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Just transition of food systems as a concept for mountain contexts?

Just transition towards more sustainable, healthy, and climate-friendly food systems is an emerging concept. While being around for some time in the context of energy transitions, it has only recently entered discussions around food systems. Just transition as a concept deals with justice questions around the diverse impacts of transition induced by low carbon transitions, i.e., the lowering of greenhouse gas emissions to levels preventing catastrophic climate change. In the case of food systems, sustainability has to be considered in addition because a just transition process leading to unsustainable food systems would not solve the problems but create new or aggravate existing ones instead.

To conceptualise just transition in food systems, a new framework of principles and criteria for just transition has been developed. It distinguishes between fundamental principles of justice in general and criteria for assessing food system transition specifically. While the framework covers food system transition at a rather abstract level, it remains to be seen how the framework can serve to support transition processes in concrete examples.

This contribution therefore addresses the following questions: What does just transition mean for specific mountain contexts and in what ways could it serve to support specific transition processes? The contribution will start by explaining the concept of just transition in food systems, continuing with an introduction to the context of mountain food systems, and ending with a specific example from the Swiss Alps by raising questions that might come up during a transition in that specific case.

Bibliographic references

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