


RURAL DIVERSIFICATION AND SMART AGRI-FOOD DESTINATIONS

REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA

PROVINCE OF NORTH BRABANT

- ▶ According to a recent EAFRD Communication on the topic of ‘Smart and Competitive Rural Areas’, rural diversification and sustainable communities are among the main objectives that the Common Agriculture Policy has to achieve. Particularly, smart approaches to rural development need to think about the broad range of (potential) rural economic activities beyond the key strands of agricultural and forestry production. Diversification can mean rural producers expanding their activities into new areas or other forms of rural entrepreneurship, exploiting for instance the linkages with cultural heritage, tourism and the wellbeing of local communities. Smart approaches to rural development need to ensure that rural communities are vibrant and attractive places to live and work.

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- ▶ This proposal wants to create an international partnership following the recent suggestions of the EU policy brief on “Food and Gastronomy as elements of regional innovation strategies” where it is recommended that it is crucial to explore niches in the agro-food sector that have the potential to generate new innovative products and services. **These niches can emerge from the cross-fertilization of traditional agro-food sectors and services, e. g. agriculture, food production and gastronomy with other sectors including tourism, hospitality, handcraft and education.**

- ▶ Also, city region food system is a reasonable approach to face challenges that are bound to specific places, in terms of causes, impacts, and governance. In fact, according to Jennings et al. (2015), at least three macro-categories of linkages exist between urban and rural areas: **ecological**, comprising ecosystem services and appropriate land-use planning; **socio-economic**, including shorter, more direct supply chains; and **governance**, bringing together urban and rural governance structures in a democratic and participatory way.

The role of specific ICT tools to increase the accessibility, openness and reputation of food destinations will be investigated. Some examples includes (but are not limited to):

- ▶ **SENSEABLE SPACES FOR AGRI-FOOD DESTINATIONS** Latest improvement on mobile devices capabilities definitively changed the way people experience their surroundings. In this area a research focus on experimental “senseable” spaces applied to agriculture and agri-food will be carried on. In this interactive spaces users can walk and discover with the help of image processing, environmental sensors, and social media analysis.
- ▶ **DIGITAL FOOTPRINTS AND SENSORY PROFILES FOR AGRI-FOOD INNOVATION AND RURAL DIVERSIFICATION** Agri-food productions can gather on digital footprints and novel sensorial profiles that are based on user generated contents and active/passive collection of digital footprints data. A passive digital footprint is created when data is collected without the owner knowing, whereas active digital footprints are created when personal data is released deliberately by a user for the purpose of sharing information about oneself by means of websites or social media.

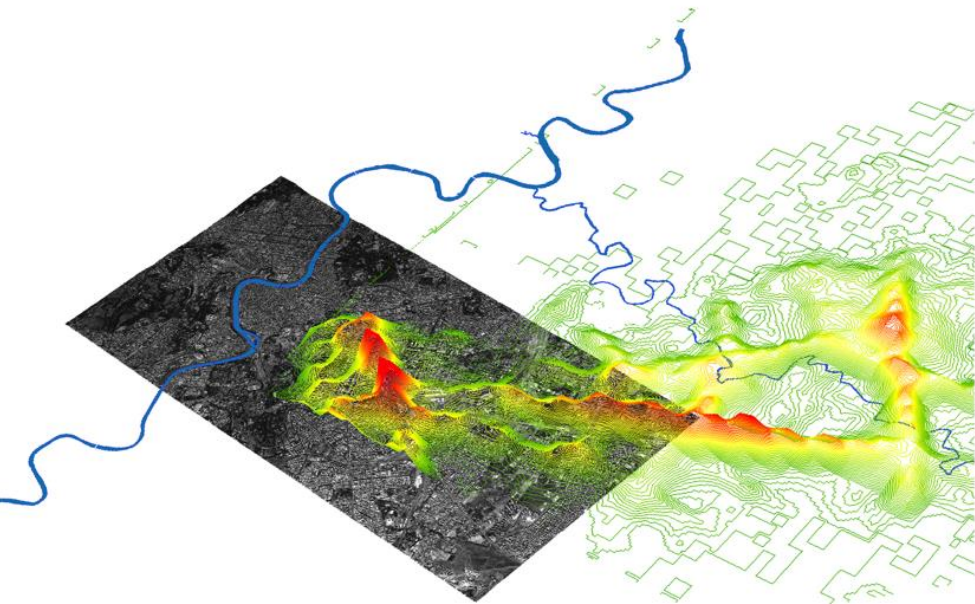
An existing prototype:

AGRI FOOD INNOVATION BOOST

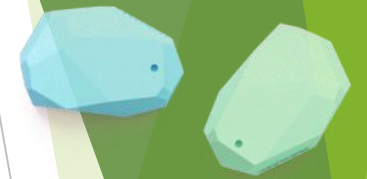
ICT INNOVATION FOR FOODIES & SENSORIAL DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Senseable environments

New Agri-Food digital innovations get embedded in the fabric of our lives and give us the ability to **show previously invisible Destination/Agri-Food actors processes**



- Enhancement of our perception
- Reveal the landscape as we experience it
- Instantaneous information
- Empowerment of the foodies
- Digital footprints collection
- Big data analytics
- Augmented Reality & Proximity
- Digital Sensorial Profiles
- User generated contents as a new vision
- Data standardization



INTERREGIONAL COLLABORATION

- ▶ The **main challenge** of this proposal is to allow a cross-fertilization between regions that are developing and studying the crossover effects between agriculture and the fields of tourism, cultural heritage and the wellbeing of rural communities. This would allow the creation of new business models allowing rural producers to expand their activities into new areas, involving local communities to manage vibrant and attractive places to live and work.

FINALLY

- ▶ This project proposal explores how digital technologies can support the aggregation management and collaborative economy. They represent a way to help local communities both to create digital coordination between all the stakeholders and around the chain and to help them to challenge the market and improve their social, cultural and economic activities, overtaking structural and physical limits and providing opportunities for rural diversification.

THANK YOU

Provincie Noord-Brabant



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
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