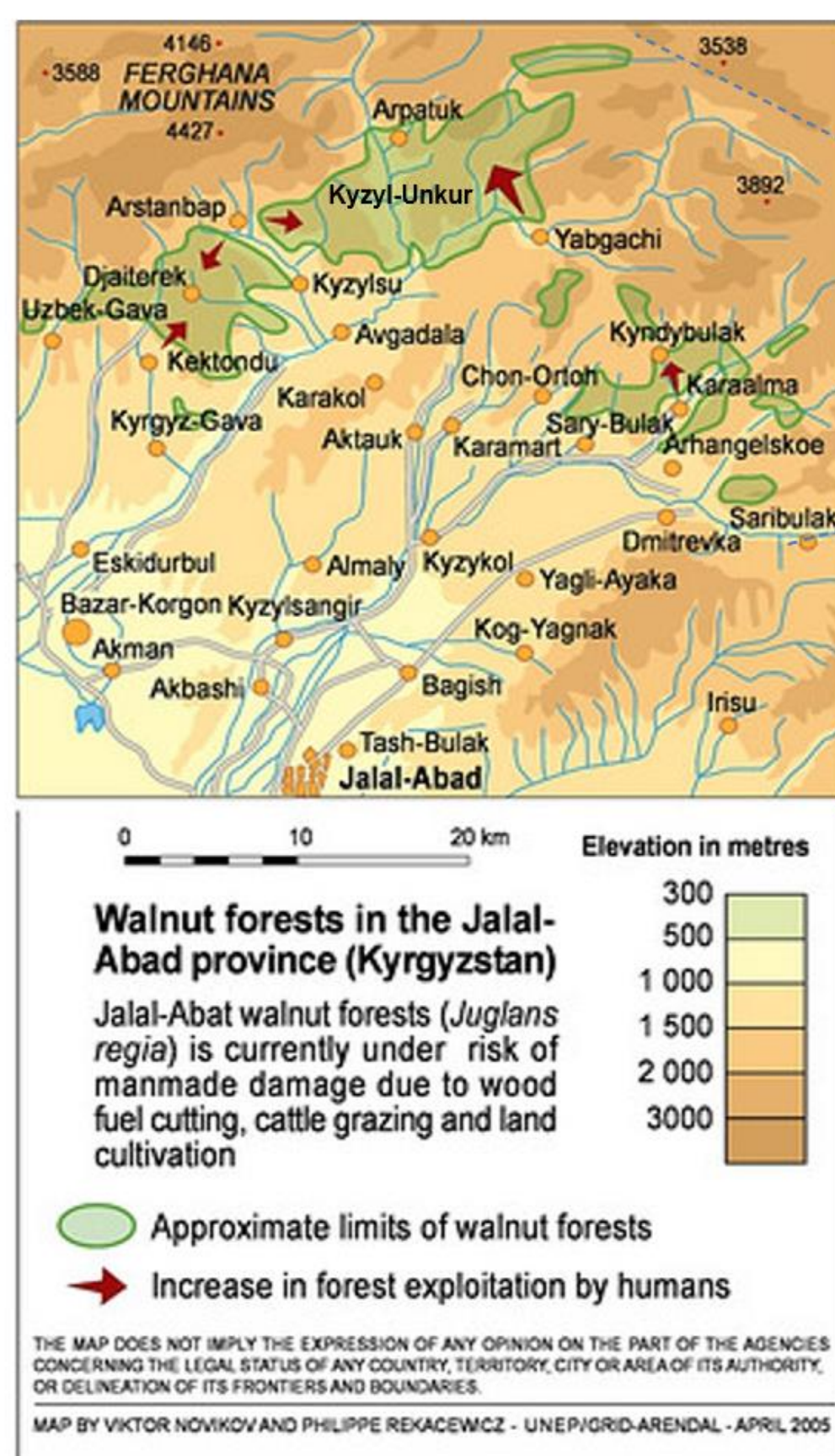


NTFP Certification Schemes in the Walnut Forests of Kyrgyzstan and Lessons Learned from Other Countries

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Walnut-fruit forests in Kyrgyzstan

- world's largest remaining area
- global biodiversity hotspots¹.
- 800 and 2,400 masl.⁴
- 47,000 ha of biodiverse forest²



Sources: 1: Blaser et al. (1998) 2: Scheuber et al. (2000) 3: Schmidt (2013)
4: Orozumbekov et al., 2009 5: Kolov, 1998

Kyrgyzstan

Surface area	199,900 km ²
Population	6.316 million (2018)
Rural population	66% (2012)
Rural population below poverty line	29% (2012)
National GDP	8.093 billion USD (2018)
GDP per capita, USD	1,281.36 USD (2018)

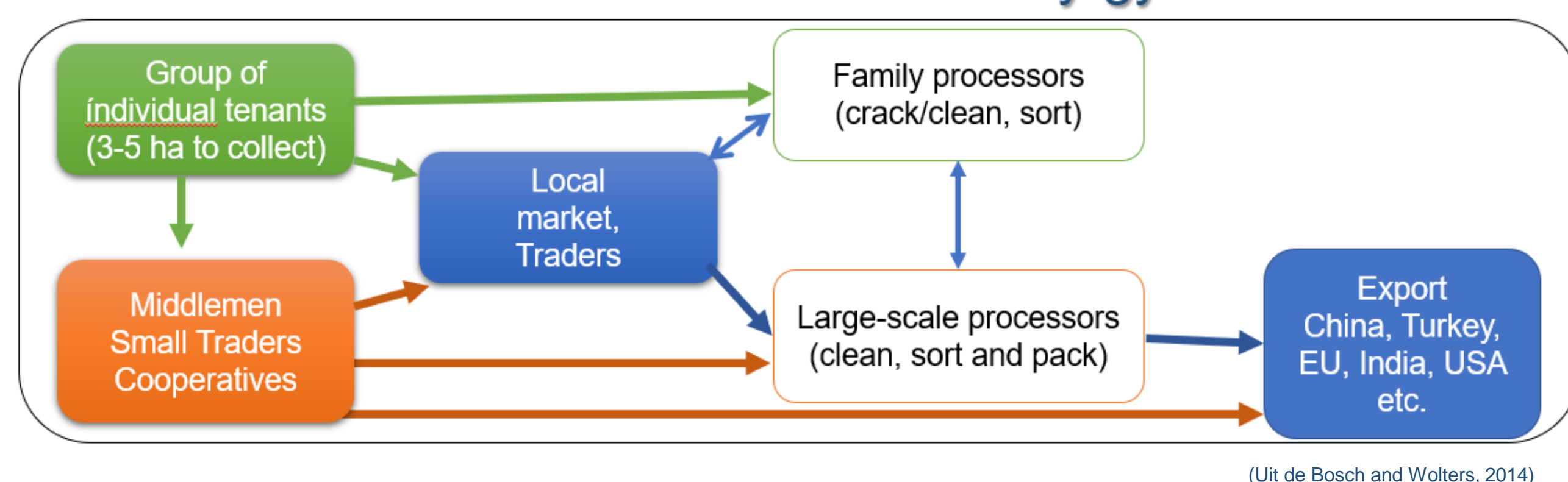
Study site:

- Origin: major walnut stands are 2000 years old⁶
- Very likely: walnut species were planted by a human
- with possible further sub spontaneous spread⁶
- Important genetic resource for tree breeding⁶
- State-owned; farmers lease for 5 years in average³.
- Over 1 million people depend on the them⁷



Sources: 1: Habel (2019) 2: Scheuber et al. (2000) 3: Schmidt (2013)
4: Orozumbekov et al., 2009 5: Kolov, 1998; 6: Beer et al. (2008); 7: PROFOR, 2011
Photos: GoogleEarth, 2020 Mamadzhonov, 2018

The NTFPs value chain in Kyrgyzstan



Forest access

- Long term lease contracts from government (local forestry)
- 3-5 ha of forest areas to collect NTFPs
- Duration: 5 up to 49 years

Forest use

- State-owned forests
- Limited sense of ownership to the forests
- Lack investments into forest restoration and maintenance
- The walnut forests over aging
- Loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Processing

- Do not comply with food safety standards
- Limited control of cleaning and processing
- Children might participate in the collection and family processing during school time



Zhusupova, 2017

Fair Trade / Organic Labelling:

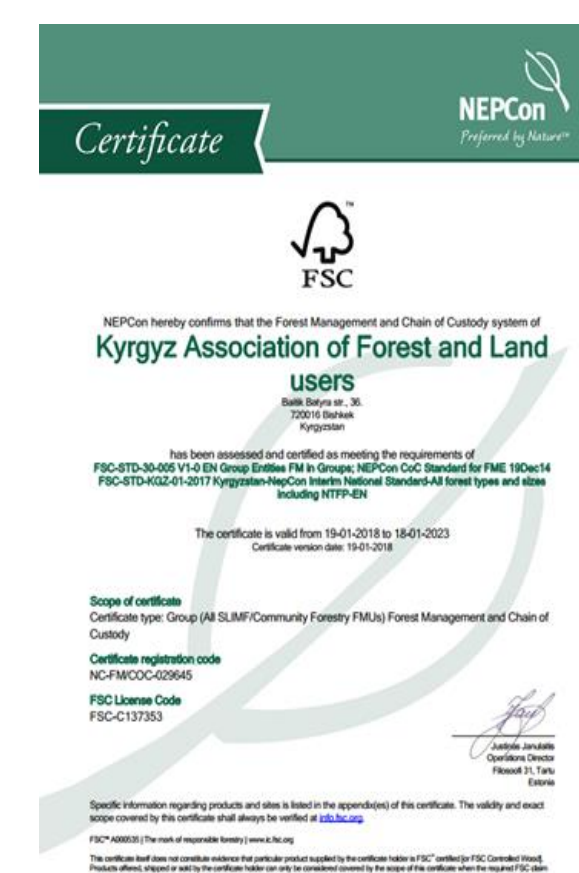


- Duration of project: 2008-2017
- Donors: GIZ and ICCO Cooperation
- 200 walnut collectors formed a cooperative.
- Fair Trade label obtained.
- FairMatch system embraced all participants within the value chain (sourcing and traceability)
- Improved quality and food safety control.
- Child labor policy awareness.
- Access to the EU markets, and premium from sales.
- **Focus on value-chain development and livelihoods improvement**

GIZ, 2015; vp.kg

Forest Stewardship Council Certification:

- Duration of project: 2014-2018
- Donors: WWF, KAFLU
- 52 walnut collectors were certified and formed a cooperative.
- 311 ha of forest areas got FSC certified for forest management and the custody chain of forest products for 5 years.
- No premium is provided, but farmers got a better opportunity to access world markets.
- **Focus on sustainable forest management.**



KAFLU, 2019

Challenges and limitations of NTFP certification in Kyrgyzstan

- The fluctuation of wild NTFP yields (e.g. walnut harvest expected every 3 or 4 year)
 - Lack of constant customers – different customers require different certification
 - Prolongation of the certificate is too expensive, lack of marketing activities.
- Limited capacities of the local cooperatives
 - lack of information and expertise on marketing, the food processing standards,
 - limited access to trading platforms and networks
 - lack of information and market analysis for future planning
 - Limited experience on certification procedures,
- Limited capacity to form more cooperatives in the area (lack awareness and incentives).

Opportunities of the NTFP certification in Kyrgyzstan

- The selling prices are about 40% higher than a non-certified NTFPs
- Up to 10.000 EUR FairTrade premium (used for further certification costs, infrastructure development)
- Increased awareness and compliance to the sustainable NTFP collection and labor regulations
- Institutional development:
 - increased cooperation with the local administrative authorities
 - Establishment of the local community institution "Organic District Kogoy" to improve cooperation among the local authorities and forest users

The „lessons“ from other countries

- The NTFP certification in India (Krishnakumar, 2013):
 - Several competing NTFP marketing institutions (official institution and tribal cooperatives)
 - Price gap: inconsistency in the NTFP pricing and benefits received by collectors
 - Local stakeholders remain „unaware, incapable and untrained“ to fully use the NTFP certification benefits
- The private-public partnership in Nepal: the cooperation between government bodies, NGOs and private sector initiated by ANSAB (Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources)
 - Nepal Public-Private Marketing Alliance (multi-stakeholder) certified by FSC standards (Acharya et al., 2015, Yadav and Dugaya 2013)
- The Amazon nut (*Bertholletia excelsa*) certification in Madre de Dios, Peru (Quaedvlieg, 2013): cooperation between NGOs, processing firms and local nut collectors (*castañeros*)
 - Limited capacities (lack of marketing and business knowledge, limited access to finance) of local *castañeros*, high dependency on the processing firms
 - Lack of transparency in further processing, pricing and benefit allocation
 - Improved awareness and "collective social and political capital" (e.g., some *castañeros* decided to start their own processing plant).

Recommendations:

- Improve the efficiency of institutions by reforms, channel government resources for their development
- Clear property rights, and ensure fair benefit allocation
- Clarity of market information and improvement of marketing expertise
- Improve the institutional capacities and social organization within cooperatives
- Training and awareness raising, acknowledging the cultural values of NTFPs
- Improve and support the entities and cooperatives in NTFP processing
- Cover the "ecological gap" – improve the capacity to monitor the harvest thresholds, regeneration patterns, alternative sustainable harvesting methods etc
- Commitments of countries under Multilateral environment agreements (MEA) like CBD, CITES – transform the national legislation, and local administrative structures to improve the sustainability, biodiversity conservation, legality of international trade, fair and equitable benefit sharing (UNEP, 2010).

(Quaedvlieg, 2013, Sellare et al. 2020; Krishnakumar, 2013, IUCN, 2016; Schunko et al., 2019; Yadav and Dugaya 2013; Shanley et al. 2002; Burnside, 2013)

