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Editorial

Dear readers,

the majority of Germany is characterised as a rural area. Compared to urban areas, however, they are confronted with special challenges, such as lower income and employment opportunities, insufficient mobility, a lack of facilities for basic care and adequate provision for the future. This is exacerbated by the increasing migration of young people from rural areas, while the proportion of older people is growing.

In times of digitisation, the question arises to what extent digital solutions can contribute to meeting these challenges and making rural areas more attractive. Certainly, an important prerequisite for this is that broadband and mobile telephony continue to be expanded across the country and in rural areas. Digitisation can then open up opportunities for the local supply of food and other everyday goods as well as for the tele-medical applications. Innovative mobility concepts in the village will also rely on digital applications and for companies it may be attractive again to settle in rural areas in an increasingly interconnected (business) world.

In the past the IfLS has already done research and co-developed solutions to these questions in a number of projects. Currently, two new projects deal specifically with digital and smart solutions in rural areas (see page 2). Other projects are concerned with the sustainable development of communities and large-scaled protected areas, and are also working on future-oriented solutions.

Despite all advantages of course, we also consider potential disadvantages and underdogs of these developments in our projects.

I hope you enjoy reading the IfLS journal!

Jörg Schramek

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New Topics

Perspectives and possible applications of digital participation procedures in rural regional development

The *DigiBeL* project is dedicated to a topic that is relatively new for the IfLS as a field of work. It is funded within the framework of the research call 'Rural areas in times of digitisation' of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The aim is to analyse how digital methods are used in processes of rural regional development and to find out how analogue and digital formats and methods can be combined sensibly and efficiently. The effects of digitisation and mediatisation on communication methods, social organisation and institutions in rural regional development processes will be examined. For this purpose, four to six regional development processes in different regions of Germany will be accompanied as case studies. They cover different types of processes such as economy and infrastructure, nature and environment, demography, social issues and participation. In addition to the case studies, practices from other regions will also be covered by an online survey. The knowledge gained leads to recommendations for action and policy to strengthen the effectiveness of rural regional development processes.

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Sarah Peter

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

Duration: 2020–2023

Client: Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture ("Rural areas in times of digitisation")

Project partner: Prof. Christian Pentzold, Institute for Media Research (IfM), Technical University of Chemnitz

Smart Villages

In the context of the *Smart Rural Project*, smart villages are understood as rural communities which – building on their strengths and challenges – follow a development and innovation process based on participation and cooperation. Digital solutions play a key role in this process, but are only one of several elements alongside other technical and social innovations.

In the 'Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century' of the EU Commission, the communities are supported in developing and implementing corresponding strategies. Conclusions for future measures on smart rural areas are to be deduced from the results.

Throughout the EU, a total of 17 communities will be selected for the project to receive monitoring and technical support. Five communities in Ireland, Finland, France, the Czech Republic and Greece have already been selected – twelve more will be added by early May 2020 through an application process.

The IfLS is responsible for the application process of rural communities in Germany and offers its expertise in specific subject areas, including bio-economy and sharing economy (shared use of resources).

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Sarah Peter

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

Duration: 2019–2021

Client: European Commission – DG 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)

Gefördert durch:





Projects

Agricultural Policy

Are EU quality schemes beneficial for producers?

Since 1992 (revised in 2012) agricultural products can be registered in the European Union as *Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)*, *Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)* and [Traditional Specialities Guaranteed \(TSG\)](#). The European Commission intends to assess the current situation with a study on the *Evaluation of Geographical Indications (GI) and Traditional Specialities Guaranteed (TSG) protected in the EU*.

The aim of the study is to evaluate the added value of the EU's Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialities Guaranteed in the EU. Various methodological approaches are used, such as expert interviews, surveys among national authorities, producer organisations and consumers, country specific case studies or FADN (Farm Accountancy Data Network) analyses.

The study is a follow-up to last year's *study on economic value of EU quality schemes, geographical indications (GIs) and traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG)*.

Contact person at IfLS: Simone Sterly

Project title: Evaluation of geographical indications (GI) and traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG) protected in the EU

Duration: 2020

Client: Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission

Project partners: Ecorys (coordinator)

Rural Areas

Interim evaluation of rural development support in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate

Since the beginning of 2016, the IfLS and its partners have been contracted with the ongoing evaluation of the rural development programmes MEPL III and EULLE in Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate.

In 2019, the team carried out extensive interim evaluations of the programmes in both federal states, including their various support measures. It presented the results at events with partners from the economic and social sectors, made recommendations for the future and discussed them with the participants. From the ongoing evaluations, knowledge can be drawn for the future funding period after 2020.

Both reports are available online (in German):

[MEPL III](#)

[EULLE](#)

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

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

Duration: 2016–2024

Client: Ministry for Rural Area and Consumer Protection Baden-Wuerttemberg

Project partners: Research group agri- and regional development Triesdorf, Unique Forestry Freiburg

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

Duration: 2016–2024

Client: Ministry of Environment, Agriculture, Food, Viticulture and Forestry, Rhineland-Palatinate

Project partners: Plannign & Research (PRAC), regioTrend – Office for Regional Development

Regional Development

Implementing LEADER in Georgia

The *EMBRACE Tsalka* project is aimed at reducing rural poverty and improving living conditions in the community of Tsalka, Georgia, through the LEADER approach. Tsalka is a multiethnic and multicultural community in the Kvemo Kartli region with 30 communities consisting of 43 villages and the town of Tsalka.

EMBRACE Tsalka is dealing with economic, social and environmental issues. Specifically, it will improve the competitiveness of agriculture, promote the sustainable management of natural resources and develop and strengthen climate-friendly rural economies and communities.

The project is carried out within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) by the EU partner organisation CENN in cooperation with the Georgian Farmers' Association (GFA) and the IfLS. The IfLS supports the establishment of qualified personnel and the implementation of LEADER on site through training, visits and the organisation of exchange visits with German Local Action Groups (LAGs).

Most recently, a capacity-building training was held in the project for the newly elected board of the LAG. To start the board work in the LAG, the principles and working methods of the LEADER approach had to be communicated. The focus was on the special features and framework conditions in Georgia in order to ensure a situation-adapted approach in the region.

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



The European Union
for Georgia
ENPARD

Project title: Embrace Tsalka

Duration: 2018–2022

Client: EU (EuropeAid) ENPARD-Programme

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



Innovative concepts for urban agriculture

Urban and peri-urban agriculture offers, in addition to its profitability, an indispensable social and ecological added value. The EU-INTERREG project *CityZen* responds to the growing number of cities and regions that have recognised the benefits of urban agriculture for sustainable living and generating income.

CityZen aims to raise awareness about green innovation and resource efficiency among regional policy makers. Different regional strategies, such as food security, waste management, community development and adaptation to climate change will be improved in the five partner regions (Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Germany) by integrating concepts and practices of urban agriculture.

There should be opportunities for transnational exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge. The involvement of regional stakeholders, such as food cooperatives, tourism associations or gardeners, is just as essential: how can new business and innovation models in urban agriculture be supported?

Within this framework, the IfLS will develop an action plan in cooperation with and for the RhineMain Regionalpark. The plan will integrate urban agriculture into the guiding concept. The aim of the action plan is to improve resource efficiency, ecosystem services, multifunctionality and the conservation of green and cultural landscapes in urban areas by ensuring sustainable income opportunities for urban farmers. In addition, the plan responds to the growing demand of the local population for regional products and the associated expansion of regional value chains.

The action plan will contain priorities for future measures, projects, implementation strategies and possible financing instruments that will complement the guiding concept and action plan for the RhineMain Regionalpark.

Further information and news can be found on the [project website](#).

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



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Project title: Enhancing scalable innovations and new business models based on the values of the urban agroecosystem (CityZen)

Duration: 2019–2023

Client: Interreg Europe

Project partners: Applied Research and Communications Fund (Koordination, 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)

Romrod: Ideas for an attractive outdoor area of communities

The outer area of communities is characterised by different uses, functions, demands and, associated with this, conflicts. That can also be seen in the city of Romrod in the Vogelsberg district, where various topics like local recreation activities, flood protection and agricultural uses play an important role.

In order to find common and citizen-oriented solutions for the further development of these topics in the coming years, an integrated rural development concept with spatial and thematic focus will be developed.

In the past year, discussions with experts and a review of the current situation helped to identify the thematic priorities and develop project ideas with local actors.

Priority measures are now being further specified with the local people on the ground and prepared for implementation.

Contact persons at IfLS: Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Nicola von Kutzleben

Project title: Integrated rural development concept with spatial and thematic focus (SILEK) in the city of Romrod

Duration: 2019–2020

Client: Magistrate of the City of Romrod



Sustainable Land Use

Study on FAKT-flowering areas supplements current discussions about insect protection

The threat and protection of insects, especially in the agricultural landscape, is increasingly being discussed at levels beyond the international and national ones. In Baden-Wuerttemberg, too, an initiative to save the bees was launched in autumn 2018 and taken up by the state ministries. A study on the faunistic assessment of flowering areas, which the IfLS carried out in cooperation with the Universities of Freiburg and Würzburg as part of the evaluation of the MEPL III (Rural Development Programme of Baden-Wuerttemberg, third application), makes a contribution to the discussion.

In 2018 annual flowering areas which are supported by the funding-program for agri-environment, climate protection and animal welfare (FAKT) and grassland areas were examined for the occurrence of bees, butterflies and hoverflies. The evaluation shows that the flowering areas have more bees and butterflies and a higher number of species of wild bees than the reference areas. FAKT flowering areas increase the range of available sources for pollinating insects in agricultural landscapes. However, they are only available for a limited time during the vegetation period. The permanent preservation of insect populations requires a reliable habitat diversity on the landscape level. This should include not only the annual flowering areas already well accepted by farmers, but also the preservation and creation of habitats that are rich in structure and exist over the longer term, i.e. also flowering areas of more than one year.



A follow-up study, in which further funding options beyond the annual FAKT flowering areas will be investigated, is therefore planned for 2020.

The first study is available [online](#) (in German).

Contact persons at IfLS: Heike Nitsch and Jörg Schramek

Project title: Two ad-hoc studies for the faunistic evaluation of flowering mixtures

Duration: 2018–2019 and 2020–2021

Client: Ministry for Rural Area and Consumer Protection Baden-Wuerttemberg

Project partner: Albert Ludwigs University Freiburg, Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg



Working towards a federal strategy for the protection of organic soils

Organic soils are valuable carbon reservoirs, the drainage of which leads to the decomposition of peat and the areas become 'hot spots' of greenhouse gas emissions. That is why the German government has set itself the task of drawing up a strategy for the protection of organic soils in its coalition agreement of 2018. The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) is the lead agency. The IfLS has been commissioned by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with a research and development project to prepare the technical basis for such a strategy. The project is being carried out in close cooperation with the BfN and BMU.

First of all a systematic analysis of existing strategies for the protection of peatlands and other documents was carried out. Two central workshops with experts were held in autumn 2019, at which relevant approaches for the protection of organic soils were elaborated. Amongst other things, discussions were held on a suitable database and monitoring methods, the role of the CAP, options for the adaptation of regulatory laws and the need to involve water management more closely.

It was made clear that the implementation of the protection of organic soils on a broad scale has to take into account climate, water and nature conservation as well as various user interests. This will be a complex and long-term task. It requires the cooperation of a large number of actors and must be approached with a mix of different instruments.

Contact persons at IfLS: Jörg Schramek and Heike Nitsch

Project title: Study to develop a basis for the implementation of a strategy for the protection of organic soils

Duration: 2019–2020

Client: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Germany

Evaluation of the project *Common hamster land*

The common hamster, which has disappeared in many places by now, is a strictly protected species under the Federal Nature Conservation Act. Especially the intensification of agriculture contributes to the fact that food and cover for the rodent is becoming scarce. With the project *Common hamster land*, the German Wildlife Foundation wants to counteract this development within the framework of the Federal Biodiversity program. Four project partners in Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate are involved in this five-year project. The IfLS was commissioned to evaluate the project.

In spring 2019, information was collected from farms that have agreed to implement on-farm protection measures for the common hamster. These initial enquiries collected information on the current management of arable land and existing protection measures, as well as the current stock of common hamsters on the farms.

The same farms will be revisited in 2023 to identify possible changes in management and stocks of common hamsters. In addition, volunteers being trained for mapping as part of the project were interviewed. The results of these inquiries are currently being evaluated in order to gain first insights into the success of training courses.

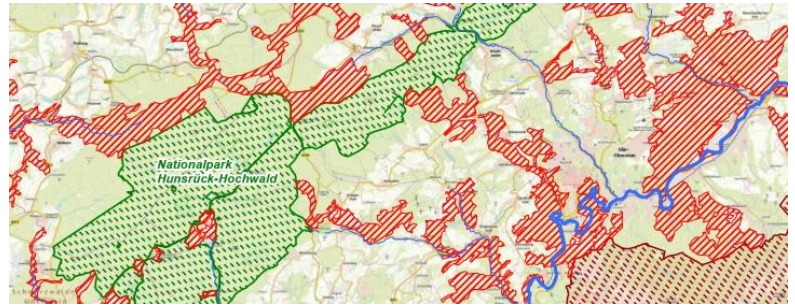
We will keep you informed about the further results of the evaluation.

Contact persons at IfLS: Jörg Schramek and Heike Nitsch

Project title: 'Common hamster land' - Evaluation of a project with focus on the protection of the common hamster in the Federal Programme Biodiversity

Duration: 2019–2023

Client: German Wildlife Foundation



Socio-economics of farm businesses

Pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest

Within the framework of the large-scaled nature conservation project *New pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest*, the IfLS prepares the socio-economic analysis. For this purpose, about 35 stakeholders in the region were interviewed until February 2020, i.e. representatives from agriculture, hunting, forestry, environmental protection, tourism and gastronomy, as well as from municipalities and other public institutions. More than half of the interviewees are farmers, especially those with livestock farming.

The areas are traditionally cultivated by migratory sheep-farming, so the focus is mainly on sheep farms. The aim is to create for them and nature conservation a win-win situation. In the Palatinate Forest, as in many places, sheep farming based on landscape conservation struggles with low income on the one, and high costs and workload on the other hand. In turn the preservation and possibly also the restoration of areas of high nature conservation value is in turn a complex and cost-intensive undertaking for landscape conservation. The project focuses on the conservation of areas that are highly important for biodiversity and cultural landscape through the use of sheep and goat grazing. In return, the project aims to make it easier for the shepherds to organise their work (larger grazing areas, access to water places, etc.).

The IfLS will make recommendations to the client based on the results of the survey, taking into account the interests of various stakeholders in the region.

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

Project title: Nature conservation project 'New pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest' - Socio-economic analysis as part of maintenance and development planning
Duration: 2019–2020
Client: Pfälzerwald- Nordvogesen Biosphere Reserve

Ribbons of life in the Hunsrück

The low mountain range of the Hunsrück extends between the Nahe and Moselle rivers in Rhineland-Palatinate - a landscape rich in biotopes of great natural beauty. The main need for optimisation lies in their connection. This is why the Rhineland-Palatinate Nature and Environment Foundation, together with the districts of Birkenfeld, Bernkastel-Wittlich and Trier-Saarburg, initiated the large-scale nature conservation project "*Ribbons of Life in the Hunsrück*" with funding from the federal government and Rhineland-Palatinate.

The project name stands for the connection of biotopes, projects and people from the Nahe river over the Hunsrück to the Moselle. The natural habitats of rare species, such as coppices, peatland, floodplains, rough meadows and orchards are to be upgraded.

At present, BGHplan is preparing a so-called maintenance and development plan (PEPL), in which nature conservation models, goals and methods are developed. An integral part of the PEPL is a socio-economic analysis prepared by the IfLS. It is intended to take into account the interests of land users and regional actors in the project. The aim is to develop use-oriented approaches for the preservation of the cultural landscape as well as economically viable concepts together with land users and local interest groups.

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

Project title: Socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning for the large-scaled nature conservation project 'Ribbons of life in the Hunsrück'
Duration: 2020–2022
Client: Rhineland-Palatinate Nature and Environment Foundation
Project partners: BGHplan, Trier

Promoting regional quality products in Rhineland-Palatinate

Since 2015, Rhineland-Palatinate has been promoting investments in the processing and marketing of regional products within the framework of regional value chains. The aim is to support processing and marketing companies of certified organic and/or regional products. In order to better understand the low take-up of the support to date, the IfLS was commissioned to conduct an in-depth study. A survey of potential beneficiaries as well as representatives of sectoral organisations and public institutions was carried out. Based on this, a workshop with experts was organised in Mainz in June 2019. On the basis of the results of the survey and the workshop, the IfLS submitted recommendations for action to the Ministry to redesign the measure and improve the external framework conditions.

The recommendations for action concern the supply, processing and marketing structures, sales, bureaucratic requirements, design and orientation of measure and information and administration.

As the main reason for the low implementation of the measure, its low awareness level was identified. Potential beneficiaries need to be approached more intensively via appropriate institutions such as chambers and guilds of crafts. Information tools, such as a description of the measure, must also be better tailored to the applicants. However, some structural problems in processing and marketing are so severe that the measure can do little to counteract the dismantling of structures that has already lasted for decades, especially in the craft trades. These include the sharp decline in small family businesses in villages and communities. Furthermore, problems such as the shortage of skilled

workers and the lack of company successors cannot be solved by investment measures alone.

In addition, there is the increasing importance of ethical issues or the faster development of the food industry, e.g. in technical terms. Craft enterprises with limited financial, spatial and personnel resources sometimes find it difficult to adapt to new development trends. On the other hand, these developments also create opportunities for new products or brands. Especially the strongly growing market for regional products and the still growing market for organic products offer opportunities for smaller, regional processing and marketing companies to establish themselves in these sectors. Agricultural producers can also benefit from this as suppliers of regional quality products.

In response to the results of the ad hoc study, the Ministry has already designed changes in the design of measures and initiated closer cooperation with organisations in the relevant sectors.

The ad hoc study will be [published online](#) in spring 2020 (in German).

Contact persons at IfLS: Bettina Spengler and Jörg Schramek

Project title: Ad-hoc study to the funding of the processing and marketing of regional quality products in Rhineland-Palatinate; Partial study as part of the ongoing evaluation of the EULLE development programme
Duration: 2018–2019
Client: Ministry of Economy, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture, Rhineland-Palatinate



Community financing in the organic food sector

Financing models involving citizens are in great demand both from companies in the agriculture and food sector, and consumers. The *BioFinanz* research project financed by the Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food illuminated the characteristics, potential and challenges of such models, which include crowdfunding, profit participation rights, cooperatives and citizen shareholder corporations.

Companies not only see the models as providing bank-independent access to financial resources and marketing advantages, but are also motivated by the ideas of sustainability, participation and responsible handling of capital. Often the models are merely one of several building blocks of corporate financing.

The most important motive of the capital providers for their financial participation is the support of a sustainable (regional) agriculture and food sector. Expected financial as well as non-financial return (e.g. natural produce) play a subordinate role. For example, it may be a matter of sustaining the local organic store which has to compete with larger supermarkets, or of supporting a farm in the start-up phase.

When initiating financial participation, the basis of trust through personal contact plays a particularly

important role. From the company's point of view, the suitability of specific models also depends on whether it already has a network of potential supporters (customer base, private environment, etc.) or whether it has yet to build one. An involvement of capital providers beyond the financial participation does not usually take place, but examples are support at farm festivals or during the harvest.

The exchange with actors from the fields of law, financing, consulting and agriculture, among others, helped to achieve the highest possible practical relevance of the project results. Among other things, this took place in 2019 within the framework of the BIOFACH fair and at an expert workshop organised by the IfLS.

The central result of the project is the [online portal *BioFinanz – A Guide to Community Financing Models in the Agriculture and Food Sector*](#). Starting in spring 2020, relevant information on community financing models will be made available there in order to support companies and citizens in choosing a suitable model. The IfLS website will provide information on project publications and the launch of the online portal.

Contact persons at IfLS: Simone Sterly and Sarah Peter

Gefördert durch:



aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages



Project title: Alternative forms of financing along the value-added chain of organic food (BioFinanz)

Duration: 2017–2020

Client: Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food as part of the federal program 'Organic farming and other forms of sustainable agriculture' (BÖLN)

Network partner: Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development (HNEE)

Subcontractors: Foundation Ecology & Agriculture (SÖL), Federal Association Natural Food Natural Products e.V. (BNN)

Ways of processing non-marketable eggs from small flocks of laying hens

In recent years, the number of farms with small flocks of laying hens has increased, in both organic and conventional farming. That logically results in an increase in dirty, cracked and S-eggs (smallest size), which are not considered marketable.

The study, which started on 01.01.2020, explores the possibilities of utilising non-marketable eggs from small production units. The common industrial utilisation for large laying hen flocks, is not an option for small farms due to the low volume of eggs produced. Therefore, in a first step, the study will collect information on the current volume of non-marketable eggs and previous utilisation strategies by means of farm surveys. In a second step, particularly sustainable utilisation strategies will be identified. The study concentrates on organic farms (associations and EU organic) and conventional farms with free-range management.

Due to the planned Germany-wide study, the expected project results will most likely be transferable to different locations and categories of agricultural companies. The aim is to provide the practitioners with a selection of possible utilisation strategies with which both farms with existing laying hen husbandry and new entrants can increase their value creation with regard to non-marketable goods.

Contact persons at IfLS: Bettina Spengler and Jörg Schramek



Project title: Organic eggs from small production units - Current and alternative use 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 GmbH, Demeter e.V.

Gefördert durch:



BÖLN

Bundesprogramm Ökologischer Landbau
und andere Formen nachhaltiger
Landwirtschaft

aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages

Valorising regional social and ecological services of organic farming

Organic farming makes an important contribution to many ecological and social goals. These services are not always assigned to a single farm, but are the result of synergies and cumulative effects on a regional level. More than in the past, these social and ecological services (SÖL) should be valorised through various political and market-based instruments.

However, by now there are neither suitable approaches for assessing the services and their effects at regional level, nor for valorising them. The aim of the *RegioSÖL* project is to make these services of organic farming more visible through transparent assessing in a regional reference area and to increase them through appropriate valorisation.

An essential aspect of the *RegioSÖL* project is the transdisciplinary research approach, which is characterised by the joint definition of the questions and the integration of all relevant groups of actors in the formation of knowledge (co-generation of knowledge). This is implemented by the participation of the practice partners ZÖL and RWAG in the research work, as well as the two real laboratories in the pilot regions Rhineland and Northern Hesse.

The result of the project will be approaches for assessing, valorising and communicating, that can be used by various organisations such as organic model regions, regional organic farming associations and other regional initiatives.

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



Project title: Regional social and ecological performances of organic farming: assessing - valorising - acting (RegioSÖL)

Duration: 2020–2023

Client: Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE) as part of the federal programme 'Organic farming and other forms of sustainable agriculture' (BÖLN)

Project partner: Center for organic agriculture e.V. (ZÖL), Regionalwert AG Rhineland (RWAG)

Gefördert durch:



aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages





Large-scale protected areas and cultural landscape

The collaboration of protected areas in Baden-Wuerttemberg

Baden-Wuerttemberg's protected areas include one national park, two UNESCO biosphere reserves, seven nature parks and the *PLENUM* project area in the district of Tübingen. What these types of areas have in common is their commitment to the protection of nature and the environment as well as the preservation of the cultural landscape. However, they differ in the pursuit and implementation of their objectives. In order to jointly develop protection measures, promote regional products or coordinate research and monitoring activities, a concept for protected areas is being developed.

It contains objectives to which the individual areas commit themselves according to their priorities. Within the framework of their activities, they are implemented in the each region. In addition, the concept contains collaboration projects from various fields of action of the protected areas. For example, joint events and presentations are planned, experiences are to be exchanged on specific topics and the collaboration is to be intensified where it promises synergies.

The concept for protected areas is the first step for further intensifying the collaboration between the protected areas. The individual areas are to benefit from experiences gained in other areas and together sensitise people to the importance of nature conservation, cultural landscape and sustainable regional development.

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

Project title: Concept for large-scaled nature conservation in Baden-Wuerttemberg
Duration: 2018–2020
Client: Regional office for the environment Baden-Wuerttemberg

New management plan for the Geo-Naturepark Bergstrasse-Odenwald

After the IfLS had already been entrusted with the preparation of the nature park plans for the Rhine-Taunus and Taunus Nature parks in 2017 and 2018, the IfLS also supported the office of the UNESCO Global Geopark Bergstrasse-Odenwald in the preparation of its management plan. The management plan has now been approved by the members' meeting and is intended to provide a framework for the work and orientation of the Geo-Naturepark over the next ten years. It is the result of an intensive process shaped by regional actors.

Based on an inventory and a SWOT-analysis, around 500 volunteers, 105 member municipalities and other partners had the opportunity to actively exchange, discuss and refine goals and project ideas in various workshop formats. The results were incorporated into the development of the action plan with operational objectives and key projects for the ten identified fields of action of the Geo-Naturepark.

In addition to the classic fields of action of a nature park such as 'nature conservation and landscape management', 'sustainable tourism' and 'environmental education', the specific topics of a UNESCO Global Geopark such as 'geology and geotope management' and 'integration and implementation contributions of the Global Sustainability Goals 2030' are also considered in the management plan.

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

Project title: Geo-Naturepark-Managementplan Bergstrasse-Odenwald
Duration: 2018–2019
Client: Geo-Naturepark Bergstrasse-Odenwald



Interim evaluation of the *PLENUM* area in the district of Tübingen

PLENUM stands for the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg's project for the conservation and development of nature and the environment. The aim of this unique nationwide funding is a nature conservation-oriented regional development along various utilisation and value-added chains under the motto 'protecting by utilising'. The currently only *PLENUM* area in Tübingen was launched in 2013 with a duration of seven years. The unique selling proposition of the project area Tübingen lies in its implementation via the association VIELFALT e.V., which combines the tasks of the landscape conservation association (LEV) and the *PLENUM* project area under one roof. It is also unique that the association takes into account the participation of people with disabilities, of long-term unemployed and refugees.

As in other *PLENUM* areas, the IfLS carried out the interim evaluation in the project area of the district of Tübingen. In addition to the effects on nature conservation, the socio-economic effects were the focus of the evaluation. On the one hand, the evaluation serves as a basis for decisions on the continuation of funding for the project area. On the other hand, it provides information on the future design of the funding landscape. Thus, synergy effects between the work of the LEV and the *PLENUM* funding became apparent in the project area. Therefore, the IfLS recommends that the *PLENUM* funding should also be used to benefit other LEVs in Baden-Wuerttemberg in order to achieve additional positive effects in the interaction between agriculture and nature conservation.

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

Project title: Interim evaluation *PLENUM* Tübingen
Duration: 2018–2019
Client: State Office for the Environment Baden-Wuerttemberg (LUBW)
Project partner: Institute for Botany and Landscape Sciences Breunig, Karlsruhe

Biosphere reserves as sustainability ambassadors

Biosphere reserves (BRs) see themselves as model regions for sustainable development. This claim is laid down at the international level in the strategy of the UNESCO programme 'Man and biosphere' (MAB) and the Lima Action Plan. At the national level, the recognition and evaluation criteria of the MAB National Committee of UNESCO biosphere reserves defines this claim through, among other things, criteria 21-25 on sustainable management.

These criteria were concretised in the context of the R&D project. Evaluation questions were developed and suitable indicators were identified to answer them. The set was tested in the BRs Berchtesgaden, Spreewald and South-East Rügen.

It became clear that the indicators can provide a broad overview of the initial conditions for (sustainable) management, the current activities to promote sustainable management and regional needs for action. At the same time, it became clear that municipalities can provide central impulses for sustainable development through their own procurement and can act as role models.

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

Project title: Quality assurance in German biosphere reserves - Further development of criteria, recommendations and implementation strategies - BRuNa-Q
Duration: 2018–2020
Client: Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Germany

Sustainability and resilience

Support for protected areas in the implementation of the SDGs

The task of protected areas is not only to protect ecosystems. They should also be initiators for sustainable regional development. UNESCO biosphere reserves in particular claim to be model regions for sustainable development. Within the framework of the Lima Action Plan, they have committed themselves to making contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In Germany, nature parks also see themselves as model regions for sustainable development and are committed to strengthening rural areas, biodiversity and climate protection.

Against this background, protected areas face the challenge of addressing and implementing SDGs purposefully within the framework of their activities. If the large protected area administrations carry out sovereign tasks, they can use their position as authorities to anchor sustainability goals in planning and approval processes, for example. Often, however, they are dependent on cooperation with economic actors or other parts of the regional administration.

There is currently a lack of information and working materials to involve these regional partners in sustainable development activities. The aim of the project is to develop such offers and materials tailored to central stakeholders of large protected areas and to make them freely available on an online platform. Specifically, materials are to be developed for cooperation with public

administrations, regional management (e.g. *LEADER*), stakeholders from agriculture, forestry, tourism, crafts and industry.

To guarantee a target group-specific content development, the project consortium consists of two adult education organisations (Biosphere Adult Education Center St. Ingbert, BVHS and Comunitatea Pentru Invatarea Permanenta, CPIP), a *LEADER* region (Asociación para el Desarrollo Rural del Litoral de la Janda, GDR) and, in addition to the coordinating IfLS, another research institute (Pnastwowa Wyzsza Szkola Informatyki i Przedsiębiorczosci w Lomzy, PWSIP). The technical implementation is carried out by the Baltic Education Technology Institute (BETI).

The Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe (Europarc Federation) is of central importance for the dissemination and application of the project results. As the umbrella organisation of major European nature reserves, it regularly provides learning content and working materials for its members. In addition, the project has been able to win large protected areas in Lithuania, Poland, Spain and Germany as associated partners. In the participating national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves, the materials are already being used and tested during the project period.

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



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

Duration: 2019–2020

Client: European Union – GD Education and Culture, Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships

Project partners: BETI (LT), BVHS (GER), CPIP (RO), EPF (GER), GDR (ES), PWSIP (PL)

Implement global sustainability goals locally

The Agenda 2030 of the United Nations (UN) has set itself the goal of implementing global sustainability goals (SDGs) at all levels. For global impact, local action needs strong municipalities as central actors.

In the project *Palatinate Forest: SDG model region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate*, eight municipalities take up the challenge of developing, adopting and subsequently implementing a sustainability strategy by 2021. The project is coordinated by the Pfälzerwald biosphere reserve.

The cities of Pirmasens, Neustadt and Bad Bergzabern, the municipalities of Lambrecht and Maikammer and the local communities of Sippersfeld, Kallstadt and Klingenmünster were selected out of 14 applicants. During the first working phase, the municipalities were highly motivated.

Supported by the eight municipalities, the IfLS is currently doing a status report of previous activities, the strengths and weaknesses and the need for action within the 17 SDGs. In the further project process, the IfLS and KOBRA from Landau will accompany the municipalities in advisory talks and moderated future workshops. The project office of the biosphere reserve provides support within the steering group and at the network meetings. By the end of 2021, the selected municipalities want to develop a quorate sustainability strategy in the core team.

Contact persons at IfLS: Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein and Dr. Marie Sophie Schmidt



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

Duration: 2019–2021

Project management: Regional association Pfalz, Pfälzerwald Biosphere Reserve

Funding: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), coordinated 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 Sport Rhineland-Palatinate (Mdl RLP); Ministry of Environment, Agriculture, Food, Viticulture and Forestry, Rhineland-Palatinate

Project partner: KOBRA Consulting Centre Landau



Simulate the implementation of SDGs and learn about land use conflicts through gaming

A central challenge of sustainable development is to weigh up the protection and use of natural resources. This also applies to the implementation of the UN goals for sustainable development (SDGs), which strive for economic progress and social justice within the ecological limits of the planet. Which priorities are set where at the regional level must be discussed and decided regionally.

The example of the expansion and use of renewable energies illustrates potential land-use conflicts in the implementation of the SDGs: Contributions to SDG 7 'Cheap and clean energy' have a direct positive impact on SDG 13 'Acting for climate protection' and, depending on the expansion scenario, a negative impact on SDG 15 'Living on land'.

This complexity poses a challenge for regional decision-making processes and the implementation of SDGs. The project *Land-use conflicts renewable energy - Scenario-based environmental education on the spatial requirements of renewable energy using new media* addresses precisely this issue: The aim is to create a specification for a serious game that simulates land use conflicts. A serious game makes the expansion of renewable energies and the consequences for settlement development, biodiversity, economic development and the development of greenhouse gases experiential. The resulting effects and competing uses can thus be learned in a playful way. In the current project this is to be tested using the example of the Bergstraße-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park.

Potential target groups are in particular young people, pupils and university students in their basic studies. These can be sensitised to conservation goals and sustainable development paths.

The following aims should be reached:

- increased evaluation competence regarding the use of renewable energies,
- identified necessary social negotiation processes in the context of the implementation of individual SDGs,
- show options for action to manage the spatial requirements of renewable energies and SDGs,
- present consequences of different development paths for "own" and "other" regions,
- and evaluate these on the basis of ethical approaches.

The IfLS often builds a bridge between science and practice in its projects. Consulting and knowledge transfer have always been among its central activities. With the development of a concept for a serious game, the IfLS is pleased to be able to use its expertise for the first time in such an approach to promote sustainable development together with its project partners.

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



Deutsche
Bundesstiftung Umwelt

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

Duration: 2019–2020

Client: German Federal Foundation Environment

Project partners: PH Heidelberg, UNESCO-Department of Earth Observation and Geocommunication (coordination), Siegmund Space & Education gGmbH

Climate change and renewable energies

Residual biomass: Which ones accumulate and what happens to them?

The use of all available resources is an important aspect of sustainable development. There is still some catching up to do in the case of landscape conservation materials and other residual biomass - currently, only some of them are being put to high-quality use. The *CoAct* project is therefore investigating the extent to which activated carbons can be produced from these materials using the *IfBB* process (Integrated Solid Fuel and Biogas Production from Biomass) developed at the University of Kassel in combination with pyrolysis processes.

For this purpose, the project region of the Lake Constance district recorded which residual biomass is produced in agriculture and forestry, nature conservation and the maintenance of traffic routes and water bodies and how it has been used to date. It was shown that most of the residual biomasses are recycled or used for energy generation, even if they are partly used for disposal. For example, pomace from viticulture is used in biogas plants, even if the energy yield is low compared to other biomasses. In contrast, roadside greenery often remains in the area.

At present, the project partners are engaged in the production and analysis of bio-active carbons and the preparation of material flow analyses and life cycle assessments. The *IfLS* is also determining the economic significance of current uses, in order to compare them with the production of activated carbon in a later step.

The project is financed by the funding guideline *Stadt-Land-Plus* of the lead initiative *Zukunftsstadt* within the *BMBF* funding programme *Research for Sustainable Development*.

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

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

Duration: 2018–2023

Client: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF)

Project partners: University of Kassel (coordination), ifeu, DVGW-Technology Center Water, Lake Constance Foundation, Krieg & Fischer Engineers, Pyreg, City of Friedrichshafen, District of Lake Constance

GEFÖRDERT VOM



Bundesministerium
für Bildung
und Forschung



STADT
LAND
PLUS+



Knowledge and innovation

Online training program for new entrants in the agricultural sector

The project *LEAN - Learning about Entrepreneurship and Agriculture for New Farmers* aims to provide agricultural entrepreneurs with easy access to entrepreneurial, organisational and agricultural knowledge. The learning material acquired is intended to support the implementation and development of a new farm according to the principles of ecological and sustainable agriculture.

During the project 15 case studies were developed covering different farms in Italy, Lithuania, Germany, Poland and France. This is where future farmers will find information about individual farms and their innovative practices. In addition, the farmers of the case study farms share their experiences and give tips that can be helpful for new entrants. People who are interested can thus gain a concrete insight into agricultural work and be inspired by various ideas.

The central result of the project are the online learning modules, which include:

- **2 Introductory modules** on organic farming and the development of ideas for organic farming.
- **5 Production modules** that provide technical knowledge about viticulture, vegetables, fruit growing, animal husbandry and beekeeping.
- **3 Entrepreneurial modules** that provide knowledge and tools on the *LEAN* approach, business models and business plans as well as communication and marketing.

The target group of the training modules are mainly young people who want to enter agriculture. In addition, the learning materials can also be used by agricultural training organisations.

Through the combination of online training material, best practice examples and personal exchange, the learning program offers a comprehensive and enriching opportunity to receive central ideas about a successful start in agriculture. The training modules and case studies are freely accessible on the [project website](#).

Contact person at IfLS: Simone Sterly

Project title: Learning about entrepreneurship and agriculture for new farmers (LEAN)
Duration: 2018–2020
Client: EU KOM, ERASMUS+
Project partners: Vertigo Lab (coordination, FR), ARID (PL), BETI (LT), VetAgro Sup (FR), University of Bari (IT)

Peer-to-peer learning in agricultural structural change

How does learning from each other help farms to deal with agricultural structural change? The IfLS investigated this question in the Baden-Wuerttemberg administrative districts of Schwäbisch Hall and Hohenlohekreis. The central part of the study, which was funded by Landwirtschaftliche Rentenbank, consisted of guideline-based interviews with managers of diversified family-run farms. In addition, experts from agricultural authorities and from the educational sector were interviewed.

'[...] to get an answer like that in five minutes, that's just great. Especially from a practitioner. Well, sometimes it is important to ask a veterinarian, there is no question about that, but sometimes it is simply worth a lot to know from other farmers how they deal with problems.'

(Farmer from the Schwäbisch Hall administrative district)

The results of the study show: Peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge and experience is an important form of competence acquisition for the farmers surveyed. It is valued as a practice-relevant exchange 'at eye level'. Primarily, it is concerned with concrete and practical topics, while more abstract information needs are more likely to be covered by other sources.

As a framework for exchange, organised and structured forms (e.g. regular guided network meetings) play a greater role than non-organised, individual forms (such as spontaneous farm visits). There are no clear differences in the practices of competence acquisition that can be traced back to farm characteristics (branch of production, conventional or organic farm, farm size etc.) or socio-demographic data of the participants (such as age and educational background).

Younger farmers, however, are considered by the interviewees to be less competitive and thus more willing to cooperate and open to exchange. A preference for exchange across greater spatial distance is evident, because more distant farms are less seen as competitors, and potential failures in learning processes will not be the talk of the neighbourhood.

In some cases, however, there simply is a lack of farm role models in the immediate regional surroundings to learn from, especially in the field of agricultural innovation and niches.

The study also shows how important it is to farmers to maintain their independence by experimenting on their own. Additionally being integrated into peer knowledge networks

and cooperation can help farmers to recognise relevant developments, risks and opportunities in good time and to reorganise and mobilise their own resources where necessary. This form of learning can thus contribute to the resilience of farms, i.e. their adaptability, persistence and transformability in (continuous) processes of change, but also in dealing with unexpected shocks.

The complete project report with success factors and recommendations for action as well as a summary can be found on the [website](#) (in German).

Contact persons at IfLS: Sarah Peter and Simone Sterly

Project title: Prepared for change – Peer-to-peer learning among farms

Duration: 2017–2019

Client: Landwirtschaftliche Rentenbank



Agricultural innovations for Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt

The new EU funding scheme of the European Innovation Partnerships (EIP-Agri) for the promotion of agricultural innovations exists since five years and has already achieved a lot. The funding has enabled the development of a wide range of interesting solutions. In Germany 207 so-called Operational Groups (OG) are and have been funded as associations of farmers, researchers and advisors. Together, they answer the most urgent questions and problems in agriculture and forestry and quickly transfer the knowledge gained into practice. The thematic spectrum is broad and ranges from food security and new food products to technical solutions in horticulture.

But how do interested groups get from the first innovative idea to an eligible application for funding? How can implementation, networking and dissemination of results function even better? This is where the assignment of an external innovation support service or so-called innovation broker comes into play. They are supporting the development of the project design in consideration of the respective funding conditions, accompany the application and can also support public relations work in the implementation phase. Last but not least, the innovation brokers' task is to pass on impulses from other OGs in Germany and the EU and improve networking with other actors.

The IfLS has been commissioned as innovation broker in Hesse for six years and in Saxony-Anhalt and Rhineland-Palatinate for about one year to support both the ministries and the (future) OGs.

Recently six innovation projects have been approved in Hesse and new ideas have already been

submitted. In Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt, the approval process for the last call for proposals is currently underway, while in Rhineland-Palatinate the next call for proposals is already underway and new ideas can therefore be submitted until 31 July 2020.

However, the IfLS does not only support the development of innovation projects but also the implementation and transfer of results into agricultural practice. The OGs are networked with each other through events. Last year, the first Joint Networking Workshop for OGs and cooperations from Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate took place. The focus was on successful communication in transdisciplinary projects.

Contact persons at IfLS: Dr. Ulrich Gehrlein, Svea Thietje and Nicola von Kutzleben

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

Project title: Supervision and evaluation of the 2nd call for proposals 'European Innovation Partnership' in Rhineland-Palatinate
Duration: 2018–2022
Client: Ministry of Economics, Transport, Agriculture and Viticulture Rhineland-Palatinate (MWVLW RLP)

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 RLP)

Project title: Innovation Service Provider Saxony-Anhalt
Duration: 2019–2022
Client: Ministry of Environment, Energy and Agriculture of Saxony-Anhalt (MULE)



Miscellaneous

Agriculture and life from the last four centuries

This year's company outing took us to the Hessenpark open-air museum near Neu-Anspach in the Taunus mountains. As an institute dealing with the topics of sustainability and rural areas, it was important for us to get to know agriculture and life from the last four centuries. Contrary to previous habits, the first part of the 'ifls day' already took place in May. A photography workshop by the Knipsakademie (Frankfurt) taught us in a practical and entertaining way how to shoot portraits, (moving) group pictures and objects. Six months later, we were able to test out what exposure time, aperture settings and ISO values are all about on the Limeserlebnispfad Hochtaunus. But first, the company outing began with a hearty dinner at the 'Eschbacher Katz' in Usingen and a relaxing overnight stay at the hotel 'Zur goldenen Sonne'. The next morning we started our tour from the Saalburg to the open-air museum and back. Larded with information boards about the local flora and

fauna, as well as relics from Roman times the path led us in sunshine to the Hessenpark. Thanks to the very informative guided tour on site, we got a good overview of the various typical assemblies for the respective centuries and regions. We were amazed by the old, narrow houses, the rooms designed according to the needs of the time, visited the old village school and now we know where the term 'remain seated' comes from: the first bench for the newly enrolled children was the narrowest. Those who were not allowed to change to the next bench despite their advancing age and size literally remained 'seated'. In Hessenpark, we were able to get to know both old endangered breeds of domestic animals and old arable wild herbs, which are still specifically bred there. For us people from the digital age, this was an all-round interesting and informative day, which made us thankful (during a final get-together with coffee and cake) for the amenities of today.



Publications and service

Market Mechanisms and the Provision of Environmental and Social Services

Rural land is a major source of environmental and social services that land-use decision makers (including farmers) and society might be unaware of. Societal demand for the provision of environmental and social services can be represented as a cascading process from awareness, appreciation and value. Private sector actions and market mechanisms emerge to valorise these services, helping to connect people and businesses with targeted policies.

The following article shows how the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) can help foster more effective

and efficient supply of environmental and social services through market mechanisms:

Brouwer, Floor; Short, Chris; Sterly, Simone; Dwyer, Janet; Maréchal, Anne (2020): Market Mechanisms and the Provision of Environmental and Social Services. In: Liesbeth Dries, Wim Hejman, Roel Jongeneel, Kai Purnhagen und Justus Wesseler (Hg.): EU Bioeconomy and Policies. Volume II. [S.l.]: SPRINGER NATURE



Community financing in the German organic food sector: a key for sustainable food systems?

Community financing can increase financial independence from credit intuitions and provides an opportunity to receive funding which otherwise might be difficult to obtain. Given the high capital intensity in agriculture and rising purchase prices of agricultural land, access to traditional bank credit financing is a particular challenge for new or less productive farms and for collaborative short food chains and green start-ups that offer innovative

products or services and/or lack business education.

This paper presents empirical evidence on community financing in the German organic food sector and discusses the role it can play in food system transformation:

[Read paper online.](#)



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Pictures

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Topics	Current projects
Agricultural policy	Evaluation of geographical indications (GI) and traditional specialities guaranteed (TSG) protected in the EU
Rural areas	Ongoing evaluation of the rural development programme MEPL III of Baden-Wuerttemberg 2014 - 2020
	Ongoing evaluation of the rural development programme EULLE of Rhineland-Palatinate 2014 - 2020
	Ad-hoc study on the faunistic evaluation of flowering mixtures in Baden-Wuerttemberg
	'Smart Rural Project' – Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century
Sustainable land use	Study to develop a basis for the implementation of a strategy for the protection of organic soils
	'Common hamster land' - Evaluation of a project with focus on the protection of the common hamster in the Federal Program Biodiversity
Regional development	Integrated rural development concept with spatial and thematic focus (SILEK) in the municipality of Romrod
	EMBRACE Tsalka
	Promoting scalable innovations and new business models based on the values of the urban agroecosystem (CityZen)
	Perspectives and possible applications of digital participation procedures in rural regional development (DigiBeL)
Socio-economics of farm business	Nature conservation project 'New pastoral paths in the Palatinate Forest' - Socio-economic analysis as part of maintenance and development planning
	Socio-economic analysis as part of the care and development planning for the large-scale nature conservation project 'Ribbons of life in the Hunsrück'
	Ad-hoc study to the funding of the processing and marketing of regional quality products in Rhineland-Palatinate; Partial study as part of the ongoing evaluation of the EULLE development programme
	BioFinanz - Alternative forms of financing along the value chain for organic food
	Organic eggs from small production units - Current and alternative use of non-marketable eggs
	Regional social and ecological performances of organic farming: assessing - valorising - acting (RegioSÖL)
Large scaled protected areas and cultural landscape	Geo-Naturepark-Managementplan Bergstrasse-Odenwald
	Interim Evaluation PLENUM Tübingen
	Creation of a concept for the large scaled protected areas in Baden-Wuerttemberg
	Quality assurance in German biosphere reserves - Further development of criteria, recommendations and implementation strategies (BRuNa-Q)
Climate change and renewable energies	CoAct - Integrated urban-rural concept for the production of activated carbon and energy sources from residual biomass
Knowledge and innovation	LEAN - Learning about entrepreneurship and agriculture for new farmers
	Prepared for change – Peer-to-peer learning among farms
	Supervision and evaluation of the 2nd and 3rd call for proposals "European Innovation Partnership" in Rhineland-Palatinate
	Innovation service provider Saxony-Anhalt
Sustainability and resilience	Support of the State of Hessen in the implementation and coordination of European Innovation Partnerships (EIP)
	Decision support system for the implementation of SDGs in protected areas
	Palatinate Forest: SDG model region for a sustainable Rhineland-Palatinate
	UN sustainability goals (SDGs) and land use conflicts - SDG:LaNuKon