

# What are the limits for agricultural collectives under Geographical Indications to take action in transitions?

*Six case studies in French cheese sector  
from the ADAOPT project*



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# Cheese geographical indications in France

46



*Protected Designations of Origin*

10



*Protected Geographical Indications*

- **Definition of Geographical Indication (GI)**
  - Product originating from a specific place
  - Whose quality or characteristics are essentially due to the geographical environment
  - Whose at least one (PGI) or all (PDO) stages of production take(s) place in the geographical area
- **Each GI has its Cheese Protection Consortium (PrC)**
  - Organized around a Board of Administrators
  - Representing the various actors in the chain



# GI sectors face growing challenges, including climate change

(Charlotte Oudart)



Foundations of PDOs and PGIs

A strong link to the land  
"terroir"

A collective organization



A set of specifications

Optimized use of the region's natural resources

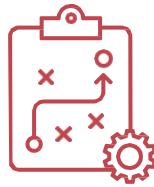


Feed criteria: type of feed, self-sufficiency

**ADAoPT**

Support six dairy PDO and PGI sectors in drawing up and monitoring their climate change adaptation strategies.

**INCREASINGLY FREQUENT CLIMATIC HAZARDS**



Requests for **temporary changes** to specifications

(26 requests for exemption during the drought in 2022)



# ADAoPT : supporting GI dairy chains in adapting to climate change

## 6 pilot areas



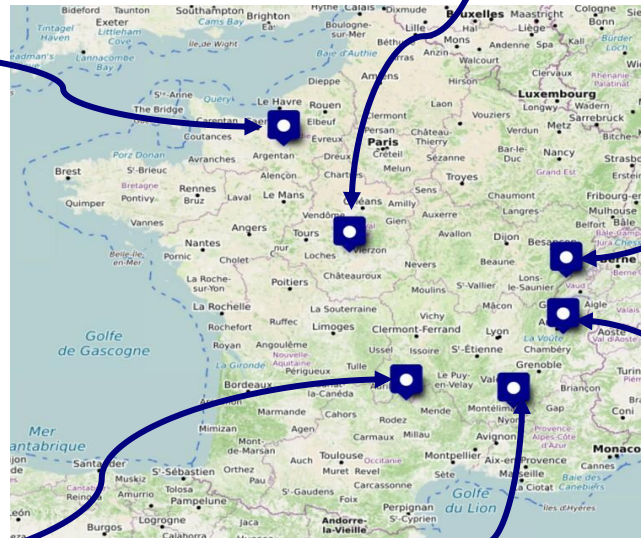
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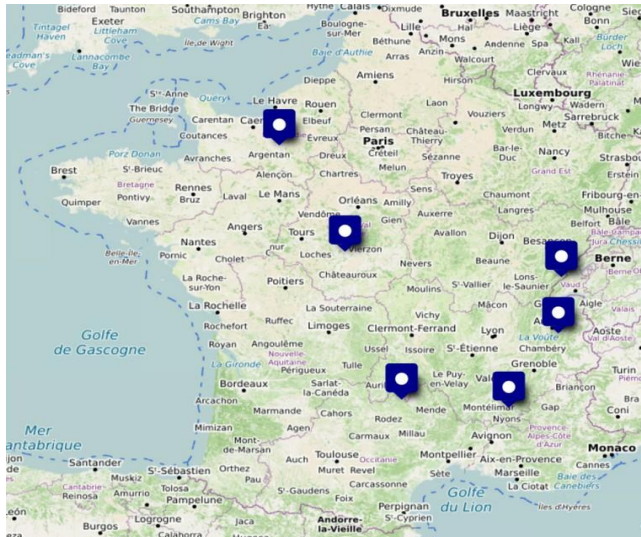
**PGI Tomme de Savoie**

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# ADAoPT : supporting GI dairy chains in adapting to climate change

6 pilot areas...



... illustrating diversity :

Territory size

Collective organization

Animal feed

Resources and constraints

Type of territory

Their objective: develop a **forecast approach** to :

- Gain a **better understanding** of the **medium- to long-term** consequences of CC for their sector.
- Determine their **strategy for adapting** to climate change.

➔ Sector-wide reflection

# A wide range of methodologies deployed to meet pilot areas needs and characteristics

## Spatial

Large-scale approach covering the entire GI territory



*PDO Laguiole*



*PDO Picodon*



*PDO Camembert de Normandie*

## Thematic

Focus on technical and economic issues



*PDO Mont d'Or*



*PDO Valençay*

## Systemic

Global approach to the sector



*PGI Tomme de Savoie*

## Organizational

Small, dedicated local working group



**A cross-cutting difficulty in the case studies: mobilizing groups, some of which are inherent to GIs specificities.**



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# Geographical scope of GIs hinders collective decisions

GIs sometimes cover large territories

Heterogeneity of production systems and climatic conditions

Unequal distribution of resources

Difficulty making collective decisions

➔ *Solutions for some may not be relevant for others*

**Camembert de Normandie**

Wide area

Diverse soil and climate conditions

➔ Choice of a very dry area

**Mont d'Or**

Relatively small area

Homogeneous production conditions

➔ Solutions suitable to all

# Lack of clear governance limits the scope of decisions taken

- Generally top-down organization within the PDO organizations
  - Delegation of technical subjects to working groups
    - In charge of investigating problems: producing results and possible solutions
    - *Mont d'Or, Valençay, Camembert de Normandie*
  - Reflection process directly led by PDO decision-making bodies
    - *Tomme de Savoie, Picodon, Laguiole*

## Lack of clarity on the mandate of these groups

- Decision-making or consultative power?
  - Possible demotivation of Working Groups
- 
- Actions generally carried out at the level of participants in the various Working Groups





# Action often limited to the production link

- Difficulty of holding debates that encompass the entire industry chain (dairies, wholesalers)
  - Downstream players underestimate, or even ignore, the stakes involved in the transition and in adapting the entire chain.
- Risk-bearing by producers
  - Slows down lever adoption
- Dependence on transformers
  - Restriction of possible choices for the sector
  - E.g.: scenarios of lower milk production often not considered (*Tomme de Savoie, Valençay, Camembert de Normandie*)



# The multi-stakeholder approach, yes but...



## A real interest in maximizing mobilization

- **More presence on the field** to widen the mobilisation force and to foster participation in **training groups**
- **Expanded skills** (technical, social, environmental, economical) to tackle the numerous challenges PrC have to face with

## But a risk of over-soliciting operators

- Risk of overlap
- Lack of coordination: similar subjects, but with different objectives for different projects



Factor of fragmentation and loss of meaning



# Conclusion: innovating to better support GI collectives

## Systemic approach: the key to a global sector strategy

- Understanding of Climate Change while **taking into account other major GI issues** (biodiversity, economy, health, renewal of the workforce, etc.).
- Need to **rethink tools and methods** to facilitate understanding (serious games, innovative animation, etc.).

## Multi-partner action, a lever for involving and training groups

- **Involve commercial and technical structures** (cooperatives, technical working groups, processor networks, farm advisory services, etc.) to facilitate awareness-raising, training and the implementation of adaptation levers.
- Need to **imagine risk management** at the chain level
- **Support of research** to facilitate the awareness and systemic approach required for a sustainable transition.



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