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Acceptance of renewable energies in Germany – the case of biogas

Journée Med-Energie – OHM BMP

Aix-en-Provence, September 2014

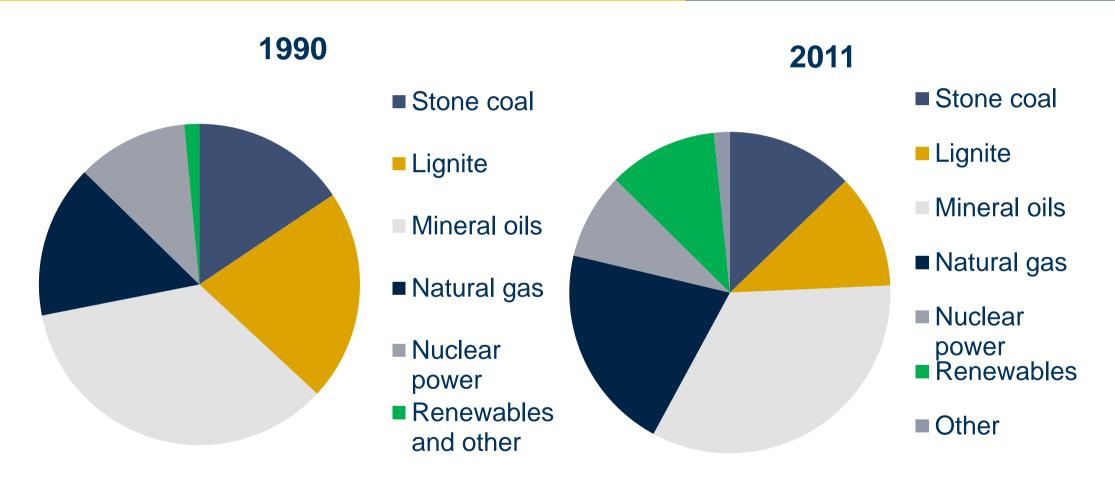


Agenda

- Introduction: RE and RE acceptance in Germany
- Biogas in Germany: development and acceptance
- Focus: the public discourse on maize and biogas
- Political effects of acceptance issues



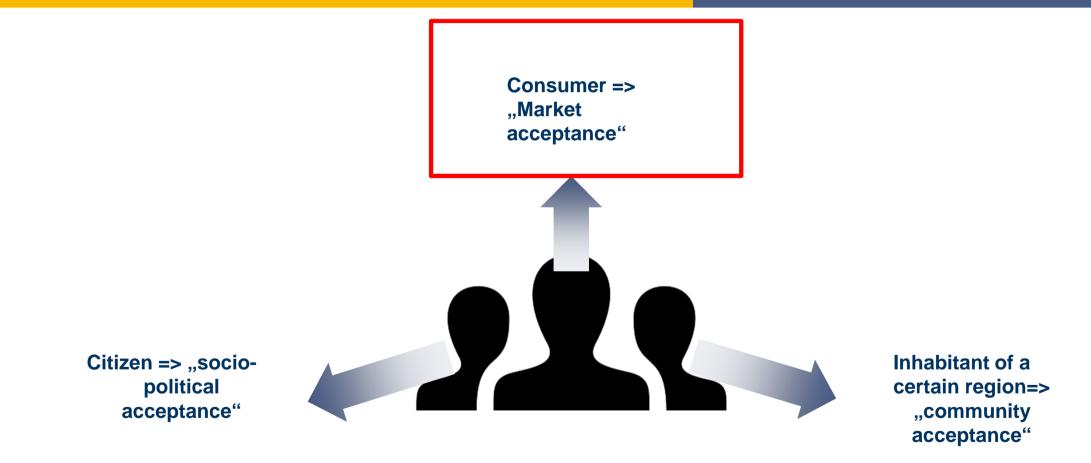
11% of primary energy consumption from RES



... and 25% of electricity production from RES

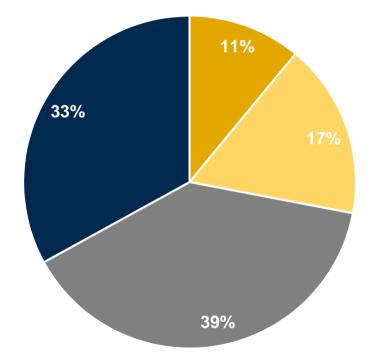


The consumers / citizens: "three in one"





Consumers' willingness to pay (WTP) in Germany



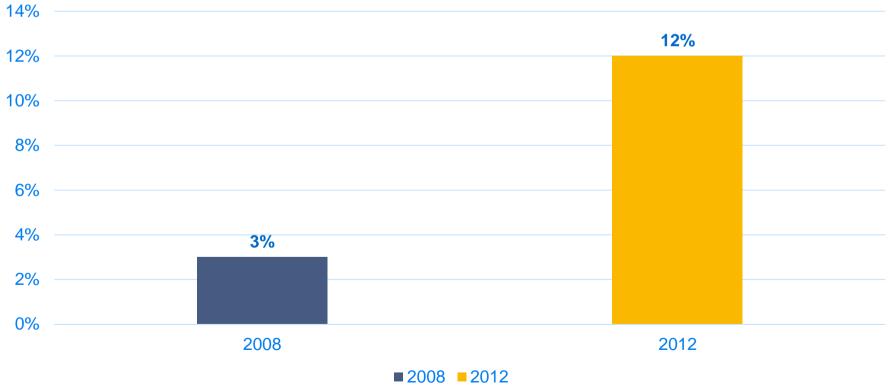
premium of more than 100€ accepted = premium up to 100€ accepted
premium up to 50€ p.a. accepted
no price premium accepted

Source: Statista 2012



Consumers: real behavior

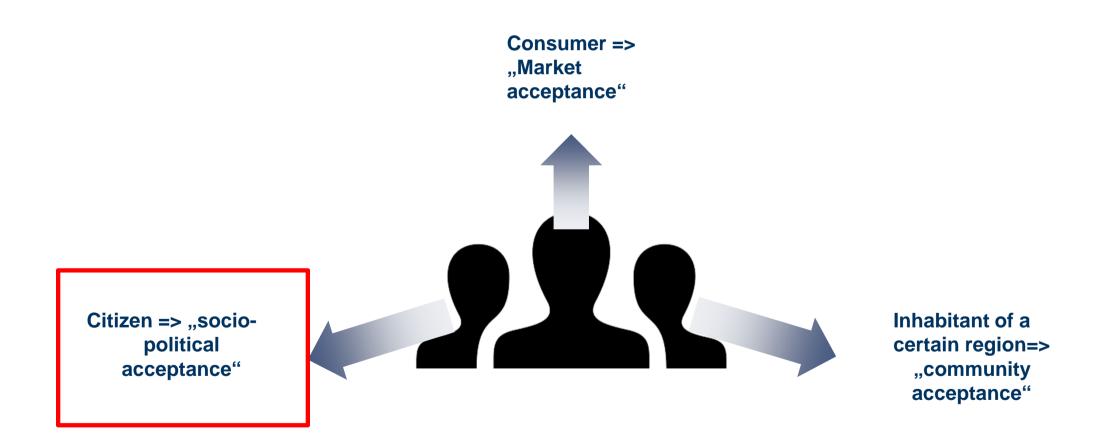
Percentage of households in Germany subscribed to a "green" electricity tariff



Source: BMU 2013



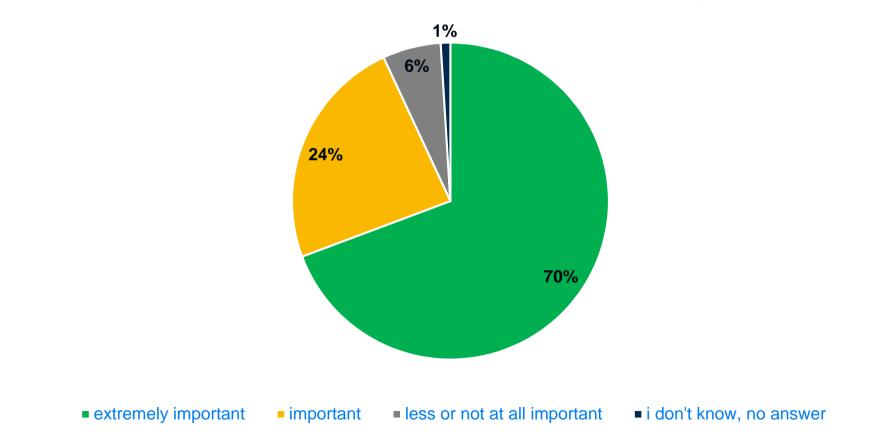
The consumers / citizens: "three in one"





High socio-political acceptance in general...

Utilization and development of renewable energy is..



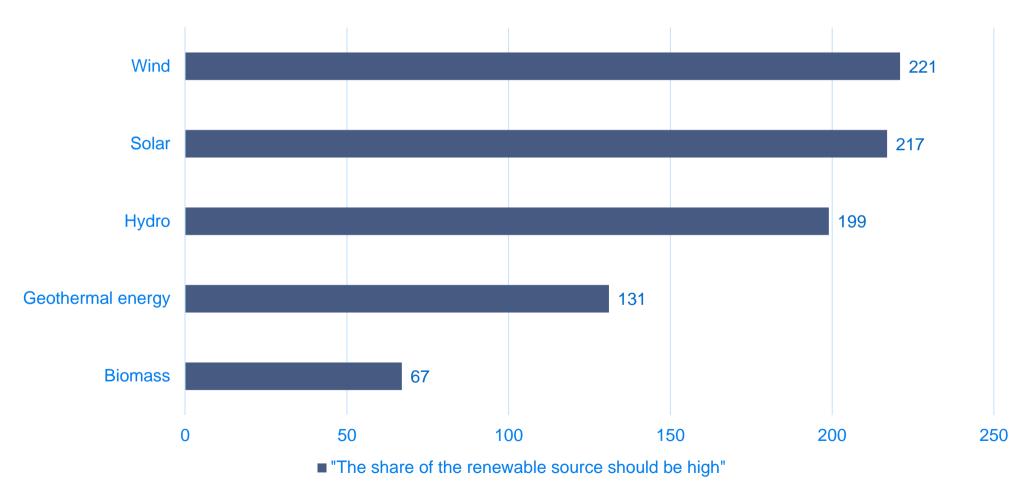
Source: TNS Infratest 2012, 4060 informants, on behalf of AEE



but issues with cost: discussion on electricity prices

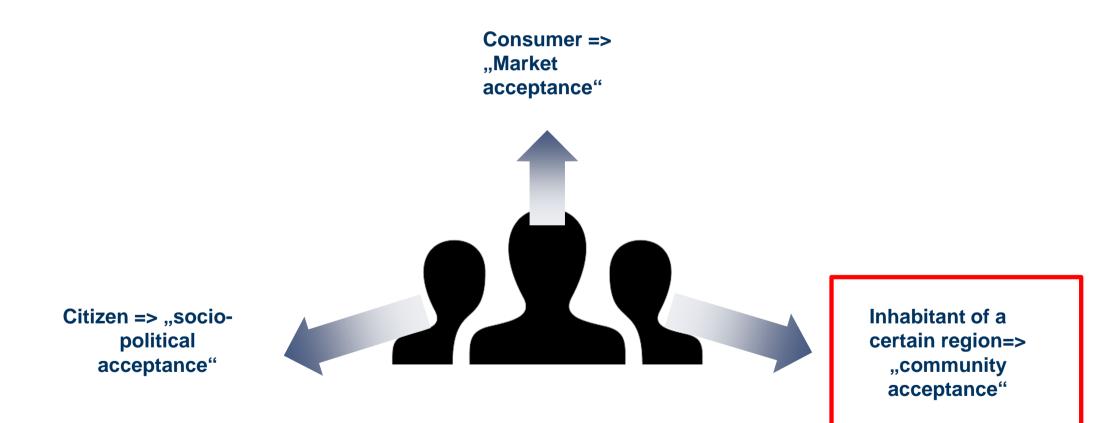


Desired shares of renewables in the electricity mix





The consumers / citizens: "three in one"





WOLFSBURGER

Wolfsburg

Die Bürgerinitiative

Biogasanlage (von

links): Hannelore

Frost, Jens Brandes,

Steffi Losert und Peter

Foto: regios24/Joachim

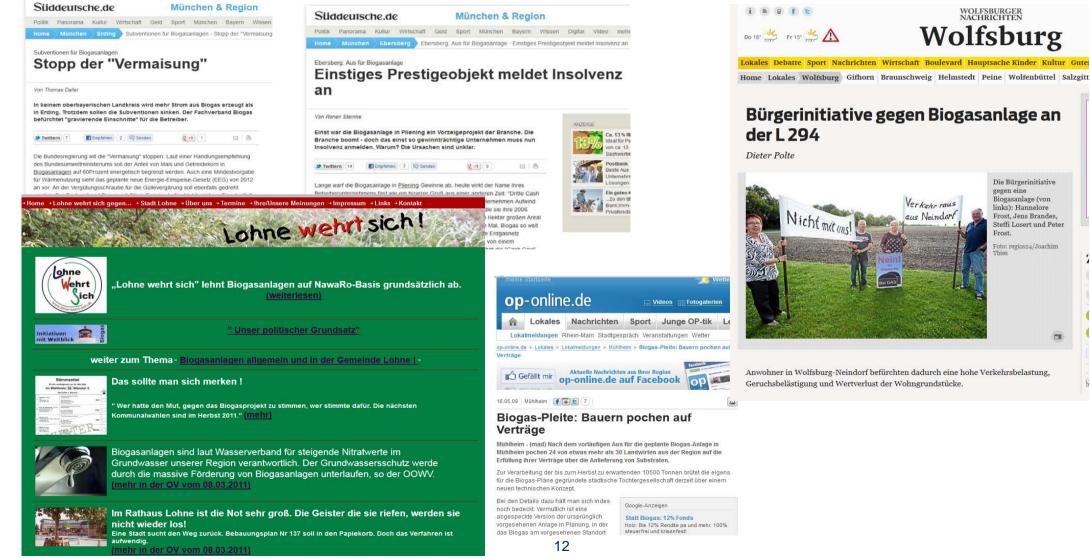
gegen eine

Frost.

Verkehr raus

aus Neindort

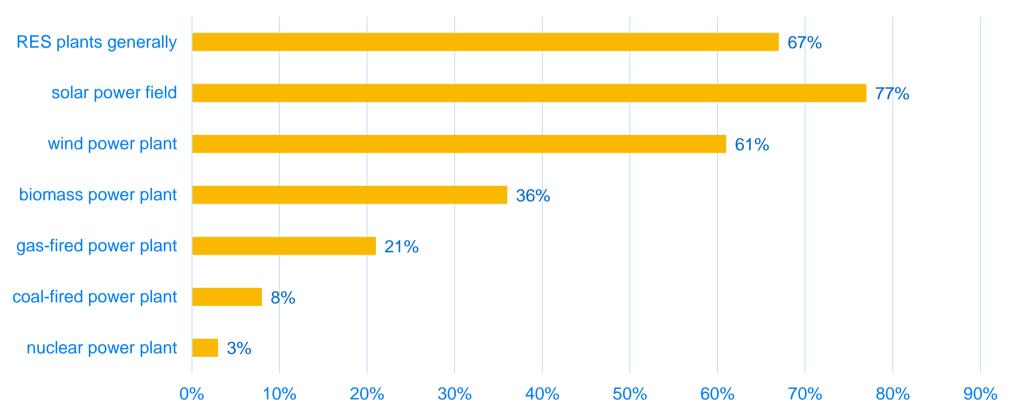
Citizens' initiatives against local renewable projects



Sources: Various websites / newspapers



Local acceptance for renewable energy generation



Local acceptance depending on electricity-generation type

For providing energy in the vicinity: good / very good



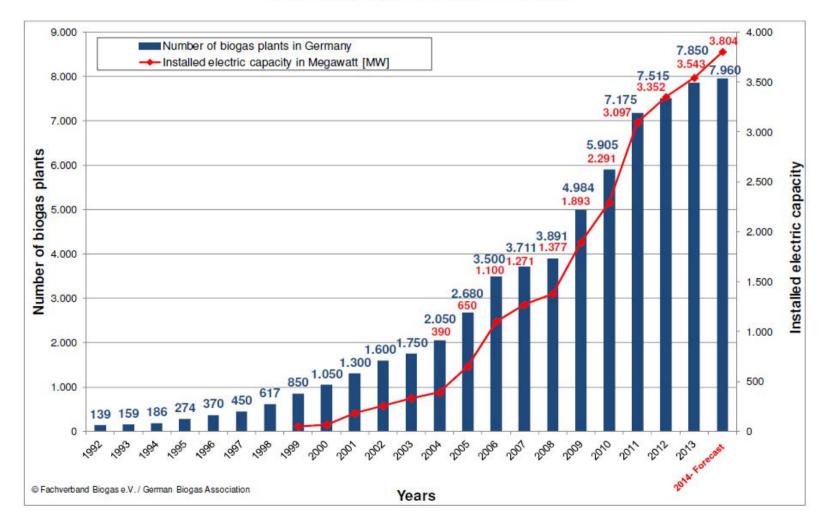
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Biogas: Development in Germany

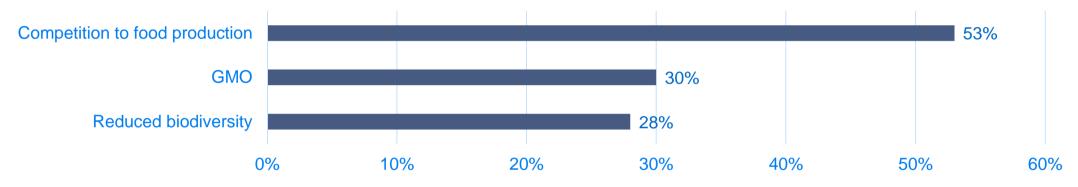
Development of the number of biogas plants and the total installed electric output in megawatt [MW] in Germany (as of 6/2014)



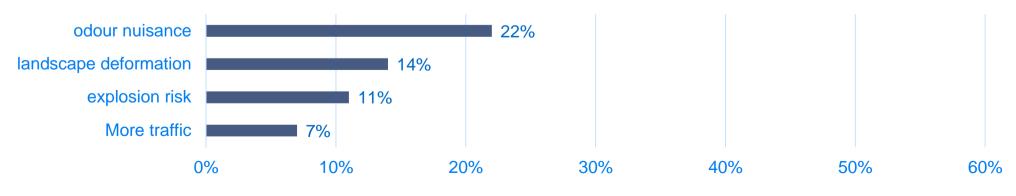


Reservations with regard to biomass (incl. biogas)

Socio-political acceptance



Community acceptance



Source: own research, n = 367



"Maizification" is a major concern

NDR Fernsehen

Stand: 02.12.2012 19:05 Uhr

Energiewende: Von Stromtrasse bis Vermaisung



Niedersachsen zahlreiche überraschende Feinde zu haben: die Umweltschützer Die die mutmaßlich noch vor Kurzem gegen Kohlekraft- und Atomkraftwerke auf die Straße gegangen sind, bäumen sich nun gegen Windkraftanlagen,

Die Energiewende scheint in

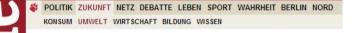


Landkreis Verden - 10.01.2013

Nabu macht sich gegen Vermaisung stark

Landkreis Verden. Der Naturschutzbund (NABU) ist grundsätzlich für die Förderung Soweit Fehlentwicklungen beim Anbau von Pflan nachwachsender Rohstoffe als wichtigen Beitrag zur Bekämpfung des Klimawandels. Ange des aktuellen Booms von Biogasanlagen zeichnen sich jedoch in einigen Regionen Entwick ab, die aus Sicht des Natur- und Umweltschutzes ein erhebliches Konfliktpotenzial beinhal die Artenvielfalt bedrohen





04.05.2012 | 8 Kommentare VERSUCHE ZUR BIOGAS-PRODUKTION

Vermaisung könnte ein Ende haben

Biogas aus Wildpflanzen ist wirtschaftlich genauso attraktiv wie Biogas aus Mais. Der Einsatz von naturnahen Kulturen hätte auch ökologische Vorteile. VON BERNWARD JANZING



Mais, überall immer nur Mais. Dabei gibt es Alternativen

Bild: dpa

4 I

FREIBURG taz | Biogasanlage und Maisfeld gehören heute meistens zusammen. Doch es geht auch anders die Vermaisung" der

top agraronline

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Energienews		Heft + 🏟	Energieforum		Aus der	Wirtschaft	Solarpreise	

Home » Energie » Energienews » Vermaisung: Regierung will Vorurteile au Energiewende in Niedersachsen.

Vermaisung: Regierung will Vorurteile ausräumen [21.01.2013]



In Deutschland gibt es 295 Landkreise. In 230 davon liegt der Maisanteil bei unter 30 % der Ackerfläche.

Die Produktion von Bioenergie ist aus dem Ruder gelaufen. Gegen dieses Vorurteil wehrt sich das * Startseite * Region * Zeitungen * Nabu macht sich gegen Vermalsung stark Bundes-Landwirtschafts-Ministerium und bezieh einem 10-Punkte-Papier dazu Stellung.

Wörtlich heißt es darin:

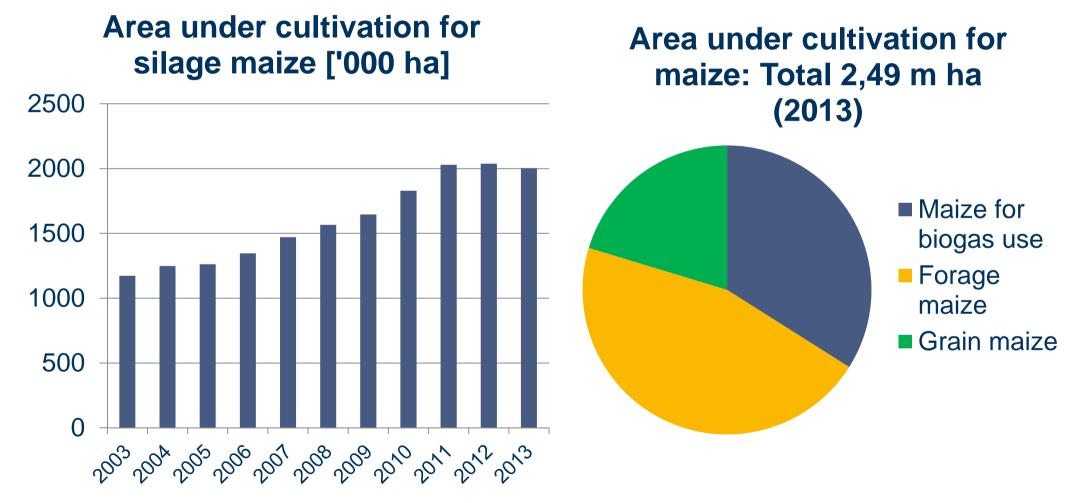
für die Bioenergie auffreten, greift die Bundesregierung diese auf und wirkt ihnen entgegen. Um Flächenkonkurrenzen abzumilder und übermäßigem Maisanbau vorzubeugen, hat 👝 F Empfehlen Bund wir in dieser Legislaturperiode beim Erneuerbaren-Energien-Gesetz mehrfach nachgesteuert. So haben wir 2012 die Fördersä

Von Uwe Dammann





Maize cultivation has been rising due to biogas boom

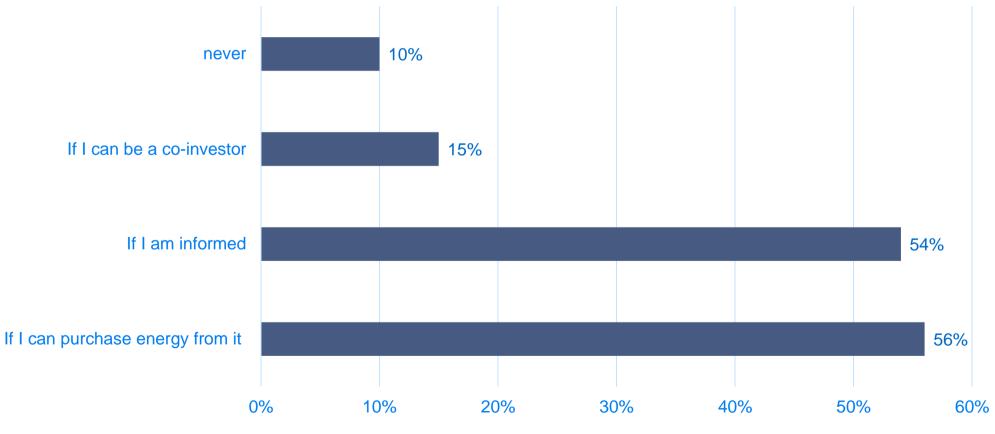


Source: Deutsches Maiskomitee 2014



Measures to raise the acceptance level

"I would be more willing to accept a biogas plant in the vicinity..."



Source: own research



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Research questions

How did the discourse around maize for biogas use develop before and after the change of the Renewable Energy Act 2012?

- Arguments & story lines
- Players & discourse coalitions
- Reactions to arguments
- Development of discourse elements over time

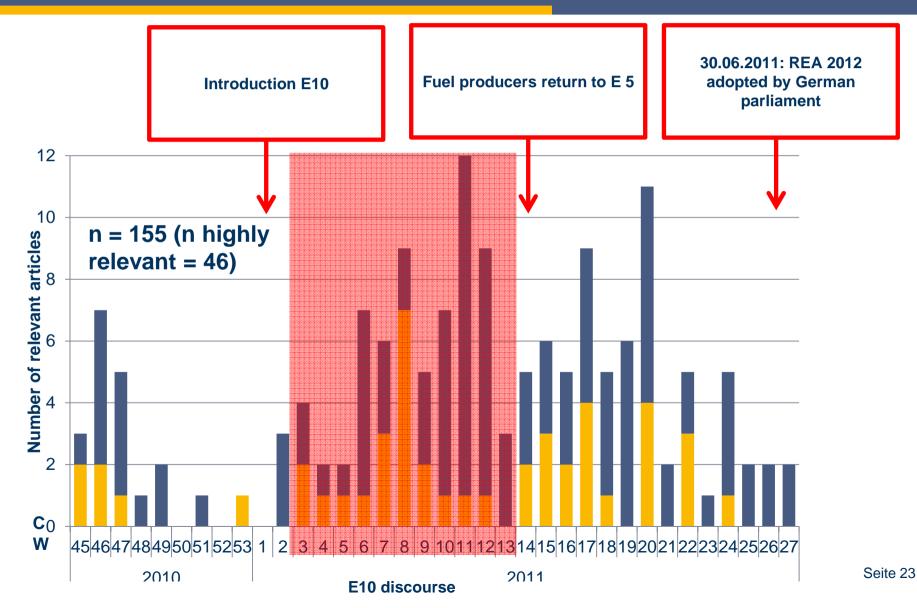


Empirical investigation

- Joint project with the Technical University of Munich (TUM)
- Focus on discourse in mass media
 - Analysis of the five biggest quality newspaper operating nationwide (SZ, FAZ, Welt, TZ, FR)
 - Analysis of hearings in parliament (political documents)
 - Qualitative content analysis (Mayring, Krippendorff) plus quantitative analysis
 - Discourse analysis based on Hajer's methodology
- Two analysis periods
 - First period: November 2010 (first discourse elements) until June 2011 (REA 2012 passes parliament)
 - Second period: July 2012 until April 2013 (new law in full operation)



Number of articles in the first period





The arguments

Effects on nature and environment

- Reduction of biodiversity
- Negative effects on soil and phreatic water
- Negative effects on landscape
- Damages for the climate
- Benefits for the climate

• Effects on economy / consumers

- Increasing cost of food production
- Threats for farmers
- Negative effects on ,secondary users' of cropland, e.g. beekeepers
- Safeguarding farmers' economic existence
- Job creation

• Effects for energy supply

- Securing energy transition



The story lines(1/2)

• The biogas boom

- Pictures the fast growth of the biogas sector in Germany
- Mostly linked to a description of negative effects plus the assumption that the political support is not adequate

• The maizification of our landscape

- Pictures the drastic effects of the biogas growth on the landscape
- Mostly linked to a description of various negative effects on nature and environment

Fuel versus food

- Pictures the conflict between energy production and food production
- Used by biogas critics during in the E10 biofuel context
- Transferred from the biofuel discourse to the biogas discourse
- Biogas supporters tried to turn this storyline into ,food and fuel'



The story lines (2/2)

Not everything called ,bio' is really bio

- According to this storyline, the original goal of creating an environmentally friendly energy supply has been missed
- Mostly linked to a description of negative effects on nature and environment

• Only the boars like it.

 Pictures the negative effects on biodiversity and resulting problems for nature and environment plus damages / losses for hunters, beekeepers, farmers

• The fight for agricultural land

- Pictures the increasing conflict on agricultural land, mostly linked to a description of negative effects on food production
- Often linked to (allegedly inadequate) subsidies

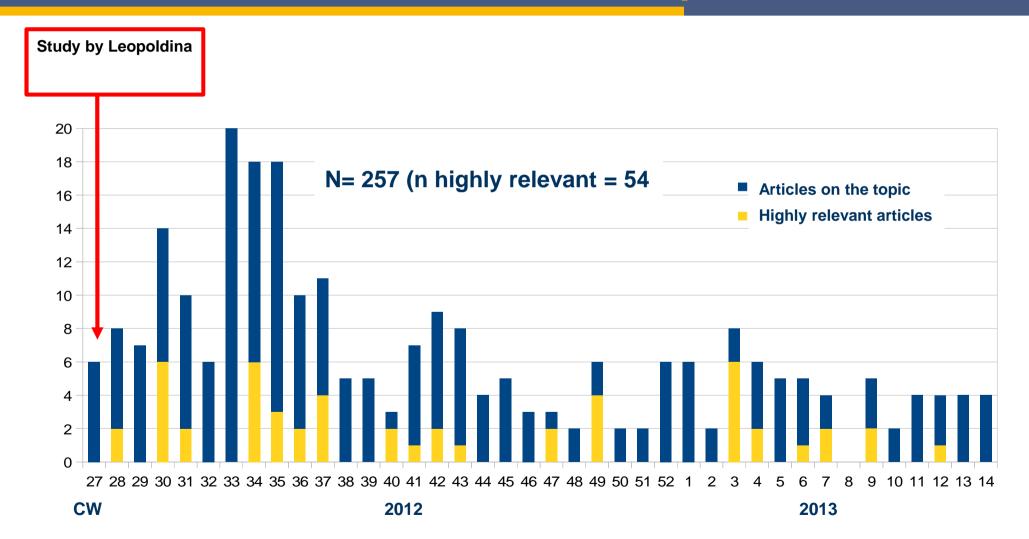


Story lines and players in the first period

	Biogas boom	Maizifica- tion	Food vs. fuel	Boars	Not all bio	Fight for agricultu- ral land	Total
Industry players	3	5	2			1	11
Beekeepers		1					1
Biogas producers		2					2
Solar producers		1					1
Farmers	3	1	2			1	7
Politicians	3	3				4	10
Media	6	14	5	6	5	7	43
Environmental groups	1	5	1	2		2	11
Administration	1					1	2
Academia		1					1
Total	14	28	8	8	5	15	78



Number of articles in the second period



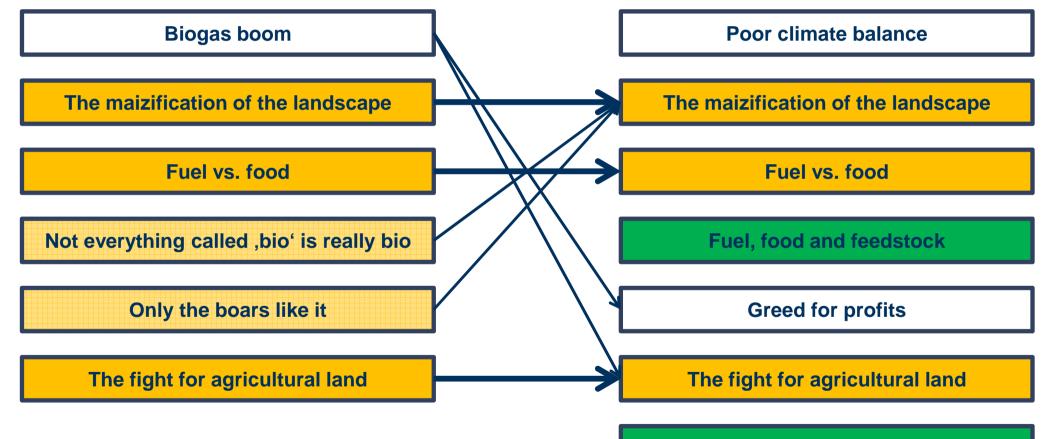


Story lines and players in the second period

	Poor climate balance	Energy storage	Food vs. fuel	Fuel, food & feedst.	Maizifi- cation	Diversifi- cation of input	Greed for profits	Fight for agricultu -ral land	Total
Industry players	2	4	0	8	2	6	2	2	26
Biogas producers	2	3		2	1	2	1	1	12
Energy suppliers				1	1				2
Farmers		1		5		4	1	1	12
Politicians	4	5	0	1	0	4	3	3	20
Environmental groups	1	0	0	0	5	1	0	1	8
Administration							1		1
Citizens	2	1	5		1	1	1	1	12
Academia	1	1	2	1	2	3		2	12
Total	10	11	7	10	10	15	7	9	79



Storylines before and after the new REA 2012



Diversification of input material

Energy storage through biogas



Summary

- Very persistent negative story lines: Maizification, food vs. fuel, fight for agricultural land
- Besides those, most story lines are dynamic: some disappear, some emerge
- Strong effects of single events: biomass study by Leopoldina
- Strong link to seemingly 'unrelated' discourse about biofuels
- Biogas sector only managed to establish own positive storylines after the political decision for the maize cap

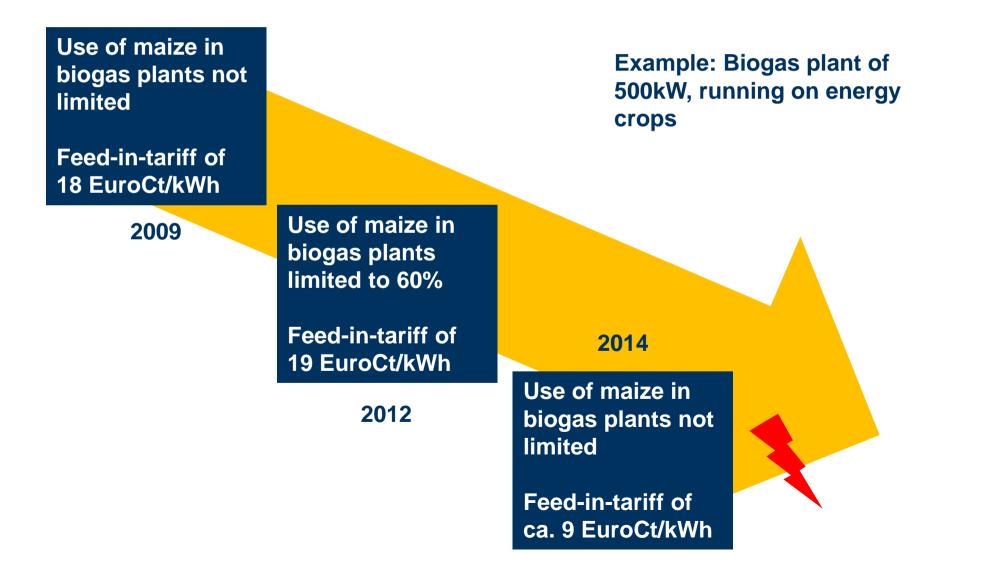


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Changes in political support (Renewable Energy Act)





Summary and political implications (1/2)

- Discrepancies between socio-political and community acceptance: Germans have more problems with general issues than with local plants
- Bioenergy is the least accepted renewable resource
- Strong reservations in Germany regarding energy crops (competition with food production)
- Public discourse on maize and biogas in mass media and political discourse are often in line (but fuel vs. food seems not very relevant in the political arena)



Summary and political implications (2/2)

- Some story lines appear earlier in the public discourse than in the political discourse (public discourse is a driver)
- Effect: Change in political support:
 - Before REA 2012: generous support for biogas from energy crops
 - REA 2012: Percentage of maize in the input material of biogas plants reduced to a maximum of 60%
 - REA 2014: Electricity production from energy crop-based biogas is economically not viable any more => end of biogas expansion in Germany
- The biogas sector had completely underestimated the potential effects of the public discourse on political decisions