

# European Resources Forum

**Plenary session I:**

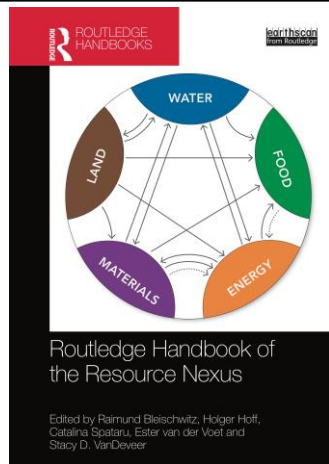
**The nexus between resource use and climate change –  
Making Europe more resource efficient and climate friendly**

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Chair in Sustainable Global Resources

Director BSEER



# 1) The Resource Nexus: a necessary complement to climate action



- Addresses interlinkages; enables overcoming silo-thinking and avoiding traps of low carbon energy (biodiv losses, water risks, unwanted side-effects)
- Defined as the set of context-specific critical interlinkages between two or more natural resources used as inputs in socio-economic systems
- Involves a variety of actors in policy and planning: infrastructures, food industry, supply chain actors, development agencies, international organizations; all quite often operating in crisis regions and/or the Global South



## 2) The Nexus Supports Integration Across the SDGs

### SDGs

- Goal 2 to „End hunger...”
- Goal 6 to „sustainable water and sanitation...”
- Goal 7 to „sustainable energy ...”
- Goal 9 to „infrastructure, industrialization (...)
- Goal 11 sustainable cities

### ...Nexus Implications

- (2)...increasing demand for land, **mineral fertilizers**, water, biomass and food
- (6)...investments in water supply and a water distribution infrastructure, i.e. increasing demand for **materials**
- (7)...increasing demand for bio-energy and renewable energy, which again implies more demand for land, biomass, water, and **materials**
- (11)...Will require more **construction materials, metals, and other materials**

### ...Nexus - Innovation enables

- the sustainable production and consumption agenda,
- Local and global increases and disruptive innovations in RE/CE
- achieving sustainable and resource-efficient infrastructures by 2030 (goal 9)
- Sustainable management and efficient use of all resources by 2030 (goal 12).

**Case: Water-Energy nexus in Brazil – Drought spurs analysis of hydro-dams and planning. Water budget approach to address evaporation reveals criticality of North-East, need for more interconnected grids and solar-based REN (T. Semertzidis et al)**

nature  
sustainability

PERSPECTIVE

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-018-0173-2>

Resource nexus perspectives towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

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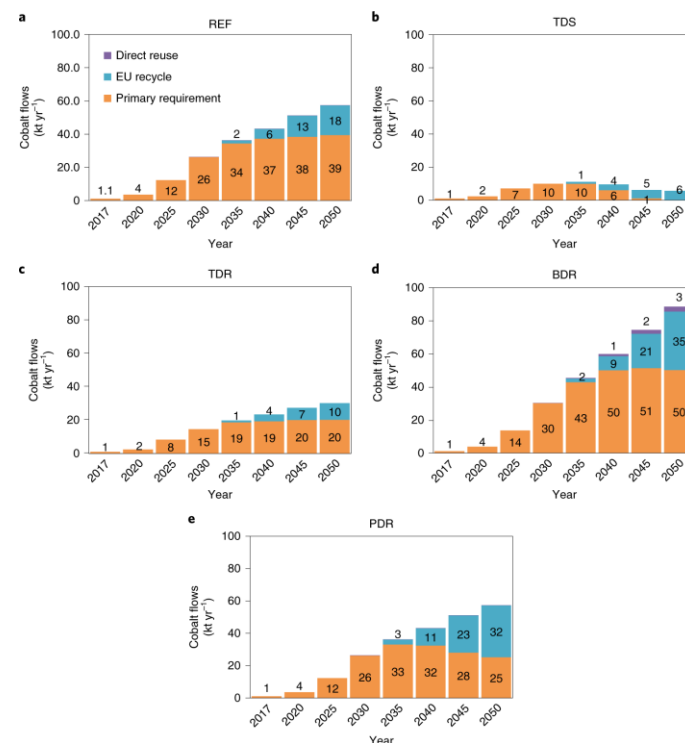
### **3) A nexus approach helps to transform the 'hard to abate' sectors**

- ...of steel & other base metals, cement & other construction materials by addressing the nexus between materials, energy and water as well as circularity
- Case: macro-economics of shifting to scrap steel
  - China could gain up to cumulated USD 819 billion by 2030, despite losses in primary steel capacity
  - International implications mixed: likely losses for iron ore producers (Australia, Brazil and India) but gains for most developing countries benefiting from lower steel prices.
  - Watch out for increasing demand of coal in electricity production! – Alignment with energy transitions clearly needed
  - Recent innovation transforms recaptured steel into liquid metals that can be applied to high-tech

Sources: Nechifor et al, World Development 2020; Zhongyun Fan

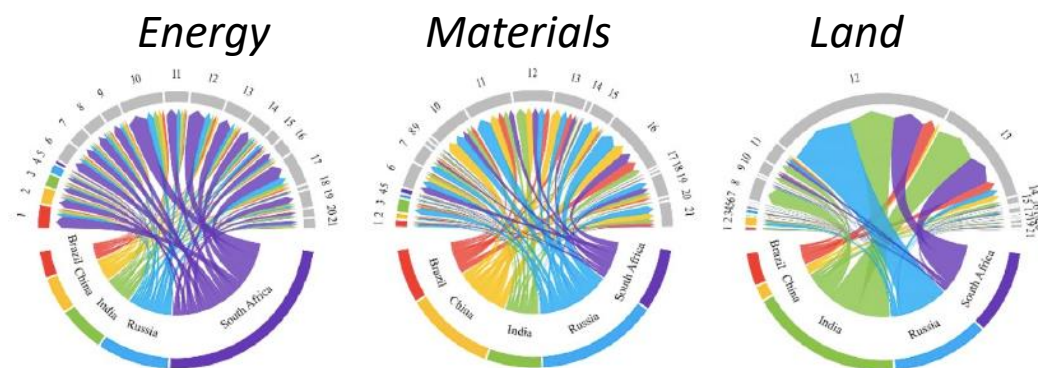
## 4) A nexus approach helps to emphasize the need to **re-use critical materials and establish a CE on metals**

- Time gaps between need to accelerate climate action and bring sustainable resources on stream
- Case Cobalt for e-vehicles in the EU (Baars et al 2020)
  - Cobalt flows analysis conducted
  - Total Co demand for EU EVs could reach 26.2 kt in 2030 and 57.4 kt in 2050, equal to 22% and 48%, respectively, of global Co mine production in 2017
  - Efficient recycling system is key



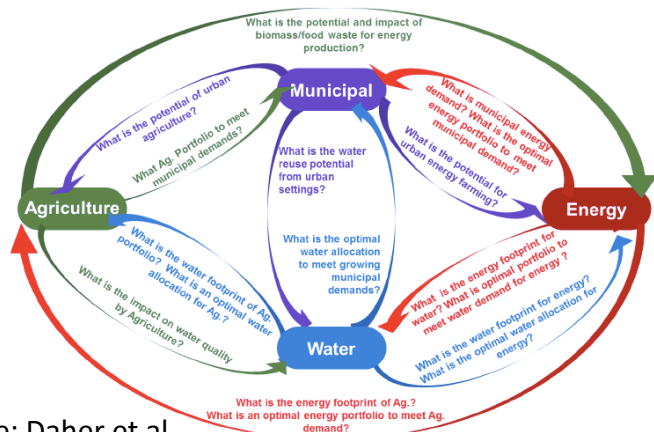
## 5) The Nexus: Addressing Multi-Level Governance

- Transcending the limits of a territorial approach, engaging with multiple actors
- Case I: Embodied emissions and footprints (Jordan/Bleischwitz 2020): construction industry rallying behind
- Case II: Urban mobility in the Ruhr Valley (Melkonyan et al. 2020): increase investments by factor four delivers zero carbon by 2030
- Case III: Footprints in BRICS countries (Tian Xu et al.)

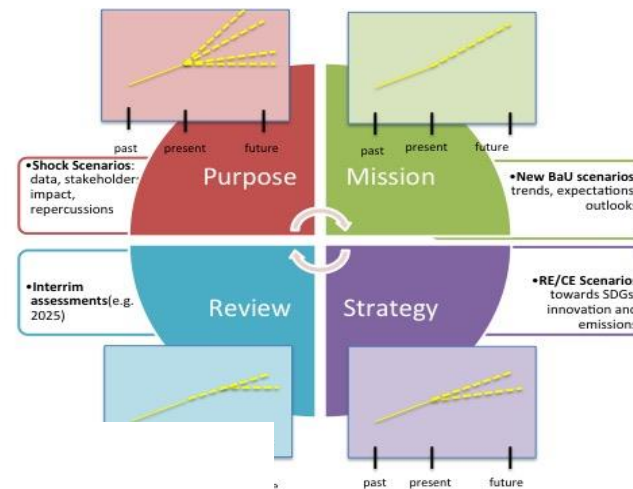


## 6) The Nexus enables looking ahead

...asking the right questions...

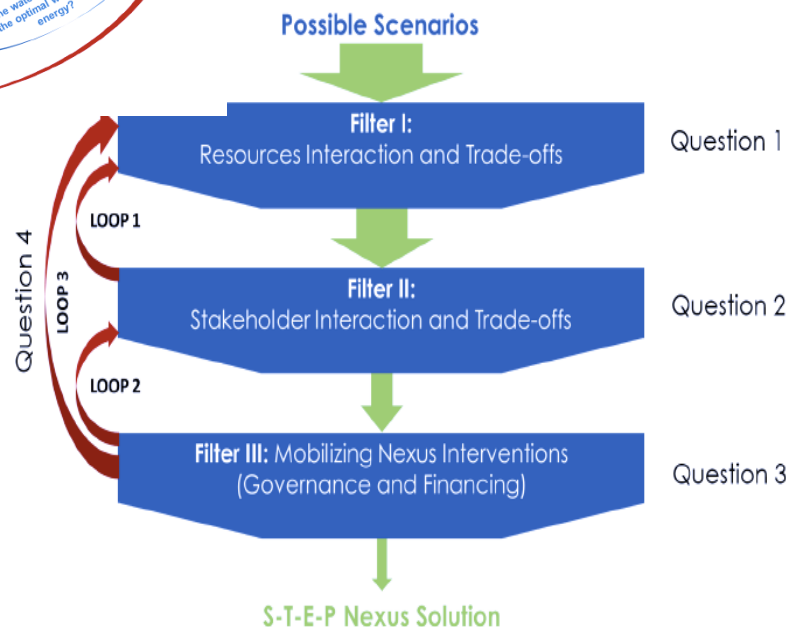


Source: Daher et al.



Bleichwitz et al, Nat Sust, 2018

...developing scenario narratives



**...engage in missions for SDGs and sustainable & inclusive growth...**



# Mobilising New Alliances

## Coalitions of the Willing, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Mover, Up-scaler



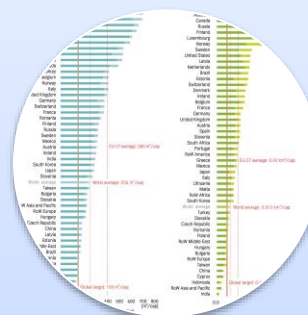
### New Plastics Economy

- HM, Unilever, Pepsi Cola, Nestle...
- Various Regulations
- Ambitious Targets: 100% by 2025
- Research on DCs to add



### Green ICT and FabLabs

- Fits to Low Carbon & CE
- Open access and inclusive institutions
- Cases for Africa



### Footprints & LCA

- Methods and data on carbon, water, materials well established
- In line with 'scope 2 + 3' inventories
- Interest from investors and business
- More EPDs and PCFs



### Transparency

- Emerging in anti-corruption efforts
- Certification for conflict minerals (case: Coltan)
- EITI and due diligence
- Implementation, enforcement and...extensions

Evidence on 'what works', mutual learning and assessments, transforming findings into roadmaps



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**Thank you!**

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