



**Land and Ecosystem Degradation
and Desertification:
Assessing the Fit of Responses**



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**UNIBAS – MEDES
Stakeholder
workshops
Brief summaries**

June 26-29, 2012

Matera-Alento, Italy



**Università
degli Studi
della Basilicata**



Stakeholder workshop organized by UNIBAS (*Agostino Ferrara*)

Brief summary of the main points that emerged from the Matera study site stakeholder meetings on June 26 and 27, 2012

Ruta Landgrebe and McKenna Davis

Two stakeholder meetings, at the local-municipality level and at the regional level, were held in the Matera study site located in the Basilicata Region of southern Italy. The local level stakeholder meeting took place in the Council room of the Municipality of Gorgoglione and the regional level stakeholder meeting took place in the Regional Office of the Basilicata Region in Potenza. The local community of Gorgoglione was represented by the Mayor, the vice-mayor of Gorgoglione and council members dealing with environmental, industrial and economic issues, members of farmer associations, those responsible for drawing up the Forest Management Plan of Gorgoglione forests and forest technicians working in the area. The stakeholder meeting in the Regional Office included responsible authorities from the forestry sector, regional NGOs working on environmental issues and forestry organizations and technicians.

From the roundtable discussion with the local level stakeholders of the Gorgoglione community, it appeared that there is an expansion of forest areas as a result of less need for grazing land (e.g. decreasing numbers of livestock). However, this is mainly an impact resulting from land abandonment and rural depopulation. This rural depopulation leads to a loss of local knowledge, changes in the landscape and also an increase in the frequency of landslides and in the intensity of erosion on hilly slopes (due to a lack of control and management of abandoned land). The main problems at farm level are declining farm incomes as a result of increasing production costs, unemployment, weak infrastructure and poor marketing conditions for local products. The barriers preventing change and exacerbating existing problems include a weak relationship between the local and regional levels, a lack of political motivation of linking groups such as farmers associations, and a lack of trust in the regional level and its bureaucracy.

Possible solutions include more integrative, coherent and effective strategic planning and distribution of financial resources adjusted to the real needs of the local economy. The local stakeholders suggested that modernization of agriculture and improvement of infrastructure for marketing local products are the main needs in the area. This would enable the creation of new jobs and slow the process of land abandonment. However, a current barrier to dealing with the existing issues and initiating the necessary changes is also a lack of motivation and political will on the local level.

As it was presented in the regional level stakeholder meeting, the management of forest areas is effective as it is based on a cooperative approach between the regional administration, municipalities and research institutions and financial support for the local level.

Stakeholder workshop organized by MEDES (*Giovanni Quaranta*)

Brief summary of the main points to emerge from the Alento study site stakeholder meetings June 28 and 29 2012

Claire Kelly

Two meetings were held with a range of regional and municipality-level stakeholders in two of the chosen communities within the Alento study site (Velina and Stella Cilento). A third meeting was held with representatives of the Cilento National Park (Parco Nazionale del Cilento e Vallo di Diano) at their offices in Vallo della Lucania.

Participating stakeholders included the regional Agricultural Assessor for the Salerno Province; the Chief Executive and officers of the Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park; Municipality Mayors and deputy Mayors; local agricultural, planning and financial technicians; artisans, farmers and businessmen.

The strongest point to emerge from the two community stakeholder meetings was that the study area already has the resources that it needs to address degradation issues and develop sustainably; nothing additional needs to be invented. Stakeholders argued that what is needed, however, is much more coherent and effective strategic planning and promotion of existing resources. With effective planning and promotion of existing agricultural and tourism products, new jobs could be created which would enable young people to work and live in their home communities. Several stakeholders suggested that conditions had been better in the past and that the past could offer some guidance in addressing current problems. The current barriers to development centre on institutional problems and issues; a lack of political will and a lack of cohesion within and between communities to plan and effect change.

Many stakeholders also pointed to difficulties with the National Park, suggesting a physical and philosophical distance between the National Park administration and the communities within the Park boundary. The National Park recognised some of the difficulties and pointed to the complex and fragmented nature of the area under protection, together with its relatively recent designation.