



Sustainable performance accounting shows its international potential: 32 farms in 9 countries now have results. The journey for rewarding resilient agriculture worldwide has started.

Biodynamic Federation Demeter International and Regionalwert Leistungen have collaborated to make socioecological practices in agriculture across the world visible and remunerable.

THE GOAL

Revealing that there is more than just nutritional value in Demeter products – that was the major goal of the project. The umbrella organisation BFDI represents biodynamic agriculture across borders and sees it as the most regenerative and resilient way to run a farm.

Holistic farm management combats climate change and contributes to food sovereignty.

The aim of the collaborative project was to determine the concrete financial value of these practices for the environment and the common good and to communicate these to the public and private sector.

PROJECT INITIATORS BIODYNAMIC FEDERATION – DEMETER INTERNATIONAL



BFDI is the non-profit umbrella organisation of Demeter, coordinating independent biodynamic member associations and farmers in 63 countries, of which five advisors from Latin America were directly involved in this project. From food to textiles, it is one of the largest organic producers in the world. Founded in 1997, it has over 7,000 licensees on 250,000 hectares of land.

PROJECT PARTNERS



SEKEM in Egypt has been carrying out economic activity within the framework of ecological and social criteria since 1977.



EGYPT

Since 1994, the Egyptian Biodynamic Association aims to certify and support biodynamic and organic farmers in Egypt, to improve their knowledge and their marketing opportunities.



The Asociación para la Agricultura Biodinámica en España was founded in 1987 with the purpose of promoting, guiding and protecting the biodynamic method of agriculture, its practices and principles.

As the oldest organic association, the centre of Demeter's philosophy lies the whole, living organism of the farm. The primary drive to farm biodynamically still comes from an intrinsic motivation rather than a marketing strategy. However, today a different basis of communication is needed to spread the Demeter approach.

For Demeter production, holistic development is at its core and often come with a higher price since it does not use the mainstream inputs of industrial agriculture. That's why transparency about the added value of agricultural products is becoming increasingly important for marketing.

So, BFDI found itself asking the question: how can we concisely show that biodynamic farming methods have added value for people and nature?

The goal is clear: instead of products getting more expensive for consumers, the services associated with agricultural production should be given a financial value that can be rewarded in a different way. That way, farmers are incentivised to operate more sustainably, but also to remain competitive with their market prices.



CALCULATION OF TOTAL ADDED VALUE

647,808 USD

on 344 hectares in Spain

2,371,117 USD

on 1,536 hectares in Latin America

76,364 USD

on 249 hectares in Egypt

THE RESULTS

The regional value performance calculation (Regionalwert Leistungsrechnung) has been in use in Germany since 2021, which served as the building block to create international versions for this project.

Workshops with agricultural experts, farmers and consumer representatives assisted in developing new, country-specific key performance indicators. This also allowed for regional adaptations, depending on the ecological or societal conditions in the 9 different countries.

For the data entry, 32 farmers in Spain, Latin America and Egypt answered over a hundred questions across nine categories of sustainability in an online form. Based on this, a proposed value for farmers' contributions to the environment and the common good could be calculated.

SPAIN

Farms in Spain contribute strongly to socioecological services related to climate and water as well as soil fertility. Aspects that have an influence on these positive results are: a high share of the farm's own nitrogen through animal husbandry, many hectares with cultural practices for water conservation, and a high proportion of areas with measures against erosion on slopes (e.g. with soil cover and no driving). There is potential for development in the transfer of knowledge, for example in the further training of farmers.



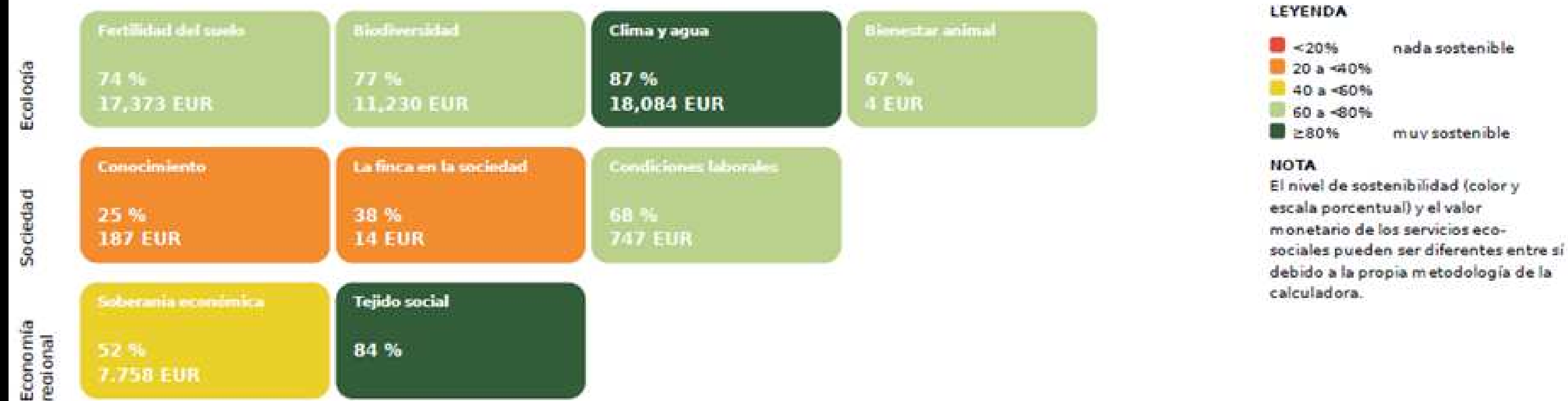
Resultados promedio para las fincas (12)

Actividades productivas: Cultivo de frutales, cultivo de olivar, hortalizas, viñedos, aloe vera, setas y ganadería
Tipo de ganadería: Vacuno de carne y ganado ovino



Servicios eco-sociales de las fincas

En el periodo año natural 2021, las 12 fincas han obtenido los resultados que se muestran en las categorías siguientes. Las casillas muestran una evaluación de los servicios eco-sociales en una escala de colores y porcentajes, combinada con una evaluación monetaria.



The dashboard depicts the average farm that participated in this project.



LATIN AMERICA

The Latin American farms show particularly high contributions to socioecological services in the category biodiversity (88,761 USD), followed by economic sovereignty. For biodiversity, the businesses take strong action in the restoration of nature reserves. In terms of societal contributions, the turnover rate of employees is low, meaning that on-farm knowledge is sustained. Within regional economy, there is a high number of measures to retain cultural assets (such as preservation of terraces or regional species).



La calculadora de servicios eco-sociales

Resultados promedio para las fincas

Resultados promedio para las fincas (9)

Actividades productivas: Cultivo de frutales (como aguacate, banano y cafetales), cultivo de forrajes, hortalizas, viñedos, ganadería y reproducción de semillas

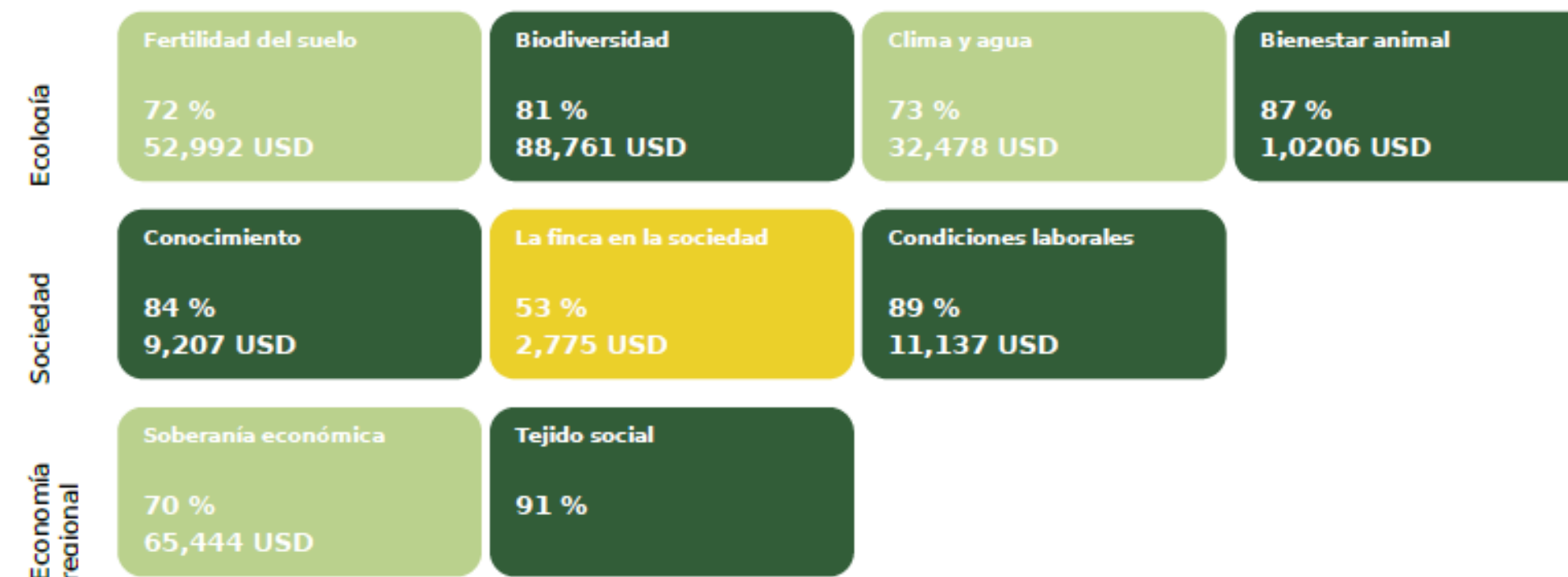
Tipo de ganadería: Vacuno de carne, vacuno de leche, ganado caprino, ganado ovino y aves de corral



Servicios eco-sociales de las fincas

En el periodo año natural 2021, las 7 fincas han obtenido los resultados que se muestran en las categorías siguientes.

Las casillas muestran una evaluación de los servicios eco-sociales en una escala de colores y porcentajes, combinada con una evaluación monetaria.



LEYENDA

- <20% nada sostenible
- 20 a <40%
- 40 a <60%
- 60 a <80%
- ≥80% muy sostenible

NOTA

El nivel de sostenibilidad (color y escala porcentual) y el valor monetario de los servicios eco-sociales pueden ser diferentes entre sí debido a la propia metodología de la calculadora.

The dashboard depicts the average farm that participated in this project.

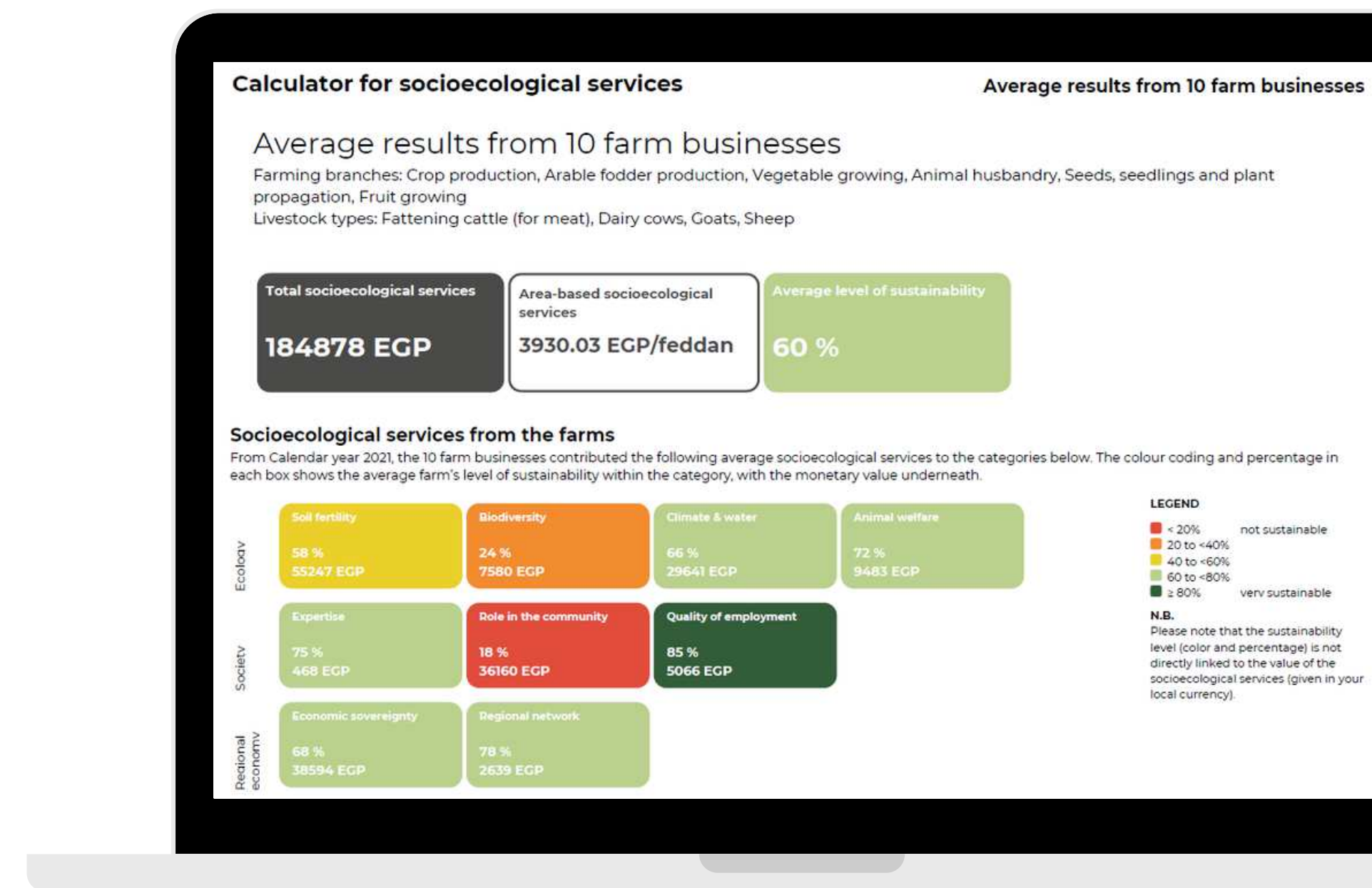
SUMMARY

The results show that the regional value performance calculation can be adapted to different conditions in different regions. It is valuable for identifying strengths and areas of potential, which makes it an interesting tool for the internal and strategic development of a farm. In addition, the services provided are made transparent and given a monetary value. A total of 120 key performance indicators were created,, each with its own threshold values for the level of sustainability and a monetary value to show sustainable performance.

The tool can now be used by advisors, institutions or organisations that want to use a system of incentives to improve regional climate resilience and promote sustainable agriculture.

EGYPT

The highest contribution to socioecological services (on average 57,168 EGP) came from the soil fertility category. However, the moderate sustainability level for this category shows that other aspects of soil fertility still have potential for development. The highest level of sustainability (85%) was achieved in the category quality of employment. On the contrary, the sustainability level for role in the community is very low, due to the low participation of women in decision-making and little time invested in building community relations.



Calculator for socioecological services

Average results from 10 farm businesses

Average results from 10 farm businesses

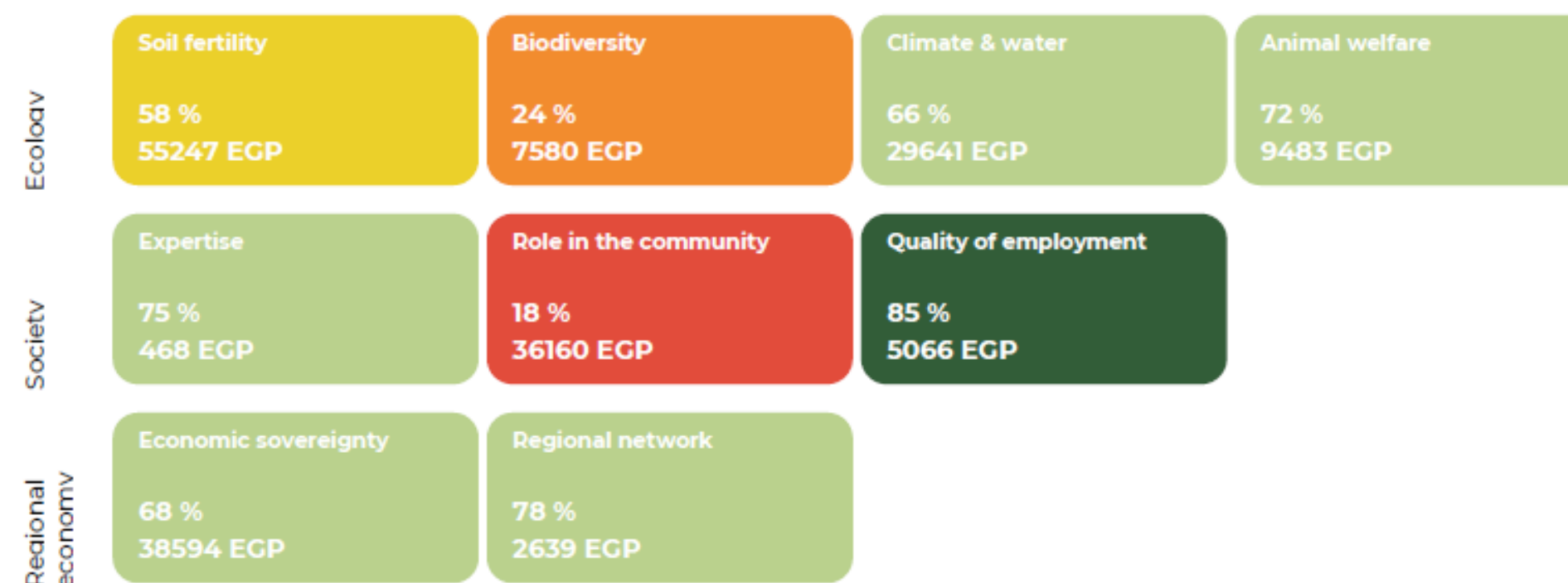
Farming branches: Crop production, Arable fodder production, Vegetable growing, Animal husbandry, Seeds, seedlings and plant propagation, Fruit growing

Livestock types: Fattening cattle (for meat), Dairy cows, Goats, Sheep



Socioecological services from the farms

From Calendar year 2021, the 10 farm businesses contributed the following average socioecological services to the categories below. The colour coding and percentage in each box shows the average farm's level of sustainability within the category, with the monetary value underneath.



LEGEND

- < 20% not sustainable
- 20 to <40%
- 40 to <60%
- 60 to <80%
- ≥ 80% very sustainable

N.B.

Please note that the sustainability level (color and percentage) is not directly linked to the value of the socioecological services (given in your local currency).

The dashboard depicts the average farm that participated in this project.

TRANSPARENCY AT ALL STAGES

BFDI supports fair exchange and continuous development. The principle of holistic management is central to this.

In order to underline these efforts and practices, Demeter has decided to use sustainable performance accounting. A 360 degree view of business performance based on the 120 key performance indicators developed in this project opens up new possibilities for transparency and cooperation. For Demeter, this is an excellent opportunity to show and share values openly, comprehensively and concretely.

1

DEVELOPMENT OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Development of the socioecological key performance indicators with local actors through workshops with agricultural experts and experienced farmers from the project countries. Stakeholders were invited to participate in discussions to determine the content of the indicator set.

2

SETTING THRESHOLDS AND MONETISATION LEVELS

Based on the results of the discussions and after researching current studies as well as legal requirements in the countries, the threshold values and the value of the individual practices and services were determined. The "Regionalwert" methodology places particular emphasis on the integration of these parameters. In this way, a level of sustainability and its sustainable contribution (the monetary value) can be determined for each key performance indicator.

3

TEST PHASES IN THE COUNTRIES

The data was entered into an online form by about 32 biodynamic practitioners from 9 countries. After the test phase, the feedback was incorporated into the tool.

What's next on the collaborative journey?

Demeter products should not stray far from conventional product market prices, but the services provided by these farm businesses must be put on a market elsewhere.

For Demeter, one thing is certain: everyone can take responsibility for their consumption by making a contribution to regenerative farming. It is not just about CO₂ compensation – that's too short-sighted. Regeneration is about complex organisms that provide multifunctional services: water and soil fertility, conserving biodiversity, securing locals' access to food, creating jobs, and much more...

Demeter farms are well positioned to make this regeneration possible at the whole-farm level. Sustainable performance accounting shows the services contributed by farms across the various socioecological dimensions in detail, offering great transparency.



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Every human being and every human activity consumes resources. Every consumption is sustainable if the resource can regenerate.

Christoph Simpfendörfer,
General Secretary BFDI

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ABOUT US

We make sustainability in agriculture visible and give it a monetary value. With this approach, we can finally start to reward practices in agriculture which contribute to the common good, improve the environment and strengthen the local economy.

www.regionalwert-leistungen.de



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