



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



# Sustainable Geographical Indications: Resolving Trade-offs for Long-Term Impact

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ORIGIN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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# Introduction

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Geographical Indications (GIs) systems face sustainability challenges due to trade-offs between economic, environmental, social, and governance objectives.

This presentation explores these trade-offs and illustrates examples of relevant practices designed to address them effectively.

## Objective: Understand the trade-offs at stake for more sustainable GIs outcomes

1. Key trade-offs between **economic, environmental, social, and governance outcomes**
  - hinder the GIs sustainability
2. Trade-offs Underlying causes / Impacts
3. Sustainable practices - prevent these trade-offs
  - Scaled up to enhance GIs sustainability and value

*Good or relevant practices?*

# Methodology

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The methodology was divided into two interactive workshops:

## 1. Workshop #1 - Identifying Sustainability Dimensions:

Participants worked together to explore the four dimensions of GI sustainability—environmental, social, economic, and governance. They identified key aspects within each dimension (e.g., fair income, carbon/water footprint)

## 1. Workshop #2 - Analyzing Trade-offs and Good Practices:

Participants were divided into six groups, each analyzing trade-offs between two sustainability components

**G1:** Social-Economic

**G2:** Environment-Economic

**G3:** Governance-Economic

**G4:** Social-Environment

**G5:** Social-Governance

**G6:** Governance-Environment



Assessed trade-offs at both **territorial** and **global scales**, identified their **impacts**, and **proposed sustainable practices** to enhance GI sustainability.

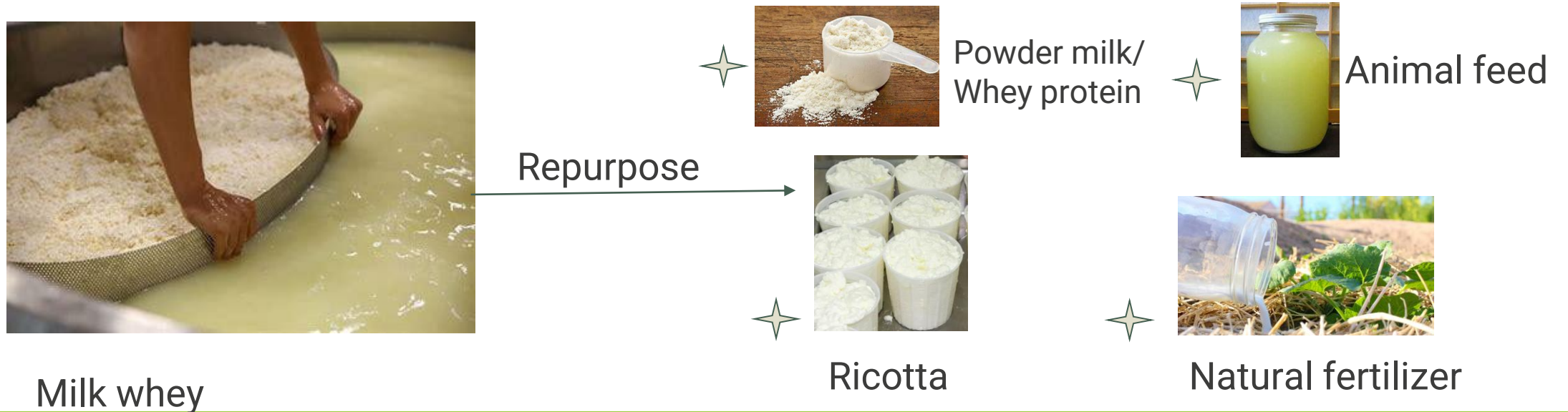
**Good practice (example):**

# Whey as a Byproduct in Cheese Production

**Trade-off:** Environmental sustainability versus Economic viability

**Environmental Component:** Repurposing whey reduces waste, minimizes the environmental impact, and promotes a circular economy.

**Economic Component:** This practice generates additional income sources or helps avoid financial losses.



# Economy - Social

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## Economy

Lack of economic return to the farmers (very high workload at extremely low income)

Innovations improving competitiveness, including the reduction of labor costs

## Social

Disinterest of the young generation in uptaking the farms

Reduction of employment perspectives for agricultural manpower leading to shortcomings in competent manpower availability

### **Good practice (example)**

Supporting young farmers allowing them to invest for better working conditions

# Governance – Economy

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## Governance

Decision making system (dominant actors that take control over the GI system)

Trust deficit in PDO/PGI governance

## Economy

Difficulties to balance between fairness and effectiveness

Inefficiencies in fixing quality / quantity, therefore lack of capacity to address the market conjuncture changes (leads to price fluctuations for all stakeholders, especially the farmers)

### **Good practice (example)**

Improve decision making processes and fix better rules for having fair representation of all stakeholders, incl. minorities

# Conclusion

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**We must work to make sustainability transversal across its dimensions.**

**Sustainability is built on trade-offs.**

Shift from adopting "**good practices**" to implementing "**relevant practices**"—context-specific, adaptable, and based on the dynamic needs of each GI system.

**Relevant practices** must emerge from trade-offs between **two or more sustainability dimensions** to ensure long-term viability.

Focusing on one sustainability aspect can **disrupt the system's balance, threatening long-term sustainability.**

Sustainable development is an **evolving process**, requiring continuous adaptation and flexible strategies.

Thank you



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