2007) the product’s origin is linked to the characteristics of small farm households, where small ruminants were bred for family consumption. Farmers would transform milk into cheese during summer, and then preserve it for the hard winter season (Michaud, 2015).

Over time, the reputation of animal products of the municipality of Vithkuq developed first because of the physical quality of the product and second, because of the product’s rarity. Before communism and after the fall of communism in 1991, most of these animal products were produced domestically, with only a few dairies producing cheese commercially. Further research is needed to determine the nutritional characteristics of the animal products because the composition of milk and meat it is influenced by the diet, the breeding system and the breeds of animals used (Dhiman et al., 2005, Velasco et al., 2004).

7.2.2 Increased demand for local animal products at national and local levels

Meat consumption in Albania is 43.4 kilograms per capita (FAO, 2013), but still far from EU levels that are more than twice as high. Between 2008 and 2015, the demand for meat at national level has increased faster than that for milk/cheese (MAFCP, 2016), and this especially since 2012. The strong urban growth and the high concentration of the economic activity in the cities make the demand for meat grow faster than the demand for milk. After

the economic crisis of 2008, there is a significant return of Albanian migrants from the neighbouring countries (such as Italy and Greece). They settle mostly in urban areas where they can find work. Another important category is the seasonal migrants who work up to six months/year in Greece and the rest of the year in the cities in Albania (Vullnetari, 2015). Another internal factor may be the fact that the richest segments of village populations aim for the big cities when they migrate. Another reason is that the historical migration flows from Albania to other countries (such as Italy and Greece) after 1991 may have generated innovations in food systems and consumption patterns by changing dietary practices.

Generally, Albanian urban consumers have strong preference especially for lamb meat because it's an important component of the traditional diet in Albania (Imami, et al., 2011). Some other research shows that customers have some preference for products produced in their area of origin because they trust more the farmers of their area (Lashi et al., 2017). The new urban consumers grown in urban areas still conserve that belief. Interestingly, our results at the Korçë district show that the meat consumption is increasing constantly and that the local production in the municipality of Vithkuq increases as well. In fact, between 2005 and 2015, the total milk production has decreased by 9 percent while the total meat production has increased by 55 percent. The recent data show that the consumers' demand for animal products coming from this municipality, especially from small ruminants, has increased in recent years at the regional and national levels (cf. chapter 5).

Changes in the diet structure are directly related to the increase in consumption of animal products when income rises (Satterthwaite et al., 2010). This trend is gradually becoming more widespread in emerging countries, where it is characterized by a very rapid transition rate (Esnouf et al., 2011). The Albanian urban society, such as in other cases (Satterthwaite et al., 2010 ; Esnouf et al., 2011; Naska et al., 2006) should question the sustainability of food systems, in terms of changing dietary practices.

Future research should explore the way in which these changing dietary practices can initiate the development of food quality value chains by improving food safety standards and could induce an economic local development. This has already started, as shown in next section 7.2.3.

7.2.3 The local development of short value chains

The emergence of short value chains has appeared because of important transitions in consumer perceptions of food and farming (Kneafsey et al., 2013). These new market niches resulting from new processes of consumers' patterns in food markets have traditionally been seen as relevant for marginalized rural areas (Renting et al., 2003). They are characterized by a minimal number of intermediaries between farmer and consumer (Kneafsey et al., 2013). Results presented in chapter 4 show that the costs of market access (such as costly weekly animal wholesale market access, cost of transporting animals from farm to city markets, costs of finding potential buyers outside their location) are higher for the local farmers. Consequently, intermediaries, having high capacity for carrying the animals from farms to their butcher shops, have created oligopsonistic markets.

The proximity between farmers and intermediaries (especially for lamb meat) can be explained by two main factors.

- First, lamb meat is dominant in the dietary practices of Albanian consumers (see section 7.2.2). Albanian urban consumers, as Greek urban consumers (Krystallis et al.,

2007), are frequent purchasers of fresh lamb meat at traditional outlets without paying attention to extrinsic quality. Same as Greek urban consumers, they seek information about meat production methods at the butcher's shop, where they can be sure about the origin of their meat, instead of reading labels and trusting brand names of products in supermarkets. The lambs are sold in live weight to intermediaries who in the majority of cases are also butchers and have their own slaughterhouses in the capital (Tirana). In Albania, as in other countries (Kneafsey et al., 2013), the willingness-to-pay for local meat by urban consumers may allow higher control costs. An important question is how this willingness-to-pay affect returns to producers? Given the competition by low prices of imported meat, increasing costs of their production may not be a helpful strategy for local farmers. A deeper understanding of how to reduce these production costs, while maintaining the quality that consumers prefer, may be desirable.

- Second, there is an increased demand for lamb meat during summer. Strong links are observed between tourism activities and restaurants demanding more fresh lamb meat during summer. As in other cases, such as “Chianina” meat in Italy (Ventura, F., & van der Meulen, 1994), meat produced on small farms finds its way directly to local butchers. With Albania's strong tourist attractions, products such as local lamb meat, may be an economically valuable long-term investment for farmers. Since the willingness-to-pay for local meat by urban consumers and tourist demand exists, the development of quality short value chains may be an option.

Future research is needed to test if the high informality of the value chains allows such a development. Importantly, the collective actions are key factor to develop the quality virtuous circle of local development based on origin-linked products (Barjolle et Sylvander, 2002). This point is explored in next section 7.2.4.

7.2.4 Local collective actions

Albania land reform after the fall of communism in 1991 has similarities with other countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Bański, 2017 ; Hartvigsen, 2014; Gorton, 2001). In Albania land was distributed in physical very small parcels as a main land reform approach (Hartvigsen, 2014a). There is a big overlap between ownership of agricultural land and land use as most of the land is farmed by the owners in small-scale family farms (Hartvigsen, 2014b). As in other Balkans countries such as Serbia and Bosnia (Esteve et al., 2011) the structure of the majority of farms (small and often run by aging farmers) makes the costs of collective organization difficult to bear. As well, the collective memory of the past communist regime has left fears about collective actions. Previous research in the greenhouses sector in Albania, has shown that small farmers suffering from land fragmentation (Kola et al., 2014), face difficulties in implementing collective actions. Furthermore, another study shows that social capital, human capital and leadership are important determinants of collective action (Skreli et al., 2014).

Despite the difficult national context of collective action identified in previous research, in our case study it was shown that farmers, by collectively managing communal pastures, may improve their collective strategies in the future (cf. chapter six). Communal pastures are the main resource for local farmers who have common interest in its good management; however, some of them want to utilize the common resource, at will, before the collective formation of a set of co-defined governance rules. Its sustainability is threatened if collective and democratic management and the construction of rules of use, which will avoid over-

utilization, are not in place (Fournier et al., 2016). All the villages use the communal pastures but only one village arranged a combination of local rules that allowed farmers to benefit from a change initiated at national level. The conditions that were able to activate such a reaction were the group homogeneity of the farmers, the strong social ties between farmers, clear defined pasture boundaries and eminent threats for the pasture use access by the big transhumants outside the village. Farmers' reaction of the village of Shtyllë show a potential in terms of social capital and leadership but will they be able to improve these initial conditions for resilient governance of their pastures? These results are based on the precise research site of the municipality of Vithkuq. Further research is needed to test if our findings are true in other mountain territories of Albania.

What has changed for the farmers of the village of Shtyllë is the opportunity to have the exclusive rights to the communal pastures, which has created the initial conditions for the existence of a common (Ostrom, 1990). One of the main principles of a proper management of a common good is the set of governance rules collectively co-defined. In fact, the exclusive rights have catalyzed the need to collectively co-define governance rules for the communal pastures. By creating appropriate group coordination mechanisms, the group of the village of Shtyllë is at the very beginning of governing this resource as a common. But what is the nature of rules that currently helps the learning process for the common pastures management? Each individual in a group may place a different value upon the collective good wanted by his group. The Olson's (2009) logic of collective action allows understanding the group configuration and the individual behaviours or strategies. Consequently, further research is needed to analyze the relationship between the group's size and the behaviour of the individuals in the group.

The ability of local communities to adapt to and recover from disruptive events is defined as community resilience by Cheshire et al. (2015). In the Albanian context of frequent changes of the pasture governance modalities, the local community's vulnerability, resilience and adaptive capacity will be determined, in part, by farmers' attitudes towards the process of change. These adaptive strategies can be slowed or be ineffective when social networks are weak and the stock of social capital is reduced. Consequently, further research is needed to understand if the current momentum can be the start for improving the social and territorial capital (Pretty et al., 2003) to achieve/obtain community resilience for long-term improvements in pastoral resources governance mechanisms.

Further research is needed to understand how public decision-makers can better integrate local development policies for community resilience strategies by promoting economic initiatives at local scale. The process of institution building is related to social capital building (Paldam and Svendsen, 2000). That's why social capital can matter for farmers as a factor of production, and as a determinant of transaction costs or monitoring costs (Paldam and Svendsen, 2000). Our case study shows that improvement of social capital is important. Future analysis of the ways in which local farmers may substantially benefit from public policies that increase social capital, will be interesting.

7.3 Factors that infirm the hypothesis

7.3.1 Lack of the safeguard of the specificity

Currently, in Vithkuq, there is no safeguarding of the specificity through locally adapted code of practice and the farming practices are not all sustainable (Gontard, 2016; Michaud, 2015). Locally adapted practices mean to (1) match animal needs to forage resources; (2) select

locally adapted animals anatomically, physiologically, and behaviourally; (3) select animals that are unable to reproduce without help from humans; and (4) create grazing systems that enhance the well-being of soils, plants, herbivores, and people (Provenza, 2008). Sustainable practices would increase water use efficiency, improve the soil health and fertility, and control pests and weeds with minimum or zero-pesticide use (Pretty et al., 2003). Sustainable breeding is also a term that has many meanings and is part of an on-going process of shared learning (King, 2008). Currently, farmers don't know/care about implementing the best sustainability practices; for example, they use pesticides in the lowlands where they grow arable crops. The intensity of production is relatively low because of lack of money to buy inputs, rather than due to adopting sustainable agro ecological farming practices which are often less intensive.

The diversity of the farming systems shows different agricultural practices reducing the safeguard of the specificity. In most of the cases, the animals' winter food is cultivated by the farmers, who use mainly chemical inputs. Manure, even though available, is not always used for two main reasons. First, lack of appropriate transport tools and, second, farmers argue that the manure they produce is not enough to meet the needs of the crops so they throw it away rather than use it in their fields (Gontard, 2016). In other cases, due to increased pressure on some arable land and the difficulty for some families to carry out all fodder crop production activities during the peak labour season, farmers buy the animals' winter food rather than producing it themselves.

The milk and meat have high degree of specificity related to their geographical origin. Still, lack of the safeguard of the specificity remains a critical issue. Even if the livestock production is based on original local breeds and, for the cheese in particular, on traditional processing practices, these products are not specified or certified. Farms manage the overall process of production - processing - marketing at the farm level. So they are oriented towards individual solutions rather than collective ones. Consequently, lack of collective definition of "traditional" products and certification capable of guaranteeing their authenticity to consumers, such as in the Brocciu case (Prost et al., 1999; Sainte Marie & Casabianca, 1998), persists. In other cases (Frayssignes, 2007) certification has better valorised the specificity of traditional products. In our case study, the lack of knowledge, and lack of capacity to collectively organize the farmers with the cheese makers and with the middle men for the meat, leads to a weak safeguard of the products' specificity. Still, because of the low intensity of production, the local products remain quite specific.

The results from our case study show that farmers have difficulties in building collective solutions to improve the safeguard of the specificity. Further research may be desirable to identify social drivers and technological tools that may motivate farmers to build and improve local rules collectively in order to improve the safeguard of the specificity. Furthermore, other research site in Albania shows more dynamic local actions in terms of the safeguard of the specificity, for example for the meat in the Northern part (project BioDivBalkans). Further research in these sites may be helpful.

7.3.2 Lack of territorial rent and market power

The majority of farmers do not benefit from any "territorial quality rent" as defined by (Pecqueur, 2001). Such as in other cases (Kaminarides et al., 2006; Ribeiro and Santos, 2004) cheese from this territory of origin is usually sold at better prices than others on the regional market. This origin has a significant impact on prices. These products might have a positive

impact on the development of this territory (Hirczak et al., 2008) but this depends on the existence and quality of coordination of private and public actors.

The local meat value chain show that the low specificity of the meat intermediaries' assets has made the market more competitive in nature, giving more economic choices to local farmers. Anyway, the regional meat market is characterized by the existence of informal chains (direct selling from farmers to the processors and distribution middlemen). As in other cases (Tsourgiannis et al., 2008), the size of the flock, volume of milk and meat production, and farm income affect the distribution channel choice. Farmers don't have tools to add value at farm level by using technological innovation such in the case of the meat products in Greece (Bajovic et al., 2012).

Small farms lack investment potentials. Farmers have high production costs resulting in a low capacity to add value at farm level. They adapt individual strategies resulting in a low market power. Contrarily, large farms, as in other case studies (Paus, 2010), are predominantly market oriented, especially in the meat value chain. In Greece, since the economic crisis in 2008, market prices are not favourable for farmers since they aren't remunerating the mode of production and the specificity of the milk/cheese products (Goussios & Anthopoulou, 2016). Consequently, at the value chain level as well as at the territorial level, territorial development mixed governance might be an option to create a territorial rent (Goussios & Anthopoulou, 2016).

Further research is needed to undertake a biophysical and socio-economic analysis of the territory. The socio-economic itineraries, reveal originality, confer typicity, and lead to a reputation, for a property originating from this geographical space. It might help to define the rules of engagement and develop a vision for the local farmers for the future.

7.3.3 Value chains are not efficient

In developing countries informal markets are characterised by non-linear, unregulated, and heterogeneous self organising food value chains (Grace et al., 2010). In Albania, data at national and local level show that the lack of an efficient legal and institutional framework has caused low development of the milk and meat value chains (cf. chapter four). As food safety enforcement standards remain low, the informality tends to be high. In other cases, such the meat sector in Brazil (Azevedo and Bankuti, 2007), variables such as low income and asymmetric information on consumption and distribution channels, explains the high informality levels. Other research (Omoro et al., 2011) shows that there is an increased concern about food quality and safety in countries with high rates of urbanization. In these countries, small scale producers are often unable to increase production by adopting productivity' enhancing technologies unless the value chains for their products are sufficiently developed and dynamic. Other studies show that smallholder dairying generates significant benefits for poor farmers, traders, retailers and consumers while their informal activities have negative health impacts on consumers (Grace et al., 2007). In our case study, there is a high level of informal direct sales from small farmers to consumers in small quantities, causing some food safety issues. As Purseigle and Hervieu (2011) has defined, survival agriculture characterises the small farmers in the area. They are cut off from the world, from collective organizations, markets, technologies and globalization because they are preoccupied with their survival.

Research on rural transformation of post-socialist countries reveals the diversity of trajectories followed by rural territories (Maurel, 2005). After the de-collectivisation process,

other mechanisms intervened, giving a large place to the capacities of adaptation and anticipation of the social actors. In the vast majority of post-socialist countries, new owners preferred to opt for a cooperative structure that was both safer and less demanding in terms of personal involvement (Maurel, 1995). Contrary to these post-socialist countries, cooperative structures were not present in Albania after the fall of communism in 1991. Previous research in Albania found that land fragmentation correlates significantly more with diversification for households which use a larger proportion of agricultural production for self-consumption than do more market-oriented households (Ciaian et al., 2018). Furthermore, Albanian farmers are, as in Serbia and Bosnia (Esteve et al., 2011), to a certain extent and for historical reasons, reluctant to enter collective structures.

In our case study, dairies and middlemen are important actors of the value chain dynamics; contrarily to other cases (Esteve et al., 2011), where the exclusion of dairies represents a threat to the development of the milk/cheese value chain. In other cases (Galli, 2011) if local producers tend to produce high quality products, the product will be supplied depending on the required certification costs and the willingness to pay by consumers for high quality. Furthermore, for such a process some conditions need to be fulfilled depending on local context (Sainte Marie & Casabianca, 1998). The current value chain dynamics do not sustain a certification process due to the high informality and low enforcement on food safety rules. Furthermore, small farm producers, of our case study, are not able to supply the market in sufficient quantities because their livestock and processing capacity is too low. Consequently, power relations and decision-making mechanisms within the stakeholders are key factors in the negotiation of the distribution of the value added at the supply chain level as well as at the territorial level (Paus, 2010).

Further research is needed to understand how the increased demand for quality products has affected the local value chains for other products that are highly demanded by consumers. Other research sites may represent more positive dynamics, so further research may be desirable to explore them.

7.3.4 Farmers have high production costs

One of the main factors that impacts farmers' position in the market is the control of the production costs in order to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage. Small farms do not benefit from economies of scale (Jeanneaux et al., 2009) because they sell low surplus amounts. Even in the case of PDO products, collective rules (Jeanneaux et al., 2011) do not necessarily reduce these costs. They depend on the definition of production rules and their ability to be imposed on all actors. Farmers, having small farms and suffering from the land fragmentation (Kola et al., 2014), have high production costs. As in other Balkans countries such as Serbia and Bosnia (Esteve et al., 2011) the structure of the majority of farms (small and often run by aging farmers) makes the costs of collective organization and certification difficult to bear.

Products that are perishable, such as milk/cheese are inherently quality-sensitive and subject to high transactions costs, particularly in the case of smallholder production. Small farmers, as in other case studies (Porter and Kramer, 2011) capture little of the value that they create because markets are not accessible to them. Small farmers, by selling only small amounts of milk/cheese and meat, face difficulties to access better financial resources for investments. So they are not able to benefit from the value produced in order to remunerate the factors of production while seeking to stay competitive in the market.

In our case study the majority of farms are subsistence farms and they have high level of land fragmentation resulting to low production efficiency (cf. chapter five). Results show similarities with other cases, such in Greece (Hadjigeorgiou et al., 2002), where farmers rely more on the increase of the flock size increasing family income rather than increasing physical productivity. In our case study, farming systems differentiation depends on the capital available to purchase land and livestock and to build a barn. Consequently, families having labour force available are adapting faster to the new market challenges (cf. chapter five). As in the Greek case, this can interpret why farmers are more interested in improving labour efficiency by increasing the size of the flock per person employed and maintaining the extensive character of the production system rather than making capital investments (Hadjigeorgiou et al., 2002). The low capital investments can be explained by two main reasons; first is the high interest rates for borrowing from banks and second the lack of collateral of farmers (Marku, 2016). To sum up, capital and labour force are crucial for the livestock activity expansion and the initial distribution of production factors in 1991 has impacted the farming systems in the long-term period for almost all the villages.

Further research is needed to analyze the possible development scenarios in the future for this mountain territory. In effect, in territories where there is a low population density, low productivity and very low level of investments, adding value at farm level and improving the livelihood of mountain communities' becomes crucial.

7.4 Implications for future research

7.4.1 Methodological implications

The operational methodology to foster sustainable development processes for mountain territories, such as the quality virtuous circle (Vandecandelaere, 2009), has two challenges in the Albanian case. The first is the identification and activation of potential specific territorial resources when data at national level are inexistent or non reliable. The second is to understand the local practices of the territory having these specific local conditions for a product qualification process. In this thesis, a varied and combined methodological approach has been used along with descriptive criteria to identify potential specific products at national level and local production practices, to better understand the territorial resource specificities. This implies that the analysis is done on a scale from national to local, always aiming to enrich the field reality that is not reflected during every stage of the analysis. This thesis, as far as we know, has been among the first to apply combined methods from a national to local scale, integrating a holistic approach from a broad value chain scope to a local farming system analysis. This has several implications when looking at the results and conclusions. First, it should be considered that any stage of the thesis might always miss something. Through Utilizing the combined methods approach, which relied on a large literature review context and extended experts' consultation, a suitable selection of a marginalized mountain territory showing great potential in terms of specific products valorization was made (Bombaj et al., 2015). But, not all attributes that have been examined at the national level have given reliable information on the local practices. The need to adapt the thesis' methodological approach to the particular local context meant that methods were enriched in each stage. At the part five of the thesis not all aspects of local dynamics could be covered by the improved methods. It was not sufficient to measure all complex aspects of local farming systems. The changing institutional governance modalities of the territorial resource during the fieldwork have made it compulsory to enrich the approach by integrating a deeper analysis at a very local level such as the village. The integration of social surveys methods like Likert scale to measure farmer's

perceptions on the future use of their territorial resource after the institutional changes in its governance modalities represented an asset for the comparisons in the reactions between villages dealing with the same issues.

The integration of stakeholders and participatory approaches has enriched the analysis. Stakeholders of all steps of the value chains have been consulted for market power issues, data collection and value chain governance. Preliminary results were discussed between public research bodies and local farmers. These results have at best recognized and validated the fieldwork results. It should not be forgotten that local development is a dynamic process, not an end goal, and each method unfortunately conveys a rather static picture. The interactions and influences between stakeholders are much more complex in reality; their deep analysis has been chosen to create a representation as near as possible to the reality.

Given these limitations, the methodological approach of this thesis appeared as a good choice to enrich the literature and analyse the considered territory. This thesis has better allowed the identification of strengths and weaknesses in each method considered in this paper, and for this reason, we argue that using a single method should be avoided as much as possible to understand the local practices. In conclusion, the methodological approach of this thesis, a combined methods approach including social surveys, was a good choice for analyzing value chains at the national and local level with particular attention on the local practices of the farmers who produce quality products not valorised by the markets. Still, some aspects could be improved or further researched and they are detailed in the following sections.

7.4.2 National-regional-local continuum of production and quality issues

The quality sign of a product, linking it with the place of production, is important to consumers and actors in the regional and national level especially for food security issues. Albanian consumers' preference for local products could be put in perspective with other recent societal phenomena linked to the recent effects of globalisation, such as the economic crisis. This would allow to test whether the increase of the local food consumption is expressed coherently with the economic crisis that has re-localised the local production systems of farmers who had emigrated in the neighbouring countries such as Greece. For example, if people consume quality local products in rejection of globalization, we should expect an increase in demand for quality local production. This demand might be met by farmers who have reinitiated their farming knowhow after losing jobs during the economic crisis. Some farmers might return home to produce, and others might stay in the country they immigrated to. Generally, it would be worth comparing local and national production interactions and quality benefits to national food security within the region as main scope, rather than particular food value chains. The recent Albanian territorial reform aiming at balanced economic development between the regions has created new issues in terms of production systems perspectives. The factors influencing the evolution of regional production systems, from a smallholder farming systems-food insecure type to quality certified products in more or less sustainable ways, would deserve more attention for research into sustainable national food security futures. Thus, certain regions can be leaders where quality products would give chances for more sustainable economic development. Since 2014, in northern Albania, the BioDivBalkans project has supported the development of the goat meat in the Hasi district. The aim is to build a GI product for this endemic breed. Their impacts in terms of collective mobilization are seen fruitful by the local and national authorities. However, the finalisation as GI is not yet legalized at the national level.

7.4.3 Dynamic methodological and multidisciplinary approach

The complete understanding of complex and dynamic value chains and local farming systems through a set of methods remains limited. One could improve the inclusion of dynamic methods and their interactions in the qualification process of a product (Vandecandelaere et al., 2009). The methodological approach of this thesis has been a first step in this direction. But it remains difficult to apply dynamic methods within a frequently changing national context while integrating stakeholders' perspectives. This thesis shows that applying different methods according to economic context and value chains products does not hinder integrated analyses (cf. chapter six), and therefore further adapted methods might be desirable. Dynamic methods on consistent data collection and interdisciplinarity would be more useful to a consistently methodological approach to local development based on mobilization and activation of local and specific resources in the marginalized mountain territories. Such an approach would indeed largely benefit from being operated in tight collaboration with market and agricultural actors from the conception stage of the projects. Stakeholders would also be more motivated to provide quality data if they see benefits from research. This is where “think global, act local” could be applied in research projects and public policy-making for territorial development.

7.4.4 A more global perspective on the local products qualification debate

This thesis was purely focused on a country, such as Albania, that suffered from a long communist period, with some literature coming from other countries not having suffered from the same context. The reflexion and analysis should be tested in other Mediterranean countries for a number of reasons. First, the value chains governance of mountain food systems might be totally different in different Mediterranean developing countries. In Albania these value chains represent inefficiency, low added value, hard labour and losses. In the Mediterranean developing countries (Fort, 2014) such as in the Albanian case, quality label products might bring a substantial additional income to farmers (Barjolle et al., 2007) and their families who might improve their economic conditions. Quality products such PDO/PGI could be seen as a sign of economic protection against globalization (Antonelli and Ilbert, 2012), but these assumptions would also need to be verified. Second, the added value distribution of impacts and benefits when choosing a product qualification process in a certain place necessarily impacts other regions as well. A significant increase in local quality products consumption in the considered country would imply a shift of production places and a pressure on local resources that might be in danger of overutilization. A global perspective on the net advantages and impacts would be necessary. Some northern Albanian goat meat qualification initiatives (Garnier, 2015; Bernard et al., 2014) have started; these initiatives analyze impacts on farmers' economic conditions and land use, and conclusions are favoring the qualification process. But, further studies could also include creation and distribution of added value, employment, biodiversity, social cohesion, etc. All indirect costs and environmental externalities should also be included, because trade can shift the impacts from wealthy consuming to producing communities. The trade-off for Albania and other developing countries (Schmitt et al., 2016) between assuming this burden and generating added value might not always be fair and should be put in perspective with consumption choices in the North.

7.4.5 Implications for policies and stakeholders

The high informality of the two selected value chains at the national and local level shows that particular institutional attention needs to be given to the quality governance of the milk and meat value chains in order to better control the national food security issues. Especially, dairies and middlemen do not document or analyze their economic activity, making it difficult to have a global understanding of the milk and meat value chains at the local level. Despite the fact that this mountain territory is under reconstruction from a social organization point of view, its collective organization is globally weak and reflects the national framework of low governmental incentives for cooperation. Thus the current dynamics of the pasture governance is not sustainably organized because the responses of the various national and local institutions acting on the territory are not adapted to the local particularities. These dynamics requires a better adaptation of the collective organization. First, by promoting interactions at the local level to help farmers to collectively find solutions to their common pasture governance issues. Second, by articulating community, public and private management policies which are better harmonized with local needs.

Management changes of communal pastures have been successfully implemented and used by a village that has rented communal pastures as a group. Thus, by creating appropriate governance mechanisms, this initiative appears to be effective in managing the common resource. The conditions and motivations of the actors, for example in a product qualification process, are different because their economic conditions and production processes are different. For such a product qualification process to be successful at the national level, some factors need to be improved. First, to increase the quality signals that consumers perceive, it is necessary to development a national traceability, labelling and certification system. Second, the product needs to be unequivocally recognized by consumers. Thus, improved legislation on certified products and labelling rules is needed. Third, farmers need to be part of cooperative movements which can be motivated by supportive state policies and incentives for such movements. Fourth, the development of an efficient land market can improve the efficiency of farms in the future.

Part 8: General conclusion

This thesis tested, analyzed and developed a hypothesis to local rural development based on mobilization and activation of local and specific territorial resources by analyzing the role of collective action in the Albanian particular case. It has characterised the situation of a mountain rural community in Southeast Albania; identified specific local products that show increasing demand at the national and regional level; discussed if the local farming practices and the local collective actions and decisions are sustaining a virtuous circle of rural development; formulated related recommendations to the local and national policy-makers. This thesis, has applied mixed-methods approach to analyze territorial development of a marginalized mountain territory in Southeast Albania. The mixed-methods approach shed light on the complex mechanisms behind local dynamics highlighting the key factors that partially confirmed the hypothesis that collective action of the actors can contribute to more resilient and sustainable mountain territories by safeguarding the specificity of food products through locally adapted practices and a better distribution of the territorial rent within the value chains (by adding value at farm level).

Albania is a Mediterranean mountain country neighbouring Greece and Italy. Historical migration of Albanian rural communities towards these countries, especially after 1991, has brought not only know-how in agricultural practices but also adaption on European dietary practices. Nevertheless, being a country in post-collectivization transition, it has similarities to other countries of the central and Eastern Europe. The land reform of 1991 has caused development issues for farmers located in the mountain territories. In the majority of cases, farms are very small. They can only sell the surplus on the market by informal channels, without collective practices that can bring market power. Anyway, this thesis shows positive dynamics in terms of potential for development for the selected research site. The specificity of the products exists, proven by the excellent reputation and their notoriety. This is due to very particular mountainous pedo-climatic conditions and the specific knowledge on livestock that farmers possess. Furthermore, there is a national demand consolidation on buying quality local products, especially for the meat. But still markets do not fairly remunerate farmers for their products because they lack market power to capture more value in the value chains. Anyway, some recent development dynamics at national level need to be mentioned.

Since 2012, great efforts are made to better valorise a few local products. Among them, the BioDivBalkans project supported strongly the research about the goat meat in the Hasi mountain territory located in the Northern Albania (Garnier, 2015; Bernard et al., 2014). These initiatives aim a goat meat qualification process improving its impacts on farmers' economic conditions and land use. This initiative has established the "code of practice" and collective mobilizations among the farmers. Still, at the national level, no certification or control body exist to legalize this product as GI. What is important to highlight is that the qualification process of a product, in the Albanian context, can only appear if economic environment and national legal and institutional framework are friendlier for such a process.

This thesis, based on results of the municipality of Vithkuq (see part 4, 5 and 6), identified several conditions that need to be improved at national level for a successful qualification process:

- For the improvement the quality signals that consumers perceive, the development of a national traceability, labelling and certification system is essential.
- Improvement of the legislation on certified products and labelling rules are needed to be done in order that the product can be unequivocally recognized by consumers.
- Farmers need to be motivated to cooperate through improved supportive state policies and incentives for cooperative movements.
- The development of an efficient land market is necessary to improve the efficiency of farms in the future.

The particular context of the Albanian case shows that local agro farming systems have gradually adapted to the new political and economic context after the fall of the communist regime in 1991. The land fragmentation occurred at that period persist even today resulting in subsistence farms not being able to capitalise and expand their activity. Subsistence farms tend to diversify their production by diversifying their sources of incomes. Furthermore, the fragmented agricultural land and the small size of the farms make impossible to reach economies of scale.

Besides this reality, some local initiatives appear to be promiscuous for the future. The institutional changes on the communal pasture governance modalities show that they are preferentially given to the local farmers, who must now pay to use them. This territorial reform has given to the authorized beneficiaries “exclusive use rights” access. Farmers of only one village are acting together to rent pastures using precisely these exclusive use rights. We show that this new context has set the initial conditions for a new management of the pasture as a “common” (as per definition given by Ostrom, 1990). Anyway, to sustainably govern common pastures a better adaptation of the local collective organization is needed by promoting interactions at the local level and by articulating community, public and private management policies better harmonized with the local needs. The need for social inclusion appears to be an issue. Social inclusion means the participation, and the ability to participate, in political and social structures, and it is seen as essential to political stability (Shortall, 2008).

The “exclusive use rights” has lead to more collective management arrangements between farmers, and could be the start for improving the social capital and engage in the future in extended actions for the collective marketing of their animal products, especially for their meat products. Social capital refers to dense networks of civic engagement that produce a capacity for trust, reciprocity and cooperation which in turn leads to a healthy economy and a healthy democracy (Shortall, 2008). The key to improve the social capital is participation. The possibility of activating endogenous rural, integrated and sustainable rural development strategies, based on the typical product, depends therefore on how pervasive and intense the link between the product and the local community is (Pacciani et al., 2001).

In countries under transition, such as Albania, markets and free-trade should leaves room for beneficial voluntary organizations and entrepreneurship. The new market-institutions will probably build social capital in the economies under transition from communism (Paldam and Svendsen, 2000). In fact, the future challenge in Albania, is to analyze how public policies can change social capital to improve the livelihood of marginalized mountain territories and contribute for more resilient economic development of these territories

(Partie 8: Conclusion générale)

Cette thèse a testé, analysé et développé une hypothèse de développement rural local basée sur la mobilisation et l'activation de ressources territoriales locales et spécifiques en analysant le rôle de l'action collective dans le cas particulier albanais. Il a caractérisé la situation d'une communauté rurale de montagne dans le sud-est de l'Albanie; identifié des produits locaux spécifiques qui montrent une demande croissante au niveau national et régional; discuté si les pratiques agricoles locales et les actions et décisions collectives locales entretiennent un cercle vertueux de développement rural; formulation de recommandations connexes à l'intention des décideurs locaux et nationaux. Cette thèse a appliqué une approche par méthodes mixtes pour analyser le développement territorial d'un territoire de montagne marginalisé dans le sud-est de l'Albanie. L'approche des méthodes mixtes a mis en lumière les mécanismes complexes qui sous-tendent les dynamiques locales en mettant en évidence les facteurs qui ont partiellement confirmé l'hypothèse selon laquelle l'action collective des acteurs peut contribuer à la résilience et à la durabilité des territoires de montagne en sauvegardant la spécificité des produits à travers des pratiques adaptées localement et une meilleure répartition de la rente territoriale au sein des chaînes de valeur (en ajoutant de la valeur au niveau de l'exploitation).

L'Albanie est un pays de montagne méditerranéen voisin de la Grèce et de l'Italie. Les migrations historiques des communautés rurales albanaises vers ces pays, notamment après 1991, ont apporté non seulement un savoir-faire dans les pratiques agricoles, mais aussi une adaptation aux pratiques alimentaires européennes. En tant que pays en transition post-collectivisation, il présente des similitudes avec d'autres pays d'Europe centrale et orientale. La réforme agraire de 1991 a posé des problèmes de développement aux agriculteurs situés dans les territoires de montagne. Dans la majorité des cas, les exploitations sont très petites. Ils ne peuvent vendre le surplus sur le marché que par des canaux informels, sans pratiques collectives susceptibles d'emporter un pouvoir de marché. Quoi qu'il en soit, cette thèse montre une dynamique positive en termes de potentiel de développement pour le site de recherche sélectionné. La spécificité des produits existe, prouvée par son excellente réputation et sa notoriété. Cela est dû aux conditions pédoclimatiques montagneuses très particulières et aux connaissances spécifiques sur le bétail que possèdent les agriculteurs. En outre, il existe une consolidation de la demande nationale pour l'achat de produits locaux de qualité, en particulier pour la viande. Mais les marchés ne rémunèrent toujours pas équitablement les agriculteurs pour leurs produits car ils manquent de pouvoir sur le marché pour capter davantage de valeur dans les chaînes de valeur. Quoi qu'il en soit, certaines dynamiques de développement récentes au niveau national doivent être mentionnées.

Depuis 2012, de grands efforts sont déployés pour mieux valoriser quelques produits locaux. Parmi ceux-ci, le projet BioDivBalkans a fortement soutenu la recherche sur la viande de chèvre dans le territoire montagneux d'Hasi situé dans le nord de l'Albanie (Garnier, 2015; Bernard et al., 2014). Ces initiatives visent un processus de qualification de la viande de chèvre améliorant ses impacts sur la situation économique et l'utilisation des terres des agriculteurs. Cette initiative a établi le « cahier de charges » et les mobilisations collectives parmi les agriculteurs. Pourtant, au niveau national, il n'existe aucun organisme de certification ou de contrôle pour légaliser ce produit en tant que IG. Ce qui est important à souligner, c'est que le processus de qualification d'un produit, dans le contexte albanais, ne peut apparaître que si l'environnement économique et le cadre juridique et institutionnel national sont plus favorables à un tel processus.

Cette thèse, basée sur les résultats de la municipalité de Vithkuq (voir parties 4, 5 et 6), a identifié plusieurs conditions à améliorer au niveau national pour un processus de qualification réussi:

- Pour l'amélioration des signaux de qualité perçus par les consommateurs, le développement d'un système national de traçabilité, d'étiquetage et de certification est essentiel.
- Il est nécessaire d'améliorer la législation sur les produits certifiés et les règles d'étiquetage afin que le produit puisse être reconnu sans équivoque par les consommateurs.
- Les agriculteurs doivent être incités à coopérer en améliorant les politiques de soutien et en encourageant les mouvements coopératifs.
- Le développement d'un marché foncier efficace est nécessaire pour améliorer l'efficacité des exploitations à l'avenir.

Le contexte particulier du cas albanais montre que les systèmes locaux d'élevage se sont progressivement adaptés au nouveau contexte politique et économique après la chute du régime communiste en 1991. La fragmentation des terres persiste encore aujourd'hui, empêchant les exploitations de subsistance de capitaliser et développer leur activité. Les exploitations de subsistance ont tendance à diversifier leur production en diversifiant leurs sources de revenus. En outre, les terres agricoles fragmentées et la petite taille des exploitations ne permettent pas de réaliser des économies d'échelle.

Outre cette réalité, certaines initiatives locales semblent prometteuses pour l'avenir. Les changements institutionnels sur les modalités de gouvernance des pâturages communaux montrent qu'ils sont préférentiellement accordés aux agriculteurs locaux, qui doivent maintenant payer pour les utiliser. Cette réforme territoriale a donné aux bénéficiaires autorisés un accès aux « droits exclusifs ». Les agriculteurs d'un seul village agissent ensemble pour louer des pâturages en utilisant précisément ces droits exclusifs. Nous montrons que ce nouveau contexte a défini les conditions initiales pour une nouvelle gestion du pâturage comme un « commun » (selon la définition donnée par Ostrom, 1990). Quoi qu'il en soit, pour gérer durablement les pâturages communs, une meilleure adaptation de l'organisation collective locale est nécessaire en encourageant les interactions au niveau local et en articulant les politiques de gestion communautaires, publiques et privées mieux harmonisées avec les besoins locaux. Le besoin d'inclusion sociale semble être un clivage. L'inclusion sociale signifie la participation et la capacité de participer aux structures politiques et sociales et est considérée comme essentielle à la stabilité politique (Shortall, 2008).

Les « droits d'utilisation exclusive » ont conduit à des arrangements de gestion plus collectifs entre les agriculteurs et pourraient être le point de départ pour améliorer le capital social et engager des actions étendues pour la commercialisation collective de leurs produits animaux, en particulier pour leurs produits carnés. Le capital social se réfère à des réseaux denses d'engagement civique qui produisent une capacité de confiance, de réciprocité et de coopération, ce qui conduit à une économie saine et à une démocratie saine (Shortall, 2008). La clé pour améliorer le capital social est la participation. La possibilité d'activer des stratégies de développement rural endogènes, rurales et intégrées, basées sur le produit typique, dépend donc de la manière dont le lien entre le produit et la communauté locale est omniprésent et intense (Pacciani et al., 2001).

Dans les pays en transition, tels que l'Albanie, les marchés et le libre-échange devraient laisser la place aux organisations bénévoles et à l'esprit d'entreprise bénéfiques. Les nouvelles

institutions de marché constitueront probablement un capital social dans les économies en transition par rapport au communisme (Paldam et Svendsen, 2000). En fait, le défi futur en Albanie consiste à analyser comment les politiques publiques peuvent changer le capital social pour améliorer les moyens de subsistance des territoires montagneux marginalisés et contribuer à un développement économique plus résilient de ces territoires.

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Glossary

Commons	The commons are resources which belong to everybody in common. No one has an exclusive right to them, making them by definition resources to which everybody enjoys open access. (Ostrom, 1990).
Farming System	Farming system is an approach for developing farm-household systems, built on the principles of productivity, profitability, stability and sustainability. The farming system approach emphasizes understanding of farm household, community inter linkages, reviews constraints and assesses potentials.
Geographical Indication	A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place. In addition, the qualities, characteristics or reputation of the product should be essentially due to the place of origin. Since the qualities depend on the geographical place of production, there is a clear link between the product and its original place of production (WIPO).
Governance	Concept referring to the complex systems covering mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which individuals and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences.
LAFS	Localised agri-food systems (syal: from the French systèmes agroalimentaires localisés) are a type of organisation of agri-food activities, in which territorial dynamics play a decisive role in terms of the coordination between stakeholders and the development of production activities. (Muchnik, 2011).
Niche market	A market segment that addresses a need for a product or service not being met by mainstream suppliers. A niche market may be seen as a narrowly defined group of potential customers and usually develops when a potential demand for a product or service is not being met by any supply, or when a new demand arises as a result of changes in society, technology or the environment. Despite the fact that niche markets are of their nature very limited in volume as compared with the mainstream market (and hence do not have the benefit of an economy of scale), they may be very profitable, thanks to the advantages of specialization and of their focus on small and easily identified market segments.
Origin-linked product	A product in which a specific quality is essentially attributable to its geographical origin, as a result of a combination of unique climatic conditions, soil characteristics, local plant varieties or breeds, local know-how, historical or cultural practices, and traditional knowledge concerning the production and processing of certain products. The interaction among these elements (which constitute what is known as the terroir) confers specific characteristics that allow the product to be differentiated from other products in the same category.

Production System	The production system corresponds to a "set of farms with access to comparable resources (same range and herd range, level of equipment and size of the work team) placed under similar socio-economic conditions and practice a given combination of production" (Cochet, Devienne, and Dufumier 2007).
Typicity	The typicity of a product from agriculture is the property of belonging to a type, distinguished and identified by a reference human group possessing knowledge distributed among the various actors in the sector: knowledge to establish, to know to produce, to know evaluate, know how to appreciate (Casabianca et al., 2011)
Value Chain	"A mechanism that allows producers, processors, buyers, and sellers – separated by time and space – to gradually add value to products and services, as they pass from one link in the chain to the next until reaching the final consumer. The main actors in a value chain are suppliers, producers, processors, marketers and buyers." (FAO 2014, p. 236).

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Peer-reviewed papers

Bombaj, F. (accepted). Freins et opportunités au développement des produits de qualité, Cas des filières pastorales - Vithkuq, Albanie. Article accepté pour publication dans la revue « *Annales Méditerranéennes d'Economie* », n° 6, 17 p.

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