



**World Forum on
Urban Forests**
Mantova 2018

*PS 2.2 Changing
spaces and places*

**Wild Urban Forests and landscape
laboratories on former brownfield sites:
Nature Based solutions
Ruhr Area Germany**

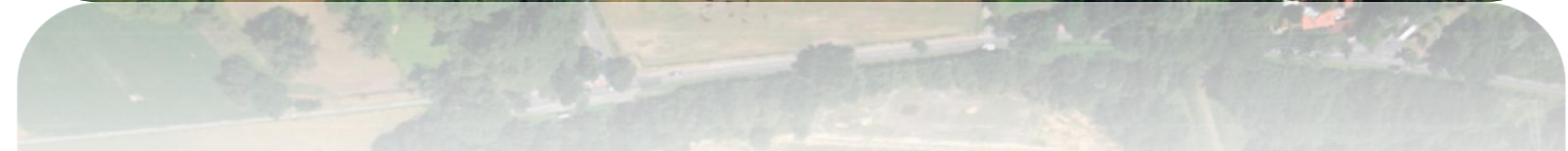
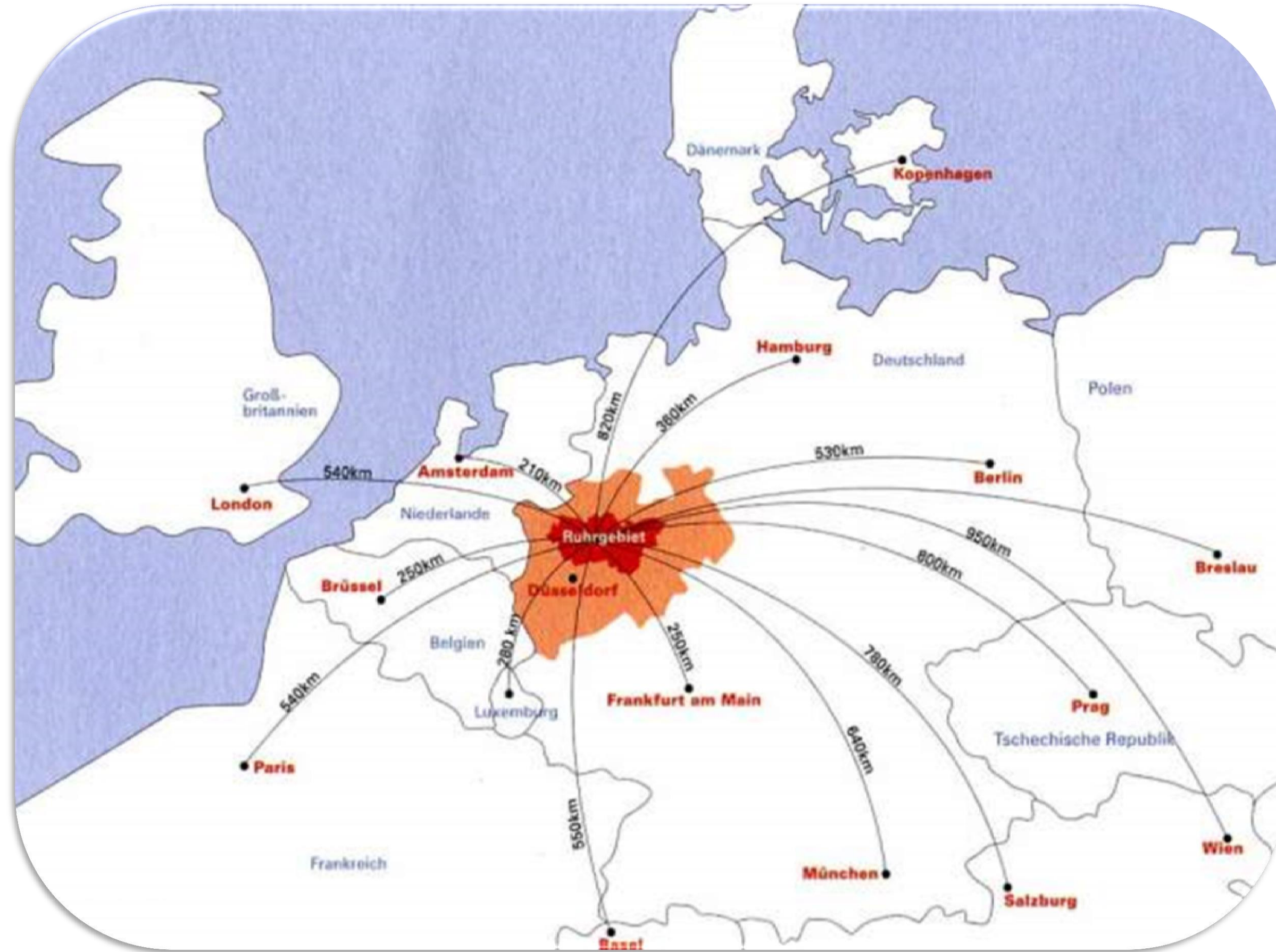
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Ruhr Metropolitan Area





Brownfield sites: experimental greening approach

- The Ruhr region in the western part of Germany
- Coal mining and steel industries...transformation for a greener city future
- Two examples of forest and green
- Wild urban forests and biomass landscape laboratory





The Ruhr Region, the former „industrial heart“ of Germany

- **Nordrhein-Westfalen: surface 34.000 km² (9.5 % of Germany) and 18 million (22%) inhabitants;**
- The Ruhr Region: largest Metropolitan area in Germany and third in Europe (4 435 square km)
- 53 independent municipalities with 5. 2 Million inhabitants
- **40 % of the EU´s inhabitants live within a 500 km radius**
- 1.173 inhabitants/ km², 11 % migrant population, unemployment rate: average 12, 5 %



Shrinking cities – The decline of coal mining and steel industries

- Coal mining, iron and steel industries as large-scale industrial activities decrease;
- What is left: a significant amount of derelict or brownfield areas
- The task: development of these former industrial areas, estimated between 10 000 and 20 000 hectares in the Ruhr Region
- small but beautiful green solutions: the wild urban forest project – a low budget approach of the International Building Exhibition (IBA) Emscher Park 1989-1999
- Result: some areas could be transformed into wooded areas by natural regeneration for the better of the neighborhood and recreational use



Conceptual framework for the post-industrial urban landscape: wild forest areas

- The areas left by industry are situated within the city, their size ranging between 10 and 200 ha
- These areas will be accessible after decades of having been „forbidden land“ for the city dwellers
- No forest management, no planning, no nature conservation areas : whoever wants to visit is free to do so at any time
- Art in Nature may act as „Translator“ between history, today's purposes and future options
- Research is conducted : about the natural development of the areas, their use and the perception towards the „new forest type“



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New Forest after old industries



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World heritage Colliery Zeche Zollverein Essen



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Education for sustainable development

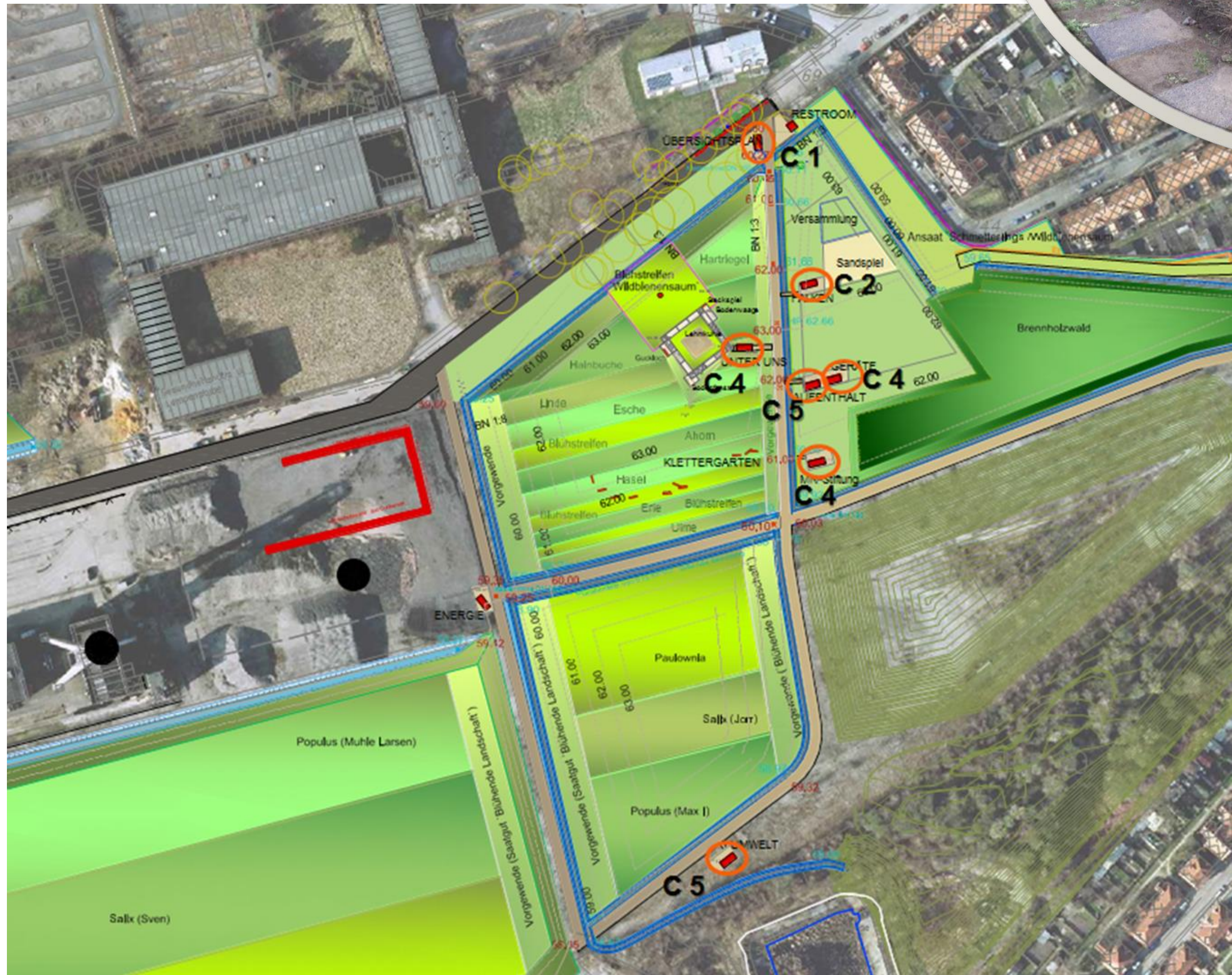


Aims of the biomass landscape laboratory

- „Greening“ of a large brownfield site
- Production of biomass in an urban neighborhood and Communication of bioenergy production topics
- Integration in the green infrastructure of the City of Gelsenkirchen
- Urban gardening
- Place making for neighbors, esp. children/young people/ schools and kindergardens
- Information about soil and soil building processes
- Shaping of a green urban area for learning
- Creating a space for multiple use



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Welcome

and thank you for your attention