SUMMARY

The aim of the project was to carry out a study on goats of native breeds reared in the south of the Lazio region (Italy) regarding biodiversity, health status, production and economic performance of the farms. This is in order to identify actions to support livestock farms to safeguard the breed biodiversity by contrasting genetic erosion and crossbreeds by expanding the reference genetic base and the number of males intended for breeding. All this aimed to improve the economic sustainability of goat breeding in rural areas and the enhancement of typical local products.
The theme of the project starts from the description of the phenotypic characteristics of these breeds and from the evaluation of their productive and reproductive characteristics.
The aim is to enhance the productive resources of these farms inserted in a context of typically marginal territorial areas through the increase of typical productions and to encourage the breeding of animals belonging to the mentioned breeds on regional farms ("*in situ*" conservation), with the following objectives:

• to assess the level of specialization of the breeds and the adequacy of traditionally practiced breeding systems;
• to characterize the attitudes of rusticity for adaptation to the farming systems practiced;
• to check the animal health and welfare status;
• to evaluate the qualitative and technological requirements of milk production;
• to identify any weak / critical points of the breeding systems to define corrective models of management of the breeding and the production;
• to ensure the maintenance or increase of the consistency of the animals populations belonging to these breeds;
• to preserve the "rural landscape" and to maintain the historical-cultural identity of the regional area;
• to ensure economic sustainability understood as the ability to produce adequate income for farmers.

The results obtained demonstrate that these goats are animals of significant zootechnical interest. However, they show a high phenotypic variability with expressions of the somatic characters that do not perfectly correspond to the breed standards, probably due to the risk of crossbreeding. Furthermore, a small number of the male breeding has been found with the consequent risk of inbreeding. These are factors that influence the safeguarding of biodiversity.
The limited milk production (91 l per lactation) is the consequence of the farming systems practiced, mostly of the wild state, very often without the contribution of the food supplementation in addition to the pastures to ensure the correct balance of the energy and protein. About the health status, the main problems are represented by endoparasitosis, mastitis and some infectious diseases for which some improvement actions could be implemented, based on prevention, control, biosafety and prophylaxis.