



Ecological Research Network

**Knowledge
for change**

Ecornet
Ecological Research Network

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Preface

Dear reader,

Our societies need ambitious social-ecological research – which is why eight leading institutes engaged in environmental and sustainability research have joined forces to form Ecornet. Working together, we identify and investigate the urgent issues facing society and develop workable solutions.

The coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine have revealed the vulnerability of our societies. The impacts of climate change are making themselves felt around the globe, and the decline in species diversity poses an ongoing threat. Under these conditions, people and ecosystems are increasingly reaching their tolerance limits.

In view of these multiple crises, we need a change of mindset and a change of direction throughout our societies. In many cases, there are already signs of a transformative dynamic emerging towards societies that are sustainable and resilient in both social and ecological terms. With our research, we aim to contribute to this positive development.

Ecornet enables us to pool our skills:

Our research is a collective endeavour. The staff of the Ecornet institutes combine their methodological and technical expertise in numerous national and international projects. We identify complex connections and produce findings of practical relevance for a sustainable world. Through our research,

we help policy-makers and society to address urgent problems and dismantle the barriers that stand in the way of action. And through our Ecornet Berlin research partnership, we strengthen transdisciplinary sustainability research in the region around Germany's capital city.

We actively engage with science policy. For more than a decade, Ecornet has been a driving force in setting a future-oriented research agenda at regional, national and European level. For example, our input has helped to shape the direction and development of the German Research Ministry's Social-Ecological Research funding priority and Research for Sustainability framework programme.

We promote debate within society. Our formats include the Ecornet Future Forum, a series of events at which we discuss current sustainability issues with stakeholders from research, politics, the private sector and society. Our "Wake-up Call for Change" provides information about sustainability issues in the Berlin region.

In all cases, our belief that we are "better together!" is the tenet that guides us, both internally and externally – and in that spirit, we are delighted that you are interested in our work. We hope that this brochure whets your appetite for more.



Jan Peter Schemmel, Ecornet Co-spokesperson



Thomas Korbun, Ecornet Co-spokesperson

Profile: about Ecornet

The Ecological Research Network (Ecornet) brings together various non-profit institutes to work for a sustainable and equitable future.

The Ecological Research Network (Ecornet) brings together various independent, non-profit institutes engaged in environmental and sustainability research in Germany. Our joint mission is to help shape society's transition towards sustainability and place it on a sound scientific footing. From the start, the Ecornet institutes have specialised in dealing with complex issues in a practical manner that transcends the boundaries of scientific disciplines. In 2011, they came together to form Ecornet in order to expand their capabilities and put their combined expertise to use in the research landscape.

Science is always part of society. This is the starting point for the Ecornet institutes' critical approach: critical science addresses real-world problems and challenges, recognises the diversity of knowledge within society and opens up spaces for alternative ways of thinking. In upholding this tradition in their sustainability research at the interface between science, politics and society, the Ecornet institutes occupy an important space in Germany's scientific landscape.

We are dedicated to working for an ecologically sustainable and socially just present and future and to shaping tomorrow's world at the local, regional, national and international level.

The Ecological Research Network (Ecornet) comprises eight institutes engaged in transdisciplinary sustainability research:

- Ecologic Institute
- Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (ifeu)
- Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW)
- ISOE – Institute for Social-Ecological Research
- IZT – Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment
- Oeko-Institut
- Independent Institute for Environmental Issues (UfU)
- Wuppertal Institute

Find out more about the individual institutes on page 8.

Structure of the Network

From the management group to the Academy: the structure of the Ecological Research Network.

The institutional management group deals with strategic and policy issues relating to the Network's development and joint activities. Two spokespersons represent the Network externally; their activities relating to its coordination, development and external relations are supported by a secretariat.

Interinstitutional working groups promote the exchange of knowledge and experience in key areas of engagement and networking. The Ecornet Academy runs internal training events for staff from the Ecornet institutes.

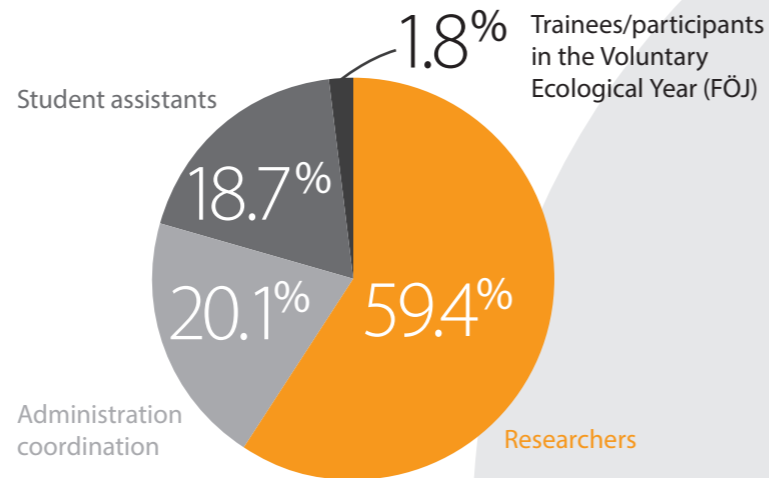
Ecornet in figures

More than 1200 projects, a combined staff well in excess of 900, and dozens of supervised dissertations: facts, figures and data relating to the Ecological Research Network in 2021*.

Staff

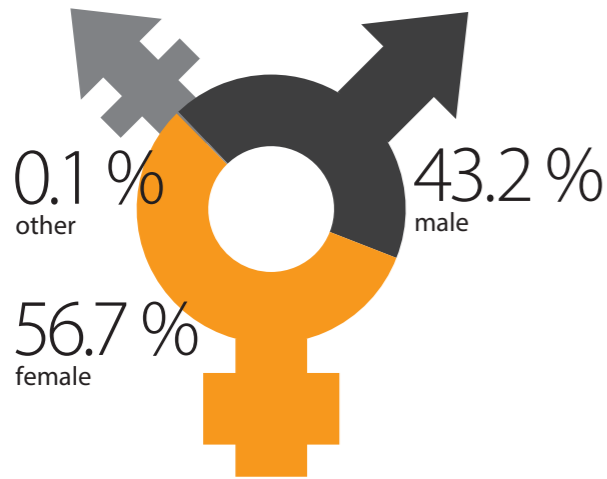
945

Staff (total)

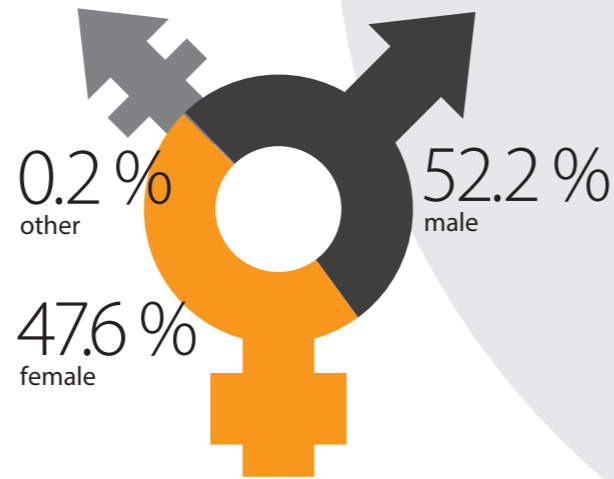


Gender balance

Total staff:



Researchers:



Internships

124

Dissertations

Supervised dissertations (Bachelor's, Master's, PhD)

64

Projects

1280

Projects (total):

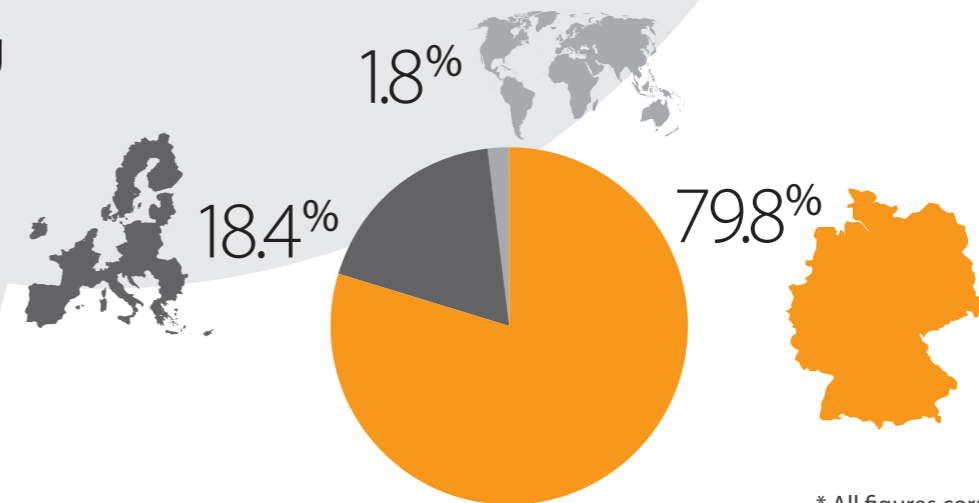


Revenue

€64,861,745

Annual revenue

Funding



* All figures correct as at 31.12.2021

Our research profile

The profiles of the Ecornet institutes are based on a shared understanding of research whose objective is to produce sound and reliable knowledge.

With their core expertise in the field of social-ecological transformation, the Ecornet institutes develop practical solutions for an ecologically sustainable and socially just present and future. We reveal options that prevent barriers to change and facilitate the necessary breakthroughs in society and research. Our research is organised into topical fields such as climate, energy, biodiversity, mobility, water and land use, resources, digitalisation and consumption.

Diversity with a shared foundation

Each of the eight Ecornet institutes has its own profile and organisational culture. This diversity is based on a shared foundation which guides us as a network of independent non-profit institutes for environmental and sustainability research in Germany.

- **Our research is problem-oriented** – and is closely connected to specific practical challenges. In this way, we ensure that our research is socially relevant.
- **Our research is learning- and dialogue-oriented** – we share our research results in a way which ensures that they reach a range of stakeholders within society. At the same time, we seek dialogue with these stakeholders in order to accommodate their knowledge needs in our future research.

- **Our research is connected** – our member institutes have access to well-established networks in science, policy-making, business and society, which can be mobilised swiftly.

Our aim is to provide sound and reliable knowledge. Using quantitative and qualitative research methods, we inform decision-makers about the potential implications of their actions for tomorrow's world.

A wealth of transdisciplinary knowledge and experience

From the outset, the Ecornet institutes have specialised in working across the boundaries of scientific disciplines. Recognising their role as knowledge-bearers, we involve non-scientific stakeholders in the research process: in other words, we work in a transdisciplinary manner. We attach particular importance to working with stakeholders from politics, business and civil society wherever possible so that problems can be identified and described in a collaborative process. Through our various practically-oriented research and consultancy projects, we have built up a wealth of transdisciplinary knowledge and experience which Ecornet researchers are continuously expanding and updating in light of tomorrow's challenges.



Our research: thematic priorities

There are many different facets to sustainability – so Ecornet's research priorities are equally diverse.

Our research on socially relevant topics addresses various dimensions of sustainability in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Climate and energy

We devise climate change mitigation strategies and develop scenarios and policy instruments for a sustainable and equitable energy supply. Our research covers topics such as renewable energy, the heat market, hydrogen use, and the impacts of the nuclear phase-out and the exit from coal.

Ecosystems and resources

We investigate the interactions between the environment, human communities and the economy from an environmental, social and economic perspective. The conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of ecosystem services are integral to our research agenda, as is efficient governance of raw materials, land and water resources.

A sustainable economy and consumption

We undertake research on the key components of a sustainable and resilient economy, focusing on sectors such as industry, construction, housing and farming. In thematic areas such as the circular economy, bioeconomy and finance, we explore how

to make the sustainable transformation of our economy and lifestyles a success.

Sustainable mobility and transport

We develop future-fit solutions for individual mobility, public transport and freight. Here, our research focuses on alternative propulsion systems and fuels, individual behaviour and forms of mobility, sustainable urban and rural infrastructures, and sustainable land use.

Digitalisation and sustainability

We make the environmental potential of digitalisation and the associated risks visible. In doing so, we look beyond the technologies themselves and also consider the socioeconomic aspects of digitalisation.

Environmental policy and law

We analyse governance processes, develop environmental policies and advise decision-makers and stakeholders inside and outside government. Through our research and consultancy, we contribute to the development and effective implementation of international climate agreements, European environmental directives and national legislation.



Member institutes: profiles

The Ecological Research Network brings together eight independent, non-profit institutes, all of which are actively engaged in environmental and sustainability research in Germany.

Ecologic Institute

Established: 1995
Locations: Berlin, Brussels, Washington D.C.
Director: Dr Camilla Bausch

The Ecologic Institute conducts research in the local and German context and addresses European and international environmental policy issues. Staff from more than 20 countries provide practical information and recommendations for policy-makers. The analyses by the Legal Team link environmental policy and law, while the Events Team creates an inspiring outreach programme. Ecologic also engages in education with partner organisations around the world.

Address: Pfalzburger Str. 43/44, 10717 Berlin
Contact: +49 30 86880 0, berlin@ecologic.eu
Website: www.ecologic.eu

Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (ifeu)

Established: 1978
Locations: Heidelberg, Berlin
Director: Andreas Detzel, Lothar Eisenmann, Dr Martin Pehnt

ifeu undertakes research and provides consultancy on major environmental and sustainability issues for numerous international and national funding providers and clients worldwide. With more than 40 years of experience, ifeu is one of the leading independent, non-profit environmental research institutes in Germany. It seeks solutions to urgent social issues at the local, national and global level.

Address: Wilckensstr. 3, 69120 Heidelberg
Contact: +49 6221 4767 0, ifeu@ifeu.de
Website: www.ifeu.de

Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW)

Established: 1985
Locations: Berlin
Director: Thomas Korbun (Scientific Director), Marion Wiegand (Financial Director)

The Institute for Ecological Economy Research produces knowledge and ideas relating to the development of a sustainable economy. The aim of this research institute is to provide policy-makers, business and civil society stakeholders with (environmental) economic advice and expertise in order to find solutions to social-ecological problems. Since its establishment, the Institute has also focused on the issue of growth and is engaged in the public debate on this topic through its blog postwachstum.de.

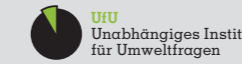
Address: Potsdamer Str. 105, 10785 Berlin
Contact: +49 30 884594 0, mailbox@ioew.de
Website: www.ioew.de

ISOE – Institute for Social-Ecological Research

Established: 1989
Locations: Frankfurt am Main
Executive Board: Professor Flurina Schneider (Spokesperson and Scientific Director), Dr Diana Hummel, Dr Martina Winker, Frank Schindermann (Administrative Director)

ISOE develops scientific bases and future-oriented concepts for socio-ecological transitions. To that end, it undertakes transdisciplinary research on global problems such as water scarcity, climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation and identifies sustainable solutions which take environmental, social and economic conditions into account.

Address: Hamburger Allee 45, 60486 Frankfurt am Main
Contact: +49 69 7076919 0, info@isoe.de
Website: www.isoe.de



IZT – Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment

Established: 1981
Locations: Berlin
Management: Professor Stephan Rammler (Scientific Director), Dr Roland Nolte (Managing Director), Sabine Flores (Managing Director)

IZT addresses major societal challenges with a view to the far-reaching transformation of society. It is committed to sustainability and the ability to shape the future. It stands for the major topics of sustainability and shaping the future, technology assessment and technology design, and is a pioneer in key cross-cutting and integrative fields such as sustainability, digitalisation and resilience.

Address: Schopenhauer Str. 26, 14129 Berlin
Contact: +49 30 803088 0, info@izt.de
Website: www.izt.de

Oeko-Institut

Established: 1977
Locations: Freiburg, Darmstadt, Berlin
Executive Board: Jan Peter Schemmel, Anke Herold, Susanne Fröschl

The Oeko-Institut is the oldest of the Ecornet institutes. It undertakes research and consultancy on transitions in the energy, heat, mobility, resource and agriculture sectors. Its national and international projects focus particularly on developing technical and legal policy options and feasibility studies, identifying the social and economic impacts of policy measures, and devising formats for participation.

Address: Merzhauser Straße 173, 79100 Freiburg
Contact: +49 761 45295-0, info@oeko.de
Website: www.oeko.de

Independent Institute for Environmental Issues (UfU)

Established: 1990
Locations: Berlin, Halle/Saale
Managing Board: Dr Michael Zschiesche, Florian Kliche

The Independent Institute for Environmental Issues is an environmental science organisation which runs applied science projects, campaigns and networks in order to change environmentally unsustainable conditions. In its projects, the UfU attaches particular importance to opportunities for citizen and public education and participation.

Address: Greifswalder Straße 4, 10405 Berlin
Contact: +49 30 4284 993 0, info@ufu.de
Website: www.ufu.de

Wuppertal Institute

Established: 1991
Locations: Wuppertal, Berlin
Management team: Professor Manfred Fischedick (Scientific Managing Director), Michael Dedek (Administrative Managing Director)

The Wuppertal Institute is a leading think tank for impact- and application-oriented research on sustainability and transformation. It feeds scientific findings into processes designed to achieve global sustainable development goals. Transformation pathways towards climate-neutral and resource-light societies are pivotal. To facilitate such pathways, the institute generates knowledge of systems and goals, and researches practicable visions and strategies for policy-makers, the private sector and society at large – in Germany, Europe and worldwide.

Address: Döppersberg 19, 42103 Wuppertal
Contact: +49 202 2492 0, info@wupperinst.org
Website: wupperinst.org

The Ecornet Future Forum

What can be done about plastic waste? How has the coronavirus pandemic affected the process of transition in the mobility sector? And how can digitalisation contribute to change? These and other questions are the focus of Ecornet's Future Forum series.

The Future Forum is Ecornet's main events series. Since 2019, it has turned a critical gaze on current environmental and sustainability policy challenges with a view to identifying unconventional solutions. Drawing on information from the Ecornet

institutes' latest scientific analyses, the individual events make valuable contributions to the debate and create a framework for dialogue with guests from politics, business and civil society.

Examples of previous events

Panel discussion: What kind of climate law do we need?

Institutes involved: Ecologic Institut, Öko-Institut

Panel discussion: The environmental problem of plastic waste – causes and solutions

Institutes involved: ifeu, ISOE

Panel discussion: Cooperation or confrontation? Civil society in transition

Institutes involved: IÖW, UfU

Panel discussion: KI² – new intelligence for the sustainability transition?

Institutes involved: IZT, Wuppertal Institute

Online discussion: Is the future of mobility a thing of the past? How the coronavirus pandemic is influencing the mobility transition

Institutes involved: ISOE, IZT

Online discussion: Pathways out of the biodiversity crisis – business as usual or a new direction?

Institutes involved: Ecologic Institut, ISOE

Online discussion: Thinking holistically about sustainable and healthy urban space – strategies of a post-Covid city

Institutes involved: UfU, Wuppertal Institute

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