

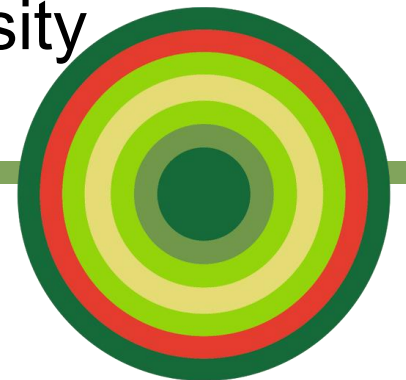
Swapping Multispecies Knowledge: Interconnectivity of Seeds and People in Garden-scale Agrobiodiversity

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Recovery” Symposium



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BETTER DECISIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY AND PEOPLE

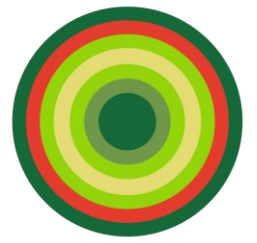
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A PLANET4B case study on agrobiodiversity

- Horizon Europe research project (16 partners, 10 countries, 10 case studies)
- Agrobiodiversity case study: understanding what are the main challenges and obstacles for a seed system that supports agrobiodiversity better
- What happened so far?
 - 21 semi-structured interviews and field visits with stakeholders (farmers, researchers, activists, artists, state actors)
 - Thematic analysis of the interviews



Photo by Várallyay Nóra

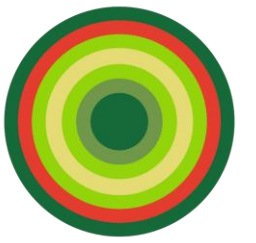


Thematic Analysis

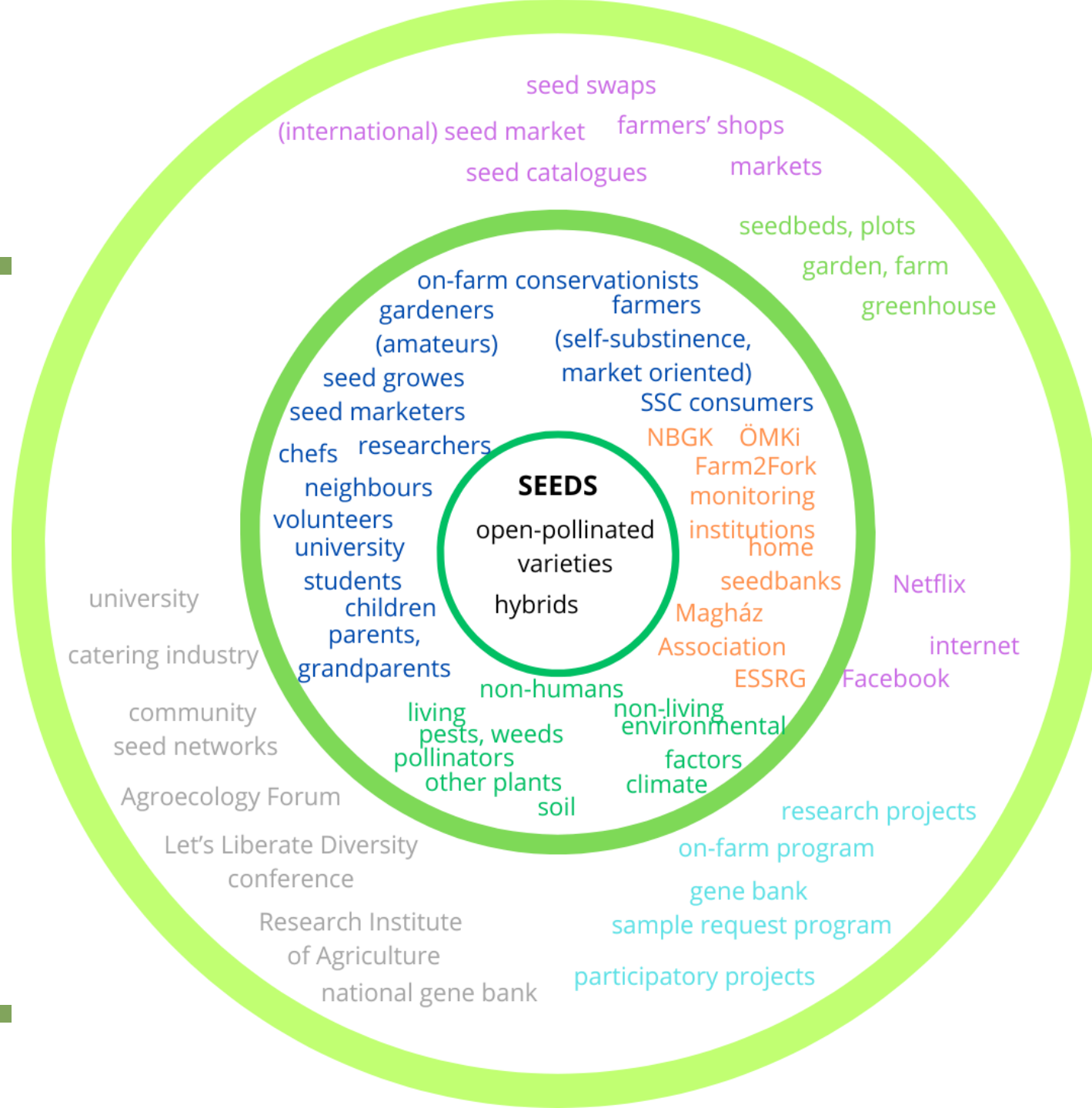
Main questions:

1. What are the human and more-than-human actors in plant–human interactions?
2. What are the different physical and metaphoric spaces where these interactions occur?
3. What are the activities through which plant–human interactions are manifested?

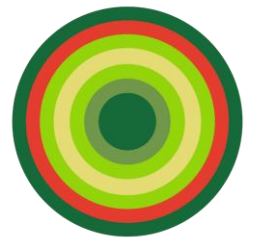




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Seed-centred, multispecies interactions

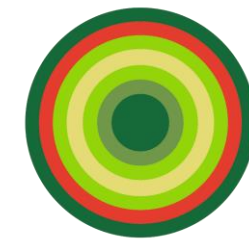


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- 🍅 knowledge swapping
- 🍅 reciprocity
- 🍅 experimentation
- 🍅 openness (towards human and nonhuman)
- 🍅 emotional connection



Knowledge swapping - Quotes



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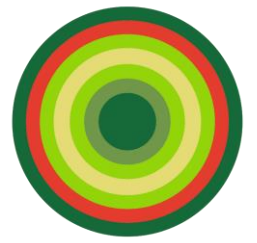


“Anyway, they [the plants] know better.” (Interview 19)

“Plants are amazingly responsive and they talk. They tell you what is going on with the landscape; the plant tells you why it grows where it does and not elsewhere.” (Interview 5)

“Positive experience is good to obtain; because what nature teaches us is eventually our true identity, our mental health; and our psyche needs to connect to nature because nature was invented by God, whilst cities were invented by mankind.” (Interview 17)

Reciprocity - Quotes

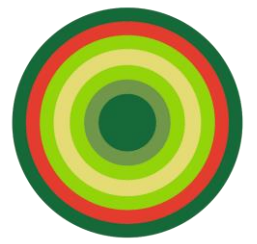


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"... the diversity of [vegetable] varieties is maintained not just because we love it and find it delightful, but because without it one cannot run a CSA [Community Supported Agriculture] system. (...) I go to the garden every October seeing a remarkable diversity. (...) You do have a choice, richness in different colours, tastes, forms...,
(Interview 11)



Experimentation - Quote



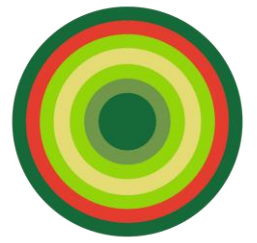
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“My curiosity is endless. This curiosity expands until the end of the seed supplies. On a European level. So it’s endless.”

(Interview 5)

Openness - Quotes



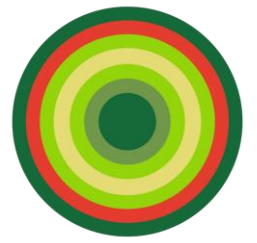
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“ ... we let the purslane exist, and in return it lead us to lots of interesting opportunities.”
(Interview 12 – openness towards plants)



“And in the meantime we need to full-heartedly educate people. Make them open their eyes. The eyes of little people, so that they realize... that they experience the possibility... so that they see that there is such thing as the Máriapócs Oxheart” (Interview 7 – openness towards people)

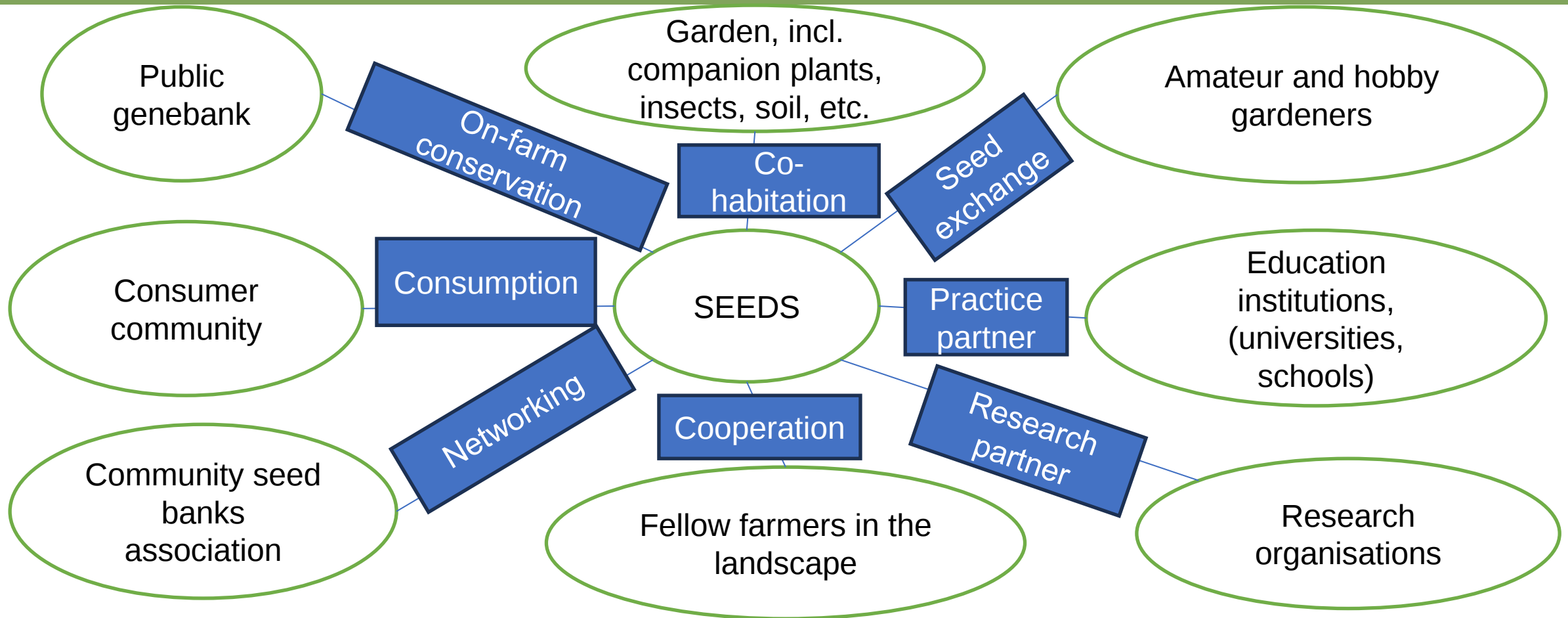
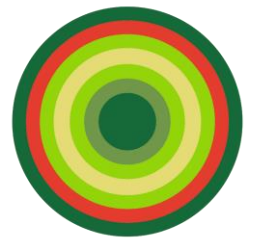
Emotional connection - Quote

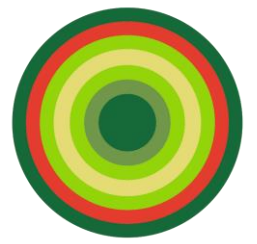


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“It’s impossible to comprehend this. Well, I know that genes and the division of cells and so on, nucleic acids and others. I know that this is the material base but there’s no definition for life itself. We can sew a human body together but it’s not going to come to life. And there’s always **that little intangible something that separates living and dead material**. And we don’t know to this day. Science can not explain, neither grab or catch it, or describe it or measure it. That what is that thing. And **this is what is in the seeds.**”
(Interview 5)







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Conclusion

1. Seeds occupy a central position in the structure.
2. A self-organising, dynamic structure is created.
 - seed-based worldbuilding → What kind of world is built? (4th nature?)
3. Nonhierarchical structure
 - mutual, interspecies learning (co-domestication)
 - common goal: liveable, common world achieved through agrobiodiversity



PLANET4B Project

understanding **P**lural values, intersectionality, **L**everage points, **A**ttitudes, **N**orms, behaviour and social **I**earning in **T**ransformation for **B**iodiversity decision making



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