Debriefing of the exchange day around the pastoral issue

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New news on pastoralism in Europe - François Lerin (AIDA)

Livestock, like agriculture (and indeed all economic sectors), are today questioned in their production methods and their trajectories of transformation by injunctions resulting from the imperative need to initiate environmental transitions: the struggle against climate change (and greenhouse gas emissions), energy transition, maintaining biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources.

However, in the breeding sector, one of the observable dichotomies distributes production methods between, on the one hand, intensive breeding indoors (always in stalls) and, on the other, outdoor breeding largely (or even mainly) grass-fed, or pastoral.

These farms do not present themselves in the same way in the face of the injunctions of the ongoing environmental transition, and one of the questions is whether pastoral farms (in the broad sense) can take advantage of their positive externalities - in contrast to the strong negatives externalities of intensive farming.

Three main types of reasons can be invoked.

The first is that pastoral or grass farming ensures minimum conditions of animal well-being, as well as a final quality of the product linked to natural food - unlike so-called concentration-camp farming in which the animals never see a blade of grass and will be fed with food resulting from intensive production practices (soybean meal, corn-silage having required significant irrigation, etc.). In addition, the prices of this pastoral and grass feed are not subject to drastic increases as are those of grain and "imported" fodder in intensive farms.

The second is that this breeding produces positive externalities in terms of landscapes and the maintenance of open environments. In the Mediterranean, this is of great importance, particularly in the fight against forest fires and in particular these "mega-fires" whose multiplication climate change promises us. Pastoralism is also a factor in the preservation of the so-called semi-natural biodiversity associated with these anthropogenic systems. It also often promotes the preservation of local animal breeds that are much better adapted to the climatic and geographical conditions of the rangelands – compared to breeds selected and genetically homogenized for their production qualities (meat or milk) but often poorly adapted to the open air and the sloping or saltus spaces. This breeding therefore contributes to the maintenance of agrobiodiversity.

Finally, while red meat weighs heavily in the carbon footprint of our diet and it is necessary to reduce its consumption, research shows that animals kept in pastoral systems - fed on permanent pastures or on rangelands (forests, saltus areas) – have a better carbon footprint than intensive farming... thus, "eat less, but eat better" (of meat), is a slogan that could perfectly support pastoral farming as a priority and highlight the quality of the products that come from them.

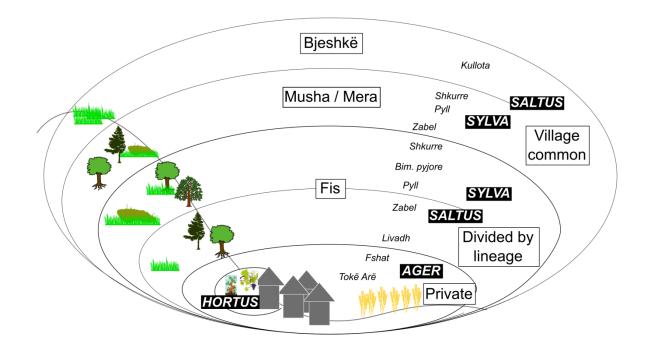
The land issue and the management of pastoral and forest land by Albanian municipalities - Orianne Crouteix (AIDA)

Land tenure regimes show a great diversity of situations and depend in particular on three factors: the set of rules and norms; the environment and the nature of the resources; the products of the territory. Factors that are variable in space and time. Pastoral resources are distributed over very different types of land, such as *maquis* or scrubland, oak, chestnut or beech forests, meadows, high altitude pastures, fallow or cultivated areas, the edges of wetlands... In Albania, livestock farming is essentially pastoral and therefore makes significant use of natural or semi-natural spaces. This pastoral farming is essential in the fight against forest fires, the preservation of landscapes, the maintenance of biodiversity and the production of quality food in quantity. It therefore seems important to analyze land tenure and those of pastoral resources in order to identify the important points in access to resources at the base of the vast majority of livestock sectors in the country. During our study¹, particular attention is given to the identification of local practices and organizations based on collective action.

In Albania, pastoral resources can come from different types of land.

- Private and fragmented agricultural according to the redistributions of 1991 and the land law n°7501.
- Municipal forests and pastoralists, the *bashkia* have the responsibility and the management after a long and complex process of devolution which ended in late 2015 and early 2016.
- State forests and pastures under the management, for example, of regional agencies for protected areas.
- Private forest or pastoral areas returned on a case-by-case basis according to Law No. 7698 since 1994.

This organization resulting from successive reforms is superimposed on village logics of sharing land and pastoral resources. If there are many particularities in the organization of uses by the village entities, there is a regularity in the form of zoning organized in concentric circles (see figure 1). The first circle, the closest to the houses corresponds to the *hortus*, that is to say the cultivated garden. The second circle is made up of arable land (*ager*), often land privatized in 1991. Beyond the agricultural land, a third circle includes the *saltus*: coppice forests generally exploited for firewood, some meadows, maquis or scrubland and rangeland. The land closest to agricultural land is often appropriated by the different lineages for the exploitation of a resource, such as firewood or fodder reserves for the winter. The most remote lands are generally considered as a village commons where each member of the community can exploit the resources according to precise rules. The lands common to the villages are sometimes divided into two zones: *musha* or *mera* for lands with mixed vegetation and shrubs or *bjeshkë* for mountain pastures.



¹ The elements presented here are the preliminary results of the study entitled "Pastoral land in Albania: From the inherited mosaic to contemporary Mediterranean socio-environmental issues" carried out by Orianne Crouteix in 2021 and financed by the AFD (*Agence Française de Développement*) as part of the "Production, exchange and development of knowledge" component of the "Project to support the development of land policies". This project is implemented with the support of the CTFD (*Comité Technique Foncier et Développement*).

Figure 1: Diagram of the organization of land use around the village (O. Crouteix, 2021).

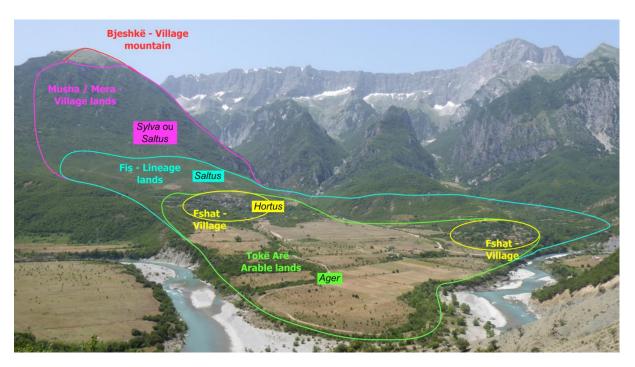


Figure 2: Division of the landscape according to village uses (Draçovë and Kanikol, along the river Vjosa) (O. Crouteix, 2021).

In order to be able to illustrate the diversity of local situations, the study invested three territories whose agrarian systems and livestock component had already been the subject of research by our team: the Has (in the north-east), the Rrungaja (in the center, Korçë), and Dukat and the peninsula of Karaburun (Vlora, in the south) (see figure 3). A week was spent on each site where 6, 18 and 13 semi-structured interviews were carried out respectively between mid-June and early July 2021. These interviews took place both with managers of municipalities or protected areas and breeders using pastoral resources. Then, in the fall of 2022, a restitution took place in each territory in order to refine the results of the study.

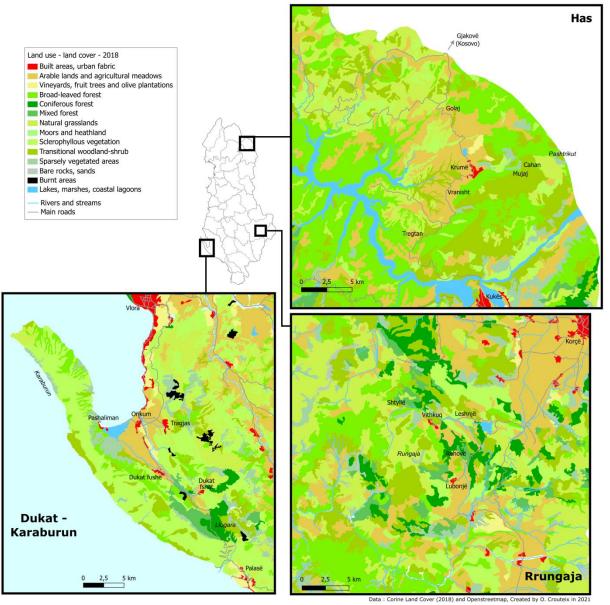


Figure 3: Land cover in 2018 for the three study areas (O. Crouteix, 2021).

Generally, management entities rent plots defined as pastureland in the 1981 inventory to breeders. These rentals are 100 Lek per small ruminant (goats and sheep) and 800 Lek per cattle (i.e. approximately 0.80 euros and 6. 60 euros), which corresponds to small sums even for Albanian breeders; in comparison, 10 liters of goat's milk are purchased at 600 Lek and 10 liters of sheep's milk at 1000 Lek by dairies in each territory studied).

The municipality of Korçë issues contracts with breeders for a period of three years, with an annual payment. In Vlora, the municipality and the protected areas agency contracts with breeders for a season (either winter or summer). According to the majority of breeders met, despite these rentals, there is little or no investment in these lands (construction of reservoirs, maintenance of cabins, etc.). Most of the breeders met have been renting these plots for several years (often more than 10 years), and they have the possibility of grouping together to rent a plot and therefore share the costs and the work (in particular herding). The stockbreeders who rent the plots to the management entities are in priority the stockbreeders of the zone.

In Has, there are no rental contracts between the municipality and the breeders. This absence of rentals is probably a legacy of investments mainly concentrated in forest areas. The exploitation of pastoral resources is therefore based on village logic and the divisions between lineages and villages presented

above. Due to the very significant decrease in the number of herders and the number of animals, the demand for pastoral resources is relatively low and the available resources are therefore quite abundant. There is then a form of tolerance for herders to use the pastoral resources (essentially the herbaceous stratum) closest to their barn and the easiest to access, even if they are rather in the land of another village or from another lineage.

Finally, in Dukat, village logics are so recognized that they are superimposed on the legal rentals conducted by the municipality and the protected areas agency. In fact, herders often pay two rentals for the same plot: once to the management entity responsible for the plot, another to the members of the family who claim "ownership" of it according to the village divisions, these lands are also called "grandfather lands". Some ranchers use their own "grandfather land", so they only pay a lease to the management entity.

In the Rrungaja massif (municipality of Korçë), 840 hectares of pasture and 260 hectares of forest were returned by the courts to a resident of Korçë who claimed ownership. These lands have therefore become private. These pastures, after a form of auction by telephone, are rented to the highest bidder for a summer to herds of large transhumant people who often come from the Vlora region, and sometimes from Sarandë. Several breeders rent part of these 840 hectares and often they come together in pairs to carry out transhumance and share the work on site and the rental costs. It is difficult to know exactly the rental price of private pastures, but the large transhumant farmers interviewed say that they paid between 5,000 and 5,800 euros this year for 500 ewes.

Most of the breeders met have a herd of either goats or sheep, there are few mixed herds. For goat herders, it is easier to use composite land with shrubby vegetation, and some then do not rent pasture plots from the management entity and can take advantage of spaces around the village identified as maquis or scrubland in the 1981 inventory.

It is important to note that these pastoral systems and the uses of pastoral resources are dynamic and constantly changing, in particular according to the three factors mentioned above: rules and norms; the environment and the nature of the resources; the productive apparatus of the territory.

All the rules and standards evolve according to legislative changes at the national level (process of devolution to municipalities, territorial reforms, restitution and privatization of certain lands, etc.) and evolutions in the village logic of appropriation and sharing of certain spaces.

Both the environment and the vegetation present on each plot also change rapidly over time. For example, some agricultural plots cleared during the communist era and privatized and parceled out according to the land law in 1991, are today left fallow. Herbaceous vegetation then recolonizes the plots which are often used by the village herds. If pastoral activity continues to decline in Albania, it is highly likely that these areas will suffer encroachment and recolonized by shrubby vegetation (often favorable to the spread of forest fires).

The means of production also evolve in each territory. Examples: in Dukat, many dairies have closed in recent years, but the proximity to the tourist area of Llogara and Vlora offers interesting outlets for breeders, so breeding retains a certain dynamism. In Korçë, the road is now tarmacked as far as Sthyllë via Vithkuq, which allows breeders to compete with the different dairies in the region. The Cahan dairy (Has) closes part of the year, so breeders must process the milk on the farm. In addition, the road between Cahan and Krumë is not paved, which significantly limits the access of breeders to regional and national markets, breeding is in marked decline.

The diversity of land tenure systems, sharing and management of pastoral resources underlines the importance of understanding local issues and analyzing the dynamics at work in the livestock sector at the scale of the "territories". In fact, in order to construct national policies (for environmental protection, rural development, maintenance of pastoral activities or supply of quality food to the urban centre), it is

important to take into consideration the diversity of pastoral systems and tenure systems present – and there are many. This assessment of the situation is urgent: indeed, in the three territories studied, the pastoral resource is in excess, the number of animals decreasing drastically in recent years with the departure of many breeders. We are here in manifest under-exploitation of the resource which could lead, in the medium term, to a loss of food autonomy in terms of livestock products.

Pastoral practices in France - Alice Garnier (AIDA)

I. Pastoral farming in France

Pastoralism refers to all livestock activities that use extensive grazing to use the spontaneous resources (grass, brush, fruit, etc.) of natural areas to provide all or part of the herd's food². It is estimated that pastoralism covers, in metropolitan France, nearly 6% of the Utilized Agricultural Area (UAA), and that 40,000 farms³, or about a quarter of them, use pastoral resources. This type of breeding concerns sheep, cattle, goats, pigs and horses spread over the whole territory and more particularly in the mountainous massifs (Alps, Pyrenees, Massif Central, Jura, Vosges, Corsica). The management of the herd on the courses depends on the work of a shepherd who can be the breeder himself (owner of the herd), or a salaried shepherd for the year or for a season.

In France, from the 1950s, the intensification and modernization of agriculture resulted in the marginalization of pastoral practices, with a decrease in the share of grazing in animal feed and a gradual abandonment of rangelands⁴. Since then, the number of pastoral farms has continued to decline, following the general trend of livestock farms all practices combined (farms specializing in livestock have fallen by 31% in number between 2010 and 2020, i.e. 64,000 farms in ten years !)⁵.

Today, however, we observe a reconsideration of the pastoral question. Measures are being put in place at local, national and European level to support these activities and curb their decline. This challenge must take into account the specificity and the stakes of pastoralism: the difficulties of access to land, the low attractiveness of the profession of shepherd, the significant dependence on climatic hazards, cohabitation with large predators, etc.

II. Learning the profession of shepherd and the transmission of pastoral knowledge

The management of feeding on pasture is more careful and more technical than that at the trough or on grassland cultivation⁶, and the know-how related to herd management can hardly be derived from a prescribed theoretical model. It is above all through observation, repetition and interaction with the living that experience is transformed into knowledge and then into knowledge, and this knowledge can be transmitted and accumulated within a community in a given context. The profession of shepherd (particularly salaried) attracts more and more people from non-agricultural backgrounds and/or in professional retraining, and this requires specific professional training needs. In France, there are different ways of learning and transmitting pastoral knowledge:

- **Exchanges between professionals** can take place informally or via structures that network breeder-shepherds, possibly technicians, and which allow exchanges of experience (*Associations de berger.ère.s*, CIVAM, *Patur'Ajuste* network, etc.).

² Definition of the French Association of Pastoralism (AFP).

³ Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation, Centre d'Etudes et de Prospective (*French Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Center for Studies and Strategic Foresight*) (2020). *Le pastoralisme français à l'horizon 2035, Analyse n°159* (*French pastoralism by 2035, Analysis n°159*). 4p.

 ⁴ Mazoyer M., Roudart L. (1997). *Histoire des agricultures du monde : du néolithique à la crise contemporaine (A history of world agriculture: from the neolithic age to the current crisis).* Paris: Editions du Seuil, 533 p.
⁵ Ministry of Agriculture, 2010 and 2020 censuses.

⁶ Meuret M. (2010). *Un savoir-faire de bergers. (A know-how of shepherds).* Versailles: Éditions Quæ, 340 p.

- Agricultural educational centers such as shepherds' schools, agricultural high schools, CFPPA (Professional Training and Agricultural Promotion Center), CFA (Apprentice Training Center), offer short professional training (a few days) and diploma courses (several months to two years) comprising different modules to learn in particular: herd management in mountain pastures, herd feeding and management of fodder areas, control of animal health and handling, use of herding dogs, adaptation to life in mountain pastures, etc.
- Other actors (research and teaching institutions, technical institutes) work on the pastoral theme and produce knowledge and methods (through technical sheets, studies, books, seminars) intended to support the maintenance and development of pastoral farms and train people involved in livestock farming and environmental management. For example, the Livestock Institute (IDELE), SupAgro and INRAE created the UMT Pasto in 2014, a mixed technical unit on the pastoral theme. The Life+ Mil'Ouv program (2013-2017), supported by the Conservatory of natural spaces (Cen-LR), SupAgro Florac, the Cévennes National Park and the Livestock Institute, notably resulted in the development an eco-pastoral diagnostic method allowing different actors to support the eco-pastoral management of open environments.

III. Examples of organizations supporting pastoral activities

There are a number of initiatives in France in favor of pastoralism, carried out by institutions with different status, mandates and technical skills, and whose funding can come from European instruments, national funds or tools linked to local institutions or associations. Here are some examples.

- The pastoral services (*Cerpam, FAI, ADEM, SEA*, etc.) are regional associations financed by local authorities and private bodies, and which contribute to the support and development of pastoral activities. For example, they implement operations such as the renovation of mountain huts, the installation of pastoral equipment, the organization of helicopter transport, etc. They provide communication, awareness, expertise, advice and training actions related to pastoral and livestock activities, and facilitate the link between actors in pastoral territories. For example, they can provide support for the creation and management of Pastoral Groupings (collective structure of stockbreeders who bring together their herds and jointly manage pastoral areas), and Pastoral Land Associations (associations made up of private landowners and /or public who combine their land for agricultural or pastoral development).

- The **French Association of Pastoralism** (AFP) ensures networking and exchanges between actors of pastoralism through meetings, seminars and publications, and organizes working groups at the national level in order to provide collective expertise with the authorities in charge of policies relating to pastoral activities.

- The *Maison de la transhumance* (interpretation center for Mediterranean pastoral cultures) and the *Maison du berger* (interpretation center for Alpine pastoral cultures) implement mediation and dissemination actions with the general public and tourism stakeholders around pastoral practices and transhumance: cultural events (exhibitions, fairs, festivals, screenings), publications, creation of discovery trails or long-distance hiking routes (for example the Franco-Italian route GR®69 La Routo®).

- The **Shepherd associations** are structures which make it possible to inform and create a link between shepherdesses and shepherds. Their objective is to defend and promote their profession and the associated working conditions, to offer professional training and times for exchanging knowledge and experience, and to develop relations with organizations and institutions linked to pastoralism. There are several in France spread over different territories, and federated at the national level (Federation of associations of shepherds and shepherdesses of France, FABBF).

- The **Coram** (*Collectif des Races locales de Massif*) is an association which represents and defends the local breeds located on the main French massifs. Coram notably represents France in the European

Shepherds Network, and coordinates the assembly of the French file for the recognition of transhumance as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- Many other institutions such as **Chambers of agriculture**, **national parks**, **regional natural parks**, **Conservatories of natural areas**, **as well as research**, **teaching or technical institutes**, can be involved in the support or technical support for pastoral activities.

- Some associations or networks implement actions for the promotion of local breeds or the promotion of products from pastoral activities. For example, Ossau-Iraty cheese, in PDO (Protected Designation of Origin), is, when it is made in mountain pastures, recognizable thanks to a specific marking on the rind and the mention "Ossau-Iraty d'estive » on the label, which highlights its direct link to pastoral practices.

- Some **local or regional authorities** can finance, support or promote (transhumance festivals, Pastoralism Film Festival, etc.) pastoral activities on their territory. We can note the example of the **Intercommunal Pastoral Pact** which defines an action plan in favor of pastoralism on the territory of the community of communes *Causses Aigoual Cévennes – Terres Solidaires*. This unique document in France was co-constructed by a group of breeders, accompanied by research and supported by local elected officials and environmental, agricultural and land associations or institutions. The elected officials voted and adopted this document and are now committed to implementing the action plan which includes the reconquest of pastures, land management, the rehabilitation of transhumance paths, public information, support for transmissions and farm facilities, pastoral priority in town planning documents, etc.

- Finally, pastoral activities can benefit from certain specific aids from the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** implemented by the European Union, via the EAFRD funds (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development), the ICHN (Compensatory Indemnity for Natural Handicap), the MAEC (Agro-Environmental and Climate Measures), the "Wolf Plan" (national system for the protection of herds against predation).

Recognition of pastoralism and transhumance as UNESCO World Heritage - Alice Garnier & François Lerin (AIDA), Esmeralda Laçi (University of Vlora)

IV. The Mediterranean agropastoralism as cultural landscape

The renewed interest in the pastoral question taken in the broad sense is also manifested in systems for identifying and preserving the related heritage. This is the case, for example, of UNESCO, which inscribed in 2011 at the request of the French State Party the vast territory of the Causses and the Cévennes in the World Heritage List under the title of "evolving cultural landscape of Mediterranean agro-pastoralism" (http://www.causses-et-cevennes.fr/). A cultural landscape is defined by material landscape or architectural attributes (routes, terraces, built heritage, etc.) as well as immaterial (agro-pastoral activities, transhumance festivals, etc.).

Another ongoing initiative, still at UNESCO, is the recognition of transhumance (one of the important aspects of pastoralism) as intangible heritage of humanity. Since December 2019, transhumance in the Alps and the Mediterranean has been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity for Austria, Greece and Italy. The objective is to sustainably maintain, enhance and promote practices related to transhumance. This recognition can be extended to other countries, Spain, France, Albania, Croatia, Andorra, Luxembourg, Portugal and Romania are organizing an international application to join the initial file. The application to UNESCO is scheduled for March 2022. Each State Party must therefore draw up an inventory of the attributes linked to transhumance (breeding methods, pastoral management practices, know-how linked to crafts, to the development of food products, festive rituals, etc.) and provide a safeguard plan which details the concrete measures for the protection and maintenance of this property.

Albania is now in this "second wave" of applications, which should initiate inventory and construction work with the actors of this threatened and neglected heritage.

Conclusions – Written by Claire Bernard (AIDA)

These exchanges allowed us to underline the discrete benefits of pastoral breeding but which, combined, become massive, particularly for a mountainous country like Albania.

If agricultural statistics do not allow us to accurately capture the pastoral dimension of livestock activities, we can nevertheless venture to a few robust orders of magnitude. Pastoral farming in Albania is the result of a large number of farms which are mostly mixed farming-livestock. They represent nearly 85% of the total number of Albanian farms, i.e. approximately 286,900 agricultural units⁷. The latter constitute the backbone of the socio-economic dynamics of Albanian rural territories.

From an economic point of view and from the agricultural production sector, this pastoral farming ensures the country's near food self-sufficiency in meat and dairy products: approximately 120,000 tons of sheep, goat and beef meat and 1,112,000 tons of milk often transformed into yoghurt, cheese, butter produced per year⁸. Healthy, quality and affordable products for the urban population. Food sovereignty that is all the more important in the context of a health crisis.

From an ecological and landscape point of view, these pastoral activities enhance more than 54% of Albanian territory: maquis, scrubland, Mediterranean forests, meadows, and contribute to the maintenance of their ecological functions and qualities (transfer of fertility, maintenance of open spaces and natural vegetation). Pastoral systems are at the heart of High Natural Value (HNV) agriculture, a pillar of the agroecological transition necessary on a European scale, to face the challenges of climate change and the maintenance of biodiversity⁹.

From a cultural and heritage point of view, these farming systems and all of their variants (grass farming, pastoral farming, transhumant farming), are at the heart of Albanian identity and have been able to adapt over time to produce today: products with strong typicality (cheese, dried meats, traditional dishes), local breeds adapted to pastoral conditions, traditions and a musical and cultural heritage still alive (festivals of ascent and descent of mountain pastures, polyphonic songs, etc.). These elements are also at the heart of a renewed and rapidly developing agrotourism offer, and of the ongoing heritage process (UNESCO classification of transhumance).

The downward trends over the last few years (the number of small ruminants fell from 2.9 million in 2016 to 2.3 million in 2020, i.e. a drop of -21% in 4 years) reveal the difficulties of this productive sector to deal first with the loss of its shepherds (immigration). This discussion also allowed us to discuss several courses of action, at different scales, and of different dimensions, to maintain a type of production that is proving to be threatened.

• Training and transmission of knowledge: find the appropriate methods to promote and structure the training of shepherds and pastoralists and encourage the transmission of knowledge between peers and technical support.

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⁷ Estimate based on Insat (2019). *Agriculture Statistics, 2019.* Online: <u>http://www.instat.gov.al/en/themes/agriculture-and-fishery/agriculture/publication/2020/agriculture-statistics-2019/</u>

⁸ Marku R. (2018). Analyse statistique et cartographique du secteur de l'élevage en Albanie depuis 1990 (Statistical and cartographic analysis of the livestock sector in Albania since 1990). Master of Science n°160. CIHEAM-IAMM, Montpellier, France. ⁹ Poux X., Aubert PM. (2018). An agroecological Europe in 2050: multifunctional agriculture for healthy eating. Findings from the Ten Years For Agroecology (TYFA) modelling exercise. Iddri-ASCA, Study N°09/18, Paris, France, 78 p. Online: https://www.iddri.org/sites/default/files/PDF/Publications/Catalogue%20lddri/Etude/201809-ST0918EN-

- Land management of pastoral areas: articulate the skills and tools available (pastoral inventories, leases and ease of access to pastures) to allow the best use of the pastoral resources available in large numbers in Albania.
- Support for pastoral production and its development on the markets: adapt the tools of the CAP and the second pillar in particular (IPARD) in the form of dedicated and stable aid over time to provide livestock systems with a long-term visibility, support the protection and promotion of products from this breeding on the markets (geographical indications and other voluntary standards) by working on their quality and traceability.
- Promotion: inventory, recognition and promotion of pastoral systems, their diversity, their specificity and their adaptability, through European and international networking.
- Encourage and facilitate the creation of networks of breeders-shepherds and their integration into European and Mediterranean networks.
- Improve working and living conditions in mountain pastures and in rural areas in general.



Exchange Day around the pastoral issue in Tirana, November 9th, 2021. (Photo : Claire Bernard).