



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE SUPPORT IN ALBANIA (SASA)

Domain

Economic Development

Duration of the Current Phase

01.09.2009-31.12.2011

Swiss Contribution

- Phase I: CHF 490'000.–
- Phase II: CHF 720'000.–
- Phase III: CHF 1'790'500.–
- Phase IV: CHF 200'000.–
- Phase V: CHF 1'737'000.–*

Partner

- *Forschungsinstitut für biologische Landwirtschaft (FiBL)*

Contact

Thomas Bernet
Project Manager
Switzerland
E-mail: thomas.bernet@fibl.org

Area of Intervention

- Tirana, Durrës, Lushnja regions
- Northern Albania

* SDC contribution: CHF 1'420'000.–
SECO contribution: CHF 317'000.–

1. Context

- Agriculture remains an important sector contributing to subsistence economy and income generation for the largest part of the population especially in rural areas where poverty level is high. Even though the rural population makes 54% out of the total population, and 71% of Albanian working force is employed in the agriculture sector, contributing towards about 21% of the GDP per year (2008), the government only allocates 2% of the overall budget to this sector.
- Labour-intensive vegetable and fruit crops grown during the winter season in the lowlands along the Adriatic Sea are attractive and competitive products with a good potential. Early harvesting during off-season in Northern and Eastern Europe are the moments, when high prices are paid due to product scarcity on these markets. Interesting export potential relates also to (non-organic) quality products such as medicinal, aromatic plants and mushrooms cultivated and/or collected in remote areas of Albania. The demand for such fresh and processed crops at the international market is growing fast, especially for products with organic certification.





2. Objectives

- The **Impact** of the project is as follows:
The economic situation of the population of rural and remote areas where SASA is intervening has improved, through environmental-friendly production practices and market-oriented efforts that foster quality production of Albanian agricultural products for the domestic and export market.
- The expected **Outcome** is the following:
Commercial, technological and institutional innovations, all contributing to take advantage of existing and new market opportunities in the segment of quality production, including organic and regional products with corresponding labels, are triggered.
- The **Outputs** are as follows:
 - Market opportunities for organic and quality label production
 - Agricultural expertise for quality production
 - Access to organic inputs
 - Enhanced competitiveness for organic farming
 - Promotion and implementation of quality management programmes



3. Activities

- The last consolidation phase realizes a strong shift towards a more market and demand-oriented approach and add values to SASA's achievements. The Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA) is the main methodological tool to structure an inclusive process: it involves different market chain actors and aims at building trust among them. Moreover, it facilitates the creation of various commercial, technological and institutional innovations.
- The SASA project will generate interventions with its different partners that impact at macro, meso and micro levels.
 - *Macro level:* Research and Development activities with relevance to agriculture will include training of public extension workers in organic agriculture and lobbying for government support for organic agriculture. This will position the bio label at the national level and promote other quality products through Albinspekt (ISO, HACCP, Globalgap) at international food fairs.
 - *Meso level:* Promotion of organic farming, production of inputs, capacity building and on-farm-research will be provided by Institute for Organic Agriculture (IOA) and BioAdria to their members, target groups and the public.
 - *Micro level:* Services to be provided by the PMCA team, IOA, or BioAdria will include punctual support in implementing organic practices on specific farms, backstopping of quality management along the supply chain as well as enabling retailers to promote organic and local quality products in their sales points.