Local nature, culture and cuisine towards seeking sustainable development in mountainous Crete

The future of mountains in Crete
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Envisioning alternative futures

The mountainous areas of Crete are facing abandonment and land degradation, population ageing, desertification and urbanization, dependence of agricultural subsidies and lack of basic services. These problems hindered the stakeholders to imagine a sustainable future for mountainous villages. Stakeholders understood the vulnerability of mountainous regions as an outcome of the prominent "sun and beach tourism strategy" that has resulted in the over-development of coastal areas.

Imagining a longer-term future brought to the forefront ways to navigate the current demographic, infrastructure, and general disenfranchisement faced by the mountainous regions' inhabitants. The collective construction of future scenarios allowed for plans to deal with these obstacles including applying environmentally friendly agricultural practices and aiding young farmers and families to settle in the regions. The stakeholders negotiated and imagined ways in which respect and protection for mountainous communities, valuing their natural and cultural heritage, and fostering sustainable food systems and culinary traditions can open new paths for mountain people to sustain their livelihoods and traditional ways of life.

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