

Common grasslands in Romania

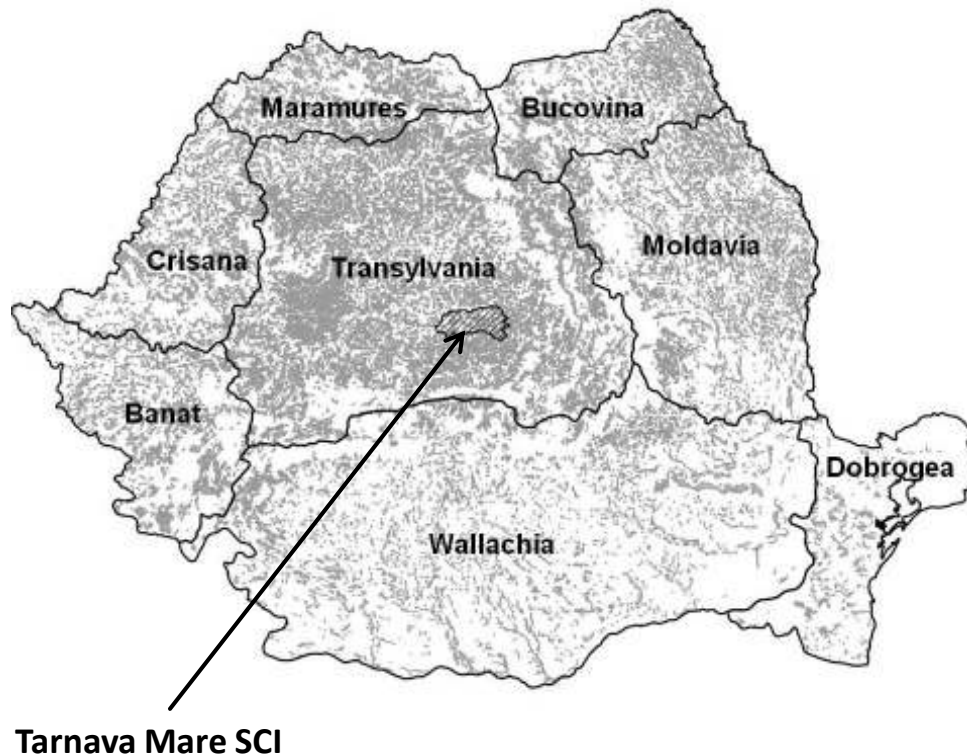


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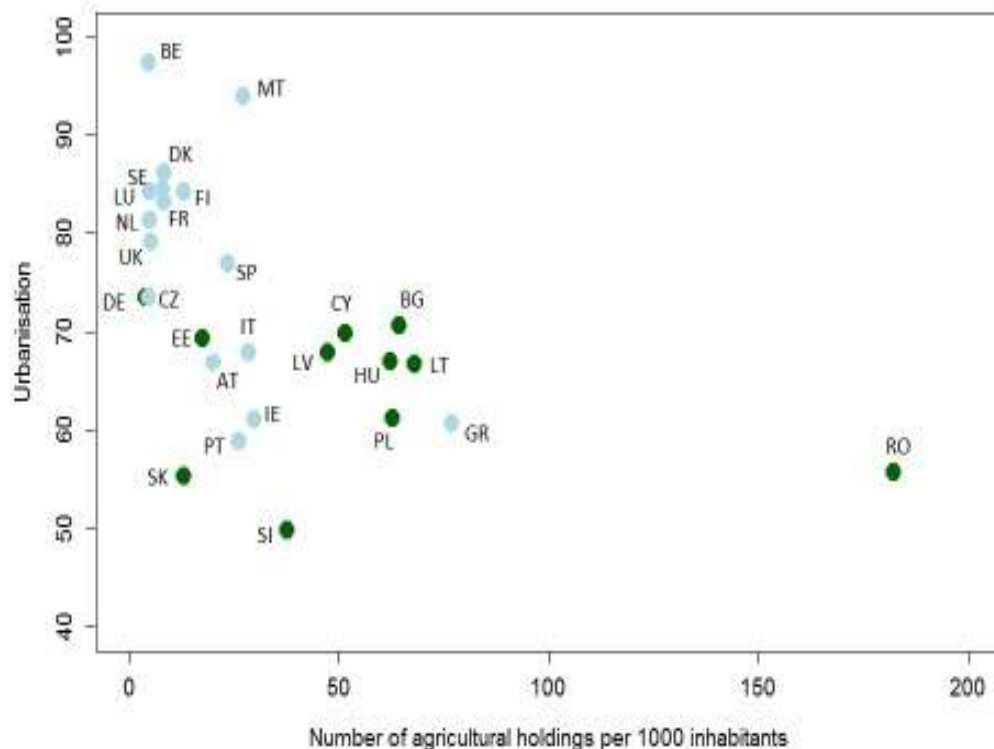
SEE Round Table: Best practices for sustainable use of common grasslands in the Western Balkans and Europe
15 April 2013, Sofia, Bulgaria

Importance of common grazing in Romanian agriculture - **extent**



- Common pasture (and forest) owned by the state or community organisations: many different models
- Differs across the country, and areas of different ethnic minorities
- 2 mi ha publicly owned common land, 3.4 mi ha perm. pasture (60%)
- The majority of villages have some common pasture: in TM almost all permanent pasture is common/communal

Importance of common grazing in Romanian agriculture - **users**



- The major user of **common** pasture is semi-subsistence farmer with 1-3 cows
- This may be around half of all cow owners (official statistics only give numbers for owners of 3+ cows)
- 90 % of holdings are <5 ha
- But this user type is declining
- The major user of **communal** pasture is those with the greatest power

Legal frameworks for common pastures in Romania



Neither sale nor change of land use is allowed for state owned common pasture

Commons type	Property rights	Use rights	Administration	Main distribution
<i>composesorat</i>	Private property of the local community	Can be restricted to members (not always); usually inherited	Elected members	(HU speaking) Transylvania and N. Romania
<i>obște</i>	Private property of the local community	Restricted to members; membership inherited/ through residence	Elected members	Regions of Wallachia and Moldavia
<i>izlaz</i>	Public property of the local community	Any inhabitant of the municipality	Elected pastoral committee	Throughout Romania

Table based on Mantescu 2009: When Globalization meets Postsocialism. Community-based institutions for managing forest commons and the internationalization of timber market in Romania (<http://www.econ.unavarra.es/seminarios/Seminarios%20antiguo/Papers0809/Mantescu.pdf>)



Administrative system

- If the pasture is owned by the state, local inhabitants have the right to apply for grazing
- Since 2007, they may rent parcels (5 year contracts) or pay a tax to graze their animals
- Allocation and price of communal pasture decided by the mayor/vice mayor + pastoral committee in an annual spring meeting
- Those with contracts may apply for EU subsidies: uptake of Pillar I and Pillar II payments is high

Positive outcomes of renting/subsidies



Less abandonment, better maintenance
(strict controls from the payments agency)



Negative outcomes of renting/subsidies

- Opportunity to make cash from common pastures -> corruption in the system
- Town Halls were banned from receiving subsidies for common pastures in 2009
- Smallest farmers have the least benefit
- Overgrazing?



Farmer associations

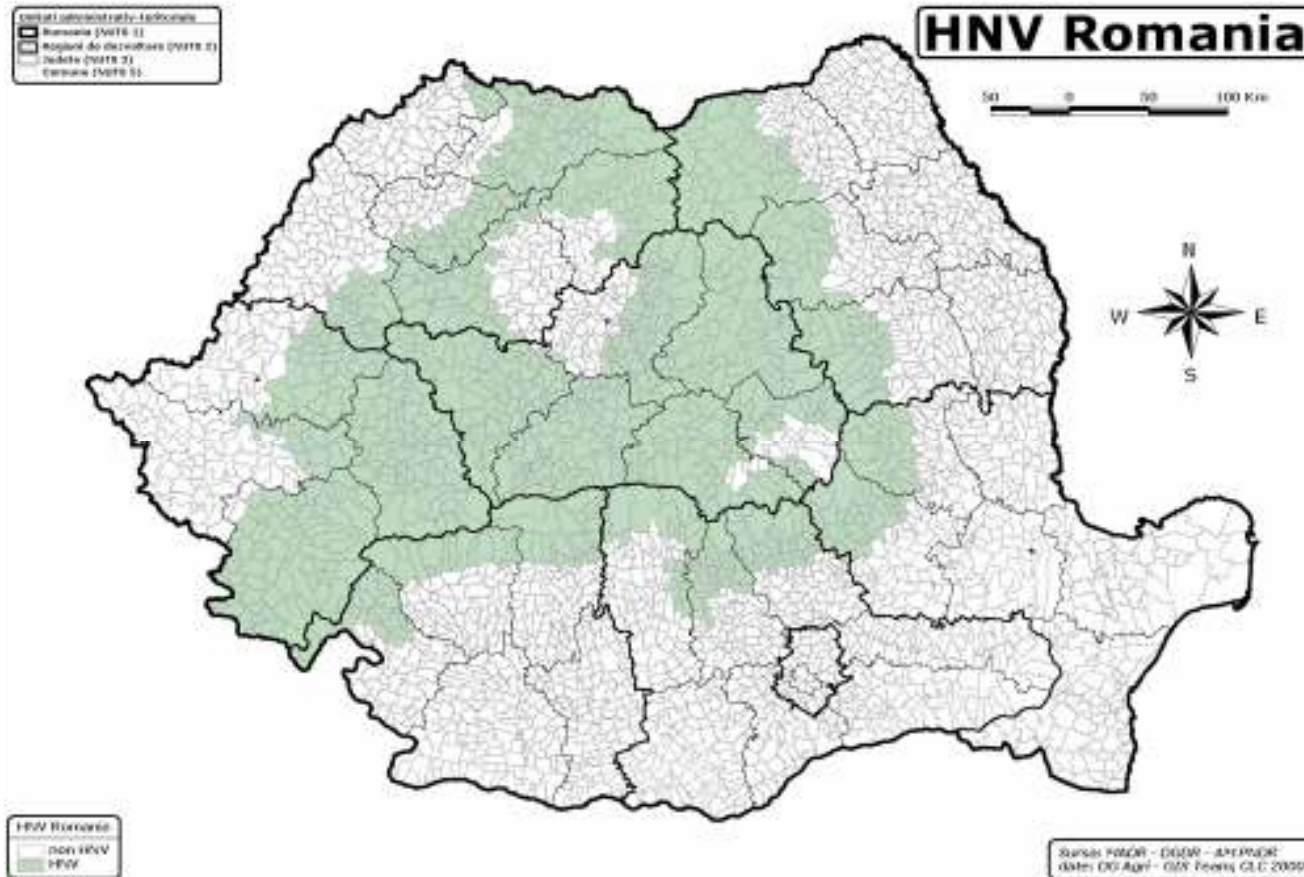
- Farmer associations were encouraged by the government to form to receive subsidies for the common pastures, and reinvest them in the pasture
- Local grazing association: rents 250 ha, receives ~€60,000/yr -> cleared pasture, built milking parlour, remade track to pasture...
- But many, many failed associations



Future trends

- In the near future, Town Halls will be required to hold auctions, whereby the highest eligible bidder will receive the parcel for a minimum period of 10 years.
- Educational initiatives for farmer associations: training to make the most out of HNV farmland

Eligibility criteria



Limited area eligible for Agri-Environment Schemes

Eligibility criteria



- A particularly valuable form of commons is wood pastures
- Solitary trees are (officially) protected by GAEC, but not e.g. promoted by agri-environment schemes
- As a result, the trees are ,tidied away' (burnt, cut down, vandalized)



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