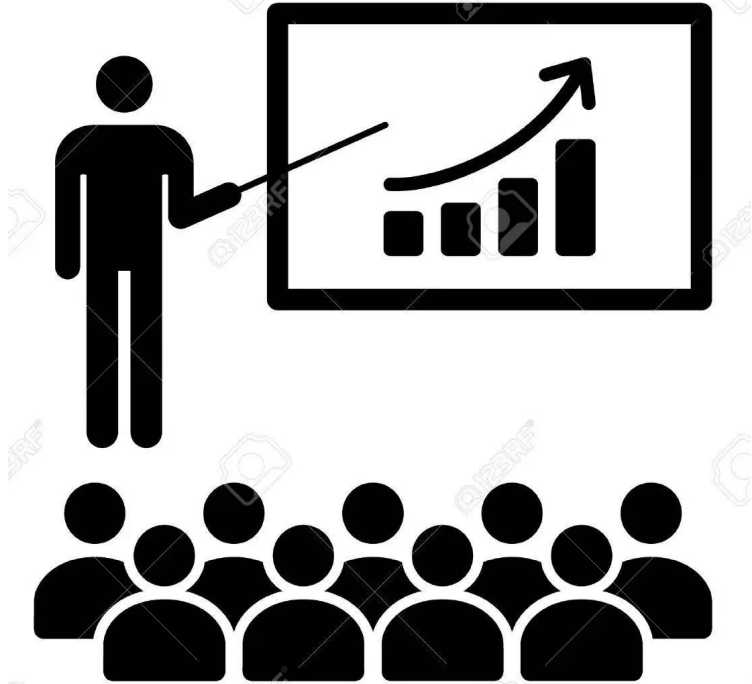


The Potential Role of Forestry for CO₂ Removal

Abhilash Desu, Ann-Kristin Knickmann, Kira Bastian, Mali Brueckner, Marcel Bongartz-Fiegen,
Simon Schreck and Valentina Garcia

HNEE - GCM - 2. Semester
Munich Re Seminar Contribution

We:
**Policy
Advisers**



You: German Government

The Potential Role of Forestry for CO₂ Removal

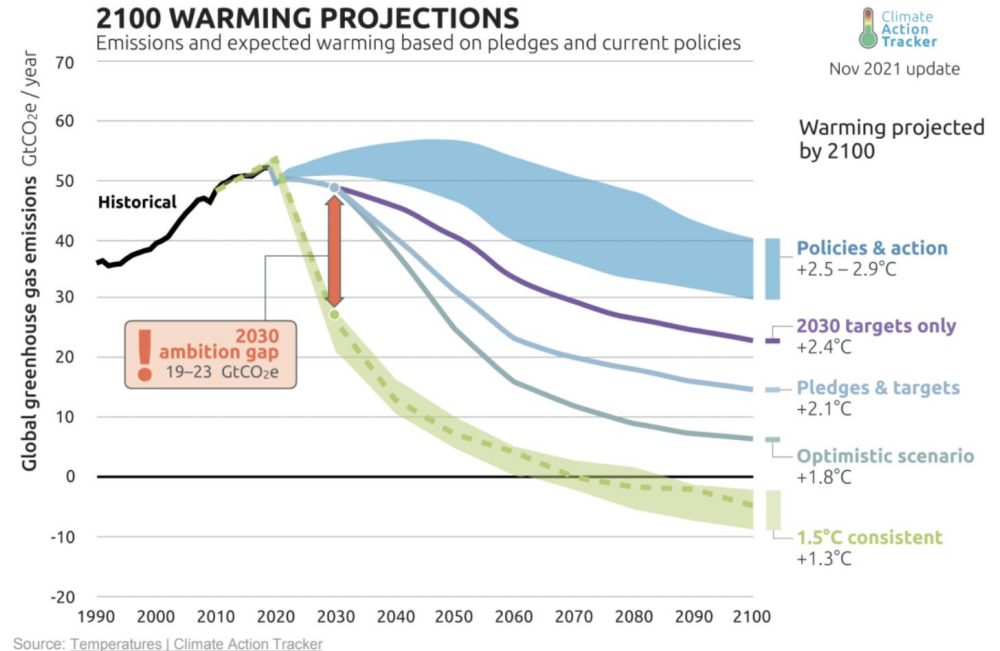
- 1) **Global perspective**
 - a) CO₂ Removal and Forestry
 - b) An Outlook to China

- 2) **Focus on Germany**
 - a) German needs in CO₂ removal
 - b) Potentials inside Germany

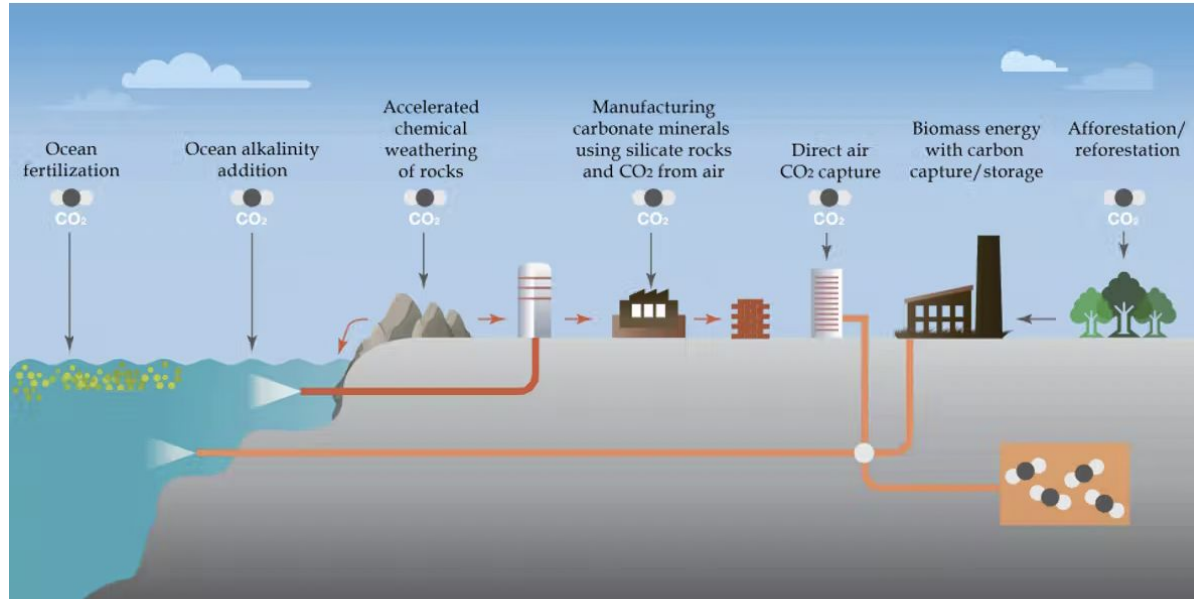
- 3) **Role of bilateral partnerships**
 - a) The danger of eco-colonialism
 - b) Lessons from Ethiopia and Brasil

Introduction

- To reach the target to limit the temperature rise to 1.5°C by the end of the century it is necessary to remove Co2 from the atmosphere
- It's not enough to reduce Co2 emissions - a carbon dioxide removal strategy (CDR) is needed to stick to the 1.5°C scenario and below by the year 2100



Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR)



'Negative emission' technology comes in many forms. Caldecott et al / SSEE

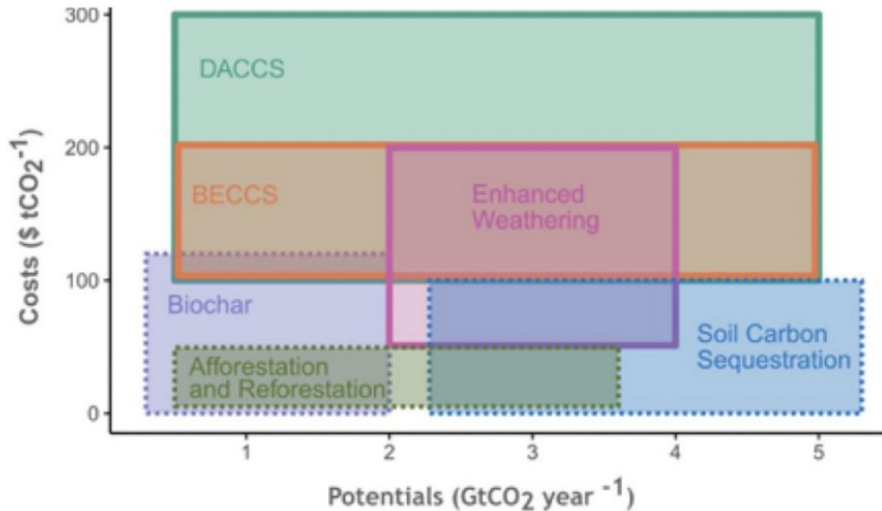
Nature based practices:

- e.g. forestation (afforestation and reforestation), soil carbon sequestration and wetland restoration

Technological alternatives:

- e.g. enhanced weathering, bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS), and direct air capture and storage (DACCS)

Potentials of Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR)



Source: [Chapter 4 of Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°](#), IPCC, 2018

- Afforestation and Reforestation are most cost effective and viable compared to their potential of CDR

Benefits/ecosystem services:

- e.g. flood control, air/water filtration, biodiversity, soil quality, climate resilience etc.
- Technological solutions (DACCS/BECCS) present the largest potential, but there are also the most expensive option (at least today and in the foreseeable future)

Advantages:

- -Once developed- easier to up scale and provide more permanent carbon pools due to geological storage

Definition of different forestry techniques

Reforestation:

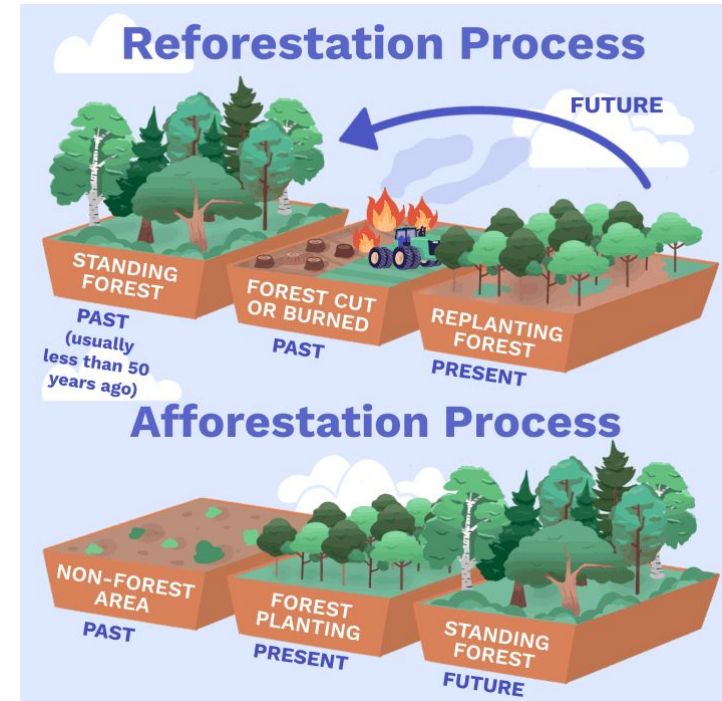
Def.: *“Is the natural or intentional restocking of existing forests that has been (recently) depleted”*

Afforestation:

Def.: *“Is the establishment of a forest or stand of trees in an area where there was no previous tree cover”*

Preservation:

Def.: *“In forestry, forest protection refers to measures to protect forests and tree stands from damage of any kind”*



General pros and cons of forestry for CO₂ removal

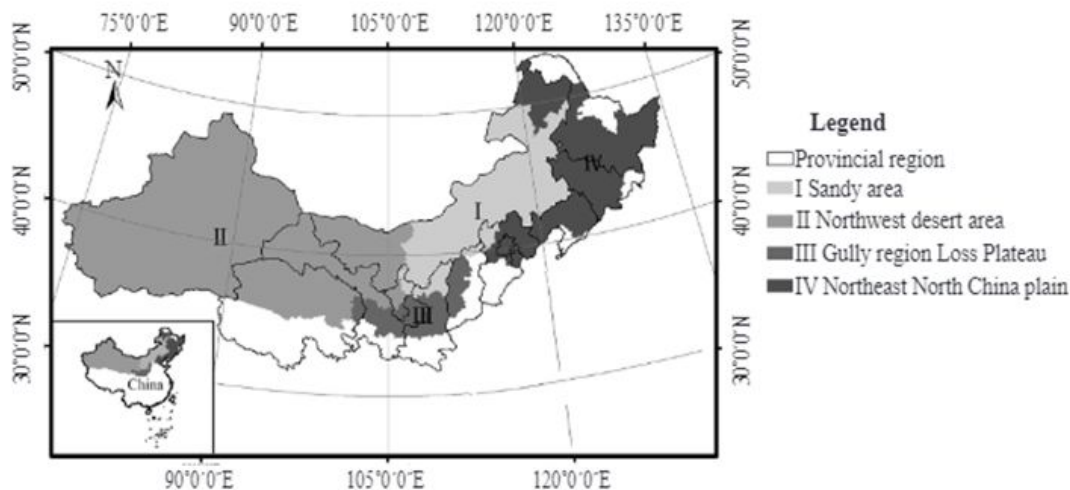
Pros:

- ready to use techniques
- many positive side effects for nature and humans
(habitat and biodiversity, recreation, economic benefits, local air quality, etc.)
- comparably cheap
- high theoretical potential of CO₂ sequestration

Cons:

- Saturation of sequestration rates after ~25 years
- limited permanence
- danger of reemission through natural events or changes in policy
- vulnerable to climate change

The Three North Shelter Project (TNSP)



Source : Wang et.al.(2014), The Three-North Shelterbelt Program and Dynamic Changes in Vegetation Cover

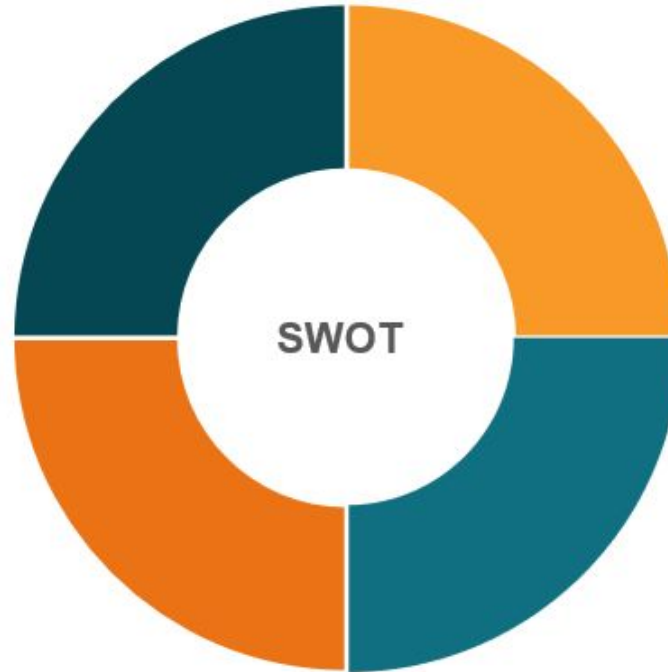
- TNSP includes 559 counties in 13 provinces and aims to create a forest area spanning 400 million hectares which was initiated in the early 1980's.
- TNSP initially aimed towards reducing desertification by afforestation and restoration, also the planted forests could serve as some kind of shield belts.
- Carbon sequestration concept is a much recent addition to the existing strategy.
- The Chinese Government aims to plant around 100 billion trees by 2050
- The project predominantly includes arid and semi-arid parts of northern China, including the Gobi Desert

Strengths:

- Public awareness
- Regional Development
- Reducing the rate of desertification and sand storms
- Increase in vegetation cover

Opportunities:

- Increase in benefits of ecosystem and social system services
- Job creation and income generation due to timber and increase in agriculture productivity especially fruit plantations



Weakness:

- Desertification rates is reduced but not reversed or eliminated
- Over dependence on non native species
- Ineffective strategy (ex. aerial seeding)
- Economic fragility of the project

Threats:

- Quantification of carbon sequestered by project activities is tricky.
- Land erosion, overgrazing and depleted water tables
- Monoculture forests
- Lack of comprehensive evaluation methodology

Real need: China is among the top 5 GHG emitting countries

Real potential: There is a lot of potential for China to transform considering their economic and technical superiority

But can we quantify China's actions especially concerning CO2 removal in forestry



Germany's pathway to net-zero emissions

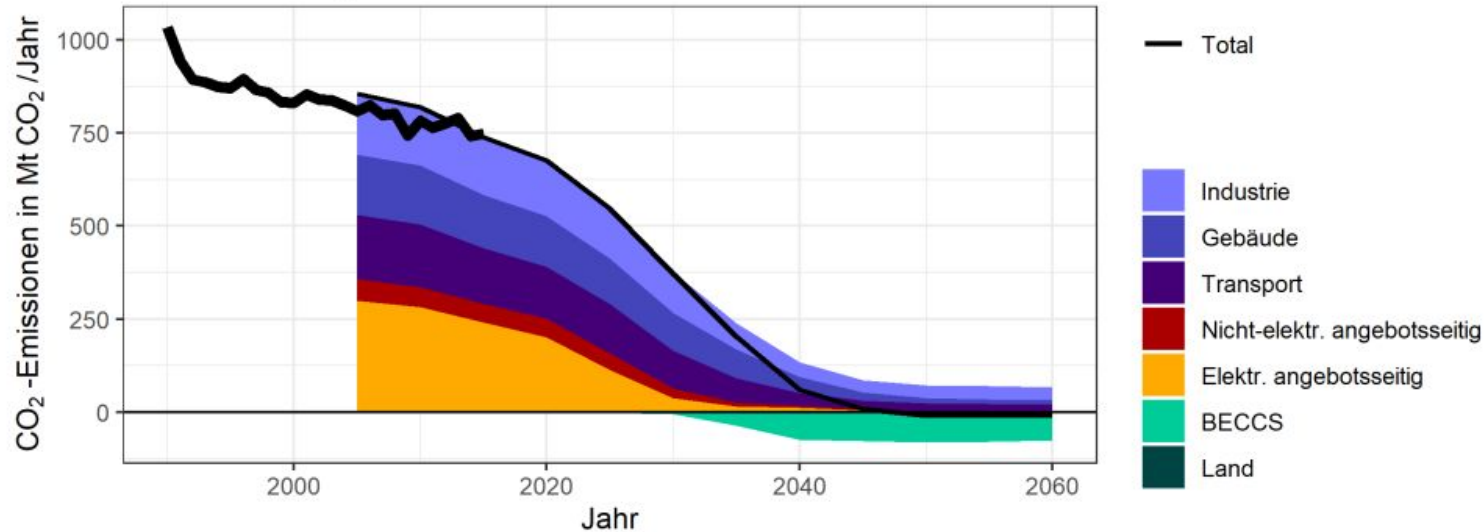
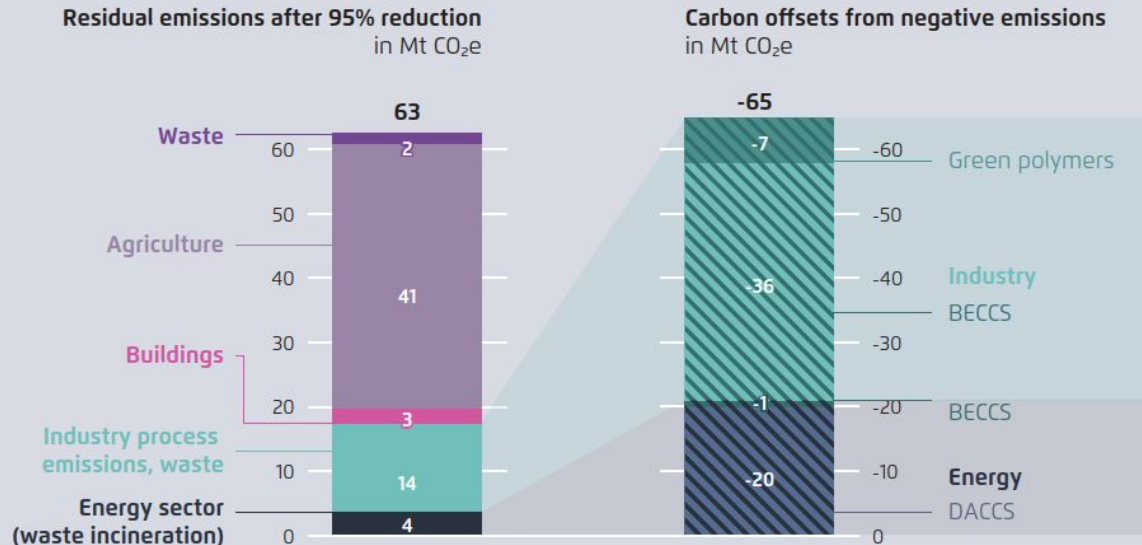


Abbildung 4: CO₂-Emissionen von Deutschland in einem Szenario im Einklang mit den Emissionsreduktionszielen, die im Rahmen des europäischen Green Deal angekündigt wurden (vorläufige Ergebnisse von REMIND im Rahmen des ARIADNE-Projekts).

Offsetting germany's residual emissions

Step 3 in detail – residual GHG emissions and their offsetting in 2045

Figure 6



Prognos, Öko-Institut, Wuppertal Institut (2021)

Residual Emissions:

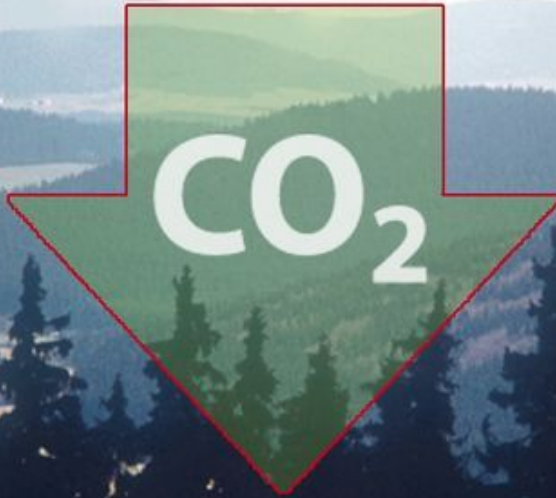
100 MtCO₂/year
(average of different studies)

Most scenarios:

Focus on **technological solutions for removing CO₂** in
→ BECCS + DACCS

Which role can forestry play in offsetting the residual emissions?

German Forests Today...



<https://www.thuenen.de/de/wf/projekte-liste/waelder-als-co2-senken-wie-kann-diese-leistung-entgolten-werden/>

... are removing

~50 MtCO₂/year*

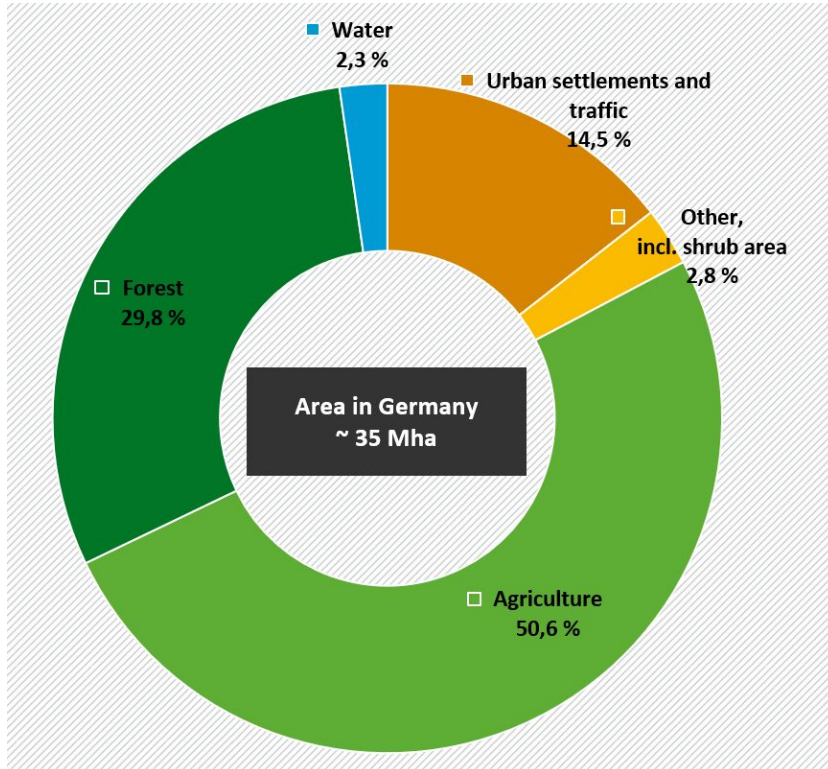
(Already included in emission scenarios.)

→ How much can forestry contribute to additionally remove 100 MtCO₂/year ?

*Umweltbundesamt:

<https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/daten/klima/treibhausgas-emissionen-in-deutschland/emissionen-der-landnutzung-aenderung#veranderung-de-s-waldbestands->

Low Afforestation Potential in Germany



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt 2021, FS 3 Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Fischerei, R. 5.1 Bodenfläche nach Art der tatsächlichen Nutzung 2020

Land-use conflicts...
... mostly with agriculture
... and traffic and mobility

Estimated available area for afforestation

1 Mha (~3 % of german area)

Average potential in first 20-25 years:

7.3 tCO₂/ha/year

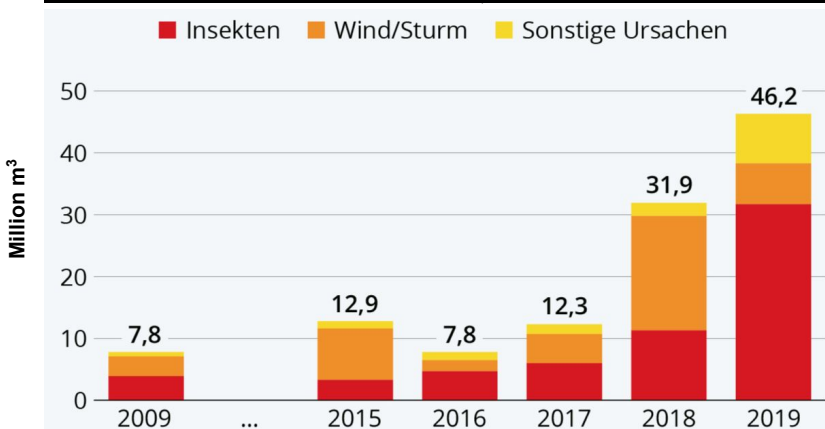
→ **7.3 MtCO₂/year**

Worrying Condition of German Forests

Direct and indirect impacts of climate change
(Storms, droughts, fires, low groundwater levels)

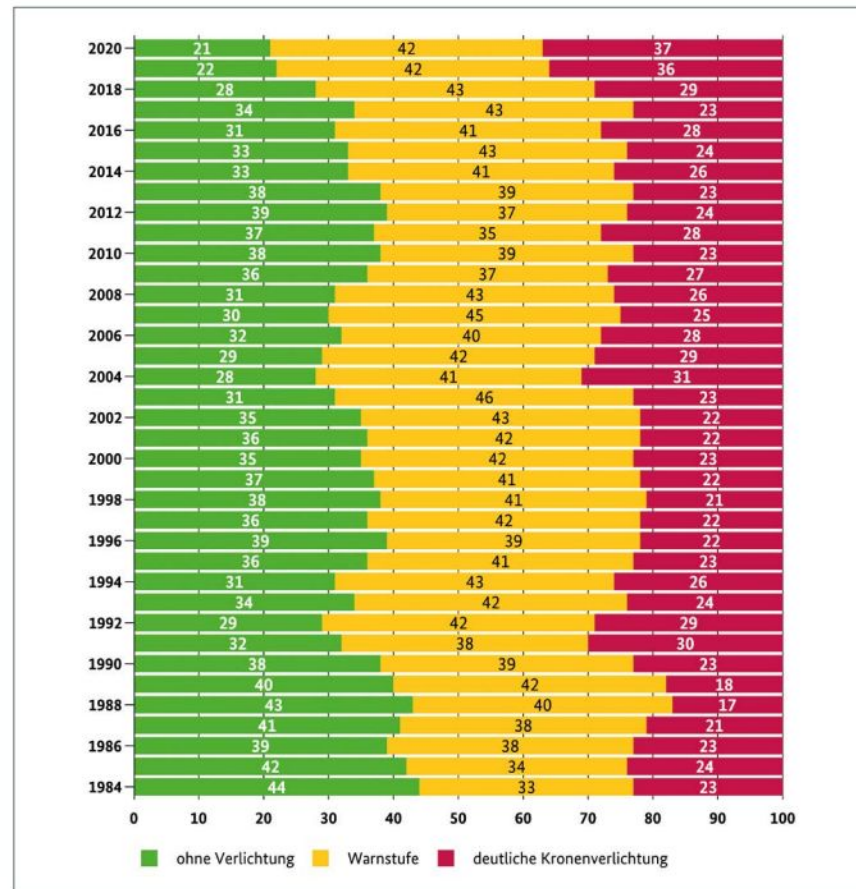
→ Need for preservation, restoration and sustainable management

Wood harvest due to insects, storms and other causes



Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt

Abbildung 10: Kronenverlichtung in Deutschlands Wäldern seit 1984; Ohne Verlichtung = 0-10 Prozent Kronenverlichtung, Warnstufe = 11-25 Prozent Kronenverlichtung, Deutliche Kronenverlichtung = >25-100 Prozent Kronenverlichtung (Quelle: Thünen-Institut 2021)



City Forest Lübeck



Location of Lübeck in Germany (source: Wikipedia)



Area of the City Forest in Lübeck (source: Hansestadt Lübeck)

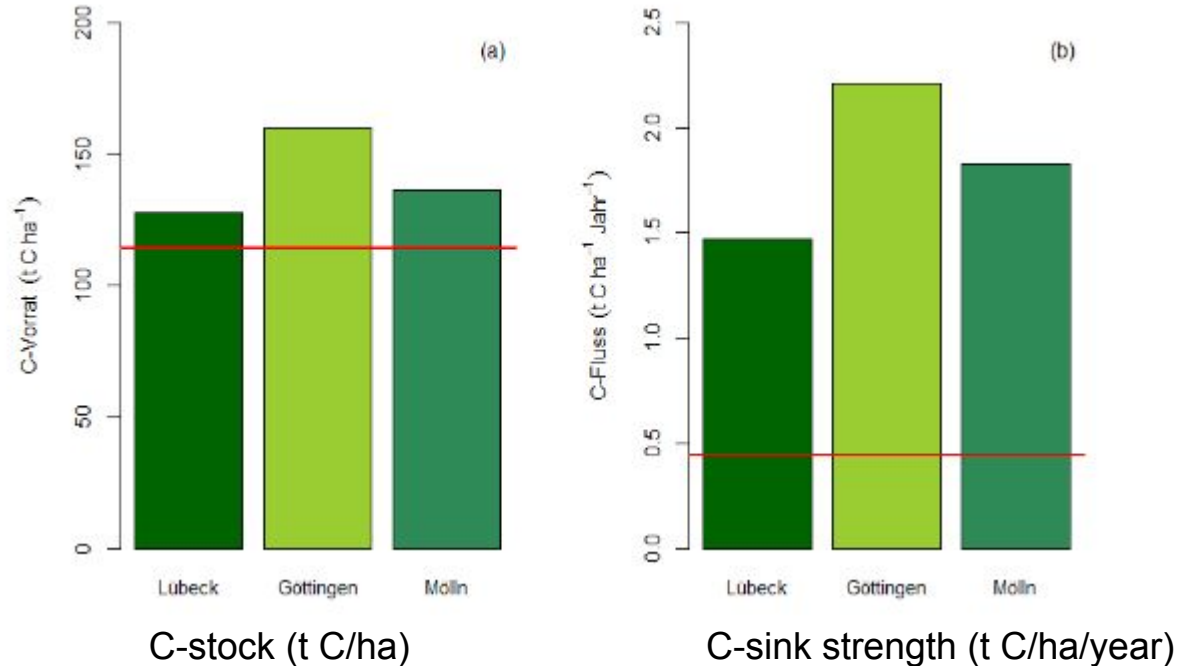
Concept of the City Forest Lübeck

- established 30 years ago
- “integrative process protection” concept
 - close to nature
 - sufficiency
 - minimum principle



Deadwood in the City Forest Lübeck (source: Hansestadt Lübeck)

Carbon stocks in comparison



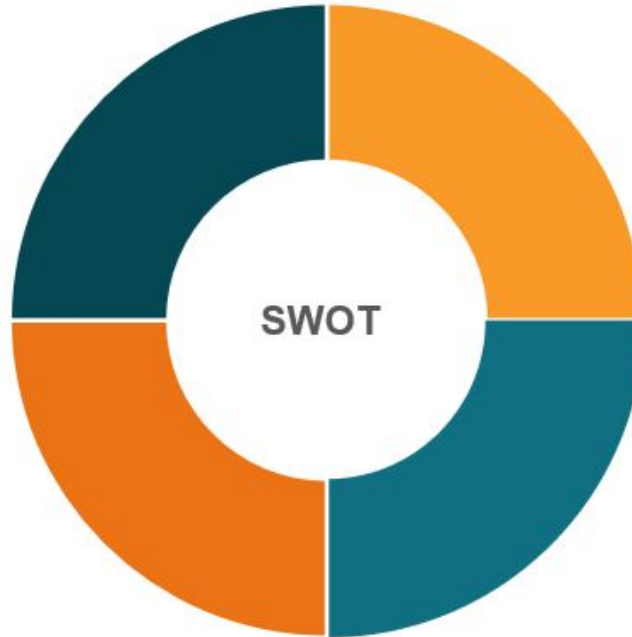
- high carbon stocks
- high carbon sinks
- red line shows average carbon stock and sinks in german forests

Strengths:

- storage potential: 22.7 t CO₂/ha/year* (104.420 t CO₂/year)
- high resilience
- native species
- natural rejuvenation
- long-term low costs
- high quality timber

Opportunities:

- storage of CO₂ in long lasting wood products
- biodiversity increase
- role model
- clean air for the city
- social acceptance through citizen participation
- scientific research
- low risks



Weakness:

- scalability
- time intense
- emissions through timber transportation
- short-term high costs

Threats:

- climate change
- extreme weather events
- regulation/ financial issues
- dependency on timber sector for operational costs

Can we achieve more negative emission through changing the forest management system in Germany?

- potential is there!
- 11.5 Mha forest area in germany
- Average potential (current forestry system): → approx. 50 Mt CO₂/year
- Lübeck 22.7 t CO₂/ha/year → 261.05 Mt CO₂/year

→ through the integrative process protection concept, approx. five times as much CO₂ could be stored in german forests than with the current management system.

Task:

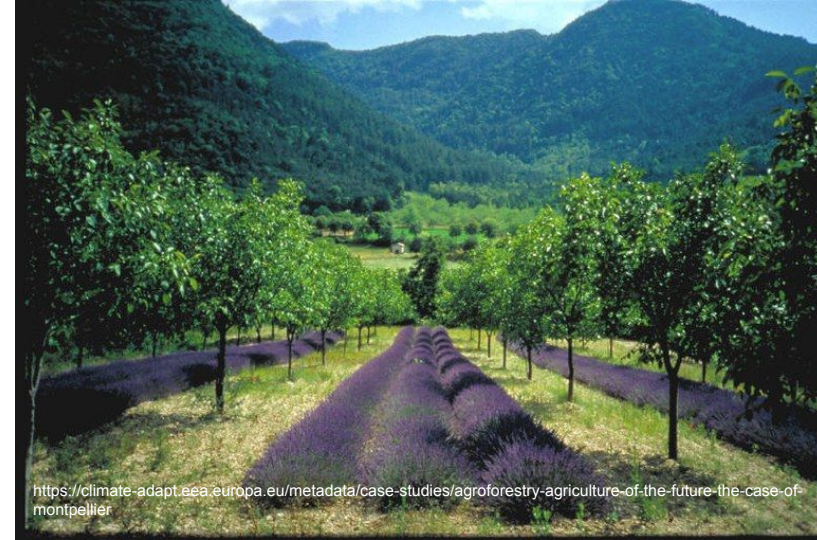
Identify real areas where the “integrative process protection” concept can be applied.

Potential of Agroforestry

- No land-use conflict with agriculture
- Potential: ~2.5 tCO₂/ha/year

→ Up to ~**30 MtCO₂/year** negative emissions
(assuming complete deployment on 11.7 Mha agricultural land)

- Positive side effects:
 - Reduced soil erosion
 - Enhanced habitat and biodiversity
 - Enhanced microclimate
 - Enhanced land productivity



Potentials within Germany

National Strategies

- Afforestation too little potential
- + Focus should be on
 - + Sustainable forest management
 - + Agroforestry

Potentials beyond Germany?

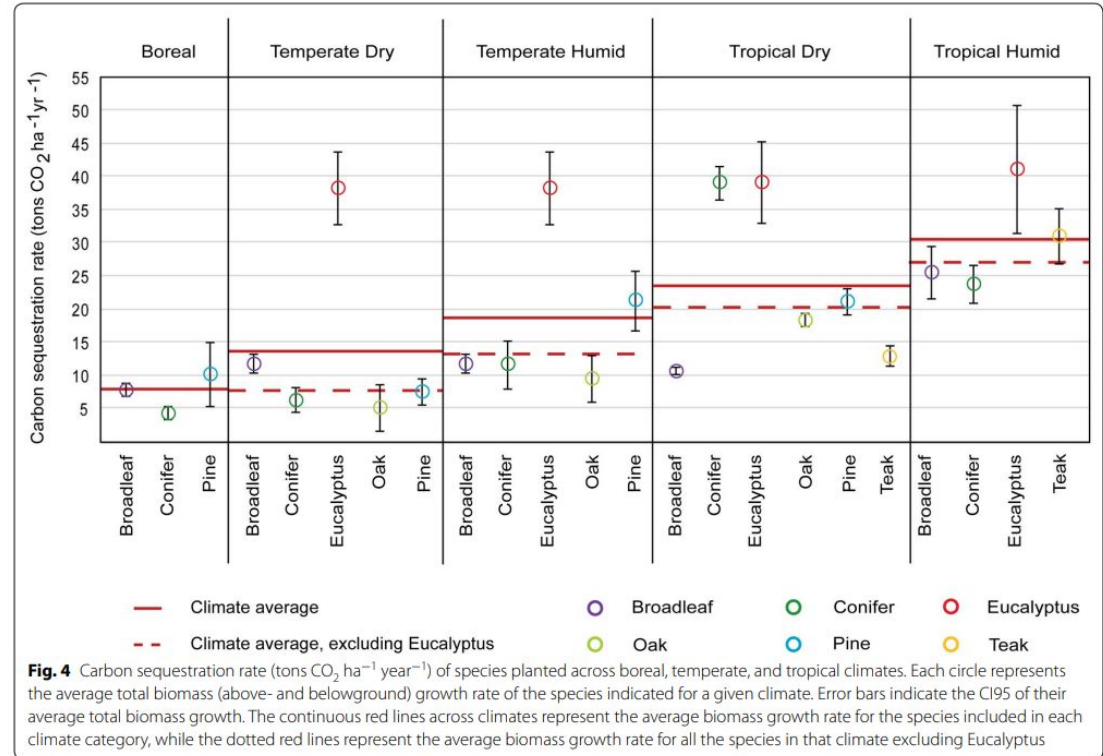
Technical Perspective:

→ Higher sequestration rates
in tropical regions

→ Larger available areas

Socio-Economic Perspective

→ Eco-Colonialism ?



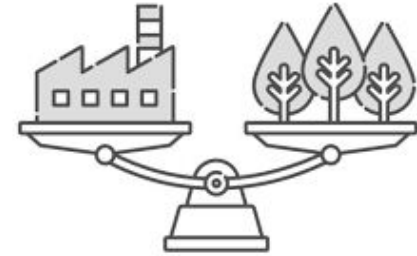
Origin of eco-colonialism

- Land grabbing in the global south for the benefit of the global north
 - e.g. for the extraction of raw materials
- Eviction of people for the purpose of wildlife and nature conservation
 - based on the Understanding of nature as untouched by humans



Eco colonialism and offset concepts

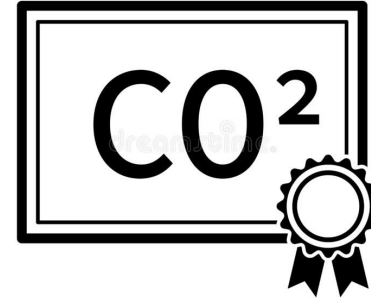
1. eurocentric forms of
 - a. knowledge
 - Control of the resources for emission reduction
 - b. spatial conception
 - system of property rights
2. unjust global economic relations
 - dominance of the Global North and the distinction between developed and less developed countries
3. neo- imperial policies
 - landgrabbing



*“ [...] This ‘carbon market’ is another face of the privatizing model of Mother Earth, that has led to the brink of a planetary suicide.”
(AIDSEEP, 2010)*

REDD+ as one example

most important international package to combat deforestation and forest degradation functioning on the basis of performance-based payments.



Critique:

- sustainable management of forests under REDD+ can open the doors for commercial logging
 - e.g. Indonesia

Chance:

- support realisation of property rights for indigenous people



Can changing land use and forestry frameworks lead to eco-colonialism for carbon removal?

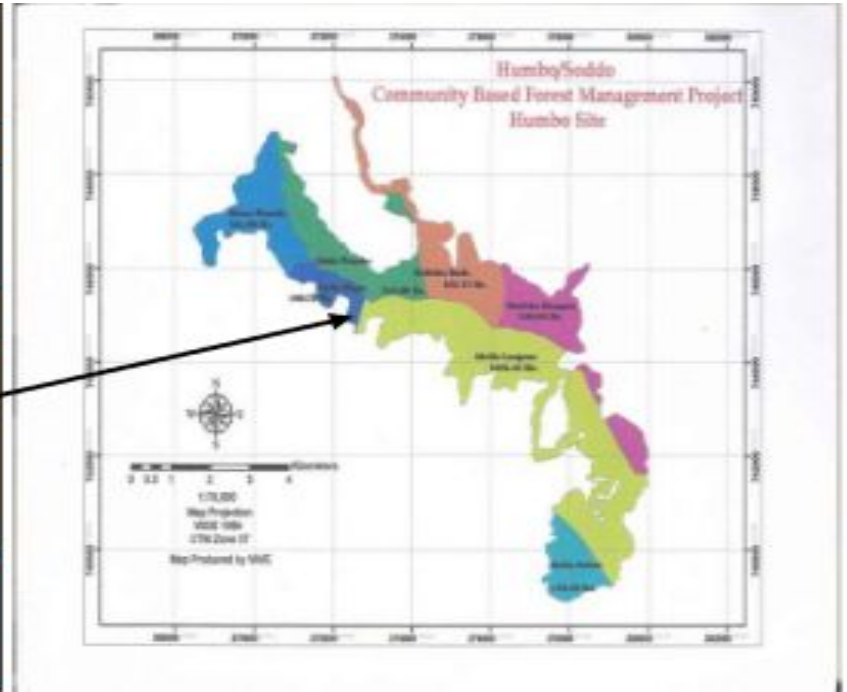
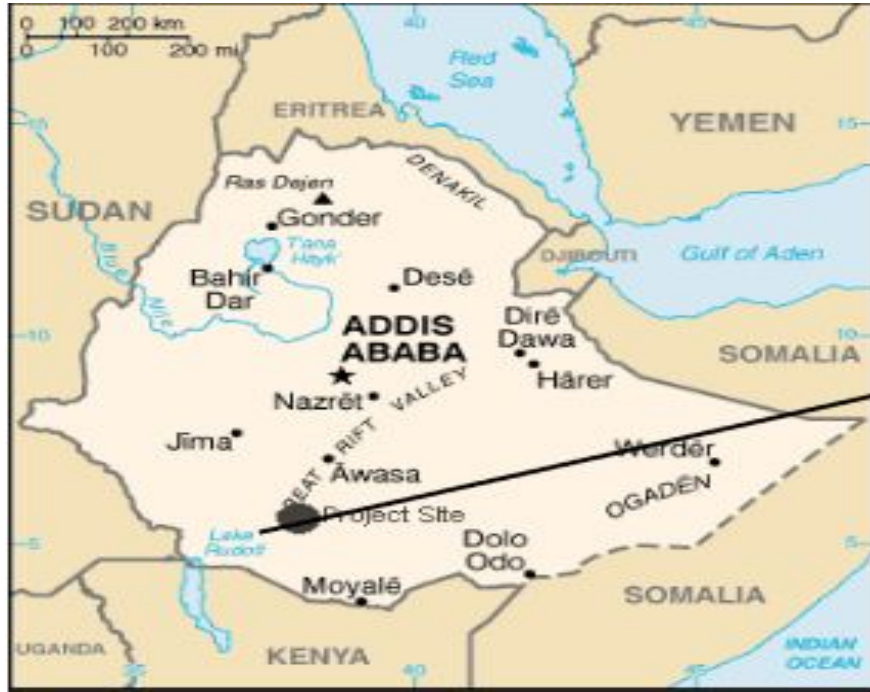
possible Impacts on local
communities:

- Change of land use practices
- Loss of incomes
- Exclusion of people not willing to participate
- new dependencies

Humbo Assisted Regeneration Project

- Initiated in 2006 by World vision Australia and WVE
- Restoration of 2728 ha; climate change mitigation and conservation
- Reforestation by tree planting, assisted natural regeneration and exclosures
- Managed and protected by 7 village level co-operatives
- First African forestry project registered under CDM

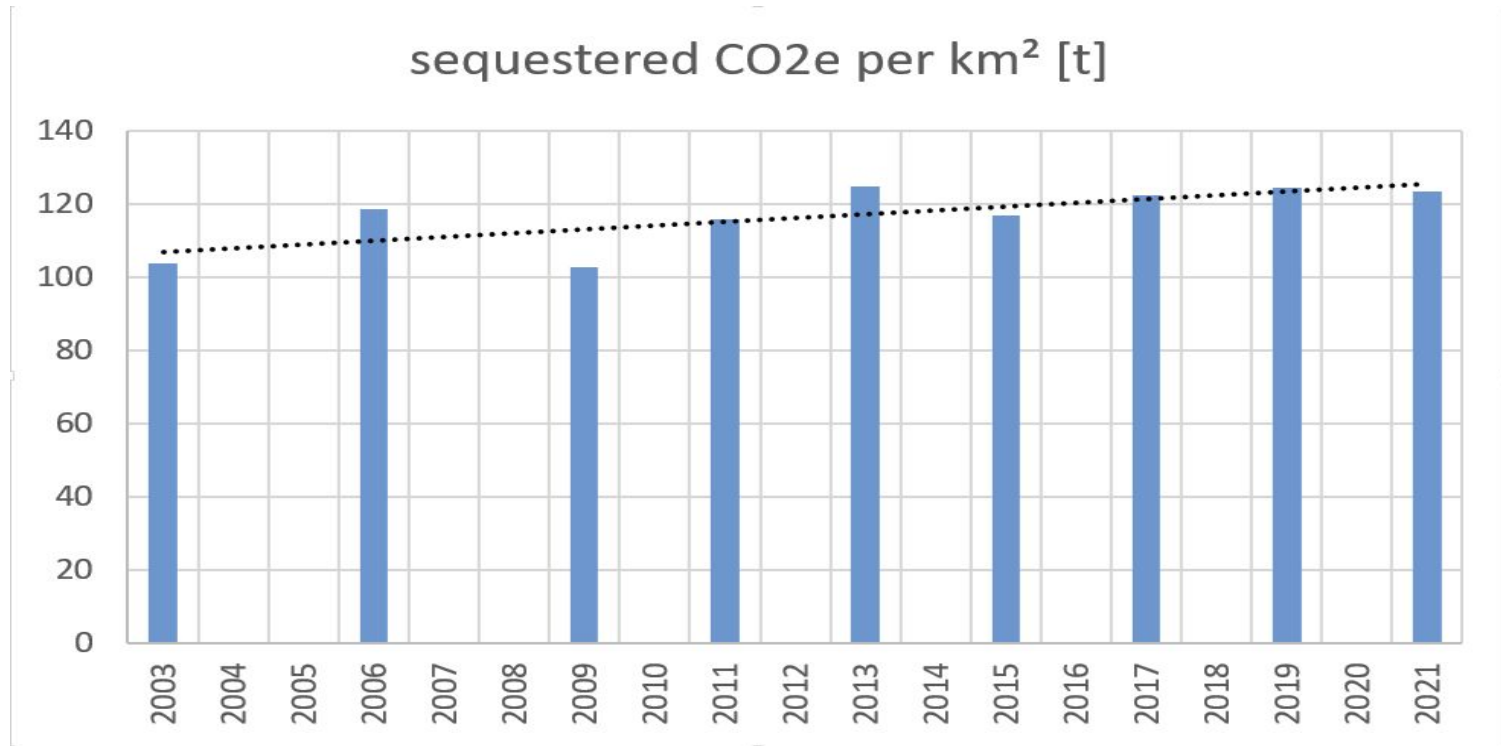
Project Area



Humbo before and after



Cumulative tCO₂e Sequestration of Humbo 2003-2021



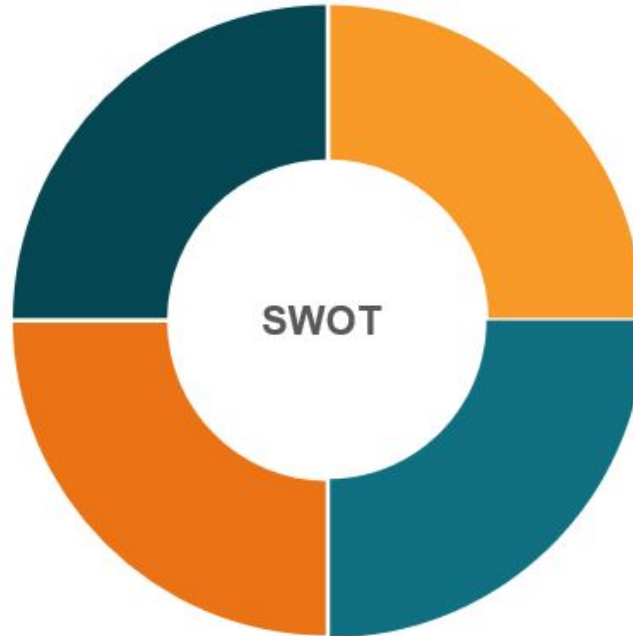
Source:Running et al (2020)

Strengths:

- Storage potential:880,295 tCO₂
- Ecosystem stability:High
- Resilience: Microclimates, curb soil erosion, water, nutrition
- Low cost and replicable
- Community Participation:Good
- Income:Attracted carbon credits \$726,000

Opportunities:

- Land value:increased
- Income: Employment opportunities i.e bee keeping
- Ethics: Enhanced social-cultural values



Weakness:

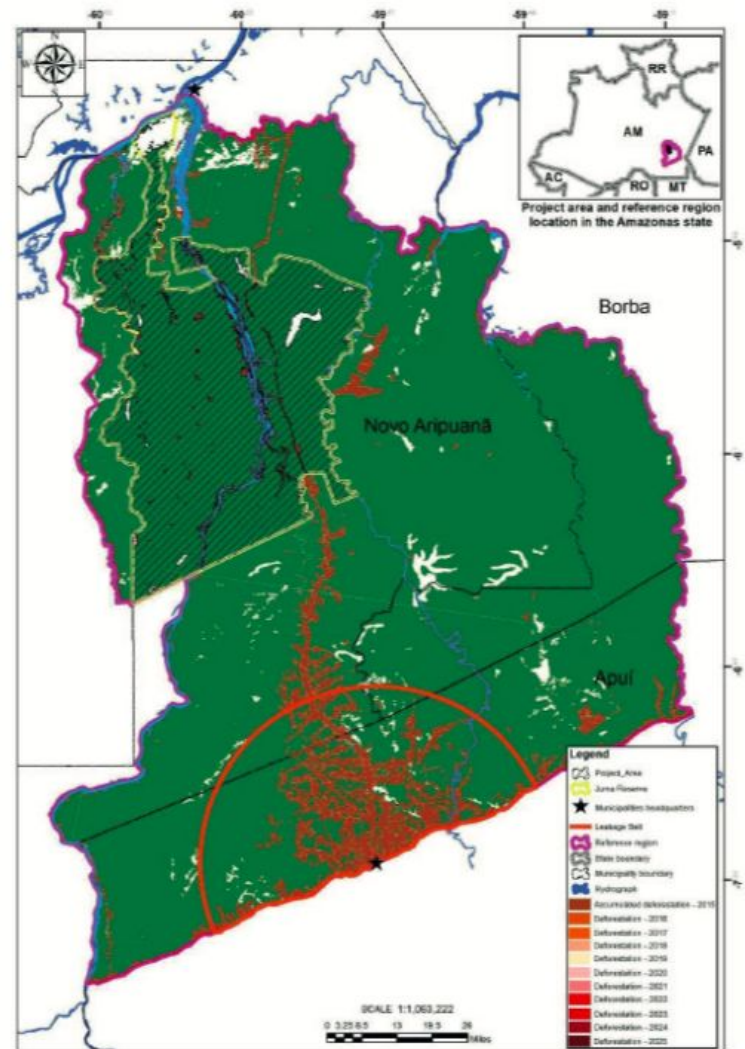
- Duration: Longterm investment
- Income distribution: Unequal
- Social inclusion:Women involved only in the nursery stage
- Technological competence: Low

Threats:

- Environmental impacts: Increased wildlife
- Climate change and adverse weather events

Juma Sustainable Development Reserve (SDR Juma REDD+ Project)

- Established 2006 → 589,612 ha
- Protect forest with high conservation value.
- 1st REDD project in Brazil (2008)
- 1.919 people → 388 families → 41 communities
- Implemented: Amazonas Sustainable Foundation (FAS)
- Partners: Governmental institutions and Marriott International, Inc.



State Law of Env. Services from Amazonas (2020)

Juma Sustainable Development Reserve (SDR Juma REDD+ Project)

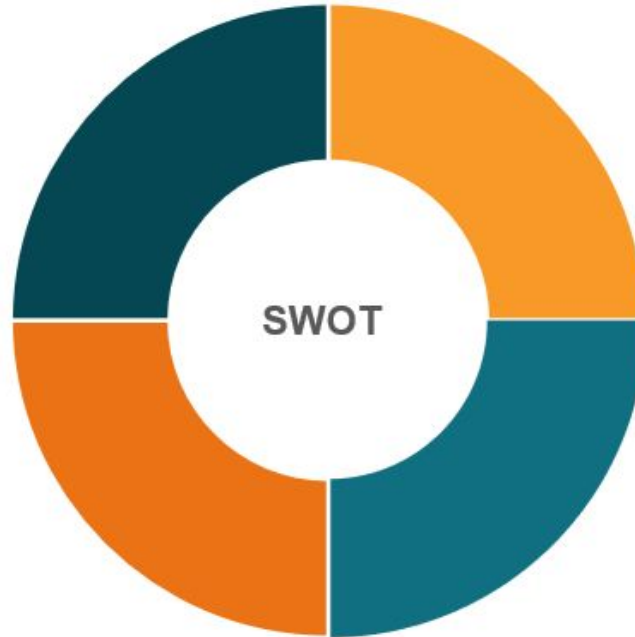
- Baseline scenario:
 - prevent the deforestation of tropical forests
 - ~329 kha that would release 189 Million tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere.
- REDD+ as a financial support to implement measures
- Controversy: Scenario with leakage 2050
- Bolsa Floresta project (from 2010) from FAS, Amazon Fund.
 - 15 conservation units (494 families in 38 locations)
 - objective: was to reduce deforestation and conserve biodiversity through increasing income and empowering resident communities.

Strengths:

- Storage potential: 189 M tCO₂
- Long term project (100y)
- Protection and strengthening of biodiversity
- Change to sustainable livelihood of people

Opportunities:

- Land value: increased
- Enhanced social-cultural values
- Positive Environmental Impact



Weakness:

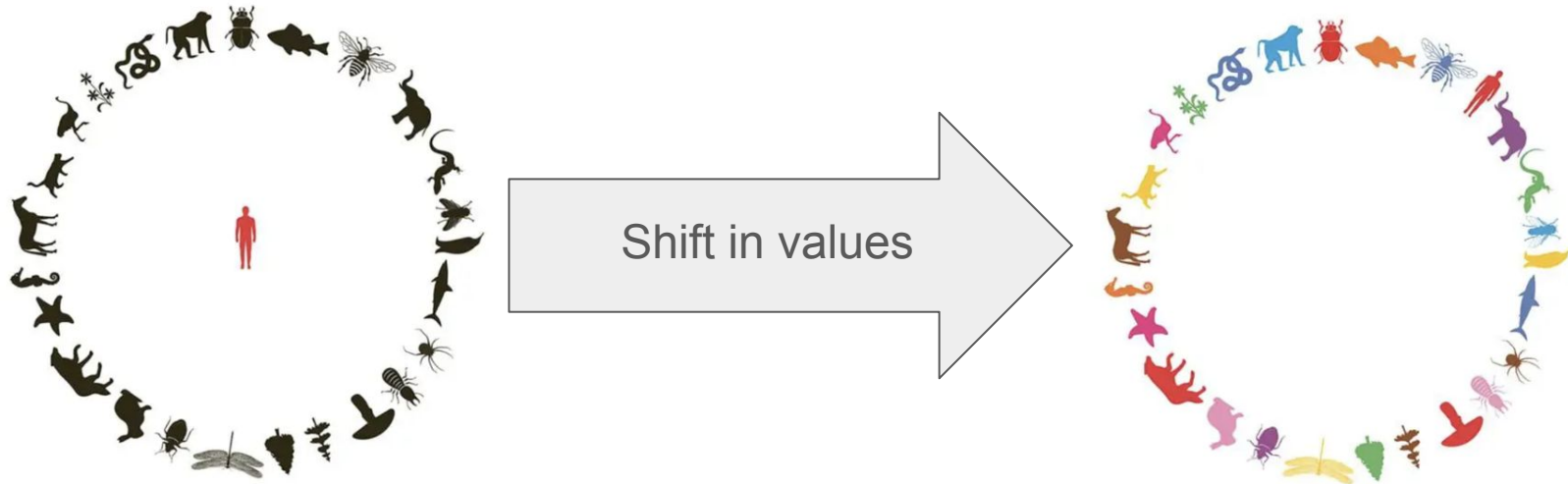
- REDD+ :
Leakage not considered
Insufficient funding
- Reliability of Investment

Threats:

- Social Acceptance
- Climate Change
- Illegal fires from the surrounding
- Pressure of exportation of soybean and meat.

strategic starting points to counter eco colonialism

- Regulation or Reformation of Carbon markets
- Involving local communities in the processes and discussions



The Potential of Forestry for Compensating Germany's Residual Emissions

National Strategies

- Afforestation too little potential
- + Focus should be on
 - + Sustainable forest management
 - + Agroforestry

Common Threats to Forestry

- Climate change
- Social acceptance

International Strategies

- + Bilateral Partnerships
- + Transforming profit-oriented thinking with the help of local knowledge
- + Need for a common strategy

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- Naturwald Akademie, Dr. Torsten Welle

Der jährliche Zuwachs beträgt ca. 60.269 VFM. Unter Nutzung der IPCC Formel erhalte ich bei 4.600 ha die 22.7 t

jährlicher Zuwachs (m3)	Holzdicke (t/m3) Wert:0,54 für Laubholz	Biomassefaktor Wert 1,4 für Laubholz	Biomasse in Tonnen	unterirdische Biomasse (t) Wert 1,26	Kohlenstoffanteil Wert 0,495	Kohlenstoff (Tonnen)	Kohlendioxid (Tonnen) Wert= 44/12	Flächengröße [ha]	T/CO2/a
60.269	32.545	45.563	45.563	57.410	28.418	28.418	104.198	4.600	22,7