



Transformation for the mass markets

Farmers, retailers and the agro-ecological
transformation

Lock-in or lever?

Martin Wildenberg & Lisa Grasl – GLOBAL 2000

GLOBAL 2000





What is this talk about?

How do we change the food system?

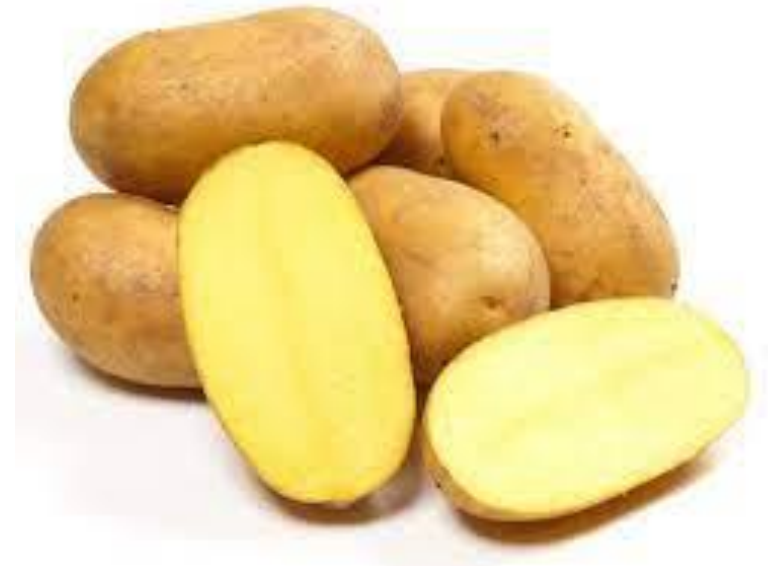
Practical considerations and perspectives of different players in the food system who participated in the project “Farm of the future”.

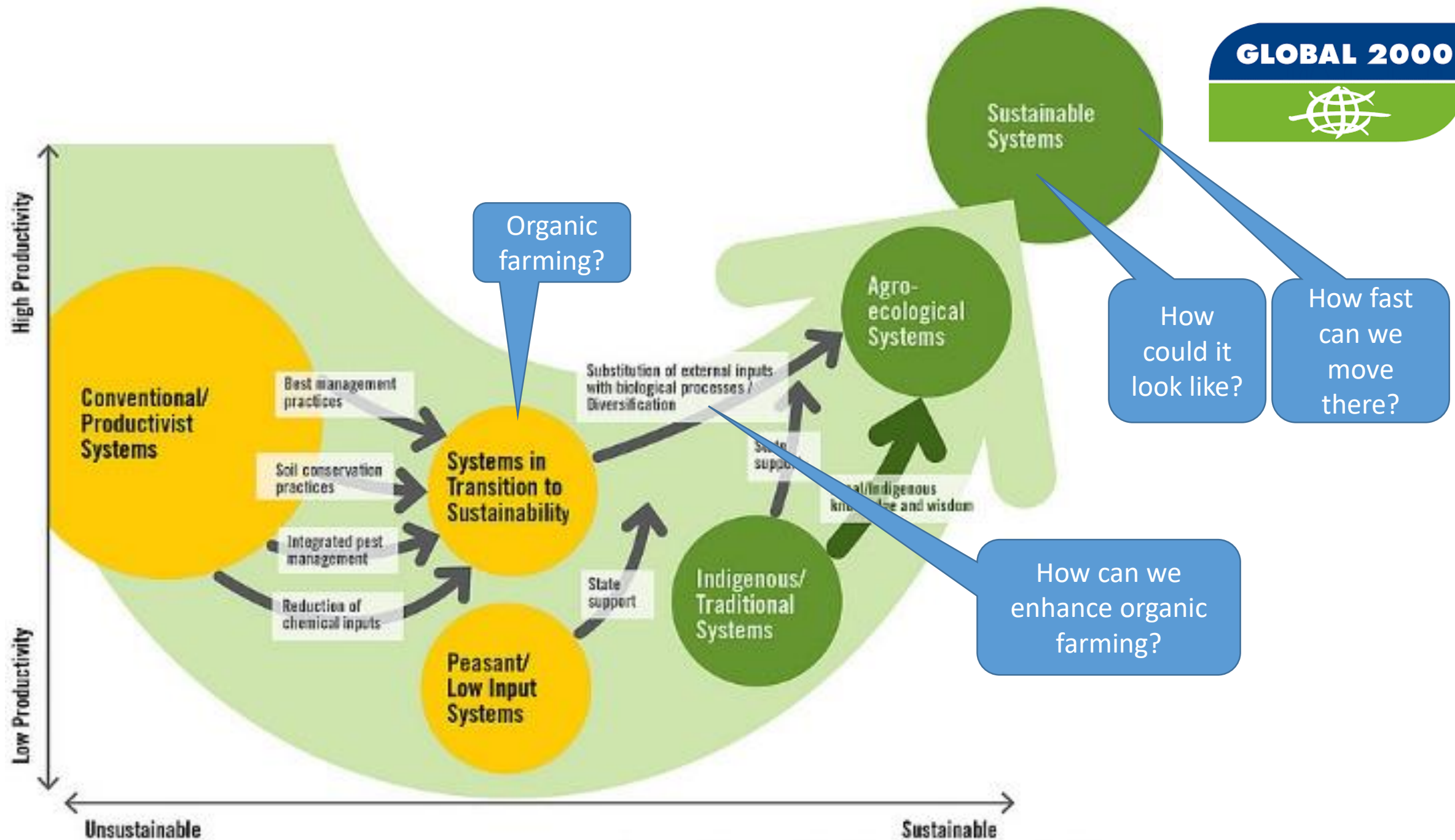
Carbon farming & agro-ecology

What is the reality of the “food system” for most of the people?



- Most people: buy food at retailers
- Farmers: Sell their products to traders / packers / food manufactures who sell to retailers -> very uneven power relations
- So what about agro-ecology?



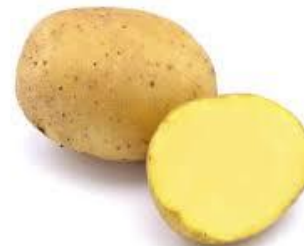




Farm of the future

A cooperation between GLOBAL 2000 (Friends of the Earth Austria), Hofer (Austrian branch of ALDI Süd) and PrüfNach!

With the participation of two pilot farmers.



Perspective HOFER

Launch of new sustainability campaign



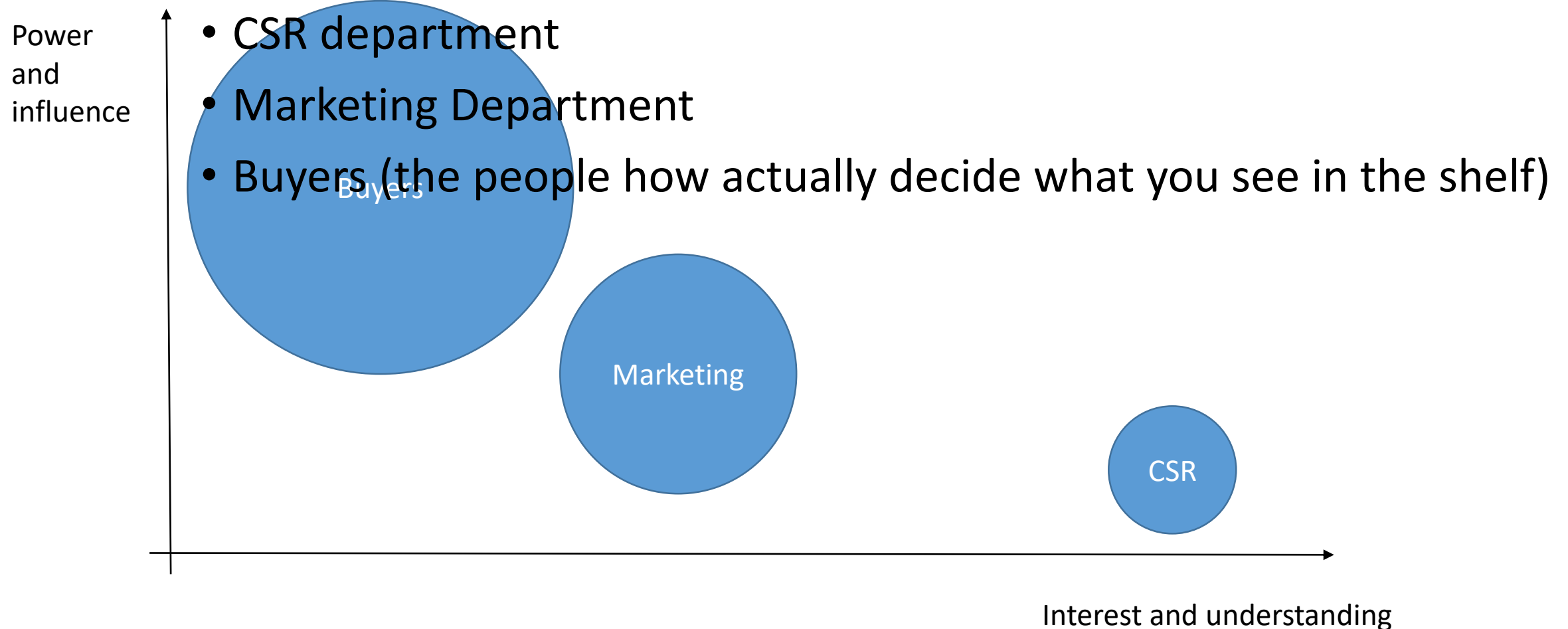
Communication around premium organic brand “Zurück zum Ursprung”

- > agro-ecology? That sounds complicated.
- > Something with climate -> its important and everyone is talking about it
- > climate neutral food on our shelves would be great! That's easy to communicate 😊

Ultimate goal: more sale!



With whom you are dealing when you deal with retailers...



PrüfNach!

Organisation that manages the “Zurück zum Ursprung” (ZzU) certificate

“Climate neutral would be cool!”

We would like to see the image of farmers (especially our farmers) to shift from climate-killer to climate-hero!

“If someone can do it then we – and we want to be the first...”



Perspective GLOBAL 2000

Contribute to a systematic change that leads to a sustainable farming and food system -> create impact

Vision on sustainable food system / farming builds strongly on agro-ecological approaches -> learn from practice

Build proof of case that sustainable farming is possible also in a more “conventional” frame regarding the rest of the supply chain

Role in the project: provide expertise and trust



Some strategic considerations...

- LCAs are commonly used in the context of assessing the sustainability of supply chains – but there are some methodological problems connected to them - we want to know how to deal with them
- Climate Neutral labels are readily available – they work with compensation. Compensation takes place outside of the supply chains of the compensating businesses => We consider it as greenwashing
- Climate Neutral it is a big thing in business! => can we provide a good alternative? An alternative that supports transformation and does not mask it?
- On A farm level – can we link climate friendly farming to sustainable farming and biodiversity protection



HEUTE DIE LANDWIRTSCHAFT
KLIMANEUTRAL GESTALTEN FÜR EIN
lebenswertes Morgen

The project:

- Screen agro-ecological methods and their potential to reduce emissions or increase C-capture
- Test and apply the methods with pilot farms to
 - See how and if they work in practice
 - Assess the costs in terms of money & time
 - Measure the actual impact
- Set up a peer to peer learning program to scale up the findings

But stop: Why work with retailers?

Uneven power relations – a (unfair) lever?

We could reach over 5000 organic farmers producing under the ZzU label...

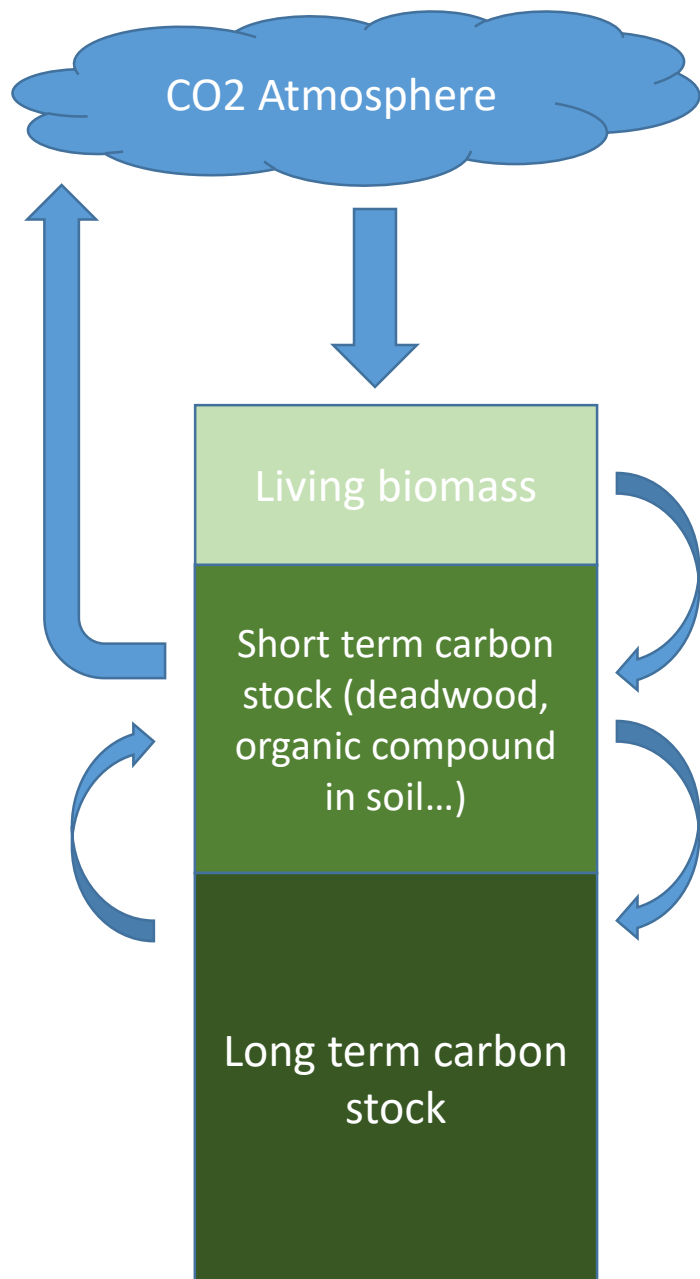
They have an enormous outreach to their customers



Carbon farming a lever for agro-ecology?

- Holistic approach (at farm level)
- Focus on the guy who is actually managing the land
- Distinguishing between emissions from fossil fuels and emissions from biogenic sources
- Long term perspective
- Getting carbon stored in the soil and forest has many other benefits

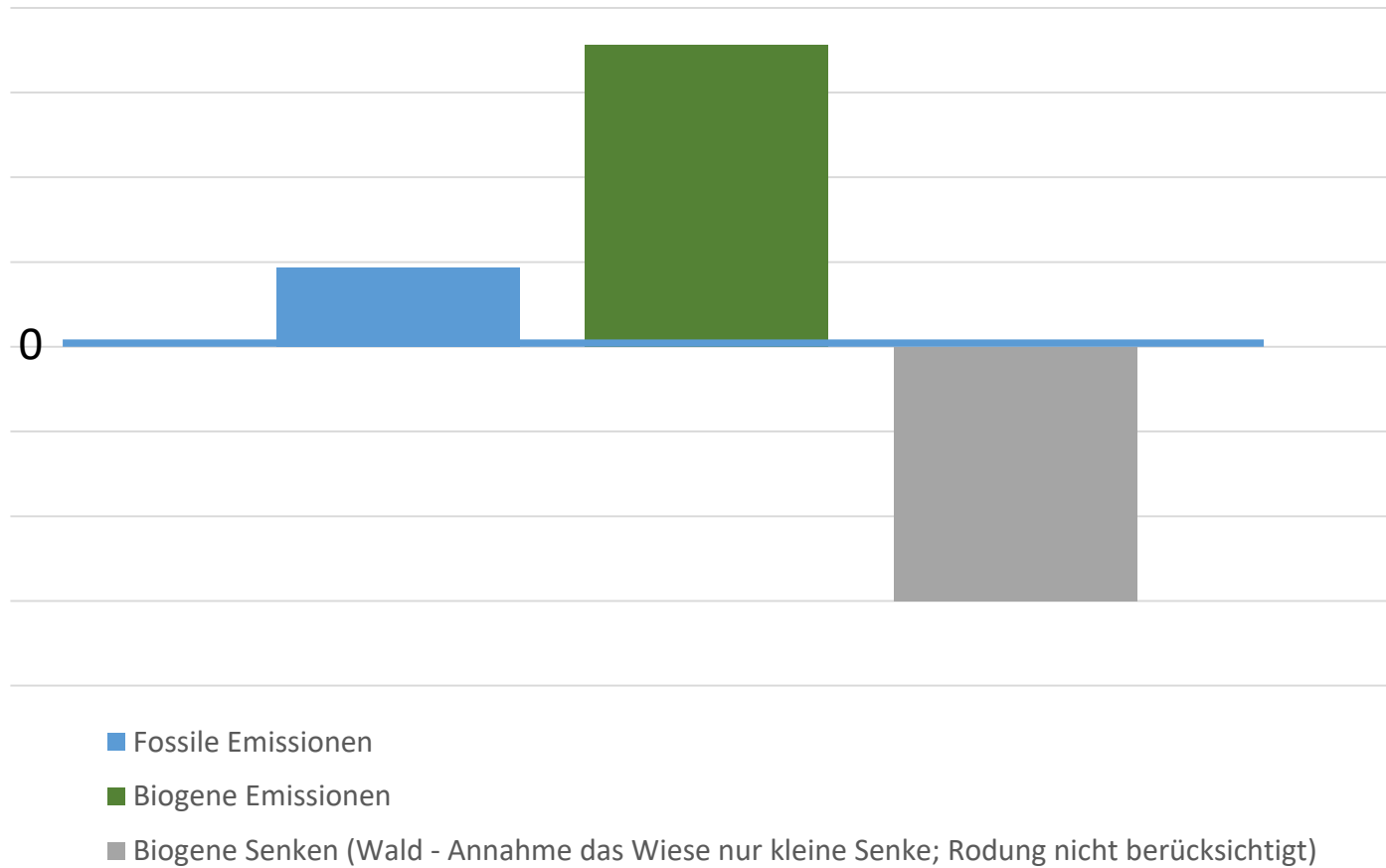
=> Is carbon-farming a lever to pay transition to agro-ecological systems?



Two important goals:

- Long term carbon fixation -> accounting systems must include long term perspective
- Secure existing carbon stocks! -> this does not show up in GHG-Balance (until it is too late)!!!

Größenordnungen Emissionen und Senken



us Prosi

Steinberg

Jocher Weg



Some Results & Outlook

Is carbon neutral farming possible?

- Yes – but....



Retailers – the powerful players in the field

- Ignore them?
 - Fight against them?
 - Use them?
 - Develop alternatives?
-
- Logic of marketing and advertisement -> hard to overcome



Carbon farming & agro-ecology

- Farm focus vs. Product focus in LCAs -> view on “land-manager”
- Agro-ecology can support carbon farming and vice versa
- Big interest on the topic also from farmers side
- There are many many possibilities of getting carbon farming wrong too
- Some methodological issues in accounting -> long term systems
- These systems could be risky for farmers too!

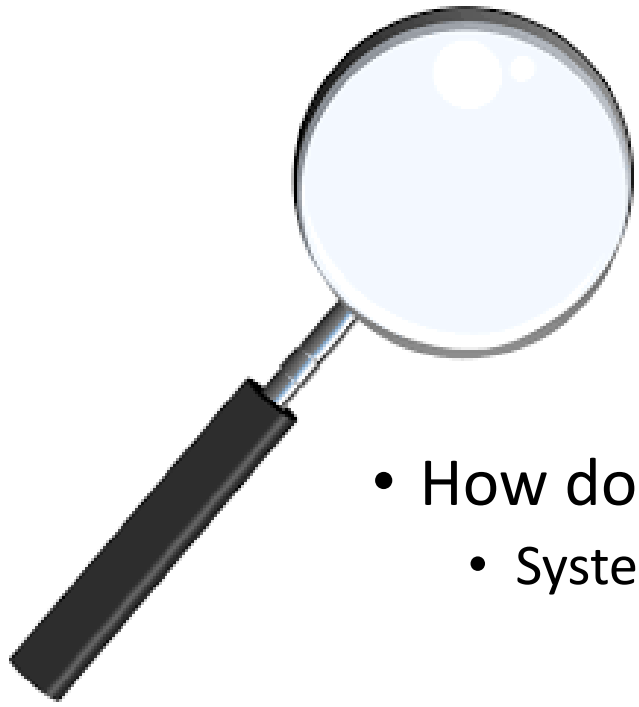


Carbon farming & biodiversity



Especially renaturation of can lead to additional carbon sequestration in the landscape

- > how can those systems be integrated into the farmers land management?
- > how can they be used in a sustainable way?
- > how can this form of land managment be integrated into the supply chain



Some research needs...

- How do we get things to work in the real world – actionize research
 - Systemic approach: how to change human-nature systems on a large scale
- How does a “Farm of the future” look like? -> what are the pathways offered to your conventional farmers?
- How to implement sustainable food systems? -> what are the pathways?