

Esprit Parc National - Food and services in the national park of Guadeloupe

"Esprit Parc National" is a brand promoted, delivered and granted by the French Biodiversity Agency. This label is granted to farmers and tourism enterprises that adopt production practices for nature protection (close to organic farming) in the vicinity of the core natural reserves in national parks. In Guadeloupe this might be an opportunity for agroforestry farmers to get better prices. However transaction and production costs seem too high for most eligible farmers.

Summary

The contract is characterized by two regulations frameworks: a generic one and one depending on the categories of products or services branded. The generic regulation states the common commitments and eligibility criteria required for every provider of products or services called User (of the brand). Among the general requirements are those relative to the protection and the valorization of the landscape quality and biodiversity, the valorization of natural resources and local craftsmanship in a processes of sustainable development. The User has to comply with these regulations during the contract. The length of the contract is not fixed in these regulations and can be renewed. The contracts are between the User and the national park where her activities are located. The Users pay an annual fee to use the collective brand. The amount of the annual fee is fixed by decision of the French Biodiversity Agency. The Agency can also decide to change unilaterally the regulations both generic and specific, in which cases the User can have up to 3 months to comply with the new regulation.

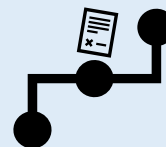


Problem description

"Esprit Parc National" is a collective brand registered by the national parks of France and it is implemented in each of the 10 French national parks. The brand is exclusively granted to products or services from economic activities that preserve the biodiversity and the heritages. Through this brand, the national parks contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage and the valorisation of activities compatible with nature protection. The national park of Guadeloupe is a part of it, and has implemented this brand in its territory, first in order to support the development of ecotouristic activities. However this brand also concerns agroforestry productions, in particular undergrowth crops such as vanilla, coffee or cocoa.



VALUE CHAIN



Natural park – farmer or producer – consumers

Short value chains are promoted to create more local value and social links with the national parks and to make national parks an asset and an opportunity for neighbours rather than a source of environmental constraints hampering the economic development.

PUBLIC GOODS



Landscape and scenery



Recreational access / Improvements to physical and mental health



Forest biodiversity



Rural viability and vitality

CONTRACT

Public – private contract

Between one national park and a private law person



Contract conclusion:
Written agreement



Payment mechanism:
Product price

Financing party:
Consumer-oriented



Start of the program:
2015

End: still running

Data and Facts - Contract

Participation: The collective brand is attributed to products and services, and not to units of production: several products or services can be produced by the same unit of production, but not all products from this unit of production are entitled to be branded as « Esprit Parc National ». In 2019, there were 939 products and services branded as “Esprit Parc National” over the 10 French national parks, included transformed products, artworks, accommodations. Four of them are Vanilla products, with two located in the national park of Guadeloupe. This national park covers 18 800 ha of land and 3 300 ha of sea (heart of the park).

The total area of the terrestrial hearts of the national parks covers 2 486 918 hectares and the maritime hearts 49 750 hectares. The eligible areas can be larger or smaller than the hearts of parks depending on the parks.

Involved parties: The French Agency for Biodiversity manages the collective brand “Esprit Parc National”. The contract is made between the relevant national park and the user, for one or several products or services. The collective brand has been implemented since 2015. There are 33 classes of products concerned by the brand. The products or services are sold and proposed locally, and the short chain of value is encouraged. However, through the communication of the brand, the promotion of local products and services is wider (national and international). The objective is to encourage the economic development of park lands, while preserving nature.

The advantages of participation: The French Agency for Biodiversity manages the collective brand “Esprit Parc National”. The farmers or other users of the collective brand benefit from the notoriety and image of national parks. They benefit from a visibility of their activity on the territory and beyond, thanks to local and national communication actions. It allows them to promote more widely the environmental quality of their products and services and their local roots. Doing so, they are part of a network of professionals who defend common values. They also benefit from a special support and training. For the consumers, the collective brand is the warrant that the products or services consumed are from the local economy while preserving the landscape and biodiversity within the national parks.

Objectives

1. A tool for the economic development of park lands, while preserving nature
2. A bearer of the values of national parks (commitment, authenticity, respect, sharing, vitality)
3. Raise consumers' awareness

Management requirements for farmers: Besides the general requirements, there are specific requirements that depend on the category of products or services the applicant wants to market with the brand “Esprit Parc National”. For instance, in the case of products category relative to “fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, plants and edible flowers, cultivated or harvested plants”, the farmers/producers have to commit to 13 mandatory criteria and at least to 3 of the 6 facultative criteria in the case of the production and commercialization of fresh products. The mandatory criteria are: the location on the territory of the national park, product valuation, location in a pollution-free environment, no use of synthetic chemicals, no GMOs in cultivated species, no agri-ecological infrastructure degradation, species or variety diversification, water resource protection, fruit and vegetable conservation, management of the waste related to production activity, customer awareness. Among the facultative criteria, farmers can choose between: choice of local or old varieties, setting up a natural mulch, packaging fresh products in biodegradable materials, responsible personnel management, partnership with local players, business development agri-tourism. Some of these requirements are very close to the organic farming ones.

Funding/Payments: Payments are coming from the consumers. The Payment for Environmental Services (PES) corresponds to the monopolistic competition mark-up (positive price difference due to the discrimination of the product), if any, associated to the branded product compared with standard product. A strictly positive mark means that some consumers voluntarily contribute to the environmental objectives of the brand while buying the branded product.

Product requirements: In terms of products quality, the farmers are required to be part of a process to enhance their production: enrolment in a process to identify the quality and origin of their production or be labelled in organic agriculture or proposing direct sale, short circuit or be registered in a collective approach product valuation (territorial brand...) or value their production through a transformation activity.

Controls/monitoring: There are controls. In each product category regulation, the type of control is mentioned for each mandatory and facultative criteria. The farmer has to be able to prove, using invoices, vegetation or field indicators, or any other means or document agreed beforehand, that the criteria are met (the mandatory ones and the facultative ones chosen by the farmer). The French Agency for Biodiversity and the national parks can proceed to controls regarding the use of the collective brand, either by proceeding directly to these controls, or by delegating this mission.

Conditions of participation: There are no limitation of participation, but there are some conditions to use the collective brand. In the generic regulations, the requirements to be eligible to use the collective brand are to adhere to the values of the national parks. In the case of products such as “fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, plants and edible flowers, cultivated or harvested plants”, that have their own particular category regulation, one of the conditions is to have 70% of the crop area located within the national park. The requirements and norms are precisely and comprehensively defined in documents that are available online with no restrictions (consumers and producers can have access to these information). The consequences of a non-compliance of the contractual conditions may vary according to their frequency and their severity, but can lead to the interdiction of using the collective brand.

Risk/uncertainties of participants: As long as the farmer respects her commitments, she has low risk to lose the ability to use the brand (except for a change in the product category regulation). There is a risk that the price, even higher than standard, does not cover the cost of environmental efforts, the fee and other transaction costs.



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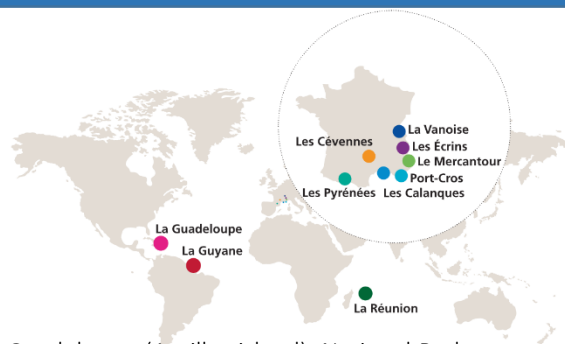
Context features

Landscape and climate: Guadeloupe is a Caribbean island with a tropical climate. The national park of Guadeloupe benefits from a wet tropical climate. It is made of mountains (altitudes: 0 to 1467 metres) covered by tropical forest. All national parks have a specific landscape, scenery and biodiversity, sometimes extremely fragile, such as in the national park of Guadeloupe, with numerous endemic species. In order to preserve these parks and promote them, the collective brand “Esprit Parc National” has been created, in the logic of a sustainable development.

Farm structure: There are no particular types of agricultural systems targeted, however, the conditions required to be part of the collective brand are numerous and stringent, given the objective of environment, landscape and biodiversity conservation. For farmers, the agricultural practices required are close to the biological agriculture: no use of synthetic chemicals, no GMOs in cultivated species, no agri-ecological infrastructure degradation (hedges, isolated trees, walls), species or variety diversification.

LOCATION

FRANCE



Guadeloupe (Antilles island), National Park
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SUCCESS OR FAILURE?



We could not find an access to any results indicators that could track the evolution of natural resources or biodiversity. However, the collective is implemented since 5 years with a relatively important offer, it seems somehow successful.

SWOT analysis

