

# Accounting for pastoralists in Germany

## Data situation, numbers and contributions

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# German pastoralism summarized

- Three types of pastoralists
- Small number:  $\leq 1\%$  of farmers
- Contribution to the GDP accordingly small
- But: Environmental contribution disproportionately high and very positive!
- No official definition
- Lots of data, but not specific to pastoralists



# Livestock in Germany

Most livestock is managed intensively or semi-intensively

Animal numbers (Nov/Dec 2017)

All cattle  
12.4 million

Dairy  
4.2 million

Sheep  
1.8 million

Pigs  
27.6 million

Chickens (2016)  
173.5 million

**Mobile herders keep 52-70% of the sheep + about < 0.5% of the cattle and some goats**

# Three types of pastoralism in Germany

Location-bound  
herding  
*Standortgebundene  
Hütehaltung*

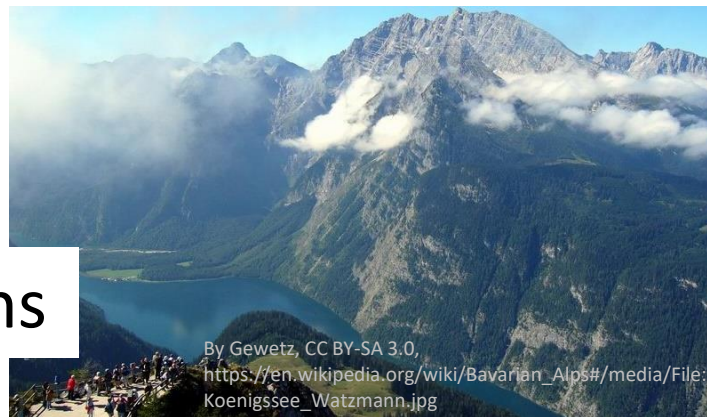
N & E Germany and other parts  
Grazing in large radius around homestead, dykes  
Sheep + some goats

Migratory sheep  
keeping  
*Wanderschafhaltung*

Mostly S of River Main  
Seasonal transhumance (200 km +)  
Sheep + some goats

Mountain farming  
*Almwirtschaft*

Far south: Alps  
Summer: grazing in mountains. Winter: in valleys  
Mostly cattle, some sheep and goats



# Pastoralist numbers

## Pastoralists

- $\leq 1\%$  of German farmers

**1,000** shepherds with  $\geq 500$  sheep  
(2016)

- mostly full-timers and mobile
- 100-200 (?) transhumant

**900** shepherds with 200-500 sheep

- often part-timers, partially mobile

**900** mountain herders (2001, 2018?)



# Economic contribution

Direct economic contribution of mobile herding is very small

## Products

### Shepherds

Meat, wool, milk, dung

Only meat included in official statistics

Wool prices barely cover costs of shearing

Dung rarely sold

### Alpine herders

Mostly cheese

Some fresh milk and dairy products for tourists



# Economic contribution

1,000 full-time shepherds:

**Sheep meat:** €82 million  
(= 0.3% of total meat value)

**Wool:** €1.9 million (estimate)

**Dung:** €9.2 million (estimate)

**No data**

- Sheep/goat milk
- Alpine production





# Ecological contribution

Far more important than their direct economic contribution!

## Indirect impacts of extensive grazing

- Landscape maintenance  
=> attractiveness for tourism
- Biodiversity conservation
- Breed maintenance
- Prevention of erosion, floods and avalanches
- Water quality
- Carbon sequestration



# Area grazed

**2017:**

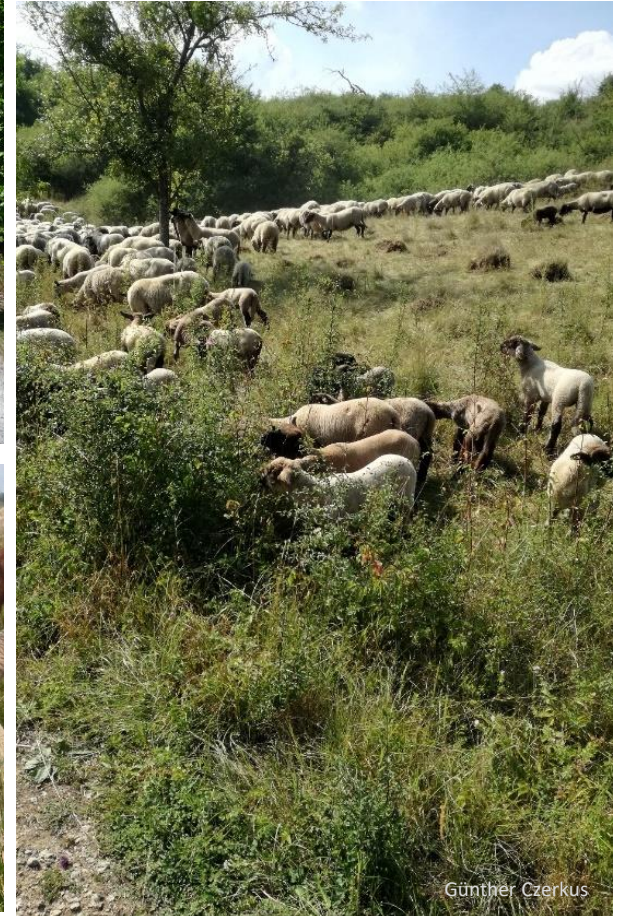
Germany 357,582 km<sup>2</sup>

13% of this are permanent grassland  
= 4,715,000 ha

**1,000 shepherds + 900 alpine  
herders**

graze ca **200,330 ha** (estimate)

≤ 1% of the farmers maintain  
**4.2% of permanent grassland**



# Ecological contribution

Net value of **maintaining 1 ha grassland** with high natural value compared to ploughing it up

= **€1,291 - €2,171**

without pollination, tourist attractiveness and related jobs! (Source: Bundesamt für Naturschutz 2014).

**1,000 shepherds and 900 alpine herders**

=> **200,330 ha permanent grassland**

=> **annual value between €260 and €435 million**



# Definitions

No officially recognized definitions

**State-level definitions** affect pensions and insurance

e.g., mobile shepherds pay higher liability insurance premiums

**Shepherds' definitions of 'Wanderschäfer' (mobile shepherds)**

- Mobile herding
- Grazing at least in part on land owned by someone else



# Data on livestock

## **HIT/HI-Tier database**

*Herkunftssicherungs- und Informationssystem für Tiere*

### **Traceability and information system for animals**

Registers all individual cattle, sheep, goats and pigs

Movements between farms

Use of antibiotics

## **Federal Statistics Office**

“Genesis” databank

## **Livestock insurance funds**

*Tierseuchenkasse*

Periodic livestock population surveys

## **Eurostat**

## **16 federal states**

State-wide databases

State agricultural chambers

Sheep reports: Bavarian Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg, North Rhine-Westphalia

## **Commissioned and academic studies**

### **Literature on**

Sheep keeping

Landscape ecology and management

Dyke grazing

Mountain farming

# Data on pastoralists

Huge amounts of data on

- Animals
- Enterprises
- Land

But **no data**

- on extensive management systems
- specific to pastoralists

**Information on pastoralism scattered in many different sources**

# Improving the data situation

**Establish coordinating body**  
for research on pastoralism

Lobby for **more research** on

- pastoralism
- impact of extensive grazing on
  - biodiversity
  - the water-filtration capacity of grazed versus cropped areas
  - water quality and purification costs
  - dyke maintenance and flood protection.



# Things that would help pastoralists

Adequate payments for ecological services

Less bureaucracy

Marketing support

Appropriate legislation

Buy their delicious products!





Thank you

