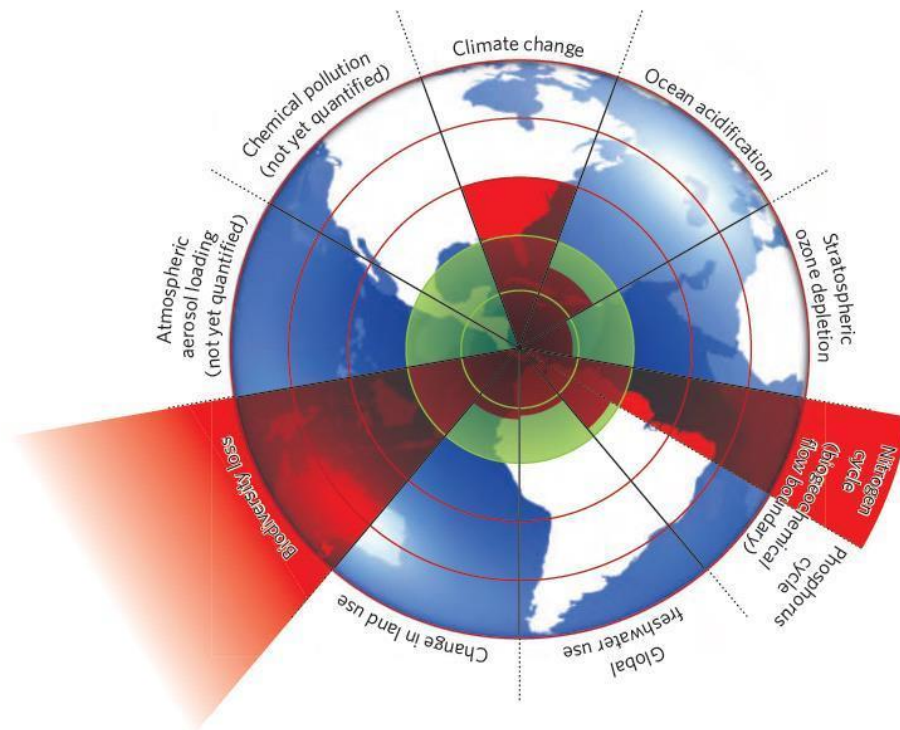




# Meadow orchards and their importance for biodiversity

## Background



- Rockström et al. defined in „Nature“ magazine 2009 nine planetary boundaries threatening our earth as we know it.
- The researchers concluded that biodiversity loss is the most advanced threat to this date.

## Importance of meadow orchards

- Meadow orchards are considered a hot spot of biodiversity
- Up to 5.000 different species live in and around the fruit trees, dead woods and various plants, herbs and wild flowers
- Typically, a meadow orchard consists of a large meadow with irregularly planted fruit and nut trees (standard size, old local varieties); often with animal grazing in between
- Dead wood is left inside the meadow
- The trees are pruned, harvested and cared for throughout the year.
- Formerly, many German families and villages all over the country owned small or large meadow orchards





## Modern challenges

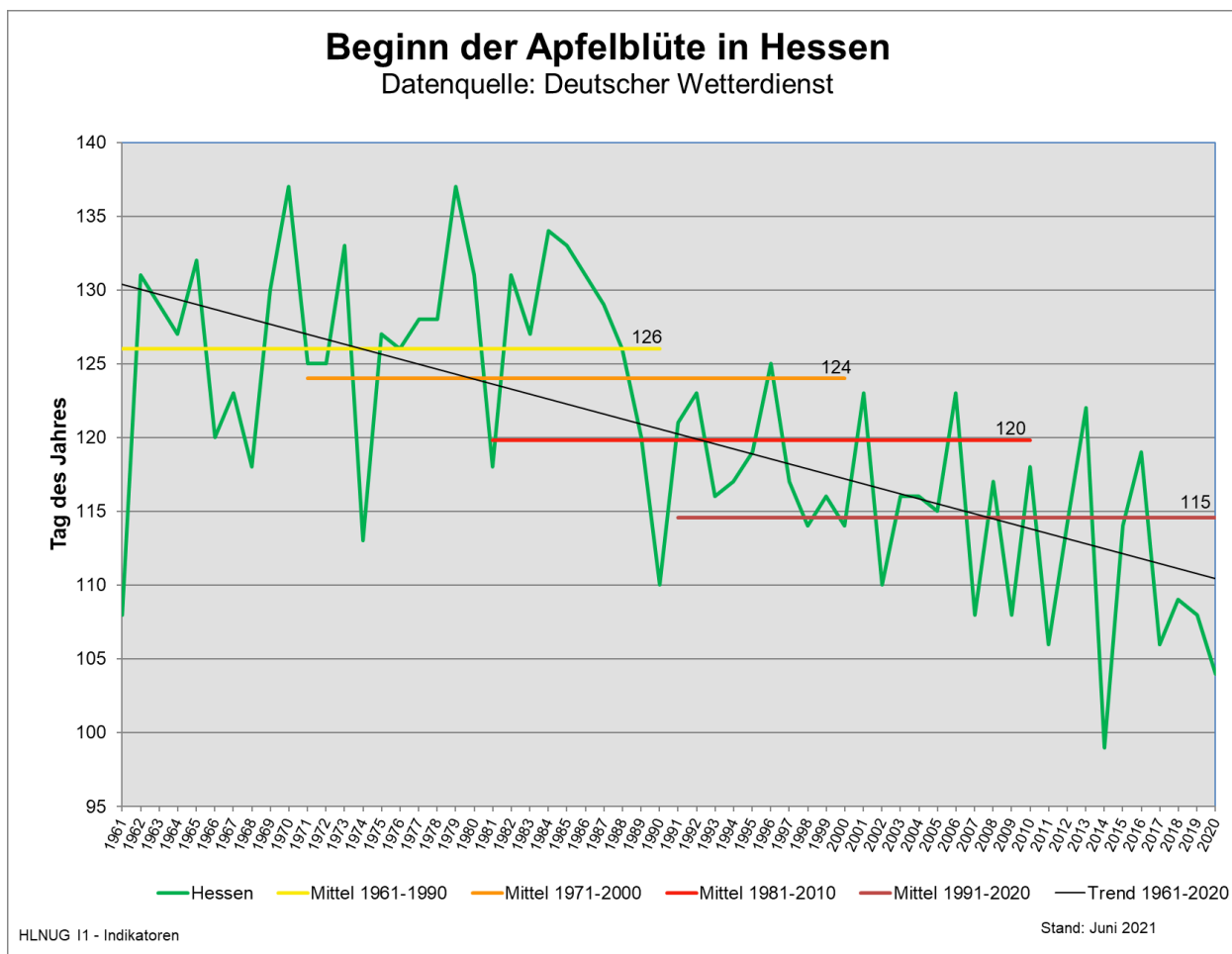
Over the last 50 years these very common meadow orchards have started disappearing with frightening speed

- Too much effort for modern lifestyles to maintain the trees, while fruits in shops have become relatively cheap
- Less interest in preserving the fruits
- Fresh apples from New Zealand in spring and summer
- Meadow orchards were turned into more profitable plantations
- Housing and construction demands

➔ Old trees, poor care taking and climatic changes put the trees under a lot of stress



# Apple blossoming in Hessen over the years



## Conservation efforts

- Today, meadow orchards are protected by different laws
- Many states in Germany including Hessen, Bavaria and especially Baden-Württemberg financially as well as ideologically support the conservation of meadow orchards e.g. with consumer awareness campaigns and the selling of meadow orchard products
- Following, an example from Baden-Württemberg