

TERRITORIAL ORGANISATION OF THE MOUNTAIN AREA IN ROMANIA. REGIONAL MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT CENTRES VS. MASSIVE COMMITTEES

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Abstract

The development of mountain areas is achieved through specific policies. The Law of the Mountain and the subsequent laws elaborated, aim to support mountain producers, entrepreneurs and implicitly to lead to the development of mountain areas. In 2019, the Government Decision no. 332/2019 regarding the establishment of the composition, duties and responsibilities of the massive committee and the National Mountain Council. In order to apply the policies and strategies for the development and protection of the mountain environment, a massive committee is constituted at territorial level for each of the 9 mountain groups provided in the annex to the Mountain Law no. 197/2018, body without legal personality, with advisory role. And, at the national level, the National Council of the Mountain is constituted, with advisory role, which will ensure the cooperation between the Government and the representatives of the mountain area, for the implementation of its specific strategies and policies. At mountain territory level, there is a number of 7 mountain development regional centres and 32 mountain development offices, each of them operated by one Agency specialist. Each CRDM has a variable number of ODMs subordinated, in its activity range. Every ODM has a number of settlements assigned to it, for the most part corresponding to two mountain basins. The Regional Mountain Development Centres are structures of the National Agency for Mountain Areas, and the Mountain Committees are structures of different organizations, which have a consultative role in supporting public policies.

Key words: mountain area, Regional Mountain Development Centres, National Council of the Mountain

Mountain areas are areas marked by specificity. Due to the altitude, flanks and climate, they are considered ecologically fragile and they are economically and socially disadvantaged due to natural causes, which requires specific management and a growing support. Mountain areas must benefit from a strategy and from protection and development integrated policies, because they constitute a common heritage, whose value must be recognized and preserved.

By Law no. 197/2018 – The Mountain Law is also readjusted the territorial organization of the mountain area. This is delimited at the level of territorial administrative units, mountain hollows, regions and mountain massifs. And the joint Order of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development no. 97/ of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration no. 1332 establishes the criteria for the inclusion of the administrative-territorial units in the mountain area. Government Decision no. 1,036 of December 21, 2018 for the organization and operation of the

National Agency of the Mountain Area by reorganizing the Agency of the Mountain Area, as well as for establishing some measures regarding the regional centers and mountain development offices, readjusts the specific institutional framework for the mountain area and establishes the commissions and powers of the National Agency of the Mountain Area.

By this normative act are also established the specialized territorial structures, without legal personality, of the institution: regional mountain development centers (RMDC), organized at a regional level and mountain development offices (MDO), organized at mountain hollow level and coordinating the centers. There are also established the attributions of the specialized personnel within these territorial structures. By Ministerial Order (MO) no. 760/R/13.02.2019 regarding the approval of regional mountain development centers, mountain development offices, the place of activity as well as counties and administrative-territorial units, supplemented by OM no. 347/2019, were established the localities/headquarters of mountain development centers and offices, from the territory.

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In order to apply the development and protection policies and strategies for the mountain environment, there was established, at a territorial level, a massif committee for each of the 9 groups of mountains provided in the annex to the Mountain Law no. 197/2018, body without legal personality, with an advisory role. And, at national level, the National Mountain Council (NMC) is in the process of being established, with an advisory role, with the aim of ensuring the connection between the Government and the representatives of the mountain area, for the implementation of its specific strategies and policies. The NMC is governed by the Prime the minister of Romania. Government Decision no. 332 of May 23, 2019 regarding the establishment of the members, tasks and responsibilities of the massif committee and of those who are part of the National Mountain Council, readjusts the number and names of the massif committees, the number of members who are part of these structures, their role and responsibilities.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The research undertaken mainly took into consideration the delimitation of the mountain area in Romania according to the mountain law and the government decisions that regulate the organization and functioning of the National Agency of the Mountain Area, the specific institutional setting for the development of the mountain area, with the specialized structures, as well as the identification of the main attributions and responsibilities which the specialized structures for mountain rural development have in the territory.

The main normative acts for the mountain area in Romania were identified and analyzed, as well as the existing institutional setting.

As a research method was used the study of the following documents: laws, government decisions, ministerial orders, as well as observation or content analysis. Data were collected and interpreted. These come from official public sources: the Official Gazette of Romania, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the National Agency of the Mountain Area, the Eurolex website, the National Institute of Statistics.

At the same time, the databases of the National Agency of the Mountain Area were also consulted. The intention was to update, transpose and adapt existing research, to collect, synthesize and process data from different sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The sustainable development of local communities in the mountain area represents a permanent concern for the government, ministries,

national and local decision-makers, public institutions, non-governmental organizations. Along with local public authorities, Local Action Groups, prefectures, county councils, Regional Development Agencies, the National Agency of the Mountain Zone is also involved. This acts directly through its territorial structures - the 7 Regional Mountain Development Centers (RMDC) - with the related Mountain Development Offices, but also through the creation of new entities, according to the Mountain Law, for each mountain massif separately: 9 Massif Committees (Ungureanu D., 2020).

The National Agency of the Mountain Area (NAMA), was established in accordance with the stipulations of Mountain Law no. 197/2018 and H.G. No. 1036/2018 for the reorganization and operation of the National Agency of the Mountain Area by reorganizing the Mountain Area Agency, as well as establishing measures regarding regional centers and mountain development offices. The agency is based in Vatra Dornei municipality, Runc street no. 23, Suceava county and is under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

According to H.G. No. 1036/2018, at territorial level, within the National Agency of the Mountain Area, specialized structures without legal personality were established as follows:

- at regional level, regional mountain development centers, organized at compartment level;
- at mountain hollows level, mountain development offices, organized at compartment level, under the coordination of regional mountain development centers.

By the Order of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development no. 760 of 2019, amended/supplemented by order 347/2019, the regional mountain development centers, the mountain development offices, the place of their activities, as well as that of the counties and regional administrative units were approved. At mountain territory level, there is a number of 7 regional mountain development centers (RMDC) and 32 mountain development offices (MDO), each of them being administered by a civil servant, professional within the National Agency of the Mountain Area.

A variable number of subordinate offices corresponds to each center. And, for each MDO has been assigned a series of localities that, most of the time, are found on the territory of two mountain hollows.

The Regional Centers of Mountain Development, the counties covered, the place of

activity and the number of coordinated MDOs are presented below:

RDMC no. 1 is based in the town of Bicaz, Neamț county and has the following counties: Bacău (1), Harghita (2), Mureș (1), Neamț (1). Coordinates 5 MDOs;

RDMC no. 2 is based in Sângiorz Băi, Bistrița Năsăud county and has the following counties: Suceava (2), Bistrița-Năsăud (2), Maramureș (2), Satu Mare (0). Coordinates 6 MDOs;

RDMC no. 3 is based in the town of Câmpeni, Alba county and has the counties of Alba (2), Cluj (1), Sălaj (0), Bihor (1) and Arad (0). Coordinates 4 MDOs;

RDMC no. 4 is based in Hațeg town, Hunedoara county and has Hunedoara (2), Caraș-severin (2), Mehedinți (1), Gorj (1), Timiș (0) counties. Coordinates 6 MDOs;

RDMC no. 5 is based in Vaideeni town, Vâlcea county and has the counties of Vâlcea (1), Sibiu (1), Argeș (1). Coordinates 3 MDOs;

RDMC no. 6 has its headquarters in the town of Bran, Brașov county and has the counties of Brașov (2), Dâmbovița (1), Prahova (1). Coordinates 4 MDOs;

RDMC no. 7 is based in the town of Nistorești, Vrancea county and has the counties of Covasna (2), Buzău (1), Vrancea (1). Coordinates 4 MDOs.

The 32 mountain development offices (MDO) are in the localities: Abrud and Săsciori (Alba county), Curtea de Argeș (Argeș county), Doftana (Bacău county), Borod (Bihor county), Rodna and Prundu Bârgăului (Bistrița Năsăud county), Lisa and Săcele (Brașov county), Nehoiu (Buzău county), Băile Herculane and Oravița (Caraș Severin county), Mărișel (Cluj county), Bodoc and Intorsura Buzăului (Covasna county), Runcu (Dâmbovița county), Tismana (Gorj county), Toplița and Odorheiu Secuiesc (Harghita county), Brad and Hunedoara (Hunedoara county), Baia Mare and Sighetu Marmatiei (Maramureș county), Șișești (Mehedinți county), Ibănești (Mureș county), Piatra Neamț (Neamț county), Valea Doftanei Prahova County), Poplaca (Sibiu County), Poiana Stampei and Sucevița (Suceava County), Băile Olănești (Vâlcea County), Vintileasca (Vrancea County).

The regional mountain development centers and mountain development offices are subordinated to the Directorate of Strategies, Policies and Sustainable Development Programs of the Mountain Area within the National Agency of the Mountain Area.

Both the centers and the offices are served by a civil servant, an employee of the National

Agency of the Mountain Area. The main attributions of the specialized personnel within the regional centers for mountain development are: a) ensures the territorial application of the Government's strategy and policies in the field of development and protection of the mountain environment, in order to increase the quality of life of the population in the mountain area; b) ensures the implementation at a regional level of the Program concerning encouraging activities in the mountain area; c) coordinates the activity of the mountain development offices within the regional center's activity range; d) implements at territorial level the legal provisions regarding the granting of the right to use the optional quality mention "mountain product", as well as respecting the European and national legislation by the economic operators who have obtained the right to use that specific mention; e) carries out information activities for the beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries in the mountain area regarding access to the support measures related to the common agricultural policy and the Program concerning encouraging activities in the mountain area; f) carries out at territorial level professional training programs with mountain specifics, according to the legislation on professional training of adults, for farmers and other relevant occupational categories in mountain localities; g) provides consultancy and specialized technical assistance at regional level for the preparation of documentation in order to access European and national funds, in compliance with the relevant legal provisions in force; h) supports the creation, functioning and development of professional organizations of mountain farmers, such as cooperatives, groups of producers, professional associations; i) establishes and applies technical-operative measures regarding the regional implementation of the Government's strategy and policies in the field of development and protection of the mountain environment, in order to increase the quality of life of the population in the mountain area; j) inventorizes the need for professional training and specialized consultancy at regional level; k) organizes the database at regional level and keeps records of the effects of the application of the measures provided by law to support farmers and economic operators; l) initiates and takes part in the organization of scientific, cultural events, fairs and exhibitions, other promotional and educational activities at regional level; m) collaborates with local action groups and public services concentrated at regional and county level.

In 2019, the Government Decision no. 332/2019 regarding the establishment of the composition, duties and responsibilities of the

massive committee and the National Mountain Council. In order to apply the policies and strategies for the development and protection of the mountain environment, a massive committee is constituted at territorial level for each of the 9 mountain groups, provided in the annex to the Mountain Law no. 197/2018, body without legal personality, with advisory role (Ungureanu D., 2021).

The Oriental Carpathians:

1. The northern group. It is made up of mountains: Oaș, Gutâi, Țibleș, Bârgău, Maramureșului, Rodnei, Suhard. The mountains are in the counties: Maramureș, Bistrița Năsăud, Suceava, Satu Mare.
2. The central group. It is made up of mountains: Călimani, Gurghiu, Harghita, Bistriței, Rarău, Giupalău, Giurgeu, Hășmașul Mare, Ceahlău, Tarcău, Ciuc, Nemira, Stânișoarei, Goșmanu, Brezunț. The mountains are in the counties: Suceava, Harghita, Bistrița Năsăud, Neamț, Bacău, Covasna, Mureș.
3. Southern group. It is made up of mountains: Vrancei, Buzăului, Ciucaș, Baiului, Brețcu, Întorsura Buzăului, Piatra Mare, Postăvaru, Perșani, Baraolt, Bodoc. The mountains are in the counties: Buzău, Brașov, Prahova, Vrancea, Covasna.

The Meridional Carpathians:

4. Bucegi group. It is made up of mountains: Bucegi, Leaota, Piatra Craiului. The mountains are in the counties: Prahova, Brașov, Argeș, Dâmbovița.
5. Făgăraș group. It is made up of mountains: Făgăraș, Cozia, Frunții, Ghițu, Iezer-Păpușa. The mountains are in the counties: Argeș, Vâlcea, Dâmbovița.
6. Parâng group. It is made up of mountains: Șureanu, Parâng, Cindrel, Lotrului, Lătoriței, Căpățâni. The mountains are in the counties: Alba, Hunedoara, Sibiu, Vâlcea.
7. Retezat Godeanu group. It is made up of mountains: Retezat, Godeanu, Țarcu, Muntele Mic, Cernei, Mehedinți, Vâlcău. The mountains are in the counties: Hunedoara, Gorj, Mehedinți, Caraș Severin.

The Occidental Carpathians:

8. The group of Banat Mountains and the Poiana Ruscă. It is made up of mountains: Semenic, Almăjului, Aninei, Locvei, Dognecea. The mountains are in the counties: Caraș Severin, Hunedoara, Timiș.
9. The Apuseni Mountains group. It is made up of mountains: Bihor, Vlădeasa, Gilău, Muntele Mare, Trascău, Găina, Metaliferi, Crișurilor, Zărand, Codru Moma, Pădurea Craiului, Plopiș, Meseș. The mountains are in the counties: Bihor, Cluj, Alba, Arad, Hunedoara, Sălaj.

At the national level, the National Council of the Mountain is constituted, with advisory role, which will ensure the cooperation between the Government and the representatives of the mountain area, for the implementation of its specific strategies and policies.

The 9 Massif Committees (MC) are constituted on the basis of the 9 groups of mountains in the mountainous area of Romania and comprise between 28 and 37 members, according to the annex to GD no. 997/2020, depending on the number of counties related to the mountain group:

1. Massif Committee for the northern group, 28 members,
2. Massif Committee for the central group, 37 members,
3. Massif Committee for the southern group, 31 members
4. Massif Committee for the Bucegi group, 28 members,
5. Massif Committee for the Făgăraș group, 28 members,
6. Massif Committee for the Parâng group, 31 members,
7. Massif Committee for the Retezat-Godeanu group, 28 members,
8. Massif Committee for the Banatul Mountains and Poiana Ruscă group, 28 members,
9. Massif Committee for the Apuseni Mountains group, 34 members.

The membership of the Massive Committee consists of:

- a) a mayor of the administrative-territorial unit with the largest number of inhabitants, from the mountain area of each county of the mountain group, for the Massif Committee of the mountain group where the locality can be found;
- b) a representative, at management level, of the county council from each county of the mountain group, appointed by the president of the given county council;
- c) a representative, at management level, of the prefect's institution in each county of the mountain group, appointed by the prefect of the given county;
- d) a representative of each public authority and institution with an impact on the protection and sustainable development of the mountain area: the direction for county agriculture, the sanitary-veterinary and food safety direction, the Romanian water direction, the environmental protection agency, the territorial structure of the National Agency for Natural Protected Areas, the territorial representation in the field of tourism of the Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism (formerly the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment), the public

health department, the forestry department, the school inspectorate, the county gendarmerie units which are territorially competent;

e) two representatives of the civil society, within organizations with representative activity in the field of protection and sustainable development of the mountain area in the given mountain group, designated by vote by these organizations;

f) a representative of the local action groups from the given mountain group, designated by vote by these organizations;

g) a representative of the business environment from the given mountain group, appointed by vote at the proposals of the chambers of commerce and industry from the counties related to the mountain group;

h) a representative from a public law unit or institution in the research-development system that fulfills, cumulatively, the following conditions: has its headquarters (main or secondary) or a work point on the territory where the given mountain group is located and carries out research-development activities, respectively measurements, data collection, scientific experiments, on the territory where the given mountain group is located;

i) a representative of the administration of the hunting fund in the given mountain group, designated by vote by these organizations.

The massif committee exercises the following attributions and responsibilities:

a) formulates policy and strategy proposals at the mountain groups level to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Water and Forests, the National Agency for the Mountain Area, the National Agency for Natural Protected Areas, the National Mountain Council and other institutions or authorized public authorities, in order to include them in the programming documents.

b) participates in counselling regarding the implementation of policies, programs and measures applicable to the mountain specificity or the particular situation of the mountain group;

c) collaborates with non-governmental bodies, economic operators, universities and academic/scientific institutions, local action groups, with other public and private persons, for the purpose of sustainable development of the mountain group;

d) collaborate with the specialized bodies of the public administration at level of mountain groups for the implementation of the proposals formulated by the National Mountain Council regarding the national strategy and policies for the protection and sustainable development of the mountain area;

e) performs the analysis, synthesis and forecast of social-economic phenomena at the level of the mountain group and periodically presents information to the National Mountain Council;

f) initiates, collaborates and participates at the mountain groups level in scientific, cultural events, fairs and exhibitions and in other activities intended for the mountain area;

g) monitors the application of programs whose aim is the sustainable development of the mountain group;

h) carries out the exchange of information with the other massif committees and creates partnerships with experts, economic operators and other natural or legal persons who can contribute to the elaboration of studies, researches and specific projects for the sustainable development of the mountain area at the mountain groups level;

i) contributes to attracting funds from internal and external sources for the implementation of sustainable development programs of the mountain area at mountain groups level;

j) carries out documentation and consultation visits to the institutions with responsibilities in the sustainable development of the mountain area, within the country and abroad, at their invitation;

k) disseminates information regarding the support programs for agriculture.

The National Mountain Council (NMC) comprises 24 members and is chaired by the Prime Minister of Romania. The NMC can have 2 vice-presidents, one of whom is the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Within the NMC, a technical commission is established, consisting in 5 to 7 members of the NMC, which ensures the continuity of work between two meetings, to which the council can partially delegate its powers.

- The president of the technical commission is the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

- The technical commission prepares the work program of the NMC meetings and is in charge of organizing its meetings.

- The technical commission draws up reports on its activities and submits them to the NMC.

At the proposal of the technical commission, NMC can establish specialized working groups.

The NMC meets at least once a year or whenever is needed and is convened by its president or at the request of two thirds of its members, upon the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The NMC Secretariat is provided by the National Agency of the Mountain Area.

CONCLUSIONS

The Regional Centers for Mountain Development of the National Agency of the Mountain Area act in the mountain territory, at local level, within the administrative-territorial units and mountain hollows (microzones), located on the territory of several neighboring counties, demarcated by a certain region, which was identified according to accessibility in the territory. They collaborate with town halls, Local Action Groups, County Agriculture Directorates. The RMDCs provide the secretariat of the Massive Committees located in their coverage area.

The regional centers are responsible for the application of the Government's strategy and policies in the territory, they identify the specific problems at UAT or hollow level, the issues of the producers of agri-food products that meet the requirements to be registered on the "mountain product" quality scheme and of the training needs. They hold training courses for interested people, for the Measures within the National Rural Development Program and for local gastronomic points.

The Massif Committees act on a more extended level, on a territory delimited by a certain mountain massif, well established, according to geographical boundaries. They are located on the territory of several counties, compared to the coverage area of the RMDCs. They comprise both representatives of public institutions and of non-governmental organizations, from fields involved in mountain development, appointed/designated or elected by vote; the distribution of the component institutions within the counties being done through an algorithm in terms of several determining factors.

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