



Youth4Mountains webinar series

Youth entrepreneurship in mountain areas: best practices and real-world examples

Territorial development processes require the presence of an active entrepreneurial component, even better if young and innovative. This series of workshops allowed present and future young entrepreneurs from all over the world to get inspiration by sharing their ideas and experience.

1) A multifunctional approach for mountain farms

This workshop shared existing **best practices** by **young people in mountain areas**, highlighting the importance of **agriculture in biodiversity conservation**, in order to enhance the rich **heritage** of knowledge and **tradition**, the recovery of **landraces** and the promotion of **local products** while encouraging **sustainable development** in mountain areas. By producing high value mountain products with low environmental impact, small-scale mountain producers can respond to the market's demand for "green" quality products and generate income in remote areas.

WHEN: 17th February 2022

MODERATOR: Prof. Fava, University of Milan (Italy)

Francesco Fava is assistant professor at the Department of Environmental Science and Policy (ESP), University of Milan. He has over ten years of research and teaching experience in agroecology and remote sensing, with a specific focus on mountain and arid environments. He is passionate about innovation and entrepreneurship and collaborates actively with international institutions and private companies bridging research and practice towards sustainable agriculture.



SPEAKERS:

- **Orto Tellinum (Valtellina, Alps, Italy)**

Orto Tellinum is a rural micro company, which aims to regenerate abandoned lands and create harmony between humans and the environment.

The company produces wine using the traditional grapevine of Valtellina, located on mountain terrace vineyards, and deals with the cultivation of some *landraces* such as buckwheat, rye, “Rostrato Rosso di Valtellina” corn and blue Valtellina potatoes. Furthermore, Orto Tellinum shares its knowledge about heroic viticulture and cereal farming through periodic workshops.

- **The value chain of the Iberian Ham (PDO) Los Pedroches - MOVING (Los Pedroches, Sierra Morena, Spain)**

The Sierra Morena - Jamón Ibérico Value Chain will be examined as part of the Horizon 2020 project MOVING (MOUNTAIN Valorisation through INTERconnectedness and Green growth) of the University of Córdoba. A high-quality product with its roots firmly in the social-ecological-system of the Dehesa area. A project that involved networking producers (farmers, foresters, grassland managers), civil society and innovation brokers/advisors.

- **Mahila Umang Producers Company Ltd (Kumaon region, Himalaya, India)**

Mahila Umang Producers Company Ltd. is a collective of self-help groups and producer-members engaged in promoting sustainable livelihoods through the establishment of micro enterprises. Umang also works to promote sustainable agriculture in the mountains by producing food, spices, tea, walnuts and honey, safely. The objective of this organization is to initiate projects directly controlled by producer members based on the principles of Fair Trade and guided by the concerns of ecology, economics and equity.

THE SPEAKERS MAP:



Problems to face...

- Holm oak tree root pathogen (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*)
- Climate change (precipitation & temperature)/Acorn availability
- Overgrazing
- Depopulation and lack of generational renewal
- Soil and pruning management
- Bureaucracy in order to access subsidies

Outcomes from the panel:

- 🌱 **New technologies** can optimize the agriculture resources in mountain and best manage them.
- 🌱 Is important that young farmers have a **long-term vision** and planning.
- 🌱 The public institutions should **support the youth** agricultural activities.
- 🌱 Restoring the **heritage** has a key role in mountain agriculture.
- 🌱 **Collaborate** and create alliance for the future of mountains.
- 🌱 We need to recognize the **values of mountains** and reverse the paradigm of marginality.



Some data about the seminar participants:

Participants: 56 + 1 class of an Italian high school

Countries: 9

Country	N.
<i>Austria</i>	1
<i>Belgium</i>	1
<i>India</i>	4
<i>Italy</i>	37
<i>Nepal</i>	1
<i>Peru</i>	1
<i>Romania</i>	3
<i>Slovenia</i>	1
<i>Spain</i>	7

AUSTRIA

BELGIUM

NEPAL

INDIA

SLOVENIA

ITALY

SPAIN

PERU

ROMANIA





2) Sharing mountain regions' examples of innovative and sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism aims to connect **recreational activities** with **ecological and social** requirements. In order to address this challenge, the **diversification** of existing businesses can **increase the competitiveness** of mountain areas while allowing the enhancement and **preservation of local resources** and interaction with the territory and communities living in these areas.

WHEN: 24th March 2022

MODERATOR: Rachel Creaney, James Hutton Institute (United Kingdom)

Rachel Creaney is a Social Scientist at the Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences Department, James Hutton Institute, Scotland. She is a qualitative researcher working on the European funded project MOVING which explores mountain-related value chains across Europe to contribute to the resilience and sustainability of mountain areas to climate change. She is also leading the youth engagement aspect of the project. Broadly, Rachel Creaney is interested in the use of creative methods to explore people's everyday experiences in various innovations in rural areas, be this in relation to housing, technology, healthcare, farming or tourism.

SPEAKERS:

- **The certified ecotourism value chain in the Southern Romanian Carpathians - MOVING (Zărnești - Piatra Craiului Mountains region, Southern Romanian Carpathians, Romania)**

The Southern Romanian Carpathians is being examined as part of the Horizon 2020 project MOVING (MOUNTAIN Valorisation through INterconnectedness and Green growth). The Zărnești - Piatra Craiului Mountains region is a high-quality tourist destination which is widely considered as one of the "jewels in the crown" of the Southern Romanian Carpathians. Unfortunately, the area is under pressure from growing visitor numbers and inappropriate patterns of development and there is an urgent need to develop more sustainable, lower impact forms of tourism whilst also maintaining the valuable income provided for the local community. Ecotourism is very well-suited to the sustainable development of the local economy of the area and the Zărnești - Piatra Craiului region is one of 10 'eco-destinations' promoted by the Association of Ecotourism in Romania (AER).

- **Mountain Altruist (Darjeeling - Lesser Himalayan, India)**

Mountain Altruist is a young company that provides attractive tour packages in Darjeeling, a very well-known tourist destination in the Lesser Himalayan region.



Their goal is to enhance the awareness of ecotourism to citizens living in this area and at the same time educate travellers from around the world about sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Recycling, reducing waste consumption and stopping the burning of fossil fuels are a part of their plan: they are committed to using alternative sources of energy, fuel-efficient vehicles and to eliminating the use of plastics during their activities. This project has also been successful in helping local communities by providing them job opportunities to improve their condition and well-being.

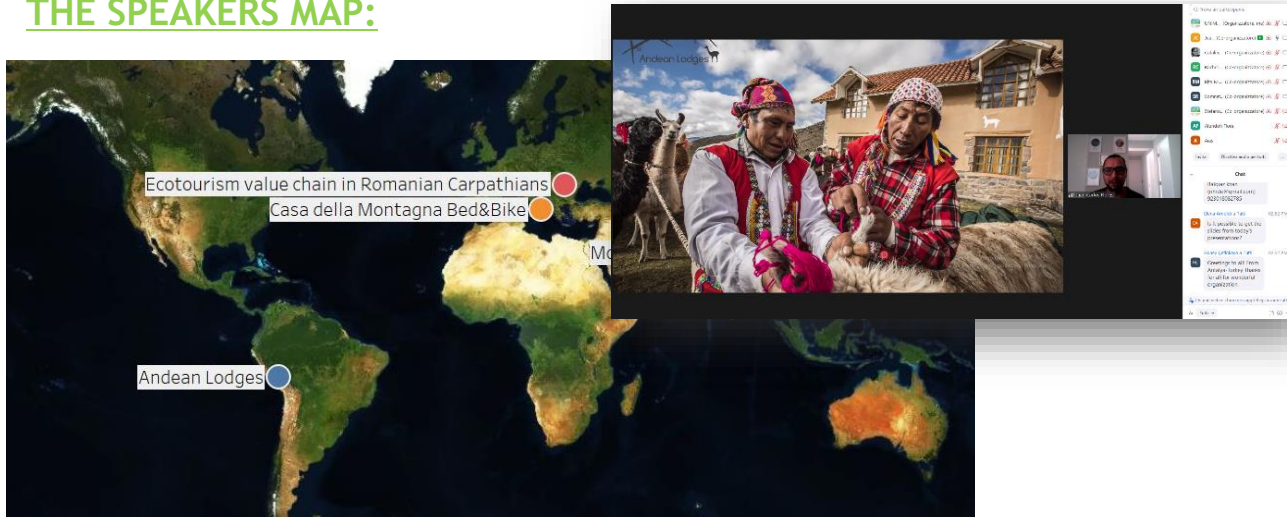
- **Casa della Montagna Bed and Bike (Lorica - Sila Park, Appennine, Italy)**

“Casa della Montagna”, the first Bed and Bike in Calabria, expands the concept of Bed and Breakfast, transporting and adapting it to the varied world of outdoor activities in natural parks and protected areas. Located in Lorica in the heart of the Sila National Park, a virtuous circuit of places where accommodation is in a perspective of widespread hospitality, connected by a dense network of over 600 km of trails. The innovative Bed & Bike concept stemmed from a desire to combine sport and nature with the relaxation of a stay in the mountains. Culture, sport and nature for innovative and sustainable mountain development. The aims of the project are to valorize the Sila Park, to de-seasonalise the tourist offer and at the same time redevelop the uninhabited houses in the area. The services offered are diversified: it is possible to rent equipment for bicycle excursions, carry out guided nature tours and wine and food routes.

- **Andean Lodges (Cusco - Apu Ausangate Route, Andes, Peru)**

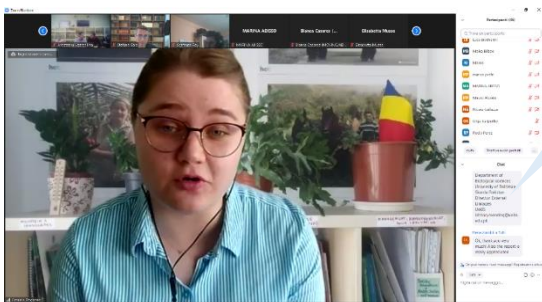
Andean Lodges is a Cusco-based company, founded in 2006 in association with the people of the peasant communities of Chillca and Osefina. Their goal is to offer unique trekking and lodging experiences on the Apu Ausangate Route, with a focus on community-based rural tourism, and to promote the development of these communities. The social vision is to create alternatives for sustainable development that are inclusive, and in balance with the cultural perspectives of the Andean original communities. To those ends, Andean Lodges has been working intensively for the preservation and safeguarding of the natural wealth, ancient knowledge and traditional ways of life of these communities.

THE SPEAKERS MAP:



Outcomes from the panel

- 🌱 Remain in the mountains and start a new business needs **creativity**.
- 🌱 It is important to have a **relationship with the social context** to start a tourism activity in mountain.
- 🌱 **Nature** is a key resource for sustainable tourism.
- 🌱 To create **partnerships** (e.g., with instruction, between other eco-tourism activity in the area) are a fundamental component in young tourism entrepreneurship.
- 🌱 **Landscape is a big asset** of mountain areas: it is important to understand and respect it when starting new businesses.
- 🌱 Sustainable tourism should be **integrated** with other local activities.
- 🌱 The **diversification in tourism** offers is important to generate an income in all season and to not overload the territory.



Some data about participants:

Participants: 53 + 1 class of a Russian high school

Countries: 18

Country	N.
Albania	1
Argentina	1
Austria	2
Belgium	1
Cameroon	1
China	1
India	2
Italy	26
Kenya	1
Pakistan	2
Portugal	1
Romania	2
Russia	5
Slovenia	1
Spain	4
Switzerland	1
Turkey	1
United Kingdom	1





3) The role of technology and innovation in mountain youth entrepreneurship

Can innovation be promoted in remote areas? Mountain areas can achieve centrality and attract young entrepreneurs thanks to collaboration between research, industry and policymaking. During this workshop, we talked with young people who have decided to stay in their territory to develop innovative projects, offering work and new opportunities to these areas.

WHEN: 3rd May 2022

MODERATOR: Ansgar Fellendorf, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Ansgar supports the mountain team of the UNEP Vienna Programme Office in the area of regional governance, climate change adaptation and sustainable mountain development. Primarily, he works on the implementation of the programme Adaptation at Altitude: Taking Action in Mountains that aims to strengthen and mainstream climate change adaptation in mountain regions. He closely cooperates with partners in the South Caucasus and East Africa, on identifying innovative adaptation solutions in the mountains, fosters regional dialogue and helps with further project development as well as event planning. Previously, Ansgar worked in natural hazard management, disaster risk reduction, ecosystem services and climate change adaptation in the Alps at the Austrian Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions and Tourism. Amongst others, he holds experience in policy development, governance processes and transborder networks such as the Alpine Convention and the EU Macroregional Strategy for the Alpine Region. He graduated with a MSc degree in Environmental Technology and International Affairs from the Diplomatic Academy and University of Technology Vienna.

SPEAKERS

- **Global Himalayan Expedition (Ladakh - Himalaya , India) - Jaideep Bansal**

Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) is the one of the world's unique impact organizations using the force of tourism coupled with technology to bring sustainable development to the remotest communities of India, as recognized by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). GHE is working in the remote inaccessible locations by merging the elements of sustainability, education, adventure tourism, homestays and solar based electrification. The organization has been commended by the world's leading organizations including the UN and the WEF, for its efforts to combat climate change and create resilient mountain communities through its development interventions.



- **Tree Flowers Solutions (Bragança - Terras de Trás os Montes, Portugal) - João Gonçalves**

Tree Flowers Solutions is a Portuguese start-up located at the countryside region, devoted to R&D, production and selling natural extracts and ingredients with innovative properties, for industrial application. The company aims to place itself in the forefront of this industry sector through its differentiation growth, distinguishing itself from its competitors by the sustainable development of its products. Both their mission and vision are focused on the circular economy pillars together with the quest for new partnerships aiming at the development of new processes, biobased products and ingredients.

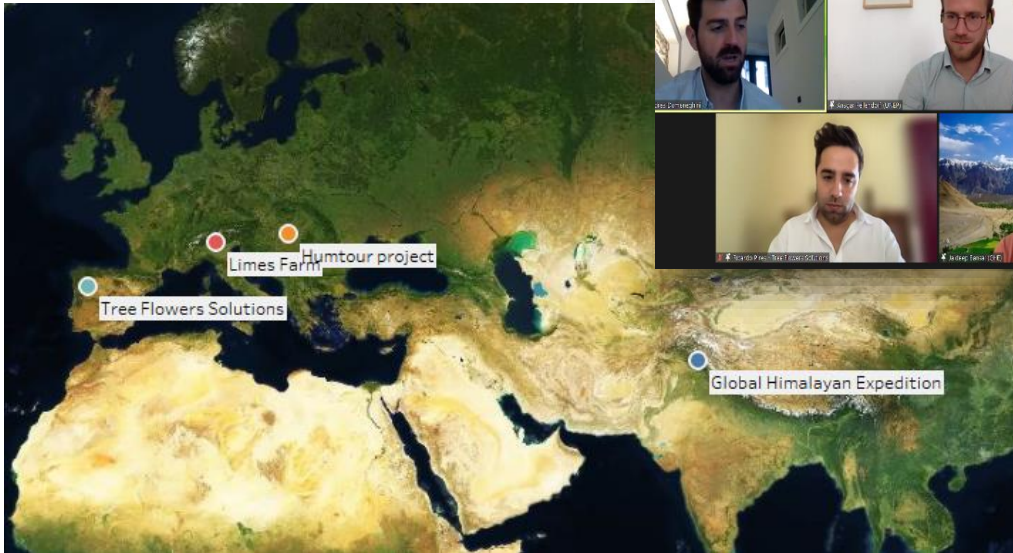
- **Humtour project (Carpathian Region, different Countries) - Ágnes Szabó-Diószeghy**

Humtour LLC is a social enterprise which offers village and wildlife tours, team building programs highlighting the surrounding nature, local traditions and offers its guests a chance to engage with local communities. The company also leads international responsible tourism projects. Humtour comes from “Humanitarian tourism”. The name and the idea of Humtour first came up in Venezuela when Ágnes was working in a volunteer program and during later travel adventures, which gave her the chance to get to know the local people, culture, and the history of her destination.

- **Limes Farm (Vallecamonica - Alps, Italy) - Andrea Domeneghini**

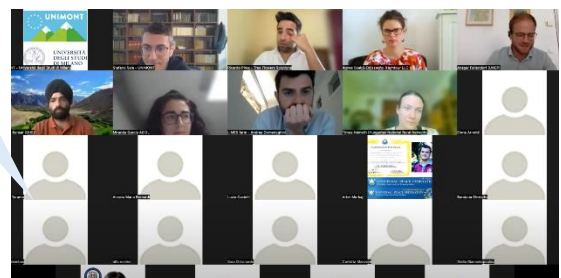
LIMES farm is an innovative startup that enables innovation and innovative communities in remote areas. Its proprietary technology allows it to manage buildings, like coworking spaces, in a sustainable and always-on way. Parallel to that, LIMES supplies a blueprint of practices to aggregate local companies, professionals and institutions into a community. Their mission is to valorize the talents of the territory supporting them in the start-up and development phase of their business, thanks to mentoring services, economically sustainable spaces and stimulating the contamination of professional skills.

THE SPEAKERS MAP:



Outcomes from the panel

- 🌱 **Innovation** in mountain remote areas should **involve the local community** in the development process, it is necessary to understand the needs of the people and to **propose solutions** and technologies.
- 🌱 **Engage young people** in the processes is fundamental for the future, e.g., starting from the high school with speeches and other interactive activities.
- 🌱 **Communication and digital tools** are useful to promote mountain new businesses.
- 🌱 Focus on youth innovative entrepreneurship in mountain areas could **avoid depopulation**.
- 🌱 Innovation in mountain areas means for our panel: **resilience, nature based solutions, circular economy, smart technological solution, glocal challenge solutions, fell not excluded, sustainable development.**



Some data about participants:

Participants: 35

Countries: 11

Country	N.
<i>Austria</i>	1
<i>Hungary</i>	2
<i>India</i>	3
<i>Italy</i>	14
<i>Nepal</i>	1
<i>Nigeria</i>	1
<i>Portugal</i>	2
<i>Romania</i>	1
<i>Spain</i>	1
<i>Tunisia</i>	1
<i>Ukraine</i>	1

