Social Entrepreneurship within Systemic Change

An Explorative Case Study of Ethics of Care in Regenerative Agriculture

Master Thesis | Caroline Tussing
September 2021

Social Entrepreneurship and Management
Roskilde University
Supervisor: Anna Umantseva

Characters: 155.347

Abstract

Purpose – This thesis analyses how care ethics are embedded in systemic change in the case of a regenerative agriculture community. This project enriches the discussion about social entrepreneurship since the ethics of care provide a theoretical perspective for how individuals interact with each other and nature, understanding how businesses can enhance their sustainability ambitions and be actively involved with the ecosystem around them.

Design/methodology/approach – The qualitative exploratory approach followed the method of digital ethnography and observed an online community consisting of different actors and proponents of regenerative agriculture across the globe for a period of four month. A mix of observation in online discussions and semi-structured interviews, as well as the usage of other online content shared by the community participants was analysed thematically.

Findings – For systemic change, care ethics seem more critical as the starting point for transitioning or beginning a regenerative farm project than financial incentives or the aim of earning more money. This finding also supports the hypothesis of ecofeminists, who recognise the human being who acts according to feminist principles not as a selfish being from birth but as a being acting according to personal values and in need of harmony.

Originality/value – Over the past few years, the transfer to the online sphere enabled digital community building, fostering social innovation and co-creation. Digital community building is a significant change driver for systemic change, and the method used is a product out of this changing world. The thesis contributes to define the approach of social entrepreneurship through its core of care ethics, and further explore its role in global systemic change.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship, Systemic Change, Transformation, Sustainable Development, Regenerative Agriculture

Paper type: Master's Thesis

Acknowledgment

This work would not have been possible without the support of different actors, and a supporting ecosystem around me for the past few months.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Anna Umantseva, who gave me precious academic and personal advice and always provided me with inspiring input and the missing puzzle pieces.

I also would like to thank the inspiring online community educating about the field on various Social Media platforms. I had fruitful conversations with people that gave me with lots of enthusiasm good insights into their work and challenged my train of thoughts constantly.

Many thanks to Climate Farmer, especially Ivo Degn and Nick Steiner, who took the time to support me in my work. Their work was and is highly inspiring for me, and I hope they continue their success story.

I am extremely grateful for my fellow students at Roskilde University, especially Line Sorsdahl Aasen, Simone Rom, and Christina Friis-Nielsen for developing together our personal and academic skills throughout the past two years, and for inspiring me with their wholehearted hands-on mentalities.

Last but not least, I would like to mention my family, who are living examples of care ethics. Without their emotional support and advice, I would not have been able to complete this work or my studies. Special thanks to my sister, who guided me in this thesis as a SCRUM Master through agile project development.

Structure of the Thesis

For the sake of clarity, the thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the introduction to the topic and explains why the topic is relevant. The chapter ends with the research gap and the question.

The second chapter provides essential background information on the status quo in agriculture and what systemic change in general and at the example of agriculture means.

The third chapter provides the theoretical basis. Care ethics are explained, and the chapter analyses what care means in food systems.

The fourth chapter is dedicated to the philosophy of science and the methodology that is the basis for the qualitative data collection through digital ethnography.

Chapter five starts with explaining how the data was gathered and analysed and continues with an overview of the findings.

In the last chapter, these findings are critically discussed and put into relation with each other. Lastly, the chapter answers the research, and explains the limitations and academic outlook.

Table of Content

Table of Figures

Abbreviations

CE	Corporate Environmentalism
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NPK	Nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goa

1. Introduction

The introduction outlines the motivation and the object of the research. The chapter starts with personal motives and the placement of the researchers in a contemporary historical context to make possible assumptions and biases clear to the reader from the beginning.

1.1 Personal Note

This thesis was written during a global pandemic and health crisis due to the novel COVID-19 virus. As a result of the outbreak and the urgency of a zero-carbon economy due to the climate crisis, civil society is increasingly exerting constant pressure on politicians and large companies in industrialised nations to drive systemic change and align their actions with the well-being of all people on the planet. The scale of these crises hits vulnerable parts of society with fewer financial resources hardest, so a holistic socio-economic approach to tackle problems is required. My interest in systemic change in the agricultural sector formed during this time of crises. Over the past two years I became more and more aware of the tremendous impact of the food system and excessive global food consumption on multiple global crises. Simultaneously social movements such as “black lives matter” and “me too” increased my awareness of intersectional justice and the importance of questioning social conditions and their interrelation with economic and political activities.

That is why I try to question with this thesis a long-time claimed as profitable economic system, which negatively impacts future food security, whole societies and worsens climate change. I self-identify as a German, middle-class, white, woman and feminist living in Denmark. I lived for the longest time of my life in a rural area in Germany and obtained there a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and working experience as a consultant for small and medium sized business.

I am well aware that my thesis is written in a comfortable and privileged lifestyle in the Global North and that my understanding can only capture a fraction of what is going on in other parts of the world

and communities outside my bubble. Even though I try to focus on academic voices of the Global South, and amplify the voices of minority groups, and research about the topic comprehensively, I have not experienced the reality farmers and people oppressed by the current food system have. Further, I understand that I cannot claim knowledge of indigenous people or make assumptions about farmers I have not been in contact with. My knowledge has been built through a digital lens, and I know that more research and perspectives from multiple communities and people involved are needed to gain a holistic understanding of the topic.

1.2 Motivation and Problem Area

"The Social Responsibility of Business Is To Increase Its Profits," (Milton Friedmann, 1970) - a famous quote published in The New York Times in 1970 that every economics student has heard of, and which sculpted business ethics and global leader's mindsets till today (Raworth, 2017). This mindset of short-term profit and innovation orientation through capitalist competition continues to fuel a narrative that justifies growth and profit as a single purpose (Stiglitz, 2010). Those goals clearly contribute to the way business is done from an ethical point of view, speaking of a lack of courage and morals for example as seen in corruption cases, where multiple actors ignore inequalities and fraud on purpose to economically or personal profit (Deterline, 2012). In the past fifty years, neo-liberalism and capitalism have acted as catalysts for innovation, improving technologies, creating wealth, tackling poverty, and increasing health and living standards (Hart, 2021). However, for achieving this, an ego-driven narrative has been established as a norm for the global economy and a goal to pursue as an individual (Raworth, 2017). This system put a price behind every good and resulted in the economics of commodification. In this so created world view, everything has a price, but nothing has a value anymore (Shiva & Mies, 2014). Access to money, the right of overconsumption and ownership over planetary resources equal power and have therefore justified the earth's and people in the Global

South's exploitation for the benefit of all current living people as if there would not be planetary and social boundaries (Dos Santos & Banerjee, 2019).

Multiple crises arose and worsened simultaneously due to this capitalistic economy: Biodiversity and species diversity, climate, devastation, polluted oceans, social inequality, racism, misanthropy, and health crises (United Nations, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to examine more closely which economic sectors play a huge role in oppressing people and nature across the globe and, at the same time, how such sectors can be sustainably transformed.

One of these sectors is *agriculture*. Around 33% of the world's ice-free land is managed by agriculture (Toensmeier et al., 2020, p. 9). The industry is not only responsible for providing humanity with the most basic needs by feeding it, but at the same time for approximately 70% of the world's total water withdrawals and causing approximately 24% of greenhouse gas emissions directly (Foley, 2021). The largest share of greenhouse gas emissions is accounted for by tropical deforestation and other land use (Toensmeier et al., 2020, p. 10). Most of the deforestation is due to cultivation of soybeans for feeding animals, pall oil plantations and cattle pastures, where tropical rainforests and ecosystems of enormous importance for the balance of the earth are burned. In addition to these CO2 emissions, large quantities of methane and nitrous oxides are released into the earth's atmosphere through agriculture (ibid.).

The agricultural sector is forced to operate as efficiently as possible due to the growing population, modern diets, overproduction, and the high demand for cattle food (Moyer et al., 2020). 30% - 50% of food gets lost after harvest (Raworth, 2017, p. 58) and still, one person in nine has not enough to eat (United Nations, 2019). The food crop production has increased since 1970 around 300 %. Tropical land with the richest biodiversity on earth, like in Latin America +/-42 million between 1980 and 2000, has been transformed for agricultural use (ibid.). Technologies have been optimised, and highly efficient industrialised farms are cultivated in monocultures using NPK fertilisers which resulted in the systematic elimination of diverse microorganisms in soil which matter for intact ecosystems (O'Connor, 2020, p. 16). Farms are turning into deserts due to poor and homogenous management of

the soil, where fertilisers have done their worst for the surrounding environmental ecosystem and changing weather conditions have also affected overall biodiversity and species diversity (Moyer et al., 2020; O'Connor, 2020; Shiva & Mies, 2014).

Regenerative agriculture could be part of a solution transforming agriculture. This solution aims to tackle all the above-mentioned crises. Regenerative agriculture is a praxis, which adapts to the environmental circumstances, uses a mix of different crops, trees, and animals to cultivate land (O'Connor, 2020). The goal is to build an ecosystem which is self-sufficient, creating healthy soils, enriching biodiversity, and in the end food which is rich in nutrients (Moyer et al., 2020).

The transition towards regenerative agriculture is a life-long and in the beginning cost-intense commitment which must be embedded in the end by farmers. The farmers are the ones who must study the soils and the climate of their area intensively (Dwiartama, 2020). They must learn to adapt to other approaches and holistic, long-term planning to manage their land. Simultaneously, the farmers must ensure the maintenance of the farm and generate income. Financial risks resulting from a long-term adoption process and changing climate conditions, financial subsidies, and an existing market for the product are equally significant as environmental benefits for the farmers in their decision-making process (O'Connor, 2020). To change the system, it is not only the farmers, who need to adopt practices, but a whole ecosystem, which needs to make an impact and think in long-term perspectives.

Social entrepreneurs are important actors when it comes to bringing about ecological and social change (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009). Through their entrepreneurial perspective, understanding of finance, business processes, negotiation skills, economics, coupled with an awareness of injustice and a vision of a better world, they can give a voice to groups that are excluded from critical decision-making discussions. Social entrepreneurs can act as a bridge, providing the farmers with their needs, providing safety, connecting them with decision-makers and increasing awareness for the end-consumer. They can bring *"service-delivery innovations that connect underserved people with appropriate resources"* (Silber & Krige, 2016, p. 182).

During the research, I attended many webinars, videos, and talks from farmers, researchers and entrepreneurs who work with, implement, and embrace regenerative practices. They seemed to emphasize an intense care point of view in their actions, talking about belonging to nature, integrating biodiversity, and agriculture's part in the climate emergency. They discussed based on the conviction that consumers will change their behaviour in the future and that we are a global community that needs to care for all.

The essential attitude of caring has been fueled by globalisation; through networking and digitalisation, international contacts, and social media, it is easier than ever to find out about what is happening and demand and implement action, even if it is far away. It is no wonder that ethics of care are becoming relevant in every days life, resulting simultaneously becoming more relevant as business ethics and driving change. These carrying attributes are observable within social entrepreneurship as their primary purpose-driven focus, and in global sustainability debates, where nature-based solutions are fostered as part of fighting climate change.

1.3 Research Gap and Problem Formulation

Social Entrepreneurship is a relatively new discipline that is still not sufficiently researched, especially in regard to sustainable development and **systemic change** (Chell et al., 2016; Pestoff & Hulgård, 2016; Spence, 2016). Moreover, academia is not sufficiently undermining **ethics of care** and the relevance for systemic change (Phillips, 2019). Therefore, it is of significance to bridge those three concepts and research their interplay.

With this thesis, I aim to look at how social entrepreneurship applies care ethics to foster systemic change at the example of regenerative agriculture. This project will enrich the discussion about social entrepreneurship since the ethics of care provide a theoretical perspective for how individuals interact with each other and nature, understanding how businesses can enhance their sustainability ambitions and actively sculpt an ecosystem around them.

The research question for this thesis is:

Systemic change within agriculture: how are care practices as part of social entrepreneurship driving a transition to regenerative agriculture?

2. Background and Definitions

This background section provides relevant information for the reader, to understand important components of the research questions: regenerative agriculture and systemic change. The first section explains what is generally understood by regenerative agriculture. The chapter starts by distinguishing regenerative from conventional agriculture and explains its advantages. The definition of regenerative agriculture is followed by a chapter on systemic change and transformation. Systemic change plays a significant role in the thesis, as regenerative agriculture requires a differentiated focus and a refusal from business as usual in many areas. Therefore, a chapter is dedicated to systemic change and the distinction to sustainability.

2.1 Regenerative Agriculture

The term *regenerative agriculture* is not easy to define because it includes different methods and approaches as an alternative to conventional agriculture. The definition paper from The Regenerative Agriculture Initiative & The Carbon Underground describes regenerative agriculture as *"farming and grazing practices that, among other benefits, reverse climate change by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity – resulting in both carbon drawdown and improving the water cycle. … It is a holistic land management practice that leverages the power of photosynthesis in plants to close the carbon cycle, and build soil health, crop resilience and nutrient density"* (2017, p. 1). Such practices include amongst others agroforestry systems, market gardening, composting, holistic planned grazing, and carbon farming (Duncan et al., 2020a). The importance of soil quality leads many academic discussions (Moyer et al., 2020; O'Connor, 2020; Stevens, 2019), as it is vital for agricultural productivity, the resilience of the surrounding ecosystem and the sequestration of greenhouse gases (Stevens, 2019, p. 9). Table 1 shows the benefits of healthy soil identified by Stevens (2019, p. 10).

	Ecological/environmental	Agronomic
Private	• erosion control • local biodiversity, natural beauty, etc. • flood control	• increased yields (direct effects) • pest control • reduced fertilizer expenditures • less necessary irrigation
External	• erosion control • cleaner water (fewer nitrates, etc.) • flood control • carbon sequestration	• lower risk for pest outbreaks • lower risk for disease outbreaks • fewer unwanted nitrates from runoff

Table 1: Benefits of soil health (Stevens, 2019)

Amongst the importance of soil quality, Duncan et al. identified in their handbook for regenerative agriculture the following five principles as crucial for a food system to be regenerative:

" 1) Acknowledging and including diverse forms of knowing and being

2) Taking care of people, animals, and the planet

3) Moving beyond capitalist approaches

4) Commoning the food system

5) Promoting accountable innovations

6) Long-term planning and rural–urban relations " (2020, p. 5)

Those principles underline the importance of socio-economic indicators. Diversity is desired from a biodiversity perspective and social and economic decision parameters such as including indigenous knowledge and questioning the global food market and its price competition (ibid.). It is important to note that regenerative agriculture is an ecological practice and a holistic change that addresses several issues and aims to improve all stakeholders' living conditions.

In contrast to conventional agriculture, regenerative agriculture focuses on the farm as a system (Moyer et al., 2020, p. 21). The focus lies not on the yield of a single plant variety. The goal is instead to optimise the harvest of an entire ecosystem (ibid.). Conventional agriculture is often practised in monocultures. This approach deprives the soil of essential nutrients and causes it to dry out (Moyer

et al., 2020, p. 5). Healthy soil is essential for food security, biodiversity and animal diversity and storing carbon in soil. Arguably, by taking desertification, *"land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems"* into consideration, regenerative thinking and practices play a significant role in fighting the climate crisis and therefore a crucial goals for the global community (IPCC, 2020).

2.2 Regeneration as Systemic Change Beyond Sustainable Development

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development marked with their Brundtland report a turning point in the discussion of a holistic, sustainable development approach and fostered a hope for transitioning systems to environmental-friendly practices (Boström, 2012, p. 3). *"Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."* (WCED, 1987, p. 16). This rather broad definition is in academics the widely used one and determines sustainable development as an umbrella term for three interrelated pillars namely people, profit, planet (ibid.). The United Nations established over the past thirty years strategies and frameworks to foster sustainable development and resulted lastly in 2015 in the 17 Sustainable development goals 169 targets, which serve as a road-map to foster sustainable development till 2030 (United Nations, n.d.). Still, man-made climate change worsened since 1987, and even though there exists a clear global, social justice strategy, how to cut down emissions to limit global warming to 1,5 degree Celsius with the Parisienne Agreement from 2015, key factors for implementing the strategic objectives seem to be missing (United Nations, 2015).

The word "sustain" suggests the preservation of something. Sustainable development follows the path of growth and efficiency (Duncan et al., 2020a, p. 4). Regenerative agriculture looks at agriculture more holistically and requires change from all actors involved. Its focus is on the regeneration of whole

ecosystems, not just their preservation. The food system is being fundamentally redesigned and rethought (Duncan et al., 2020a, p. 4). Sustainable agriculture can be described as a solution on the way towards regeneration because the establishment of regenerative practices is complex and takes several years. Measurable outcomes are not guaranteed to be achieved within a few seasons (Rainforest Alliance, n.d.-b). On the path to regenerative agriculture, research argues that multiple stakeholders (see table 2) within the system should be actively involved within change (Moyer et al., 2020, p. 28 ff).

Call to Consumers	Call to farmers	Call to policy makers
Put pressure on supply chains	Grow the community	Learn from constituents
Give policymakers hope	Experiment, observe, share	Support regenerative, organic, and regenerative organic agriculture
Start a conversation	Measure outcomes	Defund soil destruction
Buy regenerative		

Table 2: Involvement of multiple stakeholders (Moyer et al., 2020)

In this regard, a systemic perspective offers an unpacking lens, understanding the individual pieces of change. Systems are complex, and multi-dimensional and change within occurs due to questioning of circumstances, evolving of society, or the rise of new paradigms (Mersmann & Wehnert, 2014). Göppel argues that systems always consist of three interconnected elements namely parts, connections, and purpose (2014, p. 8). Parts are actors in a system and are for example humans, organisations, materials, animals, plants, or entities that store knowledge. The individual parts are interconnected and consist of constant movement and flows, kick-starting new actions and influencing the parts. Lastly, a system acts out of a purpose and a driver to make it act. Not only the system's purpose defines its existence but more importantly the constant movement of parts and connections. The elements constantly affect and influence each other resulting in a constant re-definition of their purposes (Göppel, 2014, p. 14).

Bringing in change, it becomes evident that multiple actions on multiple levels must be implemented simultaneously and systemic change is a long-term process changing multiple involved sub-systems.

Transformation works on different dimensions, including *"technology (new technologies or new uses for established technologies), institutions (including new laws and power structures), culture and social relations (including changes in values, beliefs, discourses and world views), the economy (new business models and wealth distribution) and the relation to ecology (new or limited access to resources, a reduction in or increase to the strain on ecosystems)*" (Mersmann & Wehnert, 2014, p. 15).

Mersmann & Wehnert describe transformative change as "*a structural change that alters the interplay of institutional, cultural, technological, economic and ecological dimensions of a given system. It will unlock new development paths, including social practices and worldviews"* (2014, p. 10). In their guide book for transforming for climate action, the team of scholars further clearly distinguishes the two concepts by defining *"sustainable development as a normative concept which describes the **direction and the goal** of development and Transformational Change as a concept describing the **intensity or degree** of change"* (Mersmann & Wehnert, 2014, p. 10). This distinction underlines the argument of proponents of regenerative agriculture that organic agriculture, while necessary for achieving the SDGs, is not sufficient to address the climate crisis. There seems to be a consensus in the scientific community that the consequences of climate change cannot be sufficiently minimised by sustainable development. Systemic change is therefore essential to establish a secure existence for humanity and an appropriate way of dealing with the consequences (Duncan et al., 2020a; Göppel, 2014; IPCC, 2020; Mersmann & Wehnert, 2014).

3. Literature Review: Ethics of Care

This section will provide the reader with a detailed literature review about ethics of care carried out from an ecofeminist perspective and as a part of social entrepreneurship. Ethics is not an easy concept to define. It includes attitudes, morals, belief systems and, in the case of the Ethics of Care: forms of caring for humans, animals and the planet on different levels (Phillips, 2019, p. 1158). Therefore, this part of the paper explores the existing literature on how care is embedded in a nature-human, human-human and business-human relationship.

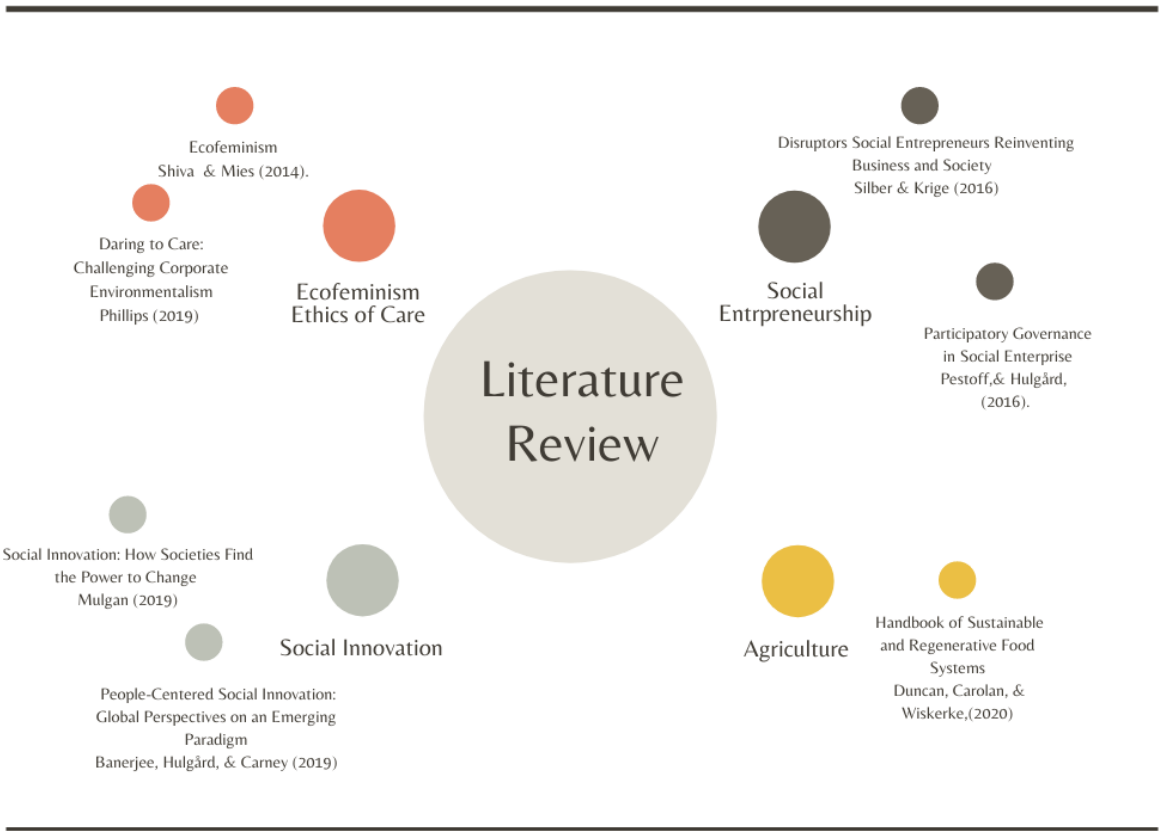

Figure 1: Most influential research textbooks and papers

The review follows Bryman's (2012, p. 90) narrative approach by providing the reader with an overview about the topic. The narrative review justifies the research question, examines existing theories, and frames what is already known in the area of interest (ibid.). The starting point for this thesis was the work of Mary Phillips and her perspective on ethics of care (Phillips, 2019). Her list of

references and the learning from this text were used to search for further texts via the search engines google scholar, Det Kgl. Bibliotek and iris.ai. This section reviewed texts containing the topics of care ethics, care in regenerative agriculture, care in ecofeminism, and care as part of social entrepreneurship (see Figure 1). The most influential research within the area is captured in the figure and guided further literature gathering. Due to the method of digital ethnography, and the steady evolution of the Data, the theory section was altered and edited throughout the whole thesis period. This thesis aims to represent voices that support intersectional feminism and indigenous folks by using a critical ecofeminist philosophy of science. It became apparent during the research that skepticism towards capitalism and an anti-growth moral is held by both the academics cited and the online communities which has been observed. This further sculpted the choice of relevant papers and justifies examining the research question as critically and appreciatively as possible. Lastly, the topicality of the texts played an important role, as the topic is constantly evolving due to the multiple acute crises.

3.1 Ethics of Care in Ecofeminism

Ethics of care has its origin in feminist theory. The theory stems from the idea that women care more from the ground up because when carrying a baby, they think of their future and create the best possible life (Phillips, 2019, p. 1132). The ethics *"values interdependencies and caring relations that connect persons to one another, rather than privilege independence and individualization. It emphasizes ethics as a process of making judgements based in real, lived experiences and in the constellation of relationships and institutions in which caring is positioned"* (Phillips, 2019, p. 1157). Ethics of care became especially relevant in today's discussion of multiple crises, where future generations and non-human living have to be taken as a crucial part of every business decision and the concept of CSR is doubted regarding its effectiveness in combating those crises (Visser, 2010, p. 8). From an ecofeminism perspective, it represents a moral obligation in contrast to Corporate

Environmentalism (CE), which often results in greenwashing and sustainability as an instrument for further growth and environment unfriendly behaviour of companies (ibid., p. 1157).

The Indian scientist and activist Vandana Shiva coined the term *ecofeminism* through her observations of agriculture and women's status (Shiva & Mies, 2014). Ecofeminists seek to create the moral languages and practices of a feminist ethics of care which tries to question the status quo, rethinking public participation and including those mostly affected by ecological and social challenges (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 30). Thereby ethics of care put social, political, and moral action in the foreground (Phillips, 2019, p. 1132). The call to consciously care for future generations is also reflected in current climate and social movements, which is primarily led by young women for example Greta Thunberg, Luisa Neubauer or Malala Yousafzai. The active integration of minority groups and those mostly affected by climate change in political and economic decisions set these movements' tone. Hence, this carrying attitude is not only facilitated by women, and other genders are equally performing ethics of care as women.

3.1.1 Knowledge Sharing and Education

Positivist structures have shaped the transmission of knowledge since the documentation and creation of scientific knowledge in ancient times (Egholm, 2014, p. 71). Since the enlightenment and industrialisation enabled more and more people to access knowledge, positivism still dominated science and its' approach to knowledge for a long time (Egholm, 2014, p. 71). Nazi Germany is an example, where Social Darwinism and an eugenic beliefsytem resulted in a genocide on Jewish people, Sinti and Roma, and other minority groups in Germany 1941 - 1945. This event not only justified the idea of observable phenomena through a certain perspective as the single truth, but also that science and knowledge were only desirable from a specific group of people and a specific way of thinking; namely white, western men (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 181). Shiva & Mies describe modern western science as reductionist *"because: 1) it reduced the capacity of humans to know nature both by*

excluding other knowers and other ways of knowing; and 2) by manipulating it as inert and fragmented matter, nature's capacity for creative regeneration and renewal was reduced." (2014, p. 23).

Until today, those structures exist in many societies through sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism, classism, and other systems of oppression, and systematically excluded valuable knowledge from curriculums (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 37). Decolonisation movements and intersectional feminism call for actively eliminating those structures, resulting in more diverse knowledge and perspectives on phenomena (Aude Chesnais, 2020; Datta, 2018; Dos Santos & Banerjee, 2019; Haraway, 1988; Phillips, 2019; Shiva & Mies, 2014). Dos Santos & Banerjee describe decolonisation *"as seeing oneself as a specific and contextualised reality in a wider frame"* (2019, p. 10). Shiva & Mies argue that the capitalist patriarchy uses hierarchy and the criterion of commercial value as an imperative to stigmatise diversity as a problem and alter uniformity as an narrative for growth and the single truth (2014, p. 164). The oppression of diversity, female and indigenous knowledge went hand-in-hand with the oppression of nature and increase in conventional farming on a global level (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 166). Even though decolonisation of knowledge and institutions gained more and more importance over the last few years (Datta, 2018, p. 1), the missing integration is undoubtedly reflected in agriculture (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 164). Study and school programmes depend very much on the individual institutions and are significantly influenced by corporates, politics, and regulations (Datta, 2018, p. 2). Especially in environmental studies, laws and regulations at the local, national, and international level play a significant role and influence the teaching content and thus the professions (ibid.).

This orientation is not given in the case of indigenous environmental knowledge. Their knowledge sharing is situational, based on tradition and oriented towards specific contexts (Datta, 2018). According to most indigenous worldviews, the human, the wild and the spiritual need to be in balance and respect for nature and the direct ecosystem is core of their values (Datta, 2018; Dwiartama, 2020; Shiva & Mies, 2014). Therefore, indigenous people and small rural traditional forest-based communities treat nature based on respect and strict rejection of its exploitation (Dwiartama, 2020, p. 27). This advocacy is reflected in the treatment of food, animals and plants and is an essential

component of food systems. Indigenous people represent under 5% of the total global population (World Bank, n.d.) and manage at least 7.8 million km2 which is around 40 % of the global protected area (Garnett et al., 2018, p. 8). Areas that have always been managed and protected by indigenous peoples have the most incredible biodiversity, sparsely population, and intact places whereas colonised and human-altered areas have lower yields and weakened ecosystems (Ellis et al., 2021, p. 7).

Dwiartama (2021, p. 26) argues that for an agricultural practice to be called sustainable, it must prove itself over a long time. He refers to indigenous peoples who, over generations, have optimised their regenerative practices in harmony with nature so that neither nature nor humans suffer (ibid.). He describes *"an indigenous food system [as] a cultural product of indigenous people through their interaction with their local ecology"* (ibid., p. 28). Due to these different focuses, it is challenging to integrate indigenous practices and content about regenerative agriculture, which is situational, into existing institutions that integrate a political perspective and universality into the content (Datta, 2018, p. 11). The institutional frameworks, based on *"its well-defined system of norms, values, beliefs, expectations, and conventional actions*" (ibid., p. 2) pushed monoculture farming practices to indigenous land and forced the people to act in a certain way (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 24) . Therefore, it is important to create new ways of integrating diverse knowledge sources into educational systems and farming practices. Regenerative thinking and nature-based agriculture is a big part in indigenous communities, and they are among the leading forces to preserve biodiversity and nature (Rainforest Alliance, 2019). This is not only since it is their livelihood, but also because they know that earth and all life on it is dependent on functioning ecosystems. Collaborative, spiritual, responsive, respectful, and relational learning approaches are a big part of indigenous education culture and for regenerative agriculture crucial to consider integrating into educational programs (Datta, 2018). Arguably, improving education and providing access to diverse knowledge is a crucial part in transitioning to regenerative agriculture.

3.1.2 Carrying for Nature: Embeddedness in Ecosystems

The above-mentioned shift in knowledge also includes a strong local focus and thus calls for a decentralisation of global supply chains (Huambachano, 2020; Meulensteen & Duurland, 2020; O'Connor, 2020; Shiva & Mies, 2014). Eco Feminists argue that food and natural resources that occur in one place should therefore be available to the immediate community (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 231). The communities are dependent on cultivating and managing the land within their surroundings and natural environment with care and holistically thinking of how to use the individual outcomes, because they are obligated to sustain the natural world as it is and enable it to regenerate (Huambachano, 2020, p. 40). The approach is not to produce what people need, but what does nature offer and how people can make the natural resources usable through regenerative and circular use so that a good life is possible (ibid.).

In times of rising urbanisation, this also includes better urban-rural relations (Woods, 2020, p. 364). An estimated amount of 70 % will live in urban areas by 2050 (United Nations, n.d.). Rural-urban linkages are on top of the agenda for ensuring sustainable development (United Nations, n.d.). Consumption in cities is more anonymous than in rural areas. Self-sufficiency through individually owned and community gardens are becoming increasingly popular, but it is not a concept for widespread implementation (Woods, 2020, p. 373). Globalisation and the division of labour have made it possible to distribute work and resolve the food supply more efficiently. However, food can be purchased simply through money without awareness of its production, which is also tricky. If the consumer is not aware of sustainability impacts, neither is this reflected in their consumption. Therefore, engagement with nature and the work of farmers is critical (ibid., p. 363). Historically, cities have been provided by farmers from hinterlands, but due to global supply chains and markets, the access to food and the sensitivity to prices changed (ibid.). Two streams are therefore necessary; one is to move global supply chains towards regenerative practices and motivate the farmers and food producers (O'Connor, 2020, p. 82). Large companies and global players can influence suppliers for example, through incentives and certificates, where regenerative practices are rewarded. The second

aspect, which goes beyond, is to simultaneously build regional food systems and infrastructures and decouple them from the global market. This shift is dependent on more local sales and regional value chains (ibid.).

The points discussed above show that it is not just individual measures that need to be implemented, but to shift focus: from profit and revenue to ecosystem thinking and the integration of other measurable indicators than revenue and harvest. For this reason, social entrepreneurship is relevant as a business approach because it must measure indicators other than profit (Hulgård & Andersen, 2015, p. 1747). Currently, the responsibility of agriculture is to ensure feeding humanity. In regenerative understanding, however, the system also serves to preserve biodiversity, build healthy soil, and improve living conditions for farmers.

3.2 Ethics of Care in Social Entrepreneurship

Hulgård & Andersen define Social Entrepreneurship *"as creating social value through innovation with a high degree of participant orientation, often with the participation of civil society and often with an economic significance"* (2015, p. 35). This innovation often takes the form of social innovation, which Ferrarini describes as an "*inter- and transdisciplinary phenomenon, since the processes and practices of innovative actors tend to cross boundaries between scientific disciplines and between regulatory frameworks of governmental structures"* (Ferrarini, 2019, p. 90). Social entrepreneurship thus applies an ecosystem thinking by including diverse actors in their operations and can be financed through various streams, such as revenue from products and services, government and community funding, social finance, and the integration of civil society (Ferrarini, 2019; Hulgård & Andersen, 2015; Pestoff & Hulgård, 2016). The people-oriented perspective of social innovation focuses on a certain improvement of a group of people's lives and thereby aims to solve a social and/or ecological problem (Banerjee et al., 2020, p. 5). The concept of social innovation has in recent years been adopted to capitalist firms and the global market model (ibid.); simultaneously scholars in the area argue for the concept to address the inequalities produced by those global market logics (Banerjee et al., 2020, p.

6; Stiglitz, 2010, p. xiv). However, it seems questionable if a dual mission social entrepreneurship approach is applicable to market logics which drove unsustainable growth and development (Banerjee et al., 2020; Ferrarini, 2019; Schumpeter & Stiglitz, 2010; Shiva & Mies, 2014).

Established economic theories going back to the "invisible hand" by Adam Smith in the 18. century, followed by John Stuart Mill and his introduction of rationality and the human as a-social and self-interested strengthened over the past three centuries the occurrence and position of the "economic man" (Nelson, 2011, p 38). This neoclassical thinking established markets and businesses as automatic mechanisms operated by a mass of anonymous, self-interested individuals. Actors within this system are regarded as "*discrete, separative agents who maximise mathematical utility functions, while firms are portrayed as discrete, separative economic actors who maximise mathematical profit functions*" (Nelson, 2011, p. 44). Established self-regulating free-market logics lead to the guiding power of monetary aspects. A narrative of selfishness and exploitation of people and nature that has been built up over the centuries is thus consolidated and established as the status-quo (Phillips, 2019, p. 1160). Historically, a deep cultural pattern developed which defines *"male as being dichotomously different from, and superior to, female, and defining minds as being radically disconnected from, and superior to, nature, matter, and emotion"* (Nelson, 2011, p. 37). This thinking hierarchically valued certain aspects (see table 3).

Higher order	**Lower order**
mind	body
rationality	emotion
autonomy	dependence
self-interest	other-interest
quantitative	qualitative
general	particular
masculine	feminine

Table 3: Splitting the world: Western philosophy (Nelson 2011, p. 37)

The lack of care towards vulnerable people, future generations and the planet, and the one-dimensionality of the "economic man" as desirable, is criticised by feminists (Haraway, 1988; Nelson, 2011; Phillips, 2019; Shiva & Mies, 2014) and modern economists (Hickel, 2019; Jackson, 2016; Raworth, 2017). Social and ecological indicators are difficult to quantify and measure because there is no globally accepted and standardized accounting mechanism or framework to monetize those indicators (Andrikopoulos, 2020, p. 7), which makes it challenging to participate in the market as an impact driven business. Thus, the hybridity of social entrepreneurship and its dual mission of profit and purpose orientation seem also tricky. Bull & Ridley-Duff, challenge the approach of social entrepreneurship by defining the ethics of care as a moral basis and thereby critically questioning the profit orientation as the hybridity aspect of it (2019 p. 632).

The increasing interest and adoption of social entrepreneurship shows the need and also its validity as an answer to unsustainable growth and further exploitation if social entrepreneurship follows a people-centered approach based on morals and ethics of care (Millard, et al., 2020, p. 179). Millard et al. describe *"the most successful social innovations and social enterprises [as acting] in a manner that treats the individual with dignity, recognizing their full value as a human being in their efforts to increase both their welfare and their prosperity"* (Millard, et al., 2020, p. 197). This desired shift in moral to a carrying approach that entirely challenges the view of the market is only reachable if social innovators and supporting policy makers are centered within the changing processes (Banerjee et al., 2020, p. 6).

The interdisciplinarity of social entrepreneurship, and its orientation towards societal challenges impacts the design of market instruments (Hansen et al., 2021, p. 13). At the example of agriculture, public action and cross-sectoral collaboration could lead to political action and the subvention of regenerative practices, higher taxes on conventional agriculture, impact measurement mechanisms, and alternative revenue streams for farmers through the trading of CO2 certificates (Duncan et al., 2020b).

Whereas current capitalistic streams of advertising promote overconsumption as a need for the economy to function (Jackson, 2016, p. 23), social entrepreneurship and the anti-growth attitude rely on conscious consumption based on needs. Forms of activism that involve protest and other care-full initiatives for organizing differently are needed to disrupt current political, economic and business approaches (Phillips, 2019, p. 1160). The idea of efficiency focuses on resource conservation, zero waste, community thinking, and sharing. Circularity forces a conscious use of resources and already in the design, the durability and best possible use of products. In this respect, people-oriented social innovation is very appropriate for regenerative agriculture, as it is based on care. Arguably, social entrepreneurship and a people-oriented care perspective as an integral part within unsustainable industries, politics, and business practices will be crucial to transform the system regarding social justice. Through this focus, tools such as technology, funding, and marketing become drivers of change, not necessities for change.

4. Methodology

This part is dedicated to the methodology and first explains the chosen philosophy of science, which is ecofeminism as a critical theory, and then turns to the design of the study and finally to the method of digital ethnography.

4.1 Philosophical Foundation: Critical Theory

Critical theory is associated with the Frankfurt School, which emerged at the end of the 1920s as a special independent research institute from the Frankfurt University (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 181). Key representatives of the school were the German social scientists and philosophers Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Benjamin, and Fromm (ibid.). Habermas is another prominent figure whose work started in the 1950s and emerged from the first area of the Frankfurt School (ibid., p. 184). Critical theory arose from questioning research and doubting implications of traditional rationality sciences: positivism as a philosophy applicable to social science was neglected, contextual, cultural, political, social, and historical influences were introduced as crucial factors determining phenomena, worldviews and knowledge (ibid., p. 182).

Political circumstances, power and institutions arguably provide relevant context in changing social problems and understanding a societal change. The philosophy has an emancipatory cognitive interest, uncovering unconventional views by focusing on the reflective interpretations of the researcher (ibid., p. 203 ff). From a methodological point of view, it is not an empirically oriented approach (ibid.). Critical theory questions and challenges anticipated knowledge and established truths and argues for an open-ended assessment of understanding. Representatives of the school of thoughts argue that a phenomenon could never be researched without knowing the context and knowledge is also context dependent. The philosophy aims to clarify relations between existing and over the years and via institutions established knowledge, and how empirical social conditions changed or were re-produced through historical and political contexts (ibid., p. 194).

Moreover, a more extensive set of data, theoretical foundation and related context are crucial for uncovering the critical argument and question anticipated knowledge. The whole process of research and a self-reflective approach is essential for a researcher, applying critical theories. Own privileges, understanding and interpretations of the researcher are relevant contextual factors for understanding the research phenomena and should be questioned and pointed out through the whole process for distinguishing empirical and theoretical aspects.

4.1.1 Notions on Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism is not only a movement but can be described as a critical philosophy of science itself. It is crucial to analyse how the chosen philosophy of science Critical Theory and ecofeminism overlap in sensemaking and shared ways of gathering and understanding knowledge.

Looking at its ontology and epistemology, ecofeminism can be described as a field of critical theory (Molyneux & Steinberg, 1995, p. 2). Because of its' intersectional character, ecofeminism is of interest for multiple fields and draws on different theoretical implications and concepts such as environmental studies, critiques of science and modernity, development studies and a range of feminist critical writing and activism (ibid.)

Ecofeminism emerged in the 70s, years after the first two generations of critical theory. Drawing on the importance of context in critical theory, the role of women in science in the beginning of the 20st century and also traditional research methods in western countries including othering and exploiting people from unknown cultures and races has not been much questioned before due to the dominance of rationalist and positivist thinking (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 190). As a philosophy that emerged after World War One and during World War Two, the environment and its destruction as well as the exploitation of women has not been a topic of the specific historical moment. Feminism and environmental activism started becoming mainstream and a civil society and academic movement in the middle of the 20st century. Habermas, does as ecofeminism question the development of a capitalized system and the effects of the technology and political conditions on society (ibid., p. 191).

He claims that people are not able to take up an independent political and or ethical standpoint and therefore result in less questioning of societal challenges (ibid.)

Ecofeminism emerged over years from diverse and several feminist perspectives and represents and anti-Enlightenment attitude. The Enlightenment emancipation-logic ciritized not only the women's place in society, but also reflects a concern for those people, who, “since the White Man’s march towards ‘the realm of freedom’ had paid for this freedom by the denial of their own subjectivity, freedom and, often, their survival base. As well as women, these include nature and other peoples — the colonized and ‘naturized’ — ‘opened up’ for free exploitation and subordination, transformed into the ‘others’, the ‘objects’, in the process of European (male) ‘subject’s’ emancipation from the ‘realm of necessity’." (Shiva & Mies, 2014, p. 8) Adorno and Horkheimer also are strong advocates of the anti-Enlightening argument, they think that “the ideal of Enlightenment leads to a form of rationality that pushes instrumental thinking so far as to produce its own opposite irrationality, also turning the social into an object of rational, means-oriented action, permitting industrialized mass murders as in Auschwitz as well as the objectification and streamlining of human needs and desires“ (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 147).

Both critical theory and ecofeminism criticize the way science and humanity developed after the Enlightenment. The disastrous impact on humanity and nature after industrialization, the emergence of technology and knowledge sharing are themes of both movements. The inability of the human to question and make decisions and behave out of an ethical and moral desire resulted in several historic events, which underlined humanity’s inability to create positive change. Ecofeminism sees a clear connection between the exploitation of women and nature. It leads to the critical examination of the capitalist patriarchy that emerged through the Enlightenment, industrialization, colonisation, and exploitation of planetary boundaries (Shiva & Mies, 2014). In this regard, ecofeminism draws a line between ego-driven exploitation through patriarchal structures and linkage to the climate crises, biodiversity crises and global poverty. Critical theory does not refer to nature and the exploitation of women but rather questions the social development linked to the place, historical and sociological

circumstances and questions power structures (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 180 ff). The critical theory emerged before and during World War two and questioned the overall economic and political institutions and systems such as Nazism and Eastern bloc communism leading to a harmful impact on humanity (ibid.). Both movements allow the search for new knowledge, detached from previously established knowledge, and have an exploratory character. Phenomena are not easily explainable and can be explained differently from different perspectives; the decisive factor is the context.

4.2 Research Design

4.2.1 Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative research is *"interested in analyzing the subjective meaning or the social production of issues, events, or practices by collecting non-standardized data and analyzing texts and images rather than numbers and statistics"* (Flick, 2014, p. 604). The research gives insights into decision problems and opportunities and focuses on collecting primary data by asking questions and/or observing social settings of smaller samples (Dickinger, 2007, p. 9). The data collection aims not to quantify results but to understand words and social aspects more precisely (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). The research approaches analysis behaviour, language, and social constructs and is suitable for understanding social phenomena and movements (ibid.). Dickinger (2009) argues for an exploratory approach as most suitable for gathering qualitative data. The project does not want to understand why a particular phenomenon exists (explanatory) or how individual actors create it (descriptive), but whether and how specific ethical behaviour is applied to drive change (Decarlo, 2018, p. 168)**.**

The Climate Emergency presents humanity with difficult choices because the idea of growth and innovation must be reinterpreted and, therefore, also the role of entrepreneurship (Göppel, 2014). Social innovation, respecting planetary boundaries in every entrepreneurial activity and turning away from overconsumption are tasks of the 21st century and are in contrast to the West's established comfort and consumption-oriented lifestyle (Banerjee et al., 2020; Shiva & Mies, 2014). Therefore, the

exploration of changemakers and their courageous and critical behaviour towards established norms serves as starting points for fostering change (Mulgan, 2019). A qualitative, explorative approach opens up optimal conditions for research to investigate the research question through the perspective of critical theory.

4.2.2 Inductive Research Approach

The research follows an inductive strategy (Bryman, 2016, p. 21). The inductive approach starts with the data collected and derives new themes from the observation (ibid.). Deduction is going from theory to observation, whereas induction is going from observation to theory (ibid., p. 23). The thesis started with an observation of the ethics of care as part of social entrepreneurship in a transition to regenerative agriculture. Based on this, it was observed whether and how these ethics are applied.

Figure 2: Research design

Theories about what care means and how it is embedded in systemic change can be derived through observation. The explorative thought that investigates more profoundly into the topic where the theoretical concepts and the collected data are turned and twisted, also supports an inductive approach (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 71). Data and literature were collected simultaneously, and

the findings were influenced by the constant development of the state of knowledge. Therefore, the observations have been progressively revised and at the end the five themes described in this paper have been identified.

4.2.3 Case Study

The project follows a case study design, namely the case of the regenerative agriculture community in systemic change. A case study describes an exploration of a particular case, such as an organisation, a community, or a person (Bryman, 2016, p. 60). This approach dives deeper into current and topical phenomena in the contemporary text and is therefore also suitable for analysing a situation that is happening at the moment(Yin, 2003, p. 13). This approach operates well with ethnography and participant observation because it allows a community to be closely observed over a more extended period and its actions to be analysed in detail (Bryman, 2016, p. 10). An online community has been identified and by following this community over a few months, a comprehensive understanding of their role and their attitudes in changing the system could be observed. Digital ethnography enables researchers to understand social movements and digital behaviour of larger groups through technology, arguably, regenerative agriculture as an online movement is suitable for a case study (Airoldi, 2018; Caliandro, 2017; Lupton, 2015; Mares, 2013).

4.3 Digital Ethnography

Ethnography is used to observe and analyse first-hand experiences to tell social stories and generate knowledge by applying different methods and varying sources of information (Murthy, 2008, p. 838). Early ethnography emerged in social science from participant observation of foreign territory and people, their behaviour, cultural implications and social constructs (Bryman, 2012, p. 431). However, the method nowadays goes beyond participant observation and can include other forms of data collection, such as interviews, for example, and uses different communication and interaction tools (ibid.). The goal is to understand and ask critical questions, learn from observing and being part of the

setting researched. After and during observing and being part of the field, the researcher analyses based on the experiences made and captured in their field notes (ibid., p. 447). Field notes and ways of capturing impressions and findings, therefore, serve as data for the analyses. Early ethnographers relied on their field notes because back in time, when ethnography evolved as a method for social science, there was no technological support (ibid., p. 423). However, over the years, ethnography developed, and researchers could use images, video material and today's digital tools to capture moments and their observations (ibid., 447). Digital and virtual ethnography developed as a relevant method since human connection and interaction happens both virtually and in person, and social media created space during the past two decades, where we portray our social lives online (Hine, 2015, p. 3). Research in social science relies on having access to the field of interest, either as being included or observing participants in it; arguably, digital ethnography opens up spaces for researchers to understand social behaviour and cultural implications (Airoldi, 2018, p. 626). A globally connected world, where ecosystems and exchange happen across borders, demands ways of cooperating digitally. Platforms and social networks allow participants of industry and discipline to interact with each other without necessarily working at the same places together or even working in the same country (Lupton, 2015, p. 20). Digital ethnography can be applied in four different ways: a) using digital tools to create and build professional conversations and networks b) understanding how individuals and communities use digital media and spaces c) using digital tools as a lens researching a phenomena d) critically research the usage and interaction with digital and social media and their effects on society (Lupton, 2015).

This thesis uses digital tools and spaces to observe the behaviour of participants and experts within the field. However, at the same time, the context of a digitised world and how individuals use it for engaging in discourses is crucial and needs to be considered. The ontological philosophical foundation of this thesis looks at the importance of the environment in which the research is performed and understanding circumstances, leading to specific observations and sculpting the understanding of it from an individual perspective. In the context of global crises, such as in 2021, the COVID 19 pandemic

and the Climate Emergency are confronted by digital activism such as zerocovid or Friday For Future, and entrepreneurship using digitalisation to counteract those crises for example. Lupton argues for the importance of the internet and digital platforms for change to happen and civil society and public engagement (Lupton, 2015, p. 151).

Digital ethnographers have a different role in the digital context than in conventional ethnography. It is more indirect and mediated (Ghosh, 2020, p. 5). By observing the field in the home office environment of the researcher, essential observations may be lost, questions cannot be asked directly, and the observed people have the power to decide how they present themselves in digital spaces (ibid.). The missing ability to participate in a natural setting is a shortcoming of digital ethnography (ibid.).

Therefore, scholars argue for a mix and the necessity to build personal relationships and interact with the field (Bryman, 2016; Hine, 2015; Lupton, 2015). The amount of data that needs to be analysed also increases significantly (Hine, 2015, p. 74). The internet and digital communication channels are multiple compared to direct contact. Therefore, as a researcher, it is crucial to decide exactly which tools and channels are available and which ones will be considered for the analysis (ibid., p. 74).

Since this thesis deals with a systemic change that combines a social movement, new business models and networks, ethnography only represents a fraction of the change within the agriculture sector. As a researcher, it is my perspective and network that is mapped in the study. However, unlike other methodologies, digital ethnography offers optimal conditions for the discussions I participated in and the digital products I consumed to describe how individual actors behave and what ethical and moral principles guide them in their actions.

5. Data Analysis

First, the chapter describes how data was collected and explains the thought process behind selecting the individual talks. Because a large amount of data was collected during the four-month data collection period, specific conversations were recorded and thematically examined in the analysis. Nevertheless, the findings from the observation play a role in the elaboration of the particular topics and the talks. This chapter, therefore, provides information on how the different input was used.

5.1 Analysis Approach

Sampling describes how cases, companies or participants were chosen across various possibilities (Flick, 2018, p. 173). Choosing wisely cases or participants is crucial since it is the foundation for a good and comprehensive qualitative data collection. What the participants say or how they behave and the circumstances of the interviewed or observed participants provide knowledge gathering and influence the final results. Therefore, it is essential to argue for a good sample and the research question (ibid., p. 174).

For this thesis, I started by following diverse companies in the sector on social media and attended online events posted by these organisations (see Appendix F). I realised that much information about how entrepreneurs enable transitioning to regenerative practices is available in podcasts, YouTube videos, TV shows, Social Media accounts and books. Asking those entrepreneurs about existing information seemed obsolete, so I decided to draw on the information available on the internet.

The first company which caught my interest for this research was the German social enterprise Einhorn. The start-up produces condoms with sustainable Kautschuk from south-east Asia and was the first company in the industry that made sustainably sourced, regenerative practices mandatory for their products (Climate Farmers, n.d.-a). Einhorn managed to support farmers transitioning and therefore positively influence their livelihood and force the entire industry to rethink their approach

of sourcing natural products through regenerative agriculture (Zeiler & Ciobotaru, 2020). I watched a panel discussion with the head of sourcing at Einhorn, where she explained her journey. The panel consisted of different participants from organisations or companies engaged in agroforestry. The participants were mostly talking about political obstacles for farmers to transition (Climate Farmers, n.d.-a).

While listening to this panel, I became aware of their different mindset and approaches to problems, and they all had it in common. Simultaneously I was reading and learning about ecofeminist ethics of care and realised that this could be the mindset I was thinking about. The panel was part of a series from the organisation Climate Farmers. Climate farmers is an enterprise, enabling farmers to transition to regenerative agriculture by providing an online academy, a community, and technical solutions to measure soil quality (Climate Farmers, n.d.-b). Their high-quality talks with practitioners from the field and online presence convinced me to use those as main resources for this thesis. By attending and observing those discussions, I was able to analyse how the actors in their sphere behave and what they think is needed to change the system. Individuals representing enterprises, NGOs, or political bodies and farmers are among the community and discuss how to accelerate regenerative agriculture through diverse topics, e.g. soil biology, the role of fashion, or farm finances. This kind of diverse and professional discussions serve as a good opportunity to observe how care as part of social entrepreneurship and doing business is embedded in the people's work and mindset.

5.1.1 Quality Criteria

The Data was gathered through three panel discussions of Climate Farmers, also available on the Regenerative Skills Podcast. The podcast is hosted by one of Climate Farmers employees, and by providing the panels via various channels, a broader audience can be reached. Further, an episode of the Planet Progress, where one of the Co-founders of Climate Farmers and the host discuss Climate Farmer's journey and their climate solution, has been used as Data. Lastly, two interviews with community members have been conducted to guarantee a mix of methods, which is essential for

digital ethnography (Ghosh, 2020, p. 5). The two semi-structured interviews were well prepared in advance, as it is essential not to ask the participants unpleasant or morally questionable topics (Diener & Crandall, 1978, p. 19, as cited in Bryman, 2016, p. 126). Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity to talk about specific topics but at the same time to be open for the interviewees' input. By preparing semi-structured interviews, the content of the interviews can be structured and planned beforehand and the findings from the panel discussions further researched, but at the same time it gives the possibility to the interviewee to add additional insides and taking part in guiding the conversation (Flick, 2014, p. 218). The participants caught my attention because of their social media presence and the fact that they reported about their profession in regenerative agriculture and, at the same time, educated their followers about healthy and environmentally friendly food in a caring way (see figure 3).

Figure 3: Instagram posts from observants

The participants were also contacted via social media, which resulted in an open and friendly interaction from the beginning. During the interviews, it was essential to make them feel comfortable and not ask difficult-to-answer questions (ibid.).

The public discussions recorded have not been held to answer the specific research question. Interpretation is crucial, and the data gathered has to be analysed regarding the research question by integrating the researcher's interpretation (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 208). The audience were mainly farmers or practitioners in the field knowing each other, which resulted in a casual language and open atmosphere. Ethics of care consist of belief systems leading to lived action and are not observable per se through asking specific questions (Phillips, 2019, p. 1157). Arguably, analysing the

community's arguments in their natural environment, where they talk about their area of knowledge, is a suitable approach to answer the research question.

Notes during panel discussion, podcasts and reading articles have been taken in a hand-written diary and further captured interpretations made during the thesis process (see Appendix E). Additional online material such as newspaper articles, blog posts, documentaries, Instagram live sessions, LinkedIn posts and discussions were part of the observation process during the whole time and therefore influenced the creation of the themes and the findings.

Public discussions:

Name	Topic	Channel	Link	Criteria
Talk 1	REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE: w/ Patrick Worms, Richard Perkins & Benedikt Bösel | Climate Farmers	Live Panel YouTube | Climate farmers Channel	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_9M5S1NeiE	Perspectives from practitioners, understanding the farmers perspective and mindset
Talk 2	REGENERATIVE FASHION: Discussion w/ Rebecca Burgess & Aroa Fernandez Alvarez | Climate Farmers	Live Panel YouTube | Climate farmers Channel	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ls6BcTfSDLY	Perspectives from two social entrepreneurs working with farmers
Talk 3	FARM ECONOMICS: Discussion w/ Mark Shepard, Michael Ableman	Live Panel Podcast | Regenerative Skills	https://open.spotify.com/episode/4eXQcrrOTzSIS6r2PLjs8I?si=qm919C0JRxS4pmjUIqZiKg&dl_branch=1	Finances as one of the main obstacles for regenerative agriculture
Talk 4	The ground beneath our feet - Interview with Climate farmers as part of google incubator about scalable climate crises solutions	Podcast | Planet progress Google.org Impact Challenge	https://open.spotify.com/episode/1oFL5kB9PJwLpQBEj0uWQk?si=aa11176f2e694983	Introduction of Climate farmers, discussion concerning the transformation and what obstacles the organisation was phasing

Table 4: Overview of talks

Interviews:

Name	Interviewee	Format	Criteria
Interview 1	Farmer	semi-structured interview	Farmer from the Climate Farmers community
Interview 2	Climate Farmers employee	semi-structured interviews	Responsible for the Climate Farmers Academy

Table 5: Overview of interviews

Research ethics are relevant throughout the process and at the same time considering the research participants' concerns about their data (Schnell and Heinritz, 2006, p. 17, as cited in Flick, 2018, p. 135). Even though some of the discussions are available online and thus freely accessible to everyone, it is essential to inform participants what happens to the information and, above all, to ensure that the information is not misused and used exclusively for this thesis. Considerations may include harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and deception (Diener & Crandall, 1978, as cited in Bryman, 2016, p. 125). Climate Farmers have been contacted after attending the first panel and asked for their permission. One of the Co-Founders agreed in a call to provide all the data needed, including the recordings of the panels. During the whole thesis, a constant exchange with employees of the organisation has taken place to ensure transparency and a good understanding of their organisation. A signed letter of consent (see Appendix D) obliges me as a researcher to use only the information given for the thesis and use misinterpretations. Furthermore, the document informs about the storage of the provided materials and deleting them after submitting this thesis. The same clarification took place with the two people who were interviewed. Furthermore, all participants were informed about the purpose, the topic, and the method of digital ethnography.

5.1.2 Process of Analysing

Otter.ai was used for creating transcripts and generating codes of the discussions held. The software automatically creates keywords and leaves space for comments. Further, the application measures the quantity of the individual speaking parts and makes it easy to add comments or search for

keywords within the conversation. Folders with different transcripts can be created which allows to look for specific information and keywords consisting of all discussions which have been recorded. That way, similarities and themes can be easier identified and bigger amounts of data can be processed in a more efficient way.

Notes have been taken while attending the panels or listening to the recordings. The content has been reviewed for a second time after attending the online panel by analysing the automatically created transcripts. This approach is suggested by Bryman to capture most relevant information and perform valuable research (216, p. 581). The notes from the initial listening helped to pay attention to the most crucial points. Comments have been made while reading the transcript on the sides. Those comments build the basis for creating codes. Thematic coding is a tool for data analysis which focuses on analysing participants' views on subjects (Flick, 2018, p. 473). This process aims to identify repeating patterns and to capture the most relevant statements of the data in regard to the research question (ibid.). The codes in the comments and the keywords from the transcripts served as a starting point for generating themes. This way, repeated patterns could have been easily identified.

In the next step, those themes have been separated into three categories: consumption, production, and mindset. Sub-themes have been summarized under those three themes (See Appendix C). However, all seemed to intersect, and the analysis would have been too long. That is why, another round of theme creation has been initiated. In this round five themes have been defined as relevant namely: *Decentralisation, Finances, Education, Technology and Digitalisation, and Consumption*.

The literature research consisted of care ethics and how it is embedded in ecofeminism and social entrepreneurship. However, the literature does not provide a framework or theory of what care ethics entails in agriculture. The research focused on how actors in the field of regenerative agriculture behave and what they say regarding conventional and regenerative agriculture.

5.2 Findings

The findings of the analysis are described below. A total of five dimensions were identified in which change is facilitated by the care perspective. These five dimensions influence each other, are interconnected, and together result in actions towards change. Figure 4 shows the strongest overlaps. The findings, their intersections are critically discussed in more detail in chapter six.

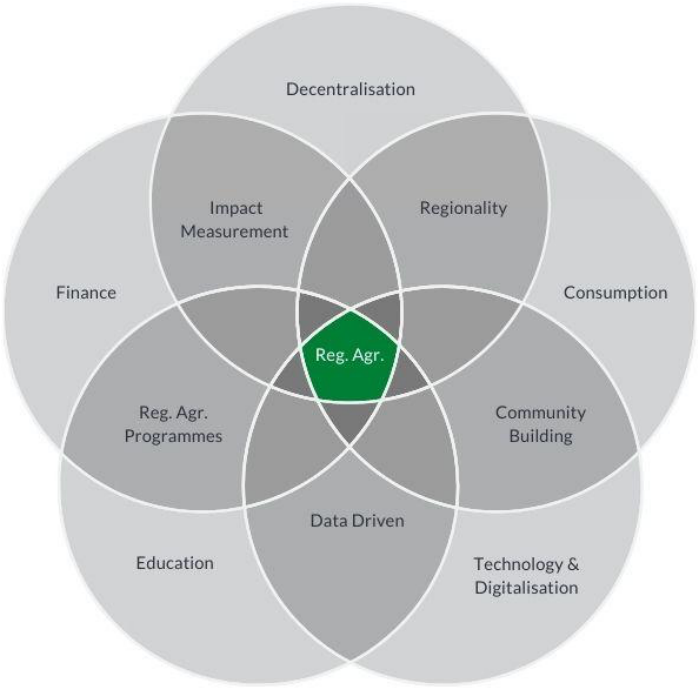

Figure 4: Intersection of findings

5.2.1 Decentralisation

All observed participants seem to agree to a certain extent that for systemic change in agriculture, a focus on *local and regional products* and the rejection of an utterly global food system is of relevance. There is agreement that globalization and global connection are essential for the current system to function and for all actors to exchange. However, participants agree that the food system, globalization, and capitalization are detrimental to global food security and the environment when it comes to natural goods and resources.

Interview 1:

[10:07] "I think a globalized world is great for information exchange, but with real goods that are made of either ending resources or very fragile once a globalized market is too dynamic."

Talk 1:

[00:17] "But this kind of thinking of like how to section up the land and resource base to the population centers and that's how I'd like to see the futures the future I'd like my kids to grow up in this real food security where farms around the population base, supplying that the majority of the food needs for those places, rather than big mega industrial farms, providing commodities on a very abstract global markets and there's no real food security there."

Furthermore, localization is relevant because knowing the direct natural ecosystem is essential for the success of the regenerative practice or transition. Also, which tools are used, which harvest is due when and which plant varieties can be combined are essential for the functioning of regenerative systems.

Talk 1:

[02:38] "I think you know what we really have to take into consideration sort of the context, and location specificity of farming right because the needs and the situations are just so fundamentally different from place to place, it is not only from the sort of soil and climate factors but also from the kind of values that you have the kind of machinery that you have the kind of risk return profiles you have and so forth and I think this is something that we really have to keep in mind"

Decentralization is essential to replace conventional agriculture by rejecting outsourcing food and fiber production distribution to various locations. Further, the idea enables farmers to consciously manage the land and build on local conditions for the direct community's food security. The decentralization movement seems to go hand in hand with the idea of serving a specific community.

Talk 2:

[00:00]: "So I guess I would say the answers are decentralization. The answers are investing in communities to create these responses at the local level, and functionally, to decentralize manufacturing … So we really do need to consider the decentralization movement, which will give brands kind of a bespoke selection of manufacturing centers across the world that will reflect the terroir of those regions."

Interview 2:

[06:35]: "we need to get closer connection to the farmers that people are willing to buy more directly from farms, instead of going the long route and only buying everything in the supermarket."

By focusing on local food production, externalities and negative environmental outcomes will be limited.

Talk 2:

[02:05]: "But one key is through localization, and through really, you know, opening up to the beauty of like, how do more local supply chains look like in the fashion industry, to really minimizing externalities."

People living in a certain area should have access to nearly all food they need for their consumption by buying from regional farmers.

Interview 1:

[10:07] "I think a good 80% of what people need should come from where they live ... I don't really think food should be an all globalized issue that's too sensitive, we depend on it too much."

Talk 3:

[31:49]: " They are part of kind of the broader palette that we have to offer our community so that when someone comes to me at the farmers market or as part of our box program. They know that they can get a full range of foods that they need. And I think that, interestingly enough, that kind of again social ecology, if you will, and community ecology tends to support the pharmacology as well. "

Cutting out distributors and producing more on demand is financially more lucrative for the farmer. This results further that farmers can better plan their finances and not compete on a global market price level, but also that less food is being wasted or not used. Networks of local farmers and food producers can form and enable customers to make economic, sustainable, and healthy consumption choices.

Interview 1:

[10:07]: If I have to compete with prices, let's say wheat, for instance, the German farmers 2017 produced a ton of wheat for 220 euros per tone. And the global market price was averaging 160 euros and the other 60 euros were subsidized by the EU. And then I think, why did we grow more wheat in Germany, then we need in the immediate surroundings? I mean, I'm sure there are some countries that struggle with that. And they can make agreements with other countries that don't struggle with it. Let's say Afghanistan can import wheat from Canada, that's fine. But I don't know, political matters influence the direction. Or if it's just education, and telling people and hoping for the consumer to make that decision themselves without any political pressure to it."

5.2.2 Finances

The topic of finance is about two crucial points: on the one hand, the *financing of the transition or the farming project* and, on the other hand, working out the *financial profitability of regenerative agriculture* for farmers. Global markets and resulting low prices have already been mentioned in the previous sub-chapter. The two experts interviewed for the paper reflected that finances and education were the biggest obstacles for regenerative agriculture.

Interview 1:

[14:38]: "(What are the biggest obstacles for regenerative agriculture?) Financing an another obstacle is education."

Interview 2:

[14:47]: "(What are the biggest obstacles for regenerative agriculture?) On the other hand, there's a big problem in financing."

The background information and field observation showed that the market is characterized by global prices, which in some cases do not even cover production costs. Highly efficient monoculture farms enable farmers to produce large amounts of food, fiber of grains by lowering costs to a minimum. However, farmers are often dependent and remain financially stable due to an anonymous global market and financial subsidies by the government.

Talk 2:

[19:28]: "Because I think also when it comes to our governments, our governments, and you know, government incentives are not incentivizing market farmers to stay small. So very often in many European countries, incentives are given according to the amount of land that you have, which could make sense, in a way. But then what that means is that farmers who have very small farms actually qualify for almost no support, and they are always under pressure to sell their lands, to others. So it's definitely like we know of examples that are working. And our our concern right now is like, how do we protect those? And how do we replicate those because there's a very clear tendency, because of markets and governments to disappear."

Regulations, laws, and daily farm business make it even more difficult to shift systems and invest in new ways of producing. Especially for a change from conventional to regenerative agriculture, the issue of finances is crucial.

Talk 1:

[2:38] "Of course we have to talk about somehow forms of support so some, some form of subsidization programs and I think my ideal. Let's say envision of agriculture in Europe would be to not only, let's say monitor and monetize the true costs of the production, but also think about the new values that are already being created in by different time methods because I think this will bring a natural energy and

and movement towards farming methodologies that actually do care account of the soil and the biodiversity and the nutrient density of food and so forth."

Interview 2:

[08:15]: "At the same time policies need to change to make it possible that these foods become cheaper, and then over time as subsidies shift from disruptive foods towards regenerative foods, the healthy food and the regenerative food can become cheaper, while the destructive food will become more expensive."

Within the regenerative agriculture community, there is no consensus on whether financial support in the form of subsidies, as is currently the case, is the solution. Currently, many conventional and organic farmers manage to be profitable only through these subsidies. However, the subsidies also force the farmers to grow and plant according to regulations and thus specifications. The support varies within countries and even municipalities. Moreover, different countries support farmers differently depending on the size of the land to be planted, per person, or the type of farming, e.g., organic farming. In this study, successful farmers tended to argue against subsidies because, in their experience, good management and precise planning are the cornerstones of regenerative agriculture. Interestingly, the farmers who started their business right away in a sustainable way, were arguing against subsidies because of the necessity of making smart economic decisions. They see a need for political action, but not in providing financial support for regenerative practices, rather change regulations, which make it easier to engage in more sustainable practice and empower farmers to learn how to manage finances in a longer term oriented and sustainable way.

Interview 1:

[16:05]: "Those people then have made smart economic decisions that made it possible for them to sustain as a business and as a sustainable, small scale farm. If governments incentivize certain things often it takes away from the necessity to make smart economic decisions"

Talk 1:

[20:48]: "I don't know if I want to see small farms getting funding, I've been reflecting on the points that I hope we talk about this evening, which, for me, the things that need to be addressed for the wider engagement of regenerative agriculture education, access to land, dealing with regulations that are archaic and written for industrial processing and finances is another thing but I'm really not up for financing, farming, I think people need to design, businesses that work. And if they can't, they shouldn't be farming, they shouldn't be in control of that land."

Transitioning the farm is more difficult because, in the beginning, the transition can be cost-intense, and many farmers have debts already, and thus they cannot cope with the short-term revenue losses associated with a changeover on their own. Moreover, their salary is dependent on the harvest and from a financial point of view, it makes sense to increase harvest in a way, to feed as many people as possible and be financially lucrative. Especially by creating financial incentives, farmers who act already organically will be more likely to take the risk and change over if they can be financially sustainable. Further, for the system to change, it is necessary to operate within it and acknowledge the fact that people are dependent on those subsidies and will stick to the regulations, so rather than continuing paying them to conventional farming, shifting their payment towards regenerative measurement could accelerate the transition.

Talk 1:

[22:05]: "[Farmers] are unable to take strategic decisions [through current subsidies regulations], but it is even more of a nightmare because the rules and regulations attached to that, to those subsidies are so complicated that prevents farmers from truly innovating, right, … So in an ideal world, I think we would all agree, it would be much better if there were no subsidies, but we do not live in an ideal world we live in a world in which subsidies are going to continue being paid. And so, right now, the good farmers are competing against those farmers whose lack of good farming is subsidized, and I would much rather have the subsidies flow into the pockets of the good farmers, then flow into the pockets of the bad farmers."

One interviewee who doubts the current subsidy scheme, gave an example of Quebec where farming projects get funded per project, the method and size of the field does not play a role. This resulted in an increasing number of farmers who start their market garden projects, which supports the idea of subsidies, but he strongly rejects European systems and agrees that there is a need to rethink the way, how the financial support is distributed.

Interview 1:

[16:05]: "But on the other hand, if you look at Quebec, that's the only place in the world since thousands of years where the number of young farmers has increased. And that's because they gave out a subsidy of $40,000 to anyone who started farming operation. And that subsidy is the same amount of money, whether I'm starting a 2 million, 2 million cows strong milking operation, or a small market garden. And for small market garden $40,000 is about as much as you need to get started. And for industrial operations, it's nothing. So a lot of young people started market gardens in Quebec, and it's the first place where the number of young farmers is increasing them. So if the government would incentivize what I'm doing, that could have a drastic impact really, really fast."

In Europe, for example, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) determines the direction of agriculture and how farmers are subsidized by what type of agriculture. The period of this policy is usually a seven-year plan and includes guiding and a European budget divided into countries and actions (European Commission, n.d.). This European solution is further broken down into countries and within regions for its execution. Although there are regional differences and politics is a complex topic which differs from country to country, the regenerative farming community agrees that policies do not yet provide sufficient incentives to farm in a regenerative way or make it difficult to stay within the defined methods to receive subsidies. The first talk covered this topic and showed the participants concerns about politics being not sufficiently close enough to the problem:

Talk 1:

[35:27]: "With so many different factors influencing the farming community in the farming industry, we talked about, you know, larger agribusiness, commodity crop prices, regulation from governments, it starts to become sort of a chicken or the egg question as to what influences what first or what can start the ball rolling, in order to influence the culture of farming in the industry at large into shifting into something that is much more ecologically sustainable." ... [51:14]: "Politics intervenes and you have a classical example happening right now, where the European Commission put some decent proposals on the table called the European Green Deal the biodiversity strategy the Farm to Fork strategy, and the politicians in the European Parliament and the member states just immediately route all that right back to ensure that the status quo businesses usual input intensive agriculture, would not be threatened." **…** *[57:56]: "I don't hold faith in institutions leading the way in this because historically they never have. And that's certainly in the last 400 years of history that I can, you know, by my estimation."*

In addition to funding, *profitability* is also an obstacle. Since the Second World War, artificial fertilizers have made production so efficient that more food could be produced quickly and cheaply in monocultures. Regenerative agriculture requires more patience and brings different products to the market all year round instead. Therefore, the system needs to be rethought, and the financial profitability of farmers having multiple income streams through different products needs to be established. This way is nevertheless lucrative and financially worthwhile. One participant expressed his concern that all stakeholders involved, that regenerative farming enables a rich and decent life for the farmers, which make them financially stable and resilient is one of the main key messages in advertising the transition.

Talk 1:

51:14: "It is about making farmers, richer them a better lifestyle, it is about giving them more income, more resilience, better security, including financial security. "

Not only farmers need to know, but also politicians to design regulations, which support all people, getting involved in the industry. Creating awareness and actively asking for change seems to be important. One participant called for more political activism to change the current political and subsidy scheme and to actively involve in political engagement for educating the people who are responsible for designing the regulations and laws.

Talk 1:

[51:14]: "Ensure that the politicians understand that this is important and do it through the usual tools that the modern digital economy, allows us to petitions the emails, the, the sharing stuff on Instagram on Snapchat and Snapchat and Facebook and what have you."

5.2.3 Education

The observation also revealed that access to *education* is a significant obstacle for many farmers and that there is not enough information available on regenerative agriculture in the form of courses of study or through special school programs.

Talk 1:

[15:19]: "And I don't know how you address that on the society wide scale because it doesn't work like that and that's the problem with our institutions also which by nature and through history, only moving with public opinion and, you know, the leaders in this field and generally not coming out of institutions all of the farmers that inspire me. Didn't go to agricultural schools."

It was described that farms often rest on tradition and that the farms are perpetuated. It seems as if the methods are not questioned critically and business as usual is a chosen practice. Education is based more on technical know-how and how to run a farm.

Interview 2:

[14:47]: "One is education. So that is a very big thing, because these practices are not taught in agricultural schools. So Most people who go through the the typical education of going to an

agricultural School of getting typical education on that side are not taught regenerative practices. Further, practitioners and pioneers of the field often did not go to a specific school or teach in those."

Talk 1:

[15:19]: "I see across the farming community, farmers are not trained to make decisions in the face of complexity, and my experience of agriculture school is that the sons and daughters of farmers are, essentially, learning how to maintain machinery and application rates and things like this, and that's not farming that's the work of a technician, that's not even farming."

Knowledge-sharing platforms, with its communities, offer farmers the opportunity to exchange ideas and at the same time provide them with essential learning material. Regenerative agriculture works because those who cultivate the land know and understand precisely how the land functions as a holistic ecosystem.

One participant talked about the people who are engaged in regenerative agriculture and explained that often young farmers, taking over the farms are concerned about the current practice and therefore look for more sustainable solutions within agriculture. Questioning the status quo not only argues for more sustainable practices, but also for a paradigm shift and therefore transformation within agriculture.

Talk 4:

[18:47]: "People that either come from a family of farmers and are now taking over the operation, they think about it in the long term"

In this sense, access to information and knowledge-sharing within the community seem to be a crucial point.

Interview 1:

[4:46]: "And there's quite some high quality content on the climate farmers, skill exchanges and so on that I usually couldn't afford. So that's a really big thing education, free education."

Besides the access to knowledge, the type of knowledge seems also to be relevant. Participants pointed out the importance of indigenous knowledge. Indigenous folks and their knowledge have been excluded for a long time in the academic sphere. The high demand of food and the global need of sufficient nutritious access made it mandatory to increase food production and therefore not stay within the ecosystem, but rather adopt it to the global needs. This also resulted in a certain need for knowledge and education and supports the argument of indigenous knowledge being excluded and systematically ignored when it comes to education.

The farmer must learn and research a lot themselves for the relevant knowledge. Without the commitment and the personal purpose for this project, the mission seems difficult to follow.

Talk 2:

[39:44]: "There's, knowledge gaps, it doesn't mean people are trying, and there aren't people trying to bridge these deltas, but there are functionally knowledge gaps in the system. And that is because our land grant universities in the US have also been predominantly bought, in many cases, but departments are very influenced by private dollars coming from the same companies that are shaping policy."

Talk 1:

[36:15]: "So I would very much encourage the people with an influence on the educational system to ensure that much more space is made in the curricular at agricultural schools, agricultural colleges and indeed universities."

5.2.4 Technology and Digitalisation

Modern civilizations were able to develop because efficient agriculture enabled technological progress and the other way round. Within the regenerative agriculture movement, practices such as agroforestry systems, market gardening, or the integration of animals do not rely on technological improvement and could make use of tools and machinery which has been used for decades.

Interview 1:

[23:02]: "I when I work with on a daily basis, it's not something that was invented in the last 50 years that I'm using."

Increasing the harvest through technology and fertilizers is rejected as a tool. Before, during and after the harvest, the soil should not be worked by technical equipment but should be and remain fertile through a natural regenerative process.

Talk 4:

[12:14]: "For seeding we only take very little, like we almost don't touch the surface and then we put some seats in there and then we rake again to close it and that's it. And when it comes to harvesting, it's actually the same you disturb as little as possible. And even when we fully harvest, we leave the roots in as much as possible. "

In addition to the technological development that has made today's agriculture possible, digitalisation has provided more opportunities for data collection, availability, and use. Two digital entablements emerged as significant: **online communities** and information exchange and, on the other hand, **applications for farmers**, such as satellites to measure soil quality, managing finances and the farm's ecosystem.

The internet makes it easier than ever to connect on a global level and create an online movement without physically meeting. Climate Farmers unites farmers and ambassadors all over the world by providing an online space where exchange and shared learning is accessible. The internet and social media also enable activism and political pressure to not only positively affect the regulations, but also educate the politicians to increase the reach of first-hand experiences. Arguably, the online sphere and its power to create noise around sustainable solutions are important drivers to enable systemic change.

Talk 1:

[51:14]: "Second, ensure that the politicians understand that this is important, and do it through the usual tools that the modern digital economy, allows us to petitions the emails, the, the sharing stuff on Instagram on Snapchat and Snapchat and Facebook and what have you."

Talk 1:

[57:56]: "social media today has massive impact and people all have access and an influence on that. …. in the university you have a drive towards those this kind of topics which beforehand weren't that interesting right so I think there's, there's a lot about the whole sort of using technology and information in the sense of spreading the word but at the same time trying to inform you as well as you can."

The online community is critical for political participation and for the creation of a movement. Digital networking and connecting strengthen the movement and increase the farmers' access to knowledge and other resources. The pre-planned and excellent content of the panel discussions themselves, which are accessible online free of charge for everyone, show on the one hand how enormously important the online sphere is for community building and a larger audience, but also how important it is for public education and awareness. Another example is the Netflix documentary "Kiss the Ground", which has been instrumental in getting people to think about the food system. Online access and promotion gave farmers and supporters of the movement a voice and therefore is a crucial part of the systemic change since it affects the consumers and the power of the farmers. The show's creators also work with community building and co-creation to work together on systemic change, empowering farmers to come together and learn.

Talk 1:

[57:56]: "it's public opinion that drives, institutions, and when you look at Netflix when you listen to podcasts like Joe Rogan or influential channels on the planet, regenerative agriculture is mentioned, weekly, this is happening, it's already going mainstream and so I just think that the more people will

make noise about that, that's what will drive institutions not a few people sitting somewhere remotely from this, that's not where the change is going to come from."

Interview 1:

[4:46]: "The biggest gain I personally have in the market gardening field because you are not required to get formal training. There's a lot of training that you can get online and knowledge that you can buy."

Another aspect is the usage of Data and the possibility to measure relevant indicators through new technology. Regenerative agriculture has a significant role in fighting the climate crisis because of its potential to store more carbon in the soil. It is essential to create metrics which capture the environmental outcome in terms of CO2 sequestration and make them easily measurable for farmers.

Talk 4:

[15:59]: "So one thing that we are doing with climate farmers is to figure out what are the metrics that tell us that an ecosystem is in a process of regeneration, and how can we measure it in such an easy remote digital way that we can actually link payments to them. So, if we can measure is there more carbon in the soil than it has been before. … So the key to expanding regenerative farming is all in measuring. We need to have ways of understanding the effect a farmer is having on their land, and help scale practices across the globe. Climate farmers are developing technology that means we can make the farming of the future smarter."

The participants seem to have a common understanding of the importance of technology and innovation and value those extremely. However, they describe that humanity was focusing too long on the development of those and increased efficiency, and this mindset is not going to be applicable for climate solutions, since there is not enough time for technologies to develop. On the other hand, the idea of technological development is going to save humanity, is not applicable if it destroys its livelihood.

Talk 4:

[08:08]: "Then are those that say you know we have technological ways of doing this non nature based, but those aren't just not ready yet. And so the best bet we have is agriculture."

Talks 2:

[4:42]: "And what we need is to change our mindsets and really understand that no technology is going to save us."

A mix of tradition and modern technology seems desirable. The aim is to use technology optimally and put into practice the existing knowledge about ecosystems and nature. Arguably, digital technology plays an empowering and supporting role.

Talk 1:

[2:38]: "And I think technology if it's, you know, being developed, out of an expertive understanding of ecosystems that can actually help us immensely in finding ways and helping farmers to find their context application specific ways of agriculture that let's say as the least common denominator, you know, at least, build soil."

Talk 4:

[16:42]: "Technology plays a very central role in [regenerative agriculture]. So, basically what we're developing is the set of technologies that will make it possible to very simply very quickly figure out the health of the soil and its regeneration taking place. This is when we can call it regenerative agriculture, not by the practice itself."

Talk 2

[1:03:08] :*"Some levels of high tech mixed with like the craft culture mixed with the deeper indigenous agro ecological pieces. Like I think there's a marriage between these things because we don't want to waste what we end up producing off the field. So if you can minimize waste with zero fall out, you can create mobility so someone keeps their garment longer because the pattern is so synced to their body."*

5.2.5 Consumption

For regenerative agriculture a seasonal diet is crucial; this goes hand in hand with the decentralized supply chains and also calls for a more regional community-based diet.

With the free-market economy and the shift within society towards more sustainable lifestyles, participants emphasized that customer behaviour is crucial, not only by voting with their money but also in putting pressure on political bodies, as discussed in the chapter about technology.

Interview 1:

[7:57]: "The consumers may be better point to look for help for farmers than to politics receive any political support"

Interview 2:

[8:15]: "I think consumers play play a huge role in this Because ultimately, they are the deciding factor"

Regenerative thinking in a circular economy sense is also an important point which has been pointed out by participants. Sharing and borrowing are essential aspects, which also conserve resources. Food sharing is a good example, but in agriculture, the sharing of machines and fields for planting. A mindset of sharing should be cultivated, promoting an awareness of the value of regenerative products. The participants made it clear that, just like farmers, consumers also must identify with their direct environment and shift more towards a community mindset.

Talk 2:

[29:27]: " the idea of circularity as another form of centralizing wealth and power but to think about decentralizing the process of making sure clothing circulates in a community like we always say like local dollars you want $1 to circulate as much as possible the most beautiful prosperous communities are where currency circulates over and over and over again in that community and does not get extracted out clothing is a similar it's a currency how can you keep it circulating in the community for as long as possible what are the beautiful strategies that we've been missing "

Talk 2:

[52:57]: "It's really about i think first reconnecting because often you know we think of our ages by better no but yeah it's not about buying but like first reconnecting with our wardrobe what we have at home."

Interview 2:

[1:53]: "we're growing healthier food for communities, the money also stays more in the areas where it's produced."

Participants agree that social sustainability is driven by regenerative agriculture, yet the participants were mainly driven by the idea of keeping natural ecosystems intact and capturing more CO2 in soils by building humus and healthy soil. This effectiveness needs to be recognized by consumers when choosing the products, they buy and by policymakers when negotiating legislation. Civil society participation goes beyond consumption decision-making and is reflected through political engagement and activism. Protests and public discussions that discuss the issue and its problems in front of a large audience seem enormously important.

Talk 1:

51:14: "Every week, you'd only for 10 or 15 minutes to sign the bloody protections to write letters to MPs and MEPs, to make sure that the politicians understand that there is a large number of people out there who feel passionately enough about this, that they're willing to spend some time into writing about it, even if it is not something that affects their direct livelihoods because they are not farmers themselves."

Talk 2:

[35:51]: "And, and I think, for that to happen, there needs to be government intervention, there needs to be enough citizen support, you know, so there is like a lot that needs to happen around, like raising awareness and consumers speaking up and voting with their purchase, but also voting, you know, like, right into their MP, and like, right into fashion brands and showing that there is this movement and distraction."

Another point raised by the participants was the respect of consumers for the profession as a farmer and the outcomes they provide. According to the participants, the low wages, high poverty, and suicide rates within the industry should lead to a more intense engagement with agriculture and what people consume. Furthermore, there should be an awareness that farmers feed communities and are essential for preserving our society. This conscious engagement with the profession should also be reflected in the willingness to pay higher prices. Social and ecological factors were considered in determining the price and therefore indicated a fair price. Nevertheless, it was indicated that consumer behaviour alone is not enough; even if farmers produce for consumers, it is not only the demand that plays a role.

Talk 4:

[18:24]: "[People] that have gone through a personal crisis. In Germany we recently had two years of drought and I'm pretty sure that the added interest to regenerative agriculture is, is also due to that, but it's also personal crisis, people thinking why am I doing what I'm doing, why, why is it that I've become a farmer, why am I still here and come to the conclusion you know it's not an order to put synthetics out there, I actually am a farmer because I love the land I love to grow, amazing food."

Talk 1:

[44:57]: "We need to be the rock stars in our communities, we need to be the ones that are like elevated because we're providing the food security. In other means, in any ridiculous way I just mean like we need to, you know, farming, as Patrick said it's got one of the highest suicide rates of any profession on the planet, there used to be the most noble profession of all."

Talk 2:

[2:05]: "So there is like a lot of negative dire social impacts of the fashion industry that don't rely only on worker exploitation, you know, but that relate to, I don't know, cultural appropriation and a lack of diversity are many issues. And I think, you know, when we talk about regenerative fashion, for sure why the core is, you know, connecting it to regenerative agriculture."

6. Discussion

This chapter is devoted to a discussion of the findings including the literature about the topic. This final section will answer the research question and examine the individual findings critically. Furthermore, the limitations are examined and finally, an outlook for further research is given.

6.1 Discussion of the Findings

This chapter explains the intersections of the findings and discusses them critically. Furthermore, the theory from the literature review will be applied. In this section, the experiences, and learnings from observing the online community via Social Media Channels and other online channels such as blog posts and podcasts, play into sculpting the arguments (see Appendix E and Appendix F).

6.1.1 A Shift in Focus for Regenerative Action

All five findings suggest a focus on a shift in mindset towards regenerative thinking. This mindset entails the critical questioning of the status quo, and business-as-usual, which *"unleashes regenerative design in order to create … and to restore humans as full participants in Earth's cyclical processes of life"* (Raworth, 2017, p. 29). This mindset goes in line with Dos Santos & Banerjee's definition of decolonisation, where individuals see their position in the world as contextualized, specific, and unique in a wider and diverse frame (2019, p. 10). Western knowledge and established practices are considered to be rethought and racist, classist and patriarchal structures challenged.

The inclusion of indigenous voices seems particularly relevant, as their management of land maintained the most biodiverse places on earth (Garnett et al., 2018). Indigenous scholars, situational approaches, and traditional knowledge from ancestors are not included in the curriculums. This goes hand-in-hand with what indigenous activists demand on social media and in interviews, for example Nemonte Nenquimo, an activist of the Waorani nation from the Amazonian Region of Ecuador:

"*I never had the chance to go to university, and become a doctor, or a lawyer, a politician, or a scientist. My elders are my teachers. The forest is my teacher. And I have learned enough (and I speak shoulder to shoulder with my Indigenous brothers and sisters across the world) to know that [western world] have lost your way, and that you are in trouble (though you don't fully understand it yet) and that your trouble is a threat to every form of life on Earth. You forced your civilisation upon us and now look where we are: global pandemic, climate crisis, species extinction and, driving it all, widespread spiritual poverty. In all these years of taking, taking, taking from our lands, you have not had the courage, or the curiosity, or the respect to get to know us. To understand how we see, and think, and feel, and what we know about life on this Earth."* (Nemonte Nenquimo, 2020).

Access to finance and power of indigenous people and regenerative thinkers is critical because through their land management and sustainability focus, policies can be influenced, and essential laws and strategies such as the European Green Deal can be designed accordingly. Modern conventional agriculture based on genetic food modification and the use of NPK fertilizers is only around 100 years old (O'Connor, 2020, p. 13). As mentioned in the theory section, this time frame is too short for a complex system as agriculture to be considered successful, even though it served for significant development towards zero hunger. The devastating impacts on the environment and vulnerable communities underline the importance of orienting towards those systems, which stood the test of time. Therefore, practitioners and academics reconsider traditional knowledge (Dwiartama, 2020), promoting top soil creation, which is crucial for healthy ecosystems, and carbon storage where the creation of 3 centimeters takes 1,000 years and the destructions happens rapidly due to modern practices (O'Connor, 2020, p. 13).

The distribution of money and access to land has been discussed by focusing on sustainable indicators. Social finance which moves beyond responsible investment and targets businesses which proactively measure benefits for society rather than minimizing harm is therefore an important driver for the industry (Stephens & Clapp, 2020, p. 220). This type of finance is designed for further developing social innovation through measuring social indicators (Schwartz et al., 2015). From a care perspective, access

to land for starting a sustainable farm should be possible for those who aim to operate in a regenerative way with the goal of feeding their community. In one informal discussion during the project, an activist from Fridays for Future and podcaster was even talking about an utopia where global markets, price fluctuations, regional competition is not part of the food system anymore and usage of land and all resources are shared. As a result, the cultivation of all land on earth would be oriented towards the common good, preservation of nature, feeding the world and not being dependent on those who are the legal owner of the land.

Furthermore, the situational focus and an orientation towards nature and its needs should be mentioned. Not only the role of humans within the world has been critically questioned, but also the role of technology and innovation was carefully considered by some participants. Stiglitz declares social innovation as important as technological innovation for a prosperous future which supports the argument of technology having an empowering and supporting role in our society (2010, p. xiv). One participant argued that a shift in mindset to understand that technology will not save humanity supports the argumentation of ecofeminists. It seems as the current global economy fosters more technological innovation for not changing habits. Those habits are highly defined by overconsumption and a misuse of finite resources. The awareness of this behaviour and the current approach of single use and short time thinking and usage of goods are therefore questioned by regenerative thinkers through resilience, inclusivity and holistic thinking (Aude Chesnais, 2020, p. 50).

A goal of harnessing all actors of a society is important to the members of the observed community. Thus, the work integration approach of social entrepreneurship (*Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation in the Nordic Countries*, 2015) is also represented, whereby the aim is not to build up enterprises with the guiding aim to be as profitable as possible, but to offer a good life, meaningful work and nutritious food to all participants in society through entrepreneurship. The focus on a good life was mentioned throughout the whole project. Spending time outside and intensively engaging with direct nature and its products is one of the best parts of the job for farmers and is also perceived as important for their customers. Ecofeminists declare a good life as being in close connection with

the community and the environment (Shiva & Mies, 2014). Consumption does not play the same role as it does in rich nations now. Caring for others and the planet is essential. Ecofeminists criticise rich nations for their pursuit of power, focus on GDP, and exploitation of nature and women (Shiva & Mies, 2014). An authentic life based on love, security, and happiness is the goal. Regenerative agriculture pushes such a definition of good life also for the farmers. Several participants reflected such an attitude towards life.

6.1.2 Supporting the Transition Through People-centered Action

The research supports the argument that linear food systems and monocultural farming practices must be dissolved and the incoherence of the different components of ecosystems taken as the guiding principles. The decentralisation of the food system can also be seen as part of this, as community actors demand close cooperation between local farmers and food producers and a focus on the direct community. Phillips argues that an essential part of care ethics is to rethink care by reevaluating the individual's place in society and cultivating the importance of local contexts and close collaboration with communities (Phillips, 2019, p. 1159). This revaluation results in the importance of local contexts, respect, and care for communities. This respect also goes hand-in-hand with accepting its' flaws: observants mentioned low wages from farmers, the dependencies of subsidies and an unforeseeable future, horrible working conditions on farms and in the fashion industry, gender inequalities, and modern slavery and child labor. Those social aspects and inequalities must be made transparent and systematically being brought into connection of cheap prices and big corporations with large supply chains. Social Entrepreneurship has the power by focusing on social injustices to make a difference and fight by its' nature and political intersection for better conditions.

At the same time, extensive consumption behaviour in rich countries harm social and ecological development. Currently economic development measured through the GDP serves as the indicator of a wealthy country, where the GDP per capita of rich nations is 50 times higher than the ones of least developed countries (United Nations, 2019). This disparity is not sufficiently historically addressed

considering the importance and influence of colonisation and oppression through Western societies, which still structurally exploits and dominates countries in the Global South till today (Hamington & Sander-Staudt, 2011). The responsibility of rich nations, which can steadily increase their wealth through the territorial, cultural and human exploitation of poorer nations, must be transparently anchored in laws and entrepreneurial activities. The observation showed that people involved in the system actively work on eliminating the oppressive structures to accelerate regenerative agriculture and make social and ecological indicators as important as monetary ones.

As described in chapter 2.2, all parts included in a system act according to their purpose. Arguably, the purposes shifted as shown in the previous chapter. Parts of the current system are expanded constantly since the actions alter the purposes and the purposes impact the parts (Mersmann & Wehnert, 2014). The table from chapter 2.2 can be expanded through the observation (see table 6). The individual parts mentioned here, and their actions interrelate, thus this list is not complete because it captions only the observed participants and time frame. Actions and purposes develop constantly and the parts of the system multiplicate. However, the findings make it evident that change needs to happen within all actors and on multiple levels.

Call to Consumers	Call to farmers	Call to policy makers	Call to Entrpreneurs
Put pressure on supply chains	Grow the international community	Learn from constituents	Develop Social Finance Systems
Give policymakers hope	Experiment, observe, share	Support regenerative, organic, and regenerative organic agriculture	Introduce Work Integration programmes
Start a conversation	Measure outcomes	Defund soil destruction	Create supporting digital technology
Buy regenerative	Develop and ask for education programmes	Stabilize falling food prices and ensure wages for farmers	Make new sales and communications channels accessible
Engage in the local community	Include direct sales channels	Establish impact measurement	Enable political participation
Engage via digital political activism	Closely work together with local companies	Inclusion of practioners in decision making processes	Develop opportunities for multiple income streams

Table 6: Involvement of multiple stakeholders - development of Moyer et al., (2020)

The findings suggested caring towards the farmers from a societal perspective by empowering and supporting. Ambassadors provide this support through awareness creation and movements on social media, as explained earlier. Branding, marketing, and storytelling are essential factors for the farmers and communities such as climate farmers to make themselves visible. Customers have an impact by voting with their money, putting pressure on politicians, and raising awareness through activism and social media. Further, as entrepreneurs they actively engage in supporting farmers in the transition by developing social finance, measuring social and ecological outcomes, developing work integration initiatives within the community, creating awareness around the topic and putting it on top of the political agenda

Besides, developing supporting technologies and tools are essential to make the necessary indicators for the chosen type of regenerative agriculture measurable. Digitalisation has made it possible for humanity to collect more data, evaluate it and make it efficiently usable through algorithms. Therefore, artificial intelligence and the internet of things are critical digital evolvements that support farmers through smart farming. The observation showed that technological progress and digitalisation are not taboo in regenerative agriculture. It is not a matter of returning to the beginnings of agriculture development but of using technology to support people and preserve the earth and her ecosystems: technology has an emancipating character, not an ultimate one.

Furthermore, actors in the field argued that it is about creating a food system that makes the individual actors financially stable and creates a better life for the farmers. Extreme weather conditions and climate change will have a more significant impact on agriculture in the future, and farmers are left alone in the current system due to poor harvests and, therefore, cannot invest. Steady income and financial security are arguably not only important drivers for the systemic change, but also to enable farmers to be able to care for themselves, their family, and employees. Strengthening small farmers is crucial because they are essential for community-centered development and at the same time, more exposed to crises, as the Corona crisis has shown, where vulnerable parts of society are more affected by hunger. Municipalities and governmental institutions integrate a people-centered approach by

including farmers into the design of legislations, reevaluate subsidy schemes, establish impact measurement schemes, stabilize local food and fiber prices, build a decentralized economy by strengthening the global community, foster social innovation, shift the economic thinking from GDP towards the common good within planetary boundaries and integrate diverse perspectives into their actions.

Moreover, developing the infrastructure for regenerative agriculture entails, besides political and financial aspects, the urban-rural linkage (Woods, 2020). Surrounding regenerative farmers are currently not able to holistically provide their close-by cities and communities. Regenerative farmers consider that it is often middle to high-income households or restaurants that are among their customers. The broad masses cannot be served due to the considerable price difference compared to conventional products. Direct sales and online shops that are presented to customers as advertising are useful tools for strengthening this relationship. Public discussions and accessible information about the health benefits and taste also enable farmers to distribute their products further.

Finally, consumers and their willingness to pay a fair price for the products play a role in empowering farmers. The environmental outcome and the tremendous impact of regenerative agriculture are amongst the biggest benefits and drivers for farmers to shift. However, externalities are not considered in conventional environmentalism, and damage to future generations or minority groups is not sufficiently critical for a lot of consumers (Phillips & Rumens, 2015, p. 79). Consumers arguably do not know from their experience what impact they have through their purchase and the story and reasoning behind this price difference. Participants agreed that conventional goods do not cover social and ecological aspects and are therefore cheaper. Fair and organically produced goods, on the other hand, are more expensive. If a constant work on a regenerative attitude that rejects overconsumption is advertised, the consumer is left with the necessary budget for healthy food and a good life by focusing on wellbeing and conscious consumption.

6.2 Conclusion

The transformation of the global food system is very complex. Throughout the thesis, it has become apparent that change occurs within the system's components. In the field of entrepreneurship, the profit orientation is changing towards a more social focus. This is reflected in the economy on the macro level, where economists question the GDP as the most critical indicator of a nation's success (Jackson, 2016; Raworth, 2017). Governments are under public pressure, and multiple disciplines within science are becoming more and more critical for societal decisions. The system's parts are moving, and, as this paper has shown, this is due to a clear relevance of caring for the environment, vulnerable groups in society and future generations (see figure 5).

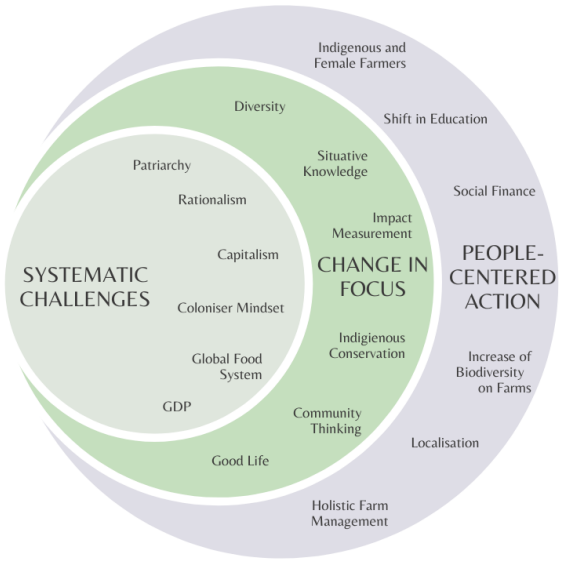

Figure 5: Care embedded in systemic thinking

Regenerative agriculture depends on the implementation of farmers, and as has been shown, this depends on many external circumstances. Therefore, it is of enormous relevance to examine these circumstances. The need for farmers to look at their business holistically and expand the business understanding through social entrepreneurship approaches such as indigenous knowledge, work integration, or a reconsideration of their purpose rather than pure short-term focus on profitability became evident through this thesis. However, enterprises such as the one that created the

community observed and those acting at the policy level through the establishment of labels or laws are equally important for implementation. Care, therefore, seems to be important in society as a belief system to develop the necessary awareness of why change is essential and how it can be achieved.

Through this focus, I argue that care is already embedded in the DNA of the concept of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs who follow the approach pursue a care perspective as opposed to a profit perspective. The research question is not easy to answer in one sentence. However, the discussion showed how care is embedded within the transitioning. Care ethics are of great importance because it drives the individual actors. The analysis is in line with ecofeminist theory; farmers are driven by the fate of their children and grandchildren. They also associate regenerative agriculture with a good life and the improvement of their current situation. Another point of concern is the climate crisis. The community observed, sees regenerative agriculture as a significant part of the solution and therefore cares about the secure existence of humanity. All the people I observed and had contact with seem to love their job and connection to nature. Their existence and the recovery of biodiversity seems to drive them. For systemic change, care ethics seem more critical as the starting point for transitioning or beginning a regenerative farm project than financial incentives or the aim of earning more money. This finding also supports the hypothesis of ecofeminists, who recognize the human being who acts according to feminist principles not as a selfish being from birth but as a being acting according to personal values and in need of harmony.

6.3 Limitations

Digital ethnography offered a useful tool, especially during the global pandemic and went in line with the findings about online community building and a shift in academia towards more diverse research approaches (Ghosh, 2020). The method is designed for a high amount of data and understanding social phenomena from a people-centered perspective (Ghosh, 2020). However, participants have been

observed only for a short amount of time. More observation of the individual participants, and interviews with those who have been observed could have led to different findings. Informal exchanges with several online community members, such as researchers, policymakers, farmers, and educators, would probably have resulted in a more comprehensive understanding of the issues and individual approaches to care.

Social media was mentioned several times as a driver for the development of an online community. Digital networking, community building, awareness, and education are driven by social media and indirectly by care ethics. Social Media behaviour and content have not been included as primary data in this thesis and would have been well compatible with the method. However, the amount of content was too large for a structured and precise analysis. In order to answer the research question, topic themes were analysed, and the findings from social media were used exclusively as guidelines.

Moreover, the community consisted almost exclusively of people from the Global North. Since regenerative practices stem from indigenous knowledge, expanding the observed community through the integration of native peoples would undoubtedly have been relevant.

The discussion of the findings underlines the importance of action from political bodies to drive systemic change. This thesis did not perform an institutional analysis or did not investigate the political dimension, how subsidies and incentives are currently distributed and which way would be the most beneficial. As stated throughout the thesis, subsidies and financial support have been discussed as essential drivers, and the interdisciplinary nature of social entrepreneurship indicates a political dimension (*Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation in the Nordic Countries*, 2015). Their impact is arguably important for systemic change, however the interrelation with care seems questionable.

Ecofeminism as a critical theory relies on the idea of women and nature being oppressed by the patriarchy. Agriculture across the globe systematically discriminates against women, especially in the Global South (Shiva & Mies, 2014). Women earn less and often not enough to make their living or escape the dependency of the patriarchy and men. Their access to land is limited with just 13%, while agriculture is the most important work sector for women in developing countries (United Nations, n.d.).

Since the thesis explored the concept of social entrepreneurship and ethics of care as a driving mindset closer, analysing gender equality has not been the focus of this thesis and the findings.

A different method, namely expert interviews, and a case study of climate farmers as a company, could have brought different insides and maybe more knowledge of what drives social entrepreneurship and hinders it. Further, a multiple case study on enterprises sculpting the system could have been insightful and helpful to understand the phenomena.

The findings might be difficult to generalize. Regenerative agriculture is situated and arguably there are different drivers needed in diverse settings. The thesis did not pay attention to geographical differences and approached the topic more holistically, since the global food system is interconnected. Regulations differ within countries and the power of farmers is till today defined by colonized structures and territories which make it even more difficult to change practices. Those differences in countries and also farm sizes, the relation of farmers and landowners might have significant influence and differ across the globe.

6.4 Further Research

Systemic change as a research topic is becoming increasingly crucial, not least through the discussions about sustainable development and the climate crisis (Mersmann & Wehnert, 2014). How to increase the impact and role of social entrepreneurship in this change is also being questioned in academia (Dey & Steyaert, 2016; Hansen et al., 2021). Due to its impact focus and critical approach towards capitalistic structures (Dos Santos & Banerjee, 2019), the concept seems particularly interesting for shifting towards a world guided by more indicators than monetary ones. How to efficiently measure social and ecological indicators is one of the most relevant tasks for practitioners and scientists (Andrikopoulos, 2020; Bassi, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2015; Stephens & Clapp, 2020). The findings of this research underline the importance of measuring social and ecological outcomes to make them accessible as indicators for growth, development, and success. Impact measurement and the inclusion

of social and ecological indicators in current systems, is arguably a relevant field of study to further understand how to transition towards more sustainability.

Social enterprises are reliant on politics and governmental support because the purpose orientation often does not allow as many monetary resources as for profit-businesses (Hansen et al., 2021). In this sense, how politics enable a more social-oriented way of managing a farm and developing businesses to support those or strengthen the ecosystem should be considered crucial as further research topics. The interplay of actors within different fields such as governments, civil society, NGOs, and entrepreneurs drives social innovation and has the power to work towards a socially just world (Mulgan, 2019; Stiglitz, 2010). This study attempted to explore social entrepreneurship within systemic change through the analysis of a care approach. The approach of this thesis offered a good starting point and shows the interrelation of diverse stakeholders for change. Researching their individual and intersected parts is important for better understanding change. Testing those findings in a different setting and a deeper engagement with the three concepts would enrich research and the work of this thesis.

As stated above, performing an institutional analysis for a better understanding of political and financial actors could result in important insights into the role of national and international governmental bodies. The reliance on the support for transitioning farming practices calls for a deeper and better understanding of the different stakeholders and their activities. Global farmer protests after introducing new biodiversity and pricing strategies such as in India in the beginning of 2021, or Germany in autumn 2019 underline the importance of a people-centered design of regulations and subsidies and the inclusion of farmers into the design. How to better integrate people into social innovation processes and make them more accessible for a broader audience, is important to understand for regenerative agriculture to be adopted. In this sense explorative research understanding farmers and practitioners' perspectives could be relevant for designing and sculpting solutions for the transition.

Bibliography

Airoldi, M. (2018). Ethnography and the digital fields of social media. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *21*(6), 661–673. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2018.1465622

Alvesson, M., & Sköldberg, K. (2018). *Reflexive Methodology—New Vistas for Qualitative Research* (3. edition).

Andrikopoulos, A. (2020). Delineating social finance. *International Review of Financial Analysis*, *70*, 101519. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.irfa.2020.101519

Aude Chesnais. (2020). Beyond Culturally Significant Practices—Decolonizing ontologies for regenerative food-systems. In J. Duncan, M. Carolan, & J. S. C. Wiskerke, *Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (pp. 50–64). Routledge.

Banerjee, S., Carney, S., & Hulgård, L. (Eds.). (2020). *People centered social innovation: Global perspectives on an emerging paradigm*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Bassi, A. (2012). How to Measure the Intangibles? Towards a System of Indicators (S.A.V.E.) for the Measurement of the Performance of Social Enterprises. In H.-W. Franz, J. Hochgerner, & J. Howaldt (Eds.), *Challenge Social Innovation* (pp. 325–350). Springer Berlin Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-32879-4_20

Bloom, P. N., & Chatterji, A. K. (2009). Scaling Social Entrepreneurial Impact. *California Management Review*, *51*(3), 114–133. https://doi.org/10.2307/41166496

Boström, M. (2012). A missing pillar? Challenges in theorizing and practicing social sustainability: introduction to the special issue. *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, *8*(1), 3–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2012.11908080

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (5th ed). Oxford University Press.

Bull, M., & Ridley-Duff, R. (2019). Towards an Appreciation of Ethics in Social Enterprise Business Models. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *159*(3), 619–634. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3794-5

Caliandro, A. (2017). Digital Methods for Ethnography: Analytical Concepts for Ethnographers Exploring Social Media Environments. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 089124161770296. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241617702960

Chell, E., Spence, L. J., Perrini, F., & Harris, J. D. (2016). Social Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics: Does Social Equal Ethical? *Journal of Business Ethics*, *133*(4), 619–625. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2439-6

Climate Farmers. (n.d.-a). *AGROFORESTRY: Discussion w/ Patrick Worms, Linda Preil, Paul Wöbkenberg | Climate Farmers* [YouTube]. Retrieved 1 March 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJMF78JuqVs&t=671s

Climate Farmers. (n.d.-b). *Climate Farmers*. Retrieved 18 August 2021, from https://climatefarmers.org

Datta, R. K. (2018). Rethinking environmental science education from indigenous knowledge perspectives: An experience with a Dene First Nation community. *Environmental Education Research*, *24*(1), 50–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2016.1219980

Decarlo, M. (2018). *Scientific Inquiry in Social Work*. Radford University.

Deterline, B. (2012). *Creating ethical cultures in business: Brooke Deterline at TEDxPresidio*. TEDx, TEDxPresidio. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzicXbnmllc

Dey, P., & Steyaert, C. (2016). Rethinking the Space of Ethics in Social Entrepreneurship: Power, Subjectivity, and Practices of Freedom. Journal of Business Ethics, 133, 627–641. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-014-2450-y

Dickinger, A. (2007). The Explorative Research. In *Perceived Quality of Mobile Services* (pp. 1–192). https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvc16hfw.4?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Dos Santos, L. L., & Banerjee, S. (2019). Social Enterprise: Is It Possible to Decolonize This Concept? In *Theory of Social Enterprise and Pluralism. Social Movements, Solidarity Economy, and the Global South* (pp. 3–17).

Duncan, J., Carolan, M., & Wiskerke, J. S. C. (2020a). Regenerative Food Systems: A social-ecological approach. In *Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (pp. 1–11). Routledge.

Duncan, J., Carolan, M., & Wiskerke, J. S. C. (Eds.). (2020b). Introduction. In *Routledge Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429466823

Dwiartama, A. (2020). Indigenous Livelihood. In J. Duncan, M. Carolan, & J. S. C. Wiskerke, *Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (pp. 26–37). Routledge.

Egholm, L. (2014). *Philosophy of Science—Perspectives on organisations and society* (1st edition). Liv Engholm and Hans Reitzels Forlag.

Ellis, E. C., Gauthier, N., Klein Goldewijk, K., Bliege Bird, R., Boivin, N., Díaz, S., Fuller, D. Q., Gill, J. L., Kaplan, J. O., Kingston, N., Locke, H., McMichael, C. N. H., Ranco, D., Rick, T. C., Shaw, M. R., Stephens, L., Svenning, J.-C., & Watson, J. E. M. (2021). People have shaped most of terrestrial nature for at least 12,000 years. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *118*(17), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2023483118

European Commission. (n.d.). *The common agricultural policy at a glance*. Ec.Europa.Eu. Retrieved 30 June 2021, from https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/cap-glance_en

Ferrarini, A. V. (2019). Ethos of Social Innovation In Search of a Decolonizing Analysis. In S. Banerjee, L. Hulgård, & S. Carney, *People-Centered Social Innovation: Global Perspectives on an Emerging Paradigm: Vol. 1.* (pp. 89–109). Routledge. https://www-taylorfrancis-com.ep.fjernadgang.kb.dk/books/edit/10.4324/9781351121026/people-centered-social-innovation-swati-banerjee-stephen-carney-lars-hulgard

Flick, U. (2018). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (Vol. 6th). Sage. https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/an-introduction-to-qualitative-research/book261109

Foley, J. (2021, March 10). Food, Farming, and the Fate of Planet Earth. *Medium*. https://globalecoguy.org/food-farming-and-the-fate-of-planet-earth-dd934324e7a7

Garnett, S. T., Burgess, N. D., Fa, J. E., Fernández-Llamazares, Á., Molnár, Z., Robinson, C. J., Watson, J. E. M., Zander, K. K., Austin, B., Brondizio, E. S., Collier, N. F., Duncan, T., Ellis, E., Geyle, H., Jackson, M. V.,

Jonas, H., Malmer, P., McGowan, B., Sivongxay, A., & Leiper, I. (2018). A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation. *Nature Sustainability*, *1*(7), 369–374. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-018-0100-6

Ghosh, B. (2020). *DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC*. 1–10. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347521881_DIGITAL_DIGITAL_ETHNOGRAPHY_ETHNOGRAPHY_RESEARCH

Göppel, M. (2014). *Navigating a New Agenda Questions and Answers on Paradigm Shifts & Transformational Change* (pp. 5–22). Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy GmbH. https://epub.wupperinst.org/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/5517/file/5517_Navigating.pdf

Hansen, A. V., Fuglsang, L., Gallouj, F., & Scupola, A. (2021). Social entrepreneurs as change makers: Expanding public service networks for social innovation. *Public Management Review*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2021.1916065

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies*, *14*(3), 575. https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066

Hart, K. (2021). *A Humanist Approach to Money, Markets and Technology*. https://www.growkudos.com/projects/a-humanist-approach-to-money-markets-and-technology

Hickel, J. (2019). Is it possible to achieve a good life for all within planetary boundaries? *Third World Quarterly*, *40*(1), 18–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2018.1535895

Hine, C. (2015). *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday*. Taylor & Francis Group. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kbdk/detail.action?docID=1873332

Huambachano, M. (2020). Indigenous Good Living Philosophies and Regenerative Food Systems in Aotearoa New Zealand and Peru. In J. Duncan, M. Carolan, & J. S. C. Wiskerke, *Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (pp. 38–49). Routledge.

IPCC. (2020). *IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/chapter-5/

Jackson, T. (2016). *Prosperity Without Growth: Foundations for the Economy of Tomorrow*. Taylor & Francis Group. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kbdk/detail.action?docID=4766926

Lupton, D. (2015). *Digital sociology*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Mares, N. (2013, January 21). What is Digital Sociology. *CISP Online Blog of the Centre for Invention and Social Process, Goldsmiths*. http://www.csisponline.net/2013/01/21/what-is-digital-sociology/

Mersmann, F., & Wehnert, T. (2014). *Shifting Paradigms Unpacking Transformation for Climate Action—A Guidebook for Climate Finance & Development Practitioners*. Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy GmbH. https://www.maja-goepel.de/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Shifting-Paradigms-Guidebook.pdf

Meulensteen, T., & Duurland, T. (2020, November 27). Transitioning to regenerative agriculture with smallholders. *The Sustainable Trade Initiative*. https://www.idhsustainabletrade.com/news/transitioning-to-regenerative-agriculture-with-smallholders/

Millard, J., Wageih, M., & Meldrum, B. (2020). Social Innovation in Africa An Empirical and Conceptual Analysis. In S. Banerjee, L. Hulgård, & S. Carney (Eds.), *People-Centered Social Innovation Global Perspectives on an Emerging Paradigm: Vol. 1.* (pp. 195–224). Routledge.

Milton Friedmann. (1970, September 13). A Friedman doctrine-- The Social Responsibility Of Business Is to Increase Its Profits. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html

Molyneux, M., & Steinberg, D. L. (1995). Mies and Shiva's *Ecofeminism*: A New Testament? *Feminist Review*, *49*(1), 86–107. https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.1995.8

Moyer, J., Smith, A., Rui, Y., & Hayden, J. (2020). *Regenerative Agriculture and the Soil Carbon Solution* (pp. 1–38). Rodale Institute. https://rodaleinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/Rodale-Soil-Carbon-White-Paper_v11-compressed.pdf

Mulgan, G. (2019). Structural change and new social contracts: How innovation in welfare can address changing needs. In *Social Innovation: How Societies Find the Power to Change* (1st ed., pp. 79–93). Bristol University Press. https://doi.org/10.46692/9781447353805

Murthy, D. (2008). Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social Research. *Sociology*, *42*(5), 837–855. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038508094565

Nelson, J. A. (2011). Care Ethics and Markets: A View from Feminist Economics. In M. Hamington & M. Sander-Staudt (Eds.), *Applying Care Ethics to Business* (pp. 35–53). Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-9307-3_2

Nemonte Nenquimo. (2020, October 12). This is my message to the western world – your civilisation is killing life on Earth. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/12/western-worldyour-civilisation-killing-life-on-earth-indigenous-amazon-planet

O'Connor, J. (2020). *Barriers For Farmers & Ranchers To Adopt Regenerative Ag Practices In The US - Identifying Key Levers and Opportunities* (pp. 1–192). https://forainitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/Barriers-to-Adopt-Regnerative-Agriculture-Interactive.pdf

Pestoff, V., & Hulgård, L. (2016). Participatory Governance in Social Enterprise. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, *27*(4), 1742–1759. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-015-9662-3

Phillips, M. (2019). "Daring to Care": Challenging Corporate Environmentalism. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *156*(4), 1151–1164. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3589-0

Rainforest Alliance. (2019, October 11). *The World's Best Forest Guardians: Indigenous Peoples*. Rainforest Alliance. https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/insights/indigenous-peoples-the-best-forest-guardians/?utm_campaign=later-linkinbio-rainforestalliance&utm_content=later-19595889&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkin.bio

Rainforest Alliance. (2021, January 14). *What Is Regenerative Agriculture?* Rainforest Alliance. https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/insights/what-is-regenerative-

agriculture/?utm_campaign=later-linkinbio-rainforestalliance&utm_content=later-19892501&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkin.bio

Raworth, K. (2017). *Doughnut Economics—Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist*. Penguin Random House.

Regenerative Agriculture Initiative & The Carbon Underground. (2017). *What is Regenerative Agriculture?* (pp. 1–2). Regeneration International.

Schumpeter, J. A., & Stiglitz, J. E. (2010). *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. Taylor & Francis Group. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/kbdk/detail.action?docID=515353

Schwartz, R., Jones, C., & Nicholls, A. (2015). Building the social finance infrastructure. In A. Nicholls, R. Paton, & J. Emerson (Eds.), *Social Finance* (pp. 488–518). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198703761.003.0016

Shiva, V., & Mies, M. (2014). *Ecofeminism (Critique Influence Change)* (2.). Zed books.

Silber, G., & Krige, K. (2016). *Disruptors Social Entrepreneurs Reinventing Business and Society*. Bookstorm.

Spence, L. J. (2016). Small Business Social Responsibility: Expanding Core CSR Theory. *Special Research Forum on The Social Performance and Responsibilities of Entrepreneurship*, *1*, 33. https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650314523256

Stephens, P., & Clapp, J. (2020). Financing Food System Regeneration? The potential of social finance in the agrifood sector. In M. Carolan & J. S. C. Wiskerke, *ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF SUSTAINABLE AND REGENERATIVE FOOD SYSTEM* (pp. 218–231). Routledge.

Stevens, A. (2019). *The Economics of Soil Health*. 1–31.

Stiglitz, J. E. (2010). Introduction. In J. A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (pp. x–xiv). Taylor & Francis Group.

Toensmeier, E., Mehra, M., Frischmann, C., & Foley, J. (2020). *Farming our way out of the crisis* (pp. 1–48). Project Drawdown. https://drawdown.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/DrawdownPrimer_FoodAgLandUse_Dec2020_01c.pdf

United Nations. (n.d.). *Sustainable Development Goals*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development. Retrieved 18 April 2021, from https://sdgs.un.org/goals

United Nations. (2015). *Paris Agreement* (pp. 1–25). Retrieved 01 March 2021, from https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

United Nations. (2019, May 6). UN Report: Nature's Dangerous Decline 'Unprecedented'; Species Extinction Rates 'Accelerating'. *Sustainable Development Goals*. https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/

Visser, W. (2010). The Age of Responsibility: CSR 2.0 and the New DNA of Business. *Journal of Business Systems, Governance and Ethics*, *5*(3), 7–22. https://doi.org/10.15209/jbsge.v5i3.185

WCED. (1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf

Woods, M. (2020). Rural-urban Linkages. In J. Duncan, M. Carolan, & J. S. C. Wiskerke, *Handbook of Sustainable and Regenerative Food Systems* (pp. 363–375). Routledge.

World Bank. (n.d.). *Indigienous Peoples Overview*. The World Bank. Retrieved 26 June 2021, from https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods: Vol. 3rd edition*. SAGE Publications Inc.

Zeiler, W., & Ciobotaru, K. H. (2020). *Unfuck the Economy: Eine neue Wirtschaft und ein besseres Leben für alle*. Goldmann Verlag.