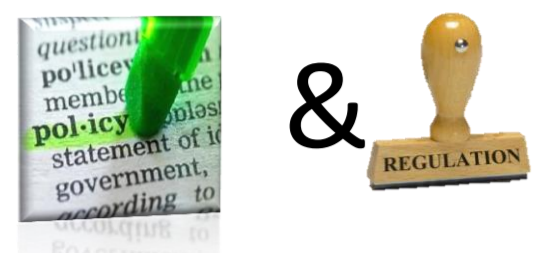


Non-Wood Forest Products in European policies and regulations

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Introduction and objectives

- In Europe, Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP) are traditionally collected for livelihood purposes, cover a touristic recreational role and enter into supply chains.
- In recent years, interest towards these products has increased.



Policies and regulations (P&R) are of paramount importance for NWFP sector promotion and development

- Which policies and regulation may affect NWFP sector? (How harvesting is regulated across countries? How NWFP are treated in national forest P&R? What major European Union P&R affect the sector?)

Methodology

- Researched harvesting rights and attention to NWFP in the forest policies, strategies, programs and laws of 12 countries.
- Reviewed EU policies and regulations that impact NWFP supply chains.



- Keyword searches in the FAOLEX database, in government documents, on the official EU website and in other literature.
- Cross-checked findings with experts within the EU StarTree project.

Results

Country level

i) Harvesting rights

- Provision contained in several legal documents and in customary rights.
- Several differences occur among countries.
- Figure 1 shows the many regulated aspects.

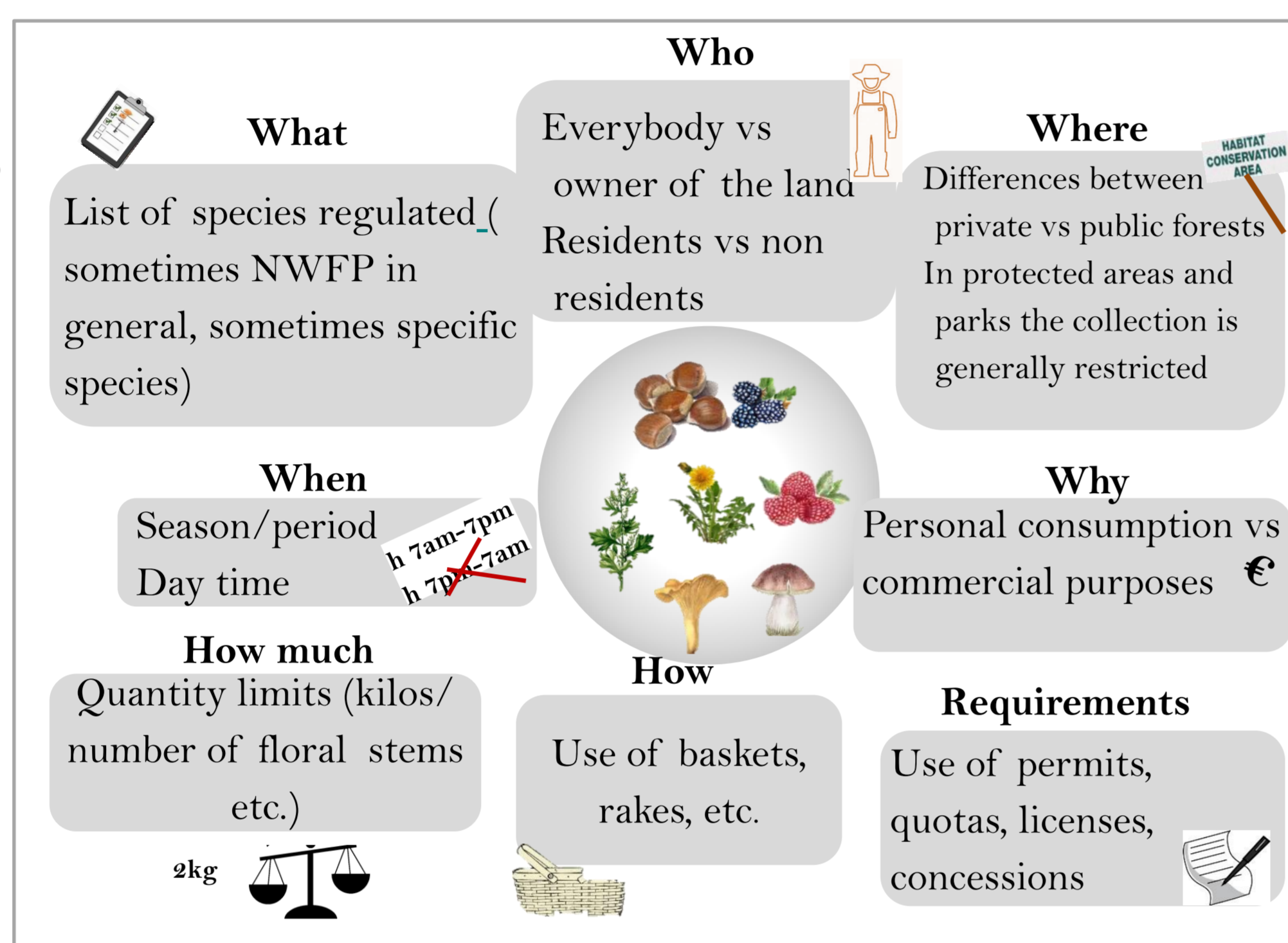


Fig. 1.: Aspects governed by NWFP harvesting regulations in European countries

ii) Forest policies

Since 1998 (1st European Forest Strategy) most of the national forest policies have included mention of the promotion of NWFP (although the terms vary) → coordination with EU.

Treatment of NWFP varies by country in approach and level of detail.

P&R that may affect NWFP value chains (VC)

Policies/ regulations	Forest tenure	Forest management		Harvesting		Production		Processing	Trade	Sale	Use		
VC segments													
Land tenure	N	N	N	N	N								
Forest		EU	N	EU	N	EU	N						
Biodiversity and nature		EU*	N*	EU*	N*	EU*	N*						
Agriculture		EU	N	EU	N	EU	N						
Harvesting rights			N		N		N				N		
Fiscal					N		N		EU	N	N		
Food safety						EU	N	EU	N		EU	N	
Product packaging						EU	N	EU	N	EU	N	EU	N
Trade									EU	EU			
Plant health						EU			EU				
EU certification (e.g. organic certification)						EU		EU		EU	EU		
GPP						EU				EU	EU		

EU= set at European Union level ; N= set at national level; *= In some lands and for some species

Binding Not binding, voluntary instrument/economic incentive Not binding, but influence national policies and laws which are binding

EU policies and regulations related to NWFP

Forest policies. The willingness to promote NWFP as important components of sustainable forest management is highlighted in several EU forest policies (European Forest Strategies, EU Forest Action Plan and the resolutions of FOREST EUROPE).

Nature conservation and biodiversity P&R aim at halting the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. By serving this purpose, these P&R pose rules on some lands management and species conservation.

Agricultural policies and instruments. The CAP and RDP encourage diversification of rural activities and have provided incentives for NWFP, such as cork in Portugal and chestnuts in Italy. Their scope could be enlarged by targeting management regimes favourable to truly wild NWFP production or by including wild product gatherers as eligible actors.

Regulations on trade and movement of products. NWFP traded at an international level are subjected to tariffs and customs duties established within the framework of World Trade Organisation. Some NWFP are also subjected to the EU regulations in line with Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Plant health and phytosanitary regulations. In some circumstances, movement of some NWFP is affected by regulations that aim at preventing the diffusion of pests.

Fiscal policies. In the EU, value-added taxes (VAT) are set at national level. Differences of fiscal policies and VAT may have effects on NWFP transaction costs, value chains and markets.

Food safety regulations apply to NWFP that are traded and consumed as food. While intended to protect the health of consumers, food safety regulations can also act as barriers to trade, especially for goods coming from developing countries.

Certification and marketing mechanisms. Several frameworks defined by the EU (e.g. EU organic certification, EU certification of origin and traditional specialties, EU Ecolabel and Green Public Procurement) may increase NWFP marketing opportunities.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Carefully evaluate the effects of harvesting regulations, collect better information on NWFP and revise policies in this light.
- Many products, many contexts, many terms → improve definitions to valorise NWFP.
- Enterprise development, rural development, income for public administration or forest owners → tailor policy to the aim it is intended to address.
- NWFP are a cross sectorial domain and involve a wide range of stakeholders, at different spatial scales → transcend sectorial policies and adopt a coordinated, inclusive and long-term vision.
- Support policy implementation (coordinated laws, economic incentives) and create an enabling environment for advocacy groups in the NWFP sector.

