



Development of a mission statement “sustainable food services” - First results from the project NAHGAST: *Developing, testing and dissemination of concepts for sustainable production and consumption in the food service sector*

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Introduction

The European food industry accounts for about 17% of greenhouse gas emissions and 28% of the global resource consumption (EU Commission 2011). In Germany, the hospitality and food service sector represents one of the most important food distribution channels, next to the food retail sector. Hence, this sector has a big potential for increasing the sustainability of our daily life, actions and practices, through improvement. The ongoing project NAHGAST will tackle these issues by initiating, supporting and pro-

moting transformation processes for a sustainable business in the hospitality and food service sector. Within this project a mission statement for a sustainable hospitality and food service sector will be established as a basis for research. The approach of the development of the mission statement “sustainable food service” is outlined within this poster, including first results of the underlying analysis.

Basis of the mission statement

Mission statements should contain fundamental principles, express values and present the desired development of the sector, i.e. answering the question “How should we behave, to achieve these goals?” (Vahs 2012).

The mission statement for sustainable food services will provide both – a framework for business strategies and the basis for a discussion with enterprises, the overall branch, different stakeholders and politics. Consequently, the NAHGAST-Projects’ vision will be expressed through general, idealised and therewith relatively abstract terms related to the pursued aims, values, standards and activities of the companies in this sector. The theses on which the model development is based are:

- (1) The mission statement serves as a central idea of “sustainable food service”, which is supported by all major actors and stakeholders of the production and consumption system and it is an important prerequisite for sustainable transformation.
- (2) The mission statement opens spaces of possibility and assists questioning and breaking consumption- and action routines.
- (3) The mission statement creates a framework for communication and transfer which can be continuously expanded and concretized.

Method

With reference to the present and to stabilise the course towards sustainability, the mission statement will be derived from the current debate of sustainability in the food catering sector as well as from existing normative structures. Therefore, a participation procedure is necessary, including the following steps (Graf / Spengler 2000):

Desk research for objective definition through the analysis of the target state (set of values, the normative basis) and the status quo of sustainability in the hospitality and food service sector.

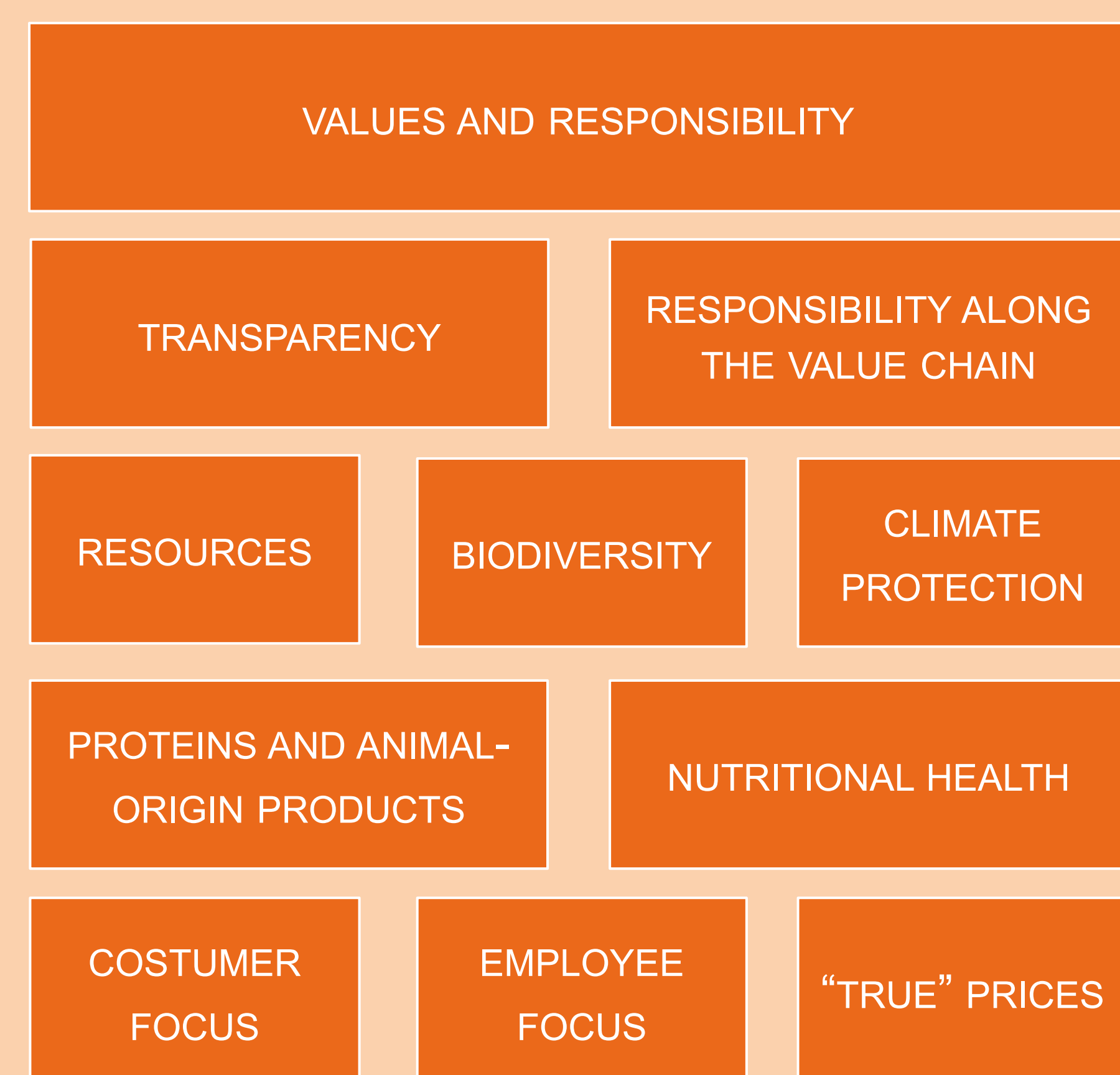
Stakeholder dialogues and expert workshops to create compliance and acceptance of the mission statement.

Testing and evaluation of the application of the mission statement with practice partners of the project.

Current results

At the current state of the project the desk research has been completed, identifying the relevant sustainability topics for companies and politics through the assessment of the target and current state of sustainability in the out-of-home market. An analytical framework for qualitative content analysis was used for evaluating literature, sustainability reports and relevant publications from politics and society (Gebauer / Hoffmann et al. 2011; Gebauer / Timme 2011). Literature was evaluated with the Software MAXQDA (Version 11).

At the current state of the project ten key areas have been identified as a basis for the elaboration of the complete mission statement. The **ten key areas** are:



Conclusion

It becomes clear that a mission statement for the whole out-of-home sector will face a content-related complexity and it is questionable if one mission statement will meet the requirements of the whole branch.

Considering the content-related complexity involved in fulfilling the different claims of the wide hospitality and food service market, communicating and discussing intermediate results with the branch is fundamental. The consensus between scientific requirements and corporate action will be tested in stakeholder dialogues, expert workshops and in an evaluation phase with the practice partners.

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