“The Karoo Lamb story”
Politics, regulations, contestation, and self interest in the process to register Karoo Lamb as a GI in South Africa

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Where is the Karoo?
## Typical Karoo shrubs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of karoo bossie / grazing plant</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
<th>Attributes identified in the grazing plants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SILVER KAROO</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plinthus karrooicus</td>
<td>Plinthus karrooicus</td>
<td>Dusty, Woody, Damp, Camomile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penzia Spinescens</td>
<td>Penzia Spinescens</td>
<td>Eucalyptus, Bitter</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SKAAP BOSSIE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eriocephalus ericoides</td>
<td>Eriocephalus ericoides</td>
<td>Woody, Bitter, Eucalyptus, Lavender, Minty</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>KAPOKBOS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Salsola glabrescens</td>
<td>Salsola glabrescens</td>
<td>Dusty, Sandy, Soapy, Woody, Damp/Musty</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RIVIERRANNA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pentzia incana</td>
<td>Pentzia incana</td>
<td>Sage-like, Eucalyptus, Lavender, Bitter</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ANKERKAROO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pieronia glauca/ Rosenia humilis</td>
<td>Pieronia glauca/ Rosenia humilis</td>
<td>Sage, Lavender, Camomile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERDEBOS</strong></td>
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</table>
Initial steps to protect Karoo Lamb in absence of *sue generis* legislation

- DURAS project: 2006-2008
- Development of protocols and standards – a 4-year process in consultation with producers and abattoirs
- Protocols approved in May 2010 by Department of Agriculture via “Meat Regulations”.
- Certification mark designed and approved and registered in March 2011.
- By end of 2011 Karoo Lamb as a meat of origin protected by:
  - Rules of use, production protocol
  - Certification mark (protected by IP legislation)
  - 3rd party audits
  - Producer organisation and membership fees
Final certification mark
Meat carcass stamp

CERTIFIED KAROO
meat of origin
Key attribute of certified Karoo supply chain: Traceability

KAROO MEAT OF ORIGIN: The official Karoo Development Foundation website
Karoo Lamb obtained GI status in Europe

- EU required mechanisms to protect GIs in South Africa
- SA offered Merchandise Marks Act as the legal mechanism
- Karoo Lamb, Rooibos and Honeybush used as test cases based on early evidence from DURAS project
- Opposition to Karoo Lamb application for protection by retailer and farmers – politics resulted in refusal
- EU negotiators took Karoo Lamb Case file to Brussels
- Confirmed GI status and included in Protocol 3 to the SADC-EU EPA
South Africa finally gets *sue generis* Legislation for GIs

- 1st attempt for Karoo Lamb GI submitted in June 2019, rejected in December 2020
- Stakeholder meeting in Feb 2020 to discuss opposition by stakeholders
- 2nd application submitted in July 2020, published for comment 2020, again rejected in April 2021
- Realization that regulations are prohibitive and SA will never be able to register a GI
- Amendments introduced – 3rd round of amendments discussed in June 2022 – agreement.
- Opportunity set for new application to register Karoo Lamb as a GI
Conclusion

• Karoo Lamb has all the characteristics of a ‘origin based food product’
• Several empirical studies to show link to territory
• But – opposition from retailer, farmers, packers who have vested interest in private control over Karoo Lamb as a niche product
• Regulations also prohibitive – amendments could help.
• After 16 years there is hope that Karoo Lamb will finally be protected as a GI in South Africa