

*BSPC Standing Committee Meeting
Stralsund, 12th June 2023*



Peatlands in the Baltic Sea region and their key role in European Green Deal policies

Jan Peters, Michael Succow Foundation

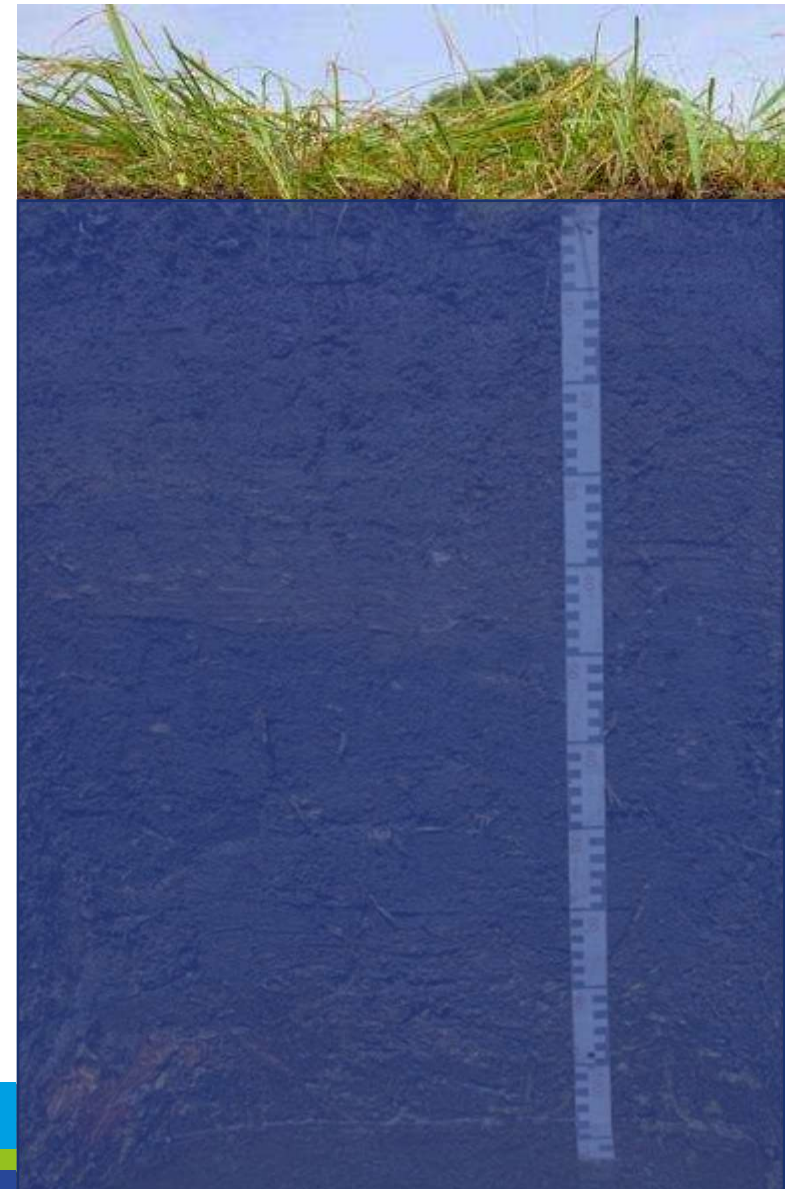


J.Peters

greifswaldmoor.de

What are Peatlands?

- Most important component: Peat!
 - Peatland with a peat layer of >30 cm
 - Organic soil / peat formed by in-situ died-off biomass (mostly sub-surface)
 - Permanent water saturation
- Growth is larger than decay
- Without water level close to surface peat will get lost ultimately
- **Rewetting is prerequisite for peatland restoration**

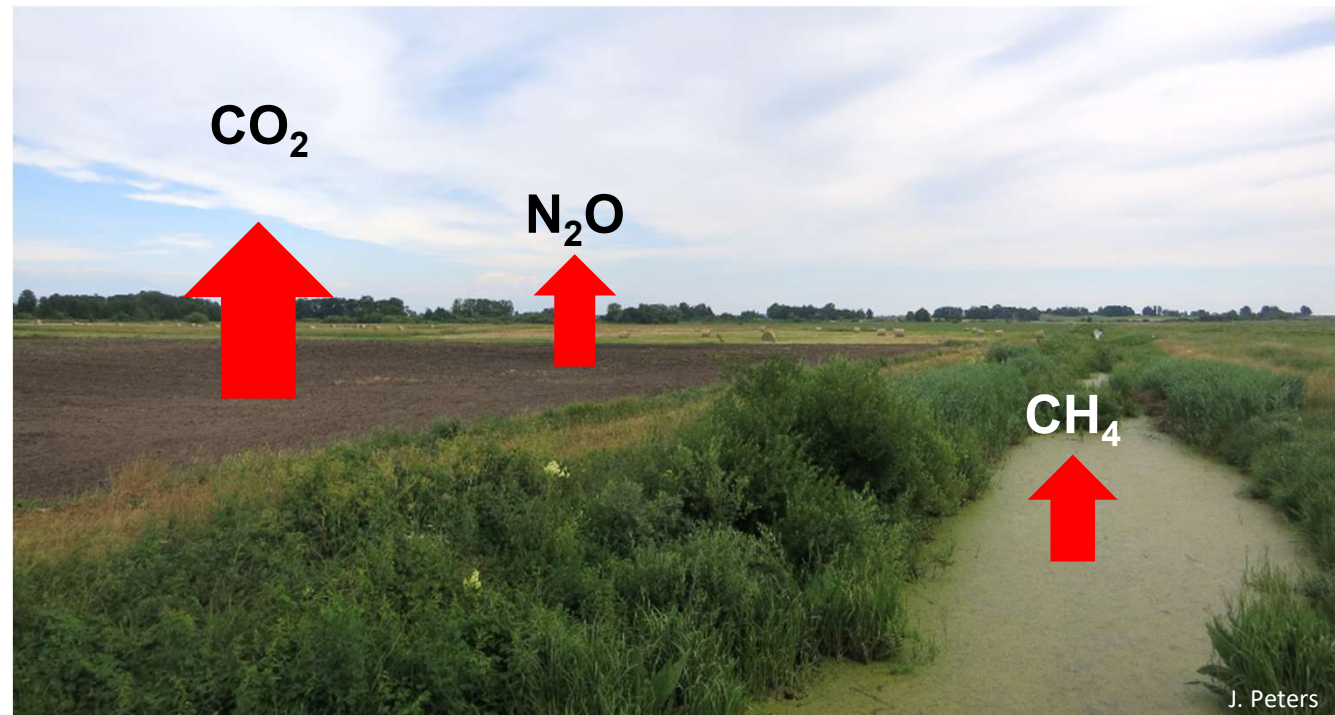


Celebrating wet peatlands...

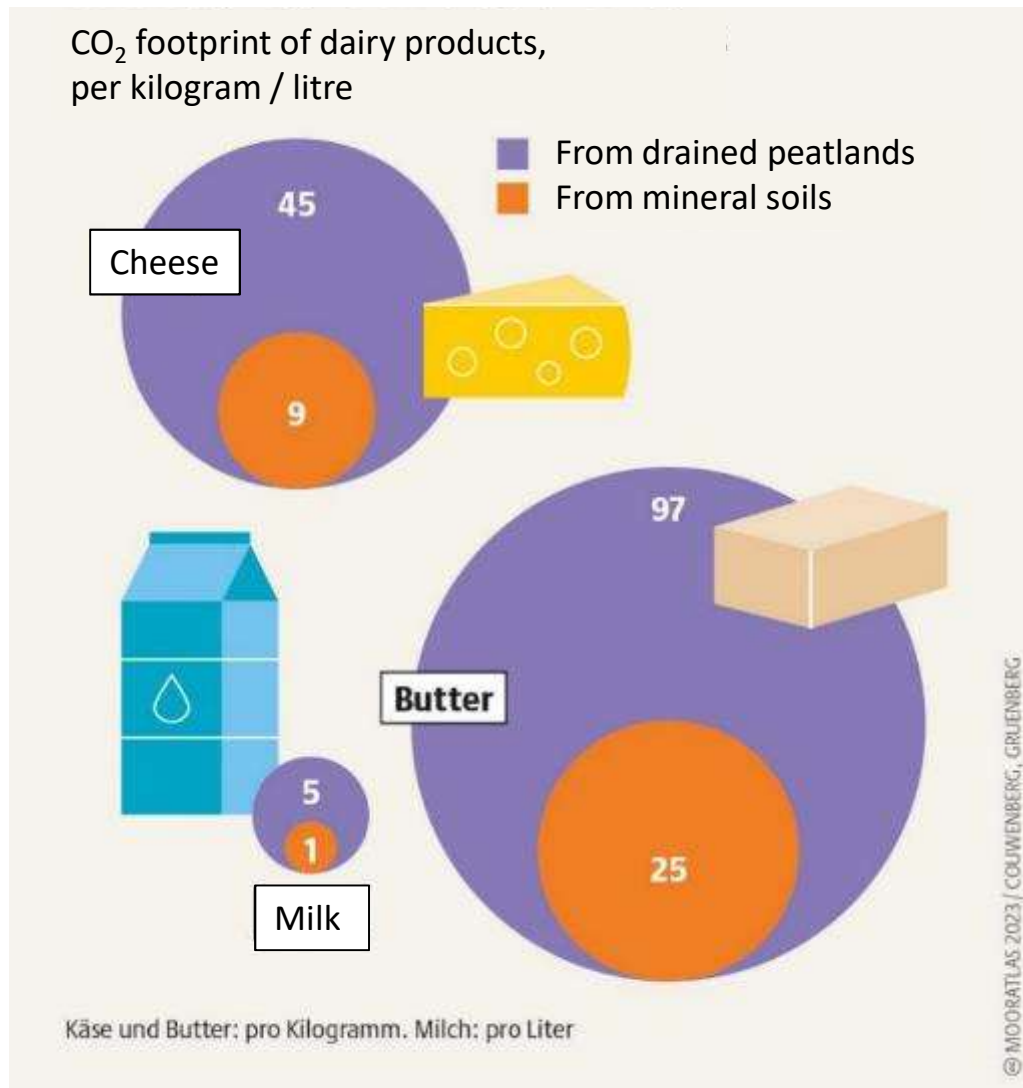


....as key for biodiversity, nutrient / water retention,
local cooling & other ecosystem services

Peat is like gherkins: When you remove the conserving water, the organic matter rots away

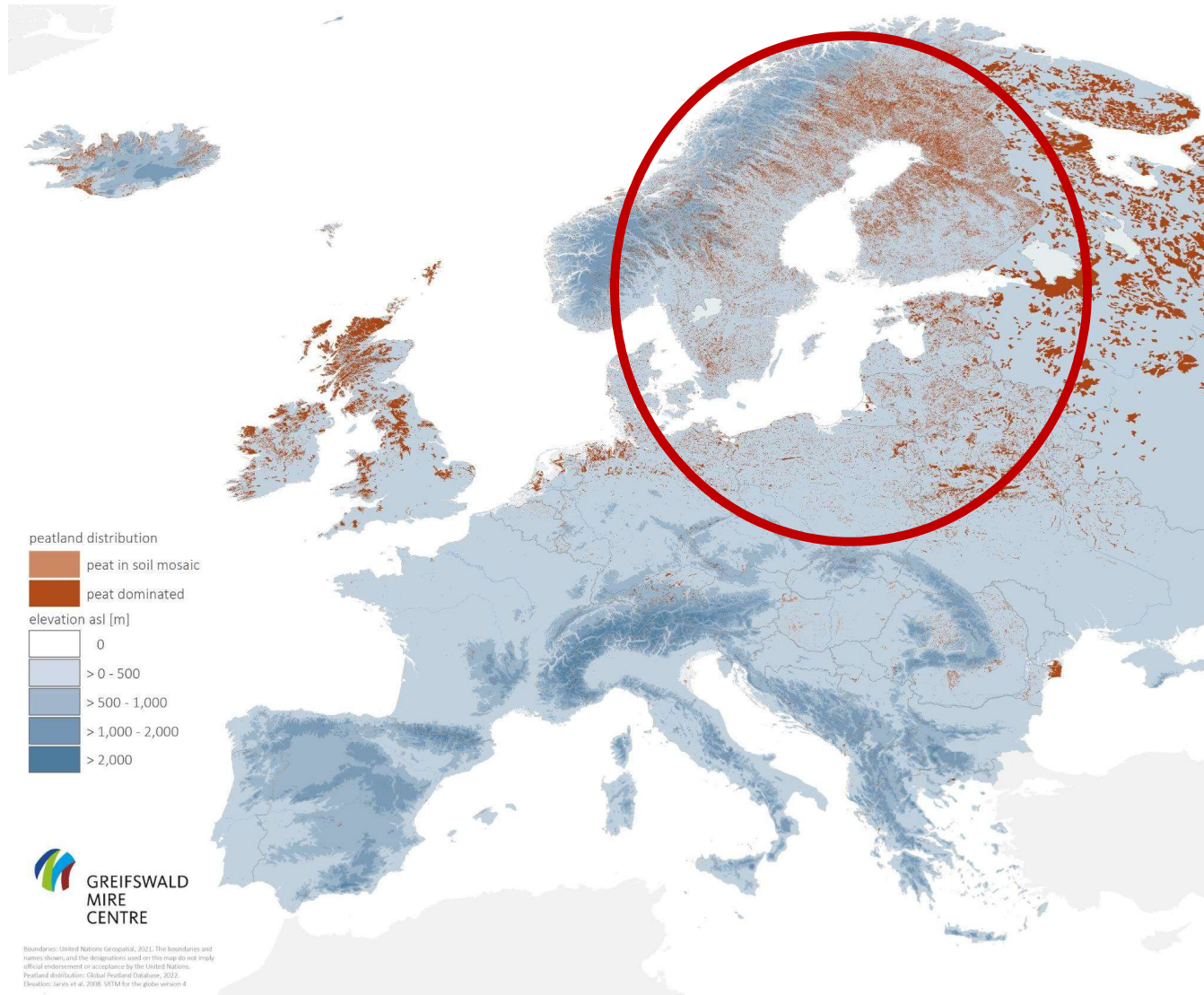


Footprint of peatland products



Dairy products 4 – 5x
higher carbon footprint
from drained peatlands
than from mineral soils

Peatlands in Europe



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Global Peatlands Assessment: The State of the World's Peatlands

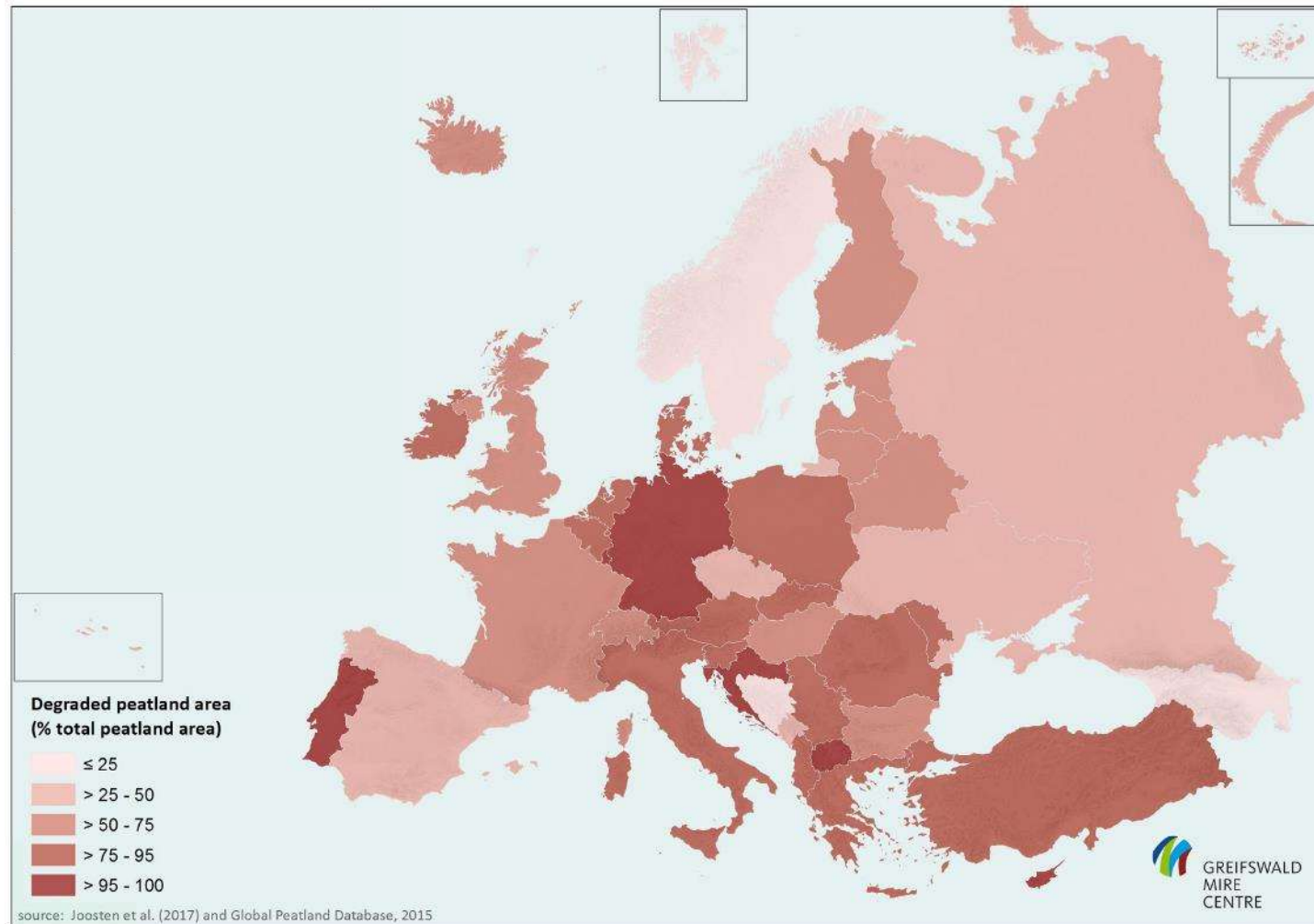
EVIDENCE FOR ACTION TOWARD THE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION, AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF PEATLANDS

SUMMARY FOR POLICY MAKERS



<https://www.unep.org/resources/global-peatlands-assessment-2022>

Peatlands in Europe



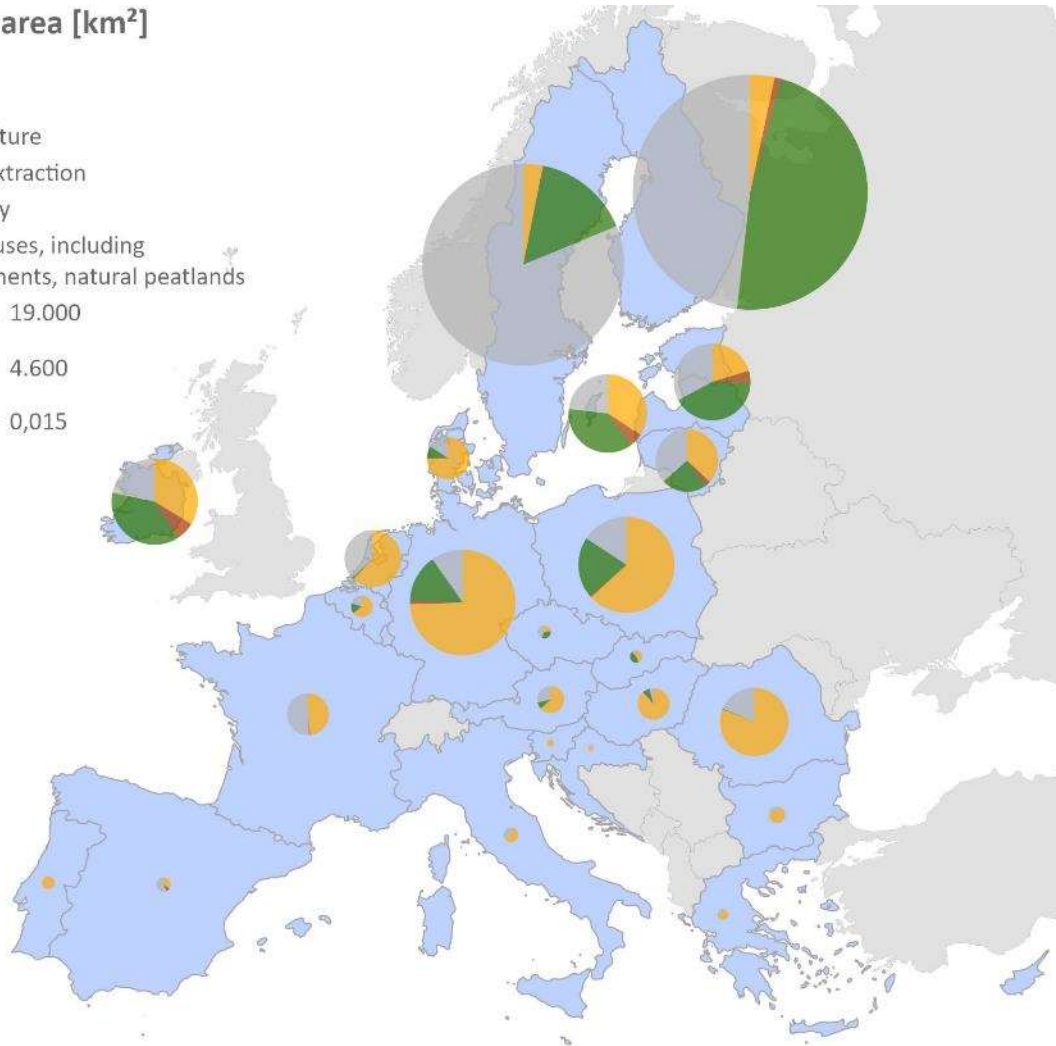
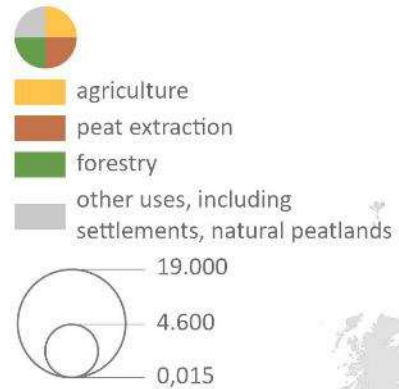
Europe's
peatlands 25%
degraded,
EU 50%

[https://greifswaldmoor.de/files/dokumente/Infopapiere Briefings/2021 EU Restoration Targ Peatlands Policy%20brief.pdf](https://greifswaldmoor.de/files/dokumente/Infopapiere_Briefings/2021_EU_Restoration_Targ_Peatlands_Policy%20brief.pdf)

Tanneberger et al. (2021): <https://www.mdpi.com/1424-2818/13/8/381/pdf>

Peatlands in Europe

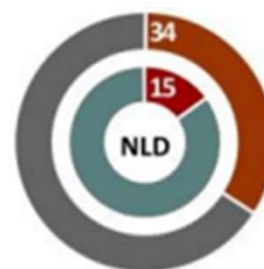
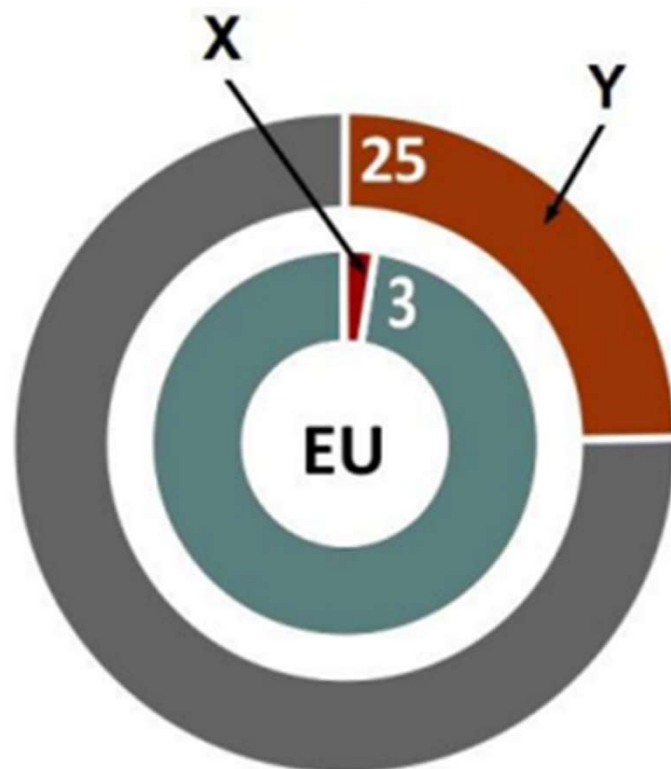
peatland area [km²]



Data: Global Peatland Database 2022
© GreifswaldMire Centre

Largest parts used for
agriculture & forestry

Peatlands in Europe



Largest parts used for
agriculture & forestry
→ **25 % of agri &
land use GHG
emissions**

EU 2nd largest GHG
emitter globally
(~230 Mt CO₂eq /a,
after Indonesia)
→ **~7 % of total EU
GHG emissions**

X = % of agricultural land

Y = % of agricultural land use emissions

Rethinking & restore peat-landscapes



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Rethinking peat-landscapes



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Alternative income options need to be developed

- **Paludiculture:** wetland crops + innovative value chains
- **Carbon Farming:** Rewarding of emission reduction (e.g. public payment or appropriate credit schemes)

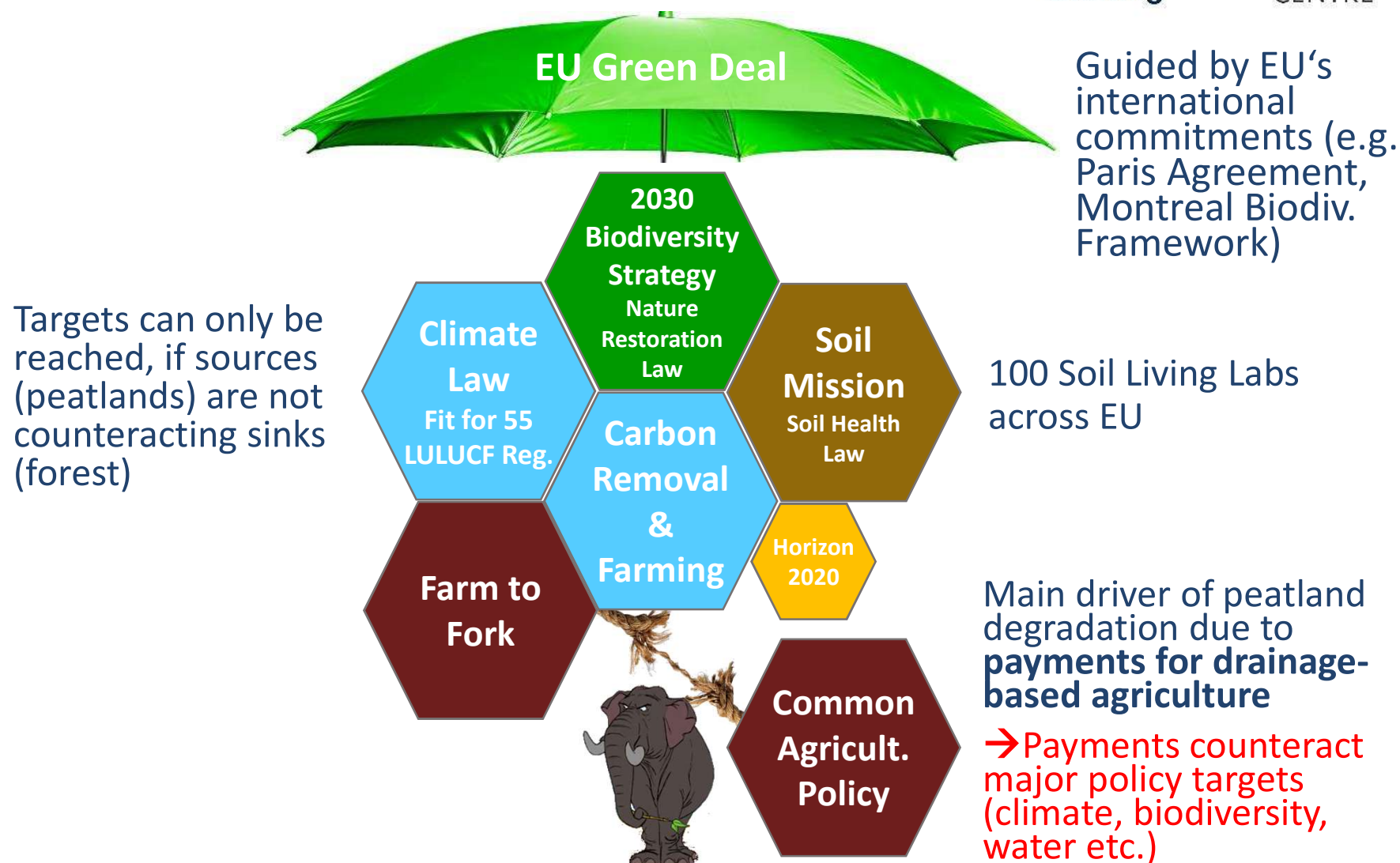


Paludiculture products

- Construction and insulation material
 - Fibres for packaging
 - Potting soil and substrates
 - Bioenergy
 - Biorefinery
- **Baltic Sea Region has high potential to become innovation cluster**



EU Green Deal & peatlands



EU Common Agricultural Policy & peatlands



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Current status in National CAP Strategic plans:

- Delay of **GAEC 2 “Protection of wetlands and peatlands”** to 2025 in many MS
- Soft regulations for GAEC 2 in MS (continued maintenance of drainage systems)
- **Few specific intervention** for rewetting and paludiculture (EcoSchemes or AECS)
- **EU Court of Auditors** stressed in subsequent reports that CAP needs to deliver more on climate, esp. with peatlands / organic soils
- Member States should strengthen support for peatland rewetting & paludiculture to reach LULUCF climate targets

→ **CAP counteracts EU Green Deal when it comes to peatlands**

Source:

Midler (IEEP) et al. (2023): <https://ieep.eu/publications/environmental-and-climate-assessments-of-cap-strategic-plans/> (focus on France, Spain, Poland and Germany)

EU Nature Restoration Law & peatlands



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- Instrument for **EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy**
- Recognition of **importance for biodiversity and climate** (recital 54)
- Emphasis on alternative use such as **paludiculture** (recital 55) → it's not about "renaturation"
- **Peatlands under agricultural use (Art. 9.4)** prescribes restoration of:
 - 30 % by 2030, ¼ rewetted
 - 50 % by 2040, ½ rewetted
 - 70 % by 2050, ½ rewetted
- Flexibilities (other land uses like forestry, peat extraction)



Brussels, 22.6.2022
COM(2022) 304 final
2022/0195 (COD)

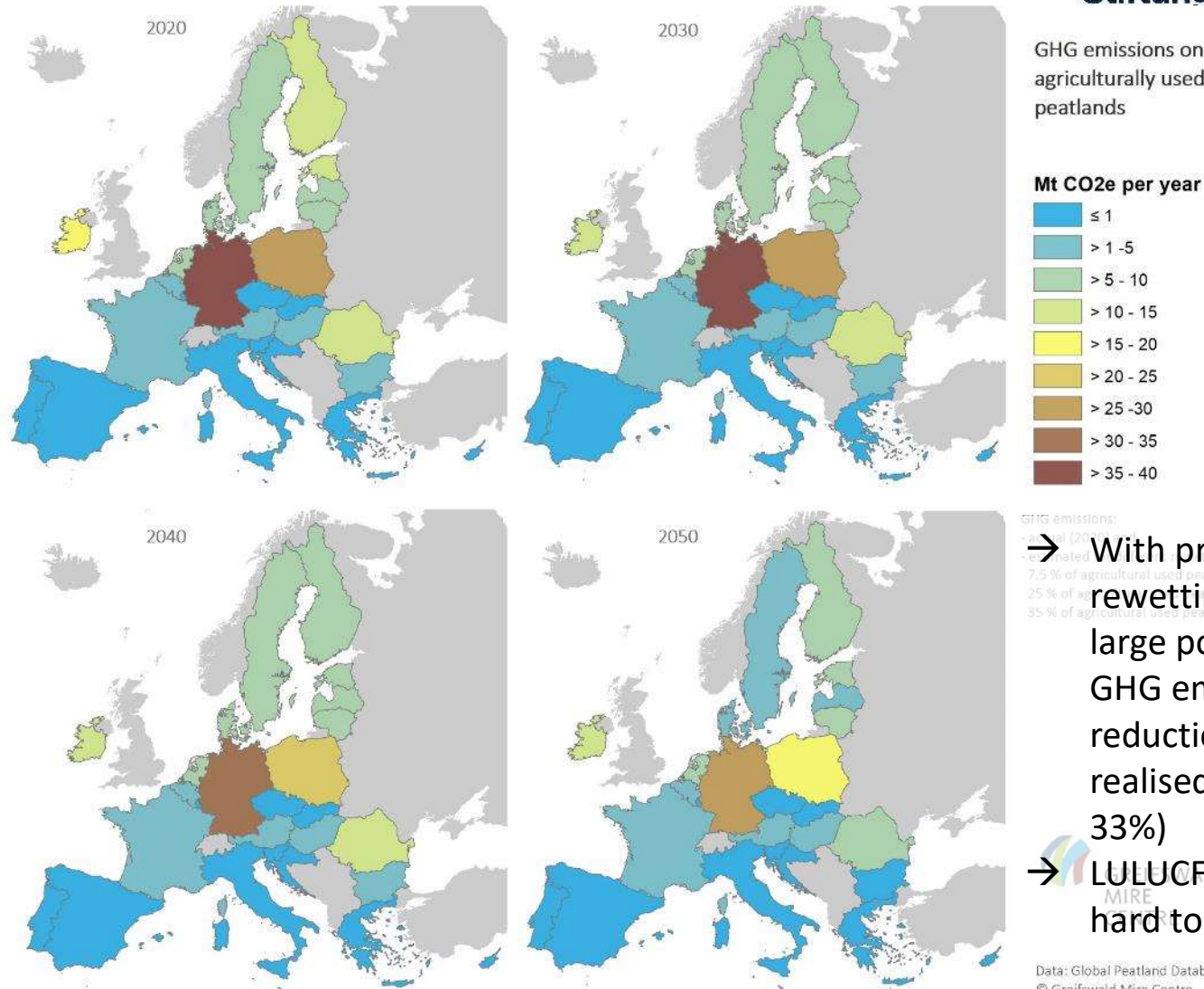
EU Nature Restoration Law & peatlands



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Horizon Green Deal Project



Building legacy across

- 15 Knowledge Sites
- 6 Action Sites
- 14 Partner Countries



WET HORIZONS

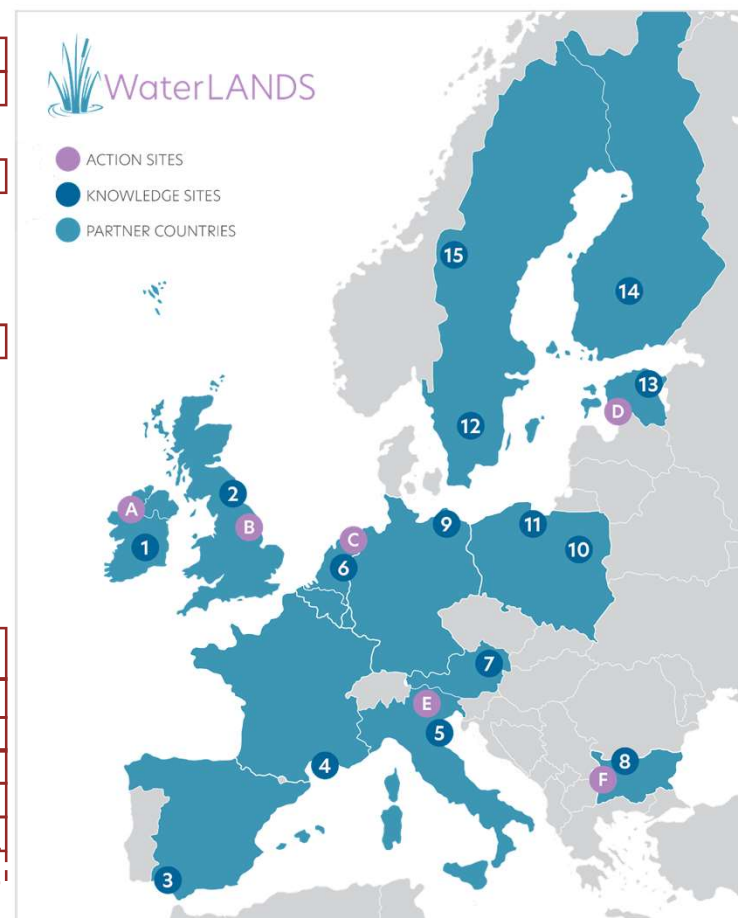


ACTION SITES

- A** LIFE-IP Wild Atlantic Nature (Ireland)
- B** Yorkshire ICASP (The United Kingdom)
- C** Eems-Dollard Estuary (The Netherlands)
- D** Pärnu Catchment (Estonia)
- E** Venice Lagoon (Italy)
- F** Dragoman Marsh (Bulgaria)

KNOWLEDGE SITES

- 1** Abbeylax Bog (Ireland)
- 2** Water@Leeds (The United Kingdom)
- 3** Doñana Wetland (Spain)
- 4** Camargue (France)
- 5** Venice Lagoon (Italy)
- 6** Engbertsdijkvenen (The Netherlands)
- 7** Landscape Finance Lab (Austria)
- 8** Belene Island (Bulgaria)
- 9** M. Succow Foundation (Germany)
- 10** Wetlands around Warsaw (Poland)
- 11** Mazury Forest Mire (Poland)
- 12** Store Mosse (Sweden)
- 13** Sirtsi and Tudusoo Mires (Estonia)
- 14** Siikaneva (Finland)
- 15** Jämtland Mountains (Sweden)



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Rewetted peatland sites in Europe...



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...are wet islands in drained landscapes today...
Green Deal policies need to change this in future!





Thanks for your attention!

Jan Peters
Succow Foundation, Partner in the GMC
jan.peters@succow-stiftung.de

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