

# Global beef production

Why production systems are relevant for  
perspective analysis

Dr. Claus Deblitz  
*agri benchmark*, Thünen Institute of Farm Economics

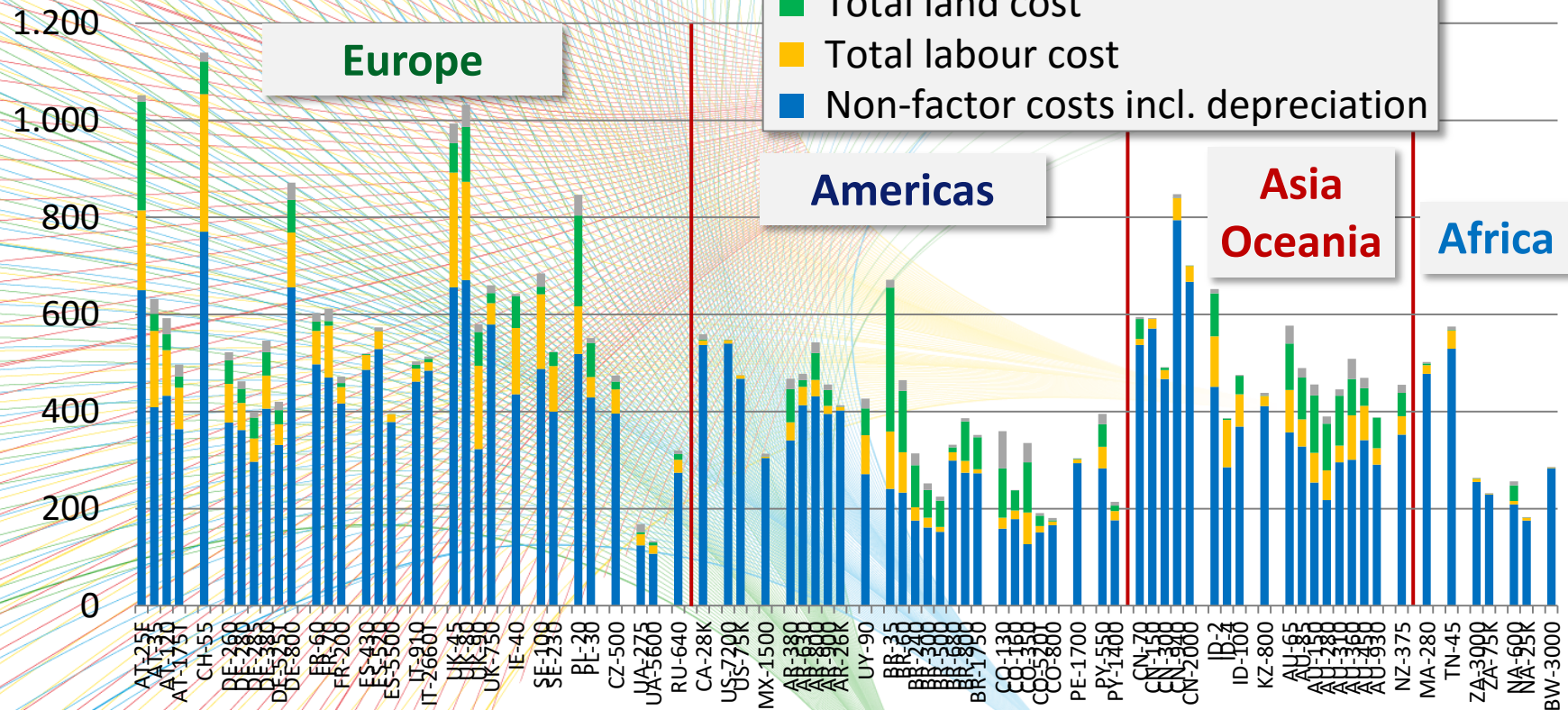
# Enhance the value of prospective exercises

**For perspective analysis and projections,  
information on the farm-level situation,  
producer's reactions to changes in framework  
conditions and future decision-making should  
be taken into account.**



# Cost of beef production 2015

**USD per 100 kg carcass weight**

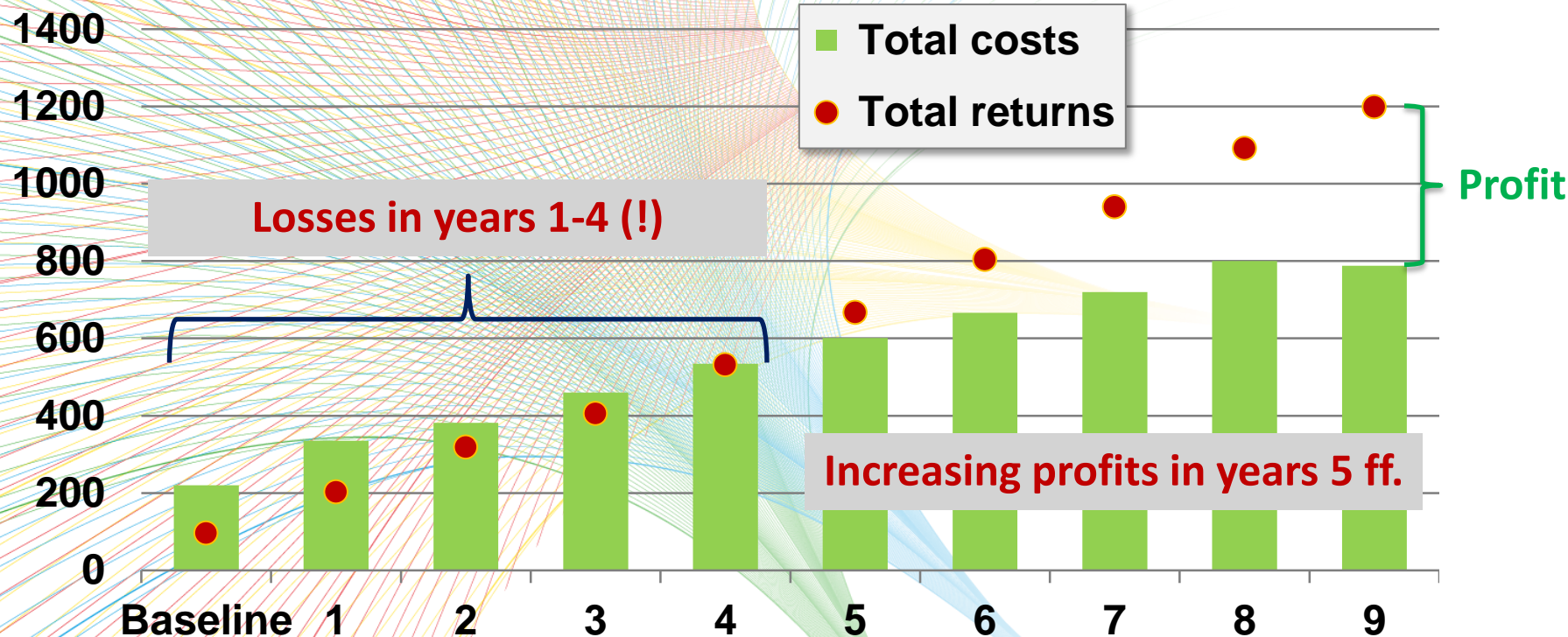


Source: agri benchmark Beef and Sheep Result Data Base 2015

# Dynamics of practice change

Million  
 COP p.a.

## Introduction of an intensive silvopastoral system in Colombia



Source: agri benchmark Beef and Sheep Result Data Base 2015



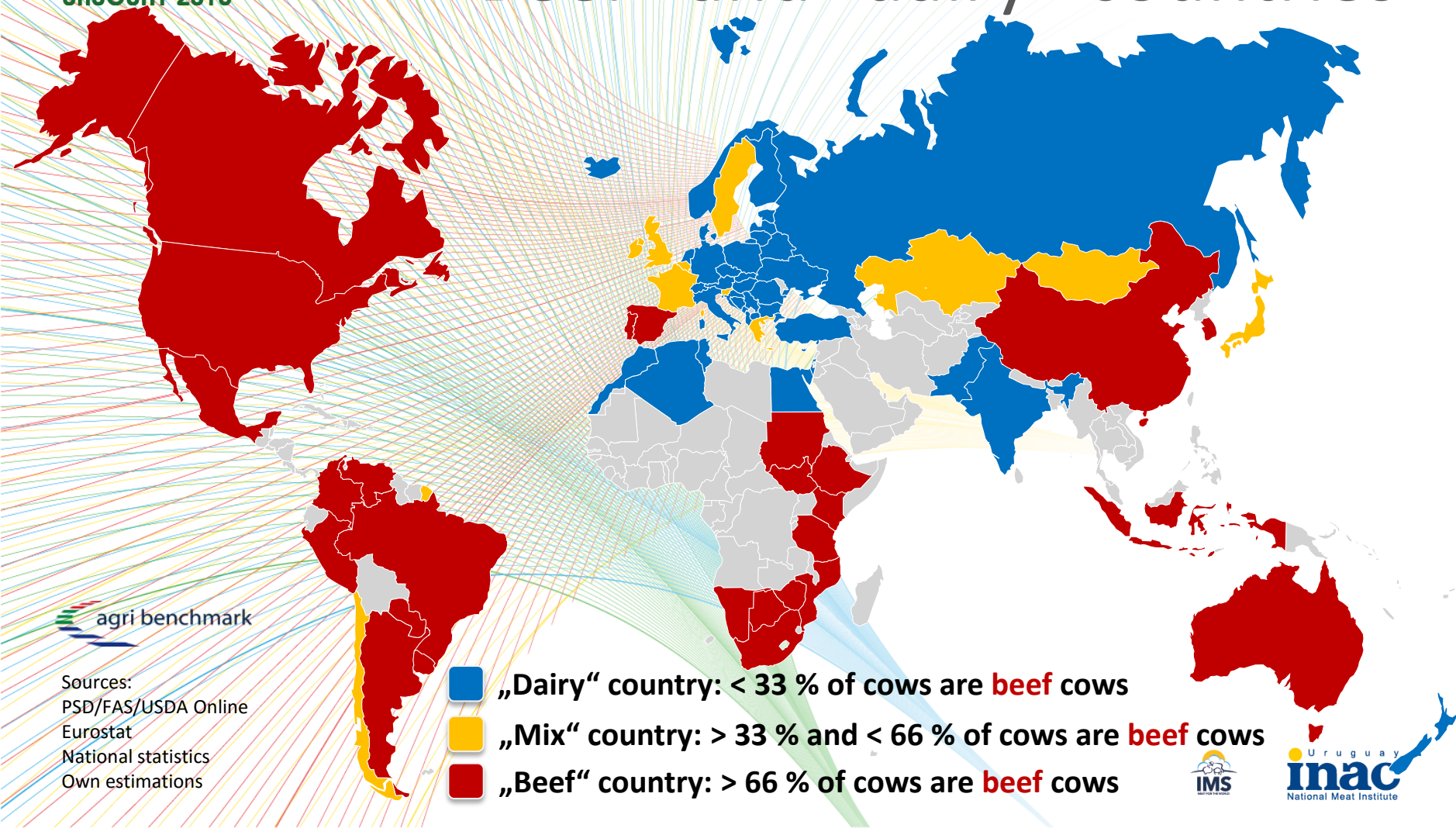


agri benchmark

# a global analysis network

- 6 branches (crop, **beef and sheep, pig**, horticulture, **aquaculture**, organic)
- 34 countries in the Beef and Sheep Network
- Annual update of farm and sector data bases
- Production systems, economics, drivers, and perspectives
- Harmonised methods and comparable results
- „Put your country in and get the world back“
- Moving towards inclusion of environmental, animal welfare and social indicators (comprehensive sustainability analysis)

# “Beef” and “dairy” countries





# Production systems beef finishing

**Cow-calf is basically pasture system (plus silage) around the world**

> 30 %

pasture incl.  
grazed shrubs in  
silvo-pastoral  
systems

## Pasture



## Feedlot



> 50 %

grains and other  
energy feed

## Silage



> 30 %

silage and  
other forages

## Cut & Carry

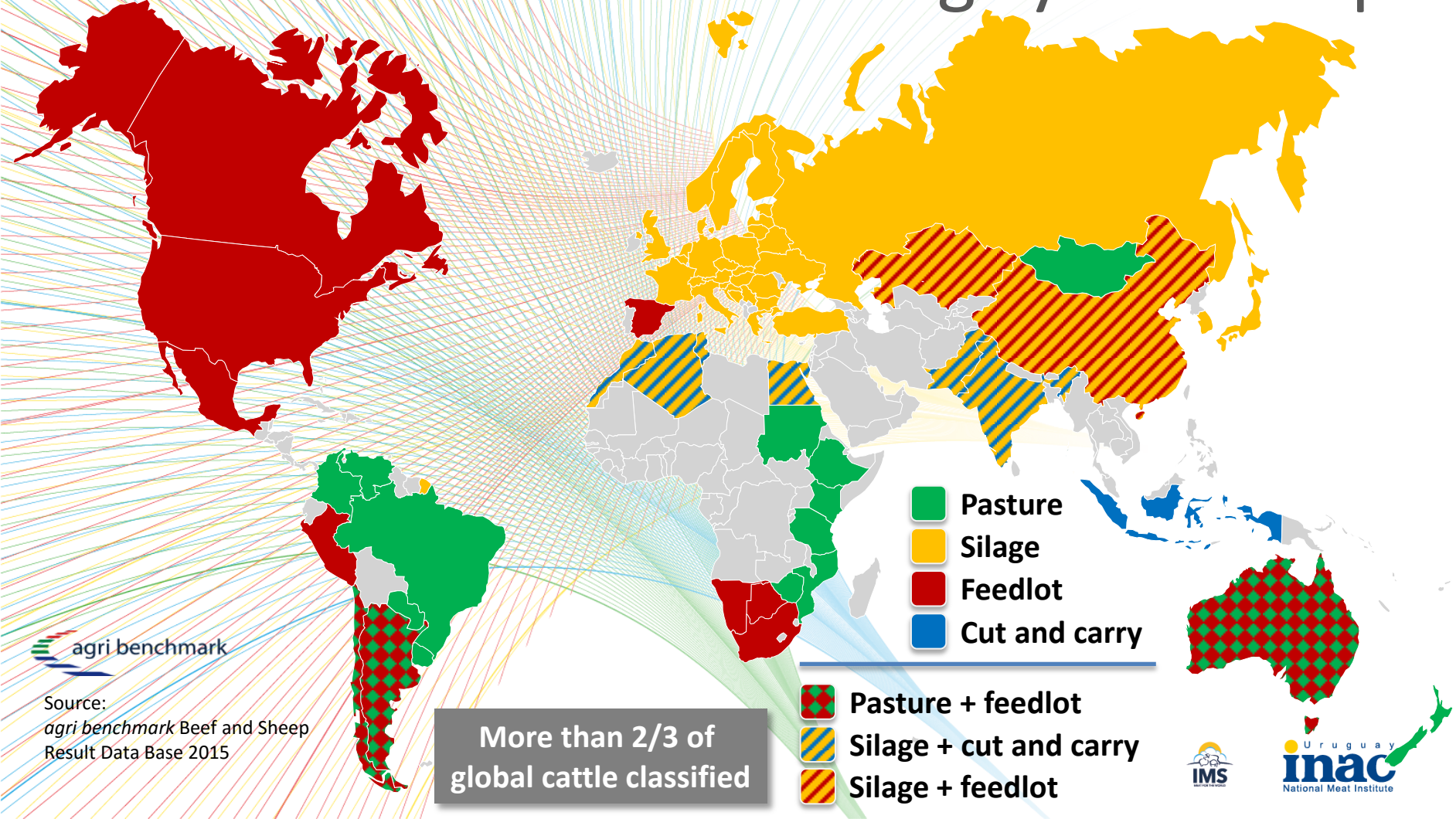


> 30 %

freshly cut grass  
& other vegetation

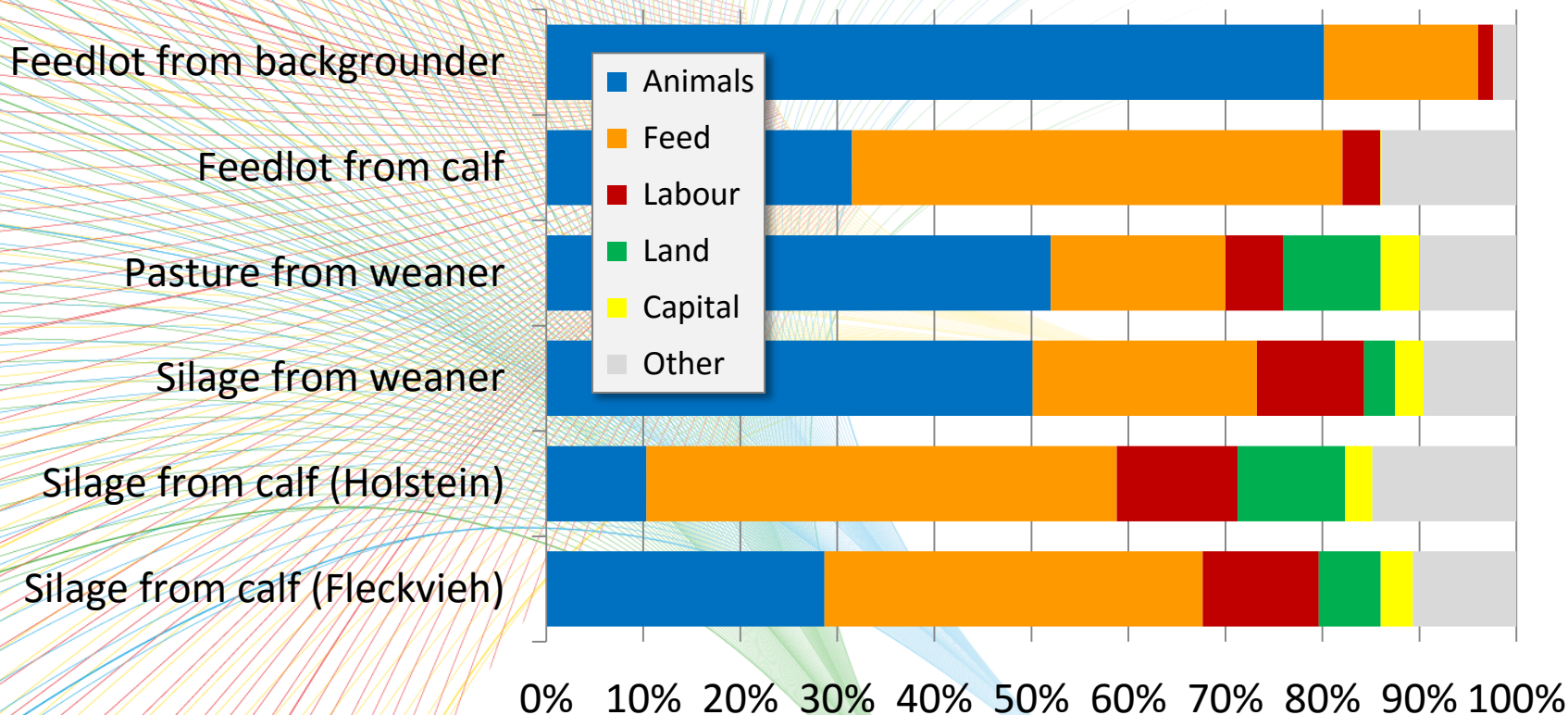
Source: *agri benchmark* Beef and Sheep Result Data Base 2015

# Global beef finishing system map





# Production systems and cost structures 2015



Source: agri benchmark Beef and Sheep Result Data Base 2015

# Is technology the answer?

**To achieve productivity improvements and practice change, management know-how is more important than technology.**

- The wheel does not have to be reinvented to narrow the gap between the Top 25 and the Bottom 25
- Problem is that in most countries public extension and advisory systems are on the decline.
- Certainly governments and international organisations and funding agencies can play a role.



# Think big

**Many drivers for agricultural development are not within the sector or linked to new technologies, but rather macro-economic and political framework conditions.**

- functioning or non-functioning institutions
- type of governance systems
- access to capital
- infrastructure and logistics
- regulations – and sometimes too many of them?

# Productivity/efficiency potentials?

Potential for cow-calf is basically the same as for pasture finishing

## Pasture

main potential



## Feedlot

very limited except  
for producing  
higher weights



## Silage

feed  
improvements



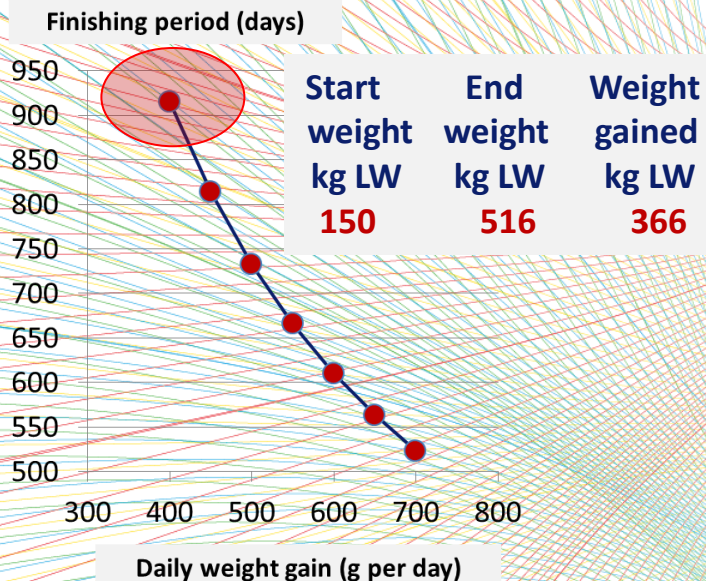
## Cut & Carry

use of concentrates  
and grains





# Increasing productivity in pasture systems



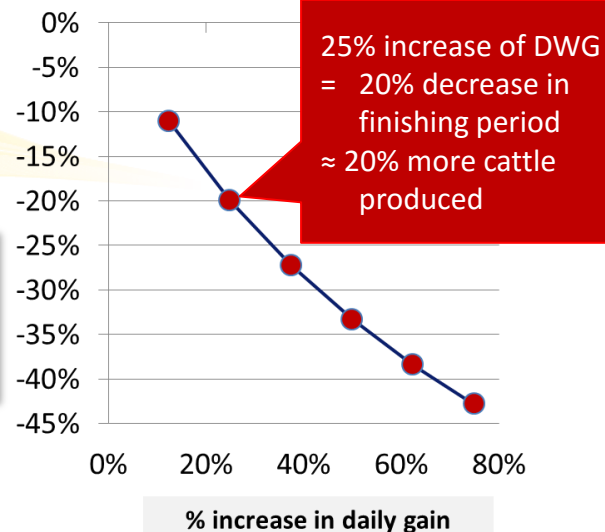
4) Improvement of animal genetics

3) Introduction of more productive pasture varieties

2) Fertilizer application

1) Fencing and subdivison

**% change in finishing period**



# The need for policy

## **But: governments must also protect the world against great ideas and technologies!**

- High productivity production systems create incentives to expand them further
- Example: the clear advantages of silvopastoral systems could create undesired land use changes by converting rainforest and other native land into silvo-pastures for cattle
- Thus governments must enforce legislation to prevent this
  - a more complex world probably requires more regulation



# *agri benchmark* – passionate about facts



**Dr. Claus Deblitz**

Thünen Institute  
of Farm Economics  
Bundesallee 50

38116 Braunschweig, Germany



Tel.: +49-531-596-5141

Fax: +49-531-596-5199

E-mail: [claus.deblitz@thuenen.de](mailto:claus.deblitz@thuenen.de)

Internet: [www.agribenchmark.org](http://www.agribenchmark.org)  
<https://www.thuenen.de/en/bw/>