

# Evaluating a framework for measuring agroecology

Case study of public financing for agroecological transition in the Walloon Region

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For the conference

« Rethinking the regulation of agricultural markets for agroecological transition in Europe »



# Importance of assessing public fundings

*“international research has found that **agroecological approaches are marginalised in existing funding streams**, and when they are supported, it is often done in **unhelpful** and even **damaging ways**”*

Greenberg and Muchero (2022)

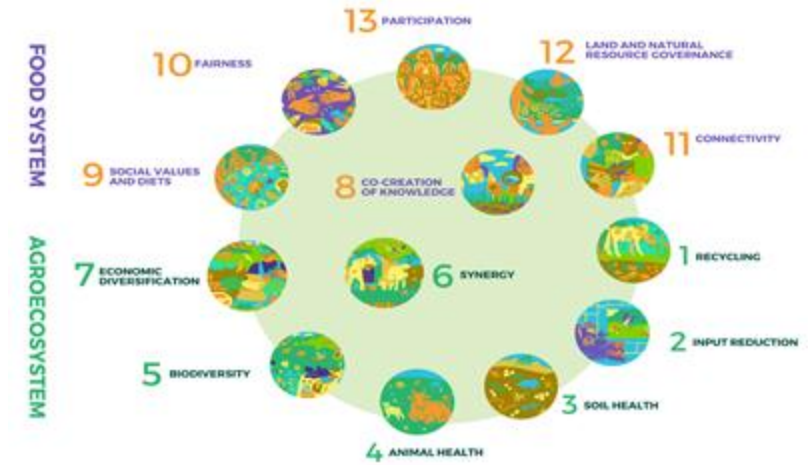
# Scope of the study

**What is the level of funding of agroecology within Walloon public funding (2019-2024)?**

- **Scope** : agricultural and food related budgets including CAP 2017-2022 & 2023-27
- **Methodology** : based on the framework developed by Research Center Agroecology, Water and Resilience of Coventry University (Moeller, N., *et al*, 2023)

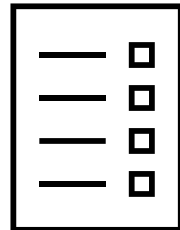
# Moeller's framework - Overview

- Centered around a scoring strategy



13 principles of agroecology

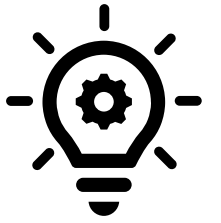
1 project



1	Recycling	na	0	1	2
2	Input reduction	na	0	1	2
3	Soil health	na	0	1	2
4	Animal health	na	0	1	2
5	Biodiversity	na	0	1	2
6	Synergy	na	0	1	2
7	Economic diversification	na	0	1	2
8	<b>Co-creation of knowledge</b>		0	1	2
9	<b>Social values and diets</b>		0	1	2
10	<b>Fairness</b>		0	1	2
11	Connectivity	na	0	1	2
12	Land & natural resources governance	na	0	1	2
13	<b>Participation</b>		0	1	2

%

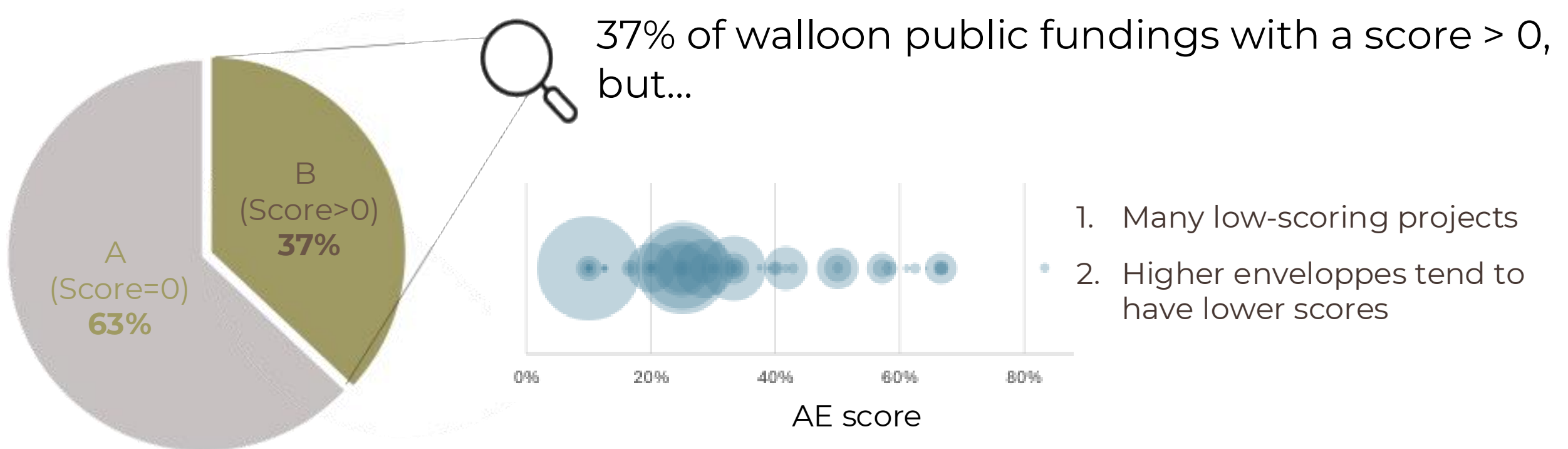
Final score



# Result 1 - Limited access to data

- Very unsatisfying access to public data
  - Very scattered information (activity reports, strategies, estimation of budget,...)
  - Limited disclosure of financial flows from public bodies and ministries
  - No consolidated financial information on the topic
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- How does the region pilot, monitor, and assess progress?
  - How do the ministries know if their action contributed to any systemic changes ?
  - Difficult for the civil society to check ministries' accountability

# Result 2: Low agroecological ambition of most of the projects



*Distribution of Walloon public fundings across agroecological scores, the size of the bubble representing the size of the budget*

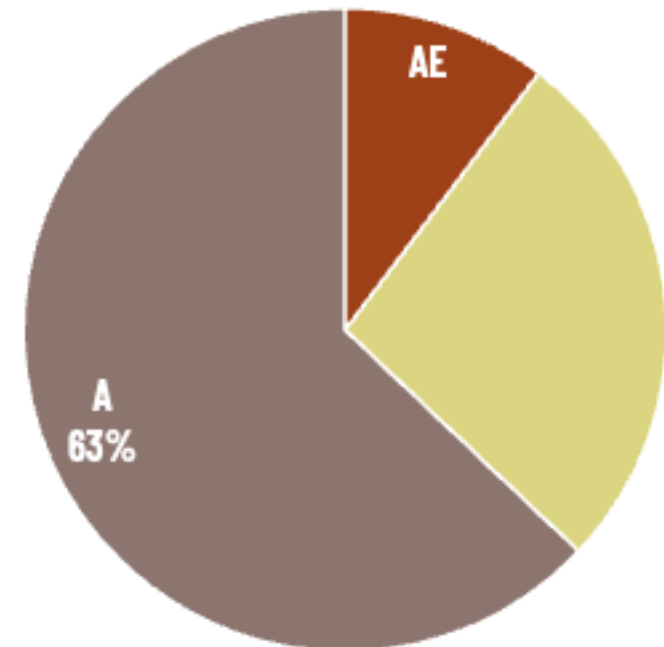
# We needed to go one step further than the framework to assess the **effective** contribution to AE

The level of effective contribution?

Each financial flow's contribution is calculated by weighing its budget by its agroecological score

*Remark : Funds for organic agriculture are of course considered as part of AE*

**Only a certain % of B contributes to AE**

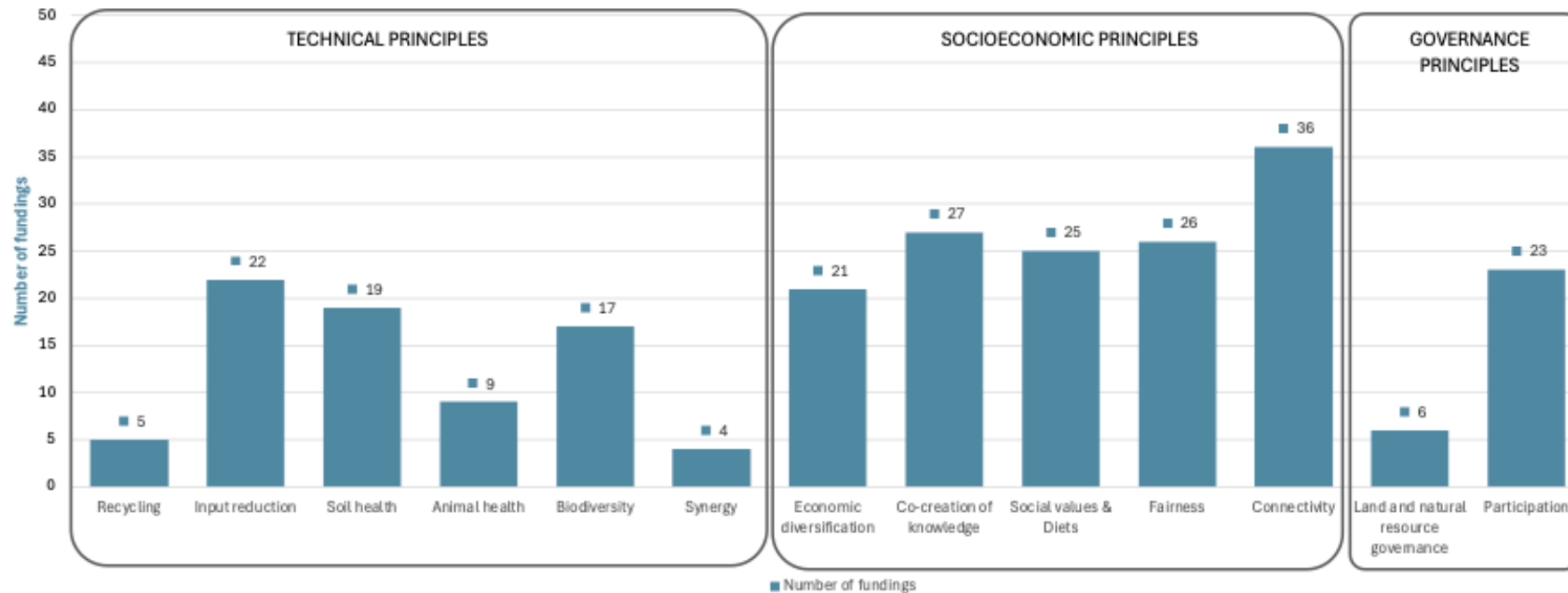


# Result 3: Only 10% of the analyzed budget supports the agroecological transition



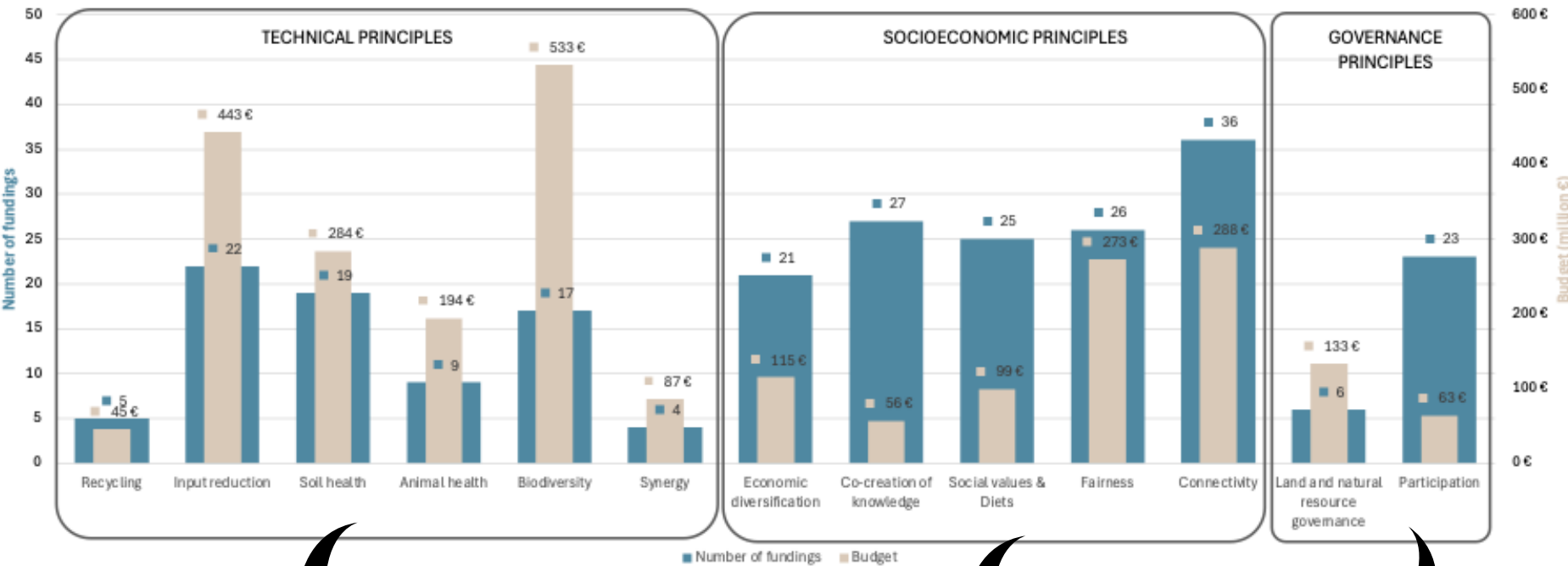


# Result 4: Unbalanced support between principles



- All 13 principles were tackled in Walloon public fundings, though with large disparities in their numbers

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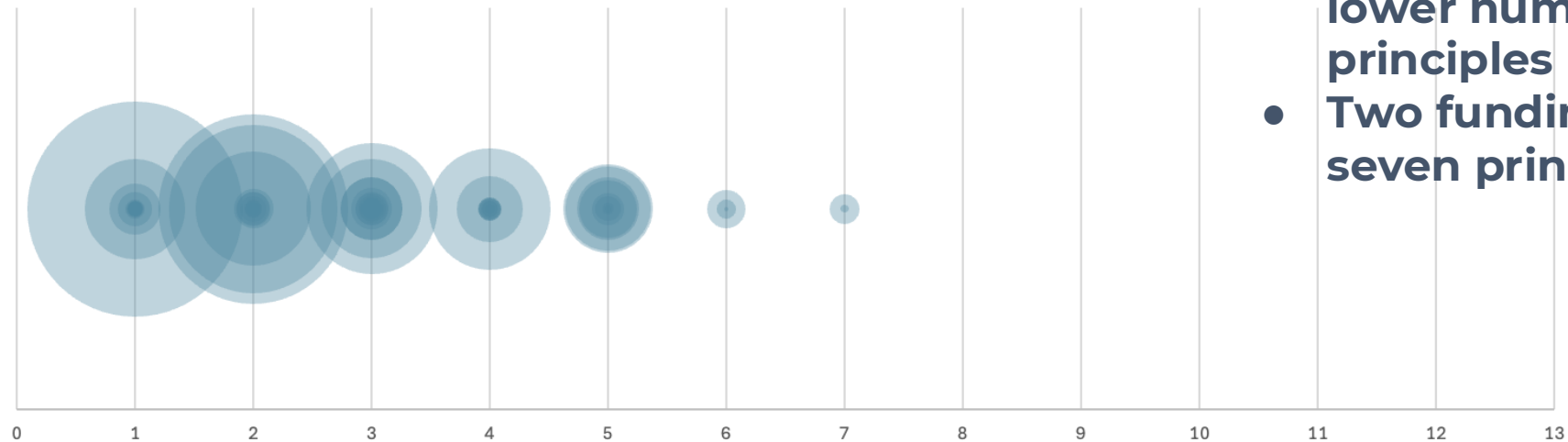
More budget,  
less frequent

More frequent,  
less budget

Less frequent,  
less budget

- All 13 principles were tackled in Walloon public fundings, though with large disparities in their numbers
- The budget is however concentrated on technical principles

# Result 5: Narrow focus of most fundings



- Larger fundings tend to address lower number of agroecological principles
- Two fundings only addressed up to seven principles

The 13 AE principles

*Distribution of Walloon public fundings according to the number of principles addressed, the size of the bubble representing the size of the budget.*

# Strengths of Moeller's framework

- ✓ **Easy to use & accessible**
  - Simple scoring system
  - Available in Excel format
- ✓ **Continuous improvements thanks to its Community of practice**
- ✓ **Supports advocacy & policy dialogue**
  - Despite the subjectivity of textual analysis by an evaluator, it provides strong estimates of financial flows toward AE
  - Helps track public spending and promote transparency
  - Generates clear, actionable figures to support civil society efforts
- ✓ **Ensures a strong approach to agroecology**
  - Requires projects to address at least four key agroecological principles, reinforcing holistic transformation

# Limits of Moeller's framework



## **Favoring broad agroecological approaches**

- The framework prioritizes holistic approaches, aligning with Moeller's vision for strong agroecological transformation
- However, this may undervalue more targeted, high-impact initiatives that focus on fewer but deeper changes



## **Requiring nuance in interpretation**

- Mid-range scores (50-60%) may still represent meaningful progress and should not be overlooked
- The framework's strict scoring rules may underappreciate projects that contribute incrementally



## **Undervaluing data & knowledge projects**

- Support for data production, research, and knowledge sharing often receives low scores, despite being critical for long-term systemic change
- These projects play a key role in scaling and sustaining agroecological transitions

# From research to action

This academic work served as a catalyst for building strong advocacy, mobilizing a broad network of actors





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transition of  
food systems

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# Step 1: Build a complete database

From a comprehensive survey of public policies database:

- 143 financial flows from agricultural and food regional budgets were identified
- **122 flows were assessed**
- 21 were not assessed due to insufficient description of action or budget



**Total amount of 2,485 billion euro for 122 financial flows in five years**

*Remark : Only the intention of financing were considered : no check was done on the ground for actual expenses*

# Step 2: Qualifying the financial flows (i)

Each financial flow is evaluated according to the framework

Each financial flow is given an agroecological score based on its contribution to each of the 13 principles

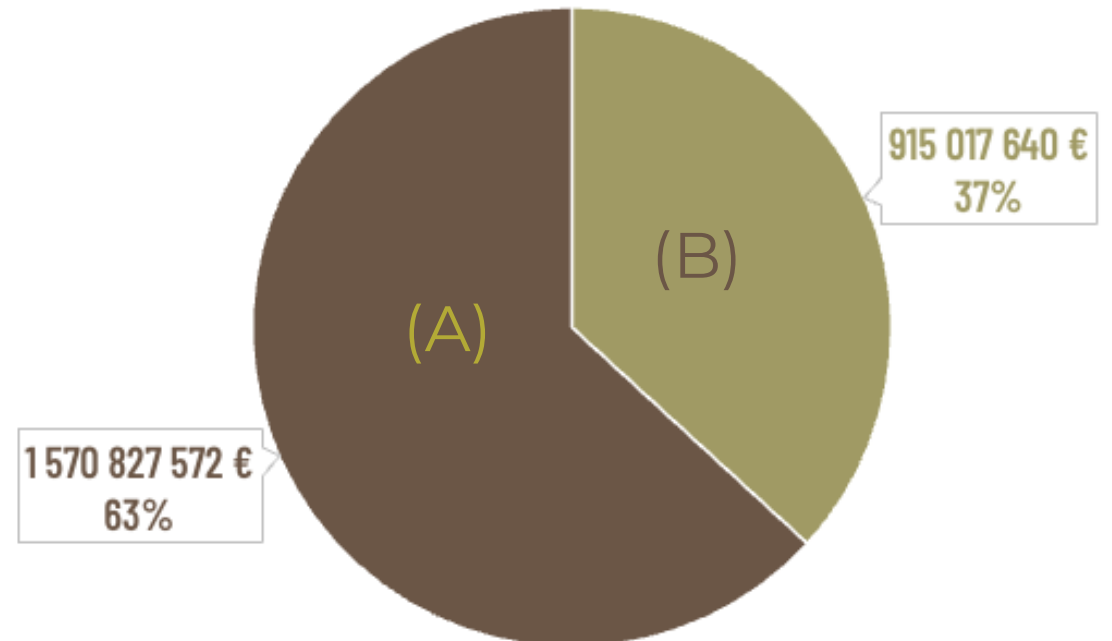
- A. The financial flow does not contribute to AE (A) (Score=0)
- B. The financial flow does contribute to AE (B) (Score >0)

ID	Code	Score
022	PRW_01	16,67%
023	PRW_02	0,00%
024	PRW_03	3,85%
025	PRW_04	3,85%
053	BIO_01	33,33%
063	BIO_11	75,00%

# Step 3: Attributing a total score to the portefolio

**“B” financial flows  
represent 37 % of the budget**

- A. The financial flow does not contribute to AE (A) (Score=0)
- B. The financial flow does contribute to AE (B) (Score >0)



# Refining the framework

## Critical reflection on the 37% figure

- Initial findings indicated that 37% of the budget contributed to at least one agroecological principle
- However, a deeper analysis was needed to determine the real financial commitment to agroecology

## Introducing a Weighting Step

- A new step was added to adjust funding contributions based on their agroecological score
- This provided a more accurate estimate of how much funding effectively supports agroecological transformation

💡 Only 10% of the budget effectively supports agroecology