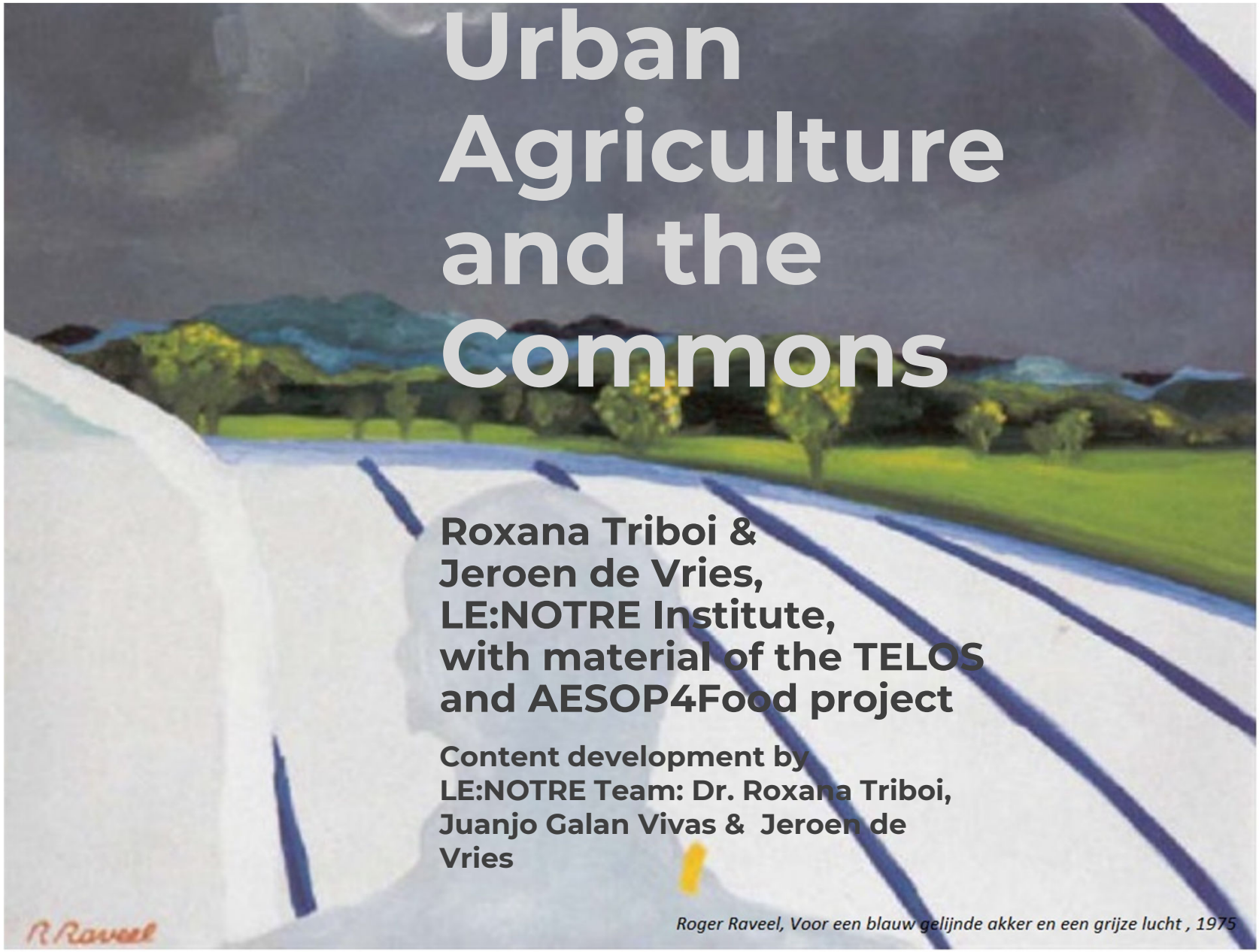
Urban Agriculture and the Commons



Roxana Triboi & Jeroen de Vries, LE:NOTRE Institute, with material of the TELOS and AESOP4Food project

Content development by LE:NOTRE Team: Dr. Roxana Triboi, Juanjo Galan Vivas & Jeroen de Vries

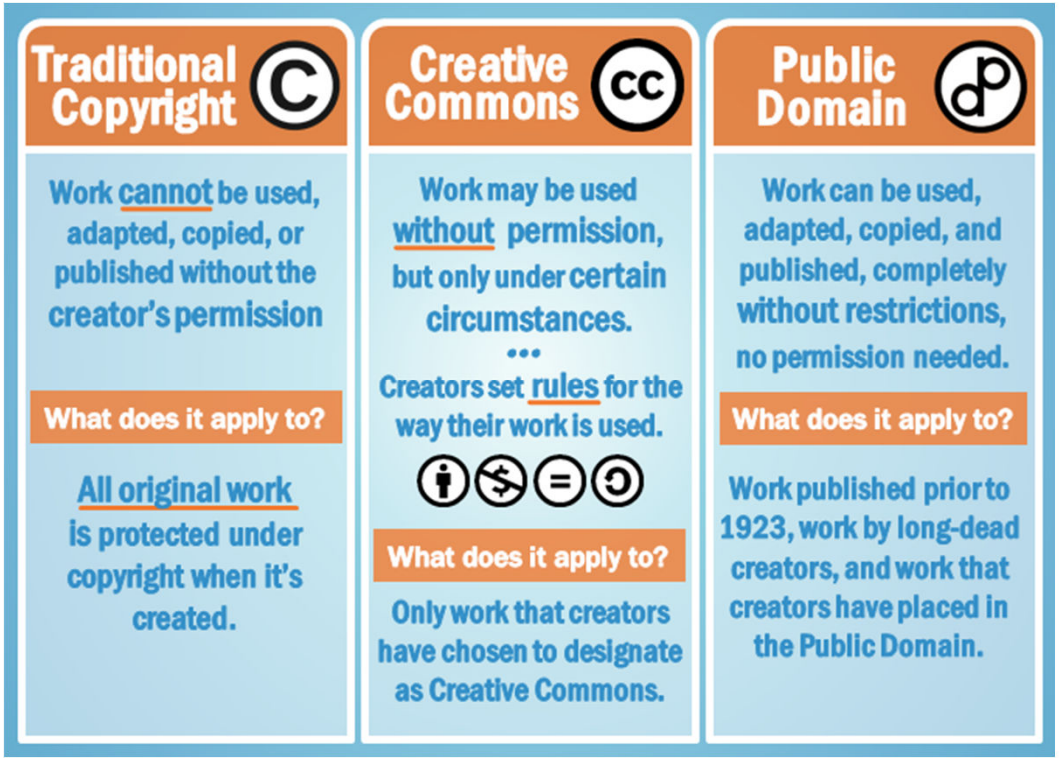
Roger Raveel, Voor een blauw gelijnde akker en een grijze lucht , 1975

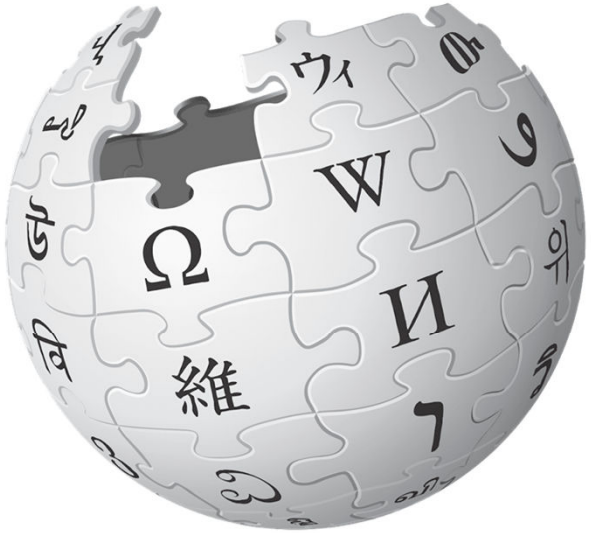
Lecture 7

November, 2026

MLA Vilnius Tech

IMMATERIAL COMMONS: KNOWLEDGE





WIKIPEDIA

The principles of commons

1 Principles of the commons

Communal and shared use of **lands** or of **goods**

The commons is the **material landscape of common lands** shared by a community of commoners with **customary use rights** in the land

Creating a community through the shared use of landscape

Recreational, restorative, economic and democratic value

Menatti, 2017; p 652 – referring to Olwig 2013, 20.



Source photo: https://www.commonland.com/

Commons *from latin communis*

1 Principles of the commons

A means to generate social processes that can **maintain, reproduce and reinvent** our lives in times of uncertainty

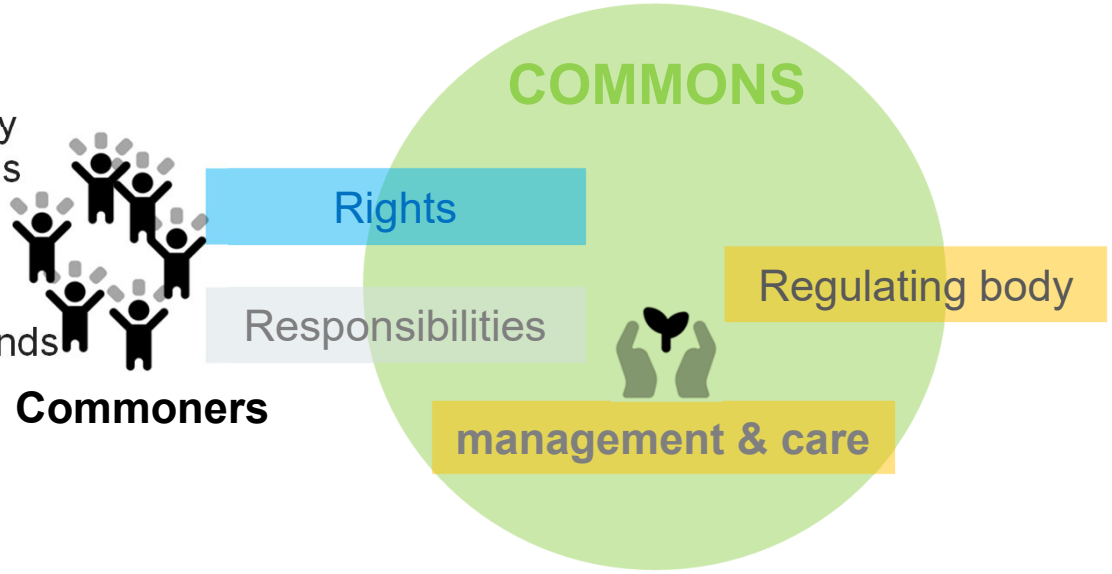
A common pool of resources containing all the creation of **nature and society** that we inherit jointly and freely and hold in the trust for future generations

Governance as well as **relationships:**

community ⟷ resources on which it depends

humans ⟷ nonhumans

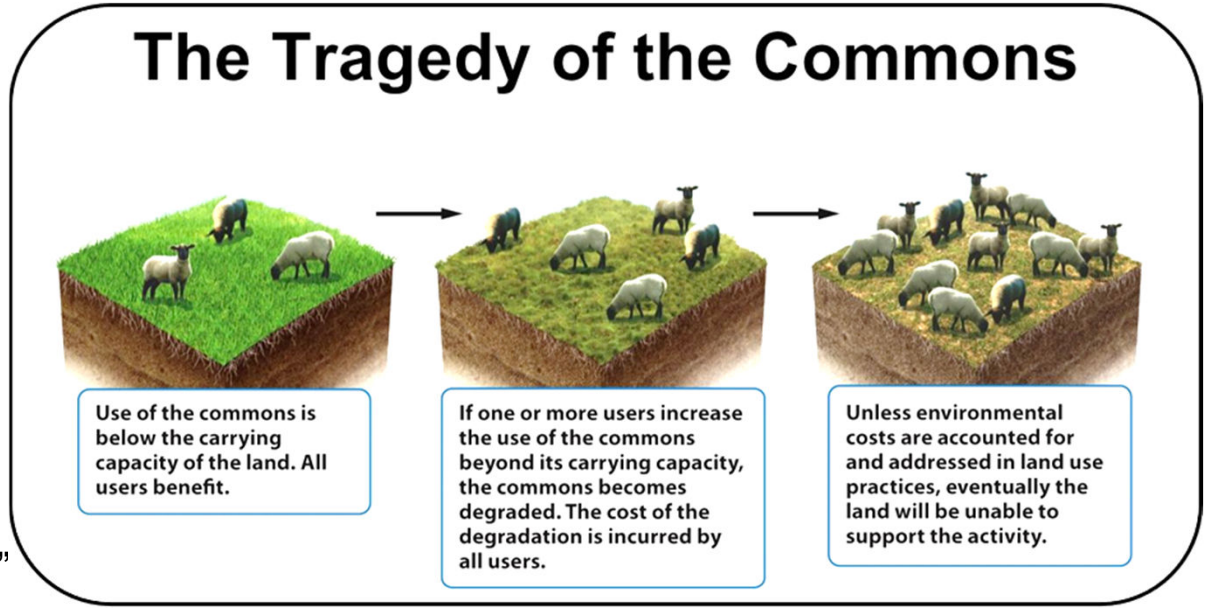
humans ⟷ nature



Urban Commons Research Collective, 2022, p16

MAIN CRITICISM TO THE COMMONS

Tragedy of the Commons' is an economic and environmental science problem where individuals have access to a shared resource and act in their own interest, at the expense of other individuals.
This can result in **overconsumption, underinvestment**, and **depletion of resources** through uncoordinated actions.

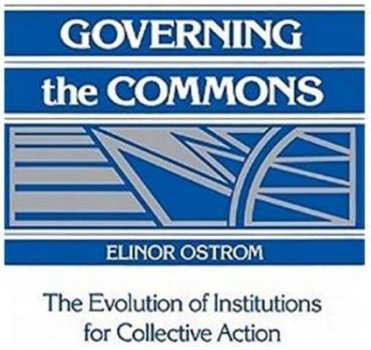


Garrett Hardin, 1968
"The Tragedy of the Commons"

IN DEFENCE OF THE COMMONS

Ending The Tragedy of The Commons | Elinor Ostrom (Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, 2009)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qr5Q3VvpI7w





Intergenerational and collective thinking:
eight principles by Ostrom for sustainable and equitable governing of commons in a community

1. Define clear **group boundaries**
2. Match **rules governing** use of common goods to local needs and conditions
3. Ensure that those affected by the rules can **participate** in **modifying the rules**
4. Make sure the **rule-making rights** of community members are respected by **outside authorities**
5. Develop a system, carried out by community members, for **monitoring members' behavior**
6. Use graduated **sanctions for rule violators**
7. Provide accessible, low-cost means for **dispute resolution**
8. Build **responsibility for governing** the common resource in nested tiers from the **lowest level up to the entire interconnected system**

Landscape as a common good



Common **good** (singular)
something belonging to the community and endowed with a political appeal

Common **goods** (plural)
common pool resources: Earth's ecological resources: water, air, etcetera

Menatti, 2017; p 649, photo: Commonland, year report 2020

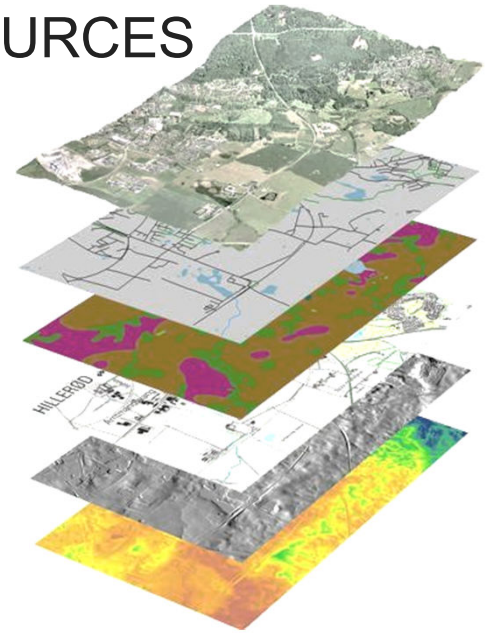
LANDSCAPE AS A COMMON?

MATERIAL RESOURCES:
- Water
- Fertile soils
- Space / Land (rural-urban)
- Forests / pastures

SERVICES & GOODS:
- Sharing economy

INMATERIAL RESOURCES:
- Knowledge

COLLECTIVE AND COORDINATED USE AND MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES



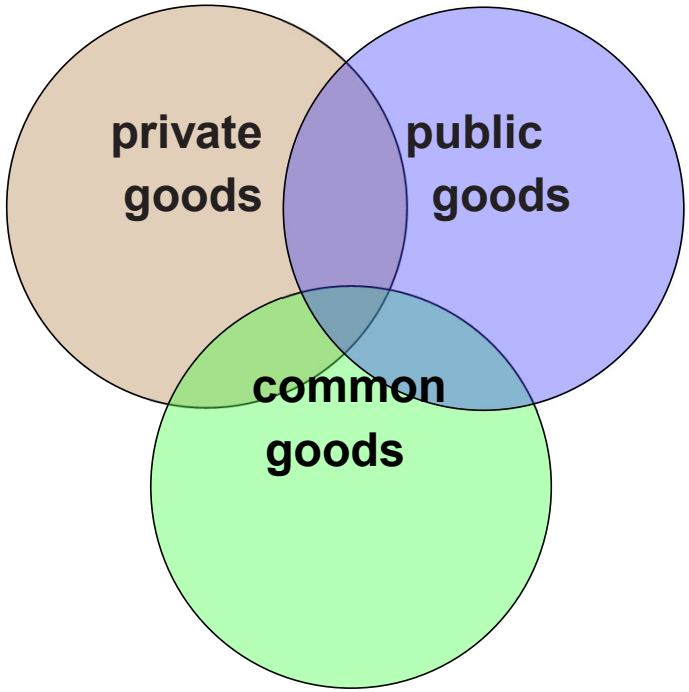


ECONOMY: PRIVATE, PUBLIC & COMMON GOODS

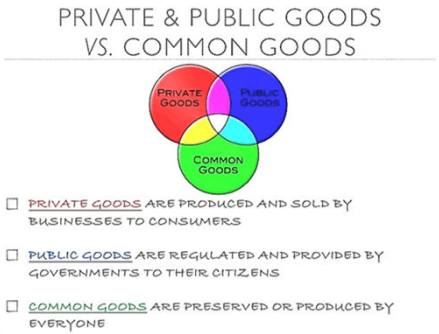
Private goods are produced and sold by businesses to consumers

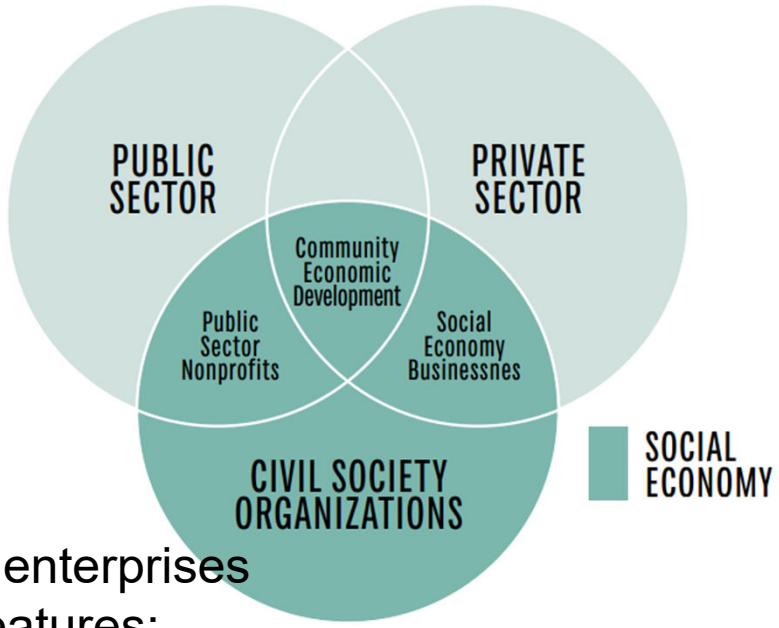
Public goods are regulated and provided by governments to their citizens

Common goods are preserved or produced by everyone or by a defined community for the benefit



SOCIAL ECONOMY





SOCIAL ECONOMY formed by a rich diversity of enterprises and organisations sharing common values and features:

- Primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital
- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic governance
- Combination of interests of members/users and/or the general interest
- Defence and application of the principles of solidarity and responsibility
- Autonomous management and independence from public authorities
- Reinvestment of at least most of the profits to carry out sustainable development objectives, services of interest to members or of general interest

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_economy

Right to landscape

- right to a **perceived landscape**. How people perceive landscapes determines their right to have those landscapes. In this case the right to a landscape can be considered a collective right (ref European Landscape Convention)
- right **per se**. Landscape as a complex ecological milieu, with animals and plants -> right to the environment.
- framework for addressing **human rights**. In this case landscape is considered a substantive space for actual human rights.

Menatti, 2017; p 667, point 2 referring to Egoz et al. 2011

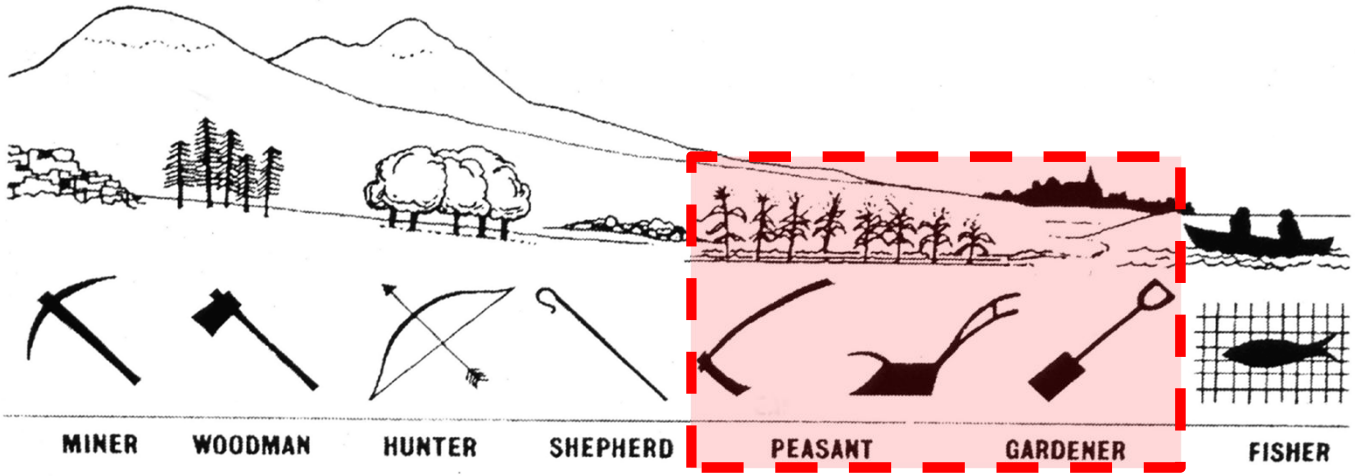
Access to land – right of way for walking

Country		Access	No access	Other rights
Sweden	Allemansratt	Countryside, open uncultivated land, forests, water and foreshore	Developed land, private gardens, cultivated land in summer	Light a fire, collect wood, berries, herbs
Norway	Allemansratt			
Finland	Jokamie-henoikeus		Cultivated land in summer	Fire only after permission, picking for direct consumption
Iceland		Open land in countryside, cultivated land in winter		
Scotland		Legal right for walking and recreation		
Switzerland	Betretungsrecht	All cultivated open land, forest, woodlands.		
Germany	Betretungsrecht	Forests, unenclosed land, foreshore, footpaths in farmland	Enclosed farmland, areas of nature conservation	
Austria	Wegefreiheit	Forests and pastures, highly organised network of footpaths.		Cycling, horse riding overnight camping requires permission
England	Right to roam on foot	Open land, foreshore and coastal perimeter.	Cultivated farmland, developed land, private parks and gardens	
Denmark		Public forests, beaches and coastlines, state owned land	Landownership and privacy are prevalent	
France		Linear passages in agricultural land, National Parks, beaches and coastlines 3 meters wide above the high tide line.		
Netherlands		Linear paths, Recreation areas, Forests.		
Ireland		National parks and some of the forest		

Source: Meeres 2014

Rural Commons

Who benefits, who cares for it,
who manages, who owns



"Valley Section" by Patrick Geddes (19th century): Design with Nature, source: https://transect.org/

Building material
Firewood
Nuts
Fruits
Herbs
Mushrooms
Meat
Milk
Crops
Vegetables
Fish

= not common



Urban commons - Right to city

broader array of resources both material and material

open system: transforming its users and shape relations based on collaboration and solidarity

can embody local forms of resistance and cooperation to make claims on urban resources and city spaces

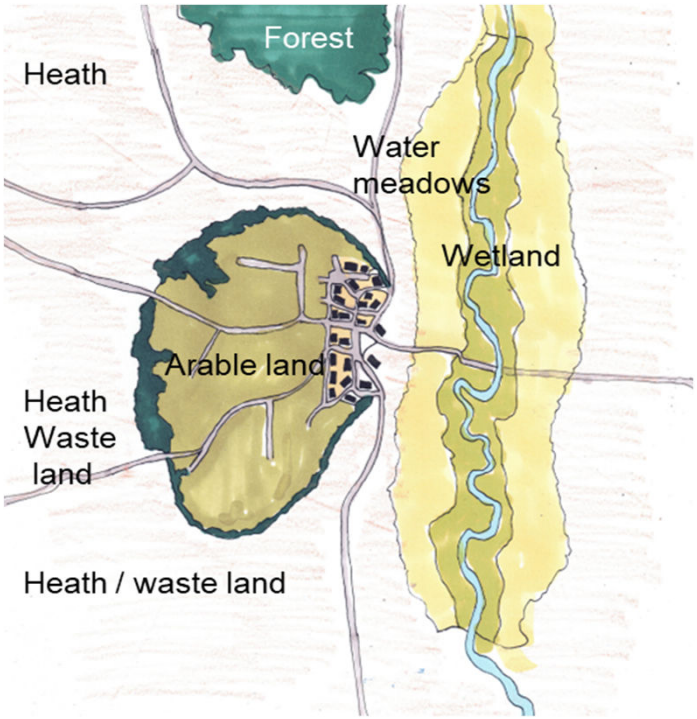
a way of resisting privatisation or/ and commodification

https://www.publicspace.org/works/-/project/j281-r-urban-network-of-urban-commons

3 Types of Commons

Development Western Europe

- Small settlements
- Common central area
- Ownership of plots near village
- Different types of ‘common land’
- Ownership by landlord, later public authories or not defined: waste land
- New cultivations, enclosures
- Impact of fertilizers, barbed wire to enclose
- Overexploitation: forests / heathland
- Losing rights by residents
- Enclosure of land still going on



Drawing J. de Vries,
adapted from: http: knapzakroutes pietsmulders.nl

Commons in rural Romania

Small Community of 30 families in a valley in Carpathians mountains

<u>Commons</u>
River banks
Circulations path
Public space
Pastures/grazing space
Woods





- ➔ 3 Days of work (individually) per cow / pasture management
- ➔ Payment of a common cow shepherd for all village
- ➔ Voluntary work of each family ensures for herds
- ➔ Pastoral management of sheeps in the mountains

Development Central and Eastern Europe



Communism/socialism

- domination of public property, implicit central planning, large state agro-structures, massive mechanization of agriculture *(large scale, expensive and environmentally insensitive agriculture as a means to support rapid industrialization centered on heavy industry)*

Commons

- the leftovers of the farm (*state or semi-subsistence*), infrastructure, industry and urbanisation
- the main platform of autonomy especially in relation with food and energy self sufficiency in scarcity era



under influence of greater powers
the fringe of Europe in terms of economic development

Postsocialism

- Complicated transition from communism to capitalism, public to private interest and property sovereignty, central to private planning
- Privatisation of commons in rural and urban context
- Aggressive and chaotic urban sprawl generating abandoned land
- New forms of hybrid commons: *for instance Urban Pastoralism on abandoned agricultural land (private) transformed in commons informally*



ex Urban pastoralism as a form of appropriation of abandoned land
@ P. Calinescu

Trends and impacts on the area of common land

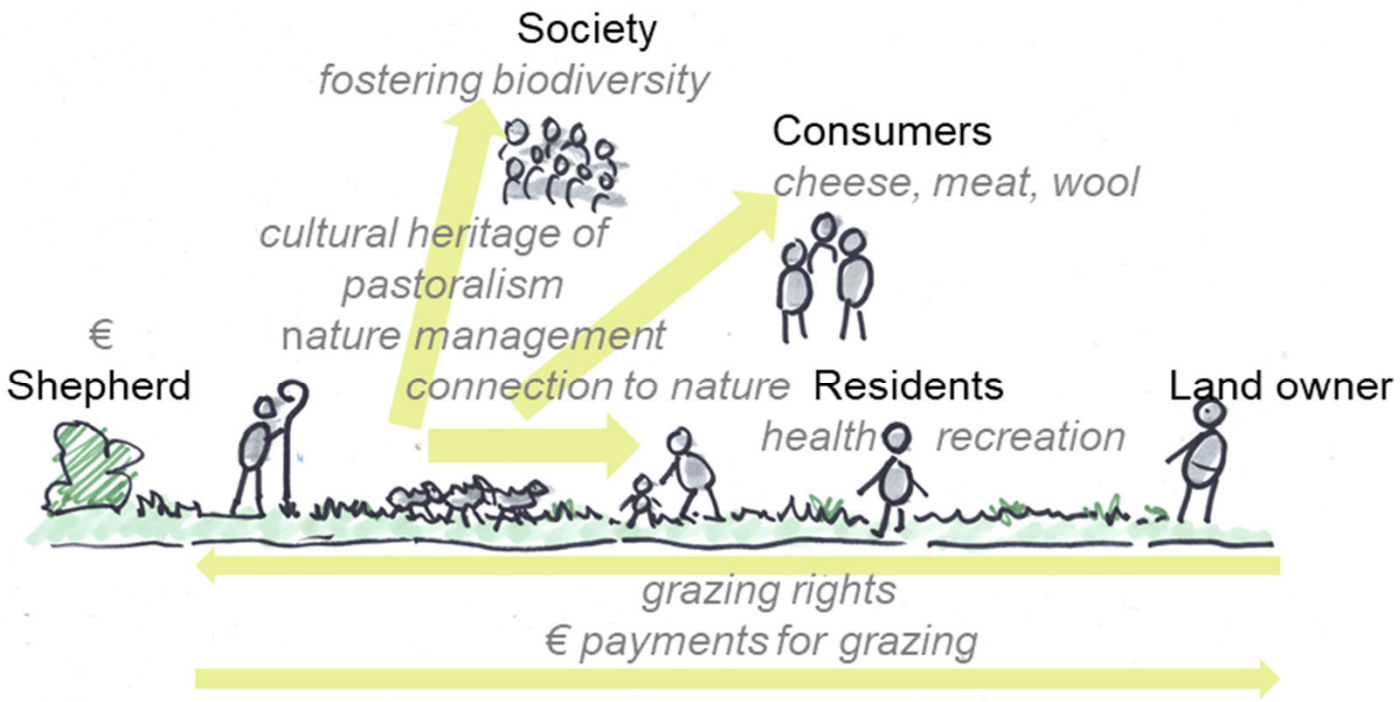
Losses

- Regulations on harvest in forests (mushrooms, fire wood)
- Loss of agricultural land for urban sprawl and development
- Illegal occupation
- Loss of agricultural land by selling to private entities (international companies take over land of small holdings for export)
- Loss of public accessible space because of gentrification, closed communities
- Loss of public land due to privatization (authorities selling)

Gains

- Reclaiming illegally taken plots
- Improved access for leisure / recreation – development of green infrastructure, recreational routes
- Reclaiming land for urban agriculture
- Buying land by trusts, communities for common production
- Giving rights to users

Value chain: an example community pastoralism



Aspects of value for well-being:

Connection to nature
Cultural fulfillment
Education
Health
Leisure time
Living standards
Safety and security
Social cohesion

Discussion

1. Do you know a place / site in your environment / city that you could label as a ‘common’?
2. Who are the ‘commoners’ and how do they benefit?
3. Do the commoners have responsibilities?
4. How could you make use of this as an example in your plans?

6 Execercise in groups



CASES


Borkum
Dokkum
Oost-Vlieland
Leeuwarden
Harlingen
Drachten
De Koog
Sneek
Den Helder
Assen
Emmen
Giethoorn
Hoogeveen
Alkmaar
Zwolle
Lelystad
Almelo
Enschede
Apeldoorn
Utrecht
Arnhem
Nijmegen
Ouddorp
Dordrecht
Middelburg
Roosendaal
Bergen op Zoom
Vlissingen
Turnhout
Venlo
Essen
Duisburg
Antwerpen
Düsseldorf
Mönchengladbach
Gent
Mechelen
Leverkusen
Hasselt
Keulen
Brussel
Leuven

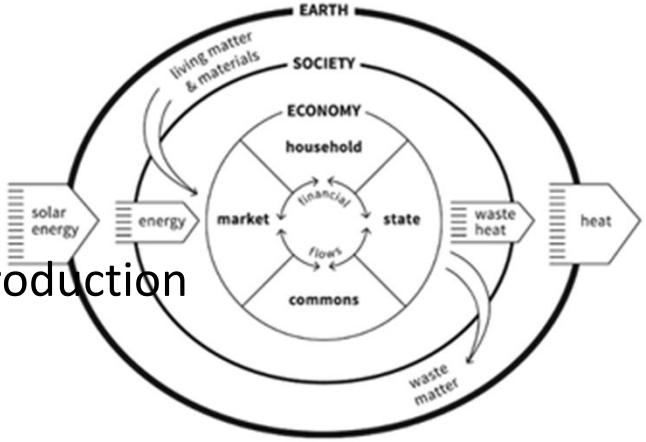


‘Herenboeren’ – gentleman-farmers NL

Concept for new commons
Farms of at least 10 hectares

Three pillars:

1. Nature-driven food production systems
2. Socially Connected Organizations
3. Economically supported companies

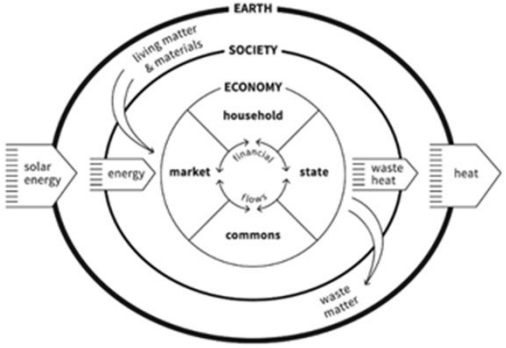




‘Herenboeren’ – gentleman-farmers NL

Seven principles

1. It is a cooperative U.A.
2. Labour secured in the budget
3. Production tailored to members' nutritional needs
4. No sale of products
5. Financing only by entrance f and yearly contribution
6. Nature-driven production
7. Active part of learning and experimenting network







Source: Herenboeren.nl







France: community garden







Source:bec36. fr et budgetparticipatifClemront




Source:Sors de terre


Source:© PDB / France 3 Paris ID


Source:Fabrique territoires

France : Urban pastoralism









Romania : Urban pastoralism





REFERENCES AND READING MATERIAL

Focussed reading list on the Commons

- Urban Commons Research Collective. (2022)., Urban Commons Handbook (Barcelona: dpr-barcelona, 2022): pages 18-29 and 32-54 .
- Menatti. L. (2017). Landscape: from common good to human right. In: International Journal of the Commons Vol. 11, no 2 2017, pp. 641–683 Publisher: Uopen Journals; http://www.thecommonsjournal.org DOI: 10.18352/ijc.738: pages 649 – 659 (10 pages)

- You can also follow **#urbancommonsresearchcollective**

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Strecker, A. (2004). Landscape, property and common good: the ambiguous convergences of spatial justice. In: I Quaderni di Carreggi, No. 06/2014 p. 25;

Tornaghi, C. (2012). Public space, urban agriculture and the grassroots creation of new commons: lessons and challenges for policymakers, in: Viljoen, A. & J.S.C. Wiskerke, Sustainable food planning. Evolving theory and practice, Wageningen Academic Publishers

Triboi, R. (2019). Urban pastoralism, the urban-productive-nature synthesis, doctoral thesis UAUIM Bucharest

Urban Commons Research Collective. (2022)., Urban Commons Handbook (Barcelona: dpr-barcelona, 2022)

Websites: https://www.publicspace.org/works/-/project/j281-r-urban-network-of-urban-commons

Some questions for you:

- Which role can landscape commons have in your study/project area or in your study or work?
- Are there already transformative initiatives existing?
- Who could be the participants / actors in the development?
- Who would benefit, who should contribute, who should regulate?
- What kind of value chains can be developed?

CONCEPTS and GLOSSARY

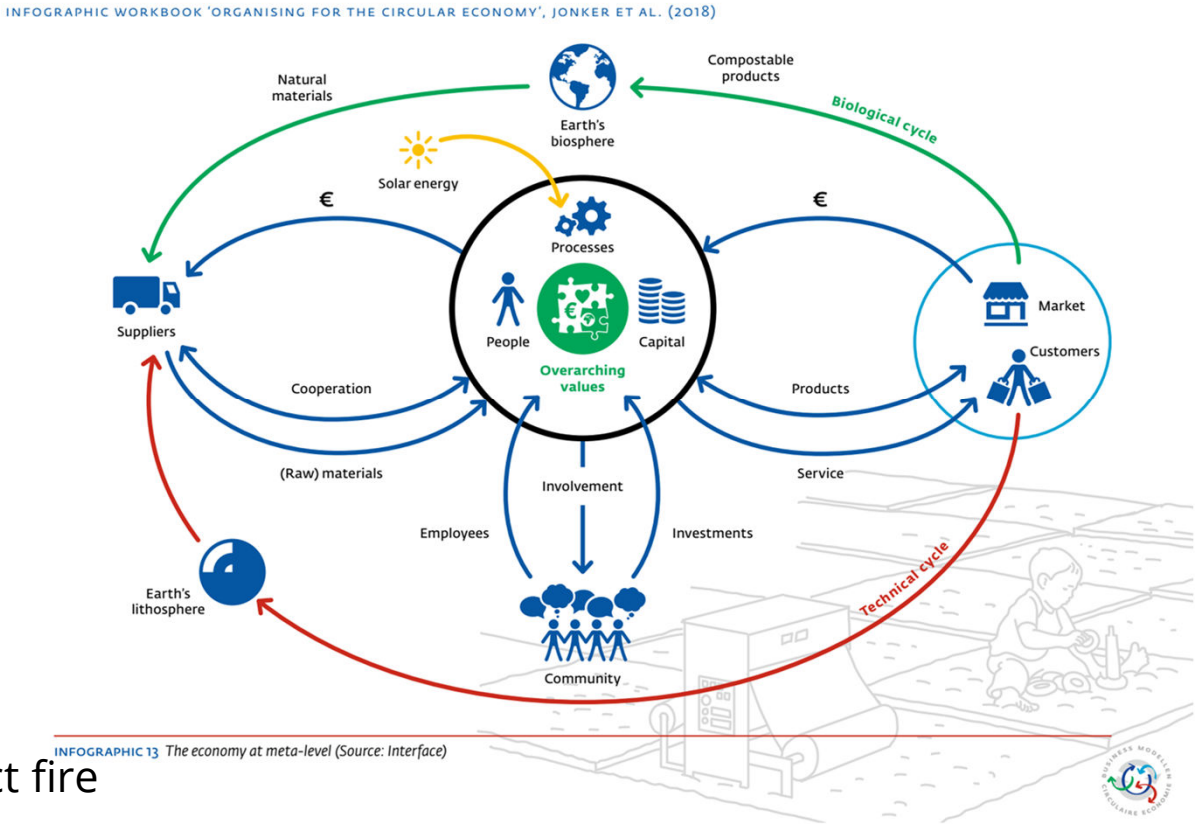
Key concepts of the (new) commons

Key concepts

- Right to landscape
- Access to land
- Landscape democracy
- New commons
- Food security
- New business models

Aspects

- Grazing rights
- Access for leisure
- Hunting rights
- Right to grow food
- Right to pick fruits, mushrooms, collect fire wood
- Funding for ecosystem services



INFOGRAPHIC WORKBOOK 'ORGANISING OR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY ', JONKER e t a l. (2018)

Landscape as a common good

Landscape is considered a – both material and immaterial – good belonging to the community. Landscape is shared, protected and safeguarded so that it can be inherited by future generations. Landscape is the relation between nature and culture, which is expressed in patrimony and cultural heritage. A sense of responsibility, both from the political and social points of view, is implied by this idea. The theoretical focus is posed on the political value of the landscape, and on the fact that its characterisation as a common good promotes a shift from an aesthetical account to an ethical one.

Commons and Landscape

The commons is the material landscape of common lands shared by a community of commoners with customary use rights in the land, with a shared use of the lands.

Management is based on a *lex loci* and on customs.

The commons imply the relationship between the material land and the culture.

Moreover, the connection between landscape and commons is established through the political value assumed by landscapes and commons in democratic processes.

Today it also includes the issue of the re-appropriation and the collective management of a land/part of a territory in every kind of landscape.

Landscape as a right

People can be entitled to a right of landscape which may be considered as a human right.

From the correlation between landscape and health, both physical and psychological, one can conclude that every human being is entitled to the right to a culturally rich and healthy landscape.

The right to landscape, even if it is not recognised as a right *per se*, is already implicated in many international right laws

Menatti and Casado 2016, Strecker 2011, 57

Right to city

This right is a reaction to the continuing commodification of urban resources encourage by both public policy and private development.

The urban commons transform cities around the globe challenging the capitalist process of accumulation, extraction and enclosure.

Social Economy

A type of economy which is formed by a rich diversity of enterprises and organisations sharing common values and features:

- Primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital
- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic governance
- Combination of interests of members/users and/or the general interest
- Defense and application of the principles of solidarity and responsibility
- Autonomous management and independence from public authorities
- Reinvestment of at least most of the profits to carry out sustainable development objectives, services of interest to members or of general interest