



# Review of European experience in common grazing

Yanka Kazakova

European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism

Best practices for sustainable use of common grasslands in the Western Balkans and Europe

SEE Round Table  
15 April 2013, Sofia

С ФИНАНСОВАТА ПОДКРЕПА НА  
ПРОГРАМАТА ЗА МАЛКИ ПРОЕКТИ НА ГЛОБАЛНИЯ ЕКОЛОГИЧЕН ФОНД





## Common priorities

Historically (*local policies and practices*):

- The main goal is to restrict access and use of the pasture resource

Nowadays (*national policies and local practices*):

- Avoiding rural depopulation, implementing new technologies & new hygiene requirements
- In most areas, the key goal becomes ensuring a minimum level of maintenance
- Recognition of positive values – landscape, biodiversity, fire prevention, etc.



# The principles of robust commons institutions (Elinor Ostrom)

- **Clearly defined boundaries** of both the pasture resource and the users
- **The rules** restricting time, place, technology and quantity of resource use are **adapted to local conditions**
- **Collective choice arrangements** – participation of affected individuals
- **Monitoring and graduated sanctions** for non-compliance
- **Conflict resolution mechanisms** – local, rapid, low-cost
- **Recognition of the local rights** to organize by governments
- **Multiple layers** of nested enterprises in larger systems



# Key threats to sustainable governance systems

- Blueprint thinking –uniform solutions to problems
- Over-reliance on simple voting rules when good understanding and agreement is needed
- Rapid external changes – in technology, in the population
- Transmission failures between generations
- Turning to external sources for help too frequently
- International aid ignoring local knowledge and institutions
- Corruption and other forms of opportunistic behavior
- Lack of large-scale supportive institutions



# Changes in the rules for use of common pastures in Switzerland

- Swiss law has since 1996 aimed to protect summer pastures and manage them sustainably
  - Pasture payments linked to sustainability criteria since 2000
  - Grazing density can vary between 75% - 110% of the sustainability levels defined at local level
  - At local level, one of the key problems is related to ensuring the collective maintenance work – repair work of alp infrastructure, manure distribution, clearing of pastures from weed and stones
- ➔ **indicator for collective action and sustainability of resource use**



# Common grazing in Bavarian Alps

- Collective pastures are predominantly located at higher altitude (> 700-800 m)
- Around 1400 alps of which 150 have the status of collective alps
- The joint organisations of collective alps are **based on a consensus between one or several land owners and several land users**
- Stocking density on collective alps varies between 0.09 LU/ha and 0.7 LU/ha

Source: Gueydon, A. & H. Hoffmann, Collective alps in the Alpine region of Germany,  
<http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc>



European Forum on  
Nature Conservation  
and Pastoralism

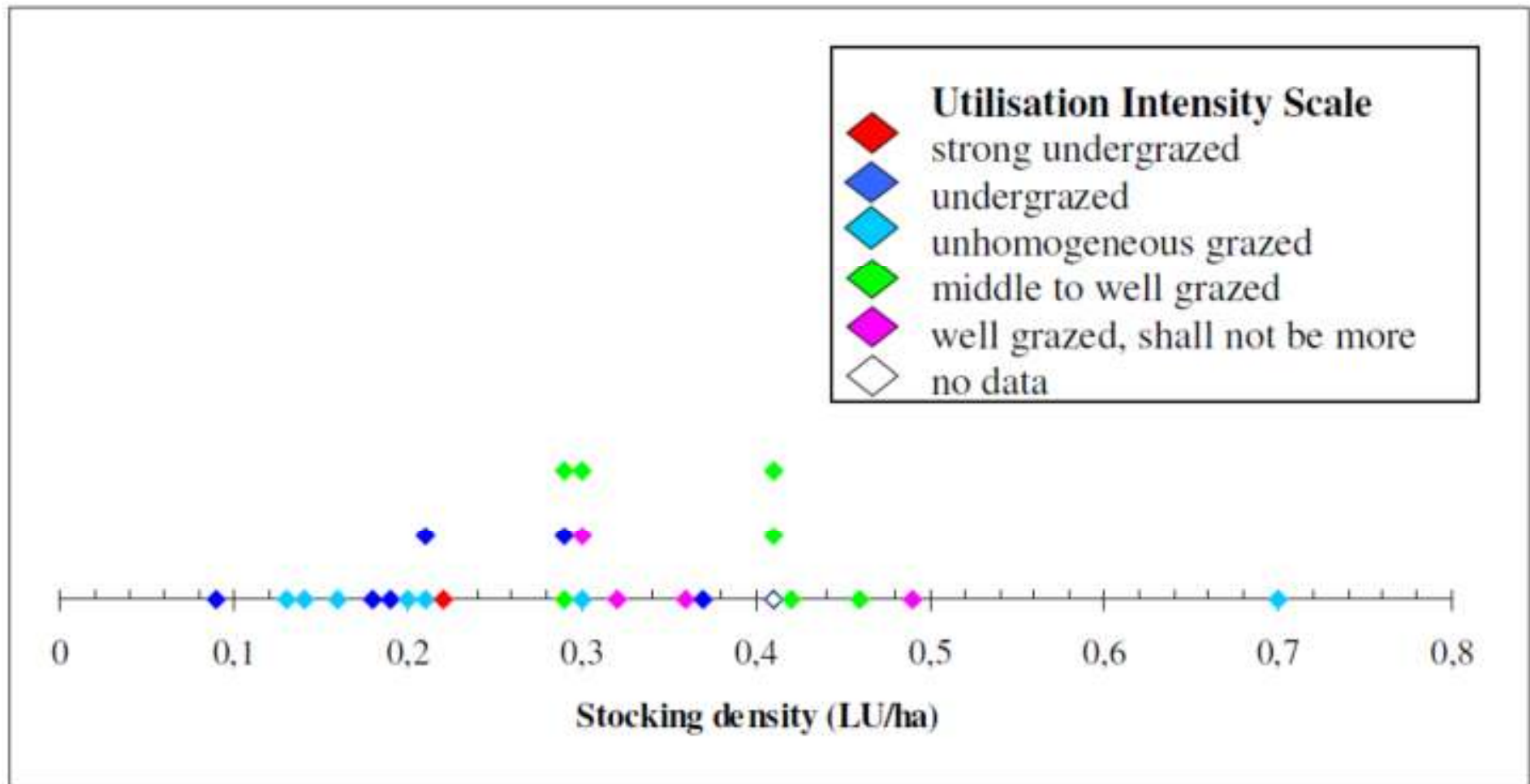
# Types of formal and informal rules on Bavarian collective alps

Type of rules	„Formal“ rules	„Informal“ rules
<b>Operational rules</b>		
date and extent of pasture maintenance	52%	48%
date of fencing/dismantling	38%	62%
Fertilizer application	33%	67%
Number of animals allowed to graze	71%	29%
Drive up and bring down the animals to/from the pastures	38%	62%
Way of managing the herd	38%	62%
Way of managing the pasture	25%	75%
<b>Collective-choice rules</b>		
Compensation of labour performed on the collective alps	100%	0%
Date of collective assignment	56%	44%
Extent and object of investments	90%	10%
Extent of labour to provide on the collective alps	60%	40%
Grazing fees	87%	13%
Level of wage compensation	100%	0%
utilisation of money from subsidies	75%	25%
Utilisation of possible surpluses	100%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>38%</b>



European Forum on  
Nature Conservation  
and Pastoralism

# Level of utilisation of the Bavarian collective alps

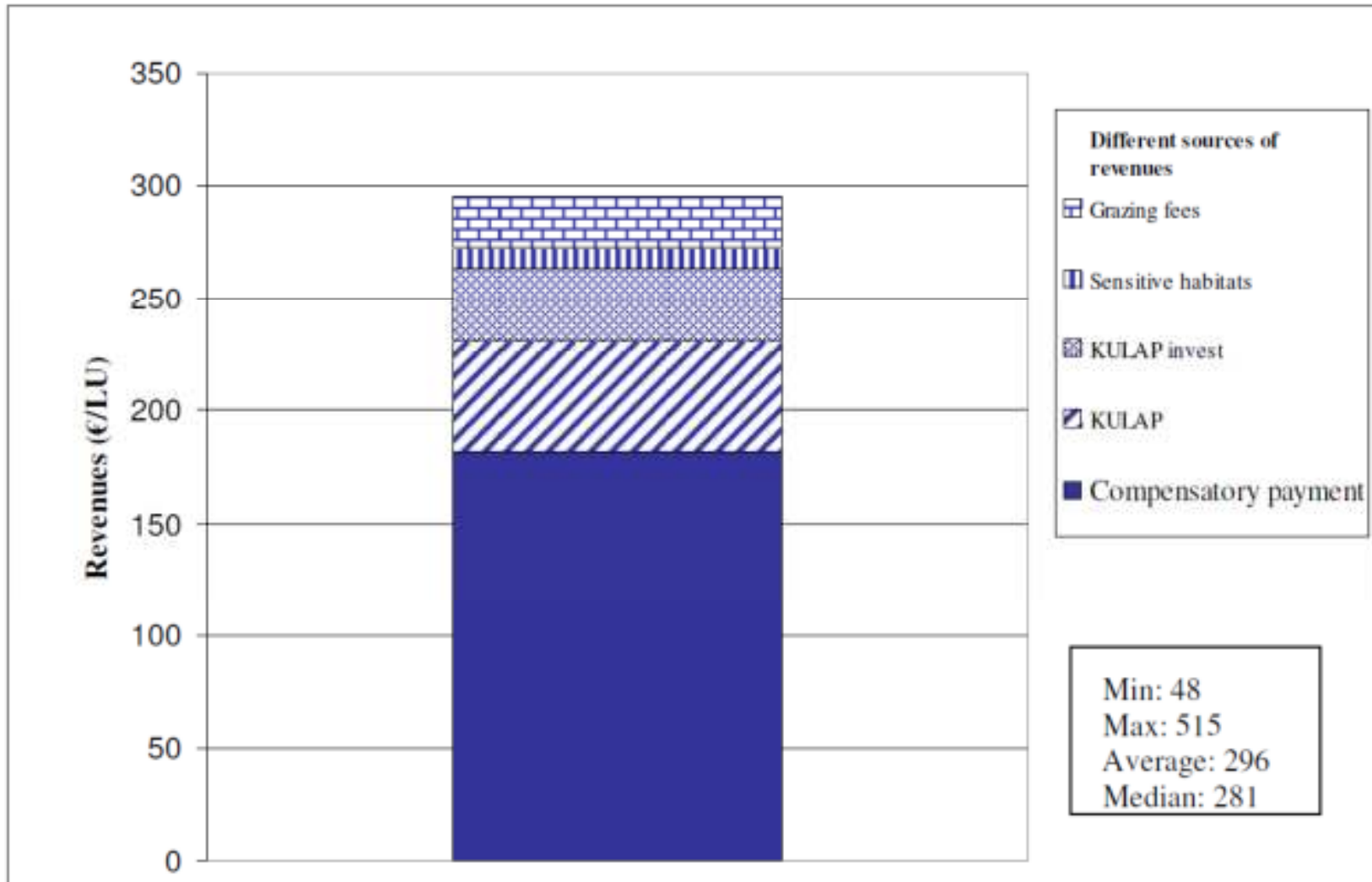






European Forum on  
Nature Conservation  
and Pastoralism

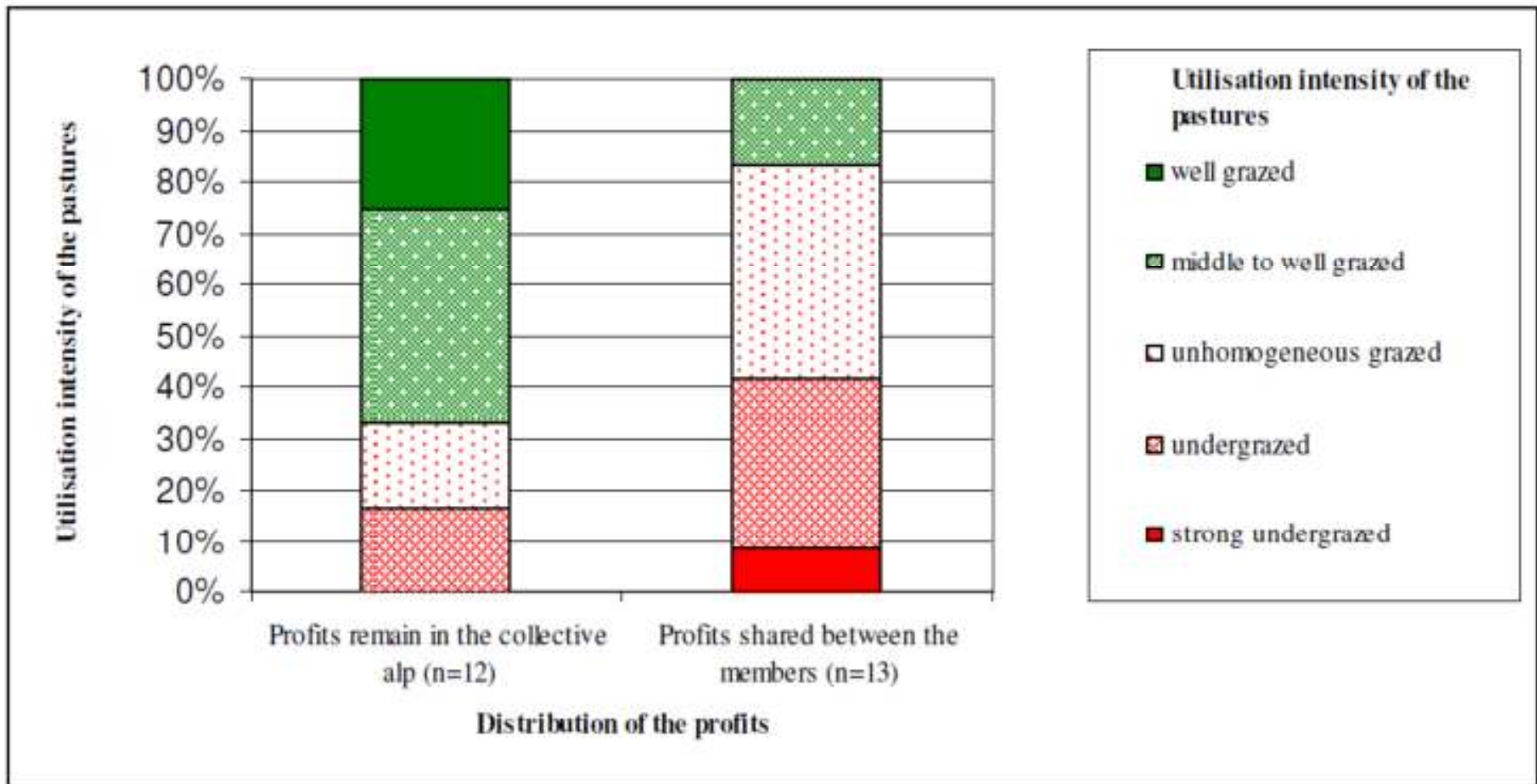
# Types of revenues on the Bavarian collective alps





European Forum on  
Nature Conservation  
and Pastoralism

# Relationship between distribution of profits and intensity of use





## Final words

- In our region, there is a tendency of de facto privatisation due to introduction of EU subsidies
- However, one of the key problems is (common) maintenance work (current situation increases pressure on individual user to maintain what was previously done by many)
- Collective forms are a way forward which have many benefits **but**
- only when carefully planned and actively supported



There is no easy way to do it properly

Whether done by **individual** or **collective**, it requires

Time

Effort

Money

Motivation

Collaboration

The difference is just in the proportion of each.