

‘Label as a mean to promote the region of the  
White Carpathians and the vision of  
sustainable development in this region’



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## *Abstract*

The initiative for establishing regional certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians originated in the marginal area of the White Carpathians in the Czech Republic soon after the collapse of the communist system. The scheme aimed to help to small-scale producers, to promote the region and to contribute to the development of tourism. To reach these objectives, actors from civic society, market and state (through the municipality of Hostětin) formed a coalition. Farmers, artisans and producers who still use traditional practices, operate in the region and whose production methods do not harm the environment were encourage to participate in the certification system. The prospect of the certification scheme seems to be dependent on the actors' interrelations as well as on macro-structural changes attached to the socio-political climate.

In this study, interrelations among actors from three subsystems civil society-market-state and macro-structural changes that occurred during last 20 years in the Czech Republic were analyzed in order to find out what implications these have in the prospect for the certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians.

The research methodology that was used in this study comprises literature study, qualitative text analysis, field visit and semi-structured interviews. For the purpose of this research, the theory of political modernization and the concept of a policy arrangement were used.

The analysis of the policy arrangement that structures the case, revealed what contributing and inhibiting factors are. These factors stem from the actors' interactions based on the coalitions they form, resources they use, rules of the game, as well as discourses to which the actors subscribe. Crucial inhibiting factor seems to be a discrepancy in attitudes between environmentalists and farmers. Environmentalists 'idealistic' approach is challenged by pragmatic approach of farmers who ask the question to what extent it is possible to profess ideals when the profit is necessary, has a potential to become battle field. Another substantial limiting factor is the discourse of some of the certification holders who recognize solely economic benefits of their participation in the project and tend to expect that economic gains arrive promptly. There is a potential danger that they will leave the coalition. Contributing factors that deserve attention are discourses of belonging and a patriotic discourse of a group of producers, learning mechanisms built by environmentalists and the participation of PRO-BIO, the Association of organic farmers that is influential actor in agricultural policymaking.

However, the fact that the legacy of the communist regime is still apparent in attitudes of people should not be neglected. The antipathy to cooperative types of initiatives, distrust to checks of criteria and external control should be taken into account. Therefore, it could be claimed that the same strategies of rural development (regional certification schemes) that work well in Western Europe cannot be applied in the Czech Republic without changes.

**Key words:** *regional certification scheme, marginal region, political modernization, policy arrangement*

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# 1. Introduction

*Regional certifications for local producers are becoming to be widespread throughout Europe (Bayerwald Premium in Germany, Fuchsia Brand from the West Cork initiative in Ireland, Łączy nas Babia Góra in Poland, Hadrian's Wall Country locally produced or Made in Northumberland certification scheme from the UK). In the Czech Republic, regional certifications have emerged recently. The rationale behind these schemes is that rural areas can make use of their distinctive features to generate income for local producers.*

## **The case description**

The locally produced certification scheme **The Traditions of the White Carpathians** (Tradice Bílých Karpat) as a sustainable development project was developed by a civic association of the same name. The civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians was established in the year 1998 in order to facilitate small-scale processing and marketing of traditional local products. Members of the organization comprise three regional chapters of Czech Union of the Nature Conservation (Veselí nad Moravou, Brno – Veronica with its branch Foundation Veronica and Valašské Klobouky - Kosenka), regional center of Union of the Organic Farmers PRO-BIO in Starý Hrozenkova, Municipality Hostětín and Zdeněk Ševčík, an organic farmer from Pitín who is the chairman of association. (Falter, 2007). The label originated at the same time as the initiative. However, issuing certification started in a year 2007. The label itself aims at pursuing sustainable development in the region of the White Carpathians by taking advantage of natural and cultural heritage of this region. Logo of the label presents *black apple tree with red fruits in the green field completed by the text Traditions of the White Carpathians*. Apple trees and fruit growing in general has a very long tradition in the region and is one of the most important local agricultural assets. The label associates labeled products with the region by their high quality (Carmin, 2003: 714) and promotes the region as a whole.

The certification tries to support local producers that are performing their businesses traditionally and with environmental concerns. Moreover, the certification aims to contribute to the development of tourism in the region.

The trademark requires producers to meet certain criteria. Commodities, agricultural and natural products or services should come from the White Carpathians. They need to fulfill requirements of quality. They should not have adverse impact on the environment in any stage of their lives (production, usage, destruction) and fulfill all environmental requirements. Moreover, producers have to prove that their products are unique in relation to the White Carpathians. Local farmers, food produces and people that perform traditional handicrafts can apply for certification at NGO, citizen initiative Tradition of the White Carpathians that is responsible for issuing and taking off the certification<sup>1</sup>. In May 2007 the commissioners of

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.tradicebk.cz/>

the initiative issued certifications<sup>2</sup>. Another certifications to producers were issued in December 2007. Among the approved holders of the certification we can find farmers, fruit-growers, beekeepers as well as artisans.

Sociologists Lošťák and Kučerová (2007: 495) state that this certification initiative is an **innovative example of how cooperation between farmers and environmentalists makes use of local resources.**

Based on the fact that one of the members of the organization is regional division of PRO-BIO, national organic farmers association, initiative's certification should not be seen competitive to the mainstream eco-labels issued by the Ministry for the Agriculture. The certification that aims to integrate economic growth, environmental protection and socio-cultural elements of the region of White Carpathians should be considered rather complementary to the widespread eco-label. Some of the certified products hold the organic 'ECO' label as well as the locally produced label.

The certification has its partnership certification on the other side of the border. The Slovakian certification has the same name, only changed due to small language variation (Tradicie Bielych Karpat). Trenčín-based NGO **The Centre of environmental activities (Centrum environmentálných aktivít)** is responsible for running the Slovak locally produced certification scheme. Being the first transboundary label in Central Europe it can serve as an example for international cooperation in pursuing common goal of preserving the cultural and natural heritage between states. "An initiative like this can already provide some powerful lessons and inspiration for other rural areas in Central and Eastern Europe" (Falter, 2007).

### ***Sustainable character of labeled products***

Why is The Traditions of the White Carpathians certification initiative associated with sustainable development? Vittersø et al. (2005) claim environmental as well as social and economic concerns are taken into account when we consider sustainability of production. In case of the certification initiatives The Traditions of the White Carpathians, the environmental concerns are taken into consideration given the fact that the producers that label their products with this particular label have to comply with environmental criteria. Social and economic dimensions of the initiative are related to new job opportunities<sup>3</sup> so desirable in a marginal region as well as to helping producers to gain additional value from marketing using a common label that is recognized by consumers. Moreover, the certification scheme aims at preserving cultural traditions of the region and generating and strengthening new social interactions among local people.

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<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.rozhlas.cz/brno/zpravodajstvi/zprava/348455/>.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, establishing a fruit juicing plant in Hostětín created 11 new job places.

## ***About the region of the White Carpathians***

The case study comes from the White Carpathians, from the mountain range that is located along the Czech-Slovak border. This area is rich in natural and cultural heritage and deserves protection on the state as well as on international level. In 1980, the White Carpathians Protected Landscape Area with 53 nature reserves was established. The Czech part of the area has been inscribed in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve List from 1996. The landscape of this hilly area is typical cultural area (Drobilova, 2007). Human activities joined a power of nature and created what is nowadays called cultural landscape. Though local landscape was cultivated and formed by people for hundreds of years, it kept its unique natural characteristics. Actually, the presence of the rich assemblage of species “owes much to the centuries of human activity” (Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 40).

**Figure 1. The landscape around the village of Hostětín (Photo: Šárka Antošová)**



Till the advent of collectivism era<sup>4</sup>, simple land use management with low mechanization and grazing had prevailed in the White Carpathians. However, the character of agricultural production had extremely changed in 1950s and brought about heavy mechanization and excessive application of artificial fertilizers. Small-scale farms had been replaced by large state or collectively owned farms. Intensification of agriculture had brought about adverse impact on biodiversity and landscape and caused that bond between humans and nature present hundreds of years had been disappearing. In order to divert further deterioration of the environment related to the intensive land cultivation (for instance, biodiversity loss), in 1980 the White Carpathians Protected Landscape Area with 53 nature reserves was established.

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<sup>4</sup> Communist takeover took place in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. The state with totalitarian regime then became a part of Soviet imperium divided by the Iron Curtain from Western Europe. Private businesses and agricultural land were expropriated and free market and private property replaced by decision making of central planners and state or collective property.

Czechoslovak Union of Nature Conservation (ČSOP), mainly the ČSOP chapters Kosenka and Bílé Karpaty were engaged in work to manage local ecosystems and preserve rich biodiversity and endangered species such as rare orchids of the White Carpathians (Carmin et al., 2003: 708, Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 41).

Even a reintroduction of the private property after Velvet revolution (1989)<sup>5</sup> was not able to address the difficulties of the land use management in the White Carpathians. Economic pressures were too strong for farmers that wished to manage their land extensively according to the local tradition. Area of meadows in the White Carpathians is divided among thousands of owners. Many of them do not live in the area so the land management is complicated and becomes “challenging problem for conservationists” (Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 42) Moreover, the crisis of agriculture in the area coupled by marginalized position forced many people to leave for cities with the vision of new economic opportunities.

## ***Overview of the actors involved<sup>6</sup>***

The overview of the actors includes founders of the civic association, its present and members of the commission for issuing the certification. The producers that utilize the certification scheme will be presented later in the chapter Establishing the certification scheme.

### ***Founders of the partnership***

1. The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Veselí nad Moravou
2. The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Brno (Veronica)
3. The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Valašské Klobouky (Kosénka)
4. Foundation Veronica
5. Mayor of the Municipality of the village of Hostětín
6. organic farmer Zdeněk Ševčík

### ***Present members of the associations***

1. An organic farmer, fruit grower Zdeněk Ševčík (the chairman)
2. The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Bílé Karpaty, Veselí nad Moravou
3. The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Brno (Veronica)
4. The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Valašské Klobouky (Kosénka)
5. Foundation Veronica
6. Information centre for Development of Moravske Kopanice, Informační středisko pro rozvoj Moravských Kopanic in Starý Hrozenkov

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<sup>5</sup> Democratic changes dated to November 1989 started by students demonstrations as a celebration of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of universities closure by Nazis. These demonstrations were violently suppressed by the regime. Protesting against this violence, citizens suddenly started demonstrations and strikes in many cities in Czechoslovakia. During the so-called *Velvet Revolution* communists gave up the absolute power. The ‘first free elections’ saw a success of democratic political parties and Vaclav Havel, a writer and active opponent of the communist regime became president of the Czechoslovakia.

<sup>6</sup> If not stated differently, information about actors involved was gained from their websites.

7. PRO-BIO, regional centre of association of organic farmers, in Starý Hrozenkov
8. Radim Ajša Pešek, gardener and fruit grower, Bojkovice
9. Jiří Němec, Záhorovice

The actors involved in Slovakia

Association Centrum environmentálních aktivit (The Centre for Environmental Activities)

## 1. The Czech Republic

### *The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation - ČSOP Bílé Karpaty, Veselí nad Moravou*

The organization is well-known for its long term activities in nature protection. From the mid 1980s, they organized volunteers and worked together to manage the meadows in the White Carpathians in a traditional way using simply rakes, scythes, axes and saws. They organize ecological educational activities for schools and run a vast array of projects to protect the environment.

### *The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Brno –Veronica*

A regional magazine Veronica launched in 1986 that aimed at joining culture with nature protection as well as raising environmental awareness represented a predecessor of the NGO Veronica. Activities of people around magazine overreached the magazine ambition and in 1991, Veronica was registered as one of the chapters of The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation. A number of the NGO activities comprises nature protection (mainly environmental assessments, practical nature protection, promotion in the media, and involvement in administrative procedures), raising awareness about 'green' ways of life for households, alternative housing (passive houses, usage of straw for thermo-izolation), renewable energy recourses, regional development and issuing a magazine. The NGO implemented a number of sustainable projects in a village of Hostětín in the White Carpathians. Professional employers work in Ecological Institute and provide citizens with consultancy concerning ecological issues or nature and landscape protection. The members of the NGO amount to more than one hundred.

### *The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation – ČSOP Valašské Klobouky - Kosenka*

A regional chapter of The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation located in Valašské Klobouky takes care of management of the landscape in the White Carpathians and offers consultancy services as an ecological centre. Among their activities, we can find raising environmental awareness as well as protection of regional cultural and natural heritage or development of civic sector involvement in the projects under auspices of sustainable development. Moreover, they cooperate with other actors such as other NGOs, businesses, state administration and international actors. ČSOP Kosenka has a status of a property organization registered in 1999 with four hectares of owned land and eight hectares of rented land. They cooperate with other bodies in managing 55 hectares of land in a protected landscape area.

### *Nadace Veronica (Foundation Veronica)*

Moravian<sup>7</sup> Foundation Veronica renowned for its activities in protection of the environment and landscape was established in 1992 as a branch of The Czech Union of the Nature

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<sup>7</sup> The Czech Republic is geographically divided into three parts: Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. The area of the White Carpathians is located in Moravia.

Conservation – ČSOP Brno –Veronica. The foundation supports various ways that lead to spreading an idea of regardful relationship with nature. They support regional and local projects in Moravia and Silesia by providing funding for cultural and environmental projects to individuals or NGOs.

***Informační středisko pro rozvoj Moravských Kopanic, o.p.s. (Information centre for development of Moravske Kopanice)***

Information centre for development of Moravske Kopanice in Starý Hrozenkov was established in 1999 by the municipality of the town of Starý Hrozenkov and association of organic farmers PRO-BIO, the regional chapter in Šumperk. Among the activities performed by this non-governmental, non-profit organization we can find providing information services, promoting an area around Moravské Kopanice and the White Carpathians, raising awareness, environmental education and assistance in organic agriculture. They are involved in projects that support an idea of sustainable development of countryside and cooperation with other NGO both from Czech Republic and international ones.

***Municipality Hostětín***

The village of Hostětín known for a number of sustainable development projects is located in the White Carpathians, precisely in microregion of Bojkovsko and Uherskobrodsko and has 2428 inhabitants. The well-known projects from Hostětín comprise biomass-heating plant, project of solar panels for inhabitants, reed-sewage treatment plan, energy efficient public lighting and juicing plant. Annually, at the end of September, Apple festivities take place in the village of Hostětín, where visitors can become acquainted with sustainable projects during organized excursions and with traditional handcrafts. Market where holders of the certification can sell their product takes place during the festivities.

***Zdeněk Ševčík, an organic farmer (fruit grower)***

After the collapse of the communist regime, Zdeněk Ševčík was given back his fathers' orchards that were expropriated in the name of collectivization. At first, he took fruit growing as a hobby. He has never used any chemical fertilizers for fruit cultivation. In 1994, he applied for an organic certification for his products and now he takes care of three and half hectares of fruit trees. He sells cherries, plums, apples and pears dried in a traditional drying kiln and sells apples to the juicing plant in Hostětín 9.

**Commission for issuing the certification The Traditions of the White Carpathians**

A commission that is held responsible for issuing the certification consists of at least seven members that are constituted of members of a partnership and representatives of local government and administration (from sector of environmental protection, agriculture, professional associations) in a well-balanced proportion in order to make sure that the commission is objective in its decisions. Members of a commission meet at least quarterly (<http://www.tradicebk.cz/>).

Zdeněk Kučera ( The Traditions of the White Carpathians)  
Rita Lečbychová (Economic Chamber of the district Zlín)

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<sup>8</sup> Information from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2008

<sup>9</sup> Personal Communication, Zdeněk Ševčík, 28 September 2008, Hostětín.

Richard Meda (The Centre of environmental activities, Trenčín)

Jiří Němec (administration of Protected Landscape Area of the White Carpathians)

Marie Petř (Educational and Information Centre White Carpathians, Veselí nad Moravou, The Traditions of the White Carpathians )

Martin Šimša (National Institute of folk culture, Strážnice)

Petra Zbranková (Regional authority office, Zlín)

## 2. Slovakia

### ***Centrum environmentálných aktivít (The Centre of environmental activities)***

Centrum environmentálných aktivít (The Centre of environmental activities) is a Slovak NGO with the seat in Trenčín. The NGO is a partner of the Czech partnership The Traditions of the White Carpathians. The NGO was established in 1994 by citizens to realize their effort to increase the life quality and to amend the environment around the city of Trenčín, in the region of the White Carpathians. The centre focuses on projects with the aim to increase environmental awareness and environmental education as well as to assist with living according to principles of sustainable development. Moreover, they take part in solving the problems associated with the life quality and the environment by trying to influence the decision-making of national government or offices of state administration. Furthermore, they try to draw citizens with interest in the environmental activities into activity and helping them by providing expert knowledge, technical assistance or organization capacities.



## ***Research setting***

Regional certification schemes seem to be an output of cooperation between representatives of market sphere (farmers and artisans that want to market their products) and civil society associations. The case of The Traditions of the White Carpathians is a pioneer in the field of locally produced certification schemes in the Czech Republic. The actors from civil society initiated the activity aimed at promotion of the region by establishing the civic association and working years on developing their objectives further. They developed the certification scheme aimed to support local producers while highlighting the heritage of the region. Why did they decide to do so? What is the role of state in this initiative? Does the state itself represent enabling factor or does it limit the existence of the certification scheme? I would like to find out what is the impact of interaction among actors from state, civil society and market for the locally produced certification scheme from the White Carpathians. What factors in the actors' interaction contribute to success of the certification and what factors bring about the limitations that could hamper its existence?

When exploring the rationale behind existence of the certification scheme, an important factor cannot be neglected. Macro-structural changes in the socio-political climate in the Czech Republic during last 20 years had undeniably influenced the rural development of the marginal area on the border with Slovakia. These had played a significant role in the activities of the organizations that were behind establishing the project. Therefore, the evolution of the certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians depends both on interactions among different actors as well as on general structural changes in the Czech Republic.

The general purpose of my thesis research is to find out what impact interactions of actors from state, civil society and market and macro-structural changes in the Czech Republic have on The Traditions of the White Carpathians certification scheme and how do they contribute to its 'success' or 'failure'.

The theory of political modernization seems to be a suitable theoretical framework for the detail analysis of the case. The stages of political modernization process and the concept of the policy arrangement would be used. An elaboration on the stages of political modernization process suits well for explaining changes of socio-political structures and their implication for the case. Policy arrangement is a tool to explain and to understand actors' interactions better. The general changes of political and social climate in the Czech Republic would be discussed in the theoretical chapter and the stages of the political modernization would be indicated referring to the change of the regime. Policy arrangements would be then elaborated in the empirical chapter.

## Research questions

Based on the objectives defined above the main research question would be:

- *What is the implication of interactions between spheres of civil society, market and state and of macro-structural changes that occurred during last 20 years in the Czech Republic for the case of The Traditions of the White Carpathians?*

First sub-question relates to reasons of establishing the certification scheme. The second sub-question discusses policy arrangements in the context of the case. Final, third sub-question aims to illuminate what factors of the actors' interaction contribute to success or failure of the certification scheme.

### *1. Why was the certification the Traditions of the White Carpathians established?*

- i. Under what conditions was the certification scheme established?
- ii. What was behind the idea to establish the certification scheme?

### *2) How do policy arrangements in the case of the Traditions of the White Carpathians look like?*

- i. What are the actors and which resources do they use?
- ii. What rules of the game can be recognized in the context of the case?
- iii. What discourses could be distinguished in the context of the case?

### *3) What are the factors that might contribute to success of the certification scheme and what are the factors that might bring about failure of the certification scheme?*

## Research methodology

The empirical research consists of two phases, desk study and field visit during which open-ended, semi-structured interviews with stakeholders were carried out. Before the interviews were conducted, the information about the area and the case was gathered through qualitative text analysis. Academic journals, written reports from conferences, the mass media (mainly regional press) and websites of the involved organizations were analyzed. The second phase of the empirical research was the field visit. The field visit was timed for Apple festivities that took place at the end of September in Hostětín, which is often labeled as a model village for sustainable development. Apple festivities seemed to be a great opportunity to reach as many participants as possible. During this occasion, the certification holders sell their products at traditional market and excursions (including the one to fruit-juicing plant) for visitors are provided.

Before conducting the interviews, the phone calls were made to arrange meetings with members of the civic association and holders of the certification and to gain their informed consent to participate in the interviews. All interviewees were provided with information about purpose of the interview and about objectives of the study. Members of The Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association and NGO Veronica have shown the interest in the results of the research. A checklist of topics to be covered during interviews was constructed based on the research questions. A checklist served more as a guiding support than the guideline to be necessarily followed during all situations. Next day, after the Apple festivities, I visited Hostětín again to meet people from NGO Veronica and employee from fruit-juicing plant who has been involved in the initiative from the very beginning. The second round of interviews with producers and NGO that utilize the certification was conducted through phone calls and additional information was gained from email correspondence.

**Semi-structured interviews** served well to the purpose of the research. The advantage of partially unstructured interviews is that they provide freedom of content and of structure for the interviewee or allow asking questions at the spur of the moment during the discussion with interviewee. However, it was necessary to keep a structure to the extent that at the end, the same topics would be covered by all interviewees to ensure information to be analyzed comparably (Vaux, 2006: 123-126).

Due to inconvenient conditions that made the writing notes during interview almost impossible<sup>10</sup> and due to the risk of losing information, it was decided to use a voice recorder to catch all information during interviews conducted in Hostětín. When analyzing, the records were listened to several times to prevent distortion of the information. During the second round, when the interviews were conducted through phone calls, the analysis followed immediately after conversation.

The theoretical research then included the literature study.

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<sup>10</sup> Some of the interviews took place in the producers' stalls at the market fair.

## ***Outline of the report***

This report contains six chapters. The first is presented here. Chapter 2 describes conditions during establishing the certification scheme and reasons for doing so. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework, political modernization theory and the concept of a policy arrangement. The report continues in chapter 4 with reasoning about how the process of political modernization is reflected in the conditions of the Czech Republic. Chapter 5 analyzes the policy arrangement in the context of the case. Chapter 6 presents contributing and inhibiting factors for the development of the certification scheme. Chapter 7 draws conclusions and offers recommendation.

## 2. Establishing the certification scheme

*Human activity in nature does not necessarily mean biodiversity decline. The case from the White Carpathians shows that the traditional way of land use management and fruit growing, as our ancestors performed, positively affects the landscape and the biodiversity. By using traditional practices, people from the White Carpathians civic association believe that quality products could be produced. These products deserve attention, which is to be attracted by the label of origin. The certification scheme was developed to support local producers and was aimed to promote the region. To understand the reasons of establishing the label, it is useful to take an excursion into the history behind the certification scheme.*

The first section of the chapter will deal with the description of the White Carpathians area, mention the natural characteristics and briefly concern the history background. The historical changes of the last centuries influenced and had an implication for the development of civic associations and formed an institutional context of the initiative from which the certification scheme has evolved. Second section will elaborate on the conditions of the region. By discussing the economic and political conditions present at the time when the initiative has been established, the second section will answer a part of the first research questions (Under what conditions was the certification scheme established?) The third section will follow with the description of Traditions of the White Carpathians, o.s. founding. This will lead us to the story of establishing certification scheme itself. Final, the fourth section will bring a discussion and will answer the latter part of the first research question (What was behind the idea to establish the certification scheme?).

### ***Historical background revisited***

The rolling hills of the White Carpathians that form a western edge of the Carpathians are located along the Czech-Slovak border. The altitude ranges from 175 m to 970 m above the sea level (Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 37). Deciduous forests, woodlands, grasslands and orchards that are characteristic for this area cannot hide their richness in biodiversity. Due to their geographical location, the White Carpathians are regarded the biodiversity treasure. Grasslands with scattered trees are considered especially valuable. Three floral provinces meet there: Panonian, Carpathian and Hercynian (Glemarec, 2004: 6). Rare species of orchids are found in the area of the White Carpathians. Wild animals such as wolf and lynx live here. In the 1996, the Czech part of the White Carpathians of an area 715 km<sup>2</sup> was designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve which made a recognition of the area as the place with high national and global biodiversity value (WWF, Carpathian Eco region Initiative, 2001). A florist research in the White Carpathians has revealed that in the area there was about 1,500 species of vascular plants; 30 of them had been previously considered missing or extinct. There are 103 vascular plant species, which are protected, 27 of them are classified as critically endangered, 37 strongly endangered and 16 grassland species are listed as globally critically endangered in the IUCN Red list (Glemarec, 2004: 6). The birds whose numbers are declining in Europe live there as well. For instance, ornithologists mention honey buzzard

(*Pernis apivorus*), corncrake (*Crex crex*), meadow pipit (*Anthus pratensis*) or corn bunting (*Miliaria calandra*). Butterflies such as *Brenthis hecate*, *Maculinea alcon* or *Colias myrmidone*, thrive on the White Carpathians flower meadows. Other valuable and endangered species from fauna could be found here.

### *Harmonic cultural landscape*

The first settlement in the White Carpathians traces back to the beginning of the Neolithic era, 6000 -3500 B.C. Archeologists' discoveries of ceramics and fortifications have brought an evidence of the arrival of tribes from Carpathian basins. During the Bronze Age, the majority of the settlements were tied upon the rivers; areas in higher altitudes were not inhabited yet. Celtic settlements appeared later on, during 500 – 200 B.C. Discoveries of Roman coins give an evidence of an active trade of Celts with the Roman Empire. From 500 B.C., the first Slavonians were coming to the area. Throughout the centuries, people in the White Carpathians experienced many dominions by different tribes, empires and kingdoms. They faced Turkish invasions. In 18th century people started to colonize the areas of higher altitudes, changed their life-style and a way of land use. New inhabitants also came from Poland and from eastern part of the Carpathians<sup>11</sup>. The forest areas were divided among colonists who later on stumped the trees and grazed sheep on meadows and pastures. Growing of potatoes, oat, rye was widespread. Flax, hemp, millet and buckwheat growing were also common. Cattle were grazing in the lowlands and sheep in the highlands. A specific way of life and the remoteness of the settlement caused that the rich traditions were saved there <sup>12</sup>.

The resemblance of the White Carpathian landscape that could be classified as cultural (Drobilova, 2007) is caused by the human activity in the region. Harmonic cultural landscape was a by-product of our ancestors' life that were dependent on "their" landscape, they spent majority of their time directly in the nature. People used to put their effort to survive and enable coming generation the same. The landscape has evolved often without the respect of its esthetical and biological value, purely to serve its purpose to be sustainable from the long-term point of view. Despite of this purposeful development, the landscape came about to be very much diverse and aesthetically valuable (Romportl, 2004: 130). In the White Carpathians, throughout the history, human factor did not have a negative impact on the nature. On the contrary, the traditional way of land use management, extensive agriculture, caused that a biodiversity in the area of the White Carpathians had even increased. "Species composition and other ecological characteristics of this habitat type are a direct result of traditional grazing and/or mowing practiced by farmers for many centuries. The result of managed, domestic livestock-grassland interactions has been a high species richness and a concentration of a high number of endemic and rare species on relatively small plots of land" (Glemarec, 2004: 8). Ratinger and Křůmalová (2002: 4) state that local people lived in a unique symbiosis with nature. During the interview, an organic fruit-grower Mr. Ševčík<sup>13</sup> underscored that at present, a human activity lead mostly to a reduction of a biodiversity and that the White Carpathians was a unique case where human activity had not triggered the biodiversity loss and rather had contributed to its boost.

"Orchards are a sort of buffering zone between the forest and human beings represented by fields, an arable land. It is said that when the human will not intervene in a nature in this region anymore, the nature will take something back. Push of the forest is natural; he would take back what used to belong in the forest realm."

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<sup>11</sup> Nowadays, Ukraine and Romania

<sup>12</sup> See: [www.bilekarpaty.cz](http://www.bilekarpaty.cz).

<sup>13</sup> Personal Communication, Zdeněk Ševčík, 28 September 2008, Hostětín.

### *The advent of collectivism*

Suddenly, the bonds between humans and nature were dramatically eroded with the advent of the era of the collectivization.<sup>14</sup> From 1950s until 1990s, the agricultural production was suddenly focused on milk and beef cattle. The intensification of the agriculture requested a heavy mechanization and an application of artificial fertilizers. Small-scale farms were replaced by large state and collectively owned farms. New ways of land cultivation so different from the traditional ones had an adverse effect on the biodiversity of the landscape. A replacement of traditional patterns of a land use by an intensive character of agricultural production had another adverse effect. The economic situation of the region was worsening and people were leaving the area (Carmin et al., 2003: 708, Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 41). Logically, the bonds between human beings and nature present hundreds of years in the area were disappearing. Several studies conducted in the Carpathians have shown that as the people stopped intervening into landscape traditionally (such as sheep grazing), some species started to dominate causing degradation of grassland habitats and declining the biodiversity value at species, habitat and ecosystem levels (Glemarec, 2004: 8). Skaloš (2006: 177) confirms the destroying element of the collectivization. “Collectivisation of agriculture stands for the one of several significant actions in the history of the former Czechoslovakia after 1945, which left great marks not at least on the face of the Czech cultural landscape. That is to say that apart from political, economic and landscape-ecological consequences, the collectivization had also a negative implication from the sociological point of view due to a severe repression of private landowners. Many of them were bound with duties, imprisoned, or punished in other ways.” In order to divert further deterioration of the environment related to the intensive land cultivation (for instance, biodiversity loss), in 1980 the White Carpathians Protected Landscape Area with 53 nature reserves was established. The Czechoslovak Union of Nature Conservation (ČSOP), mainly the ČSOP chapters Kosénka and Bílé Karpaty were engaged in work to manage local ecosystems and preserve the rich biodiversity and endangered species such as rare orchids (Carmin et al., 2003: 708, Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 41).

### **Local conditions**

The collapse of communist regime, the process of transition and opening of the iron curtain brought undisputed benefits. However, some aspects of the transition were not so favorable towards the marginal regions. Even a reintroduction of the private property after Velvet revolution (1989) was not able to address the difficulties of the land use management in the White Carpathians. Increasing social differences are a logical consequence of the transition. The state does not use nivelization tools to support marginal regions any longer. Also a new economic orientation of the state to the West caused that the eastern part of the country and its concerns and interests are at the moment low on the agenda (Vaishar and Zapletalova, 2005: 167). Differences among regions are growing and a polarity between centers and peripheries is increasing (Čermák, 2005: 44). The advent of post-industrial development mechanisms

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<sup>14</sup> Communist takeover took place in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. The state with totalitarian regime then became a part of Soviet imperium divided by the Iron Curtain from Western Europe. Private businesses and agricultural land were expropriated and free market and private property replaced by decision making of central planners and state or collective property.

coupled with a need of complex socio-economic transformation influences the special land (Nováček, 2005: 25). Uhlířová (2008) in her analysis that is related to evaluation of the model projects results under the auspice of sustainable development that have been undertaken in the village of Hostětín, states that the White Carpathians region faces quite a number of problems. She mentions a marginal position of the region, a split of Czechoslovakia and an unfavorable economy structure of the White Carpathians.

### **Marginal position of the region**

Absence of centers, long distance from centers and rugged terrain causing worse transport situation are the main signs of marginality (Vaishar and Zapletalova, 2005: 167, Čermák, 2005: 44). The region is geographically far from the capital and the willingness to take care of the periphery is little. Therefore, the area could be considered a model marginal region. The White Carpathians region was always located as Carmin et al. (2003: 707) put it “on the margins of kingdoms and empires.”

### **Restructuralization of agriculture**

The restructuralization of the agricultural production, from an intensive socialistic agriculture to grazing with extensive cattle and sheep breeding brought a decline in job opportunities on one hand. On the other hand, some people who were given back their expropriated properties were not enthusiastic about starting a hard work as farmers. The areas of meadows in the White Carpathians is divided among thousands of owners. Many of them do not live in the area so the land management is complicated and becomes “challenging problem for conservationists” (Jongepier and Jongepierova, 2001: 42). Land remains abandoned even now; several years after the era of collectivization came to its end. Economic pressures were too strong for farmers that wished to manage their land extensively according to the local tradition. For farmers it is no longer profitable to manage upland grasslands. There are no suitable market incentives that would induce farmers to come back to the traditional ways of land management. The costs of time/labor and transportation costs as well as costs associated with fencing and purchase of animals play an important role in farmers’ decisions. An existing subsidy system has limitations. It consists of different, disparate programs implemented by several Ministries and institutions and not many farmers have the technical capacity to use them effectively (Glemarec, 2004: 9).

Despite an upsurge in interest in environmental issues, after the collapse of the communist regime, a role of agriculture for the environment in rural areas was rather underestimated and no clear agri-environmental objectives were defined. In addition, not all state-driven policies are in tune of pan-European practice. This is a case of the forest bias in certain areas. In response to economic changes, the meadows are being abandoned or some intensive practices are being introduced (application of mineral fertilizers, reseeding with mono-specific grass). This results in a habitat degradation and a biodiversity loss (Glemarec, 2004: 9-10). With the vision of an accession to the EU it was necessary to reconsider new objectives and regulations of agricultural policy so that farmers and landowners would become agents of environmental change (Ratinger and Křůmalová, 2002: 4). Romportl (2004: 131) points to the fact that social and technological changes in general caused a disruption of the harmonic relation of the human to nature and at the moment there is no numerous group of people that would be able to take care of the landscape continuously. He refers to two different processes in current Czech landscape. On the one hand, an intensity of the anthropogenic activity is declining and economically active inhabitants are leaving countryside. On the other hand, countryside faces



a pressure from the society related to urbanization, agricultural activity, construction of transport networks and the pollution. In a year, 2003, by ratifying the Florence convention (European landscape convention), the Czech Republic made an important step towards protecting landscape in conformity with pan-European priorities in the nature protection [[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)].

## Unemployment

In the 1990s, a typical regional industry branches of the region since 1920s such as the armament production and the shoe making industry experienced crises associated to transformation of national economy. Therefore, an unemployment in the region has significantly grown (Uhlířová, 2008: 11, Vaishar and Zapletalova, 2005: 172). The vicious circle triggered by the unemployment continues. The consequence of the risen unemployment is a decreasing purchasing power of inhabitants which causes a threat for local businesses. For young people, especially with higher education the White Carpathians are not attractive place for living and investors, of course, are not very much willing to launch some projects there. These factors according to Vaishar and Zapletalova (2005: 173) lead to worsening of the social climate. However, they add that in the area due to the traditional rural way of life, a high level of religiosity<sup>15</sup> and the Czech-Slovak solidarity, the process of worsening social situation is rather slow. Neither, a decrease in a number of inhabitants did not occurred yet. However, ageing of the population is apparent.

## Czechoslovakia split

Furthermore, the split of the federal state of Czechoslovakia<sup>16</sup> brought about an intensification of economic difficulties of the marginal area of the White Carpathians (Carmin et al., 2003: 709-710). By the split of the state, a new barrier was built. Of course, citizens that lived near the border were much more affected by the sudden split of the state. Vaishar and Zapletalova (2005: 173-174) elaborate impacts that the border has on the inhabitants that live near the affected area, where a division line was drawn. At first, effects of the split appeared to be rather psychological. Later on, people encountered problems related to the division of currency and of the social care system. Small complications related to properties located directly at the border occurred. For Czech and Slovak citizens, the frontier was normally permeable. The common illegal transfer of immigrants is a negative aspect of the border. Among the citizens, there was a fear that these immigrants will stay around the border, which can increase a criminality. On the other hand, the border created new job opportunities; people were employed at customs administration, frontiers guards or at services related to the border<sup>17</sup>. Čermák (2005: 49) argues that the proximity of state border seems to relate to marginality of the region.

During an accession period before the Czech Republic and Slovakia joined the European Union, there were discussions that if Czech Republic joined the EU sooner than Slovakia (due to its economic development), the difference between states would be widening and the regions located along the border would stay very much on the periphery. Fortunately, this did

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<sup>15</sup> Moravian part of the Czech Republic is traditionally more religious, an island of belief in the deconsecrated Czech society.

<sup>16</sup> Political representatives of the federal republic failed in finding a consent in defining a model of coexistence of two states and as a result, Czechoslovakia split in 1<sup>st</sup> January 1993.

<sup>17</sup> These occupations came to their ends when the Czech Republic and Slovakia entered Schengen travel area in December 21, 2007.

not happen and on May 1, 2004, the Czech Republic with Slovakia and eight other countries joined the EU. Pointing to the split of the federal state, Vaishar and Zapletalova (2005: 169) argue that economic, social and personal ties that were built so many years as unit ones between these two nations were suddenly broken. However, comparing the consequences of the state division with other marginality causing factors such as change in economic orientation, they assert that a new border is not so strong factor. They reason about the marginality in the depth. Is it really always a negative factor for the region? They conclude that the notion of marginality is relative and that there are certain groups of people that prefer peripheral areas for living. “It is essential to make sure that the region will not come about degradation that results in a massive exodus of young and qualified inhabitants, economic decline or in a doom of countryside settlements...this would be dangerous not only for the marginal region but also for the whole set of settlements.” Vaishar and Zapletalova moreover (2005: 169) argue that a human factor plays an important role in the marginal region. They claim “There is evidence that it is possible to turn objective disadvantages into a benefit of a municipality or a microregion<sup>18</sup>.”

## **THE WAY FROM APPLE TO REGIONAL MARKETING TOOL**

Kučerová et al. (2007: 29) recognize four stages in the development of The Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association: the start, the establishing (formalization), the consolidation and the search for a new growth and strategies. The time-scale division they developed in respect to the description of the association operation will be followed in the thesis research. I will use it to give a firm support to my research findings (information gained from interviews) and complement information obtained from the rest of the primary sources (website of the initiative, information booklets from NGO Veronica Foundation).

### **1. THE START (1990 – 1998)**

Shortly after the collapse of the communist system, in 1990, the ČSOP chapter Bílé Karpaty from Veselí nad Moravou started to cooperate with owners of the old fruit orchards. The state administration of the Protected Landscape Area joined the cooperation. They agreed on that the old extensive varieties of fruit trees were disappearing. These trees were tied upon the region and gave to the region’s landscape a typical look. Some of the varieties were not even included in the official register (Kučerová et al., 2007: 27). For the sake of traditional varieties, environmentalists together with fruit-growers started a research in order to map out fruit evergreen tree species. A detailed expertise should have served for a gene bank purposes, for outplanting of traditional varieties and for the support of local fruit growing tradition. During the research, several local varieties of fruit trees were found, some of them were new to the taxonomy system (Veronica, propagacni brozura Kraj ovoce). The cooperation had a tangible result. They set up the “gene orchard” at the property of municipality in Velká nad

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<sup>18</sup> Own translation of Vaishar and Zapletalova (2005: 169)

Veličkou, in the nature reserve Zahrada pod Hájem<sup>19</sup>. Later on, in 1993 and 1994, other environmental NGOs joined the coalition to be involved in saving traditional varieties of the fruit trees. i.e. ČSOP chapter Veronica from Brno and ČSOP chapter Kosénka from Valašské Klobouky.

Mr. Radim Machů who is involved in the association The Traditions of the White Carpathians from the very beginning, finds the cooperation of environmentalists from the ČSOP chapter Bílé Karpaty with experienced fruit-growers an important impetus that started the action towards initiative forming.

“From that time on, the activity have spread, more people and organizaions have been involved in the common projects.” (Pers.Com., 4.) He summarizes that the fruit growing project and a necessity to make an existing cooperation formal was actually the initial impetus for establishing the initiative.

Another important impetus for the development of a wider cooperation was organic agriculture. The notion of organic agriculture, principles of organic agricultural theories, organic certifications and pioneer organic farms were emerging at the beginning of 1990s. Some of the fruit-growers applied for the organic certification. Due to the fact that the extensive farming practices typical in the White Carpathians bear all signs of the organic agriculture, they did not need to change anything in their farming procedures. Zdeněk Ševčík, founding member of the association The Traditions of the White Carpathians, who was awarded a prize The Czech organic farmer in a year 2000, stated that his grandfather had already farmed with all signs of sustainability and in this era nobody had called ‘normal practices of farming’ an organic agriculture (Pers.Com. 2). After, receiving the award Mr. Ševčík became a very much influential actor in the activities of the association. Benefits of the organic agriculture also stem from the price premium charged for organic products besides having a positive impact on the nature. Informal contacts and relations are characteristic for the first stage of the association existence (Kučerová et al., 2007: 30).

## **2. THE ESTABLISHING/ FORMALIZATION (1998 – 2003)**

With the course of the time as more actors have joined the cooperation, an increasing tendency to give the informal cooperation a more formal shape have resulted in establishing the initiative The Traditions of the White Carpathians, o.s. (civic association). Founding members of the associations were an organic fruit farmer Zdeněk Ševčík, the ČSOP Bílé Karpaty, the ČSOP Kosenka, the ČSOP Veronica, Nadace Veronica (Foundation Veronica), the municipality of Hostětín via its mayor and Informační středisko pro rozvoj Moravských Kopanic (The Information Centre for the Development of Moravské Kopanice). The members are representatives of nature protectionists, people involved in organic agriculture, information services and fruit farmers. These actors’ diversity stems from a territory-based type of the cooperation (Kučerová et al. 2007:7). Mr. Ševčík argues that the association started because of the necessity to preserve the White Carpathians and to create good living conditions in the region.

“It is necessary to do so as the stones start here and many young people scurry for job opportunities to big cities. So, it is desirable to stop this leaving.”

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<sup>19</sup> Information from the municipality of Hostětín

Furthermore, he states that people who were interested in a non-intensive way of land use management, in preserving the landscape at first had acted on their own. He argues that people in the region are not in favor of some sorts of association (aversion after the experience from communist regime).

“Despite of the skepticism towards the larger cooperation, we decided to work together towards the same objective and established something that would realize common marketing and label, something that an individual would never be able to reach upon on his/her own.”

They opted for establishing a civil association as it was considered the most suitable legal form of organization due to a higher flexibility and a lesser degree of bureaucracy<sup>20</sup>. The stakeholders have written down an appropriate list of legal articles, organized a constituent meeting and were registered at the Ministry of Interior. The association at first pursued educational issues. The idea to set up a business and establish own certification<sup>21</sup> has been incorporated in the legal document when the association started. However, these plans were aimed for the future realization and not for an immediate action. Received financial resources from the Luxembourg-based foundation Hëllef fir d’Natur was a significant drive for the establishing the association. Kučerová et al. (2007: 28) point out that the old fruit-growers did not join the established association as they were not able to agree<sup>22</sup> with the vision that environmentalists have brought and were rather skeptical about a sort of business that was coming with the association. At this time, the ČSOP chapter Veronica from Brno, became very much important stakeholder in the association. They actually came with an idea to produce a local product to help small-scale producers. This was when the label The Traditions of the White Carpathians initiated. However, as Kučerová et al. (2007: 28) state that local people were reluctant to participate. They were probably not sure what the cooperation with active environmentalists would bring to them, farmers, with the practical experience. Due to the local peoples’ unwillingness to participate, The NGO Veronica was looking for a place where the local products could be produced and processed.

Finally, they transferred its activities to Hostětín where they purchased an old farmstead from Mr. Ševčík family (1998). Then, when The Foundation Veronica has bought an old farmstead, they got an idea that the place could be suitable for an establishment of fruit juicing company where they would process apples bought from local fruit-growers. In June 1999, the reconstruction of the farmhouse, intended to be used as a fruit juicing factory, started. A group of local handicraftsmen was in charge of reconstruction. During summer vacations, supporters of The Czech Union of the Nature Conservation, Veronica and participants of summer courses as well as international volunteers from work camps organized by The Association for voluntary activities, INEX were involved in auxiliary works. Raymond Aendekerk from Luxembourg-based foundation Fondation Hëllef fir d’Natur helped them. He provided them with the experience in fruit-processing. He managed to contact a family fruit juicing firm from Germany that sold the technology for the juice processing to Veronica. A year 2000 saw the first season of the fruit juicing in Hostětín (Uhlířová, 2008: 27-36, Pers.Com. 4). During the first season of the plant, in 2000, conventional apples that were

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<sup>20</sup> Personal Communication, Zdeněk Ševčík, 28 September 2008, Hostětín

<sup>21</sup> Kučerová et al. (2007: 28) mentions a business that would use the tools of regional marketing to enhance local development.

<sup>22</sup> During the interviews Kučerová et al. (2007) carried out several times encountered the clash between old fruit-growers and young environmentalists, reference to different age and discrepancy related to experienced fruit growers and idealistic environmentalists.

processed into juice prevailed, from the year 2001 on; the proportion of organic apples exceeds the one of the conventional. The bottles of juice got a label The Traditions of the White Carpathians.

Actually, apple juice from Hostětín is the first product certified by the common label.

The idea to establish a label was included in the articles when the initiative was registered<sup>23</sup>. During the first year, they were busy with preparation, reconstruction and operation of fruit juicing company so that there was no time left for working on realization and launching a project of the regional label. Starting from a year 2002, they finally had more time to deal with the certification system for regional products. For instance, they held a seminar where the various experience with labels from abroad were discussed and suggestions made for the label have arisen. Experts from abroad that were involved in regional development or even directly with labels would come for couple of days to visit the area. They discussed background papers prepared by the stakeholders from The Traditions of the White Carpathians and possibilities of further development of their endeavor. Uhlířová (2008: 27) states about the involvement of NGOs (ČSOP Veronica and Foundation Veronica) that they brought emphasis on alternative strategies<sup>24</sup> of orchards diversity protection. Actually, the environmentalists defined their vision in term of incentives creation for local people. By offering marketing for apples they wanted to motivate landowners to keeping and developing orchards. In fact, this was a stimulus for setting up the fruit-juicing plant. Kučerová at al. (2007: 31) argues that socio-cultural factors and socio-political factors had a great influence in this stage of the association development. Moreover, the marketing factors are emerging related to the fruit juicing plant.

**Figure 2. The fruit juicing plant in Hostětín during Apple festivities (Photo: Šárka Antošová)**

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<sup>23</sup> Article three.

<sup>24</sup> Alternative to the conventional state centered subsidies programmes and tools.



### 3. THE CONSOLIDATION (2003 – 2006)

At first, the association The Traditions of the White Carpathians was responsible for operating the fruit juicing plant. In a year 2003, the association established a business firm with the same name, The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Ltd.<sup>25</sup> This firm was set up to run the plant officially, it pays rent to the Veronica Foundation which is an owner of the property. Veronica Foundation then gives the gained money back to the association (Uhlířová, 2008: 27). The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Ltd. is one of the bodies that can use the certification. The reason for establishing the Ltd. business was straightforward. According to trade register, a business firm has a broader competence. The civic association's legal articles entail "A support and setting up of model centers for processing of traditional products by making use of local resources such as processing plants for regional varieties of fruit by juicing and drying." (Articles of The Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic society, the article 3, the paragraph (h).<sup>26</sup> Whilst the trade register of The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Ltd. directly states "a production of food products, beverages, a wholesale, a specialized retail run outside regular workroom, a packaging, an agriculture including a sale of unprocessed agricultural products in order to processing and further sale." (Trade register of The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Ltd.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> The Traditions of the White Carpatians is 100 % owned by the civic association.

<sup>26</sup> See: <http://www.tradicebk.cz/>

<sup>27</sup> See: <http://www.justice.cz/or/>

A very much important impulse for establishing the label according to interviewed representative of the plant, Mr. Machů<sup>28</sup> was a project aimed at a preservation of the biodiversity in the White Carpathians and in Beskydy<sup>29</sup>. This project dealt with meadows as rich reservoirs of the biodiversity treasure. A part of the activities included in the project regarded marketing tools. That fitted perfectly for the labels. The label Traditions of the White Carpathians and a label Made in Beskydy<sup>30</sup> were included in the project. When asked about relationship of the local label with the larger system of regional labels, he underscores that the label from the White Carpathians was registered and the main ideas and simple rules formulated earlier than other regional labels. However, people from the REC (The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe) elaborated them more according to general conventions. The participation in the project and the cooperation with other regional label is seen an important aspect in the existence of the label. The existence of other label was deemed useful in terms of ideas and experience sharing. “There was someone we could share ideas and experience with and talk about the similar plans .”

A funding from UNDP/GEF to realize the project was requested in May, 2005. The mentioned project was in line with GEF eligible criteria of the Mountain Ecosystem Operational Program (Category: Biodiversity Strategic Priority BD1 - catalyzing the sustainability of protected area systems). Project was entitled: Conservation of Biological Diversity of Carpathian Mountain Grasslands in the Czech Republic through targeted application of New EU Funding Mechanism. The main aim of the project was to strengthen the conservation management of mountain grassland habitats (meadows and pastures) that are globally significant in biodiversity in two Protected Landscape Areas (PLA) located in Carpathian Mountains, in the White Carpathians and Beskydy CHKO. Moreover, this project should have enabled the Czech Republic to begin meeting its obligation of the Carpathian Convention<sup>31</sup> and to contribute to assisting the Czech Republic to meet its commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>32</sup>. These commitments refer to preventing further biodiversity loss or a degradation of mountain grasslands and increasing awareness of the biodiversity value. By strengthening the conservation management of mountains grassland areas was meant to develop capacities of a wider community of stakeholders that would establish a “strong functional partnership around the ecologically sustainable production and marketing of products generated from mountain grassland management.“ The expected community would comprise according to the project proposal farmers, communal landowners, marketing cooperatives, agricultural institutions and government Ministries (Glemarec, 2005: 4). Furthermore, a key goal of the project was to amend agricultural and forestry policy and management of PLA by incorporating biodiversity principles and objectives. In the proposal of the project, Glemarec (2005: 4-5) refers to the Millenium Goal, the EU objectives and targets from Malahide, 2004.

Expected outcomes of the project is improved institutional capacity, improved farmers’ capacity and incentives, monitoring, evaluation and incorporation of the project’s experience into national policy of agro-envi schemes. One of the four outcomes of the project that is focused on improving farmers’ capacity and incentives for and participation in conservation-

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<sup>28</sup> Personal Communication, Radim Machů, 29 September 2008, Hostětin.

<sup>29</sup> Beskydy is an mountainous area in the north-east part of the Czech Republic, it border upon the White Carpathians.

<sup>30</sup> Label Made in Beskydy is a part of the larger certification system, ‘Home made products’.

<sup>31</sup> The Carpathian Convention was signed in Kiev in May 2003.

<sup>32</sup> The Czech Republic ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 4, 1993

oriented management of mountain grasslands include above mentioned certification scheme as a tool or activity how to reach the desired outcome. Literally, the activity 2.5 of the outcome 4 in the project proposal states: “Creation of a certified marque for locally produced products based on environmentally beneficial management of mountain grasslands.” It is referred to a license fee that would generate the revenue for PLAs to cover costs of the certification scheme. The amount of the license fee should correspond with the production scale. Details about the criteria are left for a consultation with stakeholders (Glemarec, 2005: 21-28). It means that the enough space is left for stakeholders to develop the label according to their vision and interests. At the end, it enabled inclusion of diverse products. Incorporating of the objective of the initiative into the project actually brought institutional and financial support.

*“I think that this project helped us a lot to develop it further. Of course, a significant element of the successful development of the label was an accessibility of financial resources needed to run the functioning of their certification system.”<sup>33</sup>*

In 2005, a new storage building was built in order to solve the problems that accompanied the capacity of the fruit-juicing plant. In a year 2006, a new building for Veronica Information centre was build. The rooms in the building<sup>34</sup> serve also for members of the civic association.

#### **4. THE SEARCH FOR A NEW GROWTH AND STRATEGIES (2006–on)**

In a year 2007, a large investment into fruit juicing plant in Hostětín was realized. A pressing plant and new storing capacities for fruit juice were built. By implementing new equipments, the producing and the storing process became more effective. In autumn 2007, the Ltd. company unified an appearance of the products. From that time on, the products are labeled Hostětínský mošt (Juice made in Hostětín) which was awarded with prize ‘Czech organic product of the year’ in 2002, Hostětínský sirup (syrup made in Hostětín). The offer of the company expanded. Nowadays, their products range from apple juice, organic apple juice, apple juice with blackcurrant, organic apple juice with beet-root, organic mint juice, green energy juice (contains green tea and mate tea) to syrups (elder flower, mint, rooibos). A long-term goal is to produce an organic food. Out of nine offered products range, seven of them are organic. The products are of high quality, in 2007, syrup from elder flower won the prize ‘Czech organic product of the year’. Except of the rooibos syrup<sup>35</sup>, all of them bear the label from the certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians. Rooibos syrup and green energy juice do not comply with the certification scheme criteria related to the origin and the traditions of the region (Uhlířová, 2008: 28), [<http://www.tradicebk.cz/>].

The crucial step was issuing certification to several local producers. The association put a lot of effort to persuade local producers of traditional products to undergo a certification process and to start marking their products by the common label. In May 2007 the commissioners of the initiative issued certification to 11 producers <sup>36</sup>. Other certifications to producers were issued in December 2007.

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<sup>33</sup> Personal Communication, Radim Machů, 29 September 2008, Hostětín

<sup>34</sup> The building of Veronica Foundation corresponds with sustainable, passive housing.

<sup>35</sup> Rooibos does not comply with requirements of White Carpathians origin.

<sup>36</sup> See: [http://www.rozhlas.cz/brno/zpravodajstvi/\\_zprava/348455](http://www.rozhlas.cz/brno/zpravodajstvi/_zprava/348455)



## **Producers approved to use the certification**

Who are bodies approved to use the logo and certification developed by the civic association? Who decided to utilize the new regional certification scheme? The future/success of the label is actually dependent on the producers who use it. Did people from the civic association succeed in attracting producers to make use of common marketing and promotion? The support of the regional labels (from the White Carpathians and Beskydy) came from the UNDP-GEF project for preservation of meadows from Carpathians Mountains. The aim of the project was to enable marketing of the products especially from the sheep breeding which is a significant factor in the care for valuable meadow biotopes in the Carpathians. The products that relate to preservation of the meadows by their close ties with sheep breeding include fruits, bees and herbs as well. At the beginning, it was clear that the label could not be aimed exclusively to products related to sheep breeding. Since it was desirable to create a label that would be supported by local people and at the same time would be attractive for tourists coming to the region, it was decided that the wide spectrum of the products would be included in the scheme (Piro and Wolfová, 2008: 82). Therefore, it means that at the end of the day, some of the products do not directly relate to meadows.

### **Prevalence of small-scale producers**

Among those who are sanctioned to make use of logo we could find private persons; i.e. farmers, beekeepers, fruit-growers, producer of brandy, craftsmen, as well as NGO INEX-SDA Bílé Karpaty that is producing herbal tea and larger enterprise Ltd. Company The Traditions of the White Carpathians based in Hostětín. However, most of approved holders of certification come from the small-scale businesses or they have the activity as their hobby.

### **Participation of the NGO INEX-SDA**

NGO INEX-SDA with the seat in Tvarožná Lhota, village at foothills of the White Carpathians, is active in the field of community development and landscape preservation. They are involved in activities of The Traditions of the White Carpathians civic association since 2002 already. The NGO became one of the bodies that applied for the certification in the first wave of applications. They produce several sorts of herbal tea. Local and international volunteers are involved in picking up and drying medicinal herbs. By doing so, they not only produce herbal teas but they take care of maintenance of nearby meadows as well. The organization tries to promote medicinal herbs as a sustainable practice that has a long tradition [[www.inexsda.cz/bk/](http://www.inexsda.cz/bk/)].

The following table gives an overview of the users of the certification and their products that bear the label The Traditions of the White Carpathians.

**Table 1. Producers approved to utilize the certification scheme**

<b>Producers</b>	<b>Products</b>
The Traditions of the White Carpathians, s.r.o.	apple juice, syrup made from elder
Miroslav Tábořský	honey
Karel Beníček	honey
Josef Buzík	honey, mead
Zdeněk Ševčík	dried fruit and nuts

NGO INEX-SDA Bílé Karpaty	herbal tea
Zdeněk Miklas	fruit, lamb
Zdeněk Halík	different sorts of a traditional brandy
Libor Beránek	tea services
Věra Častová	regional traditional costume component
Josef Fryzelka	traditional coopery items
Martin Dudek	ceramics
Hana Buchtelová	handmade woven products
Radim Pešek	garden nursery plants
Monika Němečková	bobbin lace work
Silvie Macháčková	decorative gingerbread
David Opálka	basket-making
Josef Káňa	marionettes and marionette show

Current members of the association comprise the ones mentioned above as founding members. An organic farmer Radim Pešek, a director of The Natural protected area Bílé Karpaty administration Jiří Němec and a regional centre PRO-BIO joined association later 37. The PRO-BIO is a national organic farmers association. As Kučerova et al. (2007: 8) put it: “PRO-BIO is the bridge for 27 organic farms from Bílé Karpaty area to become involved in TBK activities. In a wider area of Bílé Karpaty there are about 60 organic farmers and in whole NUTS 3 for which regional PRO-BIO works, there are located about 100 organic farmers. These farmers are not direct TBK members but can participate through PRO-BIO representative in its activities. These farmers are flexible non-direct members, who can potentially become members of the COFAMI (as users of the common certificate/regional label).”

Kučerová et al. (2007: 31) notice that the success of product labeling and marketing depends on its characteristics. According to them, the trust to certify the products is very much dependent on the type of the product. The more heterogeneous product is, the less trust among producers to participate in common labeling and marketing. For instance, in 2004 there were attempts to start common marketing of the beef. The plans failed due to the small market of the beef in general and high margin of the retail shop. However, even the farmers did not support this idea enthusiastically. They believed that their beef was better than the neighbors’ but under common marketing nobody would recognize it. (2007: 13)

Researches point out a disagreement factors among the stakeholders of the initiative that occurred at this stage of the initiative development. They refer to a cleavage between tangible (“earth” oriented) approach of some actors and intangible mission (“sky”) oriented approach of the rest. The disagreements is being more apparent with developing marketing strategies. During the thesis research, a disagreement tendency was encountered during the interviews conducted during the Apple festivities. Interviewed young organic farmer<sup>38</sup> was rather skeptical about the certification scheme. He does not expect any miracles from it and claims that he is very pragmatic. He adds that he is used to taking care of his business himself. He asserts that for the certification system to be successful and beneficial it is necessary to ensure better service, to give it a more commercial character and to be active more. For instance, he

<sup>37</sup> See: <http://www.tradicebk.cz/>

<sup>38</sup> Personal Communication, Zdeněk Miklas, 28 September 2008, Hostětín.

proposed another project for EU-based Community Initiative Programm INTERREG application to finance purchase of a van with refrigerator to transport bottles of juice from Hostětín's fruit juicing company and ensuring other transport for hand baskets and mutton that would go on sale. However, his proposal was not approved. According to him, everything depends on the points of view of the whole system. He claims that most likely he is more pragmatic than other colleagues are. That is why he does not lay his hope on the success of the label.

**Figure 3. Certified products (Photo: <[www.veseli-nad-moravou.cz](http://www.veseli-nad-moravou.cz)>. )**



The certification is at the website of the civic association labeled as the first transboundary certification in Central Europe, which actually makes the case more interesting at the first glance. Slovak NGO Centrum environmentálných aktivít (The Centre of environmental activities) established in 1994 with the seat in Trenčín is a partner of the Czech association The Traditions of the White Carpathians. Slovak NGO established the label that would be used in the Slovakian side of the White Carpathians and would resemble the Czech certification scheme. The Slovak partner label is registered at Úrad priemyselného vlastníctva Slovenskej Republiky (The Industrial Property Office of the Slovak Republic). At the moment, the first wave of application for certification takes place 39. Close cooperation related to exchange of products, common marketing and even an exchange of experience and meeting of Czech and Slovak producers was expected by establishing the transfrontier certification (Pers.Com.). The project of transfrontier label aimed at regional cooperation was even supported by the EU based Community Initiative Programme INTERREG IIIA to help with the realization 40.

The initial objective of the thesis research was to focus at the transfrontier character of the label as well. However, due to the lack of literature on the topic of transboundary element of the certification and due to the unavailability of resources from the Slovakian association responsible for running the certification, it was not possible to do so.

<sup>39</sup> See: <http://www.tradiciebk.sk/>

<sup>40</sup> See: <http://www.erbbk.sk/index.php?id=259>

## **DISCUSSION**

Vaishar and Zapletalova (2005) mention several factors that influence life conditions in the region. The common signs of marginality, i.e. absence of centers and severe natural conditions are according them coupled with the changes after the Velvet revolution such as different economic orientation, the split of Czechoslovakia, the industry conversion (decline of ammunition industry, a bankruptcy or a decay of industrial businesses) and a rise in unemployment as its consequence. All of that signifies that people in the region do not have easy living conditions. Until now, solely the problems that the people in the remote area were faced withI tackled solely problems that people in the remote area were faced with were mentioned. However, the citizens' activism and attempts to implement ideas of the sustainable development in everyday reality should be highlighted.

The communist regime did not support independent citizens' activities since all citizens' independent activities were considered a threat to the regime itself. Citizens who were obedient had all securities, housing, work and social care system provided by the state. Moreover, if they professed the Lenin, Marxist ideology, they were even rewarded with benefits. Logically, this system led to a passivity of the majority of citizens. Given these circumstances, therefore, all individual citizens' efforts to contribute to solving public or environmental problems should be highly appreciated. New opportunities accompanied the transition processes. A democracy development brought striking changes in all the sphere of citizens' life. These changes have given a new meaning to civil society and opened the possibilities to establish the associations such as White Carpathians existing NGOs. People who are involved in NGOs are trying to find strategies to address the regional problems. The role of NGOs is very much significant and their presence made a culture medium for activities run by the associations The Traditions of the White Carpathians.

The case of the association that has arisen in the White Carpathians upholds the statement of Vaishar and Zapletalova about turning disadvantages into objective benefits. Their reference to the human factor and citizens' based activities in the marginal region falls on the fertile ground in the case.

For the overview, negative and positive factors with their operationalization into aspects in the relation to the region are summarized in the table with two columns. The negative factors such as the changes in agriculture, increasing unemployment in 1990s, the split of the federal state and overall peripheral location of the region are balanced (related to the case) by the existence of NGOs and possibility to have contacts abroad caused by opening of country's borders. These positives factors enabled the development of the civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians and its certification scheme. However, I would argue that the negative aspects could be considered important drives for a launch of the cooperation between farmers and environmentalists since these limitations triggered action in order to address them.

Some aspects of the positive factors offset the negative ones. This is a case of an access to funding via cooperation with people or NGOs from abroad or via the EU accession and following access to operational funds. They substituted the nivelization policies (attempts to balance spatial differences by subsidies) of formal communist state. Existence of NGOs and their projects made rural areas for young environmentalists from cities interesting so that they moved from urban areas, which is a reverse tendency to a general trend of leaving of young people to cities.

By illustrating the negative and positive factors recognized in the area, the table 2 graphically answers the research question: Under what conditions was the certification scheme established?

**Table 2. Negative and positive factors recognized in the conditions of the White Carpathians' area**

<b>Negative factors</b>	<b>Positive factors</b>
<p><b>Geographical location</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from the centre</li> <li>• rugged terrain</li> </ul>	<p><b>Existence of NGOs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activities of young people</li> <li>• beneficial cooperation of fruit growers, organic farmers and environmentalists</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decay of industries</li> <li>• businesses bankruptcy</li> </ul> <p><b>Resulted in a rise in unemployment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decreasing purchasing power</li> <li>• threat to local businesses</li> <li>• young qualified people leaving</li> <li>• lack of interest by investors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possibility to start a cooperation with people, NGOs from abroad (from countries from the other side of the iron curtain)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to gain experience</li> <li>• partnerships</li> <li>• an access to funding</li> </ul>
<p><b>Split of Czechoslovakia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• psychological factors (new barrier)</li> <li>• worsen transport connections</li> <li>• currency division</li> </ul>	<p><b>The EU accession</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demand for new environmental policies</li> <li>• an access to funding</li> </ul>

Young, qualified people leaving the countryside – <b>ageing of the area</b>	
<p><b>Lack of interest by the government towards marginal region</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the termination of nivelization policies</li> <li>• state’s orientation to the West, eastern parts of the country on periphery</li> </ul>	

What was then behind the idea to establish the certification scheme? The initiative that resulted in establishing certification scheme and its issuing to several producers from the White Carpathians was triggered by the cooperation between fruit-growers and environmentalists, cooperation that was aimed at saving the traditional regional fruit tree varieties. However, for the existence of the certification scheme more elements came into the discussion. It could be argued that there were several important facets and the existence of all of them resulted in the certification scheme realization in the background conditions discussed above.

When I look at the criteria that producers using certification scheme have to fulfill, I can come to the main facets that were significant for establishing the certification. First, producers have to comply with environmental criteria, the production should be “environmentally-friendly”. A presence of environmental NGOs, project aimed at strengthening the conservation management of grassland habitats, attempts to address biodiversity loss, existence of landscape protected area, designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, a trend to renew orchards with resistant old varieties of fruit trees, focus on organic agriculture in general, all of that relate to nature, landscape. I would call it **environmental facets**.

Next, the products must be produced in the White Carpathians and they should be traditional in their relation to the region. The efforts to motivate landowners to keep and develop orchards that are inherent with the landscape, attempts to renew traditions via pointing out the traditional land use management or traditional handicrafts products refer to traditions and try to induce a pride of the region among the citizens. This facet could be entitled **regional traditional**. It could be stated that the requirement of quality, which is another requirement that producers participating in the certification scheme have to fulfill, could be easily link to the regional traditional facet as well. It stands for the image: “the products that come from the White Carpathians are of a high quality”.

An organic agricultural production generates added value for producers as the price premium is charged for the products. Fruit juicing plant employed several local people. It is expected that producers will benefit from a common marketing and propagation. These are **economic facets**.

Environmental, regional traditional and economic facets are very much interrelated and interwoven. For instance, local people can generate income from production of organic

apples. By doing so, they continue in fruit-growing traditions of their ancestors and contribute to the traditional landscape appearance. Old varieties are more resistant to pests. Therefore, the application of pesticides is not necessary. (environmental facet, regional traditional facet, economic facet).

Main reason that was behind establishing the certification scheme seems to reflect all the facets. Behind combining all three facets, we can see a desire for a good life in the region. I will repeat Mr.Ševčík's statement. "It is necessary to do so as the stones start here and many young people scurry for job opportunities to big cities. So, it is desirable to stop this leaving."

The main reason for establishing the initiative is therefore simple: **to make from the White Carpathians a good place for living.** Here, a good place for living is a synonym for life in a harmonic landscape. This landscape and its natural products are a potential treasure for people. If the people will take care of the gifts from nature reasonably or sustainably, they can use the natural resources as long as they wish. In return, the nature, fauna and flora species will benefit from the human activity again. As this natural harmonic symbiosis between humans and nature is unique in our modern world and not common by no means and because this relationship is under constant threat, it is necessary to maintain and support it by giving suitable incentives to those who can influence that state of the world.

### **3. Political modernization and the concept of a policy arrangement**

*In the conceptual chapter, first, I will discuss the political modernization theory. Next, an explanation of a policy arrangement, a key concept from the political modernization theory will follow and how political arrangements relate to the actual process of the policy modernization will be illuminated.*

#### ***Political modernization***

Political modernization theory was developed as a framework that serves to study the institutionalization of environmental politics, its dynamics and variety. Political modernization as a theory explains long-term processes of changes of a political domain. It deals with institutionalization, i.e. a concept that indicates and serves to study “the ongoing processes of the patterning, preservation, construction, organization and deconstruction of day-to-day activities and interactions in institutions” (Arts, 2000: 18). Slangen and Loucks define institutions as “rules of conduct or rules of regularity” (Slangen and Loucks, 2007: 46). North specifies institutions as “the humanly devised constraints that structure policy, economic and social interactions” (1991: 97). Constraints could be formal, represented by laws, property rights, and constitutions or informal such as sanctions, customs, traditions or taboos. Institutions were developed by people to facilitate the transactions and to create order and regularity. Bell (2004: 166) in *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology* explains political modernization as various forms of governance that will enable to bring together different ideas and concerns in a cooperative way. He claims, “It will take the active engagement of citizens making choices in their consumption that put the government and the economy in their embrace of ecological rationality.”

It is not easy to specify what the modernized really stands for. Some claim that for instance the levels of urbanization, education or the energy use goes together with modernization. Others point out a significance of attitudes “such as secularization, achievement orientation, functional specificity in formal organizations”<sup>41</sup>. In fact, modernization is understood either in tangible terms related to the growth or is associated with intangible matters. Ethnocentric inclinations made nations feel that they are on the right way to modernity. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and its satellites had constantly ‘shown’ that they are doing better than the Western world. Five-year plans were designed to overtake the capitalist countries. Was over-production an ideal way to reach growth or modernity? Fallouts of the excessive productions had demonstrated its drawbacks. Deterioration of the environment and the plea for the citizens’ obedience by leading figures were present at the same time. Modernization does not necessarily mean improvement of the state of the world or societies. Rather the term modernization suggests an evolution. In fact, many definitions of modernization are based on

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<sup>41</sup> See: <http://science.jrank.org/pages/10273/Modernization-Theory-Defining-Modernization-Theory.html>



the democracy issues or political institutions. In this thesis ‘modernization’ will stand for **the evolution of democratic political and social climate** that can address environmental problems or difficulties of regional development.

A process of a policy modernization then refers to changes in the field of policy. The theory of political modernization brings into forefront above all, roles and interactions of the actors from the nation state sphere, market and civil society.

The actual interaction among actors from various institutions and three above mentioned spheres results in a formation of a policy arrangement. The concept of the policy arrangements would be used analytically in the empirical section to understand structural processes of changing interrelations between state, market and civil society. In other words, political modernization explains the change of policy arrangements from the institutional point of view (Arts and Tatenhove, 2002: 10).

### ***Policy arrangements***

How can we better understand the actors’ interaction in socio-political structures? The authors of the political modernization designed an analytical framework, i.e. an operationalized concept of policy arrangements to link interactions of various actors with the social and political environment, in which we can find these interactions, in order **to get a static picture of the processes that occur in a so-called ‘policy domain’**. Literally, “a ‘policy arrangement’, i.e. an outcome of a process of policy modernization, refers to the temporary stabilization of the organization and the substance of a policy domain at a specific level of policy making” (Arts et al., 2000: 54). A policy domain comprises policy practices that relate to a certain issue. The concept of a policy arrangement should enable us to look at policy change from two points of view. A strategic change that stem from interaction of actors from the state, the civil society and the market is taken into account as well as the structural changes (Arts, 2000: 203). However, policy arrangement should not be seen only as the outcome of the policy modernization process. Policy arrangements structure day-to-day policy practices, which has impact on policy and in fact influence political modernization process (Arts, 2000: 35).

According to proponents of the political modernization theory, we witness a constant change of social and political structures. This change is caused by a process that could be termed ‘political modernization’ and an elaboration on policy arrangement is a way to explain the process of changes. A definition of a ‘policy arrangement’ moreover suggests that this concept refers not only to an aspect of the time (that the stabilization is temporal) but also to the aspect of the space. The aspect of the space is associated with different levels of policymaking at which political arrangements might evolve. International, national, regional or local levels are usually referred to in the context of policymaking.

Day-to-day policy practices are structured by policy arrangements and this results in policy.

Circumstances and conditions of a political change are researched in the theory, the reasons and consequences of shifts from one arrangement to another are explained in literature on the political modernization. Two main aspects of policy arrangements are an organization and a

substance (Arts et al., 2000: 54). Elaboration on organization and substance helps to diagnose stability and change in a policy arrangement (Arts and Tatenhove, 2002: 3). Concerning the aspect of an organization, Arts et al. consider three main dimensions of the organization, i.e. agents, rules and resources. The term of a 'policy coalition' was employed to serve elaboration on the stakeholders/agents aspect. Dimension of resources was labeled as power and resources. The rules of the game represent the third dimension. The latter aspect of policy arrangements is a substance, represented by policy discourses for analytical purpose. Policy coalitions, resources and power, rules of the game and policy discourses characterize policy arrangements and therefore they should be elaborated with respect to empirical research.

## **Policy coalitions**

Arts et al (2000: 57) refer to policy coalitions as “a number of actors who share interpretations of a policy discourse or resources, in the context of the rules of the game.” These actors pursue the same goals. With an image of achieving set and/or identified policy goals, these actors involved in different strategies in order to reach their goals. Policy coalitions were researched from two different points of view. They employed a strategic approach, as it is believed that forming a coalition is a pragmatic standpoint by the actors that want to be successful in realizing their visions and reaching their objectives. If more actors who share same or similar policy interpretation come together, their goal pursuit has more chance to be realized. The strategic analysis of policy coalitions is therefore strongly focused on social relations among the stakeholders. An analysis of a policy coalition from the institutional point of view stems from the processes of political modernization.

## **Resources and power**

Resources closely relate to power as their division predetermines who will be the powerful one. Arts et al. (2000: 59) regard power as “the ability of actors to mobilize resources” as well as a socio-political phenomenon. More powerful actors that dispose of and use the valuable resources have a say in political decisions or setting the agendas. Their mobilization of resources results in change of the rules of the game. This relation suggests that the dimensions of resources and power and dimension of rules of the game are strongly interrelated. This holds true also for the rest of the dimensions of the policy arrangement. If there is a change in one of the dimension it is most likely that the rest of the dimensions will alter as well.

## **Rules of the game**

The third and final dimension of an organizational aspect of a policy arrangement is represented by rules of the game. Rules of the game shape the policy processes. They can be constraining as well as enabling. Formal rules of the game include formal documents and arrangements such as constitutions, laws or property rights. Informal rules of the game are according to Arts et al. (2000: 61) “a part of the predominant – but changing – political

culture.” The rules of the game define which actors are acting eligibly and which are breaking the norms. These rules are guidelines describing how one should act, “how political game should be played” (Arts et al., 2000: 62). Changes of the rules of the game result from the actual process of political modernization. Concerning the empirical research, the theory will be used to characterize new rules of the game (if they are present).

These were the three dimensions recognized within an organizational aspect of a policy arrangement. Policy discourses characterize a latter aspect of a policy arrangement, a substance, i.e. essential part of a policy arrangement or more specifically a content of the arrangement.

## **Policy discourses**

Policy discourses, often linked to social constructionism<sup>42</sup>, are widely used for an analysis of environmental ideas and texts (Hannigan, 2006: 36). Elaboration on policy discourses is a tool that contributes to the policy arrangement analysis, to a characterization of policy arrangements. Proponents of the political modernization theory (Arts et al., 2000: 56) associate policy discourses with a substance of a policy arrangement. Moreover, policy discourses should be seen interrelated to the organizational factor (policy coalitions, power and resources, rules of the game). Hajer, accused of overstating a role of policy discourses<sup>43</sup>, defines a discourse as “a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorizations that is produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which a meaning is given to physical and social realities” (Hajer, 1995: 264). Dryzek argues that the discourses are embedded in language and enable to put bits of interpretations into coherent stories. Moreover, he points out the political power that is bound up with discourses and that sometimes it is the question of power whether the actors can get their discourse accepted by others (Dryzek, 2005: 8).

For the use in the policy arrangement framework, Arts et al. (1995: 63) define a policy discourse as a “dominant interpretative scheme, ranging from formal policy concepts to popular story lines, by which meaning is given to a policy domain”. A policy arrangement might be characterized by one predominant policy discourse. However, the content of the dominant discourse might be challenged by other discourses (Arts, 2000: 63). As the predominant discourses were changing in 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, Arts et al (2000: 63) concluded that policy discourses combine elements of political modernization. In 1970, during the anti-modernization era, the discourses having an anti-statist and anti-capitalist character that defined environmental problems in terms of conflict prevailed. Political ecology, eco-development, small is beautiful discourses are examples of these. Whereas in the late 1980s and 1990s, the discourses that brought more consensus took over the dominant position. Discourses such as sustainable development or ecological modernization suggested that environmental problems might be solved by a variety of actors. As Arts et al. (2000: 65) put it “These recently developed ‘consensus’ discourses seem to provide the legitimization for the new environmental policies, which have resulted in a variety of innovative arrangements, and which reflect the thesis of political and ecological modernization to a very large extent.”

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<sup>42</sup> An umbrella term for theories that strongly emphasize a socially created character of social life [www.encyclopedia.com].

<sup>43</sup> (Hannigan, 2006:36)

Dryzek (2005: 19) offers a checklist of elements for the scrutiny and the analysis of different discourses. The elements are as follows: basic entities recognized or constructed, assumptions about natural relationships, agents and their motives and last but not least key metaphors and other rhetorical devices. One of the main discourses that are recognized by Dryzek (2005) and that is to be used for the case analysis is **sustainable development**. Each element of this discourse is further operationalized which is discussed in the table below. This checklist is used to analyze how the discourses are embedded in language and how the information provided by actors involved in the civic association and the certification scheme, being included in text documents or being articulated directly in speech, form the coherent stories. Moreover, it will be evaluated to what extent the ideas and concepts through which a meaning is given within the project by the stakeholders corresponds with the framework of elements developed by Dryzek (2005).

**Table 3. Elements for the analysis of the discourse of sustainable development**

Elements for the analysis of the discourse	Operationalization of the elements
Basic entities recognized and constructed	Nested and networked social and ecological systems Capitalist economy Ambiguity concerning existence of limits
Assumptions about natural relationships	Cooperation Nature subordinate Economic growth, environmental protection, distributive justice and long-term sustainability go together
Agents and their motives	Many agents at different levels, transnational and local as well as the state, motivated by the public good
Key metaphors and other rhetorical devices	Organic growth Nature as natural capital Connection to progress Reassurance

In an empirical part, the checklist developed by Dryzek will be used to analyze the dominant discourse thoroughly in the documents of civic association and from what I learned during the interview with actors involved. I will look at the discourse(s) that challenge the dominant discourse.

Arts and Tatenhove (2004: 351) recognize several kinds of policy arrangements. These can be classified into two groups. Modernist policy arrangements comprise statist, corporatist, liberal and intergovernmental policy arrangements and reflexive arrangements that include civic, plural, transnational and interactive policy arrangements. State is a central player with undisputed authority in statist policy arrangements. Other organizations such as trade unions are partners with state institutions in corporatist arrangements. In liberal arrangements, market is in the forefront. Intergovernmental policy arrangements represent modernist policy arrangements on international level. In the reflexive policy arrangements, players from the

state, market and civil society interrelate in plural and interactive policy arrangements. Significant role for civil society is apparent in civic policy arrangements. At international level, civil society, market and state interrelate in transnational policy arrangements and together determine political outcomes.

## 4. Reflecting on the process of the political modernization within the context of the Czech Republic

*Before coming to the actual analysis of the case using a concept of policy arrangements, the insight into a structural change of environmental policy process in the Czech Republic will forego. For a better understanding, a comparison with Western situation of a policy process will be made which will highlight the different political and social development that must be taken into account. For this comparison, the division of the process of political modernization into three stages as developed by political modernization theorists will be used. This will explain to what extent is the political modernization process as reflected in environmental policy applicable in the condition of the Czech Republic.*

Arts et al (2006) distinguish three stages of the actual process of modernization of a policy domain, i.e. *early political modernization, anti-modernization and late political modernization*. They link the stages to the structural changes in policymaking in Western Europe. This division of the actual process is hardly comparable to what countries in Central and Eastern Europe experienced under Soviet dictate.

The strong role of policy makers who were to act rationally, high specialization, differentiation and fragmentation of a policy processes and the image of a man ruling over the social and physical world (so-called manageable society) characterized the era of *early political modernization* in Western Europe (Arts et al., 2006: 38). The role of the state was undeniable. Though, the three spheres, state, market and civil society existed at the same time and the spheres functioned according to their own principles (bureaucracy, competition and solidarity), the state was considered a powerful authority and roles of market and civil society were limited in practice. Interrelations between the three spheres were influenced by existing political situation and structures of institutions. Based on these conditions, different policy arrangements emerged. The policy arrangements present in the era of early political modernization were referred to as *statist, corporatist and liberal*. Statist policy arrangement recognized a role of the state as a power container as well as an actor that determined the policy content and its organization. When some intermediate organization such as trade unions were given an opportunity to participate in policymaking, corporatists policy arrangements stood for policy arrangements. Actors from the sphere of market had a dominant position in liberal policy arrangements.

At the second stage, in general in 1970s, the state took into account claims for solving problems such as inequality, poverty, redefined its priorities and started to pay more attention to “post-materialist issues” such as environment. It means that new policy arrangements were established (van den Burg, 2007: 2). Central discourses at that time such as inequity or democracy “were defined in terms of conflict, revolution and collective emancipation” (Arts and Tatenhove, 2002: 9). New political actors - environmental movements accompanied governments in policy-making. Anti-modernists accused dominant players from the early political modernization of being materialistic, bureaucratic and repressive. Radical changes of political and social order were sought after. Though, none of the proposals for different social

and political system<sup>44</sup> were implemented in a large scale, the anti-modernization stage was crucial for a dawn of environmental policies (Arts, 2002: 41-42).

Processes related to globalization, individualization, post-modernization and reflexive modernization influenced the third phase of political modernization, *late political modernization*. An important sign of the late political modernization is *plurality*. We could notice a fragmentation of political, economic and cultural life of some societies. At the same time the functioning of these societies pertains to processes at the global level (Arts and Tatenhove, 2002: 9). Post-modernization theory is essential for understanding the globalization in sense of linking local to global. Not all units are the same but they are formed by many factors so that they become “fluid” and when connected into one complex we talk about multicultural and multiethnic nature. Global risks are put in front in reflexive modernity. Society’s response to risks is the creation of sub-politics. Arts and Tatenhove (2002: 10) refer to Beck’s Risk Society when claiming that it is necessary to distinguish between **‘rule-directed’ and ‘rule-altering’ politics**. The nation-state exercises its power through rule-directed politics whereas rule-altering politics relate to changing rules of game. The exclusiveness of the role of state was undermined and in the late modernity, rule-directed and rule-altering politics combine.

In the Czech Republic (and former Czechoslovakia), it is not possible to find similar phases of political modernity as in the Western European countries due to the historical development. Communist regime in former Czechoslovakia from 1948 until 1989 suppressed any attempts of individuals to express opinions and participation of any other actor in policy-making beside state was utterly unimaginable. Social and political pluralism was sentenced to its end/dissolution. Liberal capitalism was rejected and the state power elite decided to dismantle institutions of civil society<sup>45</sup>. During the 1960s when new political actors freely emerged and accompanied the state in Western Europe in policy-making, the politically designed processes proceeded with “quislings”, those who opposed regime, in the former Czechoslovakia. “A normative liberal notion of participation as the expression of individual and sectional interests very quickly became a rallying cry for those who opposed the Soviet-maintained communist regime....In the years after 1948 the Communist Party and state machinery intruded dramatically into the realms of the economy and the sphere of civil society” (Fagan, 2004: 56).

*It means that statist policy arrangements were the only present policy arrangements until the 1989.* A central governance styles are traditionally attached to statist arrangements (Arts, 2002: 30). Market structures were abolished, civil society suppressed. State and Communist Party was the only body that could be involved in decision-making. Market structures and civil society organizations that existed before power takeover in 1948 in Czechoslovakia were totally dismantled. Alternative opinions were held by dissidents or by clandestine organizations. Prior to 1948, the three spheres, state, market and civil society interrelated and functioned according to the same principles as in Western European countries, with the role of the Czechoslovak state being in the centre as a powerful authority from its foundation in

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<sup>44</sup> Some claims were inspired by utopian socialism, some considered that small-scale communities having a potential to address the reality problems.

<sup>45</sup> In 1948, there were about 70000 civil organizations, similar to those in Western Europe. However, in 1950 these organizations lost their independency when being reorganized into national organizations under the auspices of the Party and the National Front as they were seen opposing to the regime and their control by state was required.

1918. The state moreover was the only body that owned the information and decided which information was to be revealed and which should not have come to public ground.

In Western Europe, economies of states had made their way from heavy industry to information-based technologies during the second half of the 20th century. Their manufactures were transferred to developing countries. Whereas the Warsaw Pact countries were restricted access to technologies and innovations and their centrally planned economies of these states depended upon heavy industry with energy-intensive production methods (Fagan, 2004: 10). The state of Czechoslovakia did not pay enough attention to protection of environment and its emphasis on heavy industry such as metallurgy, mining industry brought about the devastation of the environment. Chemical industry and agricultural production with heavy mechanization and artificial fertilizers contributed to environmental problems. Pollutions and other damages threatened inhabitants, natural resources were plundered and rivers polluted. According many environmental indicators, Czechoslovakia was one of the countries with the worst state of the environment in Europe<sup>46</sup>. Socialistic regime did not admit any environmental problems and argued that only capitalism was a source of problems. As the state of the environment was getting worse, government made a lot of effort to conceal true data and all attempts to bring the true information into public were banned. The “Blue Book of Ministry of Environment: The state and development of the Environment” (1990) gives the evidence of environmentalists who were imprisoned”<sup>47</sup>. All spheres of human life were affected by a deep moral crisis, loss of civic responsibility and a focus on short-sighted and partial solutions ” (Moldan and Hák, 2000: 1). In 1970s, one important factor enters into policy-making, economic decline. Communist leaders, even if they would like to solve environmental problems, they were aware that the country does not dispose of financial resources, modern technology and the whole system of a protection of the environment. There was no institution, which would take care of the environment.

The question why the communist regime in Czechoslovakia ignored environmental risks arises. Social constructionist John Hannigan (2006: 109) offers an answer why people ignore risks. The reason why some risks are ignored is embedded in culture and social relations. Social relations can have three forms: the individualist, the hierarchical and the egalitarian. Interests of planners and people who managed the centrally planned communist regime relate to hierarchical pattern. Central planners were concerned that environmental risks threatened the domestic law and regime itself.

Ulrich Beck’s term *first modernity* refers to the society that can control risks perfectly. On the other hand, the risks associated with the second modernity that is related to further modernization are difficult to control due to the increasing complexity (Beck, 2004: 114). Beck’s famous statement of hierarchical poverty and democratic smog relates to the fact that in the second modernity the risks distribution is less clear and less hierarchical due to the complexity of environmental risks and snowball and contagion effects (Beck, 2004: 130). Even those who are responsible for the environmental problems (wield power and authority in decision-making process) become vulnerable to new categories of environmental risks. This can generate a learning mechanism within risk society and that is why environmental movement in the Czechoslovakia actually started. Environmental movements and activities of individuals were bounded to a tendency to move from industrial society to the paradigm of

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<sup>46</sup> Figures on sulphur dioxide suggested that the country was the most polluted in Europe. The problem was quantity of sulphur dioxide produces and the lack of adequate filters to reduce the impact of sulphur dioxide at the same time (Fagan, 2004: 11)

<sup>47</sup> See: <http://www.czp.cuni.cz/Osoby/Moldan/Publikace/t1181.htm>



risk society. These people wanted to prevent or minimize the externalities of the state's heavy industry orientation. Beck (2004: 122) argues that if the state can no longer guarantee its citizens "pure air and healthy food and the security that goes with them" then the resistance is completely justified. Beck explicitly states that risk not only represents threat to the environment but also limits the political system itself. People who feel that their fundamental rights are stroked and their core existence is endangered logically start to oppose the system. An inadequate quality of water caused by a lack of adequate technology, use of fertilizers in agriculture and especially air pollution reflected an increase in respiratory diseases amongst people living in the most polluted areas were the major concerns (Fagan, 2004: 11-12).

Czechoslovak citizens could not look over the worsen state of the environment and pollution that directly endangered their health. The way how people perceived these problems brought about what Beck calls risk society. The move from paradigm of industrial to risk society most likely triggered the endeavor among citizens in the Czechoslovakia to oppose the regime. Citizens felt that their existence is endangered by the ignorance of official representatives towards environmental problems. The attempts to divert deterioration of the environment can be regarded as a driver process of political modernization. After the revolution when citizens finally could take action and influence the negative impact on the environment, the process of political modernization got its form. Many NGOs were established soon after the collapse of the communist regime and environmental issues finally attracted deserved attention. Transition from centrally planned to market economies brought among others also changes in approaches towards the environment. The Ministry for the Environment was established soon after the Velvet Revolution and public enthusiastically supported its work. Improvement of the environment was actually the most important goal for a new democratic government<sup>48</sup>.

Many environmentalists from the communist era undertook a function in a policy-making, which meant that ideal conditions for environmental policy were formed. The environmental legislation was adopted. Environmentalist and geo-chemist Bedrich Moldan contributed very much to the formation of the Czech ecological legislature and became the first Minister for the Environment on the 1st January 1990. Ivan Dejmál, legend among environmentalist, who was arrested for his activities in political opposition and in ecological movements<sup>49</sup>, started to work in the Ministry for the Environment as well and later on became Minister. In the early 1990s a big number of non-governmental organizations have sprung up. The majority of NGO's were environmental ones and they attracted attention of public who were heavily willing to support their activities. Fagan (2004, 4) states on the account of environmental NGOs: "The labyrinth of nascent environmental organizations appeared to be flourishing immediately after revolution and, in 1990, they were by far the most numerous and visible expression of post-communist society." He labels this time as 'the era of movement based politics' and states that the environmental movements after revolution in Czechoslovakia emerged in the euphoric atmosphere and offered a participatory, alternative democratic politics non-existent for so long.

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<sup>48</sup> See: <http://www.czp.cuni.cz/Osoby/Moldan/Publikace/t1181.htm>

<sup>49</sup> Before the collapse of communist regime, Ivan Dejmál was very active in activities in political opposition as well as in ecological movements, especially in 1970s and 1980s. From 1987, he secretly edited Ecological Bulletin (Ekologický Bulletin) and was one of the founders of organization Ecological Society (Ekologická společnost) which initiated creation of association of ecological activities Green Circle (Zelený kruh) in 1989.

*From this moment, we can talk about development in context of political modernity. Citizen and emerging private firms are now considered independent entities and can engage in policymaking.*

With the democratic changes, one could observe the process that corresponded to early political modernization. State still represented a 'power container'. However, citizens and market disposed of principles within own sphere entered the decision-making processes. Radical movements as a sign of anti-modernity stage of political modernization are present in the Czech Republic as well. Their ideas, opinions as well as reasons of protests against establishment certainly deserve further exploration. However, I would conclude that their not well known discourses do not have distinctive influence on public life, economic and social development and by no means no one can regard the radical movements as a driving force of the modernization at the moment. That is why I would argue that anti-modernity stage of political modernization cannot be recognized in conditions of the Czech Republic. In the Czech Republic, the *processes that correspond with the third stage of political modernization, late political modernization, can be identified*. Linking local to global, plurality and fragmentation of political, economic and cultural life so typical for the late political modernization are apparent. However, due to the short time that political modernization had chance to develop, *diffusion of early political modernization and late political modernization is evident*.

Macro-processes in the social and political sphere were triggered above all by the change of regime. The democratic development was a direct cause that new policy arrangements emerged. In the empirical chapter Policy arrangements in the case, it will be shown how new policy arrangements reflect in the case.

## **5. How does a policy arrangement refer to the case of the certification scheme? Actual Analysis.**

*Policy arrangement is a valid framework to analyze the case that originated at the grassroots level in the White Carpathians Mountains. Changes occur quickly but policy arrangements that express temporal stabilization make it possible to identify and explain policy change. A detailed elaboration on policy coalitions, resources and power, rules of the game and last but not least policy discourses is necessary for a characterization of a policy arrangement. The primary objective is to identify which types of policy arrangements have structured the development of the certification scheme. Current policy arrangements would be contrasted with the arrangements from the previous regime in the comparison of statist and civic policy arrangements. However, attention is predominantly paid to the period from 1991 onwards. The chapter Policy arrangements in the case The Traditions of the White Carpathians certification scheme will answer the second research question. How do policy arrangements in a case of The Traditions of the White Carpathians look like?*

Firstly, the chapter will deal with actors' coalitions and the allocation of the resources the different actors use. Next, the rules of the game within the case will be discussed. Then, attention will be paid to policy discourses that frame the case as well as to discourses that might challenge it. Final section of the chapter will deal with an identification of policy arrangements that could be distinguished within the case.

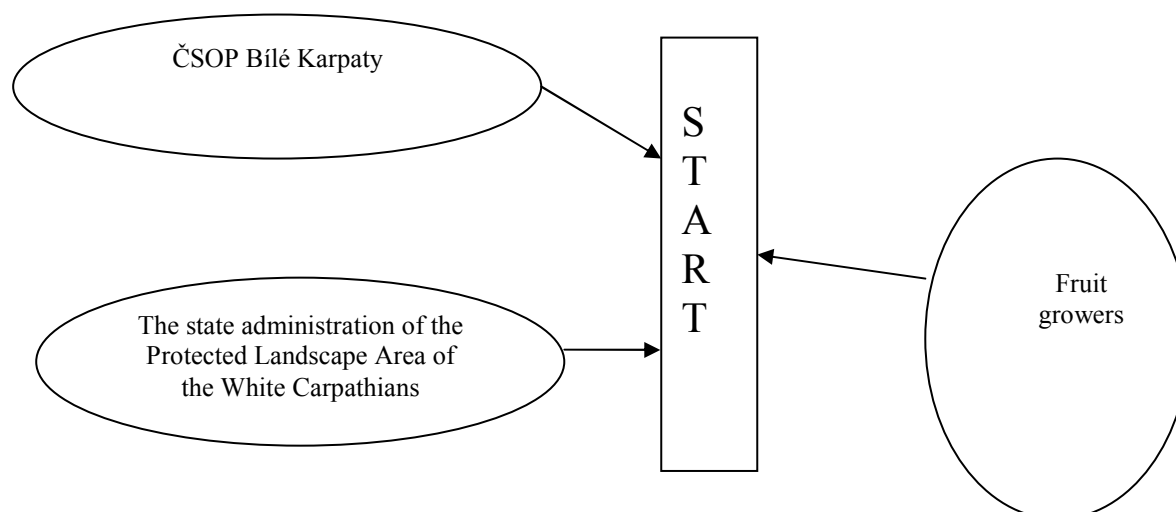
### **Actors and their resources**

This section entails identification of actors' coalitions and the allocation of the resources the different actors use. Firstly, the description of the coalitions that the actors have been forming will be presented. At the same time, to study the success of coalitions, I will try to assess the success of coalitions with respect to reaching set goals or by identifying the outcomes of coalitions.

#### **Environmentalists and fruit-growers**

At the very beginning, environmentalists from the Czech Union for Nature Conservation (ČSOP), Bílé Karpaty, the state administration of the Protected Landscape Area of the White Carpathians and fruit growers formed a coalition in order to map out varieties of fruit trees. They shared an opinion that the local fruit growing tradition was necessary to preserve. The central focus of the launched cooperation were the old varieties of fruit trees that were to be researched and according to the example from Austria, a gene bank orchard of these trees was to be established. Below in the figure 4., the composition of the actors when the first step in project coalition was made, is discussed.

**Figure 4. The composition of actors at the beginning of cooperation**



The cooperation had a tangible result. The fruit tree varieties were identified and the orchard for gene purposes planted. Moreover, the coalition brought a more important intangible result, i.e. an impetus for broadening the cooperation for the sake of the region landscape and traditions. With the course of the time, other chapters from the renowned organization, Kosénka from Valašské Klobouky and Veronica from Brno joined them. The coalition was broadening. Another actors involved in the civic association comprise the stakeholders from information services and from organic agriculture farmer movement.

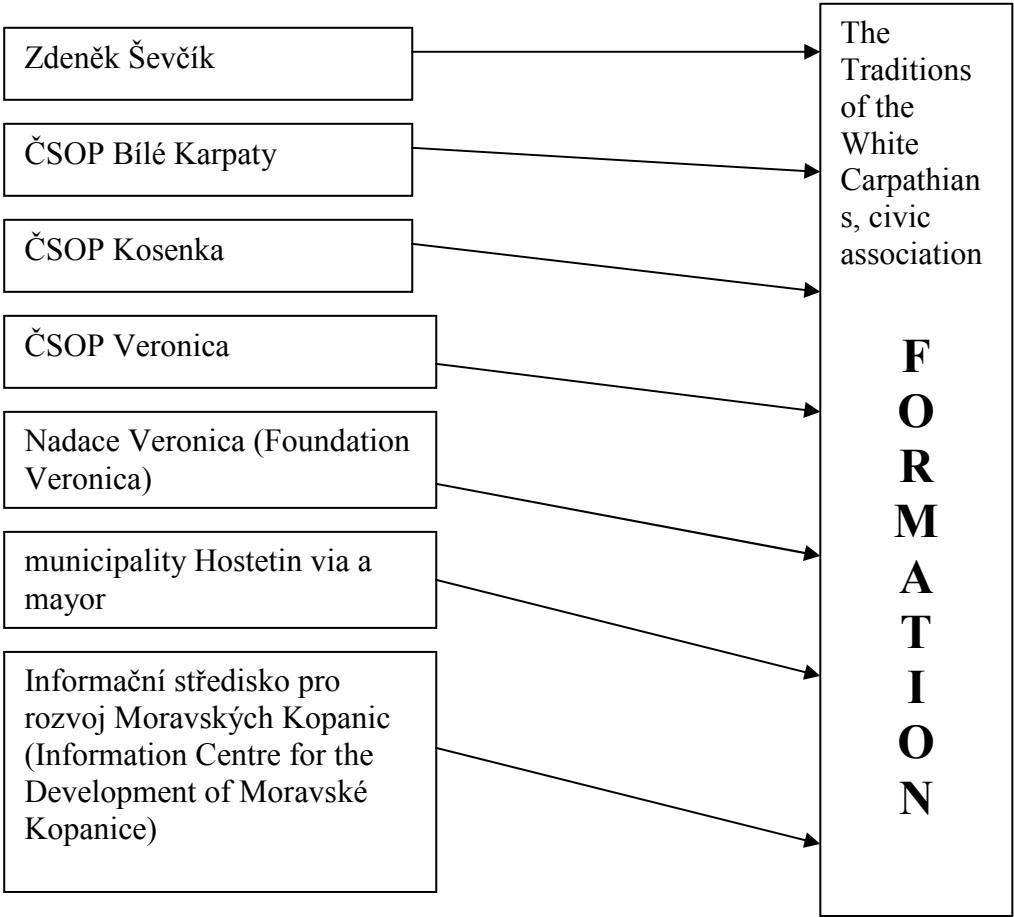
### **Resources**

In terms of resources different actors from the coalition could use to reach the common goals primarily experience and knowledge should be pointed at. Fruit growers had skills and experience in fruit growing. Environmentalists did not lack enthusiasm so necessary with dealing with the state's bureaucracy. Moreover, they had knowledge about and experience in nature preservation. The association was well-known among general public in the region for their activities in environmentalism. They had contacts with environmentalists and people involved in rural development from abroad that provided them with practical advices. An ability to reach external funding enabled to give the enthusiasm a firm ground and helped to realize objectives. When fruit growers and environmentalists combined their strengths they were able not only to map out the old varieties of trees but they initiated the project that in the later stage resulted in formation of civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians and later on in registration the certification scheme of the same name.

The fact that people involved in organic agriculture (who were moreover recognized by the state institutions) entered the coalition meant that the wish to manage the land sustainably was affirmed and the project itself beside the focus on traditions preservations gained the aspect of environmental concern. Moreover, the fact that the association of organic farmers is one of the coalition members is important from the policy point of view. The association of organic farmers PRO-BIO is very influential actor as it influences regional and national policy.

In the year 1998, the broadening of the grassroots coalition was given an official status by establishing the civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians. The figure 5. gives an overview of founding members of the association.

**Figure 5. Founding members of the Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association**

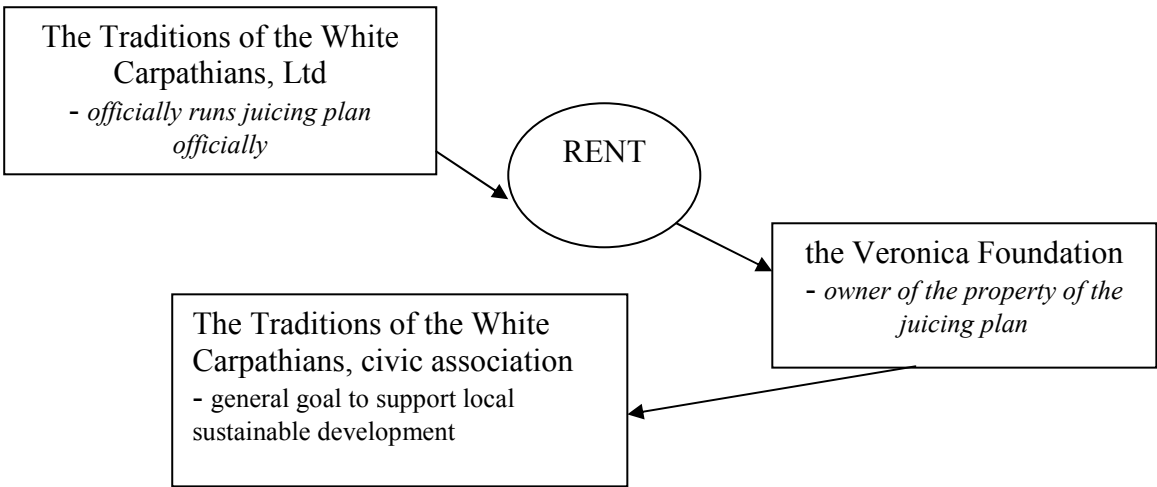


One of the chapters of the Czech Union for Nature Conservation, Veronica from Brno became a very influential actor in the project. Their purchase of the farmstead in the village of Hostětín was an important moment for the future of the certification scheme. They strove for implementation their vision, which was to generate new job opportunities as well as to give a possibility to fruit growers to market their fruit. They moreover paid extra when the fruit was delivered in the organic quality for processing in the fruit juicing plant. Veronica was successful in receiving funds. Their ability to receive funding from the Luxembourg organization Fondation Hëllef fir d’Natur largely contributed to the realization of the project. The year 2001 saw a great success of local people, volunteers and environmentalists endeavor. The first bottle came out of the fruit juicing plant. On the bottle’s etiquette, we could read The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Hostětínský mošt (Juice made in Hostětín).

However, the vision of the small-scale farming support could not be implemented unless farmers wish to participate. What was the attitude of the people who manage the land or orchards? Local people were reluctant to participate. This could be explained by the

uncertainty avoidance. Local farmers were not sure what the cooperation could bring them. Some of the environmentalists, that suggested new unconventional plans, were young, so what could they offer to experienced farmers? Furthermore, in the aftermath of the Velvet revolution, some were very hesitant to get involved in any broad cooperation when the way for an individualism was successfully paved (Fagan, 2004, Kučerová, 2007). During the consolidation phase (2003-2006), the Ltd. business The Traditions of the White Carpathians that officially runs the Hostětín fruit juicing plant was registered in the Trade Register. In order to maintain the local economy, the company rents a plot from the NGO Veronica which returns the money back to The Traditions of the White Carpathians civic association budget. This course of financial flow is discussed in the figure 6.

**Figure 6. Financial flow related to the rent of the fruit juicing company**



The existence of the Ltd. business suggests the involvement of market sector in coalition. The Ltd business formation is pragmatic (as explained in the chapter Establishing the certification scheme). People engaged in this business are involved in the civic association as well, so the extent of the market sector involvement might be contested.

From 1995, stakeholders from the White Carpathians civic association cooperated with environmentalists from Beskydy who established the regional label following the example of The Traditions of the White Carpathians label. This cooperation resulted from the project Conservation of Biological Diversity of Carpathian Mountain Grasslands. The funding to support the project was requested from UNDP/GEF and the central argument behind the project was to meet the obligation of the Carpathian Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity and to meet objectives of the EU. Members of the civic association consider this project to be a successful moment in the existence of the label itself.

On May 15th 2007, an important step in the project was made. The certification scheme that was registered at the Ministry of Interior was fully implemented when the certification were issued to 11 producers. Holders of the certification that could suddenly sell their products under the common label became participants of the coalition for preserving the landscape and regional traditions at the same time. Quality products offered by producers that are environmentally friendly and have a relation to the region is what could be called resources in

the policy arrangement framework. The goals set during the registration of the civic association, the certification scheme for local producers being one of the objectives, was reached.

We could talk about coalition forming from another point of view. Until the time when the certification to producers were approved and issued, the concern around the project was food-products-centered. Everything started with the environmentalists' and fruit growers' pact. The fruit juicing plant was an opportunity to market fruits from local people. Later on, it became clear that other traditional products could be a part of the umbrella label. Products such as ceramics, woven products or costume components do not exclude the main objectives of the certification scheme. The inclusion of non-food products is not a barrier in a strive for a regional promotion which is one of the three main objectives<sup>50</sup>. In contrary, it could be argued that the products that are region specific such as components of the regional costume represent the region more visibly than for instance apples that could be classified homogenous products. The proportion of food products and food related products (garden nursery plants) versus non-food products was 5:5. In December, 2007, the second round of the certification issuing proved that the significance of art or handicraft products cannot be neglected. The proportion of the food and related products versus non-food products is 8:9.

The actors who are participants in the certification scheme or members of the association are not the only actors involved in the whole project. Regional division of organic farmers association PRO-BIO, a member of the civic association, is the bridge another 27 organic farms from the White Carpathian area. These farms are participants in the coalitions within the project as well though not being directly involved in the civic association. The farms are flexibly involved in the activity of the association and with the course of time they might become involved in the actual certification scheme once applying for and receiving the certificate. Four farms are nowadays suppliers of organic apples for juice production. The large scale farm from the other side of the border, from Slovakia delivers apples in organic quality to the juicing plant as well (Kučerová et al., 2007: 9).

The territory-based coalition, in which heterogenous actors take part and which has formed with the vision of sustainable development and preserving traditions is continuously evolving. It will be interesting to observe the further development of this coalition and which direction it will take.

## ***Rules of the game***

The coalitions that have formed within the case are based on dialogue and cooperation above all. NGOs prefer more informal and open types of cooperation (Arts, 2002: 33). Kučerová et al. (2007: 16) consider bottom-up factors and top-down factors with respect to rules of the game within the case. Normative-controlling institutions (professing the statement 'everything what is not allowed is prohibited') that are associated with top-down character are constraining whereas the institutions agreed in the game with all signs of the bottom-up approach that are "close to socio-political factors of informal (NGOs) nature" are enabling. The fact that most of the actors, that actually started the coalitions and put a lot of effort in the

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<sup>50</sup> The aim of the certification scheme as stated on The Traditions of the White Carpathians website is

- a) to support local producers
- b) to contribute to the development of tourism
- c) to promote region as a whole

projects, come from the environmental NGOs therefore means that rules of the game are rather open. Rules of the game that govern the case are quite open based also on the fact that the actors are very heterogeneous. Explicit rules of the game of the utmost importance that govern the case are the official documents necessary for the acceptance by the state such as documents needed for establishing the civic association and alike. Another formal rules that structure the coalition and delimit its boundaries comprise criteria of eligibility for receiving the certificates.

The stakeholders share an understanding that a certain level of bureaucracy and checks of the criteria is needed for the certification to have some sort of a legal frame. The stakeholders directly involved also express their wish to operate without excessive formal rules. They try to avoid an unnecessary bureaucracy. An effort to reduce bureaucratic measures could be thought an enabling factor when the producers will consider carefully to become active participants and holders of the certification scheme. One of the holders of the certification states, an organic fruit grower states: *“This certification is not under a strict bureaucracy control. Bureaucracy associated with this label is rather moderate.”*<sup>51</sup> Another participant, sheep keeper and fruit grower claims: *“I had already experienced more complicated certification processes.”*<sup>52</sup> Antipathy towards systems of controls and formal rules is apparent and could be attached to the legacy of the previous regime when people, their ways of opinions’ expressions and activities were limited by the central power of the communist state. In the situation when individual can finally control his/her business independently, the control is logically unwelcome.

Kučerová et al. (2007: 20) reason about the rules of the game within the White Carpathians initiative:

*“The internal cooperation is not primarily based on formal agreements with internal and even some external partners but rather on commonly shared views and values related to environmental issues and landscape protection which are rooted in original views of environmentalists and organic farmers opposing the full commodization of nature and tracing back to the old traditions of farming in the region”.*

Why don't the coalitions within the case need that specific rules of the game? The fact that the rules of the game are more open does not mean indeed that informal rules of the game are lacking. The trait of informal rules; bonds among people, are more important in the local affairs. The structures of relations between and among actors (so-called social capital) encourage productive activities. “When individuals learn to trust one another so that they are able to make credible commitments and rely on generalized forms of reciprocity rather than on narrow sequences of specific quid pro quo relationships, they are able to achieve far more than when these forms of social capital are not present” (Slangen and Loucks, 2007: 55). It means that if the trust among people is high, the formal rules of the game are not so necessary and informal rules might appear to be more efficient. Trust moreover reduces contracting costs and costs of control, as the ‘fear of opportunism’ is much lower in the case where people trust one another. Noteboom (1999: 33) argues that in case of some institutions such as the certification system, detailed contracts can be destructive as they adversely affect process trust to develop. Based on this arguments, it could be stated that the informal rules such as trust, understanding and connectedness are more important for the case.

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<sup>51</sup> Personal Communication, Zdeněk Ševčík, 28 September 2008, Hostětín.

<sup>52</sup> Personal Communication, Zdeněk Miklas, 28 September 2008, Hostětín.



It appears that the new rules of the game come from the umbrella term “informal rules”. Where did these new rules come from? New rules of the game have apparently arisen from the political opportunities in the aftermath of the regime change. Informal rules of the game such as trust do not go together with dictatorships. Dictators do not want people to cooperate (independently) because they believe some cooperation outside dictator’s control to be against the regime (Paldam and Svendsen, 2000: 5). The only cooperation that is allowed is the one controlled directly by the state. All kinds of dictatorship try to create an atmosphere of fear and distrust in order to intimidate citizens and prevent them from their own initiatives. After the Velvet revolution, activities independent on the state could evolved. However, the legacy of previous regime caused that people were rather hesitant to engage again in any forms of collective activities. It was essential to build trust among people to get the cooperation started.

### ***Policy discourses recognized in the case***

Attention should be paid to discourses that frame the case as well as to discourses that might challenge the predominant discourse.

#### **Policy discourses framing the case**

It is clear that discourse of **sustainable development** dominates the case of establishing the certification scheme. The concept of sustainability is often referred to in official documents of the civic association and the idea of sustainability is endorsed by the actors involved, as apparent from the interviews conducted. The concept of sustainability dates back to the 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*. This report brought a discussion about sustainability on the political agendas. It is argued that the sustainable development concept serves as a guiding principle for rural policy making (Arts, 2000: 191). Dryzek (2005: 153) recognizes the idea that economic growth that is environmentally benign and socially just<sup>53</sup> should be promoted. This is according to him the core story line of this discourse. The detailed analysis of the case with respect to the sustainability discourse will be given later.

A poetic **Arcadian discourse** could be identified within the case as well. An arcadian nature is seen external to the human society. It refers to an embeddedness of nature in a “cultural memory” (iconization) and is seen complementary in the sense of its opposition to the bad urban world (Hannigan, 2006: 39).

#### **Challenging discourse**

The discourse of **market liberalism** could be considered challenging to the predominant policy discourse, to the discourse of sustainable development. Attitudes of politicians (Klaus’s government), especially in the early post-communist era illustrates well the challenging discourse. It was argued that environmental concerns are luxury as firstly, it is important to pursue economic growth. It was believed that economic growth and environmental welfare cannot go together and that environmental concerns rather hinder economic opportunities. This is illustrated in the case when the Prime Minister rejected the environmental plan for 1995 on the basis that it comprised the phrase ‘sustainable development’. In his hard-line neoliberal rhetoric, he insisted that the term ‘sustainable

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<sup>53</sup> Socially just here refers to distribution even within future generations (Dryzek, 2005: 153).

development' should not appear in any governmental document.<sup>54</sup> The discourse of the market liberalism might challenge the case with respect to receiving support from the external actors such as the state.

## **Discourse analysis of sustainable development**

The analysis of the discourse of sustainable development comprises according to Dryzek (2005) several elements that are to be elaborated.

### *Basic entities recognized or constructed*

#### **Nested and networked social and ecological systems**

The sustainability is not exclusively an issue for nation-states. It is also a discourse of and for global civil society (Dryzek, 2005: 159). Furthermore, sustainability is an issue at regional and local levels too. Local Agenda 21 makes clear that local governments should adopt principles of sustainable development. One of the ideas that come from the sustainable development theory is the assumption that the problem solving requires “a shift in power between different levels to meet more effectively the challenge of sustainability” and that a disaggregated approach of solutions of environmental problems is needed (Dryzek, 2005: 155). Implementation of principles of the sustainable development could be found within the certification scheme. The scheme fits well to the suggestion that local governments endorse the issue of sustainability and can take care of their own problems. The certification scheme has arisen from the activities of the civil society. The key actors here come from the grassroots civil society movement. The grassroots participation proved to have positive results in addressing local problems. People that come from the area concerned are aware of day-to-day problems they face so it is more likely that they take an action to be better off. Politicians from the national level governance are too far from the specific problems as well as from the proposing solution to these.

Moreover, Dryzek (2005: 154) points out **nested systems**<sup>55</sup> as basic entities and says that humanity is not separate from the natural system. He refers to the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1978: xi, stating: “The environment does not exist as a sphere separate from humans’ ambitions, actions, and needs...the ‘environment’ is where we all live.” The plea for safeguarding the bonds between humans and nature that are often present behind the civic associations concerns fits well to the Brutland’s idea about natural systems and humanity. An organic fruit-grower during the interview underscores the uniqueness of the human activity that resulted in an increased biodiversity value in the White Carpathians. People intervene in the natural system. This intervention has a positive outcome for humans (harvest) as well as for the natural world. The documents researched confirmed his words. For instance Jongepier and Jongepierova (2001: 37) state: “In contrast to the neighboring areas, whose landscape – dominated by plowed fields and spruce stands – is mostly a product of economic expansion of the 19th and 20th centuries, the White Carpathians reveal an age-old symbiosis between humans and nature. Its legacy is made manifest in their rich folk culture; but it is also imprinted in their landscape with its colorful patchworks of extensive and species-rich meadow communities.”

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<sup>54</sup> An analogy that is often cited is the cake (market economy), environment being its icing. The icing should be added according to Klaus when the cake is baked (Fagan, 2004: 85).

<sup>55</sup> The nested systems range from local to global (Dryzek, 2005: 154).

The document from the municipality of Hostětín mentions sustainable development directly: “The symbiosis of local people with nature can serve as an example of sustainable development.” Vaishar and Zapletalová (171) mention a ‘harmonic settlement’ in the sense that people lived in a harmony with nature. That could be a sign of either Arcadian discourse or of sustainability discourse referring to the fact that humanity here is not separate from the natural system. An inclination to the Arcadian discourse by some stakeholders is obvious. A belief that the landscape of the western range of the Carpathians is beautiful in comparison with noisy, industrious cities is in my point of view shared by some of the actors since poetic values are attached to the White Carpathians nature. Still, it does not contest the predominant ideas of the sustainability discourse that natural world and humanity are interconnected and interwoven. An argument that Kučerová et al. (2007) have brought into discussion is a sort of a disagreement between the farmers that represent rational, pragmatic attitudes (called earth-oriented) and environmentalists that are depicted having a romantic, idealist approach with the focus on harmony with nature (sky-oriented). Therefore, it could be argued that the environmentalists are more in favor of the Arcadian discourse. This disagreement cannot play a significant role in the vision making rather it could be a problem in some practical organization and planning. They share the same opinion about the objectives of their activities but there could be a clash in ways and strategies to reach the objectives. There is an assumption that this disagreement is now a bit limiting factor for the initiative and it can even develop in the future (Kučerová et al, 2007: 18).

### **Capitalist economy**

Although, the sustainability discourse seeks to redefine a political-economic chessboard, the capitalist economy is taken for granted. The challenge of sustainability requires the shift in power between the governance levels (usually away from the nation-state) and the grassroots participation. By dealing with the networked governance, the link between capitalist economy and networked systems is apparent. In all the documents and as apparent from the speech, capitalist economy as such is not contested by no means. Rather, a new democracy is considered an advantage bringing the possibility of connecting local to global and bringing the opportunities for a civil society’s free expression of opinions and ideas.

## *Assumptions about natural relationships*

### **Cooperation**

Cooperation is a one of the key words in sustainable development discourse. Cooperation is what is called for. “Sustainable development is to be achieved through cooperative rather than competitive effort” (Dryzek, 2005: 155). By putting a cooperation in the forefront, sustainability discourse opposes to economic rationalists or market liberalist discourses that highlight the power of an individual. The White Carpathian project is actually a child of a grassroots cooperation. People involved in nature protection and fruit growers found out that the common action is more fruit bearing than if they would pursue their interests on their own.

### **Nature subordinate**

Sustainability discourse suggests that human beings are in a hierarchy above the natural world (Dryzek, 2005: 155). “It is sustainability of human populations and their well-being which is at issue, rather than that of nature.” Though, nothing is said in the literature about the fact that

people rule the natural world, I would argue that this anthropocentric views could be identified within the project: tendency that humans rule the natural world is reflected in farming and fruit growing. Humans make decisions about what will happen in the natural world, with the natural system. It is human being who decides if the apple will be grown in an organic quality or if a plenty of pesticides will be applied to the tree. In fact, the Carpathian landscape owes its look to human intervention throughout the centuries.

### **Economic growth, environmental protection, distributive justice and long-term sustainability go together**

An assumption that economic growth, environmental protection and distributive justice are mutually reinforcing is recognized by the definition of the sustainable development. This should hold also in perpetuity. We should live modestly in order to sustain the resources for future generation. The appeal to conserve the White Carpathian landscape and its biodiversity in a long-term appears frequently in the documents that cover the objectives of the Traditions of the White Carpathians civic association or in the objectives of its certification scheme. Participation in the project *Conservation of Biological Diversity of Carpathian Mountain Grasslands* that endorses the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Carpathian Convention clearly shows the interest in sustainability. Here, **the economic well-being of local people** who will make use of the certification does not exclude **the interest in the nature preservation** and the conviction that this project will bring **benefits also for future generations**.

### *Agents and their motives*

#### **Many agents at different levels, transnational and local as well as the state, motivated by the public good**

Actors involved recruit from all levels of governance. However, as Dryzek (2005: 155) argues, a role of a nation-state and state actors is de-emphasized but they are still needed to bring together various actors under e.g. construction of international agreements and they communicate with NGOs and businesses. The participation of civil society and the role of grassroots movement is again highlighted in the discussion about agents.

### *Key metaphors and other rhetorical devices*

#### **Organic growth**

Dryzek (2005: 156) holds the view that metaphorical structure in sustainable development discourse is organic. "Organisms grow and develop; so can societies. Growth here is not just physical maturation that happens automatically, for sustainable development also stipulates self-conscious improvement." He sees a society that is able to develop its capacities further. Learning, growing awareness means a growth of the environment, which is here referred to being social as well as natural.

NGOs from the White Carpathians contribute to the community development by drawing attention to nature preservation. Number of seminar and activities aimed at nature preservation and environmental awareness organized by local NGOs gives an evidence of endeavor for the social and natural growth. To mention just a few, NGO Veronica organizes various educational excursions and seminars. The NGO Kosénka annually gathers volunteers to take part in mowing of meadows with scythes. NGO INEX-SDA (one of the certification

holder) organizes picking herbs at White Carpathians meadows and finally yet importantly, the NGO Bílé Karpaty has their program “Bring the sheep”. The program “Bring the sheep”, that has been launched in the year 2002, entails purchase of the sheep by citizens and providing the animal to the NGO and local farmers for rent. Farmers rent an animal for seven years. After that time, citizens can either have their animal back together with three others or they can donate it to the NGO or to local farmer who took care of it. This project is thought to enhance the care for nature and landscape and to strengthen cooperation of environmentalists and farmers (of civil society and market sphere) in the care for the landscape. Sheep and products related to sheep breeding were initially considered core products for the regional certification scheme as based on UNDP-GEF project *Conservation of Biological Diversity of Carpathian Mountain Grasslands in the Czech Republic through targeted application of New EU Funding Mechanism*.

### **Nature as a natural capital**

Nature, the environment is respected in the sustainability discourse. However, it is believed that nature serves to satisfy human needs. The natural capital cannot be substituted by man-made capital and because of that it should be preserved. “This thinking about nature is very economic” (Dryzek, 2005: 156). In the documents regarding the case, the nature is depicted more romantically rather than economically. Farmers or beekeepers should logically tend to see the nature in economic terms being their source of income. However, they take the natural resource more or less ‘for granted’ and more talk about their farming practices or circumstances that influence their businesses.

### **Connection to progress**

Sustainable development as a concept of course must pertain to a progress owing to its name. Sustainability calls for environmental improving. The progress within the project could be associated with the rural development. Farming, fruit growing and other activities contribute to the wellbeing and progress of the marginal region.

### **Reassurance**

Another rhetorical metaphor relates to the idea that at the same time, there will be an economic growth, environmental conservation and both will respect social justice in perpetuity. This optimistic rhetoric distances sustainable development discourse from other discourses. Dryzek (2005: 157) makes point about the success of local activities for the pursuit of sustainable development. He argues that more often we find successful projects (local ‘winners’) than the cases that were not that successful, with respect to sustainability.

In the leaflet *Rural Development and Environment: Initiatives that Make a Difference. White Carpathians – Czech Republic Juicing Apple for Economic Revival* we can notice the rhetorical metaphor of reassurance. “The establishment of a juice production plant was the best way to show to the local producers, small or large, that the apple juice produced under the regional label helps to revitalize local fruit orchards, to revive the interest in traditional local varieties of apples and to encourage organic farming practices. Finally it is also a way to assure the long-term preservation of the biodiversity of the orchards harbor.” The statement demonstrates that environmental concern was taken into account in the project (Falter, 2007).

Organic farming corresponds with the sustainability practices. Though not mentioned directly, the local producers are better off thanks to the project. Biodiversity preservation is a long-

term goal that goes well with the perpetuity idea of sustainable development discourse. Following statement refers to economic growth and at the same time explicitly suggests that the social pillar of sustainability was taken into consideration. “The fruit juicing plant made our village<sup>56</sup> popular, created seasonal jobs for inhabitants of the village, additional income for orchard owners and just as importantly, has contributed to preserving our village’s social fabric and rich cultural and natural heritage.” Inhabitants in rural marginal area and fruit growers benefit from the cooperation. Moreover, the social ties are strengthening. In the document from the municipality of Hostětín that describes the mission of the Traditions of the White Carpathians civic association, the reassurance rhetorical metaphor could be highlighted. “Our mission is to enable all activities to maintain and increase the diversity of natural heritage that came from the human effort....We hope to contribute to the landscape character and valuable fruit trees gene-fond preservation...to help all activities that develop traditional agricultural and craft making production.”

The table 4 will highlight which aspects of the sustainable development discourse recognized by Dryzek (2005) could be identified within the scheme. The aspects that correspond with the discourse as embedded in the project explicitly are in bold style. The references appear directly in the documents or the actors articulated the particular aspect. The rest of the aspects do not characterize the predominant discourse in the scheme directly or they do not appear in the text or speech at all.

**Table 4. Elements of the discourse of sustainable development that are reflected in the case**

<i>Elements for the analysis of the discourse</i>	<i>Operationalization of the elements</i>
Basic entities recognized and constructed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nested and networked social and ecological systems</b></li> <li>• Capitalist economy</li> <li>• Ambiguity concerning existence of limits</li> </ul>
Assumptions about natural relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cooperation</b></li> <li>• <b>Nature subordinate</b></li> <li>• <b>Economic growth, environmental protection, distributive justice and long-term sustainability go together</b></li> </ul>
Agents and their motives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Many agents at different levels, transnational and local as well as the state, motivated by the public good</b></li> </ul>
Key metaphors and other rhetorical devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Organic growth</b></li> <li>• Nature as natural capital</li> <li>• <b>Connection to progress</b></li> <li>• <b>Reassurance</b></li> </ul>

<sup>56</sup> Hostětín – my comment

## Discourses shared by certification holders

Apart from the discourse of sustainable development, the blend of actors who are using the certification and their attitudes towards the scheme seems to suggest three discourses; i.e. *pragmatism, patriotism and belonging*. These three discourses were identified based on the interviews with holders of the certification scheme.

Belief that the certification scheme will improve promotion of the products and positively influence the sales and actual development of ones business seems to belong under pragmatic umbrella term. The actors who subscribe to discourse of **pragmatism** in this case see potential gains from the certification scheme in economic terms. The common promotion via the certification was believed to improve the marketing of the traditional products made locally. Some of the producers whose production capacity allows it, expected that the public would be more aware of their products and that sales would go up. One of the producers joined the project as the further development of the business by amended promotion was expected.

Another producers associate the certification with the image of the region whose traditions are preserved. Producers, artisans, farmers and folk artists proud of their region want to be a part of the scheme and they see the participation in the certification scheme as a highly prestigious matter. The prestige is nurtured by **patriotism**. The project that addresses traditional products in the situation when some of the practices and arts of our ancestors are being forgotten has appealed to them. Close ties with the region traditions, the will to do something useful for own region go together with family traditions. The businesses of some of the producers is handing down from generation to generation. They feel that the idea to promote traditional products is very close to them and they want to contribute to this. An example of the family traditions would be the case of fruit grower whose grandfather already took care of orchards. With the advent of the communist rule, the orchards were expropriated by the Czechoslovak state. Finally, after the come back of the democratic regime, orchards were given back to the family and the tradition was saved and renewed. Another example is from different field. The family business of cooperage was established in the year 1928. In the year 1991, the firm could be re-established. Their products are popular in the Czech Republic as well as abroad. They constantly export barrels for wine to California and flowerpots to Sweden. The fact, that the certification addresses the traditional products was very interesting for them.

Figure 7. Family tradition of cooperery enterprise (Photo: <<http://www.bednarstvi-jf.cz/sudy.html>>.)



In addition, producer of components of traditional costume, who is apparently the only person who master this unique skill, continues in family tradition. Because of the handmade character of production which is extraordinarily time demanding, she can make up to five of the pieces in the course of year<sup>57</sup>. Her activity is in fact more hobby than gainful enterprise (Catalogue of certified products, Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association). However, as her skill is so special in the relation to the region, she is a reputable participant of the project. Quality of the products could be still attached to the patriotic motivation factors. One of the approved artisans states that when she put the certificate on display during the market, it is a demonstration of quality, the quality that comes with the product made in the White Carpathians. Her personal conviction is to promote the region.

<sup>57</sup> Personal phone-call communication, Věra Častová, 12 January 2009



It seems that producers whose attitudes towards their participation in the project are more patriotic than pragmatic tend to be satisfied with the current state of the certification scheme more. They were mainly interested in the project that would address vanishing practices and skills and would aim at their region. These participants are more likely that they will prolong their certificates<sup>58</sup>.

In contrast, those who put more hope in the certification scheme and their expectations were not fulfilled or those with more pragmatic than patriotic attitudes lean to look for tangible results of their participation. They expected that by joining the certification scheme their products would become more known through common promotion and that their sales would increase. They are more likely to terminate their certificates if the expected outcome does not arrive. If people with strong focus on immediate results/gains of certification will outweigh the number of those who profess more patriotic values and regard their participation as a prestigious matter, the future of the certification scheme is uncertain despite all the efforts that members of civic association has put in.

Apart from pragmatic and patriotic discourses, a **discourse of belonging** to the group is also apparent in the coalition of certification holders. One of the producers mentions that it is nice when they represent their products and themselves as a group<sup>59</sup>. Some of the certification holders have their close friend(s) participating in the project as well.

### ***From statist to civic policy arrangements***

The analysis above pointed out the existence of statist arrangements during the previous regime. The main rules of the statist policy arrangements comprise 'general administration', autocracy and secrecy (Arts, 2000: 187). The communist government of the state of Czechoslovakia was autocratic, the state governed policy making and the tendency to conceal the real information (such as the true about the state of the environment) was obvious. In general, the development of policy arrangements from the state-centered to decentralization is clear. This corresponds with the democratic development. The case demonstrates this shift in policymaking. The civic society approach is for the project important (Kučerová et al. 2007: 15-16). I would argue that the increased participation of actors from the civil society in the case means that the policy arrangements that appear in the case are 'civic'.

Regional certification system is in need of financial resources. Do the politicians recognize it? Traditional (formalized) structures of governance do not support the activities of the initiative enough according to Kučerová et al. (2007: 15-16). In the year 2004, during the seminar organized by the civic association, the head of the NGO Kosénka expressed his disappointment with involvement of regional and state administration in the project such as The Traditions of the White Carpathians being far behind the situation in Western Europe where support of rural activities by formalized governance structures is significantly higher. Regional government (when the research of COFAMI was conducted by Kučerová, Lošťák

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<sup>58</sup> Certifications are valid for two years. Certifications of producers from the first wave will expire in May, 2009 and in December, 2007 the validation of certification from producers of the second wave will terminate.

<sup>59</sup> Personal phone-call communication, Martin Dudek, 7 January 2009

and Zagata) composed of right and center-winged parties (the Civic Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Party). Their coalition challenged the cooperative approach as the collective activities were seen limiting a freedom of an individual as expressed in their individualist neo-liberal discourse.

Furthermore, regional politicians are not enthusiastic about the activities of the civic association. They are interested in and prefer large investment such as establishing Hyundai factory. There is an assumption that no regional government finds certification scheme important matter. The regional governments are aware of benefits and importance of tourism but regional certification schemes that actually aim to promote regions did not get deserved attention and stayed at the margin of interests<sup>60</sup>. Therefore, regional policy-makers are considered rather limiting actors.

In assessing the impacts of the initiative, Kučerová et al. (2007: 35) state that The White Carpathians civic association has no impact for the political performance yet. However, related actors try to lobby for measures promoting activities such these performed by people around the project from the White Carpathians.

**Civic policy arrangements** are included at local and regional levels in the era of late political modernization. This era brought new roles for the state, market and civil society. In civic policy arrangements, the participants in policy making come from the state sphere as well as from civil society and the market. It is claimed that the state sets key objectives, provides administrative and financial facilities and “supervises rural development ‘at distance’”. It has an enabling role (Arts, 2000: 189-190). It is argued that the role of private actors have gained importance, especially at local level. Public and private actors are interconnected which is reflected in an increase of numbers of public-private partnerships. The main rules of the civic policy arrangements comprise consensus, depolitization, egalitarianism and public-private partnerships. The predominant discourse of the coalitions that were formed within the case (sustainable development) is very much consensual. An understanding that the economic development can go together with environmental protection is not contested at all by the actors involved. This consensus fits well with the civic policy arrangement. The decentralization of the rural policymaking demonstrates that the local actors have a say in the issues that affect them. An ability to receive funding externally (from abroad or from private businesses) made them independent on the state support.

On the one hand, the government designs the legal framework. **The Ministry for Agriculture** prepares the Program for Rural development (in line with the EU/EC directives) and provides organic farmers with subventions. In the year 2006, The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Ltd. requested funding within the Program LEADER Czech Republic to amend technology of fruit-juicing plant. The Ministry for Agriculture approved submitted project to support processing of local agricultural production and awarded them with subsidy of 1.600.000 Czech crowns [<http://mikroregion-bojkovsko.cz/public/kapitola.phtml?kapitola=124259>].

These activities of the state seem to be enabling. However, the antipathy of the regional government that is not supporting the types of activities such as these run by the civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians is considered constraining factor.

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<sup>60</sup> Personal communication, email-correspondence, Tomáš Růžička, program director, Nadace Partnerství (Foundation Partnership), 21 February 2009

Actors participating in the certification scheme represent all stakeholders. There is a shift from elite (few actors that can involve in decision-making not being representatives of all stakeholders) to egalitarianism, which is typical for civic policy arrangements. Public-private partnerships in their exact legal definitions are not present in the White Carpathians case. However, the civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians resembles these, the municipality of Hostětín being one of the civic association members indirectly, via its Mayor. The resources that are characteristic for civic policy arrangements include *knowledge and information, managerial and communicative skills and finances*. A key element of the civic policy arrangements; i.e. open communication is well reflected within the case. The plans for the certification scheme development were communicated to and discussed with the internal actors as well as with external ones. A discussion with partners involved in organic agricultural and certification scheme from abroad should be recognized as an enabling factor. The NGO Veronica, one of the members of civic association organizes seminars with representatives of NGOs operating within the Traditions of the White Carpathians certification scheme. It means that actors developed learning initiatives. These activities represent the actors' effort in further knowledge and information generation. One of the actors of the association operates in the information services. Information Centre for the Development of Moravské Kopanice provides information and consultancy for organic farmers and raises awareness about benefits of organic agriculture.

The analysis of a policy arrangement within the case explained the changes in the policy domain both from the strategic and structural point of view. It was made clear that the strategic change is interrelated with macro-structural change of society. The democratic development after the Velvet revolution enabled the free expression of ideas and allowed independent activities of citizen. On the one hand, some Czechs and Slovaks started their own businesses. As a result of long experience with central control, people were hesitant to join collective activities. On the other hand, some people decided to get involved in the beneficial activities, started to set up NGOs or became members of these. We could talk about the renewal of the civil society. The strategic change of policy domain came together with democratic opportunities. The day-to-day activities of the actors contribute to the overall change within policy domains.

The power of actors depends on the resources they use. By being able to offer the resources for the disposal of coalitions, the actors became valuable. Environmentalists' essential resources are their knowledge, the ability to obtain funding and ties with external actors. Local farmers, fruit-growers, beekeepers and artisans contribute to the initiative with their practices, skills and experience. An elaboration on the rules of the game explains why the informal rules are important for the case. The integrative discourse of sustainable development strengthens the consensus of actors and makes their actions legitimate.

Policy makers on national level ensured framework for the initiative and provided the civic association with funding based on LEADER program. However, their position towards the initiative could be labeled as 'watching from distance'. They do not do produce any activity unless being asked for. On the contrary, regional policy makers are not seen supportive. Local policy makers from the centre town of the activities of the initiative (Hostětín) proved to be enabling actors. They moreover, directly engaged in the activities of the civic association. That is why, the municipality is considered coalition partner for environmentalist, farmers and other certification holders.

## **6. Contributing and inhibiting factors in development of certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians**

*The chapter will answer the third and last research question: What are the factors that might contribute to success of the certification scheme and what are the factors that might bring about its failure? This chapter will take into account interactions among players that co-determine the outcome of the certification scheme and will discuss how success or failure of the scheme might come about based on these interactions. In this chapter, I will come back to the concept and analysis of a policy arrangement and will reason about the components of policy arrangements within the case. Some factors in the actors' composition, allocation of resources, rules of the game and discourses turned out to be contributing to the success of the scheme while other factors could adversely affect future of the initiative that came from the border marginal area.*

### **Actors from the coalition**

Arts (2000: 57) refers to coalitions as a number of players in the context of rules of the game that subscribe to same discourse and share similar goals. By forming the coalition, the goals are easier to achieve. These coalitions are so-called supporting. The number of players that might challenge predominant discourse or rules of the game are termed as challenging coalitions. In the coalition in which all actors share the same discourse interpretation, different streams of attitudes can originate after some time. This will be explained more in the section 'Discourses'.

When we look at the composition of stakeholders, we see environmentalists, small-scale producers, farmers, NGOs, artisans and municipality forming the coalition. Coalition for promoting the White Carpathians therefore consists of players from the subsystems of civil society, market and even the state (through the mayor of the municipality of Hostětín). What does the composition of the coalitions suggests for the certification scheme? What are the benefits and what are shortcomings of actors' composition?

### **Municipalities**

The involvement of the municipality suggests the support from the state for the initiative that came up from the grassroots level. However, Hostětín municipality is the only body from the state administration involved in the coalition. Piro and Wolfová (2008: 83) add that it is important for the certification scheme to gain support from the regional administration, municipalities or micro-regions. Representative of the Traditions of the White Carpathians civic association states that it would be desirable if the label would become visible in every municipality in the White Carpathians. At the moment, there is still a low awareness about the regional label among people in the region and the municipalities could significantly help with its promotion. For a specification how can these players be helpful, program director of The

Foundation Partnership<sup>61</sup>, who took part in the research of Piro and Wolfová (2008) proposes that municipalities could for instance provide a space where these products could be sold. This space would serve as ‘a local shop of traditional products’.<sup>62</sup> It could be stated that the support from municipalities in the region where the initiative operates is rather weak.

## Large enterprises

The objective of establishing the certification scheme was the support of small-scale producers. These represent the majority of the certification scheme holders. Fruit juicing plant is the only large enterprise involved in the certification system. Piro and Wolfová argue that players will need for further development another larger enterprises involved in the system. Non-profitable and volunteering organization are deemed to need a close cooperation with larger companies if the certification is to develop further. “If the labels from Moravian Carpathians<sup>63</sup> are to become sought-after in quality and origin, other significant actors such as fruit-juicing plant have to engage in the system<sup>64</sup>” (Piro and Wolfová, 2008: 83). These kinds of producing or processing enterprises could ensure a place where farmers can market their goods.

Another way how larger enterprises could help to small-scale producers is distribution of a publicity matter (Catalogue of certified products and related advertising) or even accepting products of small-scale producers and to sell them in their own shop<sup>65</sup>. A person from the association Moravské Karpaty, o.p.s.<sup>66</sup> reminds that this cooperation of large enterprise and small-scale producers is already happening in case of other regional certification scheme (Made in Moravský kras) where the brewery Černá hora help to local producers by advertising and selling their products in the brewery shop. However, she reminds that the participation in the certification scheme should still be based on the quality and origin of the products. The certification should not serve enterprises that operate in the given region unless their prove that their products have a relation to traditions<sup>67</sup>.

## The association PRO-BIO

Kučerová et al. (2007: 15) see involvement of PRO-BIO as a factor that could enable further successful development of the initiative from the White Carpathians. “Organic farmers’ association is very active in TBK activities. Association influences also national or regional policy.” PRO-BIO is non-governmental, non-profitable association supporting development of organic agriculture. It professes international directives of IFOAM. Subjects of the association’s activities comprise preparation of conditions for cooperation among producers, processors, businesses and consumers, formulation and defense of members’ interests and

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<sup>61</sup> The Foundation Partnership is a partner association for the nationwide system of regional certification. The White Carpathians certification scheme does not belong into this network of certification system.

<sup>62</sup> Personal communication, email-correspondence, Tomáš Růžička, program director, Nadace Partnerství (Foundation Partnership), 21 February 2009

<sup>63</sup> White Carpathians and Beskydy

<sup>64</sup> Own translation

<sup>65</sup> Personal communication, email-correspondence, Tomáš Růžička, program director, Nadace Partnerství (Foundation Partnership), 21 February 2009, Personal communication, email-correspondence, Světlá Studenska, Moravské Karpaty, o.p.s., 21 February 2009.

<sup>66</sup> The association is a participant in the UNDP-GEF project for Carpathian meadows.

<sup>67</sup> Personal communication, email-correspondence, Světlá Studenska, Moravské Karpaty, o.p.s., 21 February 2009.

cooperation with the Ministry for Agriculture in creating and checking directives of organic agriculture and in certifications of businesses and products. One of the association's field of activity is representation of interests of organic farmers when dealing with Ministries (Agriculture, Environment), Parliament and with experts from research institutions<sup>68</sup>.

At national level, PRO-BIO communicates with Ministry for Agriculture and the Ministry for the Environment for improvement of economic situation of organic farmers. They were successful in their lobby, managed to defend their requirements and ensured **an increase in subsidies** for those who manage the land in environmentally friendly manner (PRO-BIO, Annual report 2007). Therefore, I would claim that one of the actors' interactions that could play an important role in future of the certification scheme is interaction between PRO-BIO, association for organic agriculture and The Ministry for Agriculture. PRO-BIO could lobby for higher subsidy for organic farmers or fruit-growers. If the products of organic agriculture would be valued more, fruit-growers would be more willing to certify their orchards and market them at juicing plant in Hostětín.

### **Marketing expert is lacking**

Environmentalists active in nature protection, sustainable projects for citizens and community development managed to build learning mechanism. Together with their colleagues from other national and international NGOs, they participate in and organize diverse seminars and projects. The learning mechanism brought the exchange of ideas and experience that could be further used as an inspiration or for the certification scheme. Despite of the vivid knowledge and experience exchange that members of the coalition utilize, there is a drawback in the composition of the coalition. Contemporary composition of the actors does not correspond with the current needs of the certification initiative. For instance, the initiative lacks marketing expert (Piro and Wolfová, 2008: 83).

### **Service providers and tourism**

The fact, that there are no service providers sanctioned to use the label means that it will be difficult to reach one of the threefold objectives for which the certification was developed; i.e. contribution to development of tourism.

In the year 2004 (before the actual existence of the certification scheme), international seminar '**Marketing of regional products from the White Carpathians**' was organized by The Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association together with NGO Kosénka with the support of Partnership Foundation Brno. More than 100 participants were present, comprising farmers, artisans, representatives of NGOs, stakeholders from tourist trade and international experts from France, Austria, Luxembourg, Poland and Slovakia. Program of the seminar included excursions, evaluation of the current situation and discussion. After four days of the seminar, conclusions and recommendations were formulated. When the experts analyzed the case from data and field visits (including previous field visits) during which they met local representatives (farmers, artisans, representatives of NGOs), they concluded that the White Carpathians resemble to great extent the mountainous areas in other European countries. Unfavorable conditions of the area caused by high level of unemployment, lack of job opportunities, population decline and dependency on big cities (Brno, Zlín) suggest many

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<sup>68</sup> See: <http://www.pro-bio.cz/>

similarities with rural regions from other European countries. Surprising factor for experts is **the weak focus on tourism in the area.**

They believed that the area had a significant potential for tourism that did not correspond with the current situation. Spa town of Luhačovice as a significant spot was pointed out as well as various folklore festivals (hornácké a kopaničářské slavnosti, Apple festivities in Hostětín) to utilize their potential and to focus more on tourism. Accommodation in typical houses or the courses of crafts such as wicker-work or bobbin-lace work were mentioned as well. **The services were recommended to use the certification scheme that was to developed** (The Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association, Press release from the seminar). When the process of applications started, service providers were encouraged and expected to join the certification scheme. Cooperation with service providers, such as providers of accommodation or entrepreneurs from restaurants, seems to be a key factor if the certification is to be targeted to tourists coming to the region.

It could be argued that the factor of cooperation with service providers could bring **success for/further development of the certification scheme.** By incorporating services into the certification scheme the aim of promoting region could be reached by focusing attention on development of tourism. More people would get to know the area. The region could be successfully promoted while sustainable character of services secured.

## **Museums**

Another factor that could be related to tourism is involvement of museums in the region. So far, museums do not have information about certified products. The museums could offer these products made by local people to incoming visitors or could help with advertising<sup>69</sup>. It is expected that visitors who are interested in the heritage of the region will visit some of these institutions and might find the traditional products made by local people appealing.

Following table summarizes contributing and inhibiting factors in actors' composition in the coalition for promoting region of the White Carpathians and supporting farmers, artisans and other entrepreneurs who live there.

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<sup>69</sup> Personal communication, email-correspondence, Světla Studenska, Moravské Karpaty, o.p.s., 21 February 2009.

**Table 5. Contributing and inhibiting factors in actors' composition in the coalition**

<p><b>Contributing factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of PRO-BIO, an association which can lobby for improved conditions of organic farmers</li> <li>• Active environmentalists who developed learning mechanism for exchange of ideas and experiences</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inhibiting factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak support from municipalities in the region</li> <li>• No service providers utilizing the certification, which makes difficult to reach one of the objectives – development of tourism in the region</li> <li>• Lack of big players (larger enterprises)</li> <li>• Composition of actors does not correspond with the current needs (no marketing expert)</li> <li>• Museums do not have information about certified products</li> </ul>

## **Resources**

Resources as **'systems of power'** is another characteristics of policy arrangements. Actors and the discourses to which they subscribe are becoming to be accepted based on the resources they have and use. The power the actors acquired helps them to dominate debates and persuade the others about necessity of action being taken (Arts et al., 2000: 59). Environmentalists from the case have **knowledge, experience in nature protection, environmental education**. Over the years when they have been working in the White Carpathians, managed to build the network of people with whom their **exchange experience** and can discuss their plans and utilize this **learning mechanism**. Environmentalists are experienced in **fundraising** and already managed to receive funding to support their projects.

Local people who use or will use the certification scheme can either make use of **nature** (in case of agricultural products) or can rely on their **skills and talents** (in case of artisans). Potential holders of the certification from the field of services could make use of **beauties of nature in the area** to attract tourists. Nature or skill and talents are resources that holders of the certification can use to contribute to the success of their own business or even to contribute to promotion of the region at the same time.



However, it could be stated that the **initiative lacks financial resources** for its further development. They would need finances for their own distribution channel. The fee that holders of the certification scheme pay serves for covering the costs associated with running and promotion of the system. At the moment, fee cannot cover these costs so that The Traditions of the White Carpathians, Ltd. support the initiative. It would be desirable if more actors from local producers, farmers, artisans join so that the label would become self-sufficient in terms of financing its activities. Table 6 summarizes strong and weak factors in resources that actors use.

**Table 6. Contributing and inhibiting factors in resources that actors from the coalition use**

<p><b>Contributing factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills and talent utilized by local entrepreneurs and artisans – cultural heritage</li> <li>• Nature resources, for instance orchards – natural heritage</li> <li>• Environmental knowledge and experience in nature protection – environmentalists</li> <li>• Networks of organization and experts that cooperate with environmentalists</li> <li>• Leverage of PRO-BIO in agricultural policy making</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inhibiting factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of financial resources to enable further development of the certification</li> </ul>

### ***Rules of the game***

Rules of the game delimit which players are eligible to be the part of the coalition and actually show boundaries of the coalition (Arts, 2000: 61). Here, the boundaries that determine who is in and who is out are partially drawn with **criteria** that must be fulfilled by those who want to utilize the certification scheme. In the previous chapter, informal rules of the game were discussed to be more important than formal ones in the case. Actors rely more on **informal rules of the game**; trust, belonging and connectedness. More open rules of the game with bottom-up character structure the actors' interaction. This is based on the fact that the majority of founding members come from the subsystem of civil society, NGOs (Kučerová et al., 2007: 16). It could be stated that these **informal rules are fragile** and could be challenged or altered with differences in discourses. Slangen and Loucks (2007: 58)

remind the proverb about trust: “*Trust comes by foot and leaves by horse.*” The table 7. illustrates contributing and inhibiting factors in context of rules of the game within the certification scheme.

**Table 7. Contributing and inhibiting factors in rules of the game that structure the case**

<p><b>Contributing factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal rules – trust, belonging, connectedness</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inhibiting factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different discourses might hamper informal rules of the game which are more important in the case</li> </ul>

## **Discourses**

Differences in discourses to which actors subscribe can play an important role for the future of the certification scheme. Already mentioned tension between environmentalists’ and farmers’ attitudes could be a potential inhibiting factor that could hamper the existence of the certification scheme. Environmentalists and farmers have different attitudes about how the certification scheme should develop and till what extent it is desirable to give it a commercial character and to what extent they can keep sustainable vision, which they have been proclaiming from the beginning. Kučerová et al. (2007: 10) point out that crucial question for the initiative is “how far it is possible to keep up the idealistic approach and to be market-oriented at the same time”.

To illustrate one of the possible wells from which the discrepancy in attitudes might come from, the question of distribution of products from the fruit-juicing plant could be mentioned. External stakeholders (wholesale agents) **PRO-BIO, Countrylife<sup>70</sup> and organic farm Deblín** close to Tišnov take care of logistics of distribution of certified products. The current way of distribution channels is not ideal. For instance, wholesaler of PRO-BIO at first, goes 200 kilometres with the good from Hostětín to their wholesale store and then transports it with other organic good to area 40 kilometres far from Hostětín. People from the Traditions of the White Carpathians wish to supply to the distance of 40 kilometres with their own channels (Kučerová at al., 2007: 18). The current distribution does not go well with sustainable image of the certification scheme. Therefore, this can nurture discrepancy of attitudes (pragmatic versus idealistic) of how far can environmentalists’ attitudes go when products need to be marketed at the same time.

In the chapter where policy arrangements within the context of the case were elaborated, three different interpretation of discourses of holders of the certification scheme were mentioned;

<sup>70</sup> PRO-BIO and Countrylife are national wholesalers

i.e. pragmatism, patriotism and belonging. What implication can have these discourses for the certification scheme itself?

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, it seems that producers who regard their participation in terms of economic gains (share pragmatic discourse) tend to expect positive outcome from their membership soon. If this does not happen in the short period, they are dissatisfied with the whole project of the certification system. On the other hand, the certification holders whose attitudes towards their participation in the project are more patriotic than pragmatic are more satisfied with the current state of the certification scheme. Previous chapter concluded that if the number of those who utilize the certification scheme and lay stress on immediate results/gains of certification will outweigh the number of those who profess more patriotic values and regard their participation as a prestigious matter, the future of the certification scheme is uncertain. Therefore, it could be stated that holders of the certification scheme who subscribe to the extreme pragmatic discourse represent **potential challenging coalition** and those who share patriotic discourse belong in **supporting coalition**.

If the holders of the certification are not satisfied with the certification system and with the way how it works at the moment, they are likely to quit their participation in the project when their certificates expire. For those who were in the first wave of certifications issuing, the certificates expire in May 2009. The validation of certificates that were acknowledged in the second wave expires in December 2009.

From the interviews undertaken with the certification holders<sup>71</sup> it became clear following: six of the certification holders find economic gains as their main motivation to start using the certification scheme. Therefore, they could be referred to as sharing pragmatic attitude. Three certification holders recognize the importance of the certification scheme for promotion traditional practices; they do not attach importance to the economic gains. They subscribe to patriotic discourse. These producers recruit from those who have the activity as hobby and their production capacity is limited due to the hand made character of work. The rest of the interviewees, 11 participants, find economic gains as important as the idea of being a part of the coalition for preservation and promotion of traditional practices and harmonic cultural landscape. So far, they are not in a camp of those who profess solely patriotic values neither in the group of those who are interested only in economic gains. The success of the certification could be dependent on how these remaining participants will/will not change their definitions of their attitudes towards the certification scheme.

The fact, that some of those who are sanctioned to use the label find the factor of belonging important clearly shines light on and **reinforces informal rules of the game and strengthens the supporting coalition**. Table 8. gives an overview of contributing and inhibiting factors in discourses.

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<sup>71</sup> The total number of certification holders is 18. Results of 17 interviews were included in the research.

**Table 8. Contributing and inhibiting factors in discourses in the context of the case**

<p><b>Contributing factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patriotic discourse – holders of the certification scheme recognize the importance of regional and family traditions, participation is a sign of prestige</li> <li>• Discourse of belonging</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inhibiting factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrepancy in attitudes (environmentally idealistic versus pragmatic streams)</li> <li>• Pragmatic discourse in terms of economic benefits – tendency to expect economic gains soon, potential challenging coalition</li> </ul>

The analysis adopted demonstrates that the **dimensions of policy arrangements**, policy coalitions, power and resources (here employed as resources), rules of the game and policy discourses, are indeed **interrelated**. If there is a change in one dimension, the change is soon or later reflected in another dimension(s). For instance, as was shown above, the discrepancy in attitudes towards the certification scheme can cause change in informal rules of the game. A process of coalition forming pertains to discourses that take place in the context of the certification scheme. Existence of the informal rules of the game and their importance for the project stems from the actual composition of actors. The lack of financial resources could alter discourses. With the certain actors, diverse resources for the coalition are brought in the forefront for disposition, for instance, with involvement of association of organic farmers, there is more chance of getting support from the state.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

### **Conclusions**

#### **Main findings**

In this thesis, I intended to aim at studying interrelations of actors from three subsystems (the state, market and civil society) and at macro-structural changes that occurred during last 20 years in the Czech Republic in order to find out the prospects for regional certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians.

*The first research question aimed to answer which conditions preceded the establishment of the initiative and why the initiative actually started.*

The initiative around the certification scheme originated in the area that could be labeled as marginal. In the White Carpathians, the seemingly ‘progressive’ collectivist way of farming that started in 1950s not only led to deterioration of the nature realm but left some residua in souls of people. The prior bonds between nature and humans were eroded and many people lost their ties with traditions.

Geographical conditions (remoteness from the centers and rugged terrain), economic transformation, consequences of the split of Czechoslovakia, drainage of young qualified inhabitants from the area and lack of interest paid by the government were the factors that contributed to the fact that the region is on the outskirts, not only in terms of geography but also in terms of economic opportunities. Actors from civil society (civic associations and NGOs), that operate in the area, try to address the problems that region is facing. The certification scheme is regarded as a mean how to find way back to regional traditions and which could at the same time contribute to solving the problems attached to the marginal position.

The main reason for establishing the certification scheme was to make from the White Carpathians a good place for living. Good place for living stands for a life in harmonic landscape where people can perform their businesses. Establishing the certification scheme was thought to bring incentives for those who contribute to preservation of regional traditions and keep a symbiosis between human and nature vivid.

*The second research question pertained to the analysis of policy arrangements in the context of the case.*

Participation of actors from the civil society and their role that have gained importance, emphasis on egalitarianism, the fact that a role of the state that is relatively in a distance and de-emphasized suggest that civic policy arrangements seem to structure the case.

Policy arrangements analysis enabled to see also structural change that occurred in the Czech Republic. Macro-structural changes in socio-political climate explain some of the factors that shape the initiative around the certification scheme. The initiative originated soon after the collapse of the communist regime in the prospect of new democratic opportunities. However, the legacy of previous regime made the step of attracting new actors for coalition difficult. People who lived for many years under pressure and experienced collective farming did not see a merit in any kind of collective activities and therefore were hesitant to get involved. Checks of criteria and control from external actors could bring another antipathy when individuals could finally decide on their own about their future.

The analysis has shown that informal rules of the game matter in this case. Environmentalists and fruit-growers that started the project had to gain respect and trust by local people who decided to participate in the certification scheme.

A concept of a policy arrangement proved to be a suitable framework that enabled to understand the interrelations of actors clear when the extra attention is paid to coalitions in which actors gather, to resources (based on them actors gain more recognition), rules and discourses.

*Then, the analysis of the policy arrangements was taken a step further. Extra attention was paid to current or potential contributing and inhibiting factors that influence/ might influence the future of the regional certification system.*

A detailed elaboration on four dimensions of a policy arrangement revealed what strengths and limitations of the certification scheme are. The analysis of contributing and inhibiting

factors concerning actors, their resources, rules of the game and discourses confirmed how closely are these dimension interrelated.

Involvement of PRO-BIO appears to be contributing factor since it is an influential player in agricultural policymaking. Next, cultural and natural heritage of the region is a merit. Environmentalists' knowledge about and experience in natural preservation and their ties with other national and international organizations is considered contributing. Last but not least, positive discourses shared by holders of the certification scheme (patriotic discourse, discourse of belonging) are enabling as well.

Crucial inhibiting factor seems to be a discrepancy in attitudes between environmentalists and farmers. Environmentalists 'idealistic' approach is challenged by pragmatic approach of farmers and the question till what extent it is possible to profess ideals when the profit is necessary might become battle field. Another substantial limiting factor are the attitudes of some the certification holders who recognize solely economic benefits of their participation in the project and tend to expect that outcomes of the certification arrive shortly. Another inhibiting factor that deserves attention is the lack of finances that make the decisions about the development of the certification system limited.

### **Contribution of the thesis**

The attempt to describe the political modernization process in the Czech Republic, its comparison with the situation in Western European countries and the analysis of policy arrangements within the case revealed that the legacy of previous regime is still the aspect what might influence decisions of actors and their interrelations, even if almost 20 years passed from the regime change. Therefore, it could be claimed that the same strategies of rural development (regional certification schemes) that work well in Western Europe cannot be applied in the Czech Republic without changes. It is desirable to take into account experience from other countries where regional certification scheme operate. The contribution of the thesis was to make clear that application of these inspirations in practice should accommodate factors that stem from different socio-political development of the country.

The members of the civic association are most likely aware of most of the limitations that constrain them in further planning and development of the certification scheme (lack of finances, insufficient support by regional government, discrepancy in attitudes between environmentalists and farmers). However, I would claim that this thesis provided them with information about another possible inhibiting factor, i.e. the attitudes of some of certifications holders who are not satisfied with the current state of the certification system. In the analysis, contributing factors were highlighted. Members of the civic association should be aware of them, maintain them and possibly build on them. These factors are for instance informal rules of the game and learning mechanism that enable the exchange of ideas and experiences.

## **Possibilities for further research**

The further research could take two ways, *theoretical and empirical*.

In the chapter 'Reflecting on the process of the political modernization within the context of the Czech Republic' I aimed to compare the situation of how process of political modernization has evolved in Western European countries and in the Czech Republic. Respectively I dealt with the question whether the stages of political modernization process as discussed by Arts (2000) could be identified in the conditions of the Czech Republic. This comparison enabled to identify how macro-structural changes formed and contributed to changes in policy arrangements. However, the theory on political modernization is in existent research and literature so far associated exclusively with Western Europe, where three subsystems (state, market and civil society) existed at the same time and their relationships after the Second World War had chance to develop. Therefore, it would be desirable to address the gap in the theory on political modernization in post-communist countries. Understanding the process of political modernization in post-communist countries better could help explore their differences in development in comparison with Western European countries. These differences could play an important role and could explain why not all inspiration taken from Western European countries finds a fertile ground in former Soviet satellites.

The empirical research of this thesis took into account interrelation among the actors from state, civil society and market. Their interplay has a considerable influence on the system of regional certification. In order to fully evaluate the case and contribute to understanding of what should be done for its successful development, it would be suitable to focus attention also on the demand-driven side of the certification scheme. In this case, it would be necessary to find out what is the awareness among inhabitants of the region about the certification system. In case of including certifications for tourism establishments into certification system, it would be suitable to investigate if tourists would be interested in purchasing certified traditional products.



## **Recommendations**

For recommendations, current contributing and inhibiting factors were taken into account. Limiting factors need to be addressed and contributing factors can serve as bricks for building the future of the certification system.

Five strategies were recommended for the certification scheme The Traditions of the White Carpathians, out of them one was elaborated in detail.

### **❖ Involvement of municipalities in the region**

Municipalities in the region should be approached by members of the civic association and possibilities of cooperation with the representatives of the municipalities should be discussed. The cooperation could entail engagement of municipalities in advertising campaigns of the certification scheme and providing the space where certified products could be sold.

### **❖ Involvement of museums in the region**

The certification scheme recognizes the importance of regional traditions. Museums in the region could represent other actors with whom the potential cooperation could be established. Museums as institutions that are associated with traditions and are often visited by incoming tourists could perfectly help with reaching the objective 'to promote region'. So far, museums did not attract deserved attention by the civic association and they even do not provide any information on the account of the certification scheme. These institutions could help with advertising. Moreover, the certified products could be sold at museum shops.

### **❖ To keep neighborliness-like character of cooperation and informal rules of the game**

It is recommended to keep the rules of the game as they are at the moment. Informal rules of the game, trust, connectedness and belonging are more important than formal ones. Human factor and neighborliness is what makes the certification scheme attractive for potential certification holders. Rules of the game should be kept at this neighborliness-like level. Of course, for securing the transparency of the certification process, the criteria checks should be done by external independent stakeholder. However, the trusted person, with whom producers are familiar should approach the producers in case of the first contact. Then, he/she should accompany the external person during criteria check. The trusted person involved in the initiative from time to time could come to visit certification holder again and informally chat about the results of the certification holder's business. By doing informal rules of the game could be strengthened and could co-exist with the formal ones.

## ❖ To improve communication between the holders of the certification scheme and the members of the civic association

As the certification scheme faces a potential danger of drainage of dissatisfied holders of the certification scheme (certification holders that share pragmatic discourse as potential challenging coalitions), it is recommended to pay more attention to communication between the holders of the certification scheme and the members of the civic association. For instance meeting could be organized by civic association, where the current situation of the certification scheme (issue of financing, possible coalition partner) would be presented and possible strategies for development would be proposed and discussed. Holders of the certifications would be invited to attend the meeting to give them opportunity to communicate their experiences with and opinions about the certification scheme. Moreover, they would be encouraged to propose their own ideas. The outcome of the meeting is to improve participation of certification holders in designing the strategy and to make them aware of the current situation.

## ❖ Focus on tourism

For further development strategy, it is recommended to take a route of incorporating tourism establishments in the certification system. By focusing attention on incorporation of service providers, the objective 'to contribute to the development of tourism in the region' would become reachable. The description of the strategy 'Focus on tourism' is elaborated in detailed below with summary of the strengths on which the strategy can build.

### **Service providers incorporated into certification system**

How would the involvement of services providers into certification system look like? Which enterprises could be eligible to apply for the certification? Potential chain of tourism establishments could comprise hotels, guesthouses, bed and breakfasts facilities, camping, pubs, restaurants. Some of the certification holders are experienced in leading courses on different skills and arts. These courses could be a potential subject to certification as well. The museums can also become subjects to certification. They moreover can help with advertising other tourism establishments. As it was stated above, the region has a lot to offer to incoming tourists and its current state of the tourism does not meet its potential in terms of natural and cultural heritage.

It would be suitable to utilize experiences from other regional certification schemes. For instance, the Fuchsia West Cork initiative from Ireland includes service providers in its system. The Fuchsia Brand, West Cork Initiative in case of segment of tourism establishments cooperates with tourism associations (The National Tourism Development Authority Failte Ireland, Cork/Kerry Tourism and West Cork Tourism). Together they define criteria to which those who want to participate have to adhere. Certification holders also have to pay a membership fee. One-day trainings are organized to provide participants with necessary knowledge about standardized quality services (Modern Kitchen Management, The Welcome Way, Adoption the Principles of Quality, Hygiene Programme). Some courses (Sales & Marketing, Business Planning,) are designed to improve the members' ability to success in their business. Participation in trainings is an obligatory element for participants. Two

trainings, Principles of Quality and Sales & Marketing are obligatory for every type of tourism establishments, participation in other training is dependent on the character of the establishment.

Special maps serve as a promotional tool for the certified products or services.

In the segment of the certifications aimed at tourism, Information Centre for Development of Moravske Kopanice (Informační středisko pro rozvoj Moravských Kopanic), which is a member of The Traditions of the White Carpathians, civic association, can play an important role. Till now, the centre has taken share in preparing the conditions and defining the eligibility criteria for certificates. They have been participating in the Apple festivities where they have own informatory stall. The information provided relate mainly to organic agriculture.

If the certification scheme incorporates service providers, the information centre could make use of its capabilities (as a body whose one of the interests is to promote tourism in the area) and play an important role in including potential services providers in the certification system. The centre could give information to visitors about where to find certified restaurants and accommodation directly in its office or by its website. Following the example of the Fuchsia Brand, West Cork Initiative from Ireland, the centre could also distribute maps of the area with highlighted places of visitors' interests, natural attractions and scenery as well as highlighted places where certified services or products could be find.

Special trainings for applicants for the certificates would be a benefit for service providers and should be seen as a business support to scheme members. The house of the Veronica Centre in Hostětín could be used for possible trainings for people who wish to certify their services. Seminars, conferences and trainings already take place there and the rooms in the building are also used by the civic association.

In case of Fuchsia Brand the training fee have to be covered by the applicants for the certificates. It could be argued, that if the trainings were implemented in case of the White Carpathians certification scheme, training fee could become constraint for potential applicants to participate.

Next, members of the civic association can invite another authority from the field of tourism to cooperate with them on the project, for instance the agency for support of incoming tourism CzechTourism that belongs under Ministry of the Interior. Cooperation with the national association could generate above all institutional support and valuable advices and could possible bring some chance for new financial source.

Regional government is so far seen as a limiting actor. However, the development of tourism is one of its priorities. It could be stated that if the services providers attached to tourism are included in the certification system, it might increase the chance of receiving recognition by regional government and potential financial support. The civic association is recommended to be more active in getting their interest on the regional agenda.

The members of the civic association can identify and approach potential service providers whose businesses are in line with objectives of the initiative (enterprises that have relation to the traditions of the region and run their businesses sustainably). Potential holders of the certification need to obtain all information necessary.

When these prove to be eligible and undertake the training offered by the civic association in cooperation with external actors – experts in marketing and sales, hotels and restaurants enterprises in the Veronica Centre Hostětín, they will receive certificates. After this stage, tourism establishments that received the certification will be included in the special map. Then, the role of the information centre is to distribute the maps to incoming tourists.

## Strengths of this strategy

- The aim to include service providers is not a new idea but is consistent with the objective of the initiative from the beginning
- The civic association comprise the actor from information services – the link with incoming visitors
- The rooms for the training are for disposal at the Veronica Centre Hostětín
- With focus on services providers attached to tourism, better chance to gain recognition by regional government, respectively financial support

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## LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

### September 2008

Zdeněk Ševčík,	member of the civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians, certification holder
Miroslav Táborský,	certification holder
Zdeněk Miklas,	certification holder
Radim Machů,	NGO Veronica Centre Hostětín
Jana Tesařová,	NGO Veronica Centre Hostětín

### December 2008 – January 2009, phone-call interviews with certification holders

Zdeněk Halík,	certification holder
Karel Beníček	certification holder
Věra Častová	certification holder
Josef Fryzelka	certification holder
Hana Buchtelová	certification holder
Martin Důdek	certification holder
Monika Němečková	certification holder
Silvie Macháčková	certification holder
David Opálka	certification holder
Josef Káňa	certification holder
Radim Pešek	certification holder, member of the civic association The Traditions of the White Carpathians

### Email Correspondence

NGO INEX-SDA Bílé Karpaty,	certification holder
Libor Beránek,	certification holder
Tomáš Růžička,	Nadace Partnerství (The Foundation Partnership)
Svetla Studenská,	The association Moravské Karpaty, o.p.s.