

Ecological modernisation and sustainable intensification of agricultural practices



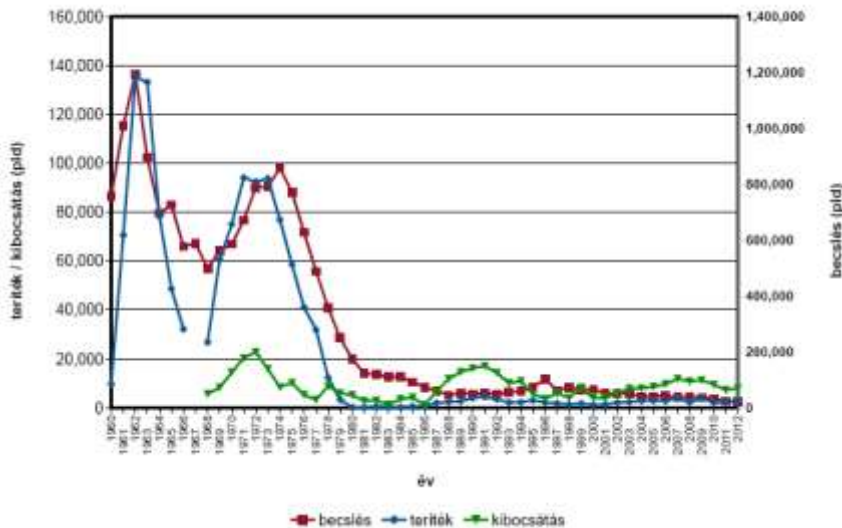
Péter Pál HAJAS

Farmer, landowner, wildlife biologist

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Grey partridge as a bioindicator – the barometer of the countryside

Grey Partridge dynamics in Hungary 1960 - 2013



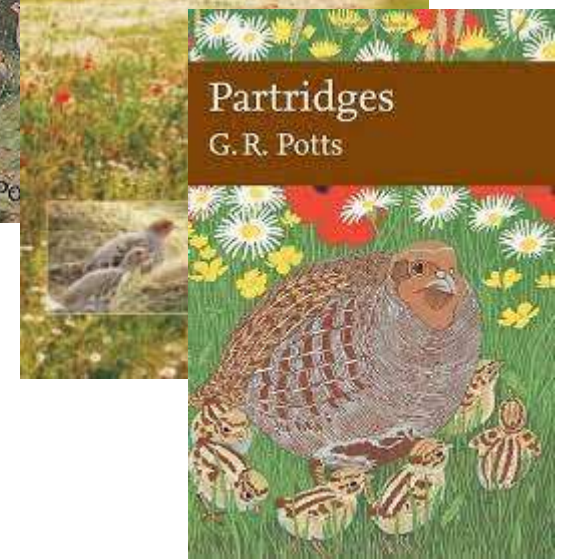
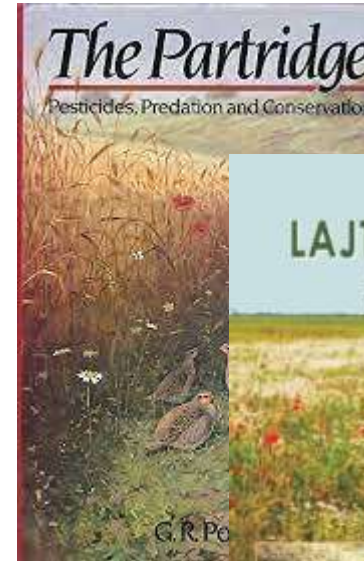
Hungarian Game Management Database

- Status EU: Unfavourable – declining
- Status HU: Critical – declining >99% since 1964
- 2021 estimate: 10855 individuals (Csányi et al., 2021)
- Rapidly growing number of local extinctions
- Remaining populations below recovery threshold (2 pairs/km² on at least 4km²)
- Once most emblematic gamebird of Hungarian farmland is facing extinction
- Similar but slower trends may be observed in the Farmland Bird Index

The impact of conventional agricultural intensification on farmland ecosystems

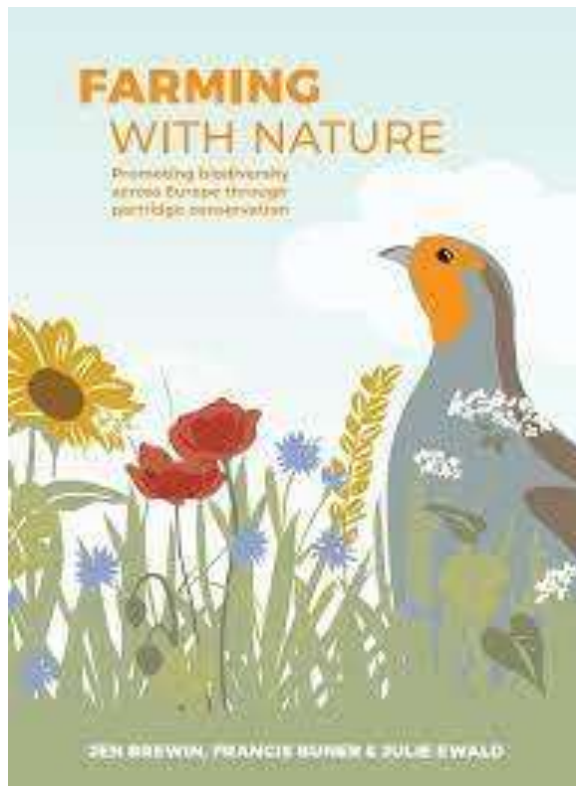


Illustration: Rodger McPhail



A practical package for farmland ecosystem recovery – farming with, not against nature

EUROPE'S FARMLAND BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

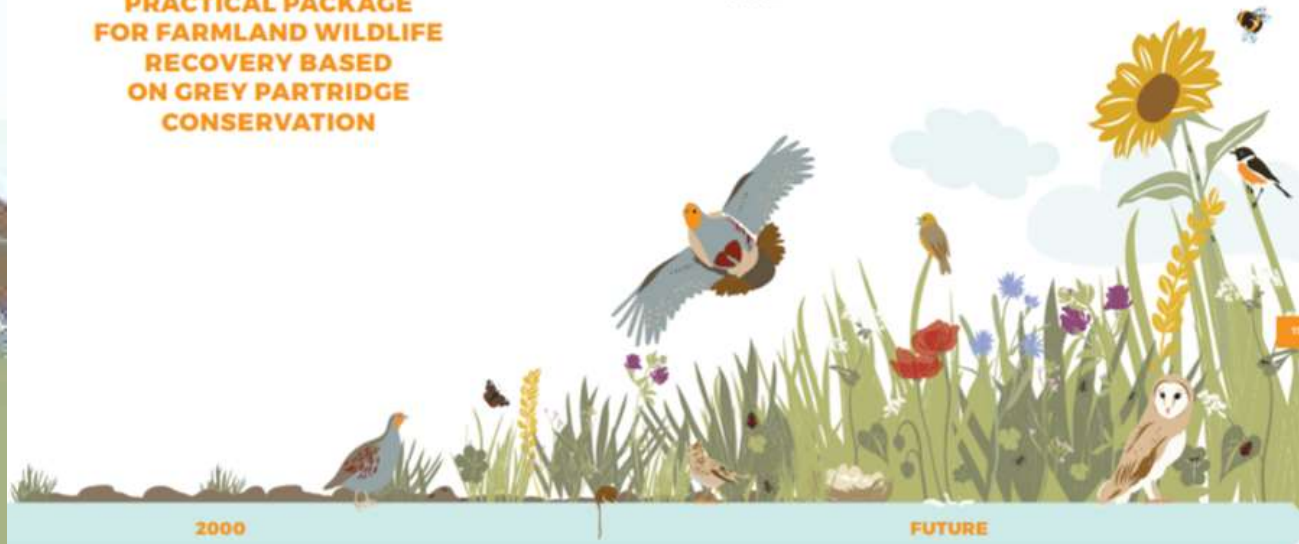


THE PARTRIDGE PROJECT BRINGS TOGETHER THE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING FROM INITIATIVES ACROSS EUROPE, INTO ONE PRACTICAL PACKAGE FOR FARMLAND WILDLIFE RECOVERY BASED ON GREY PARTRIDGE CONSERVATION

WHY THIS BOOKLET?

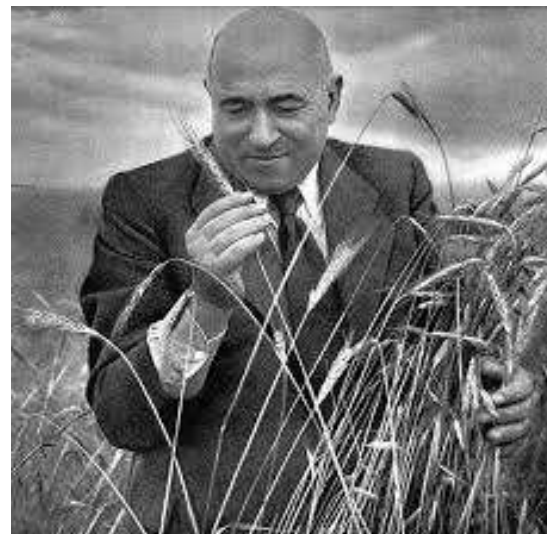
This booklet provides an overview of the grey partridge conservation research from across Europe applied within PARTRIDGE. It briefly explains grey partridge biology, the key management measures needed for this species' survival and the benefits of grey partridge conservation for farmland wildlife in general.

It is only through applying well-tested conservation approaches across regions and countries, and by developing them further, that we will ensure the recovery of farmland biodiversity today and a healthy future for us all.



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The human and social dimension of the transformation of the countryside and rural society



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Confiscation of large estates and persecution of historic families, thus the principle „*with privilege comes responsibility*” forgotten

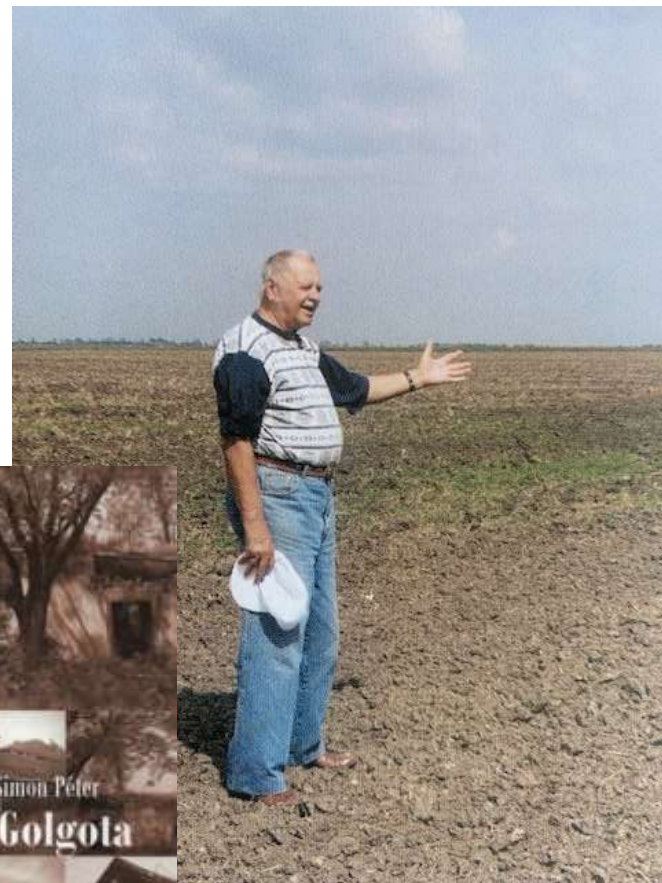


Persecution of farmers (1948-53), forced collectivization (1948-1961) and transition of land to collectives (1967)



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Destruction of the countryside

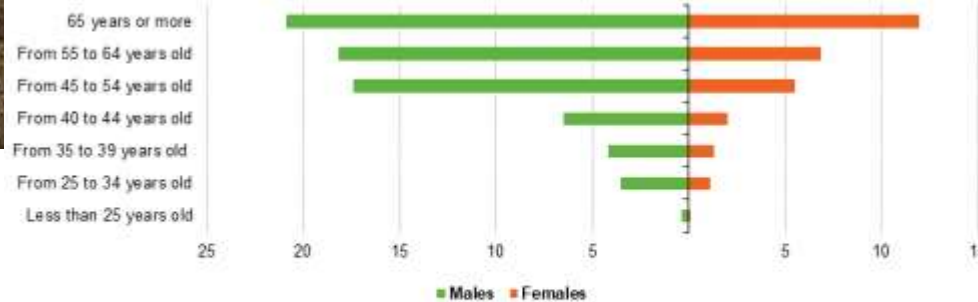


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New „agricultural” practices on state farms and at collectives – the socialist intensification (1970s & 80s)



Age classes of farm managers, by gender, EU-28, 2016
(% of all farm managers)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: ef_m_farmang)

Restoration of the green infrastructure on the landscape scale (initial map 2016)



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Restoration of the green infrastructure on the landscape scale (and one and a half year later in 2018)



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Birds eye view of the demonstration (May 2020)



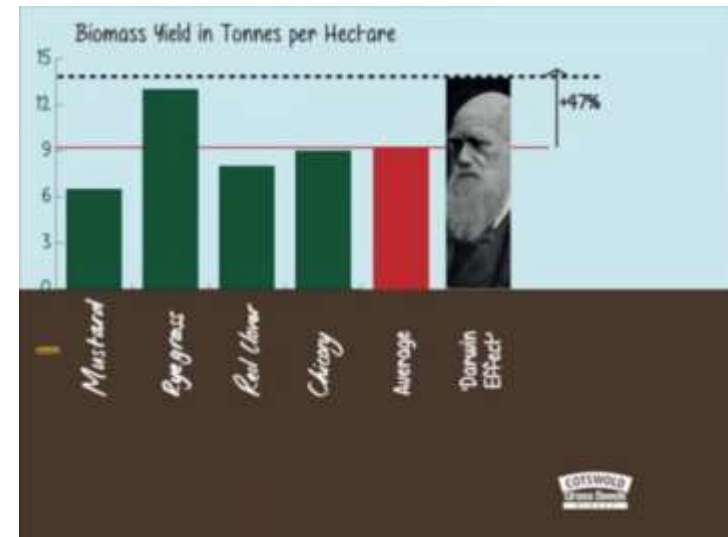
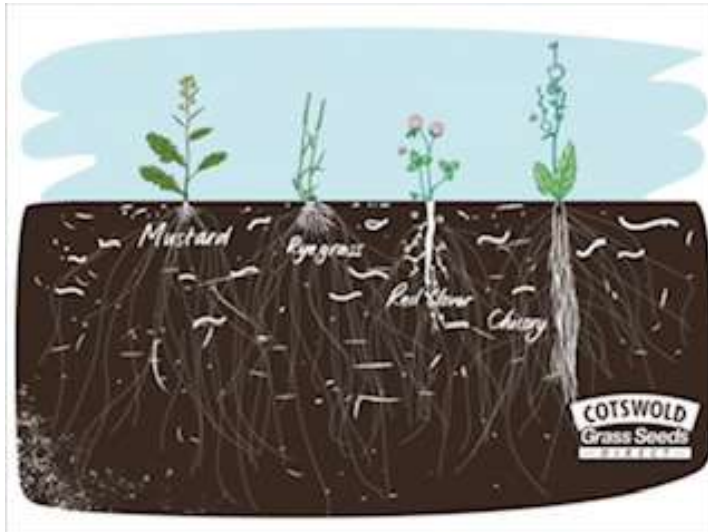
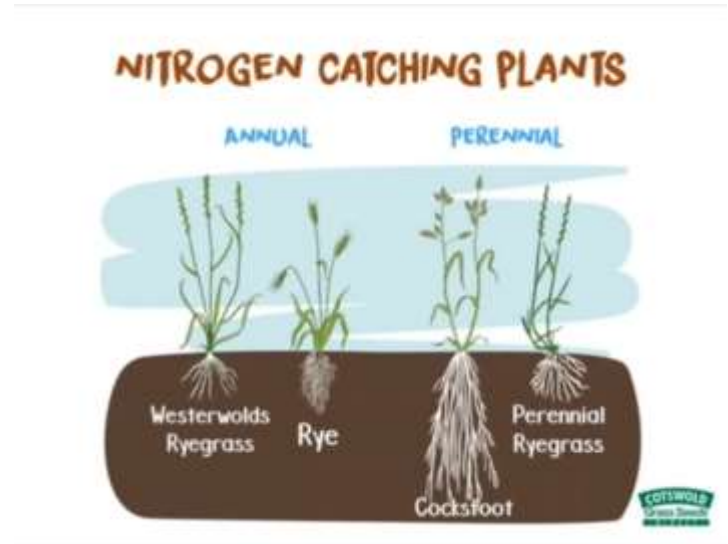
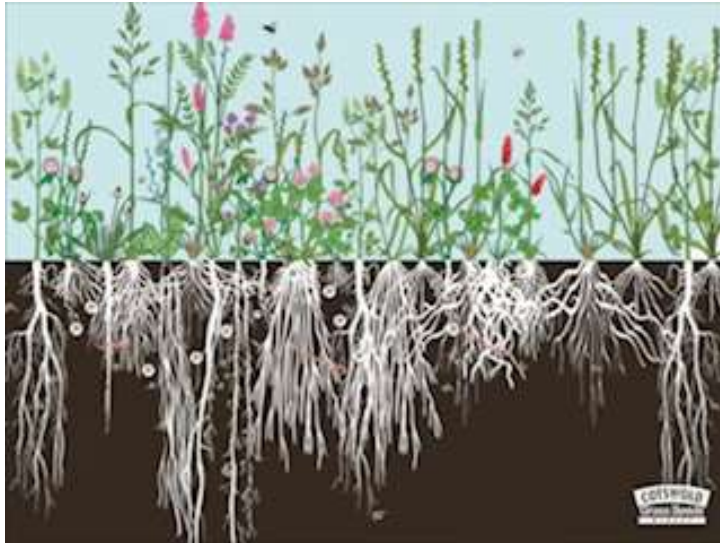
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Key natural and semi-natural habitats and ecosystem services gained

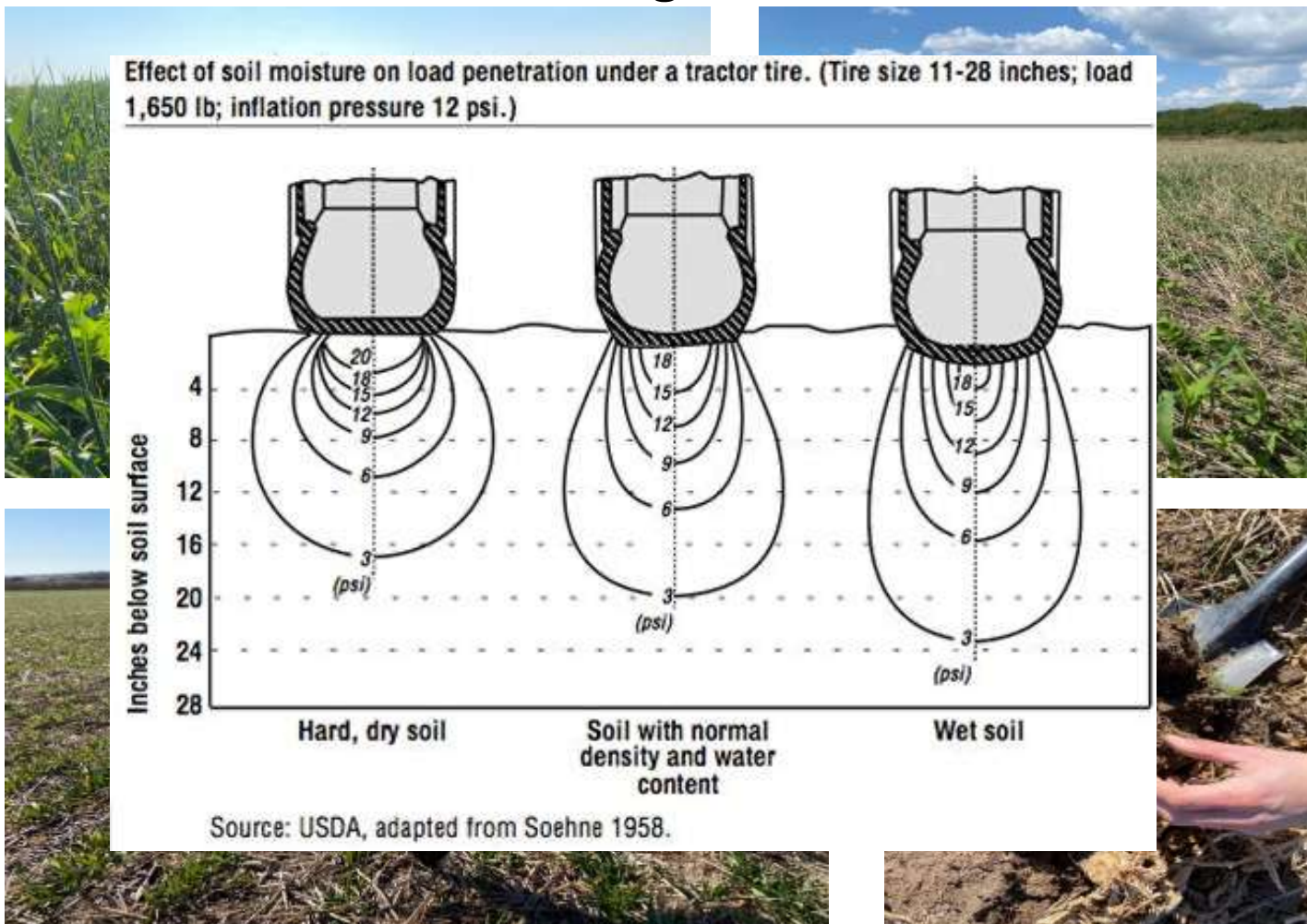


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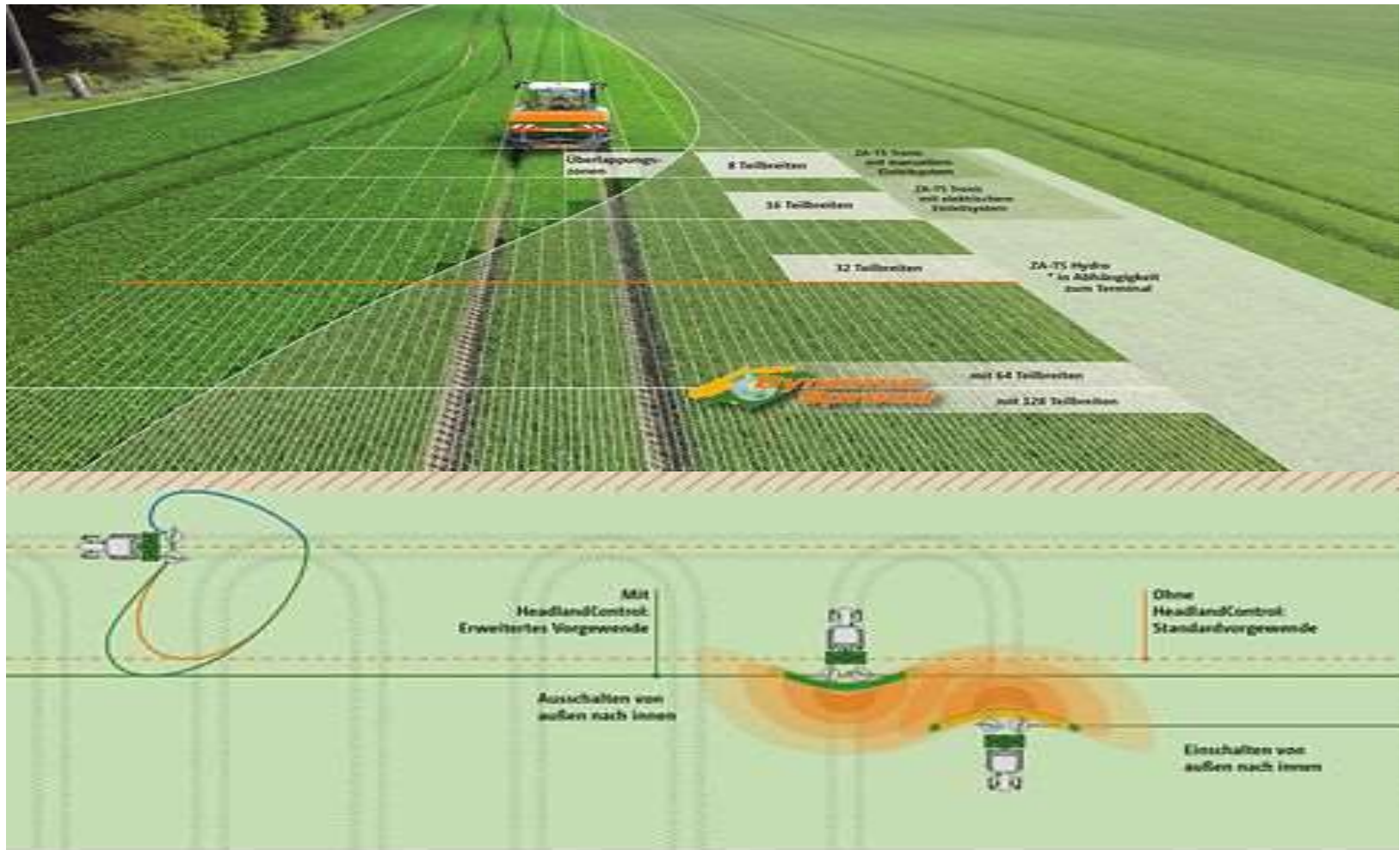
The role of cover crops in the crop rotation



Catch and cover crops, mulch layers, reduced tillage – minimum tillage



Resource efficiency through precision farming



Improved drought resilience (no-till compared to conventional)



Improved drought resilience (reduced till compared to conventional)



Recommendations for policymakers

- **Changing eligibility criteria of natural habitats for direct payments**
- **Increasing AE and ECO payments**
- **Introducing nature/wildlife friendly farming labels to increase consumer contribution**
- **Higher support of small farms**
- **Normative payment for precision farming according to scoring system**
- **Support of „green farm clusters” responsible for collective landscape restoration of farmland ecosystems. Compensation payments for farmers, reimbursement of operation costs for the cluster.**
 - **Advisory**
 - **Employment costs**
 - **Special machinery**
 - **Collective greening allowed (50% at the farm, 50% at the cluster level)**



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