Origin products from African Forests: A Kenyan pathway to prosperity and green inclusive growth?

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The **lightning** point!

In many countries people collect and sell products from forests - sometimes their livelihoods depend on it.

Sometimes the products are of high quality
- linked to *the place*
- linked to *the people*

Geographical Indication (GI) is based on terroir, and can
- provide value added to origin forest products
- link rural livelihoods to niche markets
- provide incentive for ecosystem stewardship
Important to know!

Geographical indications (GI):

- Special type of intellectual property right;
- collectively held by producers;
- product quality characteristics are results of the cultural and natural environment.

A renaissance of GI

- 2006 EU regulations opened up the EU GI system
- and fueled the ongoing development of GI systems elsewhere
- also in Africa with untapped potential for GI products

VALOR project: “Let’s go to 3 African countries, team up with local experts and researchers, and investigate GI potential products – also from the forest!”
Honey and Forest Silk in Kenya

Case study of each product
- Honey from Mwingi subcounty
- Wild silk from Kakamega county

GI potential assessed according to five elements (figure)
The *way forward* for Kenyan forest GIs

Needed:

- Capacity building for uniform quality (processing)
- Strong producer organizations
- A GI legislative and policy framework
  - member of ARIPO with GI mandate

Strengths:

- A rich and diverse natural setting
- Likewise, rich and diverse culture
- Consumer awareness of origin products
Forest GI products that has succeeded

Argan oil – the liquid gold of the Berbers, empowering women in Morocco

Bonghwa Pine mushroom – supporting mountain villages in South Korea

The success of Oku white honey
- Unique ecosystem
- Traditional beekeeping
- White color and distinct taste
- Very good reputation

After GI registration
- Increased prices and production
- Stronger cooperatives
- Rural development
- Environmental awareness