### Reclaiming the economy with food forestry

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### Today's presentation

- Some (social) theory!
  - Diverse economies
- Food forests in the Netherlands (research findings)
- Bringing it together: diverse economic practices in food forests

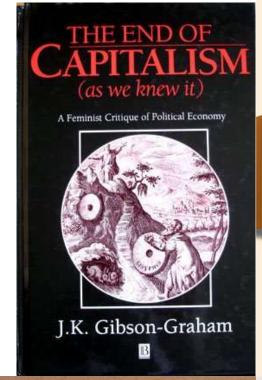


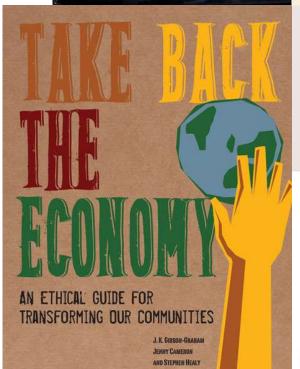


#### **Diverse Economies**

 Originated with Julie Graham and Katherine Gibson (J. K. Gibson-Graham)

Response to political economy (Marx)







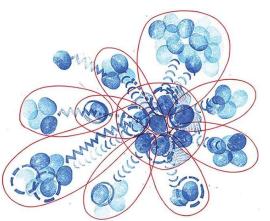
J.K. GIBSON-GRAHAM
Authors of The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It)

THE HANDBOOK OF

Diverse Economies



Edited by J.K. Gibson-Graham Kelly Dombroski

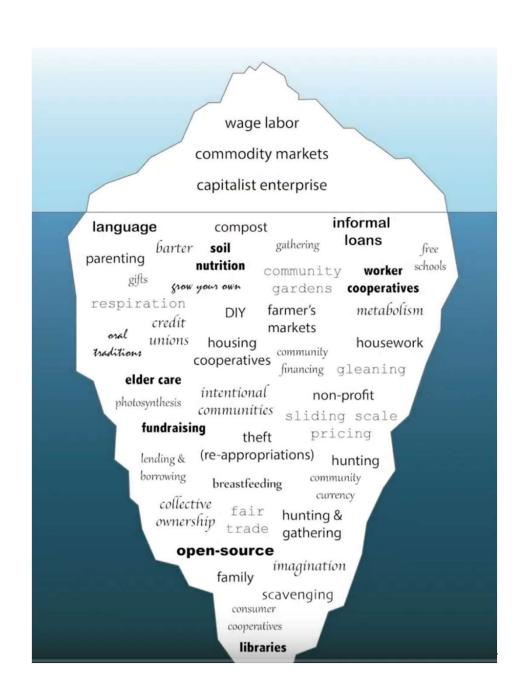




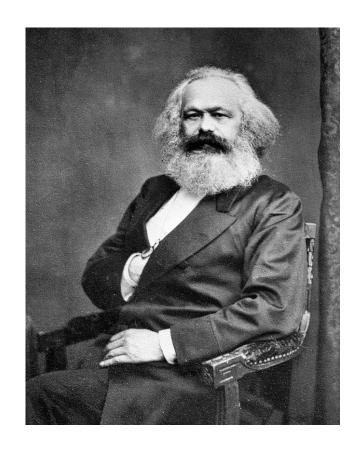
#### **Diverse Economies**

- The word economy stems from 'oikos' (house) and 'nemein' (manage)
- There is no singular 'economy'
- There's a wide variety of economic practices, pertaining to:
  - Enterprise, markets, labor, transactions, and property





### New concept: Capitalocentrism



Karl Marx's 'Das Kapital'
What does it mean?

Feeding the 'beast' of capital<u>ism</u>





# Inventory as a strategy for opening up 'the economy'

- **Enterprise**: the different types of class processes (according to Marx, there are only 5: capitalist, feudal, slave, communal, and independent)
- Labor: differentiated by the form of compensation (monetary or non-monetary)
- Transactions: equal and unequal exchanges
- Property: a relation between people with respect to both material and immaterial things
- **Finance**: the use of money to support economic practices





### What's happening?



- Green DealVoedselbossen
- Courses, workshops & tours
- Exposure in traditional media
- Social media interactions/regional networks
- Events (e.g., de Floriade)





Verified food forests: 206

Non-verified food forests: 13

**Prospective food forests:** 7

#### **Practitioners**

- Total participants: **109**
- Homogeneous group:
  - Ages predominantly between 40 and 60
  - University or university of applied sciences degree
  - Similar motivations for practicing FF
- Main motivations
  - Contribution to nature: 84.4%
  - Contribution to society: 54.1%
  - Access to (healthy) food: 56.9%
  - Being a part of something bigger: 46.8%





### Participant food forests

Number of food forests in the survey: 108

#### Size:

- Smaller than 0.5 ha: 16.5%
- Between 0.5 and 2.5 ha: 57.8%
- Larger than 2.5 ha: 25.7%

#### Main orientations:

• Education: 53.2%

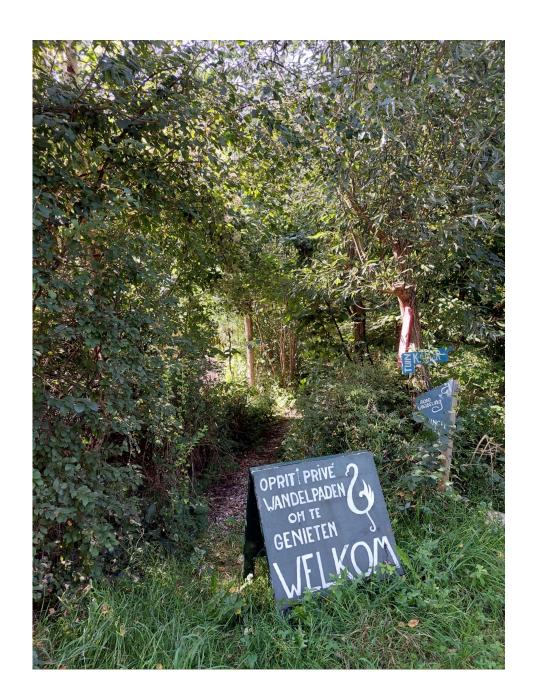
• Experimentation: 45.0%

• Nature: 26.6%

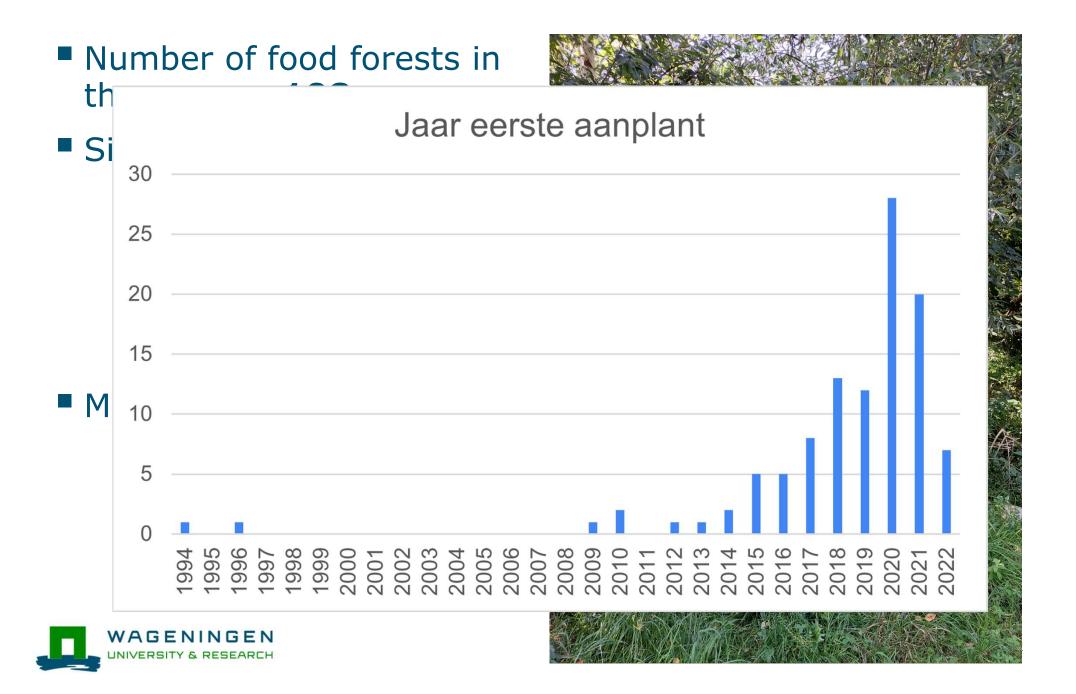
• Society: 52.3%

• Production: 50.05%





### Participant food forests



### Food forestry as a whole

## Things that are going well

- Definition of FF
- Shared values and perceptions of humannature relations
- Active group of FF practitioners, experts and organizations
  - Uniting practitioners
  - Recruiting new practitioners

#### **Challenges**

- FF as a popularized and hyped term
- Contradictory and false information
- Infrastructural obstacles
  - Land scarcity
  - Laws & regulations
  - Finance







### Multifunctionality





### Some takeaways...

- The economy is not inherently capitalist: it pertains to any activity relating maintaining one's livelihood
- Bureaucratic categories, such as 'agriculture' or 'nature' are socially constructed
  - But dominant understandings of these clash with food forests,
     which do not fit into those boxes
- Food forests are extremely diverse, but an important shared characteristic is multifunctionality
- Food forests are home to a plethora of diverse economic activities
  - There is economic value in practices that do not relate to food production





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