



In vivo conservation of farm animal genetic resources  
Wageningen, The Netherlands  
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# *In-situ* conservation of endangered Albanian local pig breed a successful history

by

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### **First information about the local pig breeds**

On 1998 in the International Symposium “*Current Status of FAnGR and their use as factor for sustainable economic development of marginal rural areas in Balkan regions*” Thessaloniki, Greece, Mr. H. Grunenfelder, was presented the results of an identification mission carried out in the regions of Shkodra and Malësi e Madhe, who had identified few pigs, in some family farms, that could be classified as native pigs of Siska Type



The first serious efforts for identifying native pig breeds were accomplished by the support of GEF/PNUD in 2005's. Outputs of this mission, enriched by

↳ the results of missions carried out in the frame of TCP/FAO project "Capacity building to support *in – situ* conservation and use of FAnGR", 2005-2006,

↳ the information collected by EURONATURE & SAVE FOUNDATION, 2005-2006

have evidenced the existence of native pigs in Albania.

Among these results, the most important informations was:

**Existence of Siska type pigs, Spotted of Scutari and Pig with wattle identified in Back Rrjoll, Velipoja region**

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**The situation of local pig population at the beginning of the project :**

Name of local breed	Sows	boars	Number of farms
Siska type – White of Scutari	8-10	3-4	8
Spoted of Scutari	10-15	5-7	10
Pig with wattle	1-2	1	2



**Spoted of Scutari**



**White of Scutari-Siska type**



**Pig with wattle**

According to the farmer`s interview, the main reasons that they farm the pigs of native breeds was:

- Farming of native pigs is a tradition and effect of the inherited hobby

- Under the conditions of family farms, where inputs are very limited, pigs of local breeds are suitable to be farmed because:

- (i) are resistant to diseases

- (ii) have low nutritious requirements, utilize pasture and by products of farm very good

- (iii) produce high quality meat

- (iv) have relatively good performance of reproduction and

- (v) have no requests for expensive housing

- Pig production from local breeds is sufficient to meet family needs

- Under the condition of lack or great difficulties of meat pork marketing, the farmers are not interested and don't consider efficient the investment for the management of high genetic capacity breeds

Nevertheless

The trend of population was - **decreasing** ↓

Risk status - **at risk of extinction**

Among the factors that affected this situation we could list:

*Firstly*, lack of program for conservation and development of local pig breeds. As a result, selection of reproducers, drafting and monitoring mating schemes, prevention of crossbreeding phenomenon ( boars come from Monte Negro ) was almost impossible.

*Secondly*, interest of farmers to preserve these breeds and increase number of animals was low.

*Thirdly*, lack of mechanisms, especially economic ones, related to marketing of products, which would promote collaboration between farmers as a necessary condition for applying a program for conservation and sustainable economic use

## Objectives of project

- Implementation of urgent measures, necessary to stop the process of genetic erosion and decrease of animal numbers in the population of local pigs “ White of Scutari”, “Black Spotted of Scutari” and “ Pig with Wattle”
- Rising awareness of farmer`s communities, informal groups or/and associations of farmers, domestic and international institutions to support any effort that will have as objective, the conservation and development through sustainable economic use of this genetic fund.
- Support and promoting collaboration among farmers.
- Building up and strengthening the capacity of Local Network of farmers to support *in situ/on farm* conservation
- Building up the Rescue Station and Ark farm in Back Rrjoll village



## ***In-situ/on farm conservation program***

### **Target of the program were:**

Local pig breeds “ White of Scutari”, “Black Spotted of Scutari” and “ Pig with Wattle”.

### **Main activities were:**

**Establishing a farm to breed 4 -5 sows and 1-2 boars for each local breed. This farm would serve as nucleus herd for *In – situ / on farm* conservation and as a Rescues Centre.**

**Setting up the Network of small scale family farms of 1-2 sows that would serve as units of applying *in-situ* conservation program**

**Producing pure breed breeding boars in order to create, for each local breeds and for a medium term period, up to 10 male lines.**



## Results after 2 years:

### 1. Size of populations

#### 1.1 Situation at the beginning of the project in 6 small scale farms involved in project:

##### Farm of Gjon Zhuri:

1 sow and 1 boar of breed “White of Scutari-Siska type”

3 sows and 2 boars “Spotted of Shkodra”

##### In 5 other farms, in Back Rrjoll village

8 sows and 3 boars (6 sows and 2 boars of breed “Spotted of Shkodra” and 2 sows and 1 boar of breed “White of Scutari-Siska type”)

and in Noshi Farm that was granted by SAVE Foundation:

2 sows and 1 boar of breed “Pig with wattle”

#### 1.2 Situation after 2 years

##### Farm of Gjon Zhuri

5 sows of breed “Pig with wattle”,

12 sows of breed “Spotted of Shkodra”,

3 sows of breed “White of Scutari-Siska type”.

5 pregnant young sows

3 boars and 5 pigs (males) of 6-8 months old

##### In 5 other farms, I

In total, 9 sows and 3 boars as well as 6 gilts and 4 pigs (males) of 6-8 months old are managed.

In total, 29 sows, 6 boars, 11 gilts and 7 pigs (males) of 6-8 months old are included to *in-situ/on farm* conservation program

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## The main activities of the project:

### 1. Support of farmers

#### 1.1 Purchase of the animal for the future reproducers

35 piglets (f), 10 piglets (m), 3 young board and 2 young sows



**Animals purchase with  
the financial support of  
project**



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## 1.2 Subsidies for keeping, feedstuffs and vet.service-animals

The group of farmers are supported with a quantity of concentrated feedstuffs according the number of animals that they have in their farm. Supporting for veterinarian service have be done during all the period of the project.



## 1.3 Building the new stable in the Farm-Rescues station and reconstruction of some other stables

New stable was constructed on the farm of Mr Gjon Zhuri.



This stable is going to be used as the Rescue Station :  
Successful use during the inundation period, January – February 2010.

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**Renovations of the existing stables have been done in other farms**



**The renovation stables**

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## 1.4 Training of farmers

During the training process different issues are develop. The field open days are also carried out.



## 1.5 Support the farmers to building – up a marketing concept of the products

☺ During the period October, 2010 – March, 2011, Gjon Zhuri, owner of breeding nucleus farm, has sold in local market 184 pigs, at age 4- 5 month.

☺ The price of selling was 80-90 % higher than usual one.

**The consumers prefer pig of local breed, because:  
It has low percentage of subcutaneous fat.  
The meat is very tasty.**

Actually, the demands of consumers to this product is increasing

Therefore

Interest of farmers to farm local pig breeds is increased too.



## **Sustainability of the project**

**Current situation – 1 year after the project was finished**

**Population data in Nucleus farm:**

**28 head sows , 4 boards, 7 gilts, 16 piglets (f), 7 piglets (m)**

**Size population in Back Rrjoll village**

**145 sows in 62 family farms**

**All family farms use for breeding the boards of Nucleus farm.**

**The price for the service is 5 Euro/service.**

**A very new important development:**

**Farmers from other region have expres their interest to farm pigs of local breeds**

**Distribution of local pig breeds in other regions of Albania:**

**Lezha Mirdita and Dibra**

**43 piglets (f) and 16 piglets (m) that will be used as breeding animals**

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**Thank you for your attention**

