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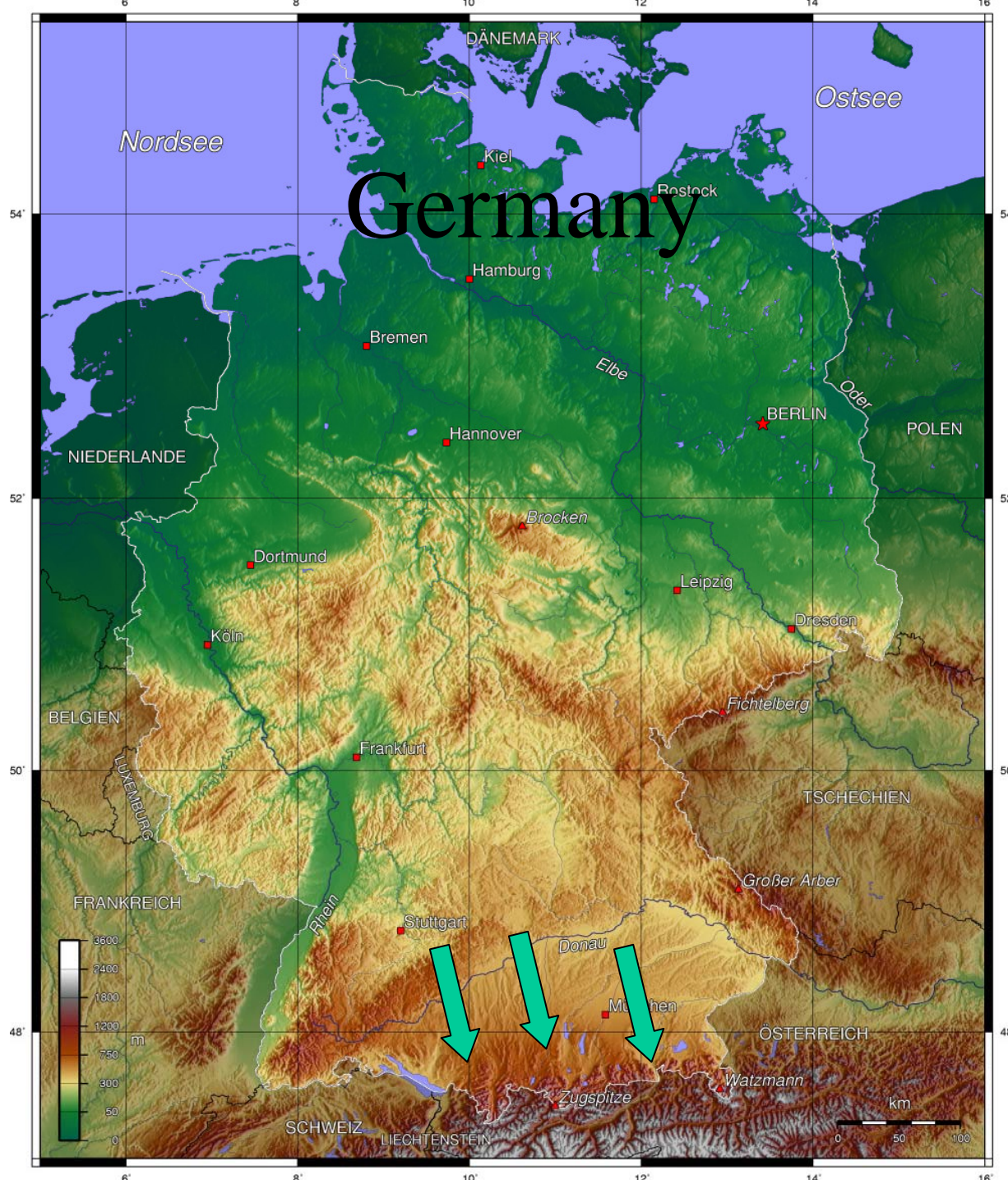
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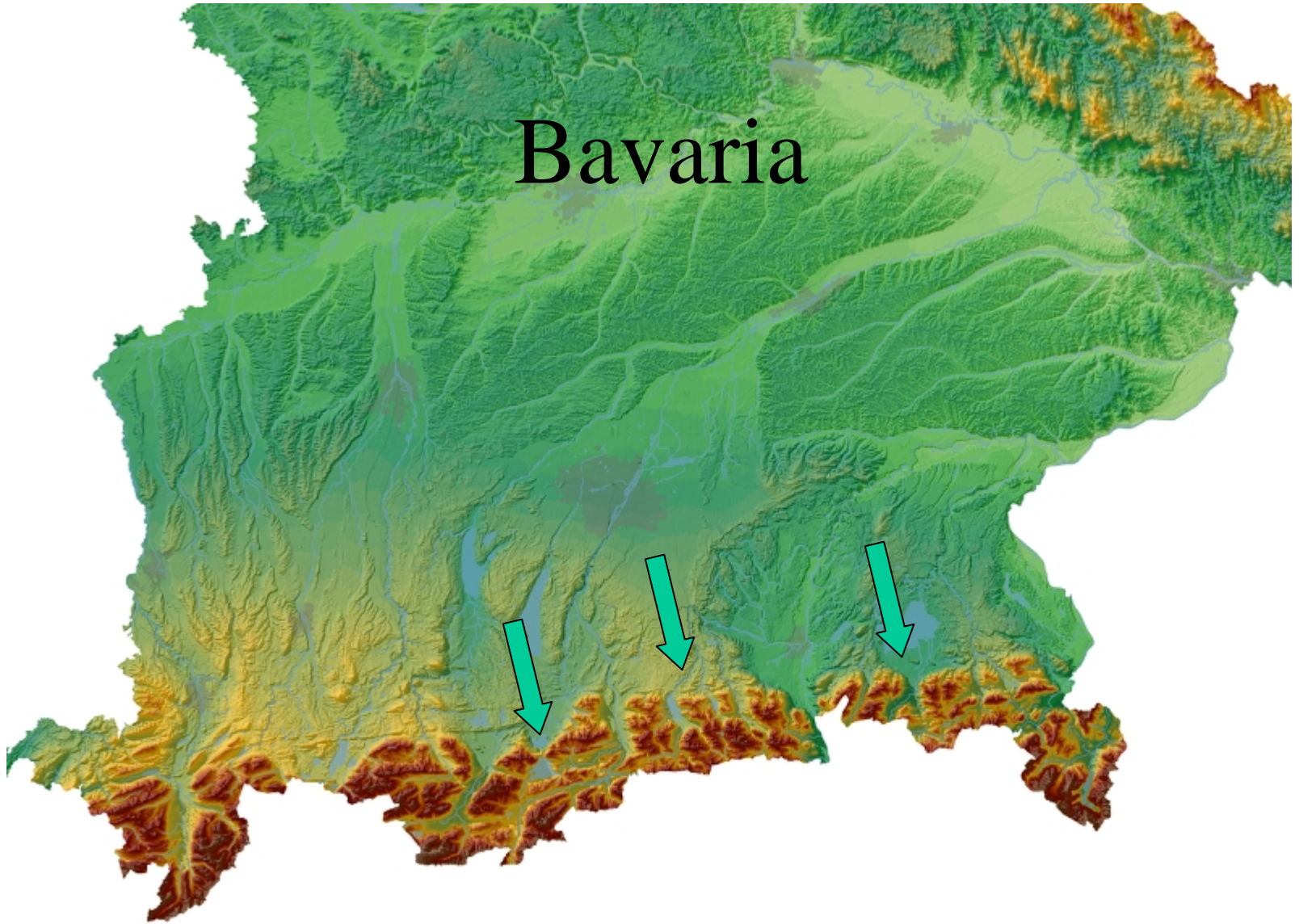
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Bavaria



Litter meadows



Litter meadows appeared 150 years ago...

Tradition of mowing wetland

How to get dry litter after summer:

- on extremely wet soils: unloading litter for drying elsewhere
- mowing during extremely cold winter periods without snow: very little humidity is drying litter quickly.



Old technologies



Special tractors:
light+low (suitable for slopes)



Light mowing-machine at the side, double twin wheels, 4wheel drive



Balin machines for the transport of litter



- lighter than loaded litter- trailers
- pressed litter can't be penetrated by rain
..and may remain for months on the meadow
- bales are easy to transport, store and sell

Shaping stumps



Subsidies

350 to 1000 € per hectar, depending on

- wetness
- hindrances
- other difficulties (late dates, distances ...)

cofinanced by the EU (50%)

In return farmers have to

- pay taxes for assurances per hectar
- accept a late date for mowing
(litter: september, hay: july)

Calculations of costs and profit

Modern farmers are calculating and considering

- the amount of working time (litter meadows are cut and harvested only once a year)
 - costs for fertilizers, gas, for mending machines
 - costs for straw (inclusive transport) instead litter
 - the governments` programmes for litter mowing
- reconverting fertilized meadows into litter meadows

Reviving of litter application

The use of litter revived in the nineties due to

- subsidies
- increasing costs for straw
- modern stables with a great need of straw
- the need of organic farmers (straw treated with herbicides is not allowed)

Alternativ applications

Litter can be fed as long as it is

- well dried and not contaminated with mildew
- fine-leaved litter

→ fodder for horses, young cattle, galloways etc.

For milk-producing cows it is used as countermeasure against diarrhea and colics (and boredom...)

In corn-producing regions straw is preferred and litter is sometimes burned for producing **thermal energy**.



Pastures

Pasturing prevents the raising of bogs. The development of raised bogs is retarded or stopped, fen-species are favoured.

No fertilizers!

is the main condition for a good result.

Grazing causes only little reduction of nutrients

→ even fertilizers which don't contain nitrogen allow

- a distinctly increasing number of grazing animals

- a very frequently damaging of plant-individuals

→ slowly growing species are getting lost

→ the quantity of species is diminishing

convenient circumstances

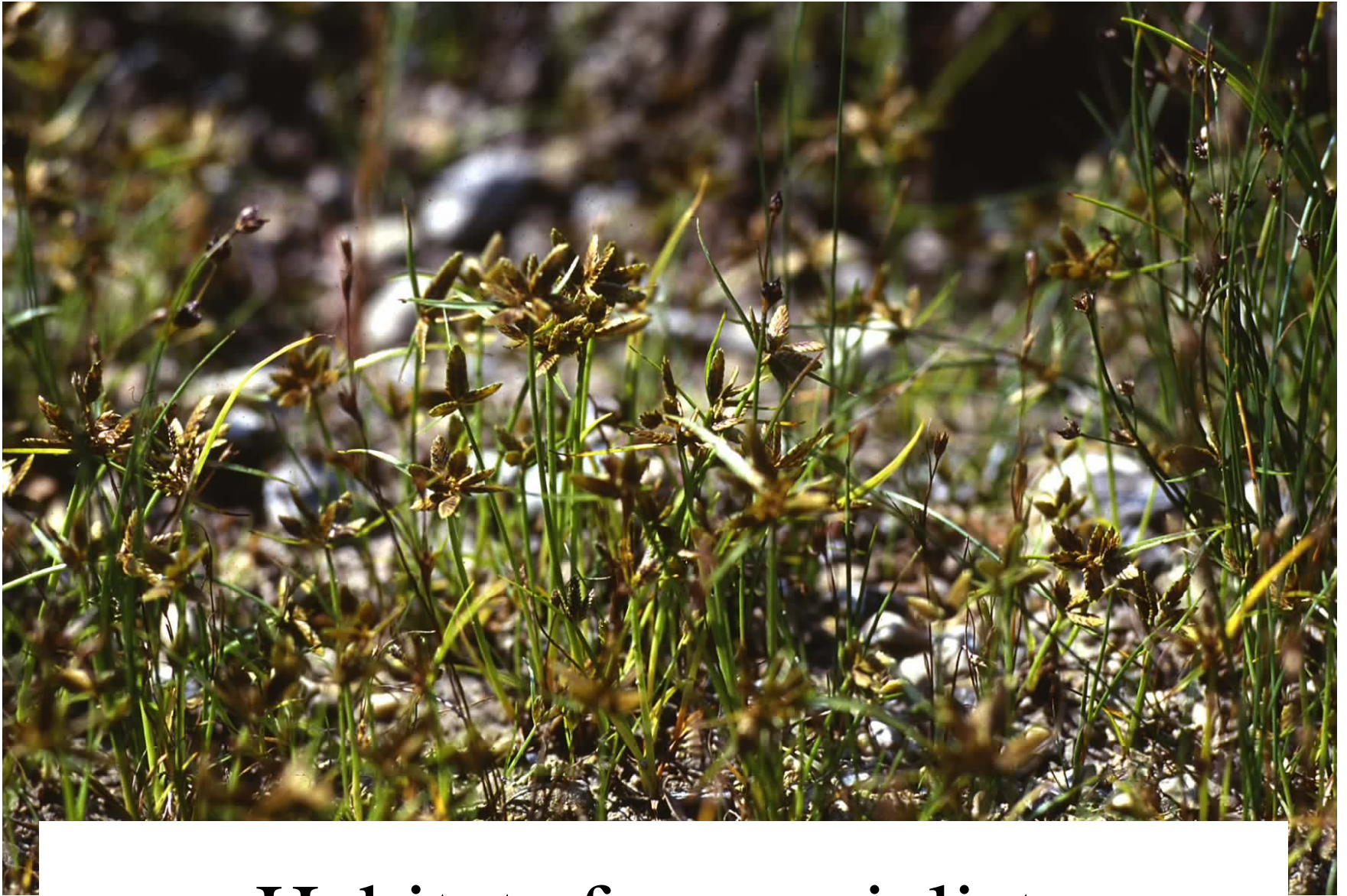


Natural boundaries + large area → easy fencing and controlling

Water

Shelter

No fertilized grassland in the surrounding (no risk of outbreak)



Habitats for specialists

Habitats for rare species

- pastures aren't as flowery as meadows
 - the quantity of species can be equal
 - rare species (usually missed in meadows!) grow in damaged soil-surfaces created by trampling hooves
- transforming unfertilized wet pastures into unfertilized litter meadows causes a dying out of rare specialists (*Apium repens*, *Sedum villosum*, *Sagina nodosa*, *Cyperus flavenscens et fuscus*, *Centunculus minimus*).

Strategies against spreading of weeds and bushes

Former times: remaining grass after grazing was mowed for litter → preventing the spreading of weeds, bushes and alders

Today: Mechanical mowing or cutting without removing the litter is expensive and often difficult (trees, ditches).

What to do?



Mixed herds:

- grass growing on excrements of horses is eaten by cattle (and the other way round)
- cattle prefer herbs, horses prefer grass (Juncus, Carex as well !).

High intensity of grazing!

- animals should starve a bit
 - should not have the chance to select
- “Animals have to wait for the grass - not the other way round!”*

Pasturing during winter (regions poor of snow!)

In spite of additional fodder animals bite at weeds (Juncus) and sproutes of bushes (boredom, habit?)

Herbicides ?

Hobby farmers



as partners

Professional farmers are often not interested in low-productive grassland which belongs to the public (government, communities)

Hobby farmers

- often don't possess own land
 - don't have the need to produce as much as possible
 - are more motivated to spend a lot of time in fencing, removing bushes etc
- reliable project partners!

Social aspects



The farmers` chairman is a very important project-partner

- In the beginning of a project he should be informed the first and personally.
- rules have to be arranged → confidence+support

Recultivation of abandoned cultural landscape and the farmers` self-image

Recultivating of abandoned cultural landscape is reminding to the achievement of the ancestors.

Well paid orders for removing bushes and cutting meadows

- are more popular than getting subsidies only for being farmer (*“honest work”*)
- helps to bridge the differences in other goals (like rewetting dried out bogs)

Landscape conservation: a social event

Working teams “celebrate” community...



Thank you for listening

