



Faculty of Life Sciences

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Student Project – Summary

As part of the Master of Science (MSc) Programme in International Natural Resource Management (INRM)

Title of the work: **Applied social research for socio-ecological resilience: solidarity economy and climate adaptation in the Cyclades**

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Summary

The present research has explored institutional change in post-crisis Greece. We conceptualize institutional change as the relation between new and old ideas, raising the question, under which conditions new ideas can establish themselves while old ideas still hold, coexisting with them before they eventually take over. To do so, we carried out and compared case studies about “sustainability projects” in different islands in the Cyclades (late summer 2019), ranging from organic farming to sustainable tourism. Relying on in-depth interviews with key informants as well as with individuals involved with the projects, we could identify attributes characterizing the island communities at stake, the different projects taking place in each island, and the interactions between the two.

Analyzing a total of ten projects across five different islands, two clusters emerged. One cluster features large island communities on well-connected islands, hosting projects that rely on their supply chains and are beneficial towards island-specific environmental issues. The other cluster features small island communities on remote islands, hosting projects that are self-contained and provide benefits to the respective island “in general”. While the projects in the second cluster receive community support, projects in the first cluster don’t. At a closer look, most of the observed community support is linked to the availability of family ties on these islands.

		~Remoteness	Remoteness			~SelfSuff	SelfSuff
LocSup	+	-----	+	-----	+	-----	+
		Case_3_1		Case_1_1		Case_3_1	
				Case_1_2			
				Case_5_1			
				Case_5_2			
~LocSup	+	-----	+	-----	+	-----	+
		Case_2_1				Case_2_1	
		Case_2_2				Case_2_2	
		Case_3_2				Case_3_2	
		Case_4_1				Case_4_1	
		Case_4_2				Case_4_2	
	+	-----	+	-----	+	-----	+
		~LargePP	LargePP			~SpecBen	SpecBen
No LocSup	+	-----	+	-----	+	-----	+
		Case_3_2		Case_2_1		Case_3_2	
				Case_2_2			
				Case_4_1			
				Case_4_2			
~No LocSup	+	-----	+	-----	+	-----	+
		Case_1_1				Case_1_1	
		Case_1_2				Case_1_2	
		Case_3_1				Case_5_1	
		Case_5_1				Case_5_2	
		Case_5_2					
	+	-----	+	-----	+	-----	+

Local Support (“LocSup”) against several island and project attributes: Island remoteness (“Remoteness”), large permanent island population (“LargePP”), project self-sufficiency (“SelfSuff”), and specific environmental benefits (“SpecBen”). The tilde “~” denotes absence: e.g. ~Remoteness denotes islands that are not remote, “~No LocSup” denotes projects that receive local support (note the double negative).

In terms of institutional change, these results suggest that the coexistence between old and new ideas is facilitated by reputational gains, which seem easier to reach in small communities, and specifically through family ties. This, however, seems to be limited to niches which require little interaction with the rest of the community, and with limited impact on the socio-ecological system at stake (no socioeconomic benefits, only general environmental benefits). To the contrary, niches with a more substantial impact on the socio-ecological system (socioeconomic benefits for the island, more specific environmental benefits) seem limited to larger communities. Exploring these niches does not translate into community support, and leaves one swimming against the tide.

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