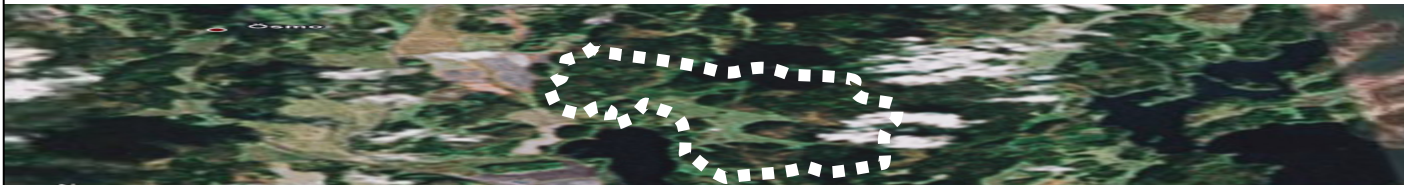


# introduction to eco-units

by Stephen Hinton & Folke Günther



A satellite map showing a rural landscape with green fields and brown patches. A red dot is located in the upper left quadrant, labeled 'Ösmo'. A white dashed line outlines a large, irregular area in the center of the map, representing an eco-unit. A vertical white line is on the left side of the map, and a small 'N' is in the bottom left corner.

Ösmo

an eco-unit is an area containing about 20 ha of agricultural land





### **Main features of Eco-units:**

- Human actions strengthen the supporting ecosystem
- Aiming at self-sufficiency in food supply; close co-operation with the farming system belonging to the unit
- Combined living, working and food production in the same area
- Minimized need for fossil fuels – decreased vulnerability
- Provide an experience of living in co-operation with nature
- A new form of investment in sustainable lifestyle







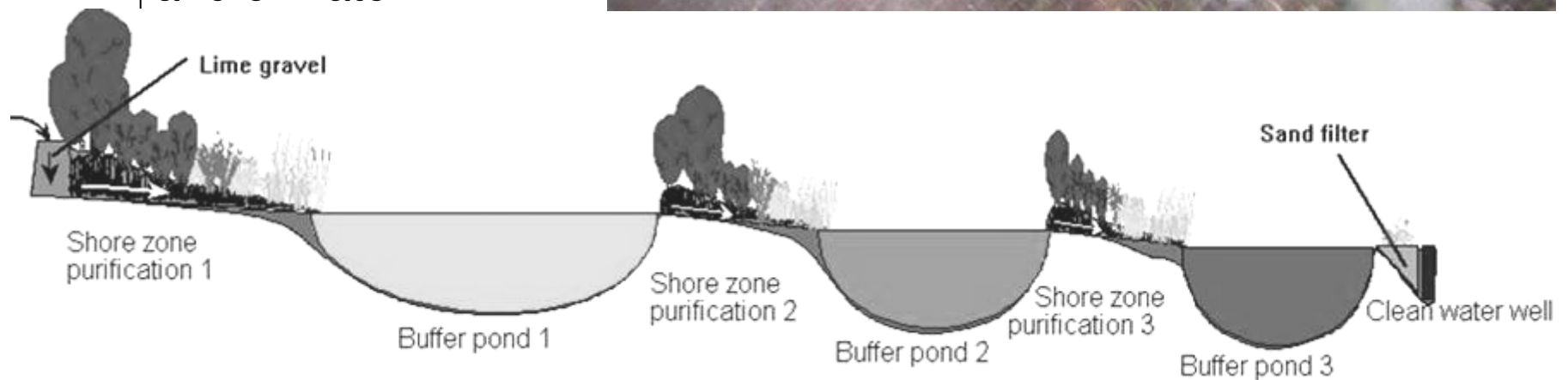
Aiming at self-sufficiency in food supply

Residents subscribe to food raised on the farming areas. The farm section plans around the needs of a defined market.



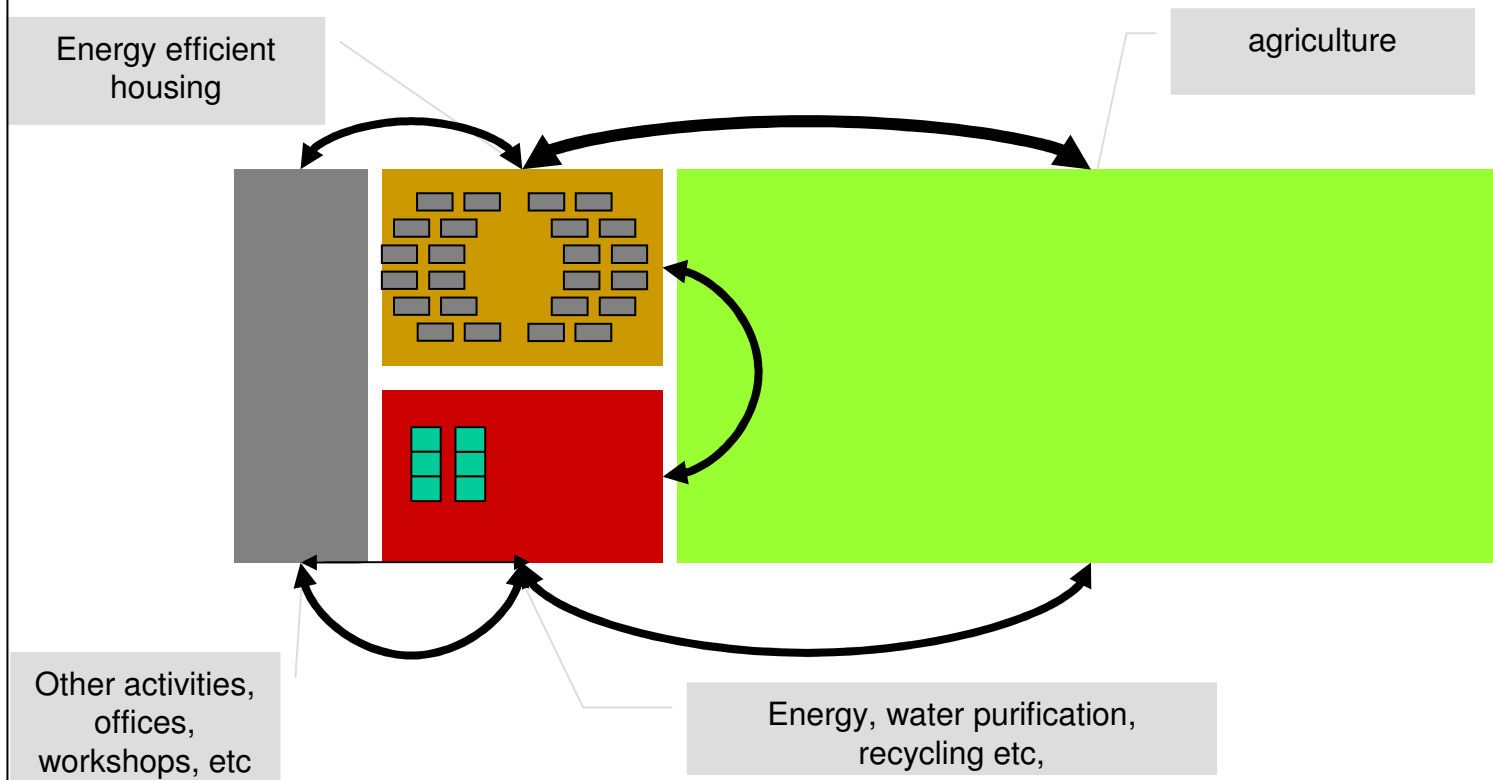
## Near-zero pollution

Eco units do not mix water with urine and faeces, so it is easy to recycle water in series of ponds, plant filters and other arrangements suited to the location and climate



# Combined living, working, food production in one area

Eco-units provide office space for those who wish to work at home, either permanently or from time to time. Some Eco-units may specialize and produce goods and services for sale. Working at home dramatically reduces the need for commuting.



# The eco-unit Area: 50 ha for 200 inhabitants

Functional size, pop. about 200

Diversified agriculture

Providing most of the human food and all of the animal fodder

Plant nutrients in food are returned to agriculture

Orchards

Private gardens

Open ditches

Nutrient reclaim

Landscape diversity

Predator habitat

Lee – planting


Biomass production

Biological greywater treatment plant (wetpark)  
Clean water is returned to the households

Nutrients, water and biomass are recycled. Food transport is minimized and solar energy is captured

Minimized need for fossil fuels

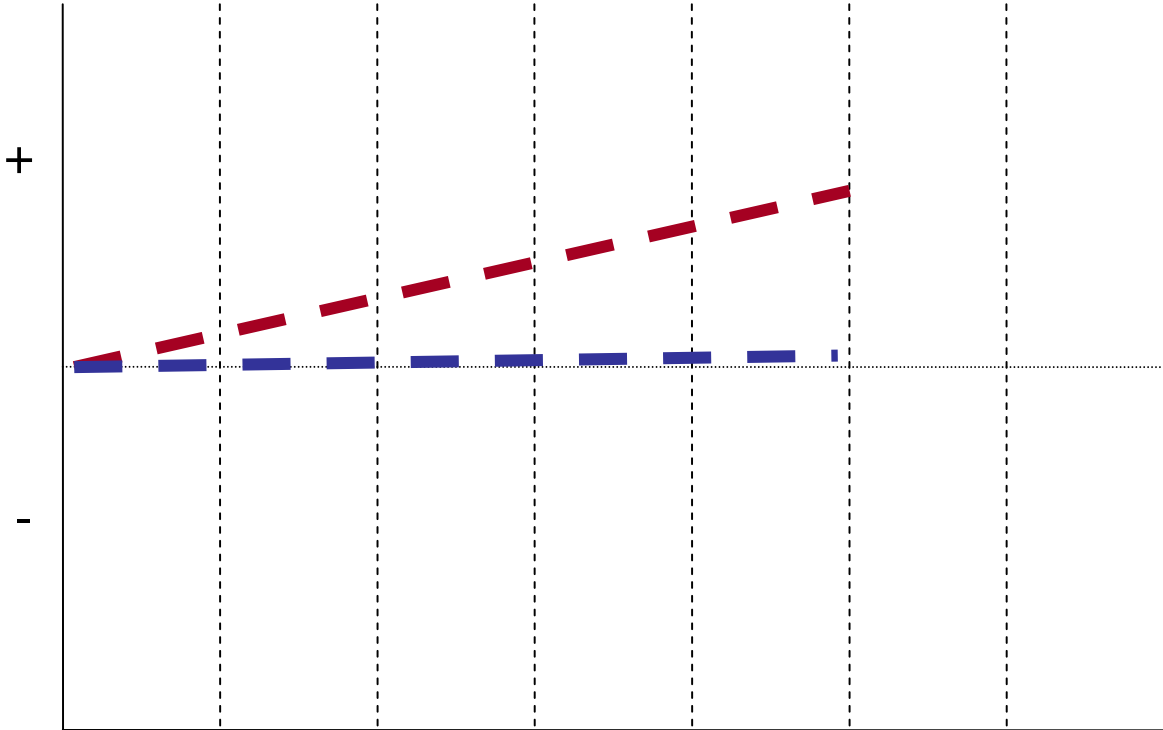




Eco-Units offer an experience of living in close cooperation with nature

Eco-unit borders are within view, and you can walk around the unit easily. Not only do you get your accommodation, energy and most of your food from this area, you are also part of the group that provides stewardship to these services will last. You are part of the eco-unit and it is your home.

# Minimized need for fossil fuels - decreased vulnerability

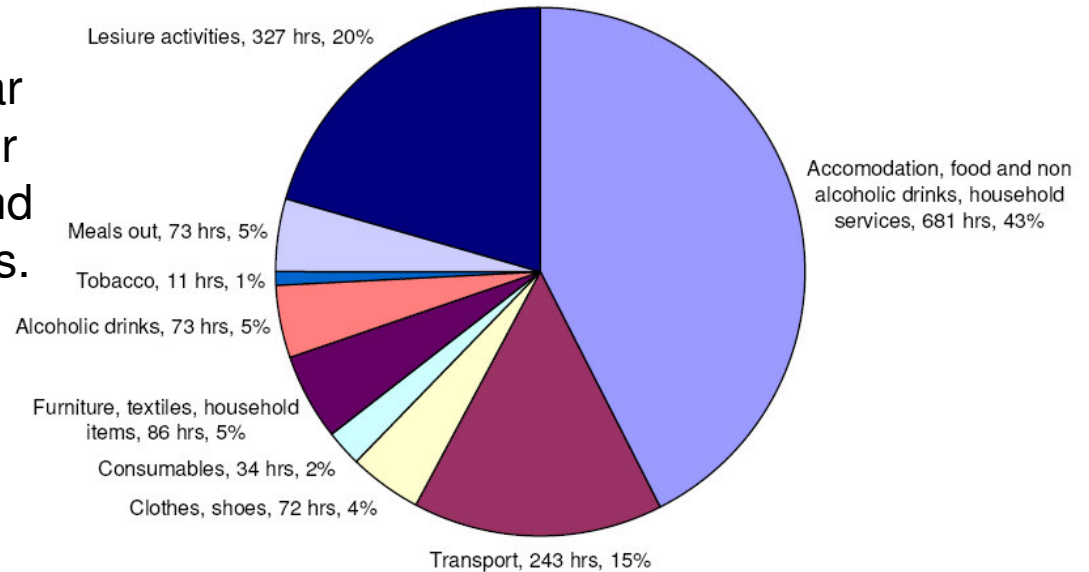


- Cost of basics over time if energy prices continue to rise
- Cost of eco-unit living over time even if energy prices continue to rise



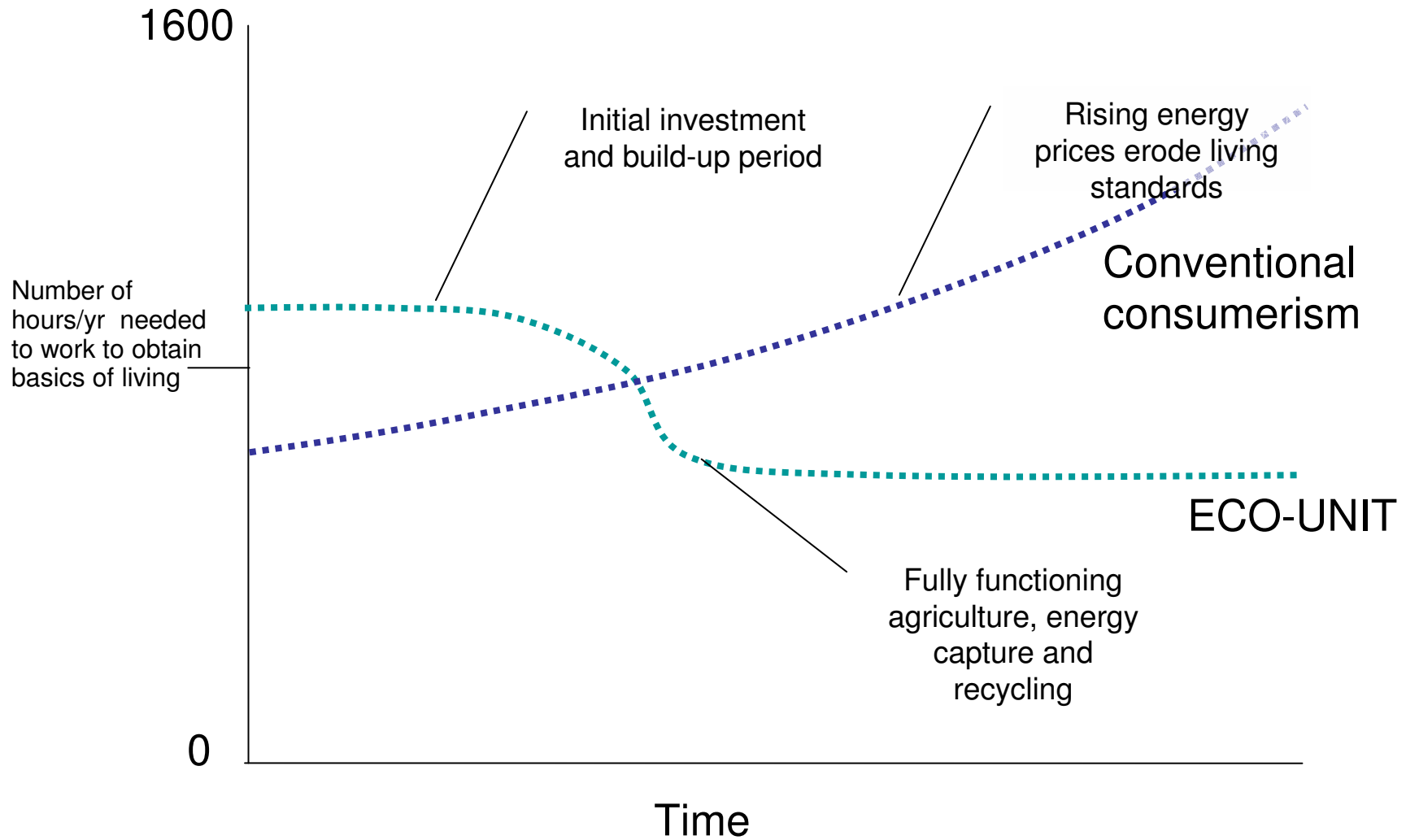
## A new form of investment in sustainable lifestyle

Today, people spend 43% of their working year to earn enough to pay for accommodation, food and basic household services. (Based on figures from SCB, the Swedish Statistical service.) As energy prices rise, the cost of these basics will rise too, as they are all heavily fossil-fuel dependent.



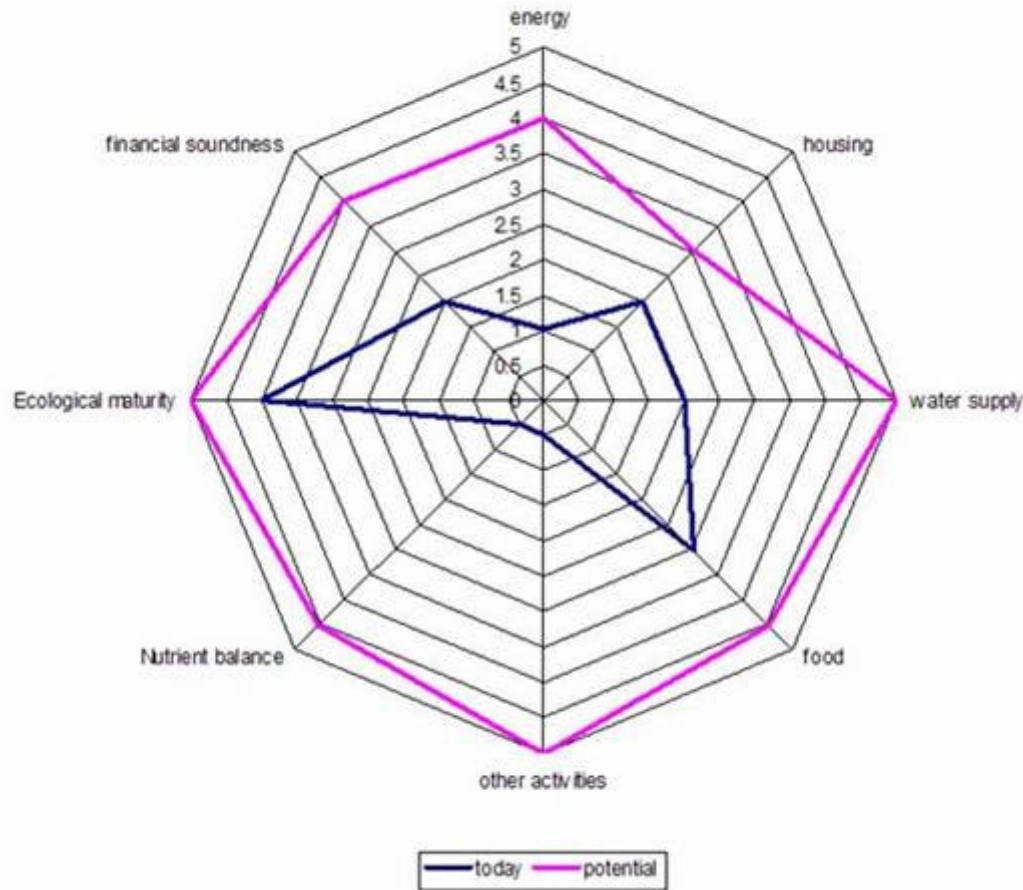
Not so for eco-units. The renewables-based activities keep energy costs down. This means eco-units will become more competitive, and therefore command a higher price on the open market.

Eco unit living requires less working hours to obtain basic living as they reach full function





Eco-units can be built from scratch or an area can be adapted along eco-unit principles. In both cases you can start by doing a pre-study to explore possibilities.



AVBP and Holon consultants would be pleased to advise you on how you can start to explore possibilities to found an eco-unit. Please contact us:

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