NON-WOOD FOREST RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – PILLAR IN MOUNTAIN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MANAGEMENTUL RESURSELOR FORESTIERE NELEMNOASE – PILON ÎN DEZVOLTAREA RURALA MONTANĂ

ADRIANA MAN[1], SABINA FUNAR[1]

[1]University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj Napoca, Romania; adrianacofari@yahoo.fr

Abstract: *The paper aims to highlight the management of non-wood forest resources of vegetal origin in Romania using as reference materials Romanian official documents. The analysis of documents shows that little importance is given to these products. And as a recommendation, the analysis of economic potential is needed for future development of forest sector and mountain rural areas.*

Keywords: *non-wood forest resources, management plans, Romania*

INTRODUCTION

Forest management has long been and still is in some areas associated with management of wood resources. Recognition of the importance of non-wood forest products was held for the first time in the early 1800s, when British colonial government of India included non-wood forest products in the forest management plan [3].

However in the early 2000s in the U.S., studies have shown that forest products other than wood are not properly included in the plans, forest inventory and monitoring services for lack of funds and personnel [5] or not included at all [1]. Non-wood forest products are collected from all U.S. regions, yet only in 87% of state forests these products are included in forest plans [5].

In Romania the problem of higher revaluation of forest products of vegetal origin other than wood, so called 'accessories products of the forest', was raised in the early 1970s [2].

Currently, in Romania, over 70% of the forest is publicly owned and managed by National Forest Administration - Romsilva. This institution applies to the national strategy in forestry, acting for the protection,

conservation and sustainable development of forest public property. Also Romsilva administers the forest and manages hunting and fishing funds allocated under the law and specific forest products in terms of economic efficiency.

Private funds manage their forest resources or hire the services of Romsilva.

The aim of the present paper is to determine how are managed the non-wood forest resources in Romania.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The materials used in the research were the forest management plans and other forest reports from Romania. From these plans and reports were analyzed primarily the stipulations relating to the non-wood forest resources.

The Forest Management Plan is a general plan for management of forest areas, usually for a full rotation cycle, including objectives, activities and management standards for achieving goals. The management plan is usually accompanied by more detailed development plans [10]. The purpose of the planning is to help owner make the most of their resources while protecting the resources that we all share [4].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Among the main tasks of the National Forest Administration – Romsilva are included:

- to practice a sustainable management of the forests;
- to harvest, purchase, process and optimize, in terms of economic efficiency, specific non-timber forest products as forest fruits, edible wild mushrooms, medicinal plants, aromatic vegetables, game, Christmas trees etc.

With respect to non-wood forest products of vegetal origin, in the document named "Policy and strategy for forest sector development in Romania (2001-2010)" [8] there is no specific reference to the development of these products. However it is stated:

- a need to raise the awareness and to educate people to protect forest and wildlife knowledge and to practice eco-tourism;
- the intention to exploit the forest resources by promoting products with high value for a sustainable development in the sector.

In the "National Forest Program 2005" [7] for non-wood forest products are allocated only two paragraphs, in which are reviewed the most important products with commercial value. And also it is stated that wherein the case of public forests the value of these products represent about 10% of total production value. In the case of the forests private owned these products are insignificant as commercial value for the moment and there is no clear.

Here is also mentioned that harvesting is done according to the national legislation, considering necessary that the volume of harvest must remain within the limits set by the forest planning.

In a third document analyzed, "Report on the status of Romania's forests in 2007" [9], nothing is mentioned about the status of non-wood forest products.

These documents show that in the present situation when non-wood forest products are harvested throughout the country, these resources are not included in the forest programs or are given a very small space. A similar situation, as was presented also in the introduction, was also found in the U.S. where to these products, is given below 1% space in the forest programs [5].

Harvesting and processing of forest fruit, edible mushrooms and other spontaneous flora and fauna fall under the law, as previously mentioned and are the subject of three ministerial orders in the last 10 years.

In the case of Local Forest Administration Cluj, the management plan for 2009-2012 [6] includes more information with respect to non-wood forest products than the national documents.

However concrete actions are not detailed, neither the periods for the activities related to objectives. Also is missing an inventory of resources, therefore the production rates are based on the yields achieved in previous years. This method of forecasting may lead to erroneous estimates of them.

CONCLUSIONS

One conclusion is that in Romania as shown in national documents is given little importance to non-wood forest resources. Also there is no national inventory of these resources and no data about the quantities harvested or economic importance.

Therefore is proposed to realize real management plans for the non-wood forest resources and to include these resources in the national reports.

As well the analysis of economic potential is needed for future development of forest sector and of local economy form mountain rural areas.

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