



## Case Study: RISE method for student term projects or theses

Understanding sustainability in practice and finding solutions

What does sustainable agriculture mean? This topic is complex and may harbour conflicting objectives between ecological, economic and social aspects. Therefore the application of sustainability criteria to farms is not without challenge. A RISE analysis as part of a term paper or final thesis helps students to do this. An example from Norway shows how an MBA student analysed six farms with the RISE method and developed sustainability measures together with the farm managers.



## Background

To date more than 75 students worldwide have used RISE for sustainability assessments as part of their term papers or theses so far, among them Petter Johan Holm Stanghov from Norway. After a number of years working as an agriculture advisor, he decided to do an MBA and used the RISE method for his final thesis.

## Why RISE?

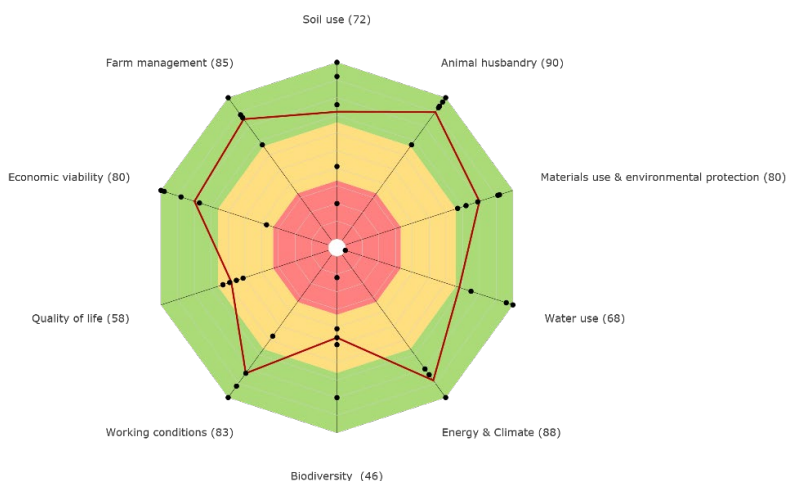
«It is difficult to grasp sustainability as a whole. How do you bring social, ecological and economic aspects together at a practical level? And how do you do that in a way that is comprehensible and actionable for the farm manager? How can each farm's individual conditions be taken into account?»

To meet these challenges, Petter Stanghov used RISE as an analytical tool on six farms in south-eastern Norway.

## Results and benefits

Petter Stanghov used RISE to conduct holistic farm assessments. It proved to be very adept at tackling the multi-faceted nature of sustainability. While the interviews with the farmers were time-consuming, the detailed questions led to a common understanding of sustainability. «That's the basis for understanding the RISE results and developing appropriate measures.»

Petter Stanghov considers the polygon a useful visualisation tool: «It gives farmers confirmation; but it also helps them to directly 'see' changes. For example, the polygon can be used to see how a reduction in concentrate feed for dairy cattle affects the entire farm's sustainability.»



*RISE sustainability polygon (example)*

## RISE in working groups

In addition to individual consultations, Petter Stanghov organised working groups with all six farm managers. «Discussions among colleagues about RISE results, potential sustainability measures, also in the face of climate change, and conflicting objectives gave the farmers an understanding of the diversity of their individual farms. But it also fostered cohesion among the participants.»



*RISE interview with a farm manager*

By incorporating RISE into his thesis, Petter Stanghov was able to «translate sustainability into practice». He would also use RISE for farm transfers and consultations on strategy development, as it provides a comprehensive assessment of the situation at hand:

«RISE focuses entirely on the individual farmer's situation and interests. This makes the method an aid in the decision-making process.»

Petter Johan Holm Stanghov



## What is RISE

RISE is an acronym for Response-Inducing Sustainability Evaluation. RISE assesses ecological, economic and social sustainability performance across 10 themes captured by a total of 46 indicators. The results provide a "360-degree view" of the farm and identify where there is potential for optimisation. RISE was developed at HAFL and has so far been used on almost 4,000 farms in 59 countries.

## Contact

Feel free to contact us at any time for a no-strings discussion of your ideas or questions:

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