


UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA



**Common Properties and Municipalities:
institutional relations in forest environmental
services provision. A case study in an Alpine Region.**

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Outline

- Introduction to the Italian common domain
 - Common Properties (CPs) in Italy: an overview
 - The study area
- Objectives and Methodology
- Results
 - CPs attitude toward ES provision
 - CPs effectiveness: Municipal vs. self-evaluation
 - Institutional relationships between CPs-Municipalities
- Conclusions

Slides can be downloaded from: www.tesaf.unipd.it/pettebella




Common Properties (CPs) institutions: an overview The Italian “common domain”

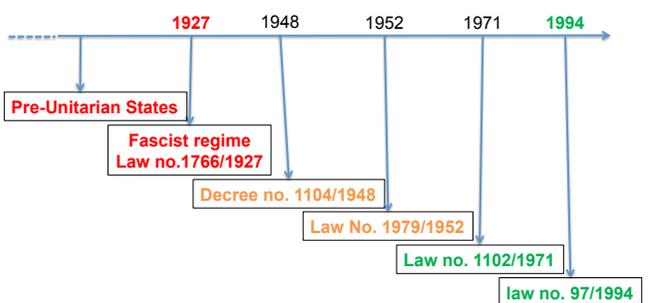
Customary rights allow a local community to benefit some products provided by a common pool resource, e.g. collecting wood, picking mushrooms, gathering herbs, grazing, hunting, fishing, etc.

	Civic Uses Lands		Common Properties
Ownership	Government OR private entities	Formally, the community	Community with legal status of association
Adminstr. entity (accountable to)	Depending on the owner	a) Municipality b) Board (Municipality) c) Administration (Community)	Board (Community)
Membership (Criteria)		Open (residence)	a) Open – registration (residence) b) Mostly close – registration (lineage)

Source: Bassi, 2012 (modified)




Italian CPIs: a brief history



The timeline shows the following key events:

- 1927:** Fascist regime Law no. 1766/1927
- 1948:** Decree no. 1104/1948
- 1952:** Law No. 1979/1952
- 1971:** Law no. 1102/1971
- 1994:** law no. 97/1994




The study area Veneto Region mountains

Forestry sector:

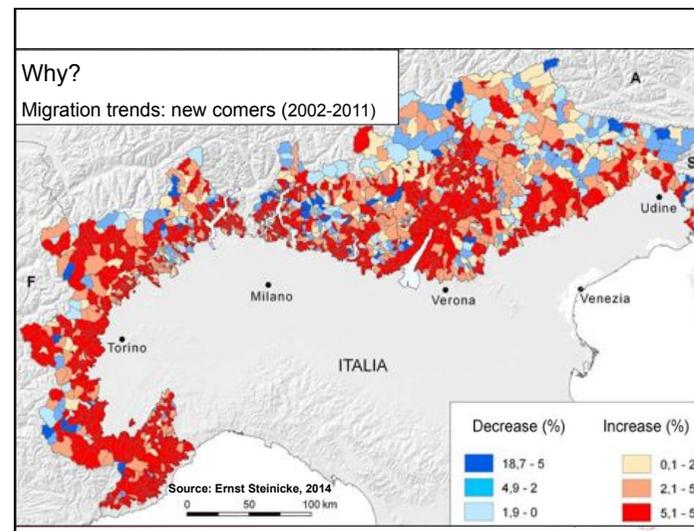
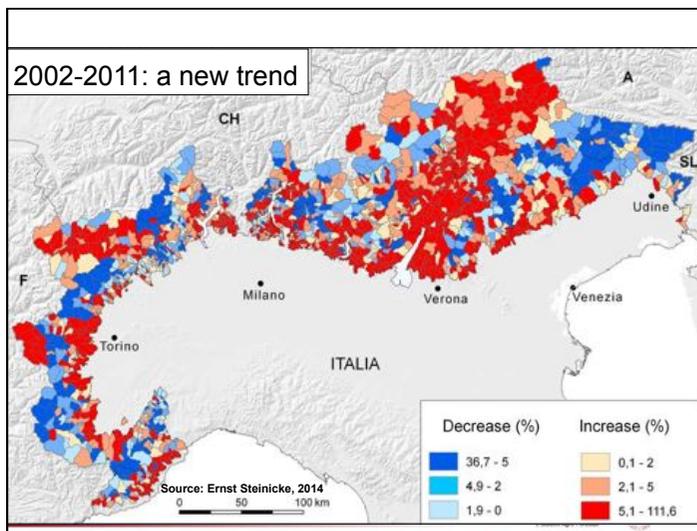
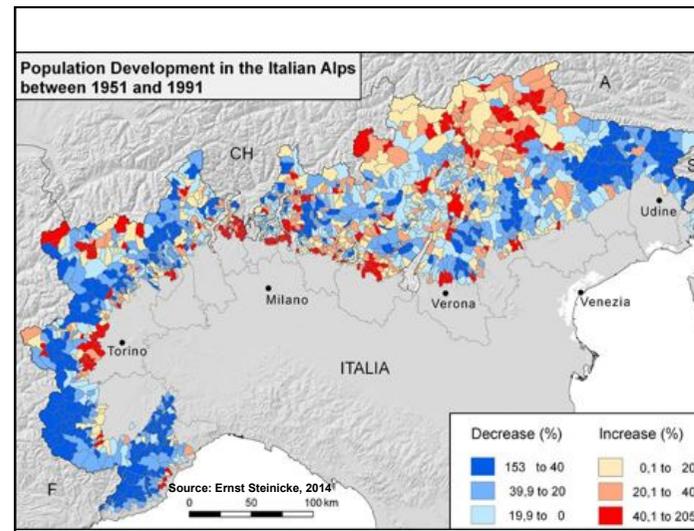
- Forest cover > 40%
- Spruce, fir, beech uneven-aged highforests → high potential supply of industrial roundwood
- Wood removals < 30% NAI
- Strong local demand for bio-energy
- Strict regulations for any forest operation (clearcut area < 2 ha, natural regeneration, ...)

Other economic activities:

- Farmland abandonment → natural expansion of forests
- Crucial role of winter and summer tourism (Dolomites UNESCO site)
- More 100 micro-hydro power plants under construction (in addition to the traditional large hydro power plants)

→ A changing patten of ES supply
+
A radical change in social structure



The study area

An increasing role of CPs (1/2)



Regional Law 26/1996, art. 1

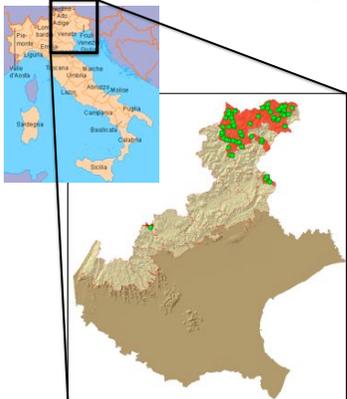
The Veneto Region recognizes *Regole* [i.e. CPs] as mountain organizations **concurring to the environmental protection and to the socio-economical development** of mountain territories.

According to the national law, the Veneto Region rearranges the legal discipline and **promotes the reconstitution of ancient CPs**, in order to foster policies aimed to stimulate investments in the agriculture and forestry sector.

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The study area

An increasing role of CPs (2/2)



- 54 CPs; 18 newly reconstituted
- Several reconstitutions still ongoing



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Objectives

Hypothesis 1: not always the outcomes of the transformation of municipal forests to CPs are positive in terms of improved forest management practices and ES provisions.

→ **Forest ES provision level assessment**

Hypothesis 2: Coexistence of new CPs and Municipalities is based on a weak equilibrium, with the need of progressively reinforcing the coordination among local institutions.

→ **Future better coordination or disclosure of currently hidden conflicts?**

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Methodology

❖ **Newforex survey**

197 interviews (private, public, common owners/managers in the Veneto Region)

Selection criterion:

- Interviews to CPs representatives: 18/53 CPs (34% population)
- Closeness criterion to select the Municipal Authorities (MA) to be interviewed: 11/23 in the Province of Belluno, excluding areas where no information on CPs had been previously collected.

Comparison between MAs and CPs attitude towards ES supply

- (1) Wood supply (2) Tourist and recreational activities (3) Biodiversity (4) Carbon sink
- Compatibility with current FM
- ES supply explicitly considered
- ES priority
- Future interest in proactive ES supply



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Methodology

- ❖ Integration with Integral project surveys and results
- ❖ 2 Interviewing phases, to [1] municipal and [2] CP representatives
- ❖ Semi-structured questionnaire
 - a) Communication channels
 - b) Administrative constraints
 - c) Economic effects
 - d) Legal disputes and institutional frictions
 - e) Social issues
 - f) Effectiveness of CPs

Note: here, only some information will be presented: those mainly related, directly or implicitly, with ES supply



<http://www.integral-project.eu>




Methodology

- ❖ **Face-to-face interviews with Municipal representatives**

Selection criterion: Municipalities where CPs exist within their administered area

Reference persons: Officers responsible for the institutional contacts with local CPs. (10 Majors, 2 aldermen, 1 municipal secretary, 1 office manager)

Why Municipalities? ► Represent the whole local communities; ► Wide variety of interests
 ► Former forest owners; ► Compulsory mechanisms of instit. coordination.

Coverage: 14 Municipalities (82%), dealing with 37 CPs (~70%)
- ❖ **Face-to-face interviews with CPs representatives**

Selection criterion:
 - Geographical area (Municipalities and regional areas)
 - Year of establishment (ante/post 1996)
 - Results from 1st interviewing phase (institutional patterns)
 - CP political and economic "significance"

Reference persons: 13 Presidents, 1 Vice-President, 4 admin. Assistants

Coverage: 18/54 CPs, standing in 11/14 affected municipal areas (78,6%)

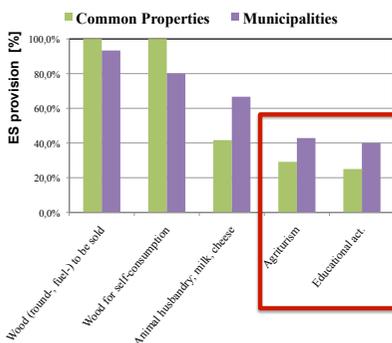



Results

Attitude toward ESs provision




Wood harvesting



Relevance of timber selling revenues on total income		
	CPs	Municipalities
Totally	71.4%	0.0%
Relevant	21.4%	0.0%
Not much	7.1%	28.6%
Negligible	0.0%	71.4%




Tourism and recreational activities

	ES compatible with current FM?		ES as FM objective?	
	Municipalities	Common Properties	Municipalities	Common Properties
No	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	Assigned ES priority	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Main objective	88.9%	14.3%
Secondary objective	11.1%	85.7%

	Future interest in proactive ES supply	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Yes, with direct earnings	-	16.7%
Yes, also without direct earnings	-	-
Yes, with indirect profits	-	16.7%
No, I think it is not applicable	-	-
No, in any case	-	-
I don't know	100.0%	66.6%

What does not differ...

...and what actually changes

Biodiversity

	ES compatible with current FM?		ES as FM objective?	
	Municipalities	Common Properties	Municipalities	Common Properties
No	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	Assigned ES priority	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Main objective	90.0%	66.7%
Secondary objective	10.0%	33.3%

	Future interest in proactive ES supply	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Yes, with direct earnings	10.0%	20.0%
Yes, also without direct earnings	60.0%	26.7%
Yes, with indirect profits	-	6.7%
No, I think it is not applicable	30.0%	26.7%
No, in any case	-	13.3%
I don't know	-	6.7%

Biodiversity: a spillover of FM for the CPs

Biodiversity offered also without payment

Carbon sink

	ES compatible with current FM?		ES as FM objective?	
	Municipalities	Common Properties	Municipalities	Common Properties
No	9.1%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%
Yes	90.9%	100.0%	93.3%	100.0%

	Assigned ES priority	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Main objective	50.0%	7.7%
Secondary objective	50.0%	92.3%

	Future interest in proactive ES supply	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Yes, with direct earnings	50.0%	40.0%
Yes, also without direct earnings	-	-
Yes, with indirect profits	10.0%	-
No, I think it is not applicable	40.0%	33.3%
No, in any case	-	-
I don't know	-	26.7%

Again an ES without trade-off

...but not perceived as a priority

Soil protection and water quality

	ES compatible with current FM?		ES as FM objective?	
	Municipalities	Common Properties	Municipalities	Common Properties
No	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Yes	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	Assigned ES priority	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Main objective	80.0%	66.7%
Secondary objective	20.0%	33.3%

	Future interest in proactive ES supply	
	Municipalities	Common Properties
Yes, with direct earnings	33.3%	40.0%
Yes, also without direct earnings	33.3%	13.3%
Yes, with indirect profits	-	13.3%
No, I think it is not applicable	22.2%	33.3%
No, in any case	-	-
I don't know	11.1%	-

A sort of pre-requisite for FM

No much interest to do more, without payments

Results

CPs effectiveness: perception by CPs vs. Municipal representatives

CPs effectiveness: the criteria

Social development

Inclusivity: young people, new comers, gender issue, ...

Tourist promotion

Contractual agreements for land use; clear definition of regulating competences

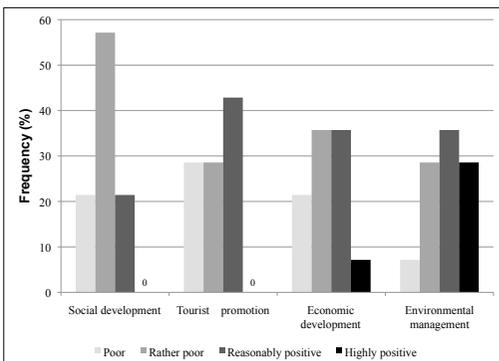
Economic development

Pro-active attitude: investing in forest-related new economic activities

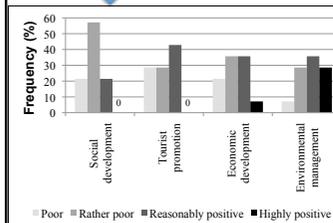
Environmental management

Impacts of ordinary management (protection of local landscapes, reinvestment rates, ...)

CPs effectiveness Municipal representatives' perception

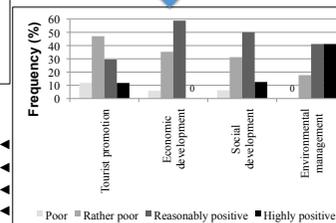


Municipal vs. self-evaluation by CPs representatives



- Non commoners: difficulties in entering the CP
- Non commoners: excluded from some P&S
- Hostile attitude toward "foreigners"
- Absence or weak gender balance

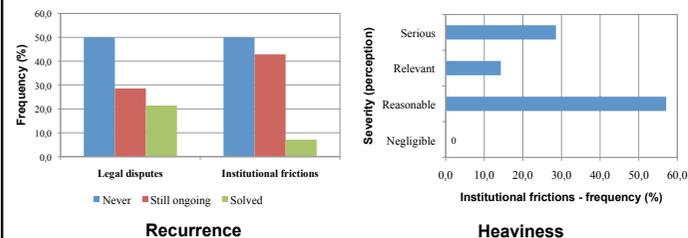
- ◀ Social cohesion within the local community
- ◀ Some P&S granted to non commoners
- ◀ Local "open" events, initiatives, activities
- ◀ Often "past issues" are being progressively solved



Results

Institutional relationships CPs - Municipalities

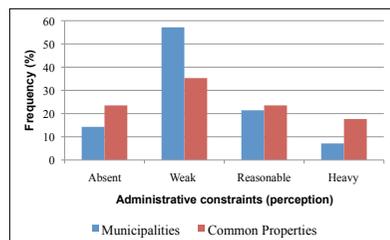
Legal disputes and institutional frictions



- Willingness to reach friendly agreements recently prevailed
- Progressive bettering of mutual institutional relationships

Administrative and economic effects

- I. Administrative constraints perceived by MAs and CPs representatives, respectively determined by CPs and MAs existence/activities



- II. CPs always represented within the Town Council
- III. Reference persons: often, almost single contacts Major - CP President

Conclusions

Hypothesis 1: not always the outcomes of the transformation of municipal forests to CPs are positive in terms of improved forest management practices and ES provision
 → Forest ESs provision level assessment

- CPs more committed towards traditional forest management: the creation of new CPs is **reinforcing the provisioning services** (wood harvesting)
- In a highly regulated context there is not much space for introducing PES and there is the risk of land abandonment (ageing forests, reduced grassland) → **a more active forest management can implicitly support the provision of some ES**
- Strongly **different opinions on CPs' ability to promote "social development"**: CPs are quite effective in protecting the interests of the old residents and the *status quo* in land use. In a society with a lot of new comers CPs **an sometimes an obstacle to positive social development** (a "inclusive" society?)

Conclusions – Institutional relationship

Hypothesis 2: the coexistence of new Common Properties and Municipalities is based on a weak equilibrium, with the need of progressively reinforcing the coordination among local institutions.

Substantially confirmed

- Institutional conflicts are frequent
- CPs always represented in Town Councils: an integration of the two institutions with frequent positive impacts in coordination
- Formal mechanisms aimed to support mutual cooperation are needed

