

# journal | 27\_22



## Editorial

Dear readers,

The IfLS can currently look back on 65 years of institute history. This is no reason for us to take a step back. Instead, at the end of 2021, we have started the reorganisation of the IfLS in preparation for further decades. Since the beginning of 2022, two organisations are operating under the IfLS name - the IfLS e.V. and the IfLS GmbH (see News, on p.2).

In the future, we will continue to be active in our well-known eleven thematic fields, which we also present in this journal. These include projects in the field of rural areas. The political framework for these is set mainly by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and traditionally takes place in 7-year periods. Together with three partner offices, we have been consulting the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) over the past two years in the drafting of the CAP Strategic Plan for Germany 2023-2027 (see p.16).

At the regional level, we have also supported various local action groups in the preparation of their development concepts for the LEADER funding period from 2023. This covers a total of seven LEADER regions spread across the federal states of Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate

(p.10). In Saxony-Anhalt, on the other hand, we support the ministry in their selection of regions that apply for funding with their development strategies (p.11).

The involvement of citizens is central to the drafting of regional development strategies. Especially in times of Corona, new formats are increasingly in demand. Therefore, we are pleased to be contributing to this. Since April 2020, we have been working with the Institute for Communication and Media Studies (IfKMW) at the University of Leipzig to investigate how digital formats can be used in participation processes and how they can be combined with analogue approaches in a meaningful and efficient way (p. 9).

Enjoy reading the IfLS Journal 2022!

Jörg Schramek

### Content

Projects	p. 2 - 27
Miscellaneous	p. 28 - 31
Publications and services	p. 33 - 35

# News

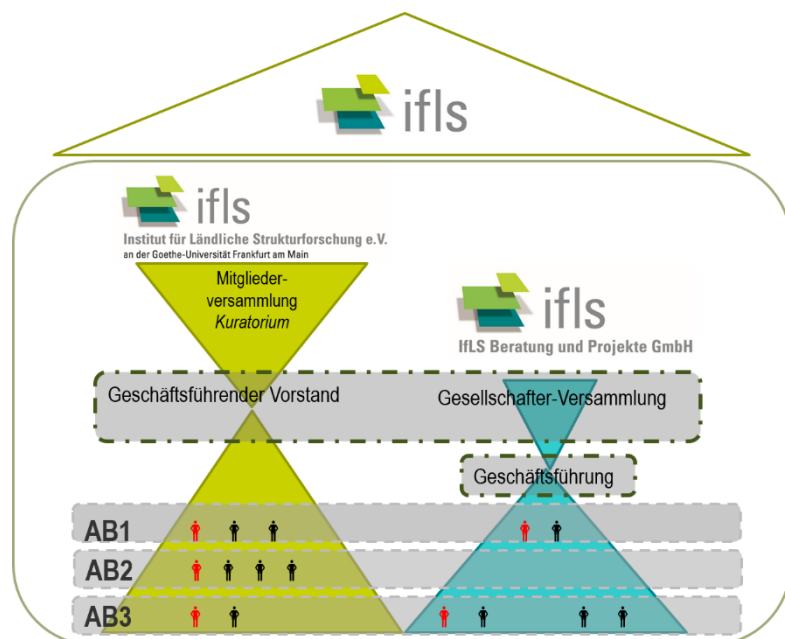
## GmbH Foundation

### Reorganisation of the IfLS: Foundation of the 'IfLS Beratung und Projekte GmbH'

In 2021 we discussed and prepared the reorganisation of the IfLS – it is completed now in 2022: the 'IfLS Beratung und Projekte GmbH' starts its activities on 1 April 2022.

Since its foundation in 1957, the 'Institut fuer Laendliche Strukturforschung' has operated as an organisation under the ownership of a non-profit association. In the last few years, the project portfolio has changed. In addition to research projects based on grants, contract research makes up a growing percentage of the business volume. After 65 years, the reorganisation of the IfLS became necessary. As a result of this change, the Institute for Rural Development Research founded the 'IfLS Beratung und Projekte GmbH' as a wholly-owned daughter company on 10 December 2021 to outsource parts of its business activities. The managing director is Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein. The 'Institut fuer Laendliche Strukturforschung e.V.' is the sole owner of the GmbH and is still represented by Jörg Schramek as Chairman of the Board.

In this way the statutes of the IfLS has to be changed and the name of the institute is now identical with the name of the association. The unity of the association and the institute has been realised. The previous honorary board was transformed into an executive board. Jörg Schramek is still the chairman of the board, Simone Sterly acts as deputy chairperson and Ulrich Gehrlein as member of the board. They together continue to lead the three departments with their topics in both organisations – 'Institut fuer Laendliche Strukturforschung e.V.' and 'IfLS Beratung und Projekte GmbH'.





# Projects

## Agriculture and environment

### Agricultural technology and biodiversity

Which new technologies on arable land are currently available and which can be expected in the near future? How do these developments affect wildlife species? How can possible negative impacts be countered? These are questions addressed by a new R+D project in which the IfLS is involved.

Land management is subject to constant development, be it based on requested increases in efficiency and effectiveness, in the course of adaptation to climate change (e.g. minimum tillage, irrigation methods) or in order to address environmental aspects (e.g. by means of agroforestry or paludiculture). This is also accompanied by the development of new techniques and equipment (e.g. fertiliser and pesticide application techniques, mechanical weed control and electro-weeding). At the same time, biodiversity is under severe threat.

By means of an extensive literature and internet research, current, developing and future technologies on arable land and (potential) impacts on selected species of wild fauna are to be determined. The aim is to compile a catalogue of measures to counteract potential negative impacts. The IfLS will participate in the research and contribute its expertise on instruments and measures and their implementation.

**Project title:** Species conservation in the light of modernised agricultural techniques

**Duration:** 2021-2023

**Client:** Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

**In partnership with:** DLR Projektträger, Leibniz-Institut (ATB), Ulrich Sander (freelance biologist)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

### Advantages of perennial flowering areas for insects

Flowering mixtures have become a popular biodiversity measure on arable land. In 2018, the IfLS coordinated an initial study on the effect of 1-year flowering areas on flower-visiting insect groups as part of the evaluation of MEPL III (Rural Development Plan of Baden-Wuerttemberg 2014-2020). In 2020, the study was expanded to include flowering areas funded by the programme, that remain longer than one growing season.

The highest numbers of species and individuals of bees, hoverflies and butterflies were found on perennial flowering areas, followed by flowering areas that have already been sown in autumn of the previous year. These areas already provide flowering plants and thus food sources in spring. Perennial areas also provide nesting and overwintering habitats. So far, however, annual flowering mixtures are by far the most popular among farmers. There is therefore a need to increase the use of mixtures that persist for a longer period.

The study is available at:

<https://foerderung.landwirtschaft-bw.de/pb/,Lde/Startseite/Agrarpolitik/Begleitstudien>

[only in German]

**Project title:** Second ad-hoc study on the faunistic evaluation of flowering mixtures in Baden-Wuerttemberg (FAKT)

**Duration:** 2020/2021

**Client:** Ministry of Rural Areas and Consumer Protection Baden-Wuerttemberg (MLR)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

## Approaches for climate protection in agricultural support programmes: A long-term strategy is necessary

Approaches for climate protection in agricultural support programmes: A long-term strategy is necessary

The new funding period of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is imminent and with it the further development of the agricultural support programmes of the so-called 2nd pillar of the CAP; also against the background of climate protection. Within the framework of the evaluation of MEPL III, scientists of the IfLS and the University of Hohenheim conducted an ad hoc study on the question of how climate protection can be integrated into such programmes. Concrete starting points and measures for climate protection in connection with agriculture were characterised, which in principle can be promoted through agricultural support programmes. Selected approaches were analysed with regard to their potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the associated costs.

A reduction of livestock numbers and rewetting of organic soils would be very effective, but could only be implemented in the medium term. Reducing nitrogen surpluses also has a high potential for reducing emissions. In addition, there are other approaches such as increased cultivation of legumes or emission-reducing measures in livestock housing and in the storage of farm yard manure, or building up soil organic matter. The energetic use of biomass should generally be limited to residues or should only take place at the end of a multiple material use.

The results of the research were used to derive recommendations for climate-relevant support measures in the second pillar of the CAP. These measures are part of a wide range of instruments that can be used to promote climate protection in

and with agriculture. They must, for example, be coordinated with regulatory law and measures from other policy areas such as energy policy.

In principle, the different instruments must be considered together and measures must be part of a long-term strategy. Clear objectives, announcements of 'where we are going' and what future prospects exist are important so that farmers can orient themselves and make appropriate decisions with foresight.



The study is available at:

<https://foerderung.landwirtschaft-bw.de/pb/Lde/Startseite/Agrarpolitik/Begleitstudien>  
[only in German]

**Project title:** Ad hoc study on ways to strengthen the climate protection aspect of agricultural support programmes in the scope of the evaluation of MEPL III (Rural Development Plan of Baden-Wuerttemberg 2014-2020)

**Duration:** 2020-2021

**Client:** Ministry of Rural Areas and Consumer Protection Baden-Württemberg (MLR)

**In partnership with:** University Hohenheim

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

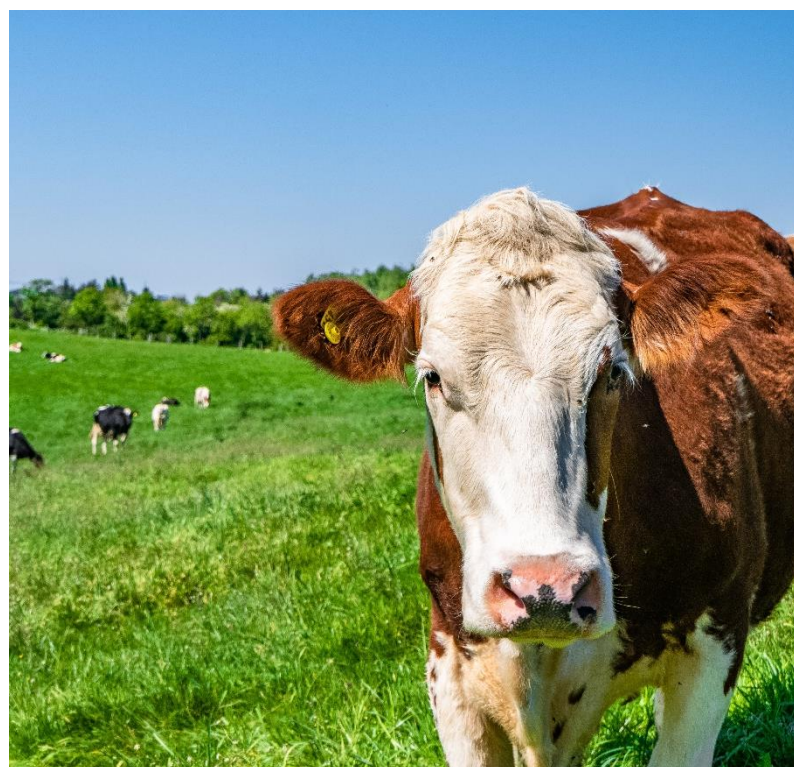


## From cow to biodiversity to milk

Climate protection is currently a topic very high on the political agenda. No less important, however, is the preservation and improvement of biodiversity. Since about half of Germany's land is used for agricultural purposes, agriculture plays a central role in preserving the biodiversity of flora and fauna. Particularly noteworthy are grasslands, which account for almost a third of agricultural land, and their management, which is largely characterised by milk production.

Under the current framework conditions, however, dairy farms struggle to promote biodiversity and be profitable at the same time. Therefore, it is obvious that production systems for the conservation of biodiversity in grassland need to be further refined - taking into account ecology, economy and social aspects in equal measure.

But what are the central obstacles and success factors for more biodiversity in dairy production systems? And which are the key economic aspects? Since spring 2022, these questions have been on the minds of the project team, which has been working closely with farms and relevant stakeholders in the Freiburg and Ravensburg regions. The project also includes biodiversity consultations with the aim of initiating an adequate change towards more biodiversity on up to 15 farms per region. Rounding off the project work is the quantification of ecological footprints with the inclusion of



regional expertise. After all only in this way, taking into account the three pillars of sustainability, is it possible to develop concrete visions for the future.

**Project title:** Design options for economically viable biodiversity-enhancing dairy production systems in regions of Freiburg and Ravensburg (GOBIOM)

**Duration:** 2021-2024 (Phase 2)

**Client:** Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

In partnership with: Öko-Institute (Projektleitung), grünweg

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Jörg Schramek and Dr. Holger Pabst

GEFÖRDERT VOM



Bundesministerium  
für Bildung  
und Forschung

## Socio-economics of farmbusiness

### Increased added value on farms

Farmers of small (family) farms have to come up with ideas to ensure the survival of the farm by increasing value generation. Within the framework of the 'OnFarm' project, different outputs are developed to inspire farm management and to provide information on successful value creation models.

As part of the consortium, the IfLS is producing a practical guideline for action that presents key aspects of building short food chains. It focuses on the specific situation in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Germany.

In addition, the IfLS supports the development of more information material on innovative marketing approaches, preconditions in agricultural production and food production. Also materials concerning the role of cooperation in generating value creation on farms are produced. Case studies and a podcast series complete the offers to agricultural enterprises and are meant to inspire them and convey practical experience.

The results are published at:

<https://www.onfarm.eu>



Funded by  
the European Union

**Project title:** 'Farming, food production and food processing with added value for local small and medium-sized farms– OnFarm'

**Duration:** 2022-2023

**Client:** European Commission, Erasmus+

**In partnership with:** ASZ (CZ, Coordinator), CEJA (BE), CIA Toscana (IT), OnProjects (ES), SFYN (NL)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Christoph Mathias

### Successful development of agricultural niche markets

For a long time the wholesale trade and world markets have put pressure on small and medium-sized farms. Niche markets represent an alternative strategy to growing or closing the businesses. The Niche Market Farming project provides information materials on high-quality food and sustainable, regional production:

- Traditional methods, old varieties and breeds and the significance of biodiversity as a niche market,
- Organic farming and short chains as a niche and
- Protected designations of origin and the importance of quality of regional products.

For more information please have a look on our website:

<https://www.ifls.de/en/references/projects/details/niche-market-farming>



Erasmus+

**Project title:** 'Niche Market Farming' – niche markets in agriculture

**Duration:** 2022-2023

**Client:** European Commission, Erasmus+

**In partnership with:** ARID (PL), CIA Umbria (IT), MAA (IT), OnProjects (ES), Hof und Leben (DE)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Christoph Mathias

## Utilization strategies for non-marketable eggs from small laying flocks

Dirty, cracked and small sized eggs from small flocks of laying hens are often not suitable for industrial processing due to the small quantities involved. The study investigates which alternative utilization strategies exist instead and how sustainable they are. Based on an online survey of farms with up to 3.000 laying hens and expert interviews, different strategies were identified and evaluated according to the following sustainability criteria:

- Integration into the operational workflow and feasibility in terms of labour management;
- Legal, ecological and consumer-relevant aspects and
- Profitability and durability of the strategy applied.

The strategies 'direct marketing', 'processing under contract' and 'on-farm processing' scored best in the evaluation. Other strategies were 'sale to an interim trader', 'sale to a processing facility', 'use as feed' and 'own consumption' - the latter to a limited extent per farm. Eggs that cannot be passed on to any of these utilization channels are disposed of.

The study shows that for all strategies, integration into the operational workflow as well as the legal, consumer-relevant and ecological aspects can be implemented relatively well. Consumer-relevant aspects are, for example, the consideration of manufacturing standards and regional value added. Waste prevention is ecologically relevant. However, the profitability and durability of the strategies applied are rated as moderate to poor. The profitability suffers from low sales prices for these eggs, or rather the costs for the refinement to higher-quality products are high. A permanently secured sale of eggs and egg products is rarely guaranteed.



Further research questions concern logistics and volume aggregation. The project ends in September 2022.

**Project title:** Organic eggs from small production units – current and alternative utilization of non-marketable eggs

**Duration:** 2020-2022

**Client:** Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) within the framework of the Federal Programme 'Organic Farming and Other Forms of Sustainable Agriculture' (BÖLN)

**In partnership with:** Bioland Consulting GmbH, Demeter e.V. (2020-2021)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Bettina Spengler and Jörg Schramek



## ‘Ribbons of life’ in the Hunsrück

At the end of January the last meeting of the project-accompanying working group of the large scale nature conversation project ‘ribbons of life in Hunsrück’ took place. After the three-year planning phase I, the planning of the PEPL (care and development plan) and supplementary studies were presented at this meeting.

The IfLS presented the results of the socio-economic analysis, which is an integral part of the PEPL. On the one hand, the IfLS had carried out area-related partial cost calculations, which show how services and costs change in the course of the implementation of nature conservation measures and what financial effects this has. The results show that losses are not necessarily to be expected when funding opportunities are taken into account.

Extensively used grassland is often no longer suitable for fodder utilization. The IfLS has therefore compiled profiles of alternative value-added options. For example, the production of raw material for grass paper, seed propagation on nature conservation areas, or the processing and marketing of hay for horse feeding or as rabbit feed. Finally, the IfLS’s explanations for the utilization and value-added opportunities for wood from coppice forests were also met with interest at the closing event.

For more Information visit:

<https://snu.rlp.de/de/projekte/baender-des-lebens/>

**Project title:** Socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning for the large scale nature conservation project 'Ribbons of life in the Hunsrück'

**Duration:** 2020-2022

**Client:** Nature and Environment Foundation Rhineland-Palatine (Stiftung Natur und Umwelt; RLP)

**In partnership with:** BGHplan Trier

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Jörg Schramek, Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Svea Thietje

## Pastoral paths in the Palatine Forest

The large-scale nature conservation project ‘New Pastoral paths in the Palatine Forest’ aims to secure the use of valuable open-land biotopes with their rare species by supporting current management, in particular by (migratory) sheep herds.

In the first phase of the analysis, the IfLS recorded the social and economic framework conditions in the project area and derived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks in relation to the objectives and planned measures of the PEPL (care and development plan). In the second phase, approaches for implementation were developed.

This included, for example, the development of proposals for the acquisition of land. In the later implementation phase of the project, land is to be leased or purchased on a long-term basis to ensure the project’s permanent viability. A workshop with representatives of various institutions served to identify hurdles in the acquisition process.

Furthermore, the costs and yields of planned measures were discussed with various sheep and suckler cow farmers in the ‘Grazing’ working group on the basis of contribution margin calculations. In addition, the IfLS and regional actors developed accompanying measures to promote the acceptance and implementation of the PEPL. The focus was on tourism, education for sustainable development (ESD) and the area of orchards.

Website: <https://www.hirtenwege-pfaelzerwald.de/>

**Project title:** Large-scale nature conservation project 'New shepherds' paths in the Palatine Forest' (socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning)

**Duration:** 2019-2022

**Client:** Palatine Forest-North Vosges Biosphere Reserve

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Jörg Schramek, Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Bettina Spengler and Svea Thietje





## Regional development

### Citizen participation in rural regional development: work in selected case study regions

Since April 2020, the IfLS and the Institute for communication and media studies (IfKMW) at the University of Leipzig have been jointly investigating how digital formats can be used in participation processes and combined with analogue approaches in a useful and efficient way.

Building on the first empirical part of the project, a nationwide online survey of representatives of rural regional development, the case study work was started in 2021 in regions distributed nationwide that cover a range of structural spatial framework conditions:

- Bavaria: Fichtelgebirge (Landkreis Wunsiedel),
- Brandenburg: Fläming-Havel (Landkreis Potsdam-Mittelmark),
- North Rhine-Westphalia: district Lippe,
- Rhineland-Palatinate: Erbeskopf (Landkreise Bernkastel-Wittlich, Trier-Saarburg, Birkenfeld) and
- Schleswig-Holstein: Amt Hüttener Berge (Kreis Rendsburg-Eckernförde).

Here, the questions of the project are examined in depth, whereby – in accordance with the transdisciplinary orientation of the project – focal points are set together with the regional actors. The regional development processes considered largely comprised the LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale) case studies, but the focus is also on other processes such as ILE (Integrated Rural Development) and 'Smarte.Land.Regionen'. One of the questions that has so far emerged as relevant across the case studies is that of the preconditions for successful participation, especially of older and younger target groups.

IfKMW and IfLS will continue to collect data in the regions until the beginning of 2022. This includes content analysis, guided interviews, participant observation of participation events and focus groups. The data collection will largely take place online or by telephone.

The DigiBeL website keeps you up to date on the progress of the project work, where, among other things, information on the case study regions and results reports on previous work modules can be accessed. You can also access the project podcast 'DigitalLand' via the website (as well as via the usual audio portals). In episode 3, the DigiBeL team reports on the case study work and in the next episode, regional actors will have their say.

For more information visit:

<https://www.sozphil.uni-leipzig.de/en/institut-fuer-kommunikations-und-medienwissenschaft/professuren/chair-of-media-and-communication/forschungs-und-praxisprojekte/perspectives-and-applications-of-digital-participation-procedures-in-rural-regionaldevelopment>

Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium  
für Ernährung  
und Landwirtschaft

aufgrund eines Beschlusses  
des Deutschen Bundestages

**Project title:** Perspective and possible applications of digital participation procedures in rural regional development (DigiBeL)

**Duration:** 2020-2023

**Client:** Federal Rural Development Scheme (BULE)

**In partnership with:** Prof. Dr. Christian Pentzold, Institut für Kommunikations- und Medienwissenschaft (IfKMW), University Leipzig (formerly TU Chemnitz)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Simone Sterly and Sarah Peter

## New strategies for LEADER regions in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate

For the upcoming LEADER funding period (2023-2027), the IfLS is currently working on seven regional development strategies in three federal states.

The LEADER approach is characterised by the participatory formulation of development strategies (bottom-up), the promotion of cooperation and networking and the implementation of integrated, multi-sectorial and innovative approaches. With the creation of regional development strategies, tailor-made, region-specific solutions are developed to meet current and future challenges and to strengthen rural areas with all their opportunities.

For the candidate regions Rhine-Haardt, from Rhine to Wine, Erbeskopf and Southern Palatinate (in Rhineland-Palatinate), Hohenlohe-Tauber and Limes Region Hohenlohe-Heilbronn (in Baden-Württemberg) as well as Lahn-Dill-Wetzlar (in Hesse), the development process began in mid-2021. The IfLS supports the regionally responsible persons in the implementation of information and participation events of various formats: In order to enable different groups of the population and stakeholders to participate, digital, analogue and hybrid forms are used to develop the concept.

At the same time, the goal and challenge is to link the regional conditions and potentials with the national, federal and EU strategic goals.

An individual mission statement, a target strategy and lead projects are developed with a view to the respective characteristics of the regions. These can be developed, for example, in the areas of tourism, bioeconomy, climate protection, digitisation, services of general interest and enhancing the quality of life.



**Project title:** Elaboration of LEADER development strategies

**Duration** (for all conceptual designs): 2021 – 2022

**Client:**

- LAG Erbeskopf
- LAG Südpfalz
- LAG Rhein-Haardt
- Stadt Gernersheim (from Rhine to wine)
- Hohenlohekreis (Limesregion)
- Hohenlohekreis (LAG Hohenlohe-Tauber)
- LAG Lahn-Dill-Wetzlar

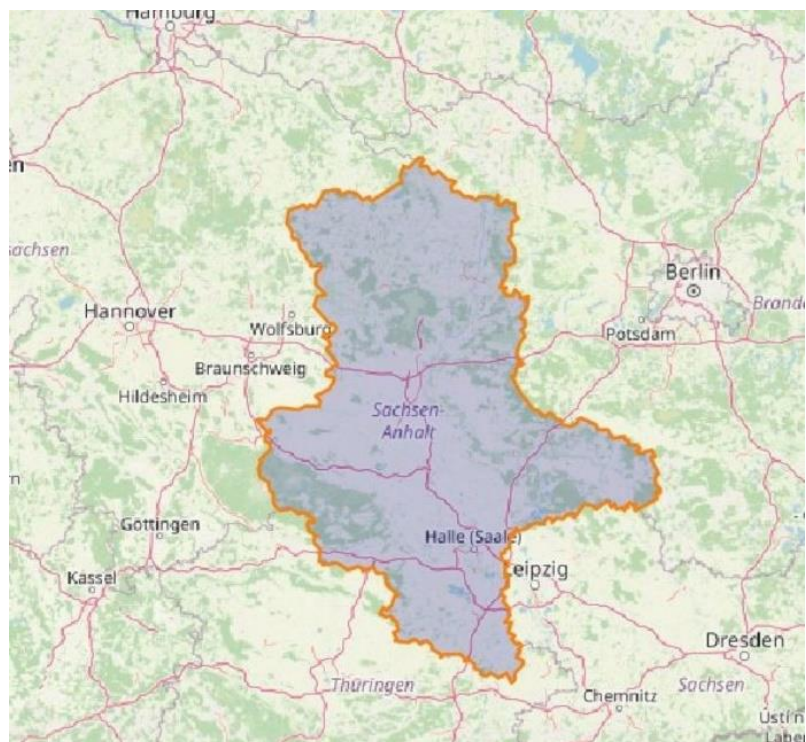
**In partnership with:** KOBRA Consulting Centre Landau (Kobra Beratungszentrum bei 'from Rhine to wine' and 'Rhein-Haardt')

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje, Christoph Mathias, Oliver Müller and Hanna Kramer

## Selection procedure of LEADER regions in Saxony-Anhalt 2021-2027

With the start of the 2021-2027 funding period, selection procedures for the recognition of LEADER regions will be carried out in the federal states. The IfLS was commissioned to provide expert support for the selection competition in Saxony-Anhalt. This assignment essentially includes the elaboration of the evaluation criteria, the creation of a handout for the 26 applicant regions, the coaching of local actors to strengthen capacity building on site, and the assessment of the submitted Local Development Strategies (LES). Of particular importance here is the multi-fund CLLD approach pursued in Saxony-Anhalt. This means that, depending on their priorities, applicant regions can draw on the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Agricultural Fund (ELER) for funding to implement their strategies. This approach is intended to strengthen both the coherence between the funds and the interaction of the funds between the territorial settings.

At present, most of the applicant regions have already started the participatory development of the LES and are receiving further technical support in the form of coaching on specific topics of strategy and organizational development on behalf of the state.



**Project title:** Selection procedure for LEADER regions in Saxony-Anhalt 2021-2027

**Duration:** 2022

**Client:** Ministry of Finance, Saxony-Anhalt

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Oliver Müller



## EU-wide LEADER Evaluation – case study Germany

The study was commissioned by the European Commission to examine the contribution of LEADER to balanced territorial development. For this purpose, the study relied on document analysis, online surveys and case studies, including expert interviews with a wide range of stakeholders in 36 Local Action Groups (LAGs) and 14 Rural Development Programmes in 10 Member States.

The IfLS was responsible for conducting the case studies in Germany (two LAGs each in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony). The aim was to enable a broad overview of LEADER implementation and an evaluation of the approach, taking into account both the diversity of framework conditions and implementation methods.

One result: the more the seven LEADER principles are realized, the better the achieved results and effectiveness of the LAGs. This is a significant added value of the LEADER program. The bottom-up approach, area-based strategies, the formation of public-private partnerships and the creation of networks were particularly significant in the LAGs studied.

In some cases, cross-regional cooperation and the multisectoral design and implementation of strategies could be further developed. However, the results in the EU-wide context also show that the implementation of the seven principles of the LEADER method has different characteristics, depending on the priorities which are pursued by the LEADER approach. The case study in Saxony, for example, showed that LEADER made a particularly effective contribution to strengthening the local economic base through investment activities. In Rhineland-Palatinate, on the other hand, the focus was more on experimental approaches and innovations, as well as on networking and cooperation. Accordingly, LEADER in Rhineland-Palatinate served more to build capacities and networks.



For the next funding period, the LEADER added value as well as the cooperation and exchange between LAGs and administrative authorities should be strengthened.

The study is available at:

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/bd6e4f7c-a5a6-11ec-83e1-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-253254311>

**Project title:** EU-wide LEADER Evaluation – case study Germany

**Duration:** 2021

**Client:** European Commission - GD agriculture and rural development

**In partnership with:** Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Oliver Müller and Simone Sterly



## Rural areas

### How can Smart Villages be successfully supported? - EU-wide review and focus on five case studies

Since the second half of 2021, the focus of the IfLS in the Smart Rural 21 project has been on the consideration of the political framework conditions. In a first step, an inventory of existing funding opportunities and the implementation of Smart Village approaches in the EU countries was established.

Recently case studies on prospective funding approaches have been conducted by experts under the leadership of the IfLS. The results should support decision-makers at different policy levels in the further design of the funding framework. The focus will be on project funding approaches for 'smart' municipalities and regions in Belgium, the Czech Republic and France, also a LEADER cooperation approach in Estonia. In Finland the focus is on an approach for developing capacities of finding bottom-up methods for 'smart solutions' at local and regional levels.

In an accompanying workshop series, the IfLS and E40 (project coordination) met with policy representatives - including the European Network for Rural Development, National Rural Networks and Ministries of Agriculture - as well as the national experts of Smart Rural 21. The aim was to present (interim) results of the project for discussion. The participants were also involved in the selection of the five case studies from a larger pre-selection.

Further information on the funding landscape in the EU countries and the documentation of the workshops is available here:

<https://www.smartrural21.eu/countries/>

<https://www.smartrural21.eu/smart-rural-21-project/events/policy-workshops/>



**Project title:** 'Smart Rural 21' – Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century

**Duration:** 2019-2021

**Client:** European Commission - GD agriculture and rural development

**In partnership with:** E40 Group (HU, Koordination), empirica Kommunikations- und Technologieforschung GmbH (DE), eTownz (IE), Innovationsförderungszentrum für die Landwirtschaft und den ländlichen Raum (NL), Landwirtschaftliche Universität Athen (GR)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Simone Sterly, Christoph Mathias and Sarah Peter



## Agriculture and rural development

### Pilot Project - Establishing an operational programme

On commission of the General Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), Ecorys is carrying out a Europe-wide pilot project on the expansion of funding opportunities for operational programmes of producer organisations. The IfLS is involved with research on Germany and Austria.

Within the framework of the new CAP period, it is planned to extend the support for operational programmes, which has so far only existed in the fruit and vegetable sector, to producer organisations in other sectors. The project will give information about existing support structures for producer organisations and the interest in the implementation of operational programmes in the different member states.

A survey carried out among producer organisations, as well as an analysis of rural development plans and interviews with experts are used for this purpose. Based on this and with the help of case studies, of which the IfLS is doing one in Germany and one in Austria, funding options for operational programmes will be developed that are as suitable as possible. Measures will be developed to make it easier for producer organisations to design and develop their operational programmes.

**Project title:** Pilot Project - Establishing an operational programme

**Duration:** 2021-2023

**Client:** Directorate-General for Agriculture and Regional Development

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Simone Sterly and Carla Wember

## Agricultural policy

### Synthesis of the online public consultation on the Action Plan for the development of the organic sector

In the context of a Communication on an Action Plan for the development of the organic sector, the European Commission carried out an internet-based consultation between 4th September and 27th November 2020. It aimed at gathering information and feedback from EU citizens and relevant stakeholders (including public authorities, businesses and their associations, NGOs, research and academic institutions).

IfLS together with Ecorys carried out this synthesis of the results of the open public consultation (OPC). It leads to the conclusion that, to a large extent, respondents share common views 1) on the obstacles to achieving greater production and consumption of organic products 2) on the main factors that plays a role in influencing the demand for organic products and consumer trust 3) on actions and measures to be implemented for stimulating production and consumption and 4) on the added value of organic produce regarding the environment and climate change, and how the environmental benefits of organic could be further enhanced. The number of responses to the OPC and the position papers demonstrate the interest of stakeholders in the development of the organic sector. Stakeholders providing inputs on relevant issues as well as useful suggestions on actions to stimulate an increase in production and consumption.

**Project title:** Evaluation of the action plan for the development of the organic sector

**Duration:** 2021

**Client:** Directorate-General for Agriculture of the European Commission

**In partnership with:** Ecorys

**Contact person at IfLS:** Simone Sterly



## Verification of premia in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate

How will the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) work towards environmental, nature conservation and climate targets for agriculture from 2023 onwards? In this regard, important instruments continue to be the agri-environmental and climate measures as well as compensatory payments under the EAFRD (2nd pillar CAP).

The federal states of Germany not only have to decide which measures should and can be supported, the level of the measures' premia must also be set at an appropriate level.

The loss of income or the additional costs associated with the participation of a farm in a measure determine the premia. For example, planting additional flower strips reduces the area available for cultivation, and the sowing of regional wildflower mixtures also results in additional costs. However, calculations also take into account cost savings resulting from the measure, such as a lower fertiliser application. The premia thus compensate for losses in yield as well as for additional expenses incurred.

In this context, the IfLS, together with the Research Group for Agricultural and Regional Development (ART), was commissioned by the responsible ministries in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate to verify the premia for the respective federal state. Calculations are reviewed for their appropriateness and correctness in terms of derivation, data used and calculation: Are the data plausible and up-to-date? Is the calculation comprehensible? There is no technical evaluation of the individual measures. However, the amount of the premia is decisive for the extent to which the corresponding measure will be taken up in agricultural practice - and is thus ultimately key to whether a contribution is made to environmental, nature conservation and climate objectives.

The IfLS and ART are therefore working in close co-operation with the relevant authorities of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate.

**Project title:** Verification of premia in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate

**Duration:** 2021-2022

**Client:** Ministry of Food, Rural Affairs and Consumer Protection Baden-Wuerttemberg

**In partnership with:** Research Group for Agricultural and Regional Development (ART)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Jörg Schramek, Bettina Spengler and Dr. Holger Pabst

**Project title:** External verification of premium calculations for Pillar 2 measures according to Art. 82 of the CAP Strategic Plan Regulation

**Duration:** 2021-2022

**Client:** Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture Rhineland-Palatinate

**In partnership with:** Forschungsgruppe Agrar- und Regionalentwicklung (ART)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Jörg Schramek, Bettina Spengler and Dr. Holger Pabst

## Ex-ante-Evaluation of the national 'CAP strategic plan'

Another funding period of the CAP of the European Union is approaching. For the first time, not only the Second Pillar (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, EAFRD) but also the First Pillar (European Agricultural Guarantee Fund, EAGF) is the subject of strategic planning. For the funding period 2023-2027, EU member states draw up national strategy plans, which are approved by the EU Commission. Based on an analysis of the initial situation of agriculture, the environment and rural areas, these plans set out how the available instruments and allocated budgetary resources are to contribute to achieving the CAP objectives in the Member State concerned.

The ex-ante evaluation was designed as an accompanying and flanking process to the programme development. It essentially comprises the evaluation of the description of the initial situation, the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) and the needs derived from these. The intervention logic as well as the conformity of the distribution of funds and the planned outputs with the intended objectives are also part of the ex-ante evaluation. The interaction with instruments outside the strategic plan was also assessed.

The IfLS was commissioned with this ex-ante evaluation together with the Thünen Institute, entera and BonnEval. Entera also prepared the Strategic Environmental Assessment, which was also part of the contract.

In accompanying evaluation steps, early drafts of strategy plan chapters were commented on and recommendations for improvements were formulated. Many of these suggestions were taken up by the client.

However, the preparation of the strategic plan is complex due to multiple coordination processes, and the timeline for evaluation and submission of the strategic plan remained challenging until the

end. The versions of the strategic plan chapters and the financial planning that were available in mid-January were finally subjected to a final evaluation.

The BMEL submitted the strategic plan with a summary of the evaluation to the EU Commission for approval on 18 February 2022.

The detailed evaluation report is published below:

<https://www.bmel.de/DE/themen/landwirtschaft/eu-agrarpolitik-und-foerderung/gap/gap-strategieplan.html> [only in German]

**Project title:** Ex-ante evaluation of the national 'CAP Strategic Plan' for the Federal Republic of Germany, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

**Duration:** 2020-2022

**Client:** Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)

**In partnership with:** Thuenen-Institute of Rural Studies, entera, BonnEval

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Jörg Schramek und Heike Nitsch



## Climate change and renewable energies

### What potential does the circular economy offer for rural development?

Circular economy means that products and materials are reused or processed into new products. This means recycling abiotic materials and closing biotic material cycles after material use and, if necessary, subsequent energy recovery. This concept of a systematically designed circular economy is becoming increasingly popular, the approach is encouraged by numerous political programs and strategies, including the Green Deal or the Circular Economy Strategy of the EU. Under which conditions circular economic cycles can be established in rural areas and to what extent they contribute to rural development is still hardly researched. Thus, the project aims to investigate the following questions:

- What development potentials result from the application of the circular economy in rural areas in Germany?
- How can a balanced and integrated rural development in Germany be supported by the application of circular economy?
- What are the regional/territorial factors that are essential for the success of circular economy in rural areas in Germany?
- Is the circular economy approach already included in local and regional development strategies and how are these implemented? How can these approaches find their way into regional strategies in Germany?
- Which European rural regions are already implementing the approach, taking regional factors into account (pioneering role), and what conclusions can be drawn for transferability to German rural regions?

- What could future funding look like for the application and implementation of circular economy in rural regions in Germany?
- What opportunities can be identified at regional level for European collaboration and future cooperation?

In a first step, the political-administrative framework is analysed and strategies and support programmes at EU, federal and state level are examined. In a second step, inhibiting and supporting factors of the circular economy and rural development are identified and compared. In this way, a deeper understanding of the special conditions of the circular economy in rural areas and the importance of territorial factors as well as soft controlling factors will be created. In a third step, these factors and mechanisms of action will be verified in the frame of seven European and five German case studies. In the last step, recommendations for policy and practice in rural areas will be developed.

The project is funded by the programme 'Region gestalten' (shaping the region).

To the project website:

[https://www.region-gestalten.bund.de/Region/DE/Home/home\\_node.html](https://www.region-gestalten.bund.de/Region/DE/Home/home_node.html)  
[only in German]

<https://www.ifls.de/en/references/projects/details/potentials-of-the-circular-economy-for-rural-development-in-germany-and-europe> [in English]

**Project title:** Potentials of the circular economy for rural development in Germany and Europe

**Duration:** 2021-2023

**Client:** Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR)

**In partnership with:** Prognos AG (Coordinator)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Christoph Mathias

## Activated carbon production at a waste water purification plant: CoAct moves forward

The CoAct project is in its second phase. After the research and development phase from 2018-2021 has showed that activated carbon production in the Lake Constance district is possible, between 2021-2023 a CoAct system will be designed for the Langenargen-Kressbronn wastewater treatment site. The location is characterised by the greatest synergies with existing infrastructures and the best cost-benefit ratio. On the one hand, sufficient space is available on site for storing biomass for the permanent operation of a CoAct system and for the system itself. On the other hand, the water from the CoAct-process treatment can be used in the purification process as a carbon additive for energy recovery in the existing digestion towers.

The IfLS is examining the economic viability of the construction and operation of the plant and is investigating different operating models.

The project is funded by the Urban-Rural-Plus funding guideline of the 'Zukunftsstadt' Initiative (Future City) within the BMBF's funding programme FONA ('Research for Sustainable Development').

**Project title:** Integrated urban-rural concept for the production of activated carbon and energy sources from residual biomass – CoAct

**Duration:** 2018-2023

**Client:** Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

**In partnership with:** University Kassel (Coordinator), ifeu, Bodensee-Stiftung, Krieg & Fischer Ingenieure, Pyreg, Bodenseekreis

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Christoph Mathias



GEFÖRDERT VOM



Bundesministerium  
für Bildung  
und Forschung



## Sustainability and resilience

### Trees, fields, water buffalo – does it work?

First, consider your definition of mixed farming systems. For us, broadly speaking, these are systems in which different agricultural sectors benefit from each other through cooperation and diversified production. There has always been a close link between forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry, and while farm specialisation persists, holistic views of linkages and synergies remain indispensable - considering climate change and the need for adaptation, perhaps more than ever?

In this context, the MIXED project explores the extent to which such mixed farming systems optimise resource use and show greater resilience to climate change. In the broader view, this also involves the development of policy recommendations at EU and national level – ultimately aimed at strengthening policy implementation and creating improved framework conditions.

In Germany, the project focuses on agroforestry systems as well as the rewetting of peatlands. Last year, we identified transaction paths as well as obstacles towards the respective land use systems. Several events, mainly online, offered opportunities for dialogue with experts of the German Association for Agroforestry Systems (DeFAF) or the ArGe Schwäbisches Donaumoos. Up next, during spring 2022, is a more in-depth look at the agronomic, ecological and social aspects of selected farms with regard to mixed farming systems.

While communication within the project consortium so far was purely online, personal exchange remains an essential factor for a successful cooperation. And as such, the physical project meeting which took place in Billund, Denmark, end of April was a full success and of major importance for the next steps towards mixed farming systems.



**Project title:** Multi-actor and transdisciplinary development of efficient and resilient MIXED farming and agroforestry systems (MIXED)

**Duration:** 2020-2024

**Client:** European Commission, Horizon 2020

**In partnership with:** International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROOFS) at the University of Aarhus (Coordination) and 17 institutes from ten different countries

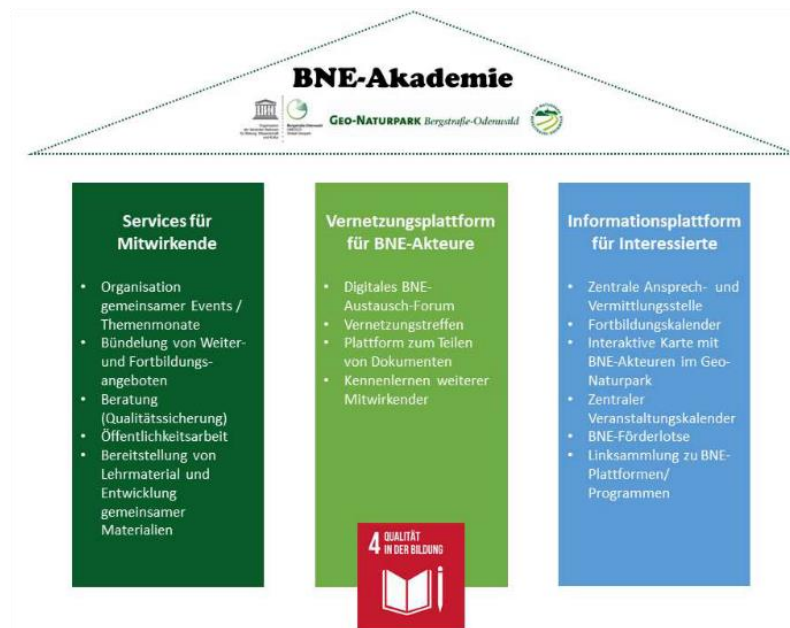
**Contact persons at IfLS:** Simone Sterly and Dr. Holger Pabst

## Relaunch: Education for sustainable development in the Bergstrasse-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park

The Geo-Nature Park's 'Strategic Didactic Educational Concept for ESD', which was finalised in autumn 2021, describes how the Bergstrasse-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park intends to achieve its goals in the field of education for sustainable development (ESD) together with its numerous partners and other regional stakeholders. IfLS supported the Geo-Nature Park developing the ESD concept, with which the existing offers can be used and developed further on in the sense of ESD. Also by taking account all 3 pillars of sustainability and the 17 SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) the concept aims to open up new subject areas.

Through this, all people, regardless of age, origin and previous education, should have the opportunity to experience and understand our world in all its facets. The development of the ESD concept was accompanied by a wide-ranging participation process. In addition to an online survey, three consecutive workshops were held to develop the ESD concept. A central project for the future is the so-called ESD Academy. The intention is to bring the established connections in the region even closer together and develop them further. First of all, a virtual ESD platform is to be set up, which in the future will be geographically located and further developed into an ESD academy.

**Project title:** Concept 'Education for Sustainable Development' for the Rhine-Taunus Nature Park  
**Duration:** 2020-2021  
**Client:** Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park  
**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Svea Thietje







## Protected areas and cultural landscape

### How is the biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land doing?

To what extent do biosphere reserves (BRs) achieve their goal of being a model region for sustainable development? This is reviewed by UNESCO every 10 years within the framework of the so-called 'Periodic Review'. This is intended to evaluate both the work and development of the relevant administrative body and the development of the region as a whole. The biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land was the only German Biosphere region of the Alps and the pre-Alps to be designated as a BR by UNESCO as early as 1990. Since then, it has successfully passed two periodic reviews and is currently passing through the third evaluation process. The IfLS supports the biosphere administration in the preparation of the 'Periodic Review Report', which will be sent to the German MAB National Committee by the Bavarian Ministry of the Environment in spring 2022. Various regional stakeholders were involved in the development process (through discussions, an online survey and an evaluation workshop), as the report presents the activities and development of the entire Berchtesgadener Land biosphere region, which is identical to the district of the same name. It is clear that the Berchtesgadener Land has taken important steps in recent years to maintain its future potential. These include regional policy measures to promote positive economic development as well as efforts in the areas of climate protection, conservation of biodiversity and education.

**Project title:** Periodic review of the Biosphere Berchtesgadener Land

**Duration:** 2021-2022

**Client:** Biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Svea Thietje

### Biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land – where to go in future?

The reflection on the previous activities and developments in the biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land offers the perfect occasion to set the course for the sustainable development of the region in the next 10 years. How can a balanced coexistence between people and the environment succeed? How can nature conservation and the economy be brought even closer together? And which actors play a central role in this?

There are already many activities and ideas for the future in Berchtesgadener Land. With impetus-giving projects and activities such as the biosphere region's partner initiative, which is currently being set up, the biosphere products or the inter-district strategies in areas such as climate protection and mobility, the first important steps have been taken in the direction of sustainable development. With the framework concept currently being developed, the central goals and visions for the future are now to be combined, fine-tuned and put into a suitable form that will have an impact on the public.

The IfLS supports the biosphere administration together with the marketing office Spreadwings from Rosenheim in the creation of the concept.

**Project title:** Framework concept for the biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land

**Duration:** 2021-2022

**Client:** Biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Svea Thietje

## R+D project 'Insect protection measures and potentials for those in large protected areas'

Insect reduction is one of the great challenges of our time. Since protected areas such as nature parks, biosphere reserves and national parks account for more than 30 percent of our federal territory, it is here that measures can be carried out on a broad scale. One obstacle to large-scale developments, especially for nature parks (NRP) and biosphere reserves (RP), is often the lack of land authority. The administrations of NRPs and BRs are therefore dependent on good cooperation with partners.

Two conferences will be held to exchange experiences on possible approaches, ideas and best practice examples. These will be organised by the IfLS on behalf of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN). The first conference will take place in

2022 at the International Academy for Nature Conservation on the island of Vilm and is primarily aimed at representatives of the protected areas in northern/eastern Germany. A further conference will be held in 2023 for representatives from the south/west.

**Project title:** R+D project 'Insect protection measures and potentials for those in large protected areas' (conference series)

**Duration:** 2022-2023

**Client:** Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Hanna Kramer





## Finding your own way: Nature park plans for the Reinhardswald and Kellerwald-Edersee nature parks in North-Hesse

After drawing up management plans for the nature parks in Taunus, Rhine-Taunus and Odenwald regions, the IfLS now has the opportunity to support two nature parks in North-Hesse with their planning.

Founded in 2017, the Reinhardswald Nature Park is still on its way to becoming established in the region. Together with the member municipalities, other regional strategic partners and relevant authorities, aims are being worked out and an implementation strategy is being developed.

In 2022 goals are set, measures developed, an action programme coordinated. For the first time the nature park Reinhardswald will take part at the Quality Initiative for Nature Parks of the Association of German Nature Parks (VDN) – coached by the IfLS. Based on the already existing development and cooperation concept, the nature park planning is to concretise and expand the elaborated contents and match them with current work and projects of the business units and, above all, with the given resources. Cooperation in the region needs to be re-adjusted and re-focused for the future. Since the Tourism Working Group (TAG) has been affiliated with the nature park since 2020 within the framework of the Hessian 'three-level model', special attention should be paid to this topic.

In contrast, the Kellerwald-Edersee Nature Park, which covers almost 600 km<sup>2</sup>, has existed since 2001 and its first nature park plan was drawn up in 2003. With the new nature park planning, the development of the Kellerwald-Edersee Nature Park as a model region for sustainable development is to be put in the foreground.

In this context, it is important to take regional characteristics into account and to incorporate them into strategic planning: The Kellerwald-Edersee National Park is the only national park in Hesse that is geographically embedded in the nature park. The cooperation between these two National Natural Landscapes and the associated use of synergies should be further strengthened.

The Kellerwald-Edersee Nature Park is also the lessor of Lake Edersee, which is located in the nature park area. Therefore, in addition to the fields of action 'Natural and Cultural Landscape', 'Recreation and Tourism', 'Education for Sustainable Development' and 'Sustainable Regional Development', the sustainable fisheries management of Lake Edersee should also be considered as a separate field of action.

A participation process is planned to work on the fields of action and to develop suitable goals and lead projects. This process will start in May 2022 with a public kick-off event in the area of the Kellerwald-Edersee Nature Park.

**Project title:** Management plan for the nature park-Kellerwald-Edersee

**Duration:** 2022-2023

**Client:** Purpose association nature park Kellerwald-Edersee

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje and Hanna Kramer

**Project title:** Management Plan for the nature park Reinhardswald

**Duration:** 2022

**Client:** Nature park Reinhardswald e.V.

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje and Hanna Kramer



## Inspiration for the implementation of the SDGs in protected areas

How can protected areas contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? In the SDG.imp project, information and working materials were developed to support the administrations of protected areas and their regional partners from municipalities, the private sector and civil society in implementing the SDGs.

Specific information materials on each SDG were developed. These present the respective SDG and the targets relevant for protected areas. In addition, key challenges for or in protected areas are discussed. Finally, solutions and examples of good practice are presented.

The working materials are intended to support the process of moving from problem analysis to action. For this purpose, a small guideline was prepared. An SDG check and a project check help to identify the challenges in the region or in one's own activities. Decision templates for municipalities support sustainable decision-making.

The learning platform as well as the work materials can be found on the project homepage:

<https://sdgimp.eu/en/apiede/>

**Project title:** Decision support system for the implementation of SDGs in protected areas – SDG.imp

**Duration:** 2019–2021

**Client:** European Union - DG Education and Culture, Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships

**Contributing:** Biosphärenzweckverband Bliesgau (DE), Europarc Federation (DE), BETI (LT), CPIP (RO), GDR (ES), PWSIP (PL)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Christoph Mathias

## Eight sustainability strategies for model communities in the Palatinate Forest Biosphere Reserve

In winter 2021/22, the eight model municipalities for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate finalised their sustainability strategies. In these strategies, they describe the goals they are pursuing and the activities through which they intend to achieve them. The four to six fields of action elaborated in each strategy address the 17 UN Sustainability Goals (SDGs). They take into account issues of climate and species protection, economic development and social cohesion.

The strategies were developed by local teams consisting of members of the communities, local politics and local administration. They were advised by the IfLS and supported in the development of the strategies. In addition, there were two workshops organised by the IfLS together with the KOBRA Advisory Centre. The aim was to activate citizens and involve them in shaping the sustainable development of their communities at an early stage. With the completion of the strategies, they are now faced with the task of implementing the planned activities in order to realise their contributions to the SDGs.

**Project title:** Palatinate Forest: SDG model region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate

**Duration:** 2019 – 2021

**Project sponsorship:** Pfalz District Association, Palatinate Forest Biosphere Reserve

**Funding by:** Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), coordination by Engagement Global gGmbH/Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW);

The State of Rhineland-Palatinate

**In partnership with:** KOBRA Advisory Centre Landau

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr Ulrich Gehrlein and Christoph Mathias



## Governance and cooperation

### New Master Plan for the UNESCO Global Geopark Swabian Alb

The tasks of a UNESCO Global Geopark are many and varied: protecting the geological heritage of a region, making it possible to experience the history of the Earth, developing the region, strengthening education and research and promoting sustainable development.

To achieve this, a proper plan is needed - a master plan.

The IfLS supported the UNESCO Global Geo-park Swabian Alb in the creation of a new master plan, which for the first time since the UNESCO certification in 2015 also takes into account the criteria of UNESCO. It is intended to form the framework for the work and orientation of the Geopark over the next five years.

The master plan was developed in a participatory process together with regional stakeholders and in a close exchange between the staff of the UNESCO Global Geopark and the IfLS. Under the cross-cutting objective 'Model Region for Sustainable Development', the Master Plan addresses topics such as ESD and geo-education, protection of geology and the natural and cultural heritage, geotourism, and the protection of the environment.

**Project title:** Master Plan for the UNESCO Global Geopark Swabian Alb

**Duration:** 2021 - 2022

**Client:** UNESCO Global Geopark Swabian Alb

**Contact persons at IfLS** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Hanna Kramer

## UNESCO-Geopark Schwäbische Alb



Bundesland: Baden-Württemberg  
Fläche: etwa 6.800 km<sup>2</sup>



## regiosöl profile of social and ecological benefits provided by organic farming

In the 'regiosöl' project, an approach is being developed on how social, ecological and regional economic benefits of organic farming can be documented and rewarded. An important basis for this is provided by existing assessment tools on farm level, which were analysed in the first year of the project.

The 'Regionalwert-Nachhaltigkeitsanalyse und -Leistungsrechnung' have proven to be particularly suitable and easy to use in the course of the regiosöl project. In the context of a regiosöl project extension in cooperation with Regionalwert AG Freiburg and Regionalwert Impuls GmbH, about 60 farms tested these online tools. The approx. 150 performance indicators in the sustainability dimensions ecology, social affairs and regional economy were supplemented by another 23 regiosöl indicators. These are intended to close gaps in the operational measurement of social and regional economic performance relevant to the regional level and were discussed with regional actors and experts in interviews and workshops.

The results of the survey are currently being analysed and should provide indications for a better regionalisation of the tools and indicators. Finally, the

company data collection results serve as an essential basis for the development of a regional profile in the pilot regions of North Hesse and the Rhineland. In the next step, the data will be extrapolated for the regions and supplemented with regionally recorded indicators.

This regiosöl profile is intended to enable regions to present the social and ecological benefits of organic farming in the region for the region. In this sense, it provides an important basis for the further development of remuneration and regional action strategies. Experts and regional actors will be involved in the further transdisciplinary research process through workshops, focus groups and interviews.

**Project title:** Regional Social and Ecological Services of Organic Farming: Recording - Rewarding - Acting (regiosöl)

**Duration:** 2020 - 2023

**Client:** Federal Programme for Organic Farming and Other Forms of Sustainable Agriculture (BÖLN)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Simone Sterly and Dr. Marie Sophie Schmidt

## EIP-Agri as a learning model in the agricultural knowledge and innovation system (AKIS)

For the coming funding period, the European Commission envisages a far-reaching reform of the agricultural knowledge and innovation system (AKIS). The interventions of the national CAP strategic plan are to contribute to improving knowledge flows and cooperation between organisations and functional areas (agricultural research, extension, agriculture, forestry and the food industry). In addition, access to practice-relevant research results and innovations should be facilitated for actors in agriculture, forestry and the food industry.

The instrument of the European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' makes a significant contribution to the objectives. The dissemination and transfer of practical solutions from EIP projects at regional, national and EU level is carried out by the innovation service managers (IDL) of the federal states in cooperation with the national GAP network. Thematic networks are established and mutual learning processes initiated within the framework of diverse networking and knowledge transfer activities. This exchange strengthens the understanding of the issues and knowledge needs of the different groups of actors. In the sense of a horizontal integration of AKIS, research, guidance and practice 'converge' at regional level. This exchange and transfer of knowledge generated in EIP projects could even be expanded with the stronger interlinking of interventions on education, knowledge transfer and demonstration activities.

What is already tried and tested practice at the regional level proves to be a great challenge from the perspective of vertical integration. At present, results from ongoing and completed research and innovation projects are only available in fragmented

form at national level. The practicality and transferability of these processed results must also be examined. Here, the experiences with the transfer of results from EIP projects with a clear focus on applicability offer fruitful starting points. Thus, it is not only the results, but also the transdisciplinary way of their elaboration and the form of their processing that provide added value. At the same time, the cooperative mode could be used as a blueprint and learning model for the future increased integration of other stakeholder groups into AKIS. The IfLS has been active as an innovation service provider in Hesse since 2014 and in Saxony-Anhalt since 2019 and has also been commissioned to support the 4th funding call in Rhineland-Palatinate.

**Project title:** Support for agricultural innovation (EIP-Agri) and cooperation in Hesse

**Duration:** 2014–2022

**Client:** Hessian Ministry of the Environment, Climate Protection, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (HMUKLV), Wiesbaden

**Contact persons IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje and Oliver Müller

**Project title:** Supervision and evaluation of the 4th funding call 'European Innovation Partnership' in Rhineland-Palatinate

**Duration:** 2021–2022

**Client:** Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture Rhineland-Palatinate (MWVLW)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje and Oliver Müller

**Project title:** Innovation Service Provider Saxony-Anhalt

**Duration:** 2019–2022

**Client:** Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Energy Saxony-Anhalt (MULE)

**Contact persons at IfLS:** Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje and Oliver Müller



# Miscellaneous

## Hiking, Wine, & Us

At the end of August 2021, our 2-day company outing took place, which is a fixed part of our annual schedule.

After our arrival in beautiful Bad Duerkheim in the Palatinate Forest, we devoted the first day to reorganization of the IfLS (see 'News'). Jörg Schramek first informed us about the planned spin-off of the IfLS-GmbH from the association 'Institute for Rural Structural Research'. Together we then discussed questions and challenges that arise in this change process. Finally, in working groups, we identified possible opportunities for change and collected assessments of where we see the IfLS in five years. The envisaged construct and the path to it entail organizational and time-intensive challenges, which the entire team tackled in a constructive and solution-oriented manner.

Famished and also satisfied with the result of the seminar, we took care of our physical and mental well-being with regional dishes and spirits in a nice beer garden.

The next morning we set off for the Limburg monastery ruins, a former Benedictine abbey from the 11th century. Luckily for us, the beer garden was open and nothing stood in the way of refreshments. With this foundation, we effortlessly made the descent and were able to tackle our last item: a guided tour through the vineyards of Bad Duerkheim with tasting. Between the vines, we learned a lot about the different cultivation methods, grafting with American phylloxera-resistant varieties as rootstocks and the nutrient supply of the vines. The all-round successful excursion packed with a lot of interesting information ended with a great feeling of togetherness.





## New to the *IFLS*-team

### *M. Sc. Hanna Kramer*

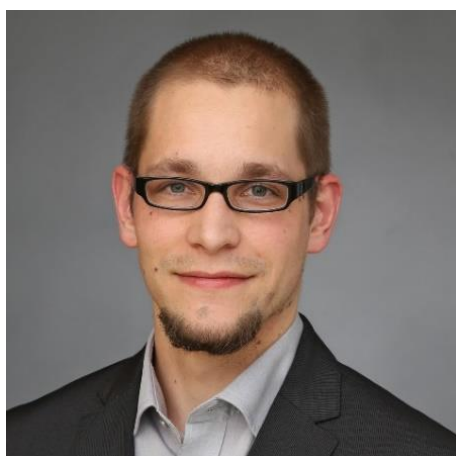
Hanna Kramer has been working in the team of the Institute for Rural Structural Research since April 2021.

In the area of regional development, innovation consulting and large protected areas, she is part of various projects, such as the development of a master plan for the UNESCO Global Geopark Swabian Alb or the development of regional development concepts within the framework of the LEADER programme for regions in Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Baden-Wuerttemberg. In all projects, analogue and digital processes for citizen and stakeholder participation take place, which she helps to shape and moderate.

Previously, she worked in the regional management of North Hesse and in tourism development there. As part of her academic career, she studied 'alternative tourism' in her Bachelor's degree and 'sports tourism and recreation management' in her Master's degree.



### *Dr. rer. nat. Holger Pabst*



Holger Pabst has been back at the IfLS since September 2021. In the area of 'Rural Development, Agriculture and Environment', he is working on design options for biodiversity-enhancing dairy production systems in GOBIOM 2, accompanying the evaluations of the EPLR MEPL III and EULLE and analyzing mixed land use systems in the EU project MIXED.

Most recently, he worked for PELUM Uganda as a technical advisor for agroecology and fundraising on strengthening organic smallholder agriculture. Before that, he worked at the IfLS from 2015-2019.

### *M. Sc. agr. Victoria Wende*

Victoria Wende has been part of the IfLS team since April 2022. In the area of 'Rural Development, Agriculture and Environment', her focus is on agricultural economics. Here, she evaluates rural development programmes with a focus on measures that contribute to income improvements in the field of agriculture. Furthermore, she is involved in economic analyses of value chains related to agriculture and analyses of social and economic effects on farms under given (environmental) political and market conditions.

Previously, she was a teacher at a vocational school in the field of agricultural economics and politics.



### *M. Sc. Ribana Bergmann*



Ribana Bergmann joined the IfLS team in April 2022 as a research assistant in the research area 'International Perspectives, Agricultural Policy and Rural Development'. Her research focuses on the conception and implementation of research and development projects in the field of regional value chains in organic agriculture and the coordination of participation processes.

Most recently, she was project manager in the BMEL's 'LandVersorgt' funding call for the 'Region Kassel-Land e.V. '.

### *25-year service anniversary with real commitment*

The summer of 2021 marked the 25th anniversary of our managing director Jörg Schramek. He has held all positions, from student assistant to research assistant to managing director. He has managed to lead his team and at the same time build up a sense of unity. As an experienced 'old hand', he supports us with advice and action and likes to chat about his early days at the IfLS. The IfLS team would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his full commitment, which we were again able to experience during his private invitation to his home on his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Our 'boss' doesn't leave anyone out in the rain, he'd rather stand in the rain for us. Thank you!



# Publications and services

## Foundations for a peatland protection strategy of the federal government: Final report

In the 2018 coalition agreement, the governing parties agreed to develop a peatland protection strategy for the federal government. The strategy should set a national framework for action in peatland soil and peatland biotope conservation. The IfLS was commissioned by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with a research and development project in which the technical basis for such a peatland protection strategy was to be elaborated. The final report on this project shows fields of action and the need for action in peatland protection and names starting points in regulatory law, remuneration, educational measures or research and development, among others.

The results of the project were incorporated into a BMU discussion paper on a peatland protection strategy in autumn 2020. However, a peatland protection strategy coordinated between the ministries at federal level failed in August 2021. The new federal government will take up this project again.

[Final report online](#)



## Community financing for sustainable food and farming. A proximity perspective

Financing models with the participation of citizens offer small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) alternative sources of financing beyond banks as well as marketing opportunities. Private investors can thus directly support the development of a more sustainable food system.

Such models are characterised by close relationships between investors and SMEs. Forms of proximity between SMEs and their potential investors are important success factors on the one hand, and a desired outcome of these financing models on the other. The article shows which dimensions of SME proximity are particularly important and how two approaches to civic financing can be distinguished.

The journal article is based on results of the collaborative project 'BioFinanz – Alternative forms of financing along the value chain for organic food' (2017-2020), which was carried out jointly by the IfLS and the Eberswalde University of Applied Sciences (HNEE). The project was funded by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) on the basis of a resolution of the German Bundestag.

Access the [final report online](#).





## Digitisation and civic participation in rural areas. A systematic review of scientific journals, 2010-2020

The vision of digitally connected and participatory 'Smart Villages' have been present in European politics and public discourses for several years. However, understanding the interactions between digitisation and citizen participation in rural areas is still a niche topic in academic journals. They mainly deal with broadband expansion, the characterisation of rural areas and the integration of top-down measures with bottom-up initiatives.

To fill this gap, a recent journal article provides a systematic review of articles in academic journals from 2010-2020 that address the intersection of digitisation, participation and rural development.

The journal article is based on the results of the joint project 'DigiBeL – Perspectives and Possible Applications of Digital Participation Procedures in

Rural Regional Development' (2020-2023), which is being carried out jointly by the IfLS and the Institute for Media and Communication Studies (IfKMW) at the University of Leipzig. The project is funded within the framework of the Federal Rural Development Programme (BULE) of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL).

More [information about the project](#).

The article is available [here](#).



## Possibilities for strengthening the aspect of climate protection in agricultural support programmes

The new CAP funding period will see a further development of agricultural support programmes, also with regard to climate protection. The study took place against the background of an imminent update of the Integrated Energy and Climate Protection concept (IEEK) by the state parliament of Baden-Württemberg and thus tighter targets for agriculture. In this context, measures for the implementation of climate protection-related projects on agricultural land and in farms were character-

ised and analysed, which are suitable for implementation via the 2nd CAP pillar. The study was conducted in cooperation with the University of Hohenheim.

The report is available [here](#) [only in German].



## Second ad hoc study on the faunistic assessment of FAKT flowering mixtures.

The Baden-Wuerttemberg funding programme for agri-environment climate protection and animal welfare (FAKT) is intended to be a building block to counteract the decline of insect fauna in particular. An initial study was conducted in 2018 as part of MEPL III to investigate the effect of annual flowering areas funded by FAKT on insect fauna. However, these annual areas only provide a flowering supply for a limited time and are less suitable as overwintering and nesting habitat.

The Second ad hoc study now examines the attractiveness of areas promoted through FAKT, includ-

ing perennial flowering mixtures as well as comparison areas with flowering arable crops for the insect groups already examined in the first study. An evaluation of interaction networks between flowering plants and insect groups was also included in the study

The report is available [here](#) [only in German].



## From matters of fact to matters of concern. Conserving rural natures in participative rural development

Participatory rural governance entails a broadening of the actors involved in the management of rural nature. The article examines knowledge conflicts using the example of the LEADER project 'The Green Village', which aims to preserve and reconstruct cultural landscape elements such as the village green with the participation of the local population. The article traces the multiple moments of translation between different understandings of rural natures by the actors involved.

The article argues for a critical understanding of the co-production of knowledge in the 'collaborative' or 'community-based' management of rural natures

The report is available [here](#).



## Editors

Dr. agr. Isgard Lugert  
Dipl.-Ing. agr. Jörg Schramek  
B.A. Edith Schöning

Institute for Rural Development  
at the Goethe University of Frankfurt  
Kurfürstenstraße 49,  
60486 Frankfurt am Main  
Germany  
Tel.: +49 (0)69/972 6683-0  
E-Mail: [office@ifls.de](mailto:office@ifls.de); [schramek@ifls.de](mailto:schramek@ifls.de)  
Website: [www.ifls.de](http://www.ifls.de)

## Pictures

P.1.: © STAR\_MEDIA/imago | P.3: © W. Ehrecke (pixabay) | IP. 4: © Uschi Dreiucker (pixelio) | P. 5: freepick | P. 7: © N. von Kutzleben | P. 9: © IfKMW | P. 11: © OpenStreetMap | P. 12: © B. Düsterhaus | P. 13: © OpenStreetMap contributors, Mapbox | P. 14: © Ecorys | P. 15: © fotodo (Fotolia) | P. 18: © Christoph Mathias | P. 19: Jörg Schramek | P. 20: © Svea Thietje | P. 21: © Gerhard Seybert (Fotolia) | P. 22: © Britta Düsterhaus | P. 26: © congerdesign (pixabay) | P. 28: © Johannes Carolus

Frankfurt am Main, May 22

### IfLS-Team

#### Board members and heads of department

Dipl.-Ing. agr. Jörg Schramek  
[schramek@ifls.de](mailto:schramek@ifls.de), 069/9726683-14

Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein  
[gehrlein@ifls.de](mailto:gehrlein@ifls.de), 069/9726683-17

Dipl.-Ing. agr. Simone Sterly  
[sterly@ifls.de](mailto:sterly@ifls.de), 069/9726683-15

#### Research associates

Ribana Bergmann, M.Sc.  
[bergmann@ifls.de](mailto:bergmann@ifls.de), 069/9726683-26

Hanna Kramer, M.Sc.  
[kramer@ifls.de](mailto:kramer@ifls.de), 069/9726683-24

Christoph Mathias, M.A.  
[mathias@ifls.de](mailto:mathias@ifls.de), 069/9726683-16

Oliver Müller, M.A.  
[mueller@ifls.de](mailto:mueller@ifls.de), 069/9726683-23

Dipl. Geoökol. Heike Nitsch  
[nitsch@ifls.de](mailto:nitsch@ifls.de), 069/9726683-13

Dr. rer. nat. Holger Pabst  
[pabst@ifls.de](mailto:pabst@ifls.de), 069/9726683-12

Dipl.-Soz. Sarah Peter  
[peter@ifls.de](mailto:peter@ifls.de), 069/9726683-19

Dr. rer. pol. Marie Sophie Schmidt  
[schmidt@ifls.de](mailto:schmidt@ifls.de), 069/9726683-11

Bettina Spengler, M.Sc.  
[spengler@ifls.de](mailto:spengler@ifls.de), 069/9726683-20

Svea Thietje, M.A.  
[thietje@ifls.de](mailto:thietje@ifls.de), 069/9726683-18

Victoria Wende, M.Sc.  
[wende@ifls.de](mailto:wende@ifls.de), 069/9726683-28

#### Financial management

Peter Franz  
[franz@ifls.de](mailto:franz@ifls.de), 069/9726683-10

#### Administration

Dr. Isgard Lugert  
[lugert@ifls.de](mailto:lugert@ifls.de), 069/9726683-10

Edith Schöning, B.A.  
[schoenig@ifls.de](mailto:schoenig@ifls.de), 069/9726683-10

Gordian Kerner  
[kerner@ifls.de](mailto:kerner@ifls.de)

#### Project assistants

Emely Benfer  
[benfer@ifls.de](mailto:benfer@ifls.de)

Dr. Ihsan Bilici  
[bilici@ifls.de](mailto:bilici@ifls.de)

Sophia Heint, M.A.  
[heint@ifls.de](mailto:heint@ifls.de)

Hannah Krugmann, M.A.  
[krugmann@ifls.de](mailto:krugmann@ifls.de)

Johannes Lang, B.A.  
[lang@ifls.de](mailto:lang@ifls.de)

Chiara Pohl, B.A.  
[pohl@ifls.de](mailto:pohl@ifls.de)

Kai Weigand  
[weigand@ifls.de](mailto:weigand@ifls.de)

Carla Wember, M.Sc.  
[wember@ifls.de](mailto:wember@ifls.de)

Topics	Current projects
<b>News</b>	GmbH Foundation – <b>P.2</b>
<b>Agriculture and environment</b>	Species conservation in the light of modernised agricultural techniques – <b>P.3</b>
	Second ad-hoc study on the faunistic evaluation of flowering mixtures in Baden-Wuerttemberg – <b>P.3</b>
	Ad hoc study on ways to strengthen the climate protection aspect of agricultural support programmes in the scope of the evaluation of MEPL III (Rural Development Plan of Baden-Wuerttemberg 2014-2020) – <b>P.4</b>
	Design options for economically viable biodiversity-enhancing dairy production systems in regions of Freiburg and Ravensburg (GOBIOM) – <b>P.5</b>
<b>Socio-economics of farm business</b>	'Farming, food production and food processing with added value for local small and medium-sized farms– On-Farm' – <b>P.6</b>
	'Niche Market Farming' – niche markets in agriculture – <b>P.6</b>
	Organic eggs from small production units – current and alternative utilization of non-marketable eggs – <b>P.7</b>
	Socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning for the large scale nature conservation project 'Ribbons of life in the Hunsrück' – <b>P.8</b>
	Large-scale nature conservation project 'New shepherds' paths in the Palatine Forest' (socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning) – <b>P.8</b>
<b>Regional development</b>	Perspective and possible applications of digital participation procedures in rural regional development (DigiBel) – <b>P.9</b>
	Elaboration of LEADER development strategies – <b>P.10</b>
	Selection procedure for LEADER regions in Saxony-Anhalt 2021-2027 – <b>P.11</b>
	EU-wide LEADER Evaluation – case study Germany – <b>P.12</b>
<b>Rural areas</b>	'Smart Rural 21' – Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century – <b>P.13</b>
<b>Agriculture and rural development</b>	Pilot Project - Establishing an operational programme – <b>P.14</b>
<b>Agricultural policy</b>	Evaluation of the action plan for the development of the organic sector – <b>P.14</b>
	Verification of premia in Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate; External verification of premium calculations for Pillar 2 measures according to Art. 82 of the CAP Strategic Plan Regulation – <b>P.15</b>
	Ex-ante evaluation of the national 'CAP Strategic Plan' for the Federal Republic of Germany, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – <b>P.16</b>
<b>Climate change and renewable energies</b>	Potentials of the circular economy for rural development in Germany and Europe – <b>P.17</b>
	Integrated urban-rural concept for the production of activated carbon and energy sources from residual biomass – CoAct – <b>P.18</b>
<b>Sustainability and resilience</b>	Multi-actor and transdisciplinary development of efficient and resilient MIXED farming and agroforestry systems (MIXED)– <b>P.19</b>
	Concept 'Education for Sustainable Development' for the Rhine-Taunus Nature Park – <b>P.20</b>
<b>Protected areas and cultural landscape</b>	Periodic review of the Biosphere Berchtesgadener Land – <b>P.21</b>
	Framework concept for the biosphere region Berchtesgadener Land – <b>P.21</b>
	R+D project 'Insect protection measures and potentials for those in large protected areas' (conference series) – <b>P.22</b>
	Management plan for the nature park Kellerwald-Edersee– <b>P.23</b>
	Management Plan for the nature park Reinhardswald – <b>P.23</b>
	Decision support system for the implementation of SDGs in protected areas – SDG.imp – <b>P.24</b>
	Palatinate Forest: SDG model region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate – <b>P.24</b>
<b>Governance and cooperation</b>	Master Plan for the UNESCO Global Geopark Swabian Alb – <b>P.25</b>
	Regional Social and Ecological Services of Organic Farming: Recording - Rewarding - Acting (regiosöl) – <b>P.26</b>
	Support for agricultural innovation (EIP-Agri) and cooperation in Hesse – <b>P.27</b>
	Supervision and evaluation of the 4 <sup>th</sup> funding call 'European Innovation Partnership' in Rhineland-Palatinate – <b>P.27</b>
	Innovation Service Provider Saxony-Anhalt– <b>P.27</b>