



What questions are agroecologists tackling; a literature survey of ongoing research

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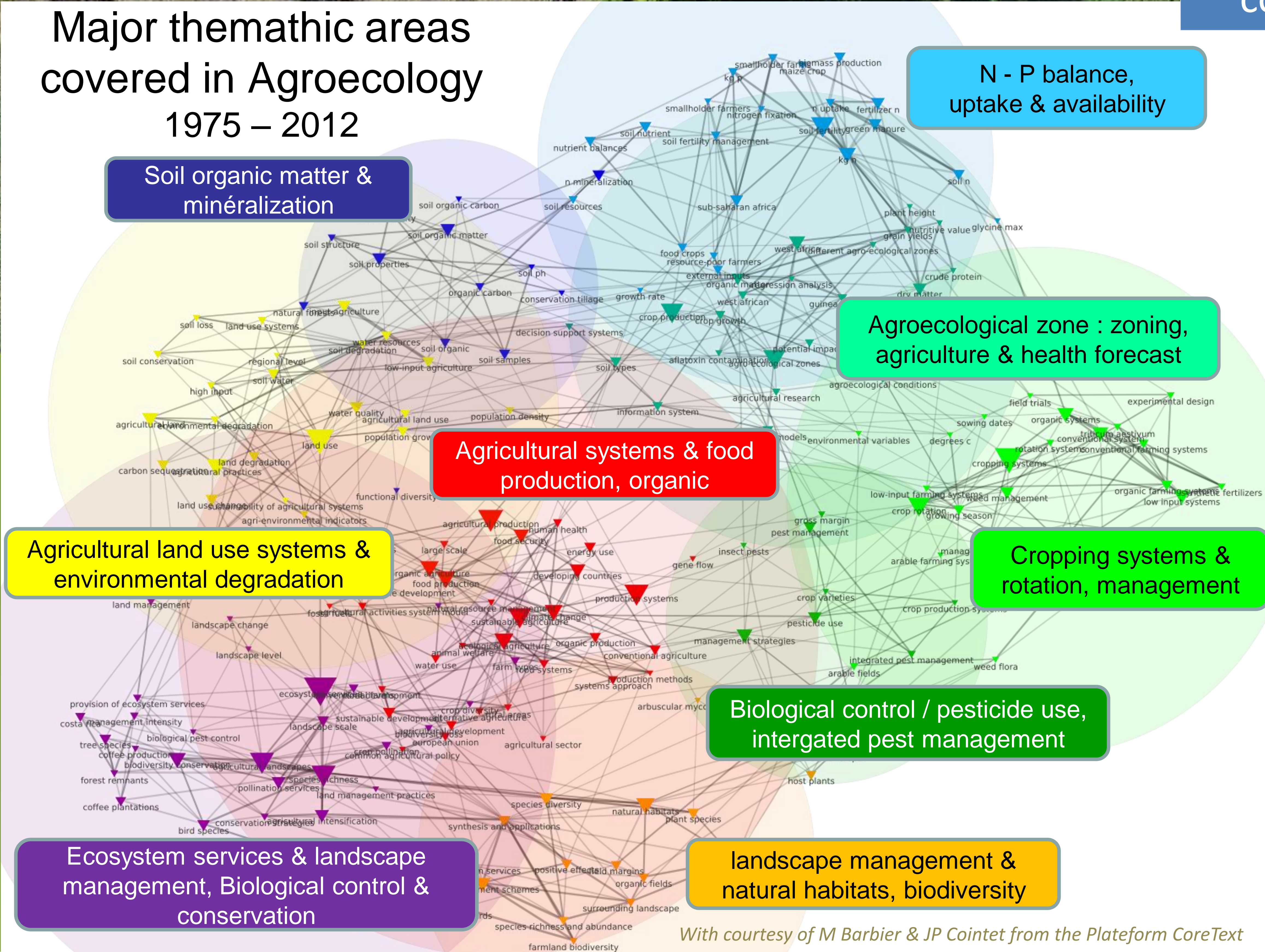
What questions are agroecologists tackling; a literature survey of ongoing research

In 2014 Agroecology or agro-ecology is still polysemic. Here we analyse a set of 2500 references from 1975 to 2012 to explore what agroecologists are doing and general concept tackled.

Co-wording landscape showing the major scientific field and topics worked-on by agroecologists

Some significant vocabulary (& index of co-wording importance)

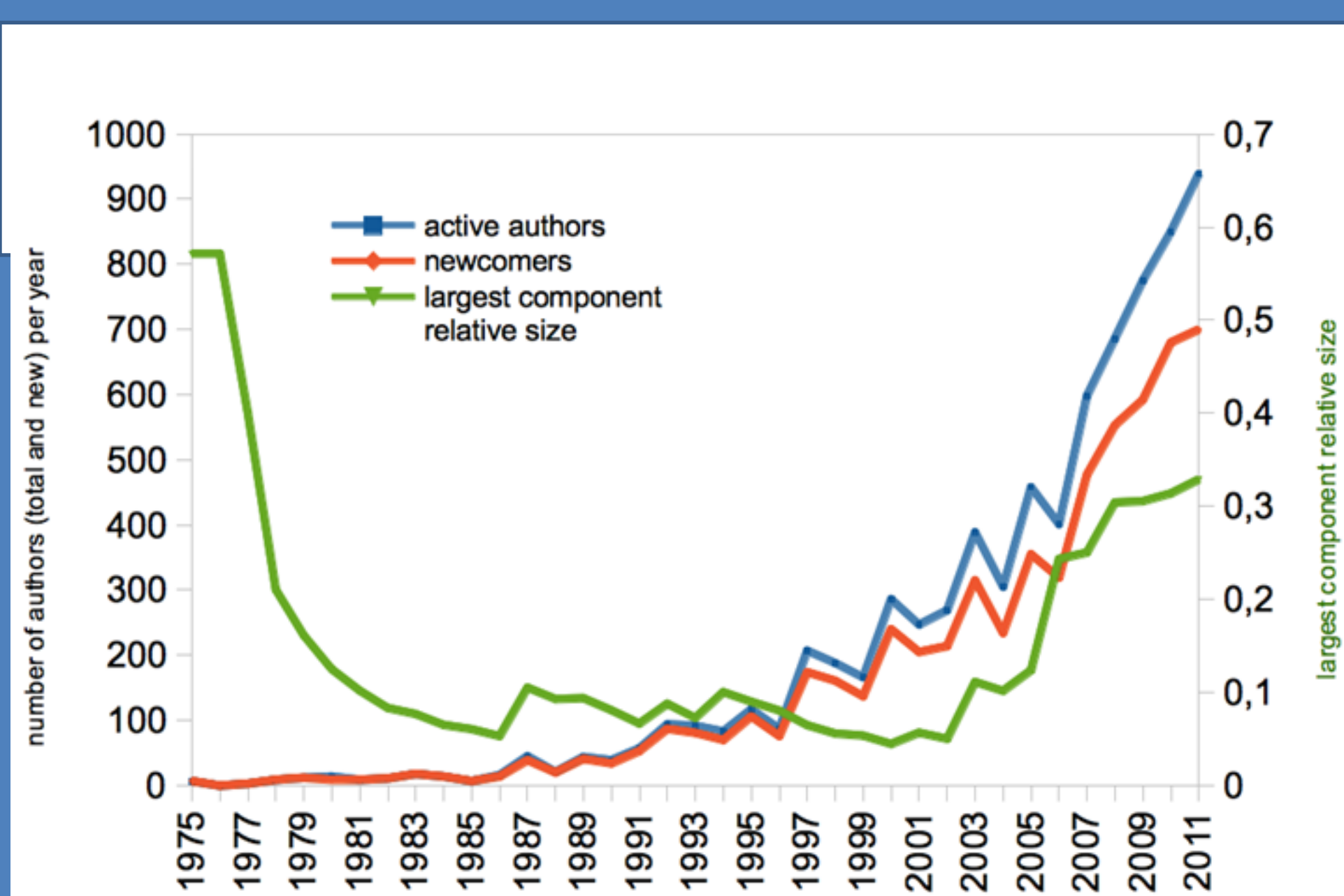
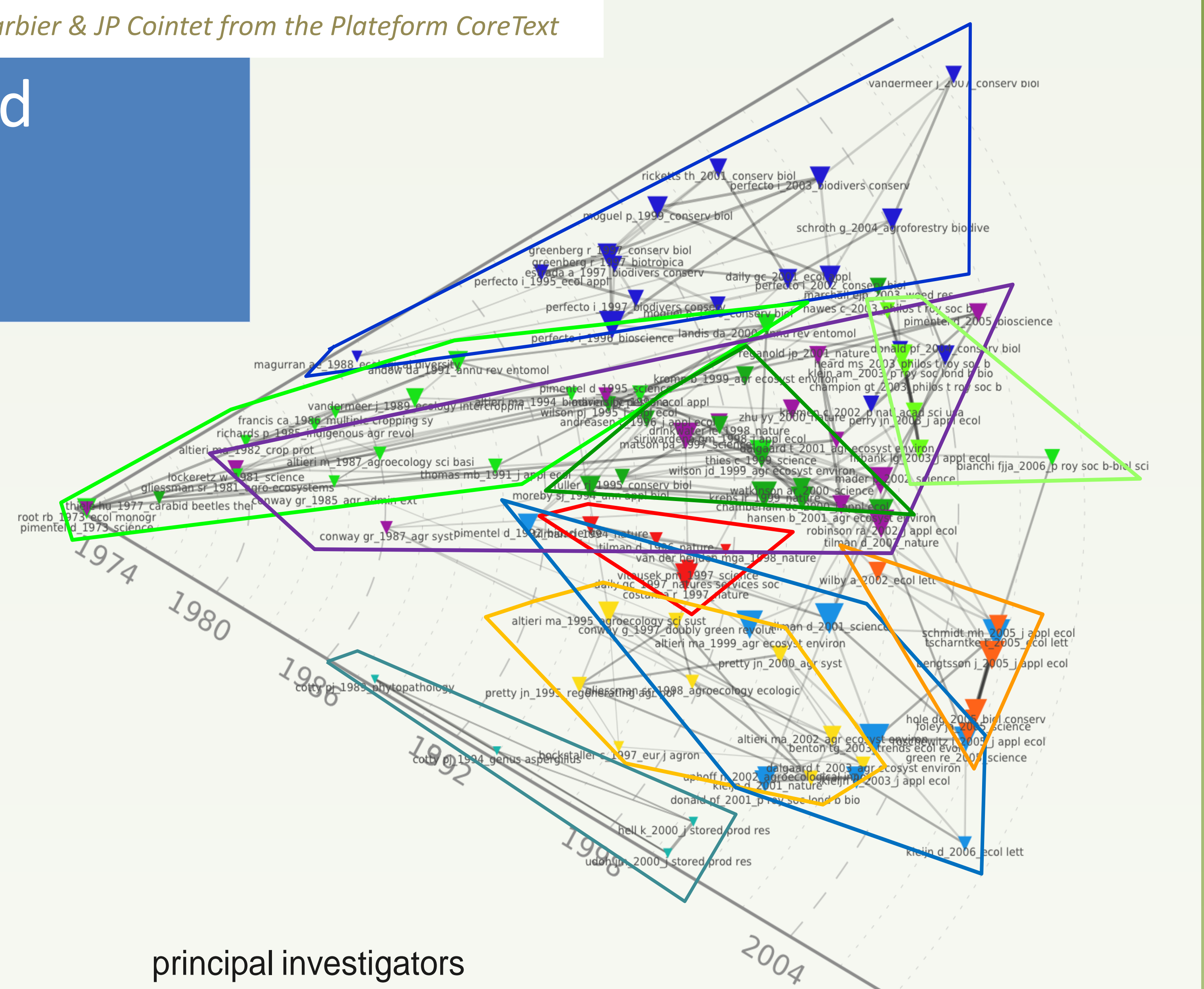
Major themathic areas covered in Agroecology
1975 – 2012



Agroecology (187)
Biodiversity (76)
Agro-ecology (57)
Sustainability (55)
Low-input agriculture (42)
Organic farming (33)
Farming system (26)
Agroforestry (26)
Conservation (25)
Pollination (23)
Biological control (19)
Soil fertility (18)
Ecosystem services (18)
Nitrogen (17)
Crop rotation (16)

Radial view showing the major concepts and themes of agroecological investigation, and associated table (partial)

Titles of highly cited refs [first author - year and format]	Citations (Oct 2012)
Ecological Diversity and Its Measurement [AE Magurran - 1988, book]	8916
Panarchy: understanding transformations in human and natural systems [LH Gunderson – 2002, book]	2236
Organization of a Plant-Arthropod Association in Simple and Diverse Habitats: The Fauna of Collards (Brassica Oleracea) [RB Root – 1973, article]	1551
Productivity and sustainability influenced by biodiversity in grassland ecosystems [D Tilman – 1996, article]	1545
Agroecology : the science of sustainable agriculture [MA Altieri – 1995, book]	1531
Insect pollination of crops [JB Free – 1993, book]	1313
The ecology of intercropping [J Vandermeer – 1989, book]	936
The ecological role of biodiversity in agroecosystems [MA Altieri – 1999, article]	893
Agroecology: ecological processes in sustainable agriculture [SR Gliessman – 1998, book]	830



The structure of the citation as well as co-wording networks suggest that agroecology has entered a phase of reinforcement of its' conceptual base. Within these, **'land use'** (including agroecological zone), **'system'** approaches (from ecosystem to agrosystem, farming system and up to food system) and **'soil fertility'** approaches occupy a preeminent position.