

Austrian farmers interests concerning spatial planning: a mixed-methods approach

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Although spatial planning essentially shapes the spatial production conditions of farming, little is known so far about the specific needs of farmers regarding spatial planning. This study aims to identify Austrian farmers spatial planning related interests to facilitate their embedding in planning processes. Given that spatial planning activities in Austria take place to a large extent at the local level, we examined the needs of Austrian farmers concerning local spatial planning. Qualitative interviews with 30 farmers enabled a first selection of agricultural interests. A subsequent quantitative questionnaire survey with 430 participating farmers examined the distribution and prioritisation of the surveyed interests across Austria. Our results show that the preservation of agricultural land represents the most important interest, being indicated by 88 % of the farmers participating in the questionnaire survey. The other interests relate primarily to spatial "buffers" around farms and a machine-compatible dimensioning and design of local traffic infrastructure. Those other interests, however, met with less uniform agreement throughout the farmers. We are right now in the process of identifying potential predictor variables for each determined interest category through the implementation of a logistic regression model for each interest category and look forward to discussing our approach within the institute seminar.