
Consumers insights on GIs and sustainability: A systematic literature review

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Résumé

Consumers are becoming more attentive to the origin, quality and health attributes of the foods they choose (Efsa, 2022). At the same time, awareness of the environmental and social consequences of food purchasing decisions is growing, with some consumers strongly driven by their ethical values and sustainability concerns (Piracci et al., 2023). Geographical Indications (GIs) are one mechanism to ensure that food production follows pre-set rules regarding quality and resource use (FAO and oriGIn, 2024; García-Moral et al., 2023). However, less is known about the long-term sustainability contributions of GIs including their environmental, social, and governance outcomes alongside the economic benefits (FAO and origin, 2024), and how these factors influence consumer demand for GI products.

Against this backdrop, the aim of the study is to conduct a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of consumer and GI sustainability research to better understand *consumer perceptions of GIs, identifying sustainability attributes and strategies related to the demand for GI products*. We conducted our review using the Scopus database, chosen for its extensive journal coverage (c.f., Falasco et al., 2024). The initial search strategy using keywords related to GIs, sustainability, and consumer behaviour yielded an initial sample of 320 articles, which was refined to 170 using established step-by-step SLR approaches. The paper documents the current state of the art, identifies knowledge gaps, and outlines an agenda for future research.

Key drivers and barriers related to the demand for GIs and associated outcomes were identified. These include consumer preferences for authenticity, traceability (Leufkens, 2018) and the importance of brand name and reputation (Užar and Filipović, 2023). GIs also provide product differentiation, where added value is related to sustainability credentials or the promotion of health benefits (Iotti et al., 2023). Barriers were also identified, including low consumer awareness of GIs (Kos Skubic et al., 2019), limited or fragmented communication about their benefits (Maró et al., 2023), and low safety perception of artisan products (Bytyçi et al., 2024). Additional concerns relate to GI pricing premiums (Papoutsis, 2023), which limit their reach, especially among younger and less affluent consumers (Alpeza et al., 2023).

The literature documents how GIs may drive stronger consumer-producer relationships (Zhe et al., 2023), and command higher producer prices (Staffolani et al., 2023). However, GIs are

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not fully realising potential benefits due to widespread consumer confusion regarding multiple labels (Papoutsi, 2023) and difficulties in understanding the added benefits of GI-certified products (García-Moral et al., 2023). Few consumer studies on GIs explicitly engage with sustainability aspects or address practical questions as to how increase consumer demand for GIs as part of more sustainable diets.

The study contributes to the stream of GI and sustainability research with a conceptual framework (Appendix 1) offering a structured overview of antecedents and outcomes, which can inform future research and policymaking. Examples of successful and innovative GI marketing in the academic literature are identified. An online workshop with experts from the GI SMART project, helped refine and validate the conceptual framework as well as identifying evidence gaps and future research needs.

Mots-Clés: Geographical Indications, Consumer Insights, Sustainability, Consumer Perception, Consumer Attitude