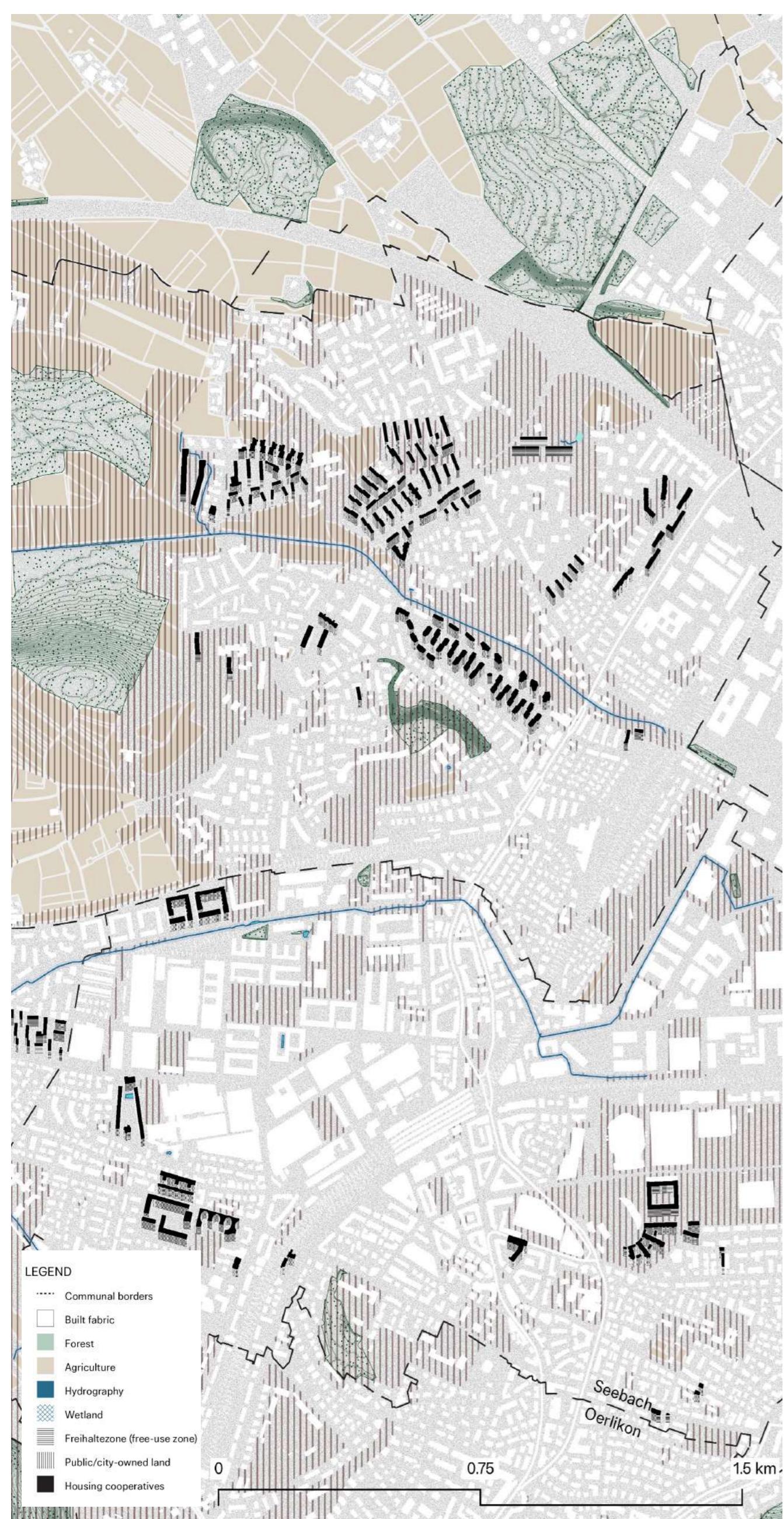
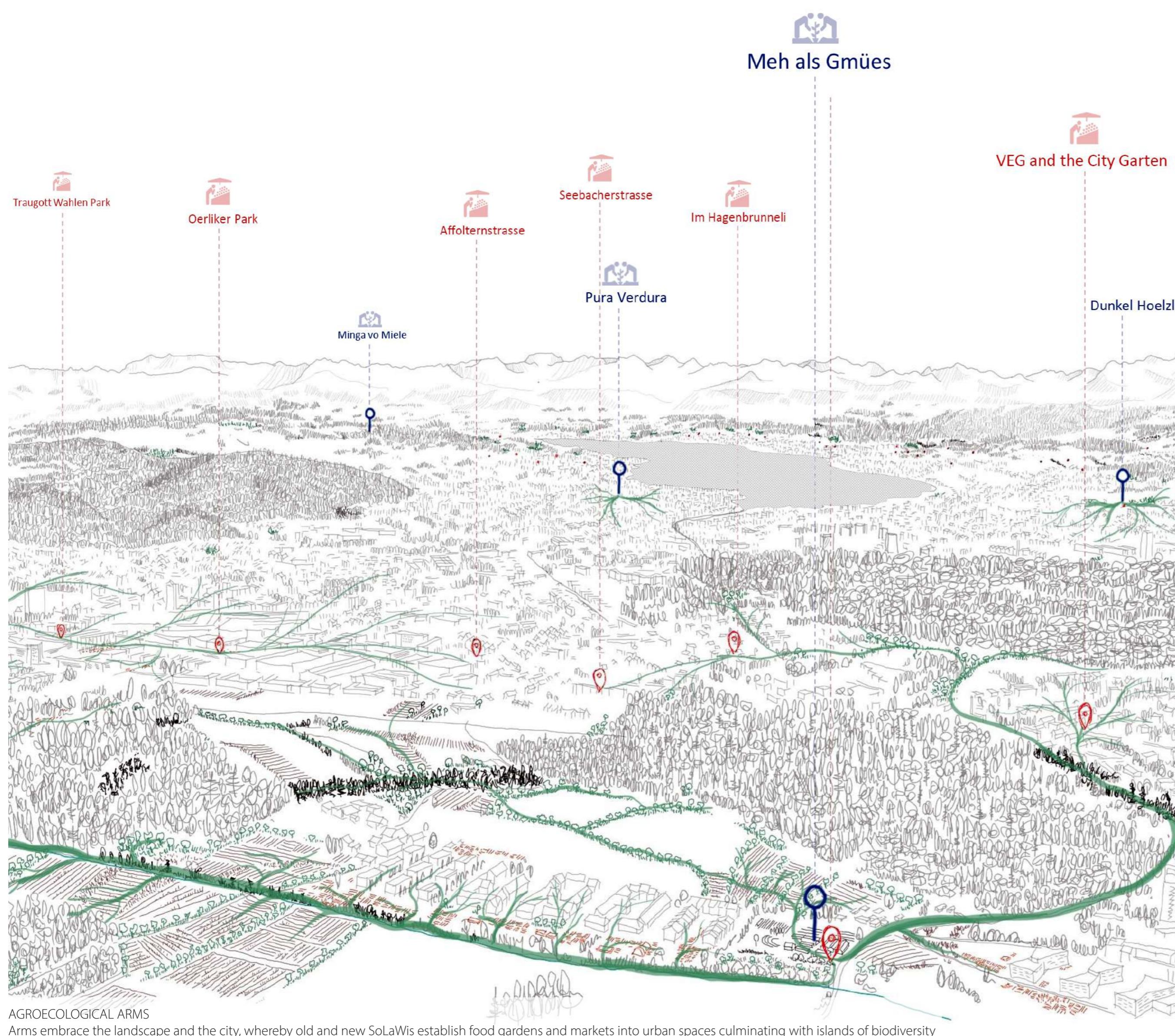


Landscapes of Solidarity

Reassembling Neighbourhoods and Agroecology Through Zurich's Solawis

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From the mediaeval manor, to the attachment of particular customers to the stand of a particular farm at an open market, human history is replete with examples of connections between nonfarmers and the people and lands that feed them. Connections that have been increasingly severed over time, as the free market not only separates people along the binaries of producer and consumers, but also creates landscapes of monocultures catering to a global demand. The family farm, touted as a cornerstone of Swiss tradition, has been facing increasing pressures, from contentious policies to an ever-increasing market demand. While the cultural landscape continues to be thought of as a separate category of islands maintained for leisure and biodiversity in the sea of intensive agriculture of the Mittelland. Under the challenges faced by the agricultural sector, such as a decreasing number of farms, economic difficulties, and ongoing environmental transformation, we believe an alternative future can be fostered through embracing the practices of community-supported agriculture. We then raise the question: *"What ecological and social landscapes are created from a food system driven by solidarity rather than by the economy?"*

In an attempt to answer that question, we refer to the canton's farming cooperative movement, or as they are known in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, **SoLaWi** (Solidarische Landwirtschaft). SoLaWi's have been appearing at the interface of urban agglomerations and agricultural land. Here we can identify the first actor of this story: the city of Zurich and its **public land**. An additional layer is the cantonal definition of *Freihaltezone* (the no-building zone). In spatial planning, these zones act as demarcations of settlement areas. They are kept "free" to preserve nature, and provide access for the local population. In practice however, these areas usually exist as monocultural meadows, as areas of ecological compensation from the construction industry, and as reserves for future urban expansion. We argue that especially in these free zones, an agroecological approach offers more in terms of added value to the landscape and intensifying biodiversity than the existing conditions. A spectrum of agroecological spaces allow local communities and surrounding cooperatives to have different levels of interactions, sharing and applying their knowledge specific to their particular landscape. This spectrum manifests as '**agroecological arms**' whereby corridors of edible forest gardens and fields near village communities and private farm holds can re-link forest patches. These arms finally reach into the city, through pixel-farming plots and markets which reconnect communities with their farmers and their land. The work argues that commoning agricultural land through the system of solidarity does not only build on lost traditions, but is also a way towards a holistically progressive and sustainable future.

Urbanism meets Agroecology

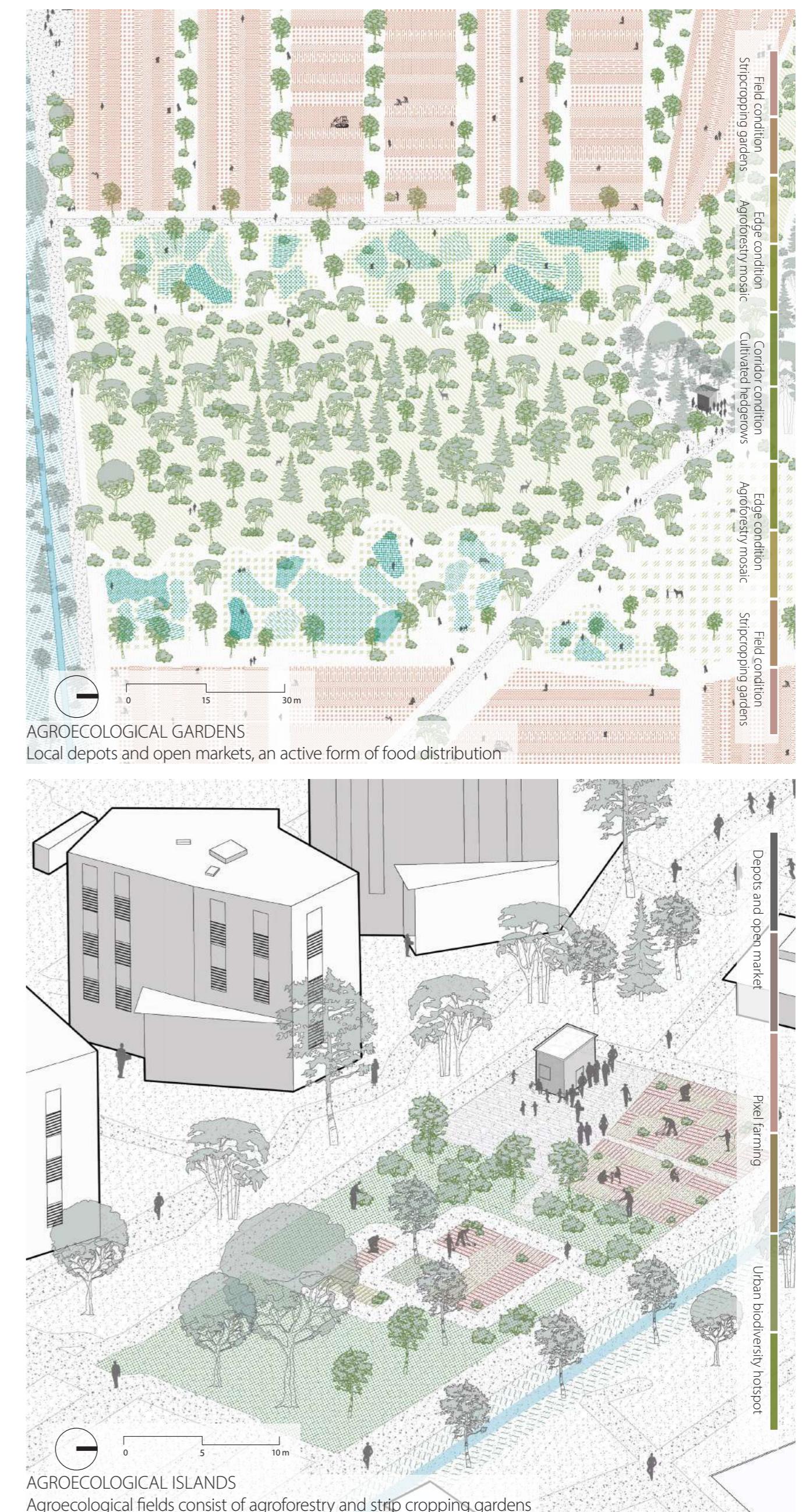
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Biography

Amin El-Didi and **Nima Tabrizi** are architects, urban designers, and researchers based in the Netherlands, holding a MAS in Urban and Territorial Studies from ETH Zurich and EPFL.