Economic and legal conditions for reed use in Germany

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Introduction

- > 95% of the peatlands are drained
- mostly used as agricultural area
- GHG-emissions of drained peatlands: 1/3 of the total agricultural emissions
- alternative, climate-friendly landmanagement options have to be promoted
Introduction

- reed on agricultural land
- as a paludiculture
- peatland protection with mere rewetting without alternative use

=> social and economic problems and lack of acceptance among the local population

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Traditional reed use

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Traditional reed use

Reed as a Renewable Resource, Greifswald 2013/02/15

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Reed use in Germany
Cutting in nature protection areas

Reed as a Renewable Resource, Greifswald 2013/02/15

Reed use in Germany
Cultivation of reed

Reed as a Renewable Resource, Greifswald 2013/02/15

Reed use in Germany
Cultivation of reed

• what is reed used for?
  – fodder (permanent grassland)
  – energetic purposes
  – building and construction material

• on agricultural land
  => agri-environmental political and legal framework conditions

Reed as a Renewable Resource, Greifswald 2013/02/15
Agri-environmental political conditions

- peatland area in Germany:
  - 1.4 million ha – 1.8 million ha (4 % - 5 % of total area)
  - 1.3 million ha used as agricultural land
  - 8 % of total agricultural area on peatland soils

- in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania:
  - peatland soils ~ 300,000 ha (13 % of total area)
  - ~ 167,000 ha used as agricultural area (56 % of total peatland area)
Agri-environmental political conditions

- direct payment of the First Pillar of the CAP on agriculturally used drained peatland soils: 344 €/ha (2014: <344 €/ha)

- direct payments have to be maintained, i.e. after rewetting

- direct payments granted for agricultural land, which is used for agricultural purposes

=> reed?
First Pillar of the CAP

- according to a first evaluation of the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection: no direct payments for reed
  - but direct payments are possible
  - no need to change current laws

- rewetted areas might lose status as "agricultural land"
Legal conditions

- biotope protection prevents harvesting of reed
  - grown reed: protected biotope

- reed bed harvesting is limited according to regulations for species conservation

=> landowners and farmers avoid reed cultivation and paludicultures
Conclusion

• political awareness has to be risen

• subsidies for other energy plants like miscanthus, willows, and poplars as short rotation coppice possible

• without subsidies and direct payment schemes an introduction of paludicultures on large scales might be impossible
Thank you very much for your attention!

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Peatland protection in Germany

• federal system in Germany => no national peatland protection policy

• federal states have their own protection policies adopted to their specific regional situation

• no general agreement on peatland protection and reduction of GHG-emissions caused by drained peatlands
Peatland protection in Germany

• 2007: National Strategy on Biological Diversity
  following aims should have been reached until 2010:
  – maintainance and restoration of bogs
  – peatlands as CO$_2$ and nutrient sink
  – economic incentives to promote extensivation of fens
  – peatland development concepts in all federal states
• 2011: Position Paper by special administrative agencies

general objectives:

– protection of all seminatural peatlands
– rewetting of drained peatlands
– peat-conserving and sustainable usage (paludicultures)
– reduction of GHG-emissions

Aims: reduction of GHG-emissions, protection of biodiversity, stabilisation of water balance

Phase I (until 2015)
1. regional surveys of peatlands
2. restoration field books
3. protection of pristine peatlands

Phase II (until 2020)
4. rising of water level up to natural condition
5. cessation of peat extraction

6. rising of water level and extensification of agricultural and silvicultural usage

7. Monitoring

source: German Advisory Council on the Environment, p. 421