

Austrian Initiatives on Environmental Product Information

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SERI – Sustainable Europe Research Institute



European research network

Head office in Vienna with 26 employees,
further offices in Germany

Research

European and national projects

Consultance

for politics, NGOs, companies

Themes

resource use and quality of life



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Background – ECR Austria Initiative



The company representatives within ECR Austria believe that:

“aware costumers – on condition that well-grounded information on the sustainability performance of the product is given – prefer ‘sustainable’ products and so contribute to reaching the global objectives.”



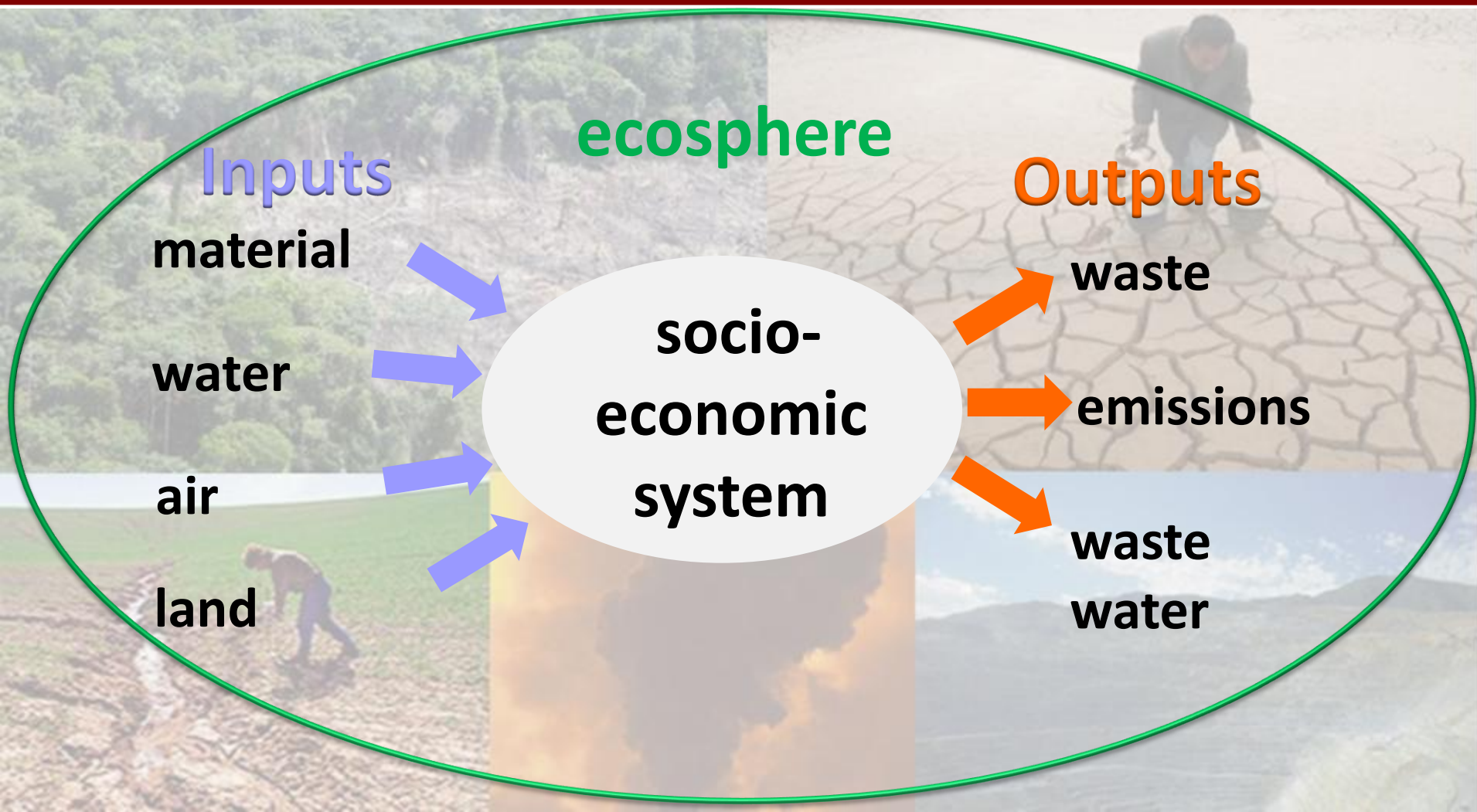
“You can’t manage what you can’t measure”

- ② Better **information** for consumers is required.
- ② **Quantitative targets** for reducing resource use and greenhouse gas emissions on company and product level.
- ② **Robust data and indicators** are requirements for target setting and monitoring of sustainability strategies.



What are the ecological key performance indicators?

The socio-economic system embedded in the environmental system



Life cycle measurement



Main Environmental Categories

Our Indicator Set

GHG emissions

Carbon Footprint

Water

Water Rucksack / Footprint

Land use

Actual Land Use

Non-renewable resources

Abiotic Material Input

Renewable resources

Biotic Material Input

Why this indicator-set



- + Relevant for the **whole life cycle** of the product
- + Gets down to the **root of the environmental issues**
- + Considers the **main environmental categories**
- + Considers the **scarcity of all** natural resources
- + Applicable **for all products and services**

Environmental Categories

Our Indicator Set

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I. EPI Initiative: Nachhaltigen Wochen



- Initiative of the Lebensministerium (ministry of the environment)
- Cooperation with different retailers (2009: 46 trade chains)
- 15th of September – 15th of October (each year since 2003)
- „Bewusst kaufen. Besser leben.“

Advocating sustainable buying decisions by explicitly attracting interest in ecological and social sustainable products by means of a common label.

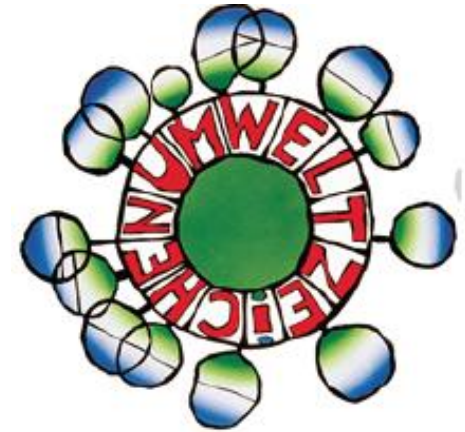


II. EPI Initiative: Österreichisches Umweltkennzeichen



■ Objectives:

- Information for consumers
- Change of products supplied
- Change of consumption patterns



⌚ Integration of the Carbon Footprint planned

- Product category specific indicators (CF not suitable for all)
- Waiting for a standard method for CF calculations
- First application planned for the product categories selected by the EU Ecolabel (starting in 2011)

III. EPI Initiative: Zurück zum Ursprung



Initiative from:

- Hofer KG / Zurück zum Ursprung
- BMLFUW

Conducted by:

- FIBL Austria and BOKU University

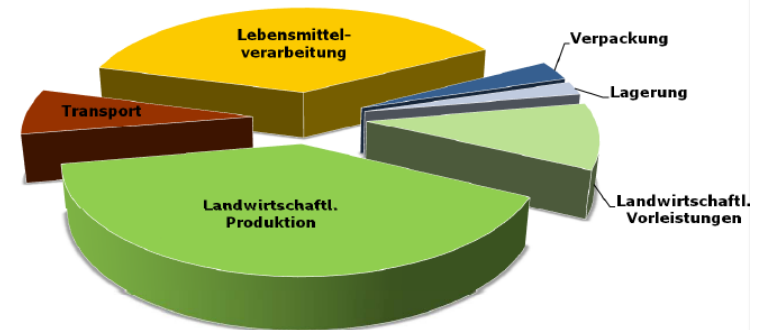
Carbon Footprint of food products

Communicated as relative difference between a conventional product and the Bio-Premium „ZURÜCK ZUM URSPRUNG“ product.

So far 127 x 2(3) products assessed:

- dairy products
- fruits and vegetables
- bread products
- poultry and eggs

Hauptkategorien der Wertschöpfungskette



IV. EPI Initiative: REWE Sustainability Label



Sustainability Label of REWE

- Measuring sustainability in the production of fruits and vegetables



Sustainability: social, ecological, and economic context

- With strong CSO partners:
 - for the social sustainability: **Caritas**
 - for the environmental sustainability: **Global 2000** (supported by SERI and INL)



Objectives

- Progress towards sustainability
 - Less resource use
 - Less emissions
 - Less environmental impact
- Develop measurable indicators
- Information for costumers
- Information and recomandations for producers



Process REWE Sustainability Label



So, it is not just about **collecting data** and **analysing** it...
It is about a **PROCESS**...

Discussion and involvement of stakeholders:

- (1) Screening phase
- (2) Stakeholder Forum I
- (3) Assessment
 - (1) Data collection
 - (2) Calculation of indicators
 - (3) Evaluation of benchmarks - if necessary adaptation
- (4) Stakeholder Forum II
- (5) Labelling



Assessment:

- ✓ **Step 1:** Collecting primary data along the production chain
- ✓ **Step 2:** Calculation of Resource use indicators
- ✓ **Step 3:** Benchmarking of results

Willing participants

Learning from praxis

Ensure good data quality



Indicators REWE Sustainability Label



Bilances (N,P,H)
Pest management intensity
Energy intensity
Erosion
Soil compaction

Repro-model



from INL (Institut für nachhaltige
Landbewirtschaftung)

Farm

Distributor

Retailer

Water, abiotic, biotic, CO₂ footprint, area footprint / kg product

Footprint calculation by



System Boundaries

REWE Sustainability Label



- ② Functional Unit: 1 kg of product
- ② System boundaries:
 - for REPRO: agricultural production
 - for SERI Indicators:



1st Phase: From infrastructure, Production (including raw materials) to the door of the Distribution Center of the Retailer.

2nd Phase: From infrastructure, production (including raw materials) to the retail shelf



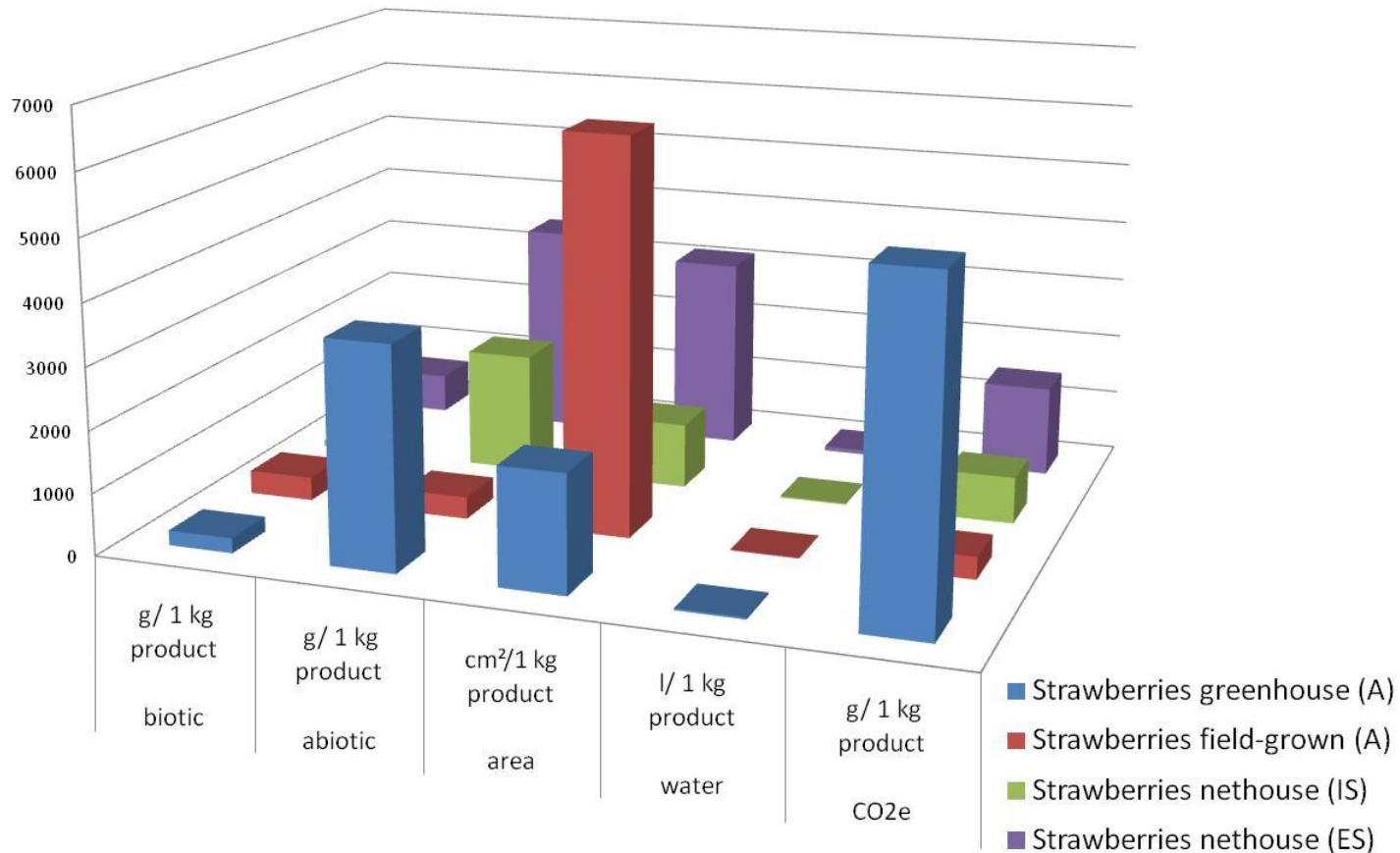
Selected REWE results: Resource use – by production step



Overview Strawberries
Austria-Israel-Spain



Re
Infr
Cul
Pac
Sto
Dis
Str

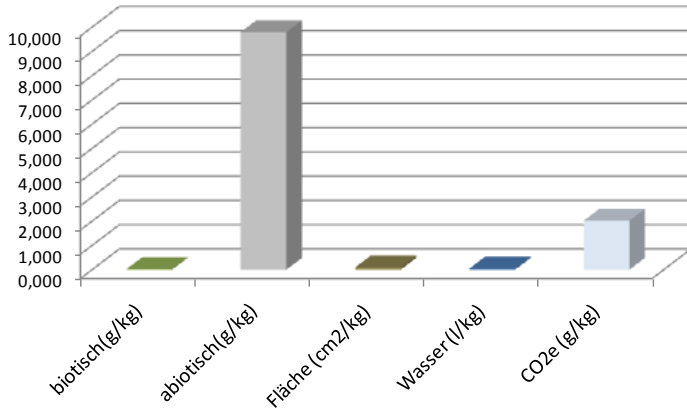


CO ₂ e
g/ 1 kg product
6
293
27
22
10
358

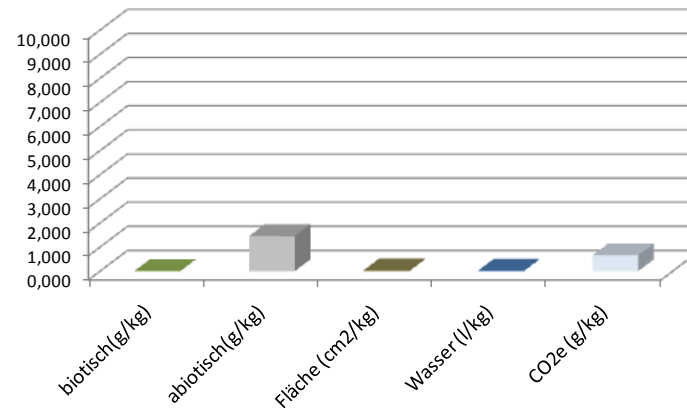
Selected REWE results: Infrastructure



Folien- u. Netztunnel ES/IS

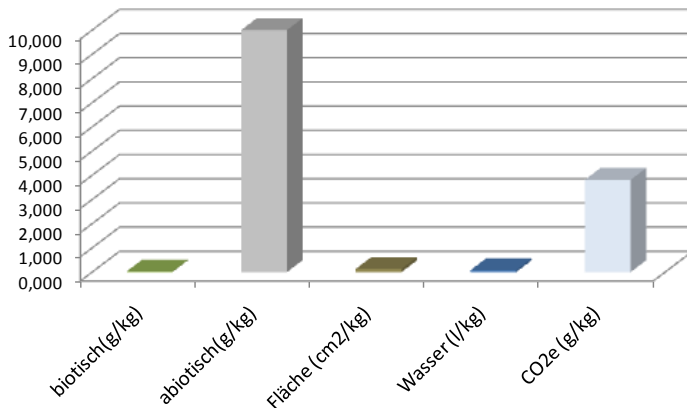


Folien- u. Netztunnel AT

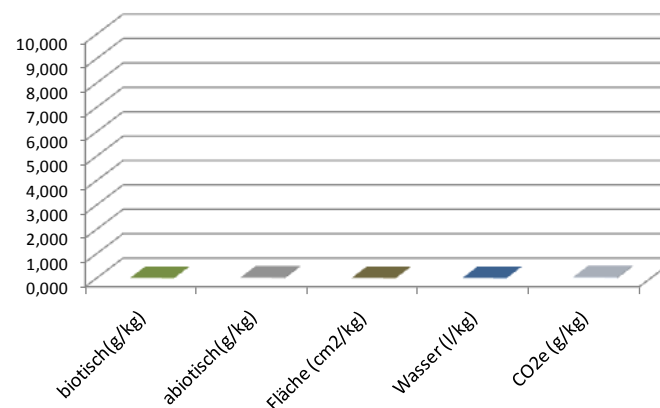


Difference between film tunnel and net film tunnel ES/IS and AT due to shorted average film usage caused by the conditions in ES/IS.

Glashaus AT



Freiland AT



Field, greenhouse, film or net tunnel plus irrigation system:

Data from Theurl, 2008 and Producers

Including:

- PE-film/-net
- steel
- wood
- aluminium
- gas
- concrete
- flynet
- wire
- iron pipe
- PE-tube/ pipes

REWE Sustainability Label



Challenges:

- Enable win-win situation
- Programme must be applicable for the broad market
- Transparent and scientific approach
- Workload for producers – remuneration?
- Setting of benchmarks
- High environmental objectives vs. Practicability

Strenghts:

- Includes social and environmental pillar of sustainability
- Enables environmental friendly and social fair consumer behavior
- Stakeholder involvement



Weaknesses:

- Consumer understanding of the communication concept? (not known yet)
- No third-party verification of results planned

Thank you!

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