

What new frontiers for the socio-economic revival of the Italian chestnut sector?

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1. Conclusions

Highlights:

- **Market-based view** as a leverage strategy, as opposed to the **resource-based one**
- Difficulties in **involving stakeholders** early in the decision-making process

Implications:

- Importance of an **effective** and **timely communication** with stakeholders
- Promotion of **social learning** and **trust-building**
- Fostering of the **crowding-in effect**

Future research:

- Empirical evidences
- Spatial upscaling

Limitations:

- Small sample
- Snowball sampling technique
- Threshold of comparable variables with the AHP


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for more information




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2. Introduction

 **590+ thousand ha** of chestnut coppices in Italy of (Gasparini et al. 2022)

 After WWII, about **40%** of the national chestnut groves were abandoned, due to several changing factors: depopulation of mountain areas, biotic adversity, climate change and socioeconomic changes (Manetti et al. 2017)

 The **main wood-based value chain**, apart from the fruit, is **tannin** -> an Italian company is a world leader (Bruzzese et al. 2023)



Sweet chestnut trees surface in Italy (Fernández-López & Alía, 2009)


2.1. Research Question


Which factors could be useful in enhancing the resource and stimulating higher value-added production chains?

2.2. Aim

Propose new **strategies** for the **sustainable management** and **valorisation** of the resource that can also be prodromal to the **socio-economic revitalisation** and **hazard-resilient** of marginal and inland areas, and bring **added value** and smart use of **chestnut wood**

3. Materials & Methods

 **A'WOT methodology**, a multi-criteria analysis which merges a qualitative method - **SWOT matrix** - and a quantitative method - **Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP)**

 **Data collection** took place in **two stages** (n= 20 experts, July 21-June 22): I) obtaining **local** or intra-criteria **priorities** of SWOT factors; II) identifying **global** or inter-criteria **priorities**


Analytic Hierarchy Process results

SWOT factors	Ranking of global factors	SWOT factors	Ranking of global factors
O4. Increasing civil society's awareness of ecosystem services	1	T1. Climate change, pests and diseases	8
O1. Chestnut research projects	2	S6. Generational change of forest entrepreneurs	9
T2. Depopulation of mountain areas	3	W3. Weakly harmonised forest management	9
W4. Old machinery and poor support for innovation in processors	4	S2. Provision of ecosystem services (cultural and protection)	10
T4. Weak granting of subsidies and incentives for the forest-wood sector	4	W6. Modest public support for the provision of ecosystem services (PES)	10
O3. Forest certification and quality labels	5	W1. Negative stumpage value	11
T3. Lack of market knowledge and strong foreign competition	6	S3. Richness of wood assortments	12
S5. Vocational training initiatives	7	W5. Technological defects of wood	13
O2. Business networks	7	W2. Land pathology and orographic context	14
S4. Tradition of chestnut use	8	S1. Good resource availability	15

Notes: S: Strengths; W: Weaknesses; O: Opportunities; T: Threats

4. Results

 **External factors:** opportunities and threats as **priority strategic elements**

 **Internal factors:** strengths and weaknesses **deemed least interesting**

 Importance of **civil society awareness** and research

 **Profound recognition** of the role of **services** in addition to products

 Importance of **strong know-how** on resource use and **machinery innovation needs** as internal strategic levers

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