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Editorial

Dear readers,

in public opinion, there has been a growing recognition in recent years that the European Union's *Common Agricultural Policy* (CAP) should not solely focus on agricultural productivity and income and supply targets. Rather, there is a legitimate demand to use the extensive public CAP funding for specific challenges related to agriculture and rural areas. The preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, the safeguarding of a fair and healthy as well as environmentally friendly food system, improvements in animal welfare and attractive working and living conditions in rural areas are to be mentioned here.

Regarding the CAP from 2023 onwards, central decisions are currently pending. The *IfLS* is involved in various projects that help shape this future and are presented in this journal.

In the section 'Climate Change and Renewable Energies' you will find three articles on how agriculture and especially peatland can contribute to climate protection. In several projects, we deal with possibilities to improve biodiversity (section 'Environmentally-friendly land use'). The section 'Socio-economics of farms' contains contributions on how certain niche areas of agricultural production can

be economically viable. In order to increase the value added within the supply chain, bundling larger quantities of products to strengthen the position of producers is of central importance. For this reason, we have devoted a study to specific questions about producer organizations.

Political measures are more successful if their implementation is accompanied by the transfer of knowledge and innovation, as well as education and consulting. In this regard, the *IfLS* is working on concepts that can be found in the sections 'Sustainability and Resilience' and 'Knowledge and Innovation'.

I wish you a pleasant reading of this year's issue of the *IfLS* journal!

Jörg Schramek

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Projects

Sustainable land use

Biodiversity instead of species loss in milk production systems

In Germany, grassland plays a key role for maintaining biodiversity. Keeping the economic efficiency of farms in mind, the decline of dairy cows and agricultural intensification are central causes for the decrease in species-rich grassland. The *GOBIOM* project aims at improving the conditions for dairy production systems in order to operate economically viable while simultaneously promoting biodiversity.

How these conditions can be developed will be evaluated on the basis of two organic model regions in Freiburg and Ravensburg. The *IfLS* is currently working in cooperation with the *Institute for Applied Ecology* and *grünweg* on the project design, ultimately to achieve substantial biodiversity improvements in areas managed by dairy farms. The team is dealing with which aspects of biodiversity should be addressed, and how they can be measured and monitored adequately.

To be able to develop practicable and financially feasible options, integrating regional actors with great agricultural and conservational expertise is key. Therefore, an advisory board was founded consisting of representatives of the organic model regions, the *Landscape Conservation Association Ravensburg* (Landschaftserhaltungsverband Ravensburg), the regional councils of Freiburg and Tübingen, the *State Office for Agriculture, Food and Rural Areas Schwäbisch Gmünd* and the *Working Group for Rural Agriculture* (Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft e.V.). In order to coordinate the different expectations of the participants, a first virtual meeting took place in December 2020.



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Project title: Design options for economically viable biodiversity-enhancing milk production systems in the organic model regions Freiburg and Ravensburg (GOBIOM)

Duration: 2020 – 2021 (Phase 1)

Client: Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

Project partners: Institute for Applied Ecology (Öko-Institut e.V., project management), grünweg

Contact persons at IfLS: Jörg Schramek and Dr. Johannes Carolus



Importance of long-term and perennial flower mixtures for insect diversity

To protect insects, farmers in Baden-Wuerttemberg create flower areas on arable land by sowing special flowering mixtures. These flower-rich areas are intended to provide food for insects and serve as reproduction and refuge areas. In the context of the evaluation of the *Baden-Wuerttemberg Rural Development Program* (MEPL III), the *IfLS* together with the University of Freiburg already conducted an evaluation of annual flower areas in 2018 - 2019. In 2020, a second field survey has taken place, which now also considers long-term and perennial flower areas.

In 2020 almost 60 annual, long-term and perennial flower areas from the *Funding program for Agri-environment, Climate Protection and Animal Welfare* (FAKT) were surveyed three times each. Reference areas were fallow land, rapeseed and legumes. In addition to the blossom supply offered by these areas over the course of the year, wild bees, hoverflies and butterflies were mapped. The abundance of individuals and species of these flower-visiting insects is an important criterion for the evaluation of the flowering areas. Currently, the evaluation and a summary analysis are in progress.

The study is supported by the University of Freiburg.

Main.Kinzig.Blooms.Net: Evaluation tasks

The Main-Kinzig district is implementing the project *Main.Kinzig.Blooms.Net* as part of the federal biodiversity program. Areas in public ownership are to be optimized from a nature conservation perspective. These include, for example, roadsides and field margins. These areas are to be enhanced in terms of nature conservation by sowing flowering mixtures, thus providing insects with food sources and possibly habitats.

Next to the activities on these areas, 'ambassadors for insect diversity' are being trained in courses. They are supposed to act as contact persons, advisors and promoters and pass on knowledge in order to spread and implement the project idea in the long term.

Various people in the communities are involved in the project. The aim is to raise the awareness of the importance of biodiversity through knowledge transfer and practical nature conservation work.

The *IfLS* was commissioned by the Main-Kinzig district to evaluate the extent to which the courses for the ambassadors result in an increase in knowledge. In addition, it will assess if the people involved in the communities have become more aware of biodiversity.

Project title: Second ad hoc study on the faunistic investigation of flowering mixtures in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

Duration: 2020 – 2021

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

Contact persons at IfLS: Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

Project title: Socio-economic evaluation of the course 'Ambassador for flowering and insect diversity' and of the overall project 'Main.Kinzig.Blooms.Net'

Duration: 2021 – 2025

Client: Main-Kinzig district

Contact person at IfLS: Jörg Schramek

Foundations for a peatland protection strategy of the Federal Government

Peat soils are valuable carbon reservoirs. If drained, this leads to the decomposition of peat and the area becomes a hot spot for the emission of greenhouse gases. For this reason, the German government planned to prepare a peatland protection strategy in its 2018 coalition agreement. In this process, the *Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety* (BMU) is the lead agency. The *IfLS* was commissioned by the *Federal Agency for Nature Conservation* (BfN) with a research and development project to develop the foundation for such a peatland protection strategy. The project was carried out in close cooperation with both *BfN* and *BMU*.

In the course of the project, peatland protection strategies of the federal states, current publications on organic soils and peatland protection as well as existing framework conditions were evaluated. In addition, two expert workshops were held in the end of 2019 to identify relevant approaches for peatland protection. Topics as monitoring approaches and a suitable data basis, the role of the *CAP*, options to adapt regulatory law and the further involvement of water management were discussed. It became clear that the implementation of peatland protection on a broad scale – taking into account climate, water and nature protection as well as diverse interests regarding the utilization of organic soils – is a complex and long-term task for society as a whole. It requires the cooperation of multiple actors and has to be approached with a mix of different instruments.

In order to reach existing mandatory goals in climate protection and to secure the function of the land use and land-use change sector as a carbon sink, large areas of land previously used for agriculture and forestry must be completely or at least partially rewetted by 2050. Increasing the water level requires an adjustment of the current land

use and implicates structural changes in the affected regions. Often, knowledge about the problems of draining wetland is still lacking. Also the administration has to be empowered to initiate and more strongly support peatland protection.

In order to expand peatland protection, an adaption of framework conditions, intensified persuasion and the securing of the financing of measures that make such changes possible have to be addressed. A whole package of measures should ultimately lead to a program for 'climate farmers' who give priority to climate protection when managing their peatlands, and are rewarded for providing these services. As long as they are not in conflict with nature protection, new possibilities for peatland conservation (paludiculture) must be an important part of this approach to increase acceptance among land users and to further enable value creation on rewetted areas.

As a result of this project, a synopsis of the most important contents and results was published in advance (in German):

www.bfn.de/themen/biotop-und-landschaftsschutz/moorschutz/fachliche-grundlagen-moorschutzstrategie.html

The detailed final report will soon be available on the *IfLS* website.

Project title: Foundations for a national peatland protection strategy of the federal government

Duration: 2019 – 2020

Client: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

Contact persons at IfLS: Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek



Socio-economics of farm businesses

A stakeholder workshop on the peatland conservation strategy

How is the *BMU*'s discussion paper on the German government's peatland protection strategy received by various stakeholders? What advice would they like to give the *BMU* for the further development of the strategy?

Questions like these were part of an online stakeholder event last December, in which about 100 people linked to peatland protection in the fields of agriculture and forestry, environmental protection and nature conservation, horticulture, water management, administration and science took part.

The basis was a [discussion paper](#) published by the *BMU* in November (in German).

The consulting agency *Zebralog* organized and moderated the workshop and coordinated the documentation. The *IfLS* was involved as a subcontractor and contributed with its expertise on peatland protection to the conception, implementation and documentation of the workshop.

The *BMU* will take into account the results of the discussion in its further elaboration of the peatland protection strategy.

'Ribbons of Life' in the Hunsrück

Since the beginning of 2020, the *IfLS* has been involved in the large-scale nature conservation project *Ribbons of Life in the Hunsrück*.

The *IfLS* is preparing the socio-economic analysis, which is part of the care and development planning being developed simultaneously. After an in-depth evaluation of available data and information on the social and economic conditions in the project area, additional surveys were conducted. Until February 2021, 28 persons in the region working in agriculture were interviewed. In addition, two focus groups with representatives of regional and local development were conducted.

Based on these surveys, opportunities and risks in relation to the guiding principles and goals of the care and development plan will be derived. Afterwards, solutions will be worked out sufficiently taking into account the goals of nature conservation, but also other interests. In particular, the interests of nature conservation and agriculture have to be united while also expanding the acceptance of the regional actors and the cooperation between them.

Project title: Conceptual design, organization and implementation of a stakeholder event on the federal peatland protection strategy

Duration: 2020 – 2021

Client: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN)

Project partner: Zebralog GmbH & Co. KG

Contact persons at IfLS: Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

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: Foundation Nature and Environment (Stiftung Natur und Umwelt RLP)

Project partner: BGHplan Trier

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

Pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest

In the Palatinate Forest, grassland sites are important habitats for diverse animal species. If the use of valuable open land biotopes is given up, the forest spreads and rare species disappear. The large-scale nature conservation project *New Pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest* intends to counteract this by optimising current management with (migratory) sheep farming.

Since the *IfLS* completed the status quo analysis as part of the socio-economic analysis in winter 2020, the focus of the work has been on determining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) in regard to the goals and implementation of measures in the care and development plan. Thus, regional stakeholders can perceive the grazing of sheep and goats as a positive side effect for the landscape, tourism and, of course, biodiversity promotion (herds of sheep as 'seed taxis'). Nevertheless, with regard to the planning of measures, it is also essential to consider the problems and conflicts.

Sheep farming based on landscape management is not only struggling with low income due to low prices for wool and meat and insufficient marketing structures. The necessary and, above all, costly adaptations in the area of herd protection are also a problem. The interests of various regional actors are a fundamental factor in the development of the recommended actions that the *IfLS* will address to the *Biosphere Reserve Pfälzerwald-Nordvogesen* as a final result.

Further information accessible at the project website (in German):

www.hirtenwege-pfaelzerwald.de

Project title: Nature conservation project 'New pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest' (Socio-economic analysis as part of the maintenance and developing planning)

Duration: 2019 – 2022

Client: Biosphere Reserve Pfälzerwald-Nordvogesen

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



Utilization strategies for non-marketable eggs from small flocks of laying hens

The study, which started in the beginning of 2020, deals with the question of how dirty, cracked and S-sized eggs (smallest size category) from small laying hen flocks can be utilised in a reasonable way. Since industrial marketing is out of question for small quantities, egg producers have no choice but to find new ways of utilising the eggs, or to dispose them.

Results of an online survey among farms with up to 3,000 laying hen places are as follows:

- In most of the farms surveyed, self-consumption is a possibility for partial utilisation of the eggs, especially for the dirty and cracked eggs.
- S-sized eggs can be sold easily in the farm shops although price reductions compared to M- or L-size eggs (usual size categories) are necessary.
- Dirty and cracked eggs, and to a lesser extent S-sized eggs, are either processed by the farmers themselves or by so-called pasta or (egg) liqueur manufacturers in wage labor. The end products are then available for sale in the farm shops.

The evaluation of the survey results is not completed yet. In addition, interviews with experts at the beginning of 2021 will clarify open questions, including legal and organizational requirements for egg processing and marketing.



Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium
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und Landwirtschaft

BÖLN

Bundesprogramm Ökologischer Landbau
und andere Formen nachhaltiger
Landwirtschaft

aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages

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

Duration: 2020 – 2021

Client: Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE) as part of the federal program 'Organic Farming and Other Forms of Sustainable Agriculture' (BÖLN)

Project partners: Bioland Consulting (Bioland Beratung GmbH), Demeter e.V.

Contact persons at IfLS: Bettina Spengler and Jörg Schramek

Stronger together?! New funding schemes for producer organizations in Germany

Various price crises in several agricultural sectors within the last few years have exposed the weak negotiating position of farmers versus the companies processing their products. Against this background, producer organizations are attributed with an important role, especially concerning political influence. A recent study has shown, however, that they have hardly been able to meet these demands so far.

With the project *Institutional Support Needs of Producer Organizations – Possibilities for Strengthening Agricultural Enterprises*, the IfLS aimed at broadening the knowledge about the importance and function of producer organizations in Germany. In addition, first steps for improving the institutional support of producer organizations were identified and, based on this, recommendations for action and policy options were developed.

The analysis of a survey among beef and grain producer organizations (carried out for another study), as well as interviews with experts from the support structures of the federal states initially revealed that conditions, occurrence and support structures differ greatly in the individual federal states. Therefore, their importance also varies between the states.

Main functions of producer organizations are the bundling of supplies, production planning and especially price stabilization. To strengthen the latter, according to the results of the study, it is crucial to provide information on markets and prices as well as regional branding. It also seems promising to take up trends in the areas of organic production, regionalization and quality labels or protected geographical indications. This is in line with the recent recommendations of the European Commission on the German CAP strategic plan.

Supporting these developments should therefore be the goal of institutional support structures. In

addition, organizational development in producer organizations could play a more important role. Changes in the level and duration of funding are assessed differently, hence a more flexible approach could help. Further means to ensure successful cooperation between agricultural producers are public relations and information campaigns about the potentials and functions of producer organizations. An exchange between support structures, especially between the federal and state governments, could contribute to better strategies for the promotion of producer organizations operating across states.

Looking closer at possible synergies with other funding guidelines and structures, such as nature conservation frameworks, could also be of great importance for the promotion of sustainable producer organizations. There is a need for further research in this area – especially with regard to best practice examples.

Project title: Institutional Support Needs of Producer Organizations – Possibilities for Strengthening Agricultural Enterprises

Duration: 2020

Client: Development Agency for Agribusiness and Rural Areas Germany (Landwirtschaftliche Rentenbank)

Contact person at IfLS: Simone Sterly



DEVELOPING YOUR TRAINING PATHWAY

Home / Training / English / Developing your training pathway

First of all, where are you in your business idea?

- ☐ I'm looking into it.
- ☐ I have an idea of the production workshops I'm interested in...
- ☐ I'm going to start producing soon: I have the land and I know which production area I'm going to manage.

Back Next Reset

Agriculture made easy: training for new farmers

While European agriculture faces an aging population and problems with farm succession, a new generation of farmers is emerging: young people with no agricultural qualifications and no farming background in their family. They are eager to develop a more sustainable agriculture while earning a living. Since they have to be rather entrepreneurs than traditional farmers, they need –beyond agricultural expertise – also organizational, economic and entrepreneurial skills.

As existing training structures are too intensive and long, they do not meet the needs of this new generation of farmers. In addition, they are interested in agro-ecological practices, which are not specifically offered in conventional curriculums.

This is where the project *LEAN – Learning on Entrepreneurship and Agriculture for New Farmers* came in. Over a period of two years, an online platform was set up to support newcomers in developing their business according to the principles of organic farming.

A total of ten web-based training modules were created in six languages. These include information about the basic principles of sustainable agriculture, different farm sectors (animal husbandry, fruit and vegetable production, beekeeping, etc.), as well as communication and marketing. The study materials are intended to provide newcomers with a basis for setting up their own business. In addition, 15 case studies in the five partner countries give practical examples of newcomers in agriculture.

In order to personalize the study experience, an online tool offers the possibility to individually combine the different modules. Additionally, a notebook can be downloaded which helps evaluating the experience and reflecting on gained knowledge.

On October 7th 2020, the German version of the materials was presented in a workshop and tested by newcomers to agriculture as well as multipliers.

The online platform is available: <http://leanproject.eu/>

Project title: Learning on Entrepreneurship and Agriculture for New Farmers

Duration: 2018 – 2020

Client: Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Erasmus+ Program Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships.

Project partners: Vertigo Lab, ARID, BETI, University of Bari, Vet Agro Sup

Contact person at IfLS: Simone Sterly

Regional development

Alternative models for urban agriculture in the Rhine-Main region

Last year, the *IfLS*, in cooperation with the *Rhine-Main Regionalpark*, organized different focus groups to work on the topics 'Cultural Landscape and Orchards' and 'Alternative Agricultural Models, New Initiatives and Cooperations' as part of the EU Interreg project *CityZen*.

Experts and representatives of regional initiatives, farms, municipalities and authorities discussed online how to ensure the preservation and development of the cultural landscape – especially of orchards. Strategies also aimed at increasing the appreciation of local agriculture, peri-urban food production and its products among consumers and in politics. The projects resulting from this are summarised in an action plan that complements the *Regionalpark's* guiding concept regarding urban agriculture.

The five *CityZen* partner regions (in Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Germany) regularly exchange information and ideas on the optimal

design of such action plans and possible measures. Most recently, a joint workshop of the cooperating countries dedicated to new business models, technology and innovation in urban agriculture took place.

Further information on the project:
<http://www.interregeurope.eu/cityzen>

Project title: Promoting scalable innovations and new business models based on the values of the urban agro-ecosystem – *CityZen*

Duration: 2019 – 2023

Client: Interreg Europe

Project partners: Applied Research and Communications Fund (coordination, BG), Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia (EL), Municipality of Beja (PT), University of Valladolid (ES), CIMBAL (PT), Natural Heritage Foundation of Castilla y León (ES).

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein





LAG Tsalka put to test

COVID-19 does not stop at Georgia: in its first year of existence, the *LEADER* action group in Tsalka faced special circumstances due to the pandemic. While dealing with these new challenges, the main tasks were to disseminate information on the project and raise awareness for it. Additionally, capacities in the villages of the region were built and the first two calls for funding and project competitions implemented. In the meantime, the first regional projects have started. A visit to Germany to exchange experiences with *LEADER* groups and the state of the art could not take place.

However, reason enough to put the first year of the Tsalka *Local Action Group* (LAG) to test. This was done with the help of an online evaluation workshop performed by the *IfLS* together with *CENN* and members of the LAG board. Based on relevant self-evaluation methods and tools, the participants were satisfied with the aims that had been achieved so far and identified areas for improvement in the LAG's work.

Tsalka, a multi-ethnic and multicultural municipality in the Kvemo Kartli region, consists of 30 communities with 43 villages and the town Tsalka itself. The project is implemented within the framework of the *European Neighbourhood Program for Agriculture and Rural Development* (ENPARD). Through special training and the organization of exchange visits, the *IfLS* supports the *LEADER* implementation on site.

Project title: Embrace Tsalka

Duration: 2018 – 2022

Client: EU (EuropeAid) ENPARD program

Project partners: Caucasian Environmental NGO Network (CENN), Georgian Farmers Association (GFA)

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein

Final evaluation of the LEADER process in the region Ortenau

With the transitional period from 2021 to 2022, the current funding period of the *European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development* (EAFRD) will be extended. Nevertheless, the Baden-Wuerttemberg LAGs are expected to put to test the effects and successes of their work reached so far in a final evaluation. This should, next to monitoring the success of the current funding period, also provide indicators for the further development of the local development strategies (LDS).

In this context, the *IfLS* supports the association *Regionalentwicklung Ortenau* in organizing surveys and evaluating their results. Not only LAG members, project leaders and regional key actors are being interviewed, but also, for the first time, beneficiaries of the regional budget financed by the joint task *Improving Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection* (GAK). The regional budget permits the unbureaucratic funding of micro-projects (up to €20,000) that help achieving the goals of the LDS. This particularly supports and encourages the engagement of volunteers and local initiatives.

After conducting the surveys, the various stakeholder groups will discuss the results in an evaluation workshop. Conclusions for the direction of the priority areas and issues concerning the region Ortenau in the coming funding period will be elaborated.

Project title: Final evaluation of the LEADER process in the LEADER region Ortenau

Duration: 2020 – 2021

Client: Regional Development Ortenau (Regionalentwicklung Ortenau e.V.)

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



Challenges and benefits of digital participation in rural areas

The *DigiBeL* project is dedicated to the investigation of analogue and digital participation formats in rural regional development. Since the start of *DigiBeL*, digital formats have become increasingly important, also concerning the work in the project itself – partly due to COVID-19. This concerns video conferences instead of face-to-face project meetings, as well as the restructuring of research designs with regard to digital methods of data collection.

After developing an overview of the theoretical discourse on the role of digitalization in regional development processes, an online survey was completed in December 2020. The analysis of the responses from 152 nationwide representatives of regional development processes (mostly *LEADER* and *ILE*, but also *Land(auf)Schwung* and *SmarteLandRegionen*) is almost completed. In 69 % of the regions taking part in the survey (N=112), the interest of the population in opportunities for participation has increased during the last years. Acceptance among the population, as well as numerous other aspects (e.g. digital skills), pose challenges in the expansion of digital participation offers. The greatest advantages mentioned are, among others, a reduced mobility effort and a wider participation.

More information about the results is also published in the second episode of the podcast *DigitalLand* accompanying the project. The episode is available at www.sozphil.uni-leipzig.de/index.php?id=projekt-digibel (in German).

The next step is to select four to six case study regions throughout Germany. The case studies will deepen the findings from the survey by testing them in various thematic contexts in exchange with the regional actors.

Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium
für Ernährung
und Landwirtschaft

aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages

Project title: Perspectives and possible applications of digital participation procedures in rural regional development – DigiBeL

Duration: 2020 – 2023

Client: Federal Rural Development Scheme (BULE)

Project partners: Institute of Communication and Media Studies (IfKMW), Leipzig University (previously Institute for Media Research, TU Chemnitz)

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Sarah Peter

Rural areas

Smart solutions for a village in structural change

Demographic change and the breakdown of potash mining are challenging the village of Sollstedt in the southern Harz region. In order to develop sustainable perspectives for the population and local businesses, the inhabitants are looking for smart solutions. The *IfLS* supports their effort within the framework of the *Smart Rural 21* project. This involves the development of a strategy to expand the digital infrastructure, open up Sollstedt's (industrial) cultural landscape for its inhabitants and guests, connecting people and developing new products and services, as well as showing the population the possibilities of digitalization. The village development council defined 13 priority measures to implement these goals.

On the one hand, the *IfLS* accompanies the strategy implementation in the community of Sollstedt. On the other hand, conclusions for future measures for the smart development of rural areas derive from the experiences of Sollstedt and 20 other 'smart municipalities' within the project.

Further information in English: www.smartrural21.eu/

Project title: 'Smart Rural 21' – Preparatory action for Smart Rural Areas in the 21st century

Duration: 2019 – 2021

Client: Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

Project partners: E40 Group (HU, coordinator), empirica Research and Consulting (DE), eTownz (IE), Innovation Support Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (NL), Agricultural University of Athens (GR)

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

Rural development programs extended by 2 years

It will still take a while until the EU Commission, the EU Parliament and the European Council will finally agree on the future *CAP* this year. Also regarding Germany, the future *CAP* strategic plan will not be in force until 2023 even though 2021 was initially set as the starting point. To ensure a smooth transfer of funding, the federal states have the possibility to extend their current rural development programs for the years 2021 and 2022. Since the beginning of 2016, the *IfLS* and its partners have been responsible for the ongoing evaluation of the *MEPL III* and *EULLE* programs in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate. Currently, the federal states plan the future use of additional funding. As soon as this is clarified, the evaluation team will examine whether this results in new or various approaches to evaluation. After discussion with the responsible ministries, the evaluation concept will then be adjusted.

Project title: Evaluation of the rural development program in Baden-Wuerttemberg (MEPL III)

Duration: 2016 – 2024

Client: Ministry for Rural Areas and Consumer Protection, Baden-Wuerttemberg (MLR)

Project partners: Agricultural and Regional Development Research Group Triesdorf (Forschungsgruppe Agrar- und Regionalentwicklung Triesdorf GbR), Unique Forestry Freiburg

Contact persons at IfLS: Jörg Schramek, Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Heike Nitsch, Bettina Spengler, Dr. Johannes Carolus und Svea Thietje

Project title: Evaluation of the rural development program in Rhineland-Palatinate (EULLE)

Duration: 2016 – 2024

Client: Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture Rhineland-Palatinate (MWVLW)

Project partners: Policy Research & Consultancy (Planung & Forschung – PRAC), regioTrend – office of regional development

Contact persons at IfLS: Jörg Schramek, Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Heike Nitsch, Bettina Spengler, Dr. Johannes Carolus and Svea Thietje

Agricultural policy

Protected designations of origin and traditional specialties: an interim assessment

Since 1992, labels for agricultural products and food items show and protect the origin of products in the EU: *protected designation of origin (PDO)* and *protected geographical indication (PGI)*, as well as the quality label *traditional specialties guaranteed (TSG)*. The EU assessed the benefit of these labels with a study on *geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed protected in the EU*. The IfLS was involved as a 'country expert'.

Based on three case studies - vegetables from the island of Reichenau, Bavarian beer and Genever - the significance of protected indications of origin in Germany was assessed. While the importance for Genever in Germany is low, *Reichenau-Gemüse eG* uses the indications as an additional quality feature. The effectiveness of the label, however, could not be assessed. The PGI *Bayerisches Bier* on the other hand is considered particularly important to open new markets and for export. Here, higher turnover is the effect of the PGI certification.

In general, the use of protected indications of origin and the quality seal TSG is very low in Germany compared to other European countries. Consumer knowledge about the labels is also poor. This shows great potential, especially when looking at regionalization trends.

Action Plan for the development of organic production in the EU

The *European Green Deal* describes the path to a sustainable, climate-neutral Europe. *The Biodiversity Strategy* and the *Farm to Fork Strategy* aim for an extensive conversion to organic farming, with the goal of 25 % of the EU's agricultural land being organic by 2030.

To achieve this goal, the EU Commission develops an action plan for the period 2021 to 2026.

In the run-up to this, a public consultation on organic farming took place in the form of an online survey and the possibility to submit comments, in accordance with the European Union's regulation guidelines. In cooperation with *Ecorys* (Belgium), the IfLS summarizes and analyses the results of the consultation.

Project title: Geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed protected in the EU

Duration: 2020

Client: Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

Contact person at IfLS: Simone Sterly

Project title: Evaluation of the Action Plan for the development of organic production

Duration: 2021

Client: Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

Project partner: Ecorys

Contact person at IfLS: Simone Sterly



First joint CAP strategic plan for Germany

The framework for the CAP is traditionally set in 7-year periods. Although the EU legislation for the next CAP funding period is still ongoing, the member states have been busy developing their CAP strategic plans for several months. For the first time, there will be only one national strategy plan for Germany until 2027. It is supposed to provide orientation for the implementation of agricultural policy in Germany. In the past, the federal states at least had their own rural development programs as part of the CAP.

The *Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture* commissioned the *IfLS* with the ex-ante evaluation of the national CAP strategic plan for Germany. It is working on this project together with three partner offices (see box). In September 2020, the team submitted its first comprehensive recommendations and proposals for changes to the description of the starting position, as well as to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that derive from it and the resulting needs for various target areas of agricultural policy. Generally, the focus is on the agricultural sector and associated value chains. However, environmental and climate protection and the development of rural areas are important target areas as well.

The government and the federal states are currently in the process of developing the national strategy plan with concrete measures. Here, a further task of the evaluation team will be to assess the future impact on various target areas in the course of the planned implementation. Particular attention lays on the question to what extent more ambitious environmental and climate-related goals can be achieved compared to the 2014 - 2020 funding period. This is explicitly emphasised in the current EU draft legislation.

The announcements made with regard to the *European Green Deal* match this. In the forthcoming years, the *Green Deal* will be the EU Commission's roadmap for a more sustainable future by transforming the EU economy. The CAP will have to play its part in this. Among other things, the *Farm to Fork* strategy is crucial for establishing a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system in the EU.

The next few months will show how the national strategy plan will be implemented in Germany within the framework set by the EU.

Project title: Ex-ante evaluation of the national 'CAP Strategic Plan' for the Federal Republic of Germany

Duration: 2020 – 2021

Client: Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)

Project partners: Thünen-Institute of Rural Studies (Thünen Institut für Ländliche Räume), entera and BonnEval

Contact persons at IfLS: Jörg Schramek, Heike Nitsch, Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Oliver Müller and Dr. Johannes Carolus

Climate change and renewable energies

Dangers of the climate crisis and climate targets: What is the CAP's contribution?

To achieve the climate goals, which Germany has committed to, agriculture also has to play its part. A project of the *IfLS* financed by German's *Development Agency for Agribusiness and Rural Areas* deals with the question to what extent *CAP* measures address climate protection in the current funding period. Based on this, proposals for future support measures derived.

As a first step, a literature study showed which climate goals Germany is obliged to achieve, what the sources of greenhouse gas emissions are in connection with agriculture, and what possible approaches for climate protection are. The study focused on the use of agricultural land. Important are especially safeguarding and increasing soil organic matter and mitigation options in connection with the use of nitrogenous fertilizers.

The results of the short study are available as a report under the following link (in German):

www.ifls.de/referenzen/publikationen/details/strategien-und-massnahmen-fuer-den-klimaschutz-bei-der-landwirtschaftlichen-flaechennutzung-im-rahmen-d

Climate protection in agricultural support programs: Options for Baden-Wuerttemberg

A study commissioned by the *Ministry of Rural Affairs and Consumer Protection Baden-Wuerttemberg* aims at identifying options to integrate climate protection into the agricultural support programs of Baden-Wuerttemberg. The background of this project is the further development of such programs with regard to the new *CAP* funding period.

While the *IfLS* is researching the current support programs and options for climate protection measures, the *University of Hohenheim* is investigating to what extent selected measures in Baden-Wuerttemberg can contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the costs involved.

The project is a separate study but belongs to the evaluation of the *Rural Development Plan of Baden-Wuerttemberg 2014 - 2020* (MEPL III).

A report on the results will be published in spring 2021.

Project title: Strategies and measures for climate protection in agricultural land use under the CAP

Duration: 2019 – 2020

Client: Development Agency for Agribusiness and Rural Areas Germany (Landwirtschaftliche Rentenbank)

Contact persons at IfLS: Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

Project title: Ad-hoc study on ways to strengthen the climate protection aspect of agricultural support programs in the scope of the evaluation of MEPL III

Duration: 2020 – 2021

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

Project partner: University of Hohenheim

Contact person at IfLS: Heike Nitsch

Sustainability and resilience

More resilience and efficiency through mixed agriculture and agro-forestry

The *MIXED* project aims at promoting the development of mixed agricultural and agroforestry systems. The basic assumption is that such systems have an increased resilience and climate adaptation potential, use resources more efficiently, and provide a variety of ecosystem services.

Together with a large number of institutions and actors from science and practice, a broad spectrum of different mixed agricultural and agroforestry systems are developed, improved and implemented in the course of the project. Among other things, the robustness of the systems, including their ability to adapt and transform, is evaluated. Ultimately, the resilience of agricultural systems to the climate change will be strengthened and the use of resources optimized.

Funded by Horizon 2020, the EU's biggest Research and Innovation program, a total of 19 institutions from ten European countries carry out *MIXED*. Together with the *Swabian Danube Moss Working Group*, the *IfLS* establishes and forms the German network.

Currently, the first workshops in the partner countries are planned. These are supposed to identify possible transformation paths towards sustainable, mixed agricultural and agroforestry systems. Based on the expertise of relevant stakeholders, available technologies and other factors, the first step is to co-construct a positive vision for the future of mixed systems, followed by the development of transition pathways to achieve them.



THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM
THE EUROPEAN UNION' HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH
AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME
UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT N. 862357

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

Project partners: International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROFS) at the University Aarhus (Coordinator) and 17 further institutions in 10 countries in total

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Dr. Johannes Carolus



Sustainable Living and Learning – ESD Concepts in the Rhine-Taunus Nature Park and the Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park

Education for sustainable development (ESD) aims to support and enable all people to shape their own lives, society and the future in a sustainable way. Thereby, *ESD* is not primarily a matter of imparting knowledge, but rather of developing social and participatory skills that help people realize the effects of their own actions – in line with the maxim 'think globally, act locally'.



ESD is both a core value of SDG 4 (quality in education) of the 2030 *Global Agenda for Sustainable Development* and a driving force of the entire program. An essential part of *ESD* is the conscious

experience of the personal environment. With their unique cultural landscape and their numerous information and educational offers, large protected areas provide the ideal context to enable this holistic learning with all senses. Here, not only the great importance of nature conservation, but also socio-cultural characteristics of the respective region are illustrated. Large protected areas have a dual function: on the one hand, they are important extracurricular providers of *ESD* themselves; on the other hand, they play a networking and moderating role in the field of *ESD*. Thus, they can contribute significantly to a comprehensive development of the regional educational landscape.

Since April 1 2018, *ESD* has been a legal task of nature parks in Germany according to §27 of the Federal Nature Conservation Act. The *Rhine-Taunus Nature Park* as well as the *Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park* have attributed an important role to the topic of *ESD* in their respective management plan. After the *IfLS* has already supported the two areas in the development of these strategies in 2018 and 2019, it is currently preparing the respective *ESD* concepts. The overall objective of these

projects is to establish a sustainable and above all viable structure in the field of *ESD*. In addition to an analysis of the existing actors and offerings, the focus is on the identification of target groups and key topics, as well as the development of objectives and guidelines for the design of *ESD* activities in the future. Together with regional *ESD* actors in the context of in-depth participation processes such as workshops and online surveys these aims are pursued.



Project title: Strategic-didactic Concept 'Education for Sustainable Development' (ESD) of the Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park

Duration: 2020 – 2021

Client: Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park

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

Project title: Concept Education for Sustainable Development in the Rhine-Taunus Nature Park

Duration: 2020

Client: Nature Park Rhine-Taunus

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

Energy transition as an example of sustainability

Sustainable development in general and the *UN Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) in particular are characterized by the fact that individual goals can compete with each other in certain areas. This is particularly evident in the use of renewable energies. Here, the interests of species conservation and climate protection are sometimes diametrically opposed to each other. Responsible action therefore requires knowledge of the various options and their consequences, and the competence to evaluate them in a specific regional context, also with a view to the global effects. Together with the *Heidelberg University of Education* and *Sigmund Space & Education gGmbH*, the *IfLS* has developed a concept for a serious game. Playing the game students should get first experience of the sustainability dilemmas of the energy transition.

Based on the SDGs, the aim is to show that both, the use of renewable energies and the delay in their expansion, have different effects on individual SDGs.

The concept provides to use the educational game in secondary schools or other educational institutions. After the project has shown the feasibility of such an educational game, the *IfLS* and the contributors aim to develop the educational game.

Project title: Land use conflicts of renewable energy: Scenario-based environmental education on the spatial requirements of renewable energy using new media

Duration: 2019 – 2021

Client: German Federal Foundation for the Environment

Project partners: Heidelberg University of Education, UNESCO Chair on World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve Observation and Education (Coordination), Sigmund Space&Education gGmbH

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

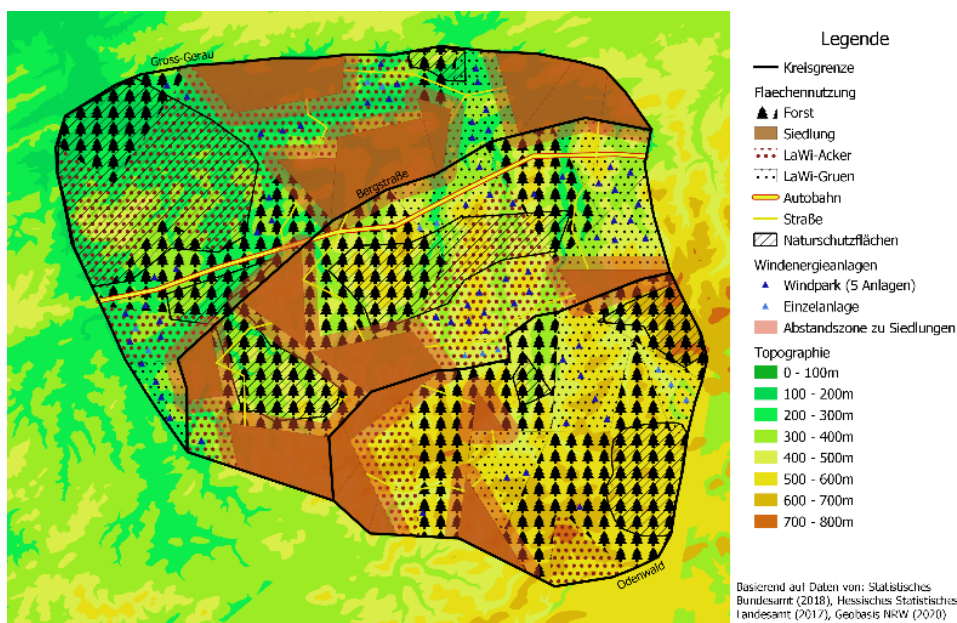


Figure: Example of gaming environment for the simulation of land use conflicts of renewable energy

Eight communities on their way to the implementation of the SDGs

Within the framework of the project *Palatinate Forest: SDG-Model Region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate* eight villages and cities started to develop sustainability strategies for the implementation of the *UN Goals for a Sustainable Development* (SDGs). In a first step, the *IfLS* captured the individual standing of the communities in terms of their commitments to the SDGs.

The results show that many activities that contribute to the SDGs are already carried out. The focus of the model cities and villages so far has been SDG 11 'Sustainable cities and Communities', SDG 4 'Quality Education' and SDG 7 'Affordable and clean energy'.

Currently, the model communities derive action priorities based on their stocktaking in a participatory process and develop individual goals and measurements.

Project title: Palatinate Forest: SDG-Model Region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate

Duration: 2019 – 2021

Project management: District Association Palatinate, Biosphere Reserve Palatinate Forest

Funding: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Coordination by Engagement Global gGmbH/ Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW); Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture Rhineland-Palatinate (MWVLW RLP); Ministry of the Interior and for Sport of Rhineland-Palatinate (Mdl RLP), Ministry of Environment, Energy, Food and Forests of Rhineland-Palatinate (MUEEF RLP)

Project partners: KOBRA Consulting Center Landau (KOBRA Beratungszentrum Landau)

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

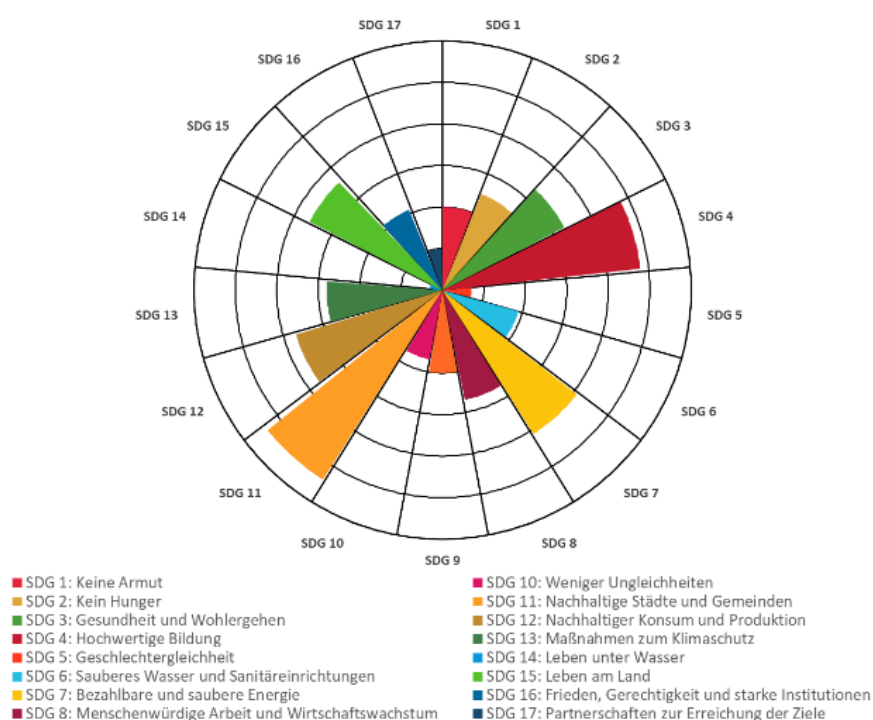


Figure: Activities based on the SDG in the model communities

Protected areas and cultural landscape

Online platform for the implementation of the SGs in large protected areas

The project *SDG.imp* aims at providing information for actors in protected areas about possibilities and strategies for the implementation of the *UN Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs).

For this purpose, a learning platform with all information on the possibilities of implementing the SDGs in protected areas is being developed. There, small learning modules with one of the 17 SDGs each are explained with references to the work in protected areas and their regional actors. Practical examples illustrate the diversity of approaches. In addition, contributions of protected areas to the implementation of the SDGs serve as inspiration. The platform also includes the provision of tools for the administrations of large protected areas and for regional actors with the intention to support them in becoming active and working on the SDGs in their own region.

The platform will be successively expanded within the framework of the *ERASMUS+* project. The materials and information are available in English, German, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian and Spanish at: www.sdgimp.eu.

Project title: Decision support system for the implementation of SDGs in protected areas

Duration: 2019 – 2021

Client: Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Erasmus+ Program Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships

Project partners: Biosphere Association Bliesgau (Biosphärenzweckverband Bliesgau, DE), Europarc Federation (DE), BETI (LT), CPIP (RO), GDR (ES), PWSIP (PL)

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

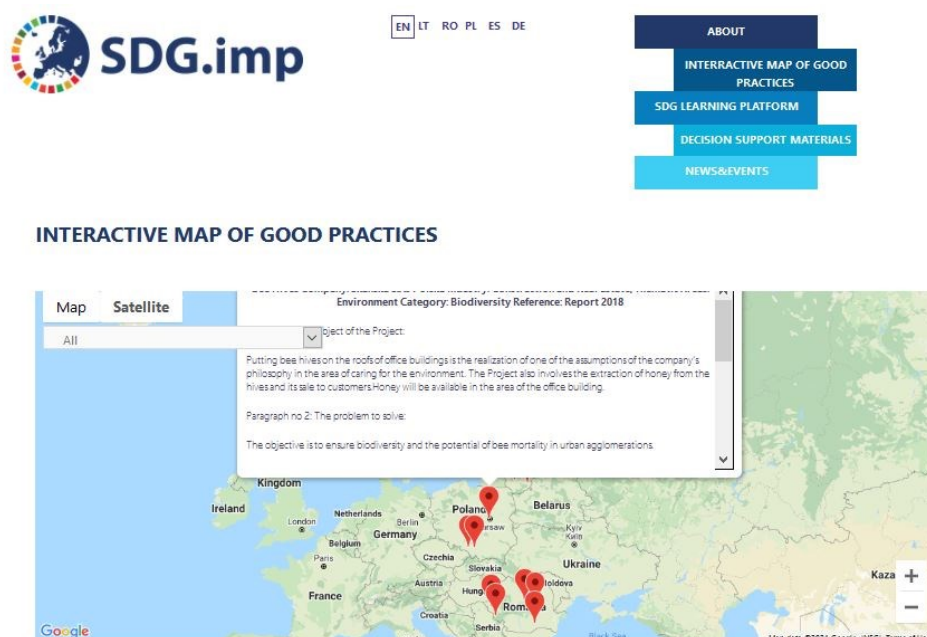


Figure: Screenshot of the learning platform

Governance and cooperation

Regional social and ecological services of organic farming: Assessing - Valorizing - Acting

Since one year the research and development project *regiosöl – Regional social and ecological services of organic farming: Assessing – Valorizing – Acting* has been running. In a first step, the status quo for assessing ecological and social achievements in organic farming was determined. Therefore, seven approaches to farm sustainability assessment were examined in-depth and evaluated in terms of their dissemination, availability, costs, data origin and the effort of recording. Currently we are developing additional criteria at the farm level and a regional approach to capture the identified gaps in the field of social and regional economic services.

The approach is to be further developed and tested with the practice partners in two real-world laboratories in the pilot regions of the Rhineland and the eco-agricultural model region of Northern Hesse. Regarding discussions with farm managers and regional actors, one concern will also be how to valorize the socio-ecological services.

In expert meetings and in a national workshop research questions, methodical steps and previous results were discussed in detail and further developed with actors from research and practice. Many parties emphasized the importance of the topic and expressed an interest in further exchange.



Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium
für Ernährung
und Landwirtschaft

BÖLN

Bundesprogramm Ökologischer Landbau
und andere Formen nachhaltiger
Landwirtschaft

aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages

Project title: Regional social and ecological services of organic farming: Assessing – Valorizing – Acting – RegioSÖL

Duration: 2020 – 2023

Client: Federal Program Organic Farming and Other Forms of Sustainable Agriculture (BÖLN)

Project partners: Centre for Organic Farming (Zentrum für Ökologische Landwirtschaft e.V. – ZÖL), Public limited company Rhineland (Regionalwert AG Rheinland – RWAG)

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Karen Schewina

Knowledge and innovation

How does the agricultural sector innovate?

As part of the modernization of the *CAP*, from 2023 onwards the EU will increasingly focus on knowledge exchange, innovation and digitalization of the *CAP* and of rural areas in general. For this purpose, the member countries are required to describe their *Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System* (AKIS) within the framework of their National Strategic Plan. Here, one task is to explain how to offer advisory and innovation services in the future. The aim is to intensify the relations, interactions and knowledge transfer of multiple actors within an interactive innovation ecosystem.

In this context, the EU Commission attaches special importance to consulting and the so-called 'Innovation Support Services' as mediating brokers. As an Innovation Service Provider (IDL) for the *European Innovation Partnership 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability'* (EIP-Agri) in Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt, the *IfLS* plays an important role in this network. Time to reflect on our own experiences and think about the future tasks of the IDL in a complex innovation system.

Innovations result from the interaction and recombination of different knowledge. According to innovation models, agricultural innovations are created in a translation process between formalised experts from research and development and the experience-based and context-specific knowledge of farmers working in practice. From the IDL's point of view, these translations do not always run smoothly when applied practically and require accompanying translation services. First, this concerns the very problematizations and questions to be resolved in innovation projects within the framework of *EIP-Agri*. The challenge at the beginning of every innovation project is to bring the different questions and interests of science and practice together.

Often the first task is to connect the right people with each other. Here, the IDL supports through networking. Once a common understanding of an idea to be pursued is established, it needs to be translated into funding objects. As a broker, the IDL simplifies complex funding guidelines and mediates between the sponsor of the idea, the authorities and the environment of the innovation. This includes all potential stakeholders in the innovation process. To benefit from the findings, the IDL helps to transfer the results from the specific origin context into extended fields of application. One aim of the modernized *CAP* is to strengthen and enhance these functions of innovation brokers by better integrating the IDL into the *AKIS*.

Project title: Supervision and evaluation of the 3rd call for proposals 'European Innovation Partnership' in Rhineland-Palatinate

Duration: 2020

Client: Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture Rhineland-Palatinate (MWVLW)

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

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 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 of Saxony-Anhalt (MULE)

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



Miscellaneous

Nature from the river perspective

In times of COVID-19, we fortunately were able – in compliance with all hygiene regulations – to do our annual company excursion late last summer. This time we went to Limburg an der Lahn, first for a workshop, then for cool fun.

In the modern rooms of the Limburg Business Park, we discussed our *IfLS* strategy, which covers different topics from business field development and public relations to knowledge exchange and sustainability. Our guiding principles, strategic and operational goals and measurements had been updated last six years ago. It was time to reflect the goals set, as well the status of their implementation. Which targets did we reach, where do we stand right now? Are there any gaps or do we need new measurements?

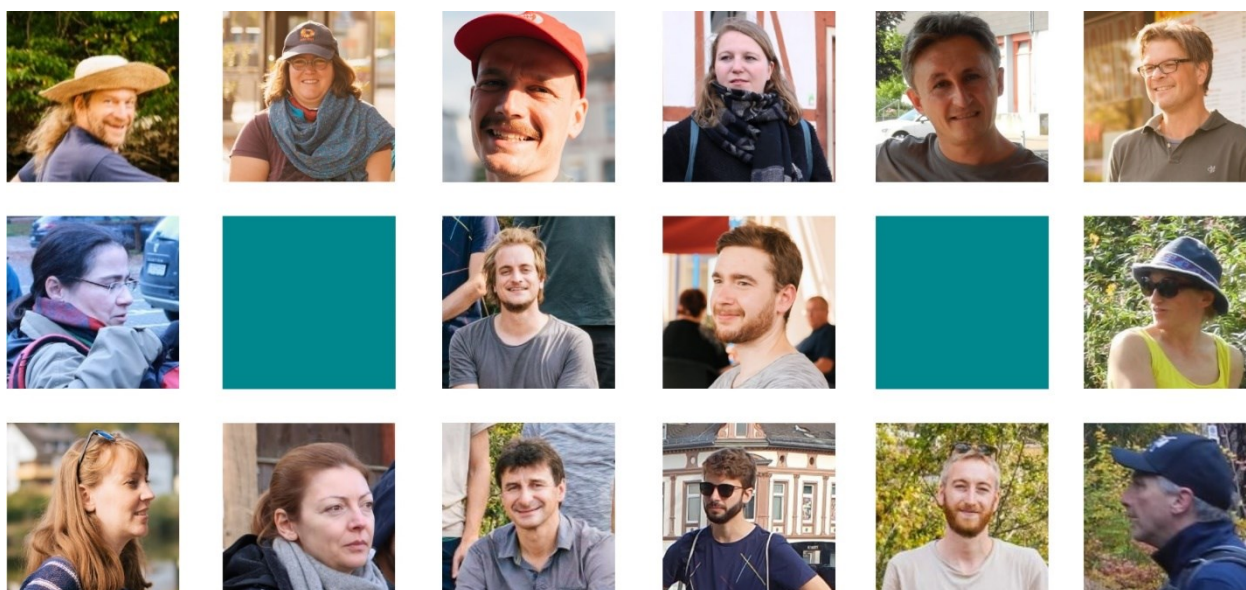
After work was done, we strolled over the former city wall, across the river Lahn, right through the romantic old town to the beer garden to calm our smoking heads with food and drinks. After spending the night in the – for ecotourists well situated – hotel at the train station, we took the train to

Runkel on the second day. There we started the active part of the excursion, a 12 km canoe trip on the Lahn back to Limburg.

In glorious sunshine, we set off in 3-person canoes with enough distance between us. The first section of the route with a weak stream, a lot of sun and little shade at the same time made us sweat a lot.

However, an exciting scenery and a well-deserved picnic after 2/3 of the way rewarded our efforts. There was something for every one of us on the canoe tour: some learned how to paddle, others tried their luck at bird identification by voice, enjoyed a nice chat or simply let their souls swing. Sportily exhausted, armed with good pictures and new ideas for the *IfLS*, we set off on our way home. An all-round successful excursion, not least because there were only voluntary visits to the water!





New to the *IfLS* team

Dr. Johannes Carolus

Johannes Carolus joined the *IfLS* team last summer and works in the area of 'Rural Development, Agriculture and Environment'.

He is involved in various projects to promote and evaluate sustainable agricultural production, including the ex-ante evaluation of the German *CAP* Strategic Plan and the EU Horizon 2020 project *MIXED*.

He previously worked as a research assistant and a Ph.D. fellow at the University of Copenhagen and has also been employed as a research associate at the *Thünen Institute of Farm Economics* since 2019.



Oliver Müller, M. A.



Oliver Müller is part of the *IfLS* team since April 2020 in the area of 'Regional Development, Innovation Consulting and Large Protected Areas' and is also doing a PhD at the University of Bonn on the topic 'Flourishing Landscapes. Producing the Green Countryside in EU rural development policies'.

His work focuses on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS), innovation consulting and innovation services within the framework of *EIP-Agri*, and the evaluation of various development-programs and measures in the field of rural development.

Previously, he has worked as a research assistant in the DFG project *Participatory Development of Rural Regions* at the University of Bonn.

Karen Schewina, M. A.

Karen Schewina supports the *IfLS* in the area 'International Perspectives, Agricultural Policy and Rural Development' since February 2021.

She is involved in various regional and international projects to promote sustainable agricultural production, including *regiosöl* and *MIXED*.

At the same time, she is doing her Ph.D. at the Institute for Cultural Anthropology and European Ethnology at the Goethe University Frankfurt am Main on municipal food policy and food councils in Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Vienna.

Previously, she has worked in the field of agricultural policy and campaigning.



Publications and service

Sustainable development & sustainable management in biosphere reserves: A guideline for assessing and implementing sustainability

Sustainable development and sustainable management are among the core issues of biosphere reserves (BR). But what does it mean? The guideline includes a set of indicators that operationalizes the German recognition and evaluation criteria for UNESCO biosphere reserves related to regional development. In addition, five tools are presented to support biosphere reserve administrations and to promote sustainable development and sustainable management in different application contexts,

including a regional sustainability check, target indicators for BR framework concepts and communication modules for sustainability reporting:

www.bfn.de/fileadmin/BfN/service/Dokumente/skripten/Skript593.pdf
(In German)



Management plan for the Geo-Nature Park Bergstraße-Odenwald

The management plan for the Geo-Nature Park Bergstraße-Odenwald is a guideline for the further development of the Geo-Nature Park up to 2030. The plan shows how to fulfil regional and international tasks and to meet the challenges of our time, such as the preservation of biological diversity or of the experience and recreational function of our landscape:

www.ifls.de/referenzen/publikationen/details/managementplan-fuer-den-geo-naturpark-bergstrasse-odenwald/

(In German)



Foundations for a peatland protection strategy by the Federal Government

Over 90 % of German peatland soils are drained and in poor condition, so that their ecological services are reduced largely. However, organic soils are of great importance as carbon reservoirs and thus for climate protection. Beyond individual projects, water levels in organic soils have to be raised and the current land use adjusted on a larger scale in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from such areas significantly. In the 2018 coalition agreement, it was decided to develop a peatland protec-

tion strategy as a national framework for the protection of organic soils and peatland biotopes. The *IfLS* discussed and prepared the basis for such a strategy in a project:

www.ifls.de/referenzen/publikationen/details/grundlagen-fuer-eine-moorschutzstrategie-der-bundesregierung/
(In German)



Institutional Support Needs of Producer Organizations – Possibilities for Strengthening Agricultural Enterprises.

Weak negotiating positions of producers of agricultural products vis-à-vis processing companies encourage them to join forces in producer organizations (POs). Based on selected POs, the aim is to identify aspects for strengthening their political influence and enhance factors that promote their tasks and objectives:

www.ifls.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Abbildungen/Publikationen/2021/Rentenbankbericht.pdf

(In German)



Alternative financing models along the value chain regarding organic food

Citizen financing models are increasingly used by companies in the agricultural and food sector as a complementary financing model with citizen participation. The focus is not only on financing, but also on customer loyalty. Within the *BioFinanz* project, the *IfLS* investigated these citizen-financing models along the food value chain of organic agriculture and the food industry:

www.ifls.de/referenzen/publikationen/details/alternative-finanzierungsmodelle-entlang-der-wertschoepfungskette-fuer-oekologische-lebensmittel-synth/

(In German)



Strategies and measures for climate protection in agricultural land use within the framework of the CAP

This study identifies options for integrating climate protection measures into the CAP that are related to agricultural land use. The main focus is on the second pillar of the CAP, which offers a number of starting points including agri-environmental and climate protection measures and the promotion of organic farming, various investment measures as well as knowledge transfer and advisory services:

www.ifls.de/referenzen/publikationen/details/strategien-und-massnahmen-fuer-den-klimaschutz-bei-der-landwirtschaftlichen-flaechennutzung-im-rahmen-d/

(In German)

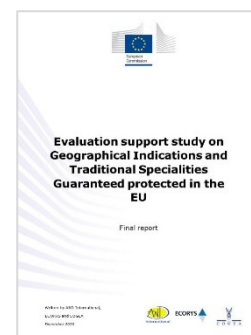


Geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed protected in the EU. Final Report.

The study evaluates the benefit of the *Protected Geographical Indications* (PGI) and the *Traditional Specialities Guaranteed* (TSG) for agricultural products and food in the EU.

What are the advantages & limitations of the quality schemes, both for private and public actors? The benefit of the labels was evaluated based on 3.000 names originating from Member States, registered in the EU or applied for directly from third countries. The *IfLS* was involved as a 'country expert':

www.ifls.de/referenzen/publikationen/details/geographical-indications-and-traditional-specialities-guaranteed-protected-in-the-eu-final-report/



Action needed for the EU Common Agricultural Policy to address sustainability challenge

The *CAP* has failed on biodiversity, climate, soil, land degradation and socio-economic challenges. A "greener" *CAP* has to be established, based on science and use existing knowledge. More than 3.600 signatories have already expressed their support for the points listed in this article:

<https://www.ifls.de/en/references/publications/details/action-needed-for-the-eu-common-agricultural-policy-to-address-sustainability-challenges/>



IfLS Online

On our website www.ifls.de/en you will always find recent news. Furthermore, we inform you about our topics of research, our services, projects and publications.

We are also on twitter now. Follow us under [@ifls_rural](https://twitter.com/ifls_rural) and stay updated.

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Pictures

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Frankfurt am Main, May 2021

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Topics	Current projects
Sustainable land use	Biodiversity instead of species loss in milk production systems– GOBIOM
	Second ad hoc study on the faunistic investigation of flowering mixtures in Baden-Wuerttemberg
	Socio-economic evaluation of the course 'Ambassador for flowering and insect diversity' and of the overall project 'Main.Kinzig.Blooms.Net'
	Foundations for a national peatland protection strategy of the federal government
	Conceptual design, organization and implementation of a stakeholder event on the federal peatland protection strategy
Socio-economics of farm businesses	Socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning for the large-scale nature conservation project 'Ribbons of Life in the Hunsrück'
	Nature conservation project 'New pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest' (Socio-economic analysis as part of the maintenance and developing planning)
	Organic eggs from small production units – Current & alternative utilization of non-marketable eggs
	Institutional Support Needs of Producer Organizations – Possibilities for Strengthening Agricultural Enterprises
	Learning on Entrepreneurship and Agriculture for New Farmers
Regional development	Promoting scalable innovations and new business models based on the values of the urban agroecosystem – CityZen
	Embrace Tsalka
	Final evaluation of the LEADER process in the LEADER region Ortenau
	Perspectives and possible applications of digital participation procedures in rural regional development – DigiBeL
Rural areas	'Smart Rural 21' – Preparatory action for Smart Rural Areas in the 21st century
	Evaluation of the rural development program in Baden-Wuerttemberg (MEPL III)
	Evaluation of the rural development program in Rhineland-Palatinate (EULLE)
Agricultural policy	Geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed protected in the EU
	Evaluation of the Action Plan for the development of organic production
	Ex-ante evaluation of the national 'CAP Strategic Plan' for the Federal Republic of Germany
Climate change and renewable energies	Strategies and measures for climate protection in agricultural land use under the CAP
	Ad-hoc study on ways to strengthen the climate protection aspect of agricultural support programs in the scope of the evaluation of MEPL III
	Integrated urban-rural concept for production of activated carbon and fuel from residual bio-masses – CoAct
Sustainability and resilience	Multi-actor and transdisciplinary development of efficient and resilient MIXED farming and agroforestry-systems (MIXED)
	Strategic-didactic Concept 'Education for Sustainable Development' (ESD) of the Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park
	Concept Education for Sustainable Development in the Rhine-Taunus Nature Park
	Land use conflicts of renewable energy: Scenario-based environmental education on the spatial requirements of renewable energy using new media
	Palatinate Forest: SDG-Model Region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate
Protected areas and cultural landscapes	Decision support system for the implementation of SDGs in protected areas
Governance and cooperation	Regional social and ecological services of organic farming: Assessing - Valorising – Acting: regiosöl
Knowledge and innovation	Supervision and evaluation of the 3rd call for proposals 'European Innovation Partnership' in Rhineland-Palatinate
	Support for agricultural innovation (EIP-Agri) and cooperation in Hesse
	Innovation Service Provider Saxony-Anhalt