



## **International Workshop**

*“Sharing knowledge on Participatory Mapping for Forest and Pasture Areas -Combining different mapping techniques to address policy challenges in the management and use of forest and pasture lands”*

***Tirana, 27<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup> May 2007***

*Background paper 3:*

### **BAZI COMMUNE FIELD VISIT Fact Sheet**

#### **Field visit objectives**

*The field visit to Bazi Commune will serve to:*

- *Introduce visitors to the traditional use of forest and pasture based on participatory method;*
- *Familiarize visitors with forest and pasture boundaries designation at all levels (commune, village, family);*
- *Introduce proper user rights, as a benefit for forest and people.*

#### **1. Background**

Bazi Commune is part of Dibra region, Mati River Watershed. It is located 80 km North-east Tirana. In an attitude of 400 m above sea level, it is mostly a hilly mountain area, with an administrative territory of 4,645 hectares. Bazi Commune is composed of 7 villages that are the smallest administrative units, governed by villagers. Each village has an elected head of the village “*kryetar*”. Villages have their traditional boundaries recognised and respected by neighbours. Each village has a forest and pasture commission that is the mother cell for the establishment of users associations at Bazi commune.

The main economic activities for income generation are: animal farming, agriculture, emigration, small business and employment in the public sector (schools, local government, health service).

## **2. Land Use**

Mostly, the agriculture land is profited due to the conversion of former oak forest, it is very limited and with a poor level of fertility due to overuse with cereals cultivation (rye, oats, barley); overgrazing; lack of irrigation; and presence of erosion. Considering this, land is not claimed for property rights by farm families. There are few fruit tree species grown in the courtyards of village houses (apples, pears, plums, cherries, nuts, etc.), as well as small areas of vineyards. Livestock is mostly small ruminants (sheep and goats), milking cows, and very few pigs and poultry.

Based on tradition, currently are inherited two different situations regarding forest management. Old inhabitants have good memory and knowledge on traditional forest boundaries (family, village, or communal) and forest use:

*(i) family forest:* these are small areas of forest surrounding farm houses; these are in very good shape, due to better protection and management by every individual household, reflected into improvement interventions.

In fact, family use of forest is an old tradition based on the so called “*Kanun (Code) of Scanderbeg*”, according to which forests and pastures close to the houses, especially oak forest, were divided into small pieces called “*ograje*”, considered as family property. The family was entitled only to the products (usufruct), but has no rights in changing the designation or damaging it.

*(ii) common forest:* these are areas in common use that are located in a distance from the households. These are mostly degraded forests, as a result of overgrazing and frequent cutting from inhabitants.

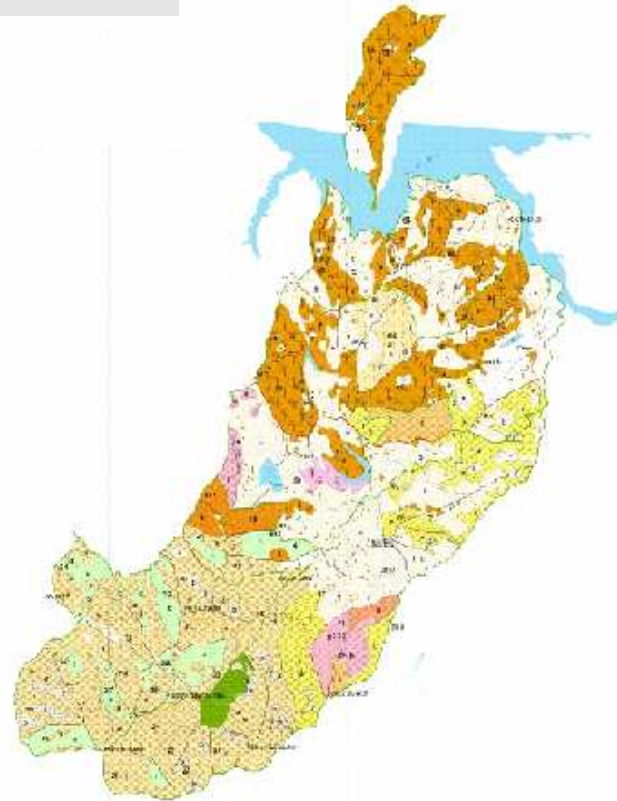
The village forest and pasture commonly used by villagers is called “*mera*” (considered as common property and administered by the village elderly). “*Mera*” served to inhabitants to complete their family needs for grazing, fuel wood and

construction material, but they were not entitled to sell any forest product or by product in the marketplace.

### 3. ***Communal Forests and Pastures Users' Association***

The philosophy of state owned forest and pasture transfer to commune is based on the community needs and tradition for their management. The Communal Forest and Pasture User Association takes the leadership on resource management based on written agreements with members, aiming to a successful participatory approach. This way of management is guaranteed by the village commission that takes decisions in terms of demarcating the boundaries, identifying users, defining the use of resources, as well as implementing the protection and improvement plans of village forests. In addition, the village commission has an important role in managing and resolving conflicts.

# **BAZI COMMUNE**



<b>Population Inhabitants</b>	<b>3,336</b>
<b>Households</b>	<b>667</b>
<b>Arable land total</b>	<b>1,094 ha</b>
<b>Arable land/ inhabitant</b>	<b>0.33 ha</b>
<b>Forest area</b>	<b>2,598 ha</b>
<b>Forest area per inhabitant</b>	<b>0.76 ha</b>