Faced with the impact of climate change on chestnut groves, are producers of Corsican chestnut flour the new guardians of the common resource?

Topic
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When the sustainability of a value chain depends on the management of a common resource.

The accession of Corsican chestnut flour to PDO status in 2010 underlines almost 30 years of the value chain structuration. Based on the exploitation of chestnut resources, the professionalisation of Corsican chestnut-farming has made it possible to enhance the value of the resource, which at the time was suffering from abandonment and predation by other CVs, due to changes in long-standing co-existence practices that ensured the sustainability of the agro-pastoral ecosystem in mountain areas. The PDO specifications therefore attempt to define areas and practices capable of protecting both the resource and the product.

However, a study of the vulnerabilities and resilience of the value chain has shown that new challenges are threatening the resource and the socio-technical organisation of the VC. Since the early 2000s, with by example the arrival of the Cynips (a chestnut pest) in 2010, the impacts of climate change have forced the VC to close in on the aspects of control, setting aside development, innovation and coexistence practices.

The foresight exercise has largely highlighted the need to revive these latter dimensions in order to create the conditions for resilient CV sustainability, but it has also shown that to ensure this sustainability, the question of modes of coexistence between CVs based on the same resource (chestnut groves) needs to be addressed. The construction of stakeholder collectives enabling the design of ways of assembling VCs on the one hand, and the promotion or creation of new derived VCs on the other, seem to be the 2 minimum conditions for ensuring the sustainable resilience of the VC and its resource.

MOVING receives funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 862739. The content of this document does not reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Responsibility for the information and views expressed therein lies entirely with the author(s).