

# Controversy Mapping: Exam

“I don’t want to see a dead horse when taking a walk!”



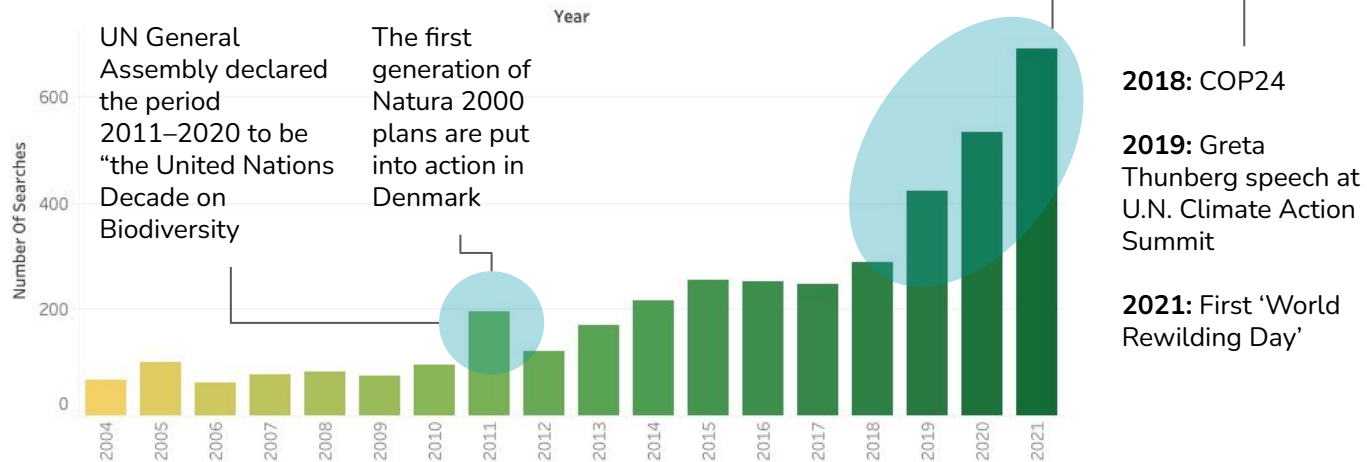
P8 Superteam: Freja, Bjarke & Signe  
Mapping Controversies, 29.04.2022

Even though forests only cover 31 percent of the global land area, they contain most of Earth's terrestrial biodiversity, housing 68 percent of mammal species and 75 percent of the world's bird species. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources' (IUCN) Red List 28 percent of all assessed species both fauna and flora, are threatened with extinction at the moment, in part due to deforestation. As a result of this decreasing biodiversity, the European Union (EU) launched a biodiversity strategy for 2030 with the objective to ensure the recovery of Europe's biodiversity by 2030. This project was called Natura 2000.

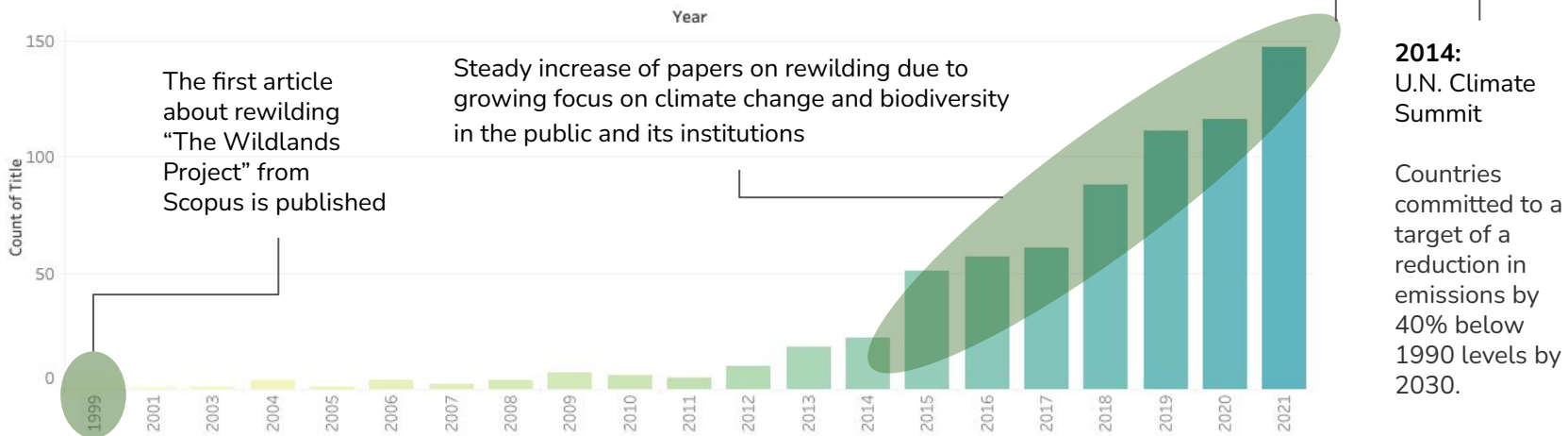
Natura 2000 areas cover 18% of Europe's land mass with the aim of protecting breeding and resting areas for rare and threatened species, which includes the use of 'rewilding'. Rewilding is a type of ecological restoration focused on us, the humans, stepping back and letting natural processes take over. Because of these pressing matters, we looked into how the term and theme "rewilding" has developed in use over time in both academic literature on Scopus and within the public through Google Trends.

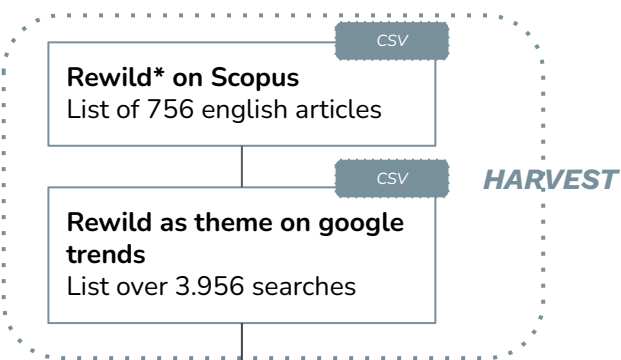
# “Rewilding”: The New Hot Potato

Google trends

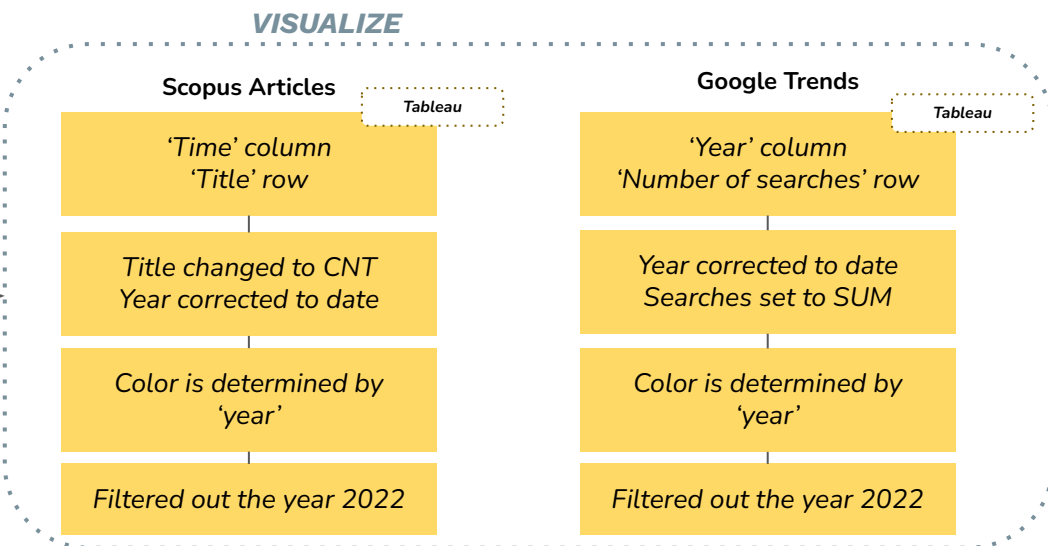
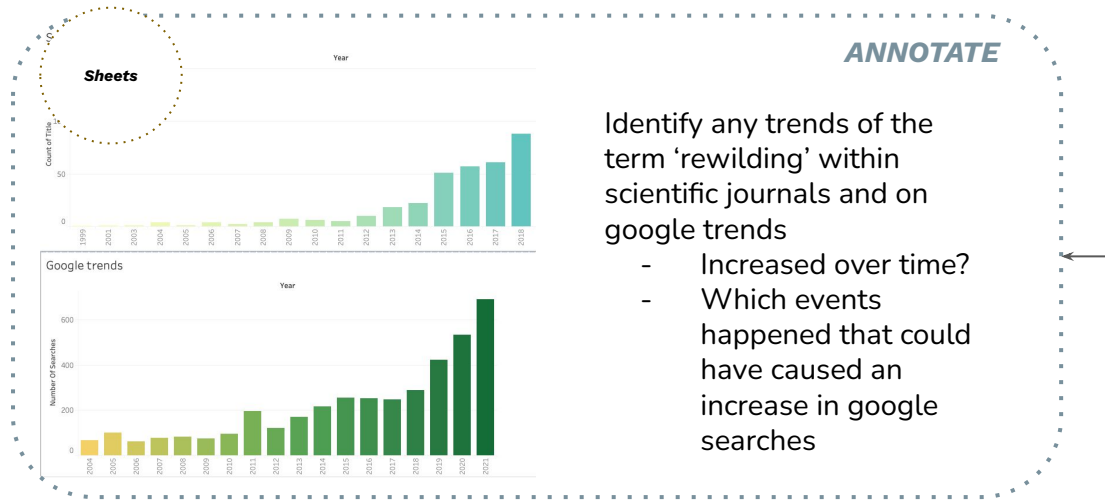


Scopus





Import both csv files into Tableau



Move timelines to dashboard

In 1999 the article: “The wildlands project and the rewilding of North America” mentioned Rewilding in academic literature for the first time, since then the topic has grown vastly and spread to many varying academic disciplines, and from North America to all over the planet.

As seen in the timeline visualization, there has been a dramatic increase in the interest in “rewilding”. While the term has received more focus and takes up more space in the general media, several controversies have emerged alongside it. One being the government initiative; the Nature National Park in Mols Mountains, a rewilding project part of Natura 2000 which has been in the spotlight. One of the sparks igniting this controversy in Denmark is due to the focus of the Nature National Parks, which have emphasis on nature and biodiversity, thus having a limiting effect how the public can interact with the areas in question, in part due to fencing the area and releasing large herbivores (Exmoor ponies and Galloway Cattle) in Mols mountains.

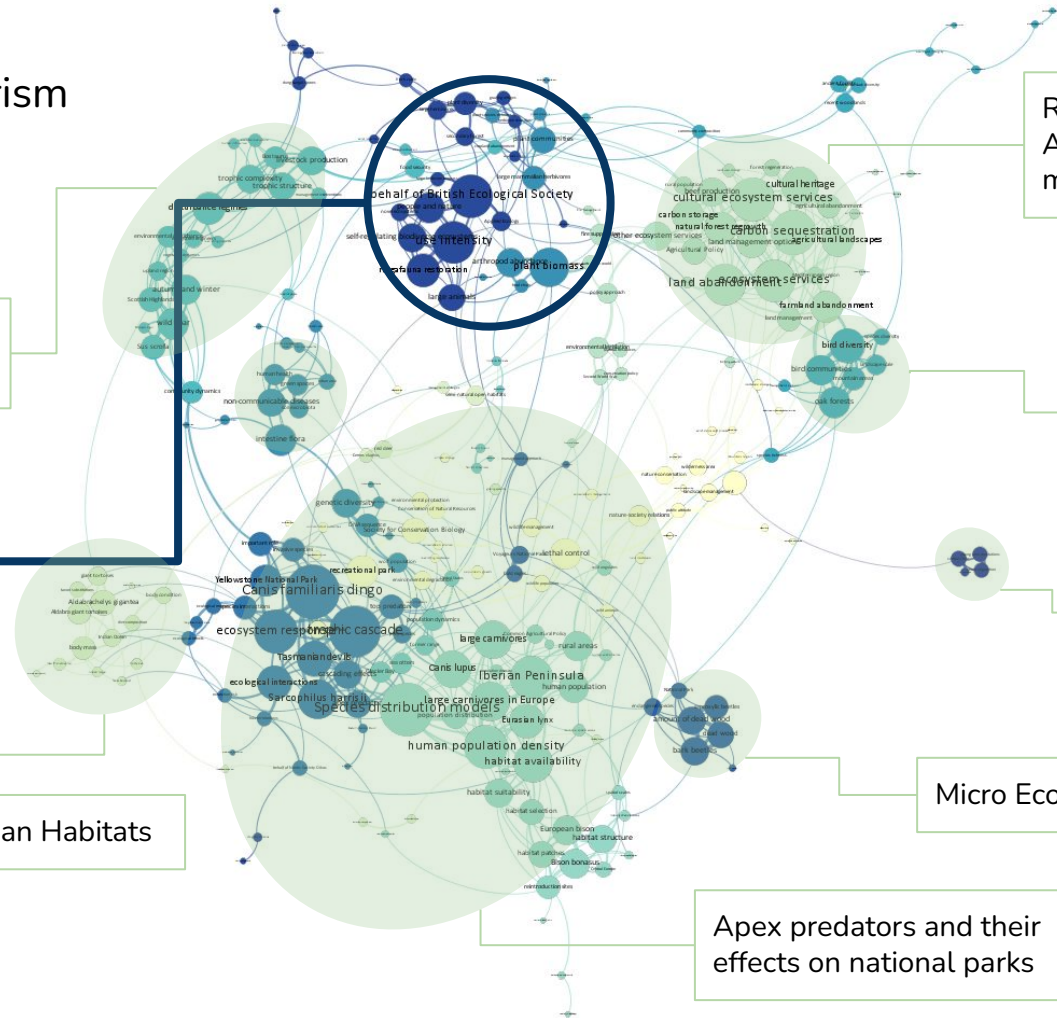
Following the growth in usage, rewilding has manifested itself in various shapes and has become entangled in different controversies situated in its geographical locality.

# Academia: The Academic Prism on Rewilding

Northern Highlands and  
Wildlife

Human-Large  
Herbivore interaction

Rewilding: Ocean Habitats



Rewilding and  
Agriculture: A  
mediterranean concern

Bird Communities

Rewilding: A South  
American concern

Micro Ecosystems

Apex predators and their  
effects on national parks

## HARVEST

### Rewild\* on Scopus

List of 756 english articles

CSV

Extract term list from abstracts

CorText

Run network analysis, converting  
CSV to GEXF file

GEXF

### Network of 267 nodes

Terms as nodes, edges as co-occurrence between terms

## VISUALIZE

Gephi

Apply force-directed layout  
with ForceAtlas2

Scale set to 10  
Prevent overlap

Run Modularity

Modularity Clustering  
determining color of nodes

Run Avg. Weight degree

Node size determined by  
weighted degree (min. 10,  
max. 100)

Labels scaled to node  
size

Removed nodes  
containing names of  
non-public figures

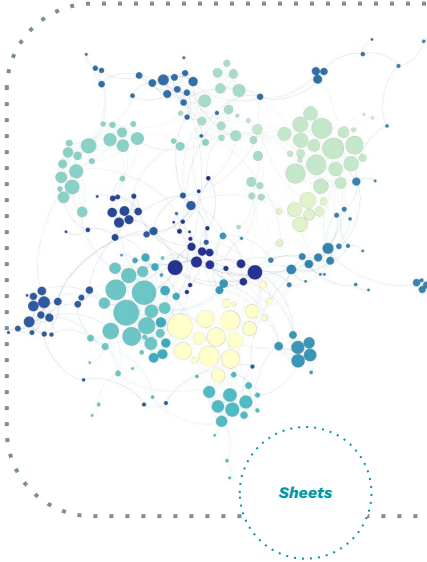
Network  
visualisation

PNG

## ANNOTATE

Identify discourses within the  
academic field of rewilding in  
the co-occurrence term network.

Qualitatively compare the  
discourses of the academic  
debate with those represented  
in the Danish public debate.



After discovering the controversy regarding rewilding situated in Denmark, we wanted to gain a deeper understanding of which discourses are in play within the academic literature and in the Danish public. Thus, we created the co-occurrence terms network (extracted from abstracts of articles including Rewild\* in the title, from Scopus), where it became obvious that the different discourses are very geographically situated, i.e. a focus on llamas in Chile and the battle of land use (agriculture vs. forest/wild nature) in the Mediterranean. The network has some exceptions, i.e. human-apex predators interaction and human-large herbivore interaction which are a smaller but more general parts of the academic discussion related to rewilding.

In general, as seen in the map above, the debate in academia is a very multifaceted one and spans across many varying topics, concerns and geolocations.





## HARVEST

1300 comments from DR3 documentary 'Er vild natur dyreplageri?' on Facebook

Facepager

585 comments from DR3 documentary 'Er vild natur dyreplageri?' on Youtube

Extract terms from comments on both platforms

CorTextT

Run network analysis, converting CSV to GEXF file

Network of 330 nodes

Terms as nodes, edges as co-occurrence between terms

GEXF

## VISUALIZE

Apply force-directed layout with ForceAtlas2

Gephi

Scale set to 10  
Prevent overlap

Run Avg. Weight degree

Run Modularity

Modularity Clustering  
determining color of nodes

Node size determined by  
weighted degree (min. 10,  
max. 100)

Removed nodes  
containing names of  
non-public figures

Labels scaled to node  
size

## ANNOTATE

Identify discourses within the public regarding the rewilding of Mols in a co-occurrence term network.

Qualitatively compare the discourses of the Danish public debate with those represented in the academic debate.



Network visualisation

PNG

As rewilding has grown in academic literature, it has also transitioned into the general public and has become a word that many are familiar with.

When we looked into the discourses in the public debate, represented through the comment sections on a DR3 documentary about the project in Mols, both on Facebook and Youtube, we identified that almost the entire discussion was about the human-large herbivore interaction and animal abuse.

One of the most central points on the map and the controversy is the node “animals behind fences” (dyr bag hegn), which functions as a bridge between the two parts of the network. This could be because “animals behind fences” is at the core of the controversy, essentially separating two main factions where some feel that they lose access and are being excluded by the fence, while the opposing side is less concerned with the installment of a physical fence.

Additionally, terms surrounding animal abuse such as ‘starvation’ and ‘painful death’ were mainly centered around the horses and less so on cattle, indicating a differentiation among the animals and what is considered appropriate. The nodes located in the dominant yellow cluster were heavily influenced by emotional arguments, and indicated greater empathy for horses rather than the cattle. Interestingly, terms such as animal abuse and related topics were not part of the discourse in the academic literature showing a divide in the focus of interests.