Rooibos
(South Africa)

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THE PLANT
Aspalathus linearis
Rooibos presentation

- Rooibos tea or red bush tea = herbal tea San
- South Africa, Cedarberg region (36,000ha)
- 10,400 tonnes (2005)
- 400-450 mainly large scale producers; 8 large processors
- 40% domestic / ‘Mass’ consumption (large retailers)
- 60% export (mainly Germany): health product, and niche markets (specialty tea)
- Export in bulk for mainly flavoured or blended end products
National context: Protection schemes in S. Africa

• No specific GI system in place in South Africa
• Compliance with WTO/ TRIPS = Provision for protection as collective trademark
• Private initiatives (i.e. Camdeboo Mohair, Klein Karoo Ostrich, etc.)
• Wine has its own regime (Wine of origin scheme; 1970 & 1989 Acts )
• Current revision of Trademark act (indigenous knowledge)
Emergence of the Rooibos initiative: Usurpation as a driving force

1993 - 2003: Phenomenal growth, esp. export market: + 742%

Marketing strategies development: trademark expansion and US battle
• “Rooibos” Trademark – USA : 12.08.1992
  – by a SA Company
  – 2001: cedes rights to Burke Intl. (USA)
• Rooibos Ltd. filed cancellation proceedings
• Burke Intl. :
  – SA Companies to pay royalties
  – Burke less than 1 ton
• Case settled out in court : 02.2005
  – Considerable help from “Coffee houses”
  – R.6 Million ($1 000 000)
GI system:

- Industry controlled locally by 8 processors (one major player: Rooibos Ltd = 75% prod°) and at export level by German brokers
- NGO involvement with Small-Scale Farmers (SSF)
- Western Cape Department of Agriculture, University of Pretoria and Cirad : GI initiative (IPR action research project)
- Cape Nature (provincial conservation agency) and Sustainable rooibos initiative: stakeholder in GI initiative
- Rooibos council set up a Task force (10.2006): processors, marketers, commercial farmers, emerging farmers, NGO
Task force proposals: 

Rooibos area and product specifications

Rooibos area of production:

• Criteria:
  – In the Fynbos biome.
  – Winter Rainfall Area.
  – Derivative of Table Mountain Sandstone.
  – Deep, well drained sandy soils.
  – pH below 7.
ROOIBOS: THE PRODUCTION AREA
CULTIVATION
HARVESTING
ROOIBOS: PROCESSING SPECIFICATIONS

- Delivered within 72 hours
- Silage cutter to reduce to 1 – 10 mm
- Placed in row-like heaps
- Concrete surface
- Wetted to 60% moisture content
- Leaves bruised - facilitate fermentation
- Aerobic fermentation, no catalyst added
- Heaps turned at regular interval
- Ferment between 12 – 16 hours
  - Odour & colour
- Spread on surface
  - 1 000m² / ton
- Dried in sun to below 10% moisture
- Collected, sealed & stored
  - Cool, dry place
- Health regulations
  - Bacterial – steam sterilization
  - Tea court
- Tea court in delimitated area.
- Packed at 10% moisture - containers.
THE PRODUCT
Rooibos product

• Product: Asphalathus linearis plant
  – fermented dried leaves & stems
  – cut into 1-10mm lengths.

• Herbal teas
  – should sieve through a 6
  – leaves has a characteristic red-brown colour (Codes ??)

• extracts have a red-brown colour (Codes: 162u - .... – 168)

• Panel of experts:
  – Aroma
  – Taste
  – Appointed by the SARC

• Regulations regarding blending and packaging.. But 99% are bulk exports
Impacts of the initiative / protection scheme on sustainability, esp. economic effects

• Which GI recognition and protection? 4 scenarii:
  1. No local nor international GI recognition: continuation of individual strategies Indiv. trademark protection of name rooibos in some countries but also usurpation of name in others / no current collective protection
  2. National GI recognition but no formal international recognition (EU application rejected): collective name reservation, but weak effects
  3. National and international recognition (EU application accepted)
     • 3.1. Low requirements for collective quality strategy
     • 3.2. High requirements for collective quality strategy (possibility of GI as an umbrella + collective ‘terroir’ definitions)
## Impacts of the GI system / protection scheme on sustainability: economic effects

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<td>Name reservat°</td>
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<td>Risk of delocalisation outside SA</td>
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<td>Collect. Q managmt</td>
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<td>Risk of reputation and market share loss</td>
<td>++ Value adding potential But risk of loss for convent° rooibos</td>
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<td>Territorial dynamics</td>
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<td>++ Tourism dev. potential (rooibos route)</td>
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## Impacts of the GI system / protection scheme on sustainability: social effects

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<tr>
<td>Name reservat°</td>
<td>-- Risk of SA production decline:</td>
<td>→ potentially huge impact on labour</td>
<td>→ stronger impact on trad° prod° area than expans° area</td>
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<td>Collect. Q managmt</td>
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<td>SSF specific assets recognition</td>
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<td>Territorial dynamics</td>
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<td>Potential synergies/ rallying point between SSF and large scale farmers</td>
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**Impacts of the GI system / protection scheme on sustainability: environmental effects**

- Endemic species adapted to local conditions but current huge threat due to largely uncontrolled expansion
  
  15,000ha (out of 36,000ha) planted in 2005

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<td>Deloc° risk: pos. ++ impact on biodiversity and envt</td>
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<td>Collect. Q managmt</td>
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<td>- Mainly private initiatives (organic…)</td>
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<td>Sustainable practices enforced collectively</td>
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<td>Territorial dynamics</td>
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<td>Ecotourism</td>
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**Trends and perspectives: GI system**

*(value chain structure/ technology/ market)*

**Driving forces:**
- Usurpation of the Rooibos name
- Biodiversity
- Concentration in the Export market
- Bulk exports

**Pressures:** Increased demand
- Climate change
- Health attributes of rooibos
- Agri BEE

**State:** Increase of volumes
- Expansion production area
- Diversification of SA players
- Tourism (rooibos route)
- Quality concerns

**Responses:**
- Collective action development and building of GI specification at industry level
- Corporate governance (channel captain), evolving towards sectorial governance (Rooibos Council)
- Increased conserv° agency support
- Rise of sustainability and ITK concerns

**Impacts:**
- Quality deterioration
- Increased name and reputation usurpation
- Biodiversity loss