

CASE STUDY FR-2 VOLVIC

BRIEF PROFILE OF THE CASE STUDY

- The catchment area of Volvic Waters covers 3,800 ha across four towns in the Puy-De-Dôme in France. The site is mainly covered by forest (53%) and agricultural land (41% of the area), mainly as pasture supporting extensive cattle raising, which production is sold through conventional markets.
- Since 2007, the Volvic company implements a water catchment strategy that involve public stakeholders and land managers (farmers in particular) in order to prevent water pollution, water shortage and improve its brand image. Interventions mostly target agriculture and are aimed to reduce the use of chemical inputs in the area and improve the management of cattle effluents.
- The primary benefit of this initiative is high water quality and avoidance of water scarcity. The initiative also contributes to the conservation of a few endangered species such as the red kite (*milvus milvus*) and some species of bats.
- A quick overview of historical data show that there has never been any significant problem regarding water in the area (e.g. no water pollution or water shortage) but this ensures a maintenance of those good conditions.



KEY FACTORS IMPACTING THE PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

- *New governance arrangements* have the potential to bring about long term improvements for the delivery of environmental and social benefits. In this case study, the association regrouping the 4 municipalities of the watershed and Danone was created in 2005 to collectively manage the water catchment.
- *Economic interests* is the main driver that explains the involvement of downstream stakeholders. Danone wants to sustain its business while local authorities want to sustain a significant source of local tax. Maintaining a good *public image* is also essential for Danone: the ecosystems and land uses located in the water catchment have to be perceived as healthy. Finally, *regulations* regarding mineral water imposes Danone to maintain a constant mineral content, which requires implementing measures that go beyond current land management regulations applicable in the area.
- *Local economic incentives and investments* are an important factor of change in agricultural practices. These changes are also more likely to get farmers' support if they are economically attractive and/or technically relevant for their farms but also if the process of emergence and diffusion is participatory and guarantees freedom of decision.

EMERGING FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS



- The formation of new public-private and private-private partnerships was the primary way to induce change.
- The main issues at stake are the management of the pollution risk and the brand image of Volvic, rather than solving a problem of under provision of environmental and social benefits in the region.
- The convergence of interests is one key factor driving new partnerships in this case study, particularly around the sustainability of Volvic industrial activity and the economic vitality of the area.
- The role of local resource managers was highlighted as well as multiple drivers leading to the adoption of new practices by farmers.
- There is a growing interest around agricultural products value-chain intervention, as a key factor to deal with rural deprivation but also as a way to change practices (e.g. organic agriculture).

