

# "I owe it to the animals": The bidirectionality of Swiss alpine farmers' relational values

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# Agenda

1. What and why of environmental values
2. Study Methods and Results
3. Implications

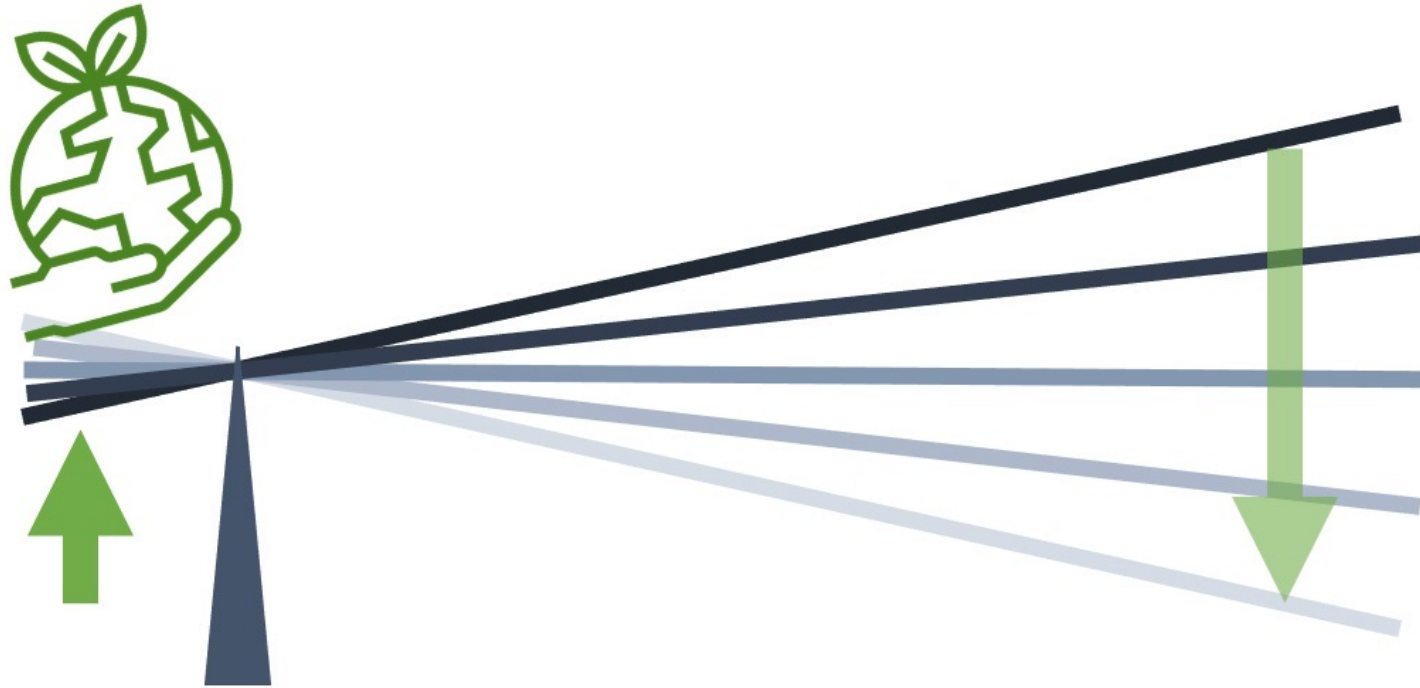




Werte = Was uns wichtig ist . . .  
. . . und warum



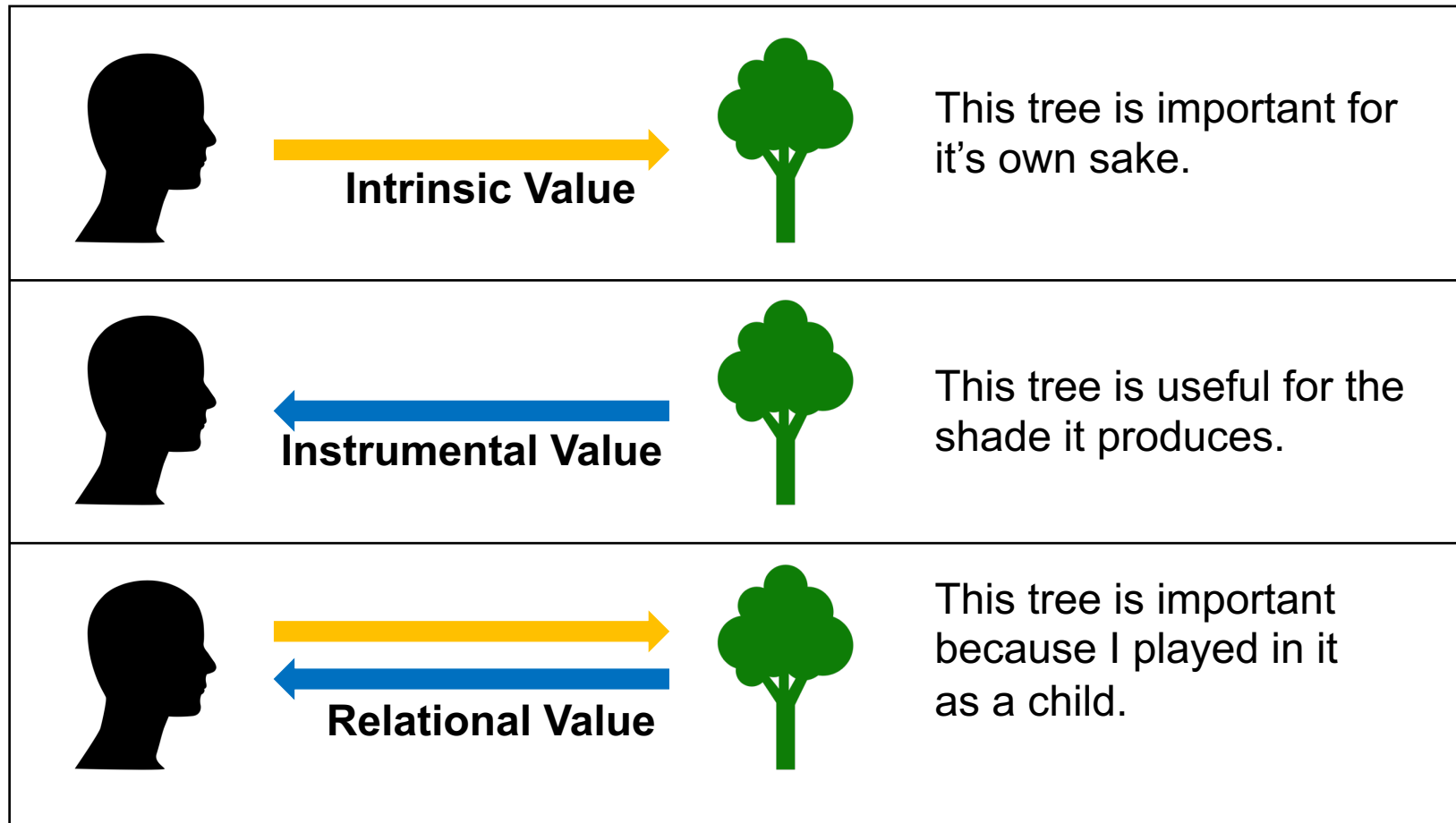




Values can serve as a leverage point for sustainability transformations



But doing so requires a deeper understanding of how values work ‘in the wild’



Chapman, M. & Deplazes-Zemp, A. (2023) *People and Nature*, 5 (1), 147-161.

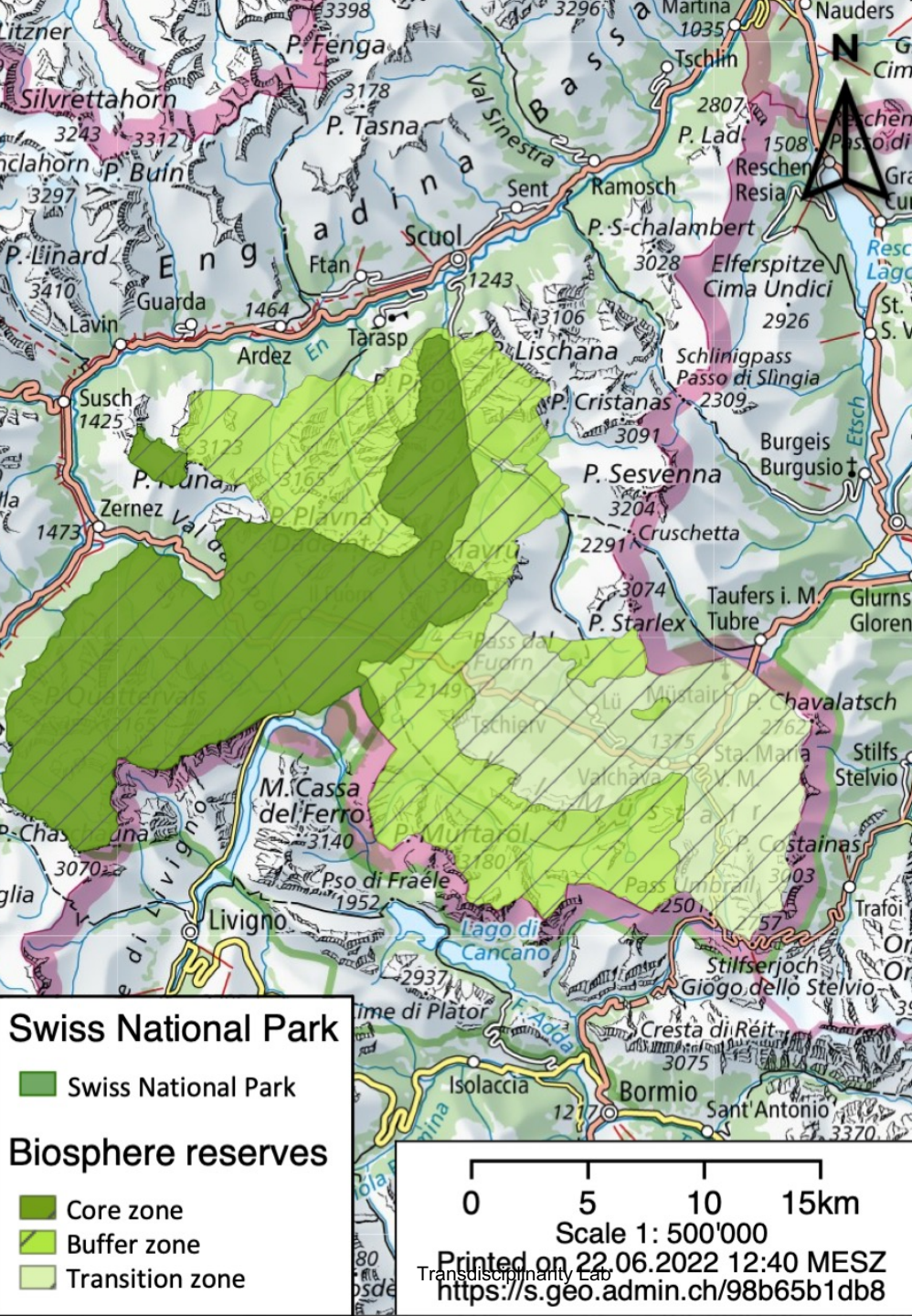
Deplazes-Zemp, A., & Chapman, M. (2021). *Environmental Values*, 30, 669–693.

# Relational value of nature is . . .

1. . . . based on relationships between people and nature
2. Bi-directional (aka involve a give and take)
3. Non-substitutable
4. Between people and nature directly or between people via nature
5. Part of a value pluralism approach



But how to operationaize relational values?



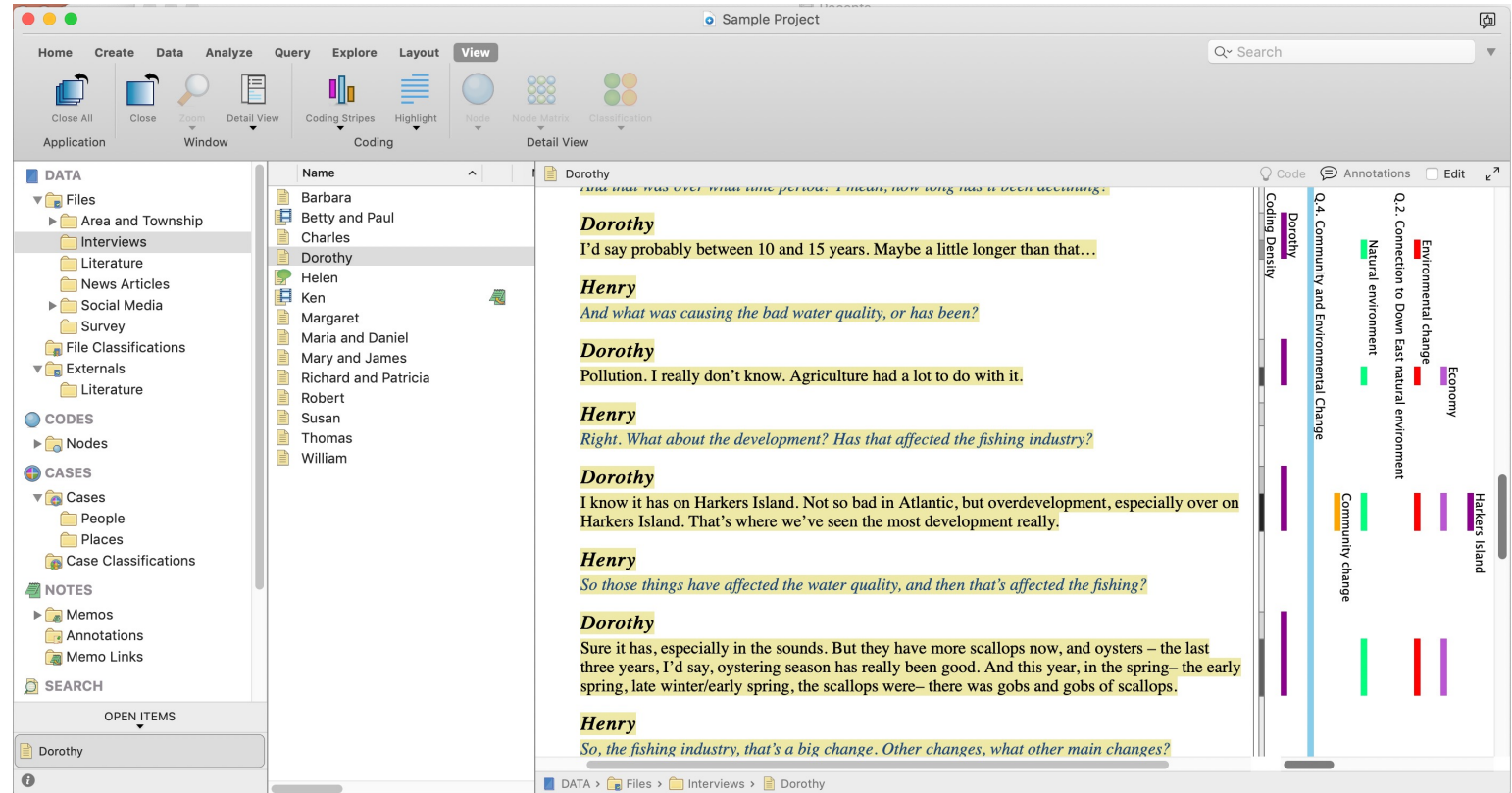
## Empirical study of relational values of swiss alpine famres

- Research Questions:
  - What are the most important relational values among farmers in the Lower Engadine and Münster Valleys?
  - What characterizes farmer's key relational values?
- Methods
  - 32 semi-structured interviews 'on site'
  - Respondents identified in collaboration with local partners
  - Interview protocol based on Syntax of Environmental Values framework



# Analysis

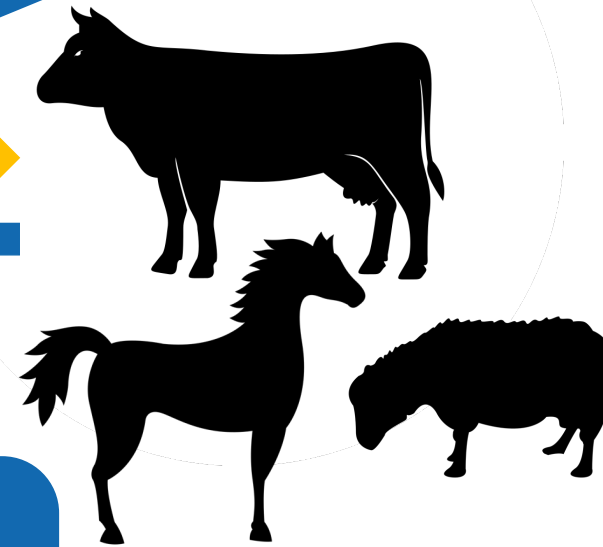
- Qualitative coding (inductive and deductive) using Nvivo (= 3000 + codes)
- Deductive codes based on Syntax of Environmental Values Framework
- Inductive codes included key elements of items described in Table 1 (such as 'practices of care', 'animal death', or 'closed production cycles') as well as contextual codes (such as 'making a living', 'working together' or 'family').



# Resultate Beziehungswert 1: Landwirt/innen – Nutztiere



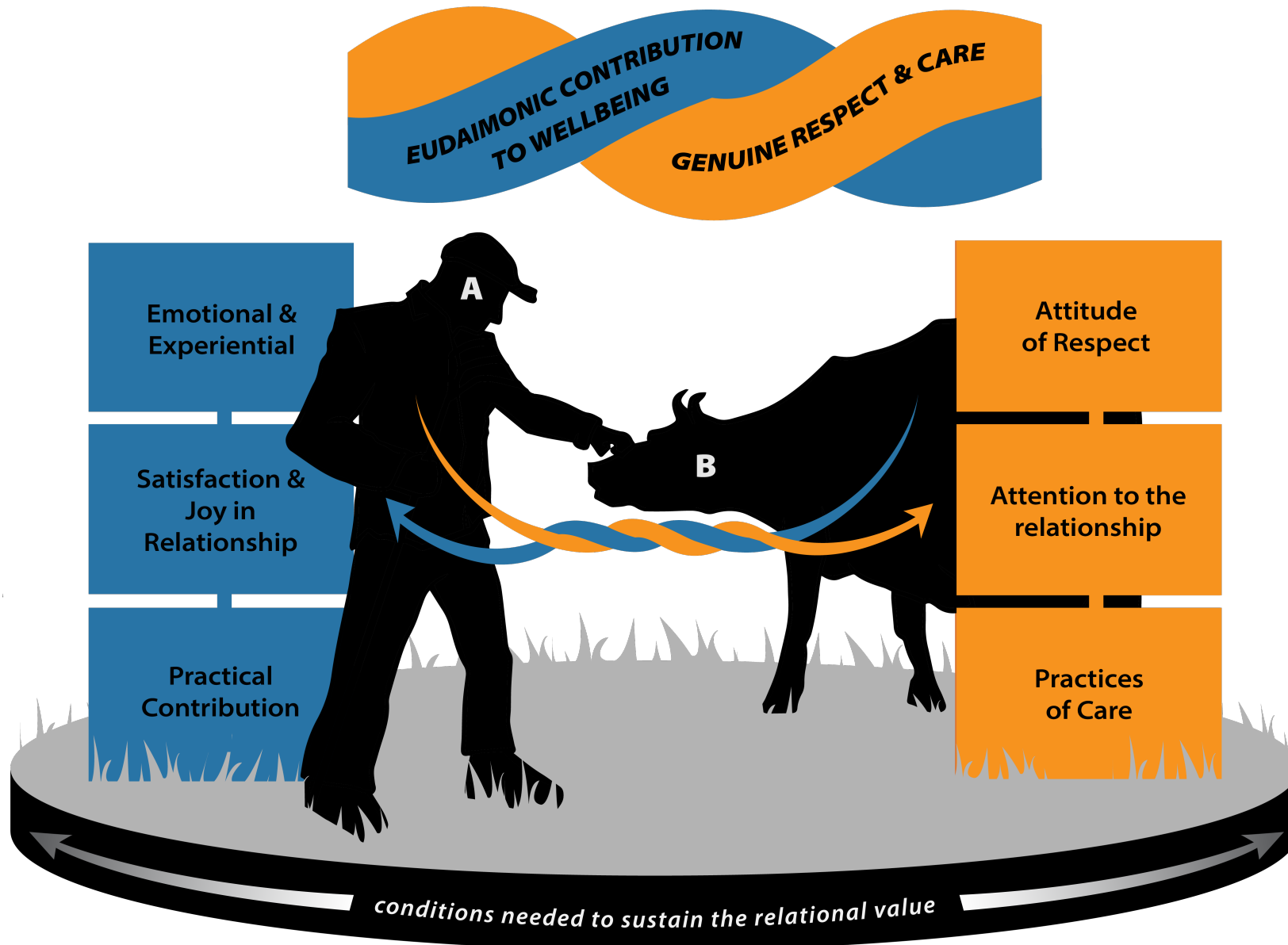
«Ich fand immer, das bin ich den Tieren noch schuldig am Schluss, das Mitgehen und bis zum Tod Begleiten»



«Da gefällt einem halt das [Lieblings-]Tier. Also [mir] gefallen alle, aber die ist vielleicht spezieller, weil die will immer schmusen, und dann muss ich sie immer am Hals kratzen. Wenn ich in den Stall komme, kommt sie immer zu mir»

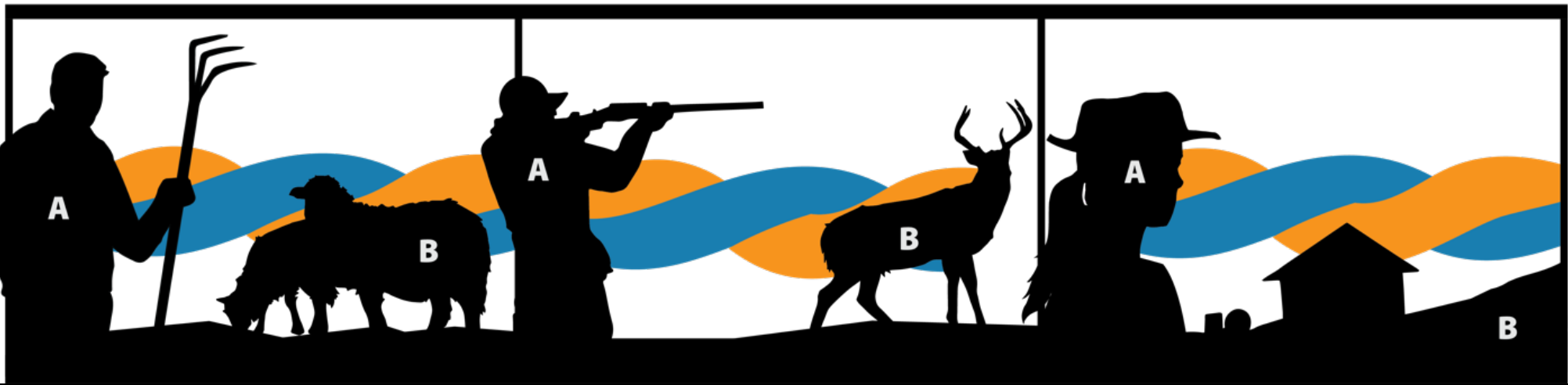


# Results: Elaborated syntax of environmental values framework



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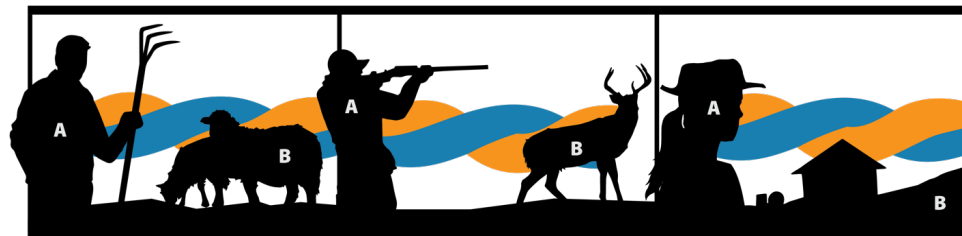


Relational Value	Care for Farm Animals	Respect for Hunted Animals	Farming in Place
No. farmers	14	4	23
A	Farmer	Hunter	Farmer
B	Farm animals (cows, sheep, horses, chickens, etc.)	Wild animals (deer, rabbits, ibex, etc.)	Place (pastures and meadows, landscape, traditions, culture, history, ecology, community, etc.)
<b>A → B (genuine respect and care for the valued entity)</b>			
Attitude of Respect	Accept what mother cow will allow (e.g, when to put ear tag in calf); accompany cows to slaughter	Provide a good death (no fear for the animal); offer a last bite (e.g., a small bough) and place animal in a respectful position; be a thoughtful hunter	Long-term thinking; operating with nature/close to nature; seeking sufficiency; not maximizing production; focus on regionalism; balance production and nature protection (not lose agricultural character of place)



# Operationalizing Relational Values

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Attention to the Relationship	Give animals attention to see if they are sick or hurt; spend time with the animals; talk with animals; take time to do farm tasks without hurrying	Want there to be animals in 100 years; think of them as "his animals"	Fitting the farm operation into the place/region; do the best with what you have; produce good food and 'enough' food while minimizing impacts; seeking a closed circle of production ( <i>geschlossener Kreislauf</i> )
Practices of Care	Provide animals with good food, especially from one's own farm; care in long term way (means cows stay for 10 – 15 years instead of 2 – 3); hygiene and hoof care; attend to nutrition; provide brushes for cows (observed that cows enjoy this); assure animals can go outside; barn should be ventilated but not drafty	Do not hurt or cause unnecessary suffering; protecting roe deer fawns from farm machines; secondary hunting season ( <i>Nachjagd</i> ) to prevent starvation of wild animals	Protect terraces; tend hedges; careful hand care of pastures; grow traditional crop varieties; protect biodiversity; take only what nature gives (e.g., sell animals you cannot feed from own farm); maintain local dairy; create local product label ( <i>bun tschlin</i> ); place-based innovation in value chains or products
B → A (eudaimonic contribution to wellbeing for the valuer)			
Emotional and Experiential Contributions	Animals are calm and trust farmer; cows let him pet them, lick his hand, want to cuddle; emotional connection to animals; enjoyment of work with animals	Experience and emotions of hunting; experience of hunting in untouched nature	Meaningful relationship to land, pastures and place connected to memories and experiences
Satisfaction and Joy in Relationship	Feels good to see animals enjoy the good hay you grew; glad to know animals are happy; joy of relationship to animals	Satisfaction of the challenge of hunting and competition with wild animals	Sharing place and farm life with customers/tourists; farming with others via shared alpine pastures
Practical Contributions	Care for animals is good for the soul and pocketbook; fences unnecessary; cows know the farm and make it easy; animals follow without problems	Wild meat tastes better when animals do not have fear before they die	If you focus on the long-term and not on maximizing production perhaps the farm operation will be better off in the end

# Implications: Sustaining relational values as a deep leverage point

1. Showed not only *what* is valued but *how*
2. Developed framework that can be broadly applied
3. Sustaining relational values may require particular practices or contexts → need to assure farmers have agency to live their relational values



Chapman, M., & Deplazes-Zemp, A. (2022). 'I owe it to the animals': The bidirectionality of Swiss alpine farmers' relational values. *People and Nature*





**«Das ist nicht  
nur Heu»**



# Dank!

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# Grazcha fich!

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