



# Cross-sector collaboration for promoting biodiversity in agricultural landscapes: the case of a local bottom-up initiative in Southern Lower Saxony

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More Than Just Flower Strips - European Conference, Frankfurt, 20. May 2025

# Agenda

1. Project background:  
KOOPERATIV

4. Success of the initiative

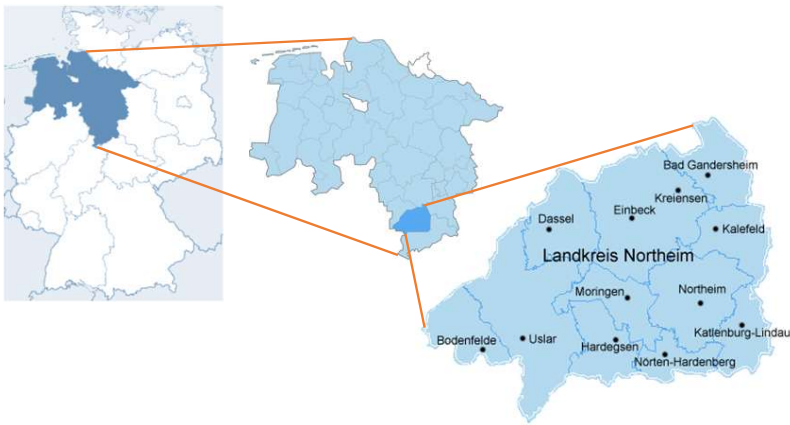
2. Local bottom-up governance  
in Southern Lower Saxony

5. Ways forward

3. Cross-sector collaboration in  
the „Round Table“



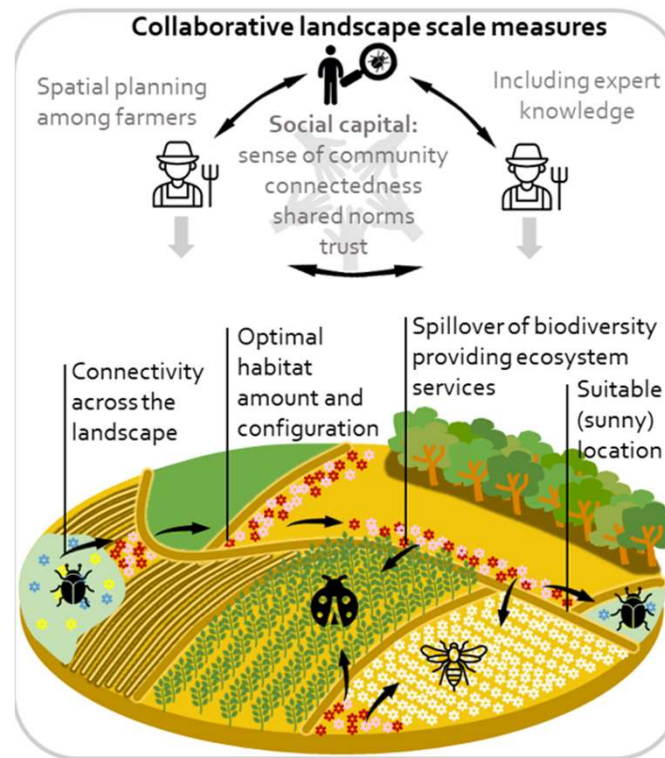
# 1. Project background: KOOOPERATIV – Promoting biodiversity at the landscape level



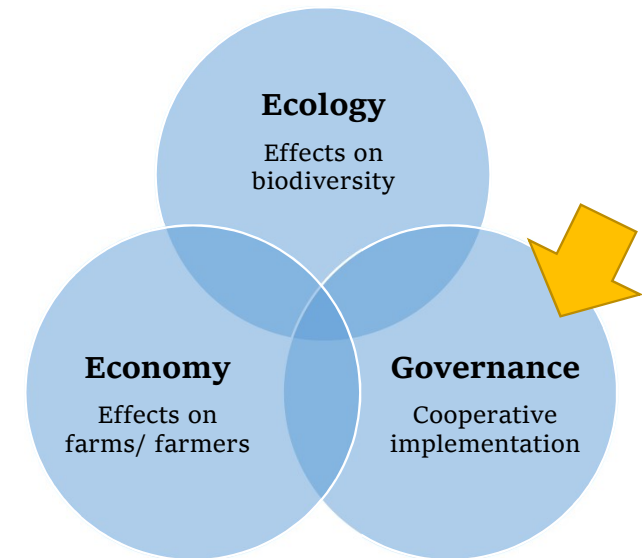
41 farms



ca. 250ha



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# 1. Work package Governance

1

Farmer motivation to participate in cooperative agri-environment and climate measures

2

Relational values for landscape-scale conservation in agricultural landscapes

3

Analysis of a local cross-sector network for enhancing biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes

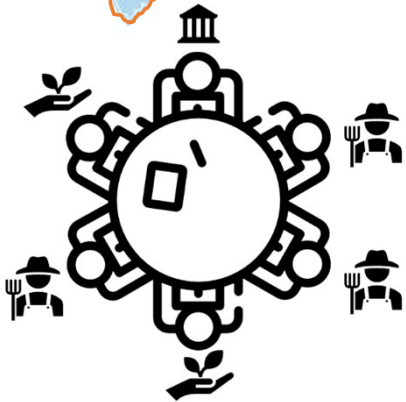




## 2. Local bottom-up governance for promoting species diversity in Uslar, Lower Saxony



*The Round Table for Species Diversity* is a local bottom-up, cross-sector initiative in the agri-environmental context focusing on biodiversity conservation in Uslar



*The Round Table in action*

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### 3. Cross-sector collaboration in the Round Table for Species Diversity

- Cross-sector exchange of perspectives, knowledge, expertise, skills, experiences, and resources
- Following own agendas, but reconciling different values, objectives, and interests
- Joint decision-making: aiming to reach consensus
- Lively and free-flowing discussions, to which everyone can contribute ideas or share opinions
- Mutual trust and respect
- Inherently collaborative approach to biodiversity conservation
- Conflicts based on diverging interests are addressed by trying to find solutions that everyone can agree with



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## 4. To what extent can the Round Table be considered transformative?

Multifunctional interventions	Integration across scales	Potential for social tipping points	Engagement of multiple actors	Equitable approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overall, interventions are designed to be environmentally effective, societally relevant, and compatible with agricultural interests</li> <li>- Interventions address multiple landscape problems simultaneously</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Activities limited to Uslar</li> <li>- Some level of scaling out, in, and up, but only regional impact</li> <li>- Diverse barriers (e.g., lack of authority) limit capacity to act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Influence on the perception of biodiversity conservation in the region</li> <li>- Efforts to engage younger people have not proved effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participation of diverse actor groups allows for exchange of diverse perspectives</li> <li>- Everyone is welcome</li> <li>- Decreasing number of participants in regular meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participants can equally contribute ideas/ share opinions</li> <li>- Planning of interventions in a way that most local actors benefit, but some trade-offs exist</li> </ul>

Huber et al., forthcoming a

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## 4. Success factors



Facilitators of collaborative conservation efforts, i.e., highly motivated key actors (Schüler et al. 2025)



High willingness to collaborate and engage in biodiversity conservation among local population (Huber et al., forthcoming b)



Voluntary, non-hierarchical, bottom-up character of the initiative (Gernert et al. 2018)



Institutionalized setting for dialogue and exchange between actors (Schüler et al. 2025)



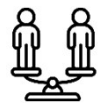
Mutual trust and respect facilitate consensus-building in diverse groups (Chapin et al. 2012)



Effective external communication shapes public opinion, and political and media discourses on biodiversity conservation (Buijs et al. 2023)



Cross-sector collaboration allows for pooling capacities (Martens et al. 2023)



Aiming for just distribution of benefits and costs increases societal acceptance of conservation activities (Fook 2015)

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## 5. Ways forward

### Scaling out

- Increase size of Round Table
- Support replication in other municipalities

through marketing, awareness creation, education, and capacity-building

- Connect with similar initiatives through partnering

### Scaling up

- Gain institutional support
- Influence policy-making

through explicitly reaching out to specific audiences, strategically mobilizing powerful actors

### Scaling deep

- Mobilize broader societal support for biodiversity conservation

through awareness creation, education, engaging people with nature, and engaging with like-minded social movements



**Thank you for  
your attention!**



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