

Open Thesis Topics at the Chair of Social-Ecological Interactions in Agricultural Systems (Prof. T. Plieninger)

Updated June 2025

Thesis topics in English language

Contact & Supervisor	Title and brief explanation (may incl. method and literature)	Requirements
Dr. Laura Kmoch (laura.kmoch@uni-goettingen.de)	Motivations and experiences of farmers engaging with "direct-trade" companies/initiatives such as "CrowdFarming" to market their crops and agricultural products.	Good oral and written English, language skills related to the producer countries (e.g., Italy, Spain, France, Germany, etc.) would be a plus
Dr. Laura Kmoch (laura.kmoch@uni-goettingen.de)	Farming system resilience and recovery in post earth-quake settings in Morocco. This project would focus on the impacts that a recent earth-quake in Morocco has had on smallholder farming communities in the Atlas mountains. Qualitative interviews, photo-voice, or semi-structured interviews could form the basis for such a study.	Master student, drive for a project requiring independence and creativity during the empirical research phase, relevant language skills (e.g., Arabic, French) and/or personal ties to rural mediterranean landscapes advantageous but not essential, the student would require own funding to conduct fieldwork in Morocco
Dr. Laura Kmoch (laura.kmoch@uni-goettingen.de)	Shifts in rural people's sense of place in post-disaster landscape settings. Rural communities in Germany and many Mediterranean countries recently experienced climate-related disasters, including floods, storms, droughts, and wildfires. This thesis project aims to engage with residents of such disaster-affected communities, to appraise how their sense of place and socio-cultural valuation of agricultural landscapes may have changed in consequence of their disaster experiences. Surveys, qualitative interviews, and participatory research approaches, e.g. photo-voice, could be used to explore these themes.	Master student, drive for a project requiring independence and creativity during the empirical research phase, personal ties to a disaster affected landscape/region advantageous but not essential, relevant language skills (e.g., French, Spanish, Italian, Greek) are required for a study outside Germany

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Tobias Plieninger (plieninger@uni-kassel.de)	Pan-European mapping of cultivated terraces in European landscapes. Especially Southern Europe has a diversity of terrace landscapes of high nature value that are often in danger of land abandonment. This master thesis will explore possibilities of mapping European terrace landscapes, combining two types of information: (1) a review and qualitative comparison of existing landscape typologies, and (2) the use of spatially explicit EU-wide land-cover datasets.	Good knowledge in GIS and data processing, and interest in a European perspective on agricultural landscapes
Maria Chiara Camporese (maria.camporese@uni-goettingen.de)	Traditional farming systems and foodways of central Sardinia. The thesis will revolve around understanding food systems in central Sardinia and how they are connected to landscape management strategies and livelihood security. Data collection will be carried out in Spring 2026.	Master student with good levels of independence and self organisational skills. Knowledge of italian language is preferred.

Thesis topics in German language

Kontakt & Betreuer	Titel und Kurzbeschreibung (inkl. Methoden und Literatur)	Anforderungsprofil
Dr. Laura Kmoch (laura.kmoch@uni-goettingen.de)	Wahrnehmungen und Motivationen von Gärtner*innen in urbanen Mietgärten z.B. "Meine Ernte" Verschiedene methodische Ansätze sind denkbar: Qualitative Leitfadengestützte Interviews, photobasierte Befragung, Quantitative Umfrage, etc.	Deutschkenntnisse
Dr. Laura Kmoch (laura.kmoch@uni-goettingen.de)	Wahrnehmung und Konsequenzen der Frühjahrsdürre (2025) für Landwirte (und ihre Angestellten) in (Nord-ost) Deutschland Verschiedene methodische Ansätze sind denkbar: Qualitative Leitfadengestützte Interviews, photobasierte Befragung, etc.	Deutschkenntnisse, Kontakte/Kenntnisse der Region wären von Vorteil