Small-scale farmers as the core of sustainable landscapes and rural economies - setting the context for IPARD measures

Gwyn Jones
gwyn@efnep.org
• A different perspective on the relationship between town and country

• Where the small farmer fits in rural development

• What the small farmer needs from rural development
Rural emigration; ageing population

Rural poverty; urban growth; lack of intervention & investment

Decline in critical mass for services; lack of labour

Abandonment of pastures; decline in local food production;

Loss of open landscape; loss of condition of designated sites; wildfires

Rural poverty continues to demand social spending; huge land use problems leading to unavoidable public spending
The countryside often becomes ‘sexy’ again in richer societies – the example of England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population change 1980-2003 as % of 1980 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural areas</td>
<td>+14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed areas</td>
<td>+8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban areas</td>
<td>+1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>+6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mean house price/
mean household income
Price of cheapest houses/
lowest household incomes

Mean lower quartile house prices/
Mean of lower quartile income 2004
Rural emigration; ageing population

Abandonment of pastures; decline in local food production;

Increased attractiveness of rural getaways & commuter culture; Any economic activity only making land management more unattractive

Rural poverty; urban growth; lack of intervention & investment

Decline in critical mass for services; lack of labour

Loss of open landscape; loss of condition of designated sites; wildfires

Unaffordable housing AND rural poverty; huge land use problems leading to unavoidable public spending

‘Rich country’ direction of change?
A more holistic (and cheaper?) approach?

- Sustainable rural communities and land management
- Policies to increasing rural population retention
- Priority to retaining and building on remaining positives
- Potential of rural areas maximised; public spending on development not disasters
- Encouragement of rural entrepreneurship
- Improving viability of land management & land managing households
- Holistic territorial analysis and intervention

A more holistic (and cheaper?) approach?
Viable farming activity

Viable household

Viable farming community

Viable wider community

IPARD can and should address all of these!!
Socio-economic pressures

- Low returns
- Increased aspirations & attraction of cities
- No business succession
- Limited market & poor marketing
- Poor education, little advice
- Pasture access & quality issues
- Increasing regulatory burdens

Private, market goods

Public, non-market goods
Private, market goods

Focus of ESSEDRA project

Farmer registration does not impose unnecessary administrative and financial burdens

Food safety & hygiene requirements for extensive dairy producers makes full use of possible flexibility and allows direct sales of quality products

Food policy values and encourages quality products

IPARD should support:
- Training
- Advice
- Investment
- Co-operation and marketing
• Need a holistic view of policies and problems and of the links between them

• Countryside and rural policy needs farmers – can’t depend *just* on ‘wider rural development’

• Farmers need living rural communities – can’t depend *just* on support payments

• Many key aspects of policy are not about support payments

• But support payments essential to break through barriers and fill in for market failure
Sustainable landscape management

Attractive livelihoods for farmers

Viable living communities