

A critical review of EU agri-food policy impacts

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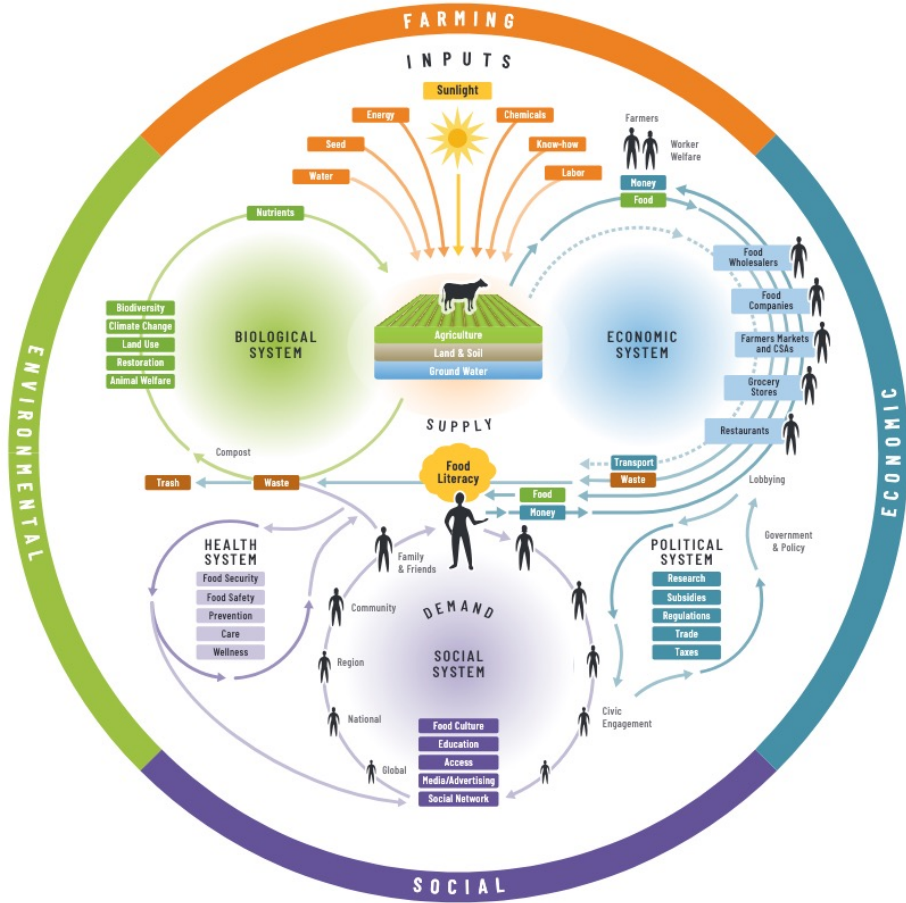
For the conference

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



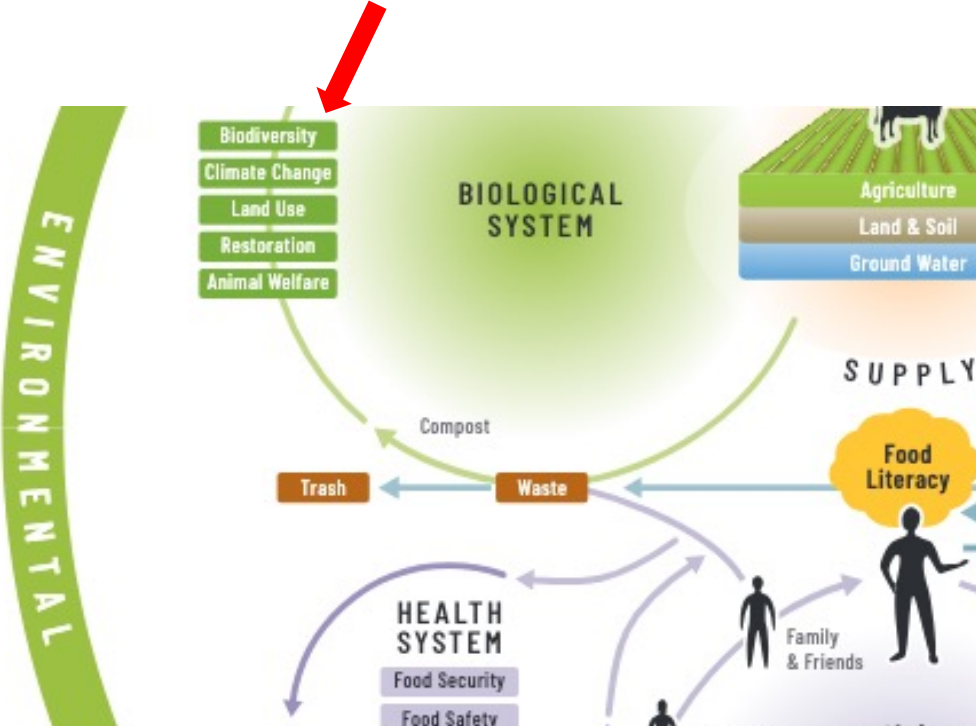
1. INTRODUCTION

Research in the context of the EU FOODCOST project

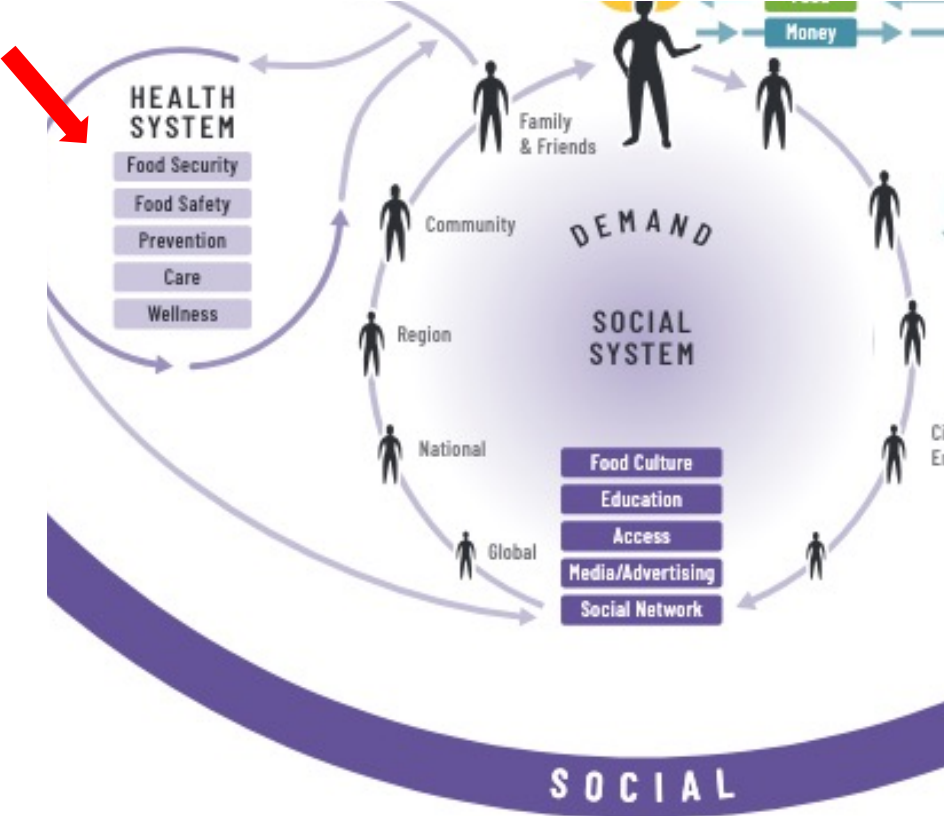


Nourish Initiative food systems mapping (2020)

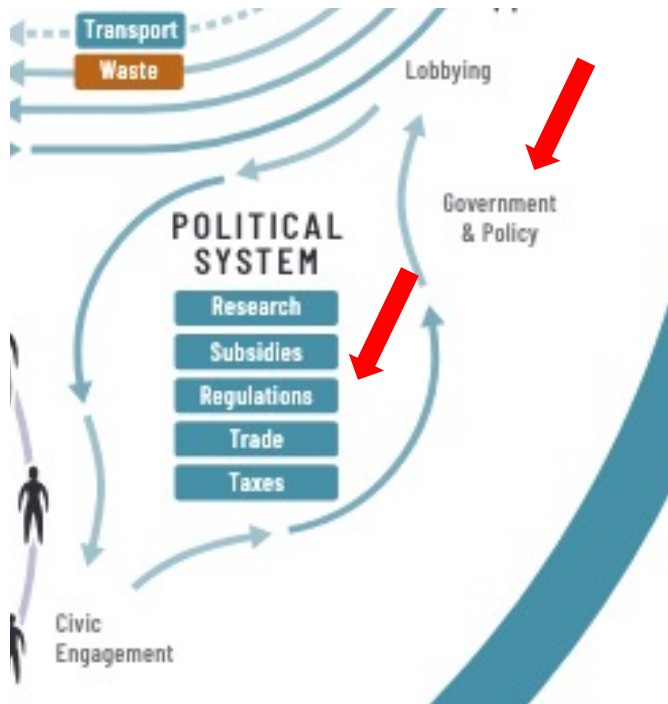
Research in the context of the EU **FOODCOST** project



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Addressing these **externalities** is crucial for building sustainable and resilient food systems that accurately reflect the true costs of production and consumption.

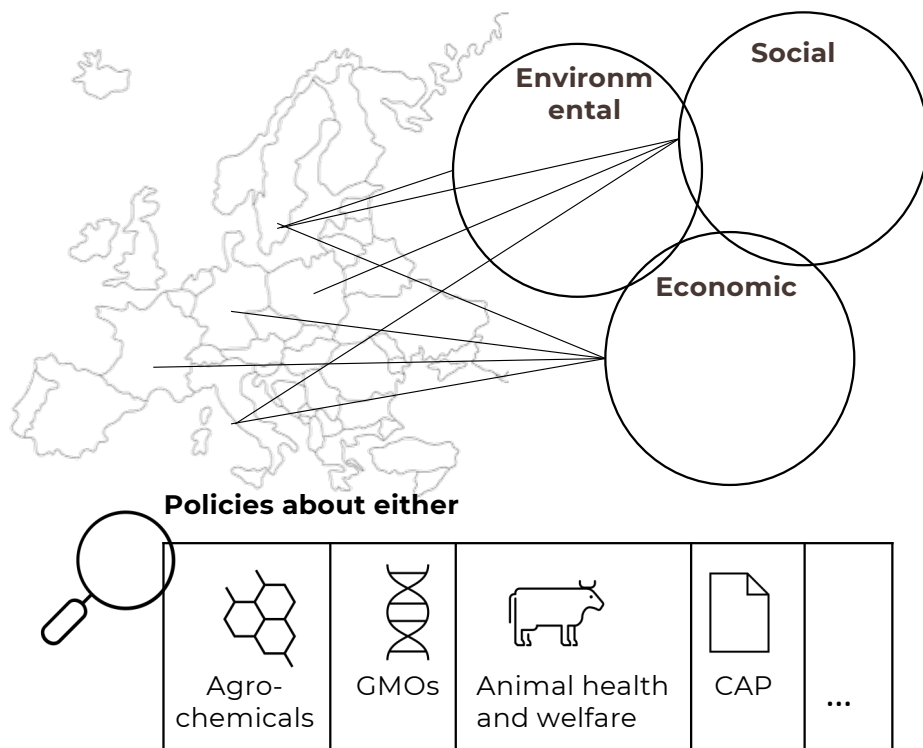
Policies play a part in promoting positive externalities and reducing or mitigating negative ones

Research question

How do European policies influence the
 environmental,
 social, and
 economic
externalities of agri-food systems?

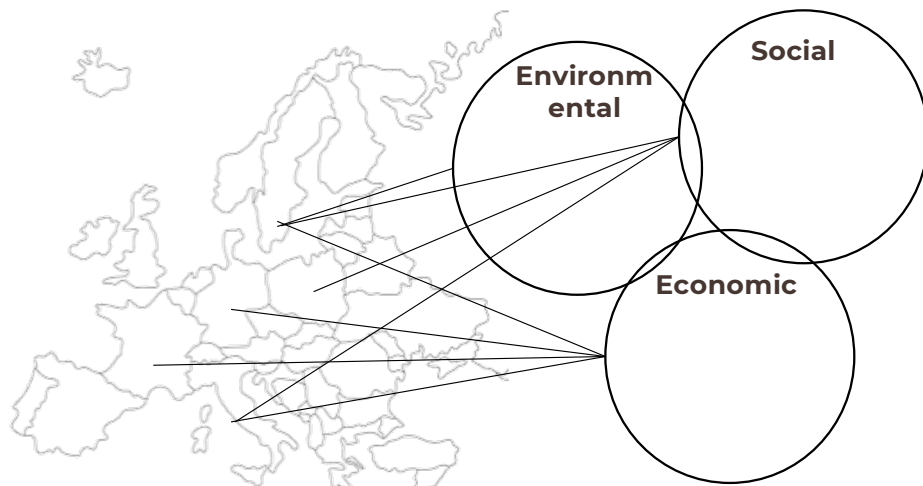
Bridging the gap in EU agri-food policy evaluation

Current research landscape

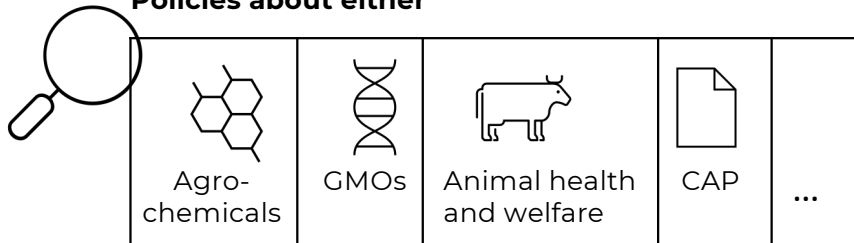


Bridging the gap in EU agri-food policy evaluation

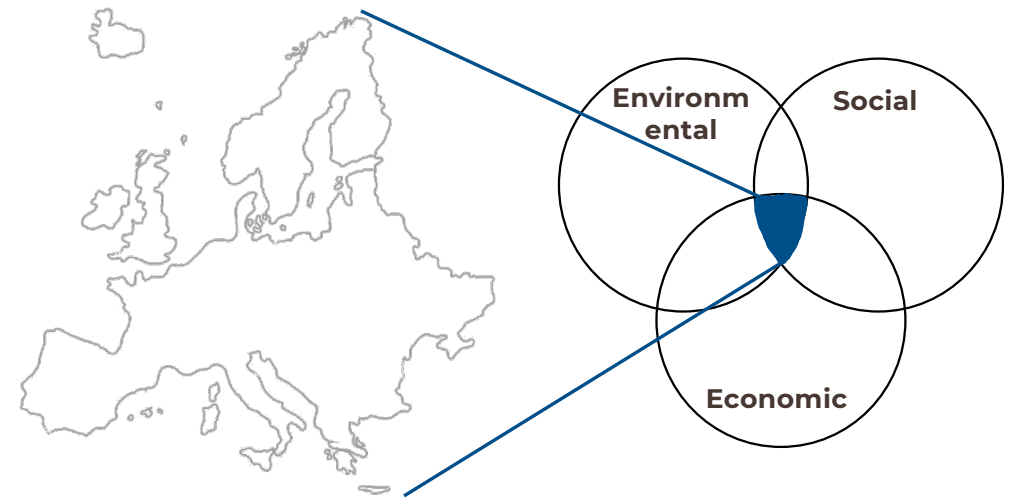
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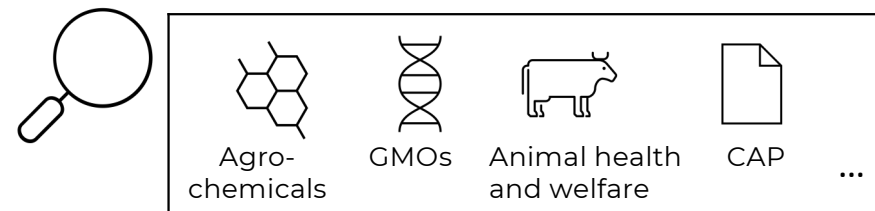
Policies about either



Our objective

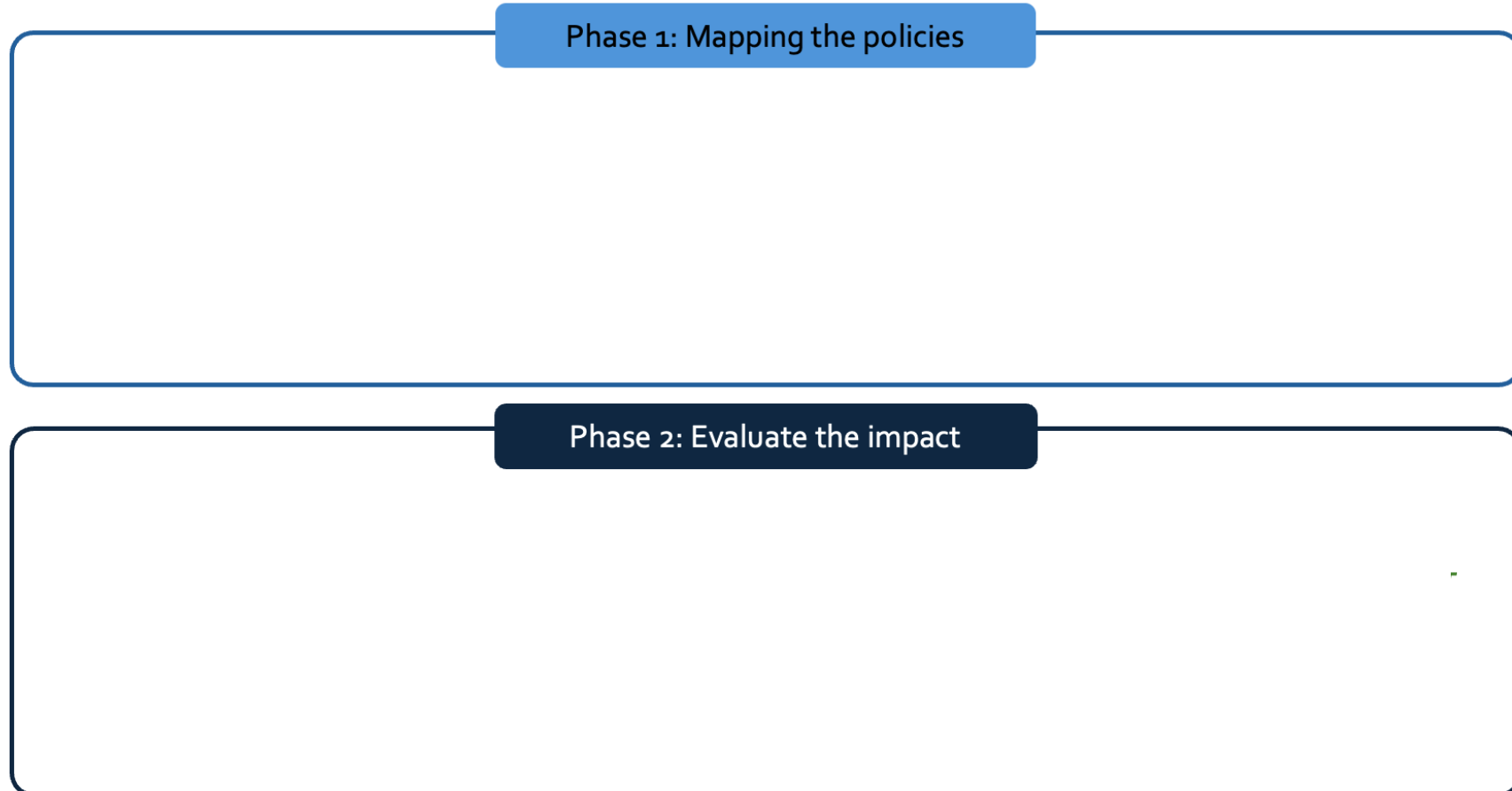


All agrifood-related policies



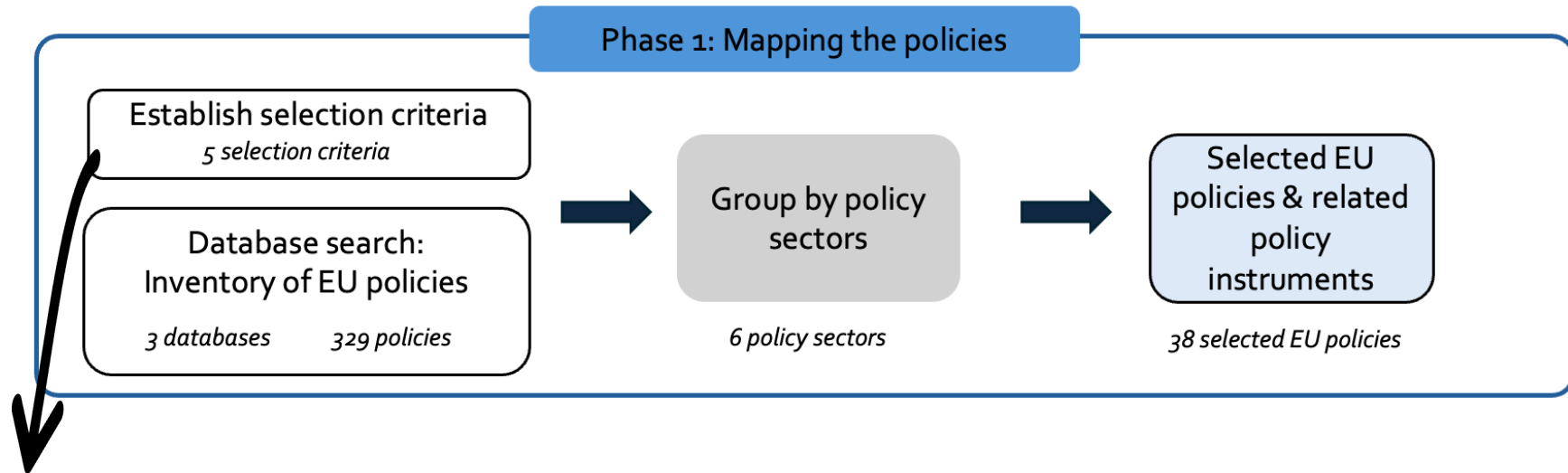
2. METHODOLOGY

Two-stage approach methodology



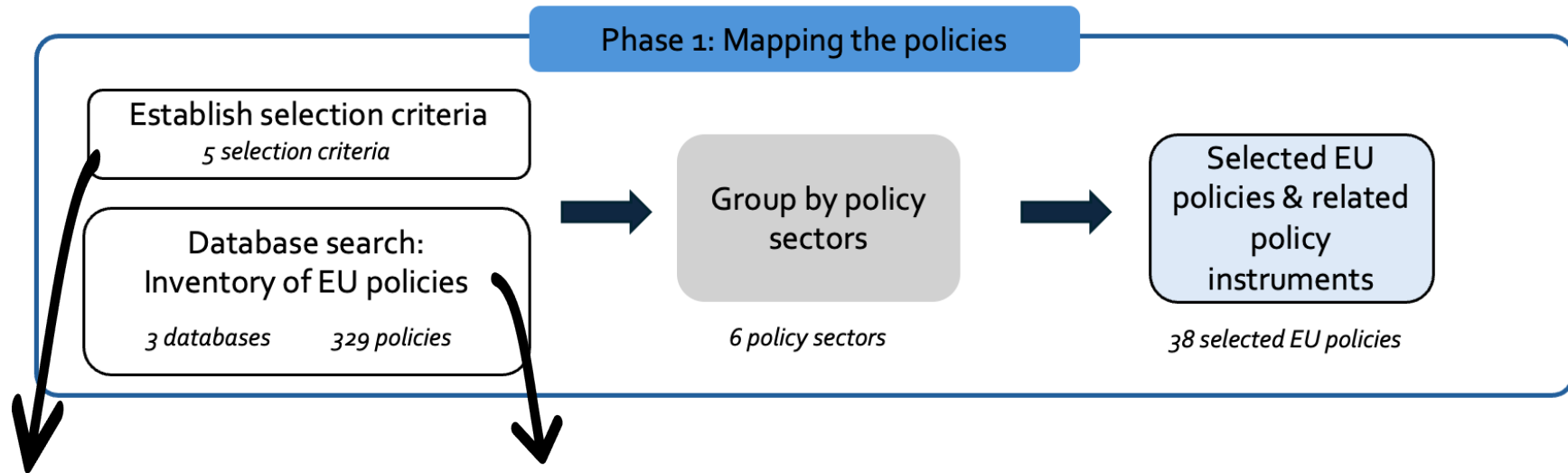
Based on Coinon M. et al., 2023

Policy mapping



1. Public policy
2. Active from 2000 onward
3. Focus on policies affecting the production side
4. Impact-related

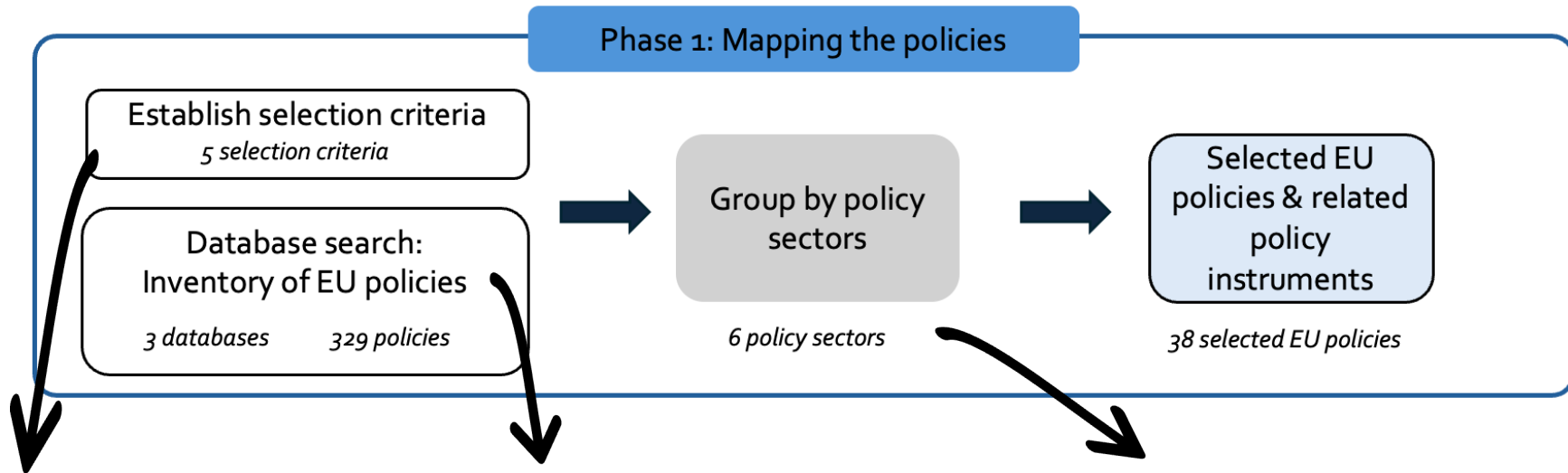
Policy mapping



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1. The European Union database for European Law
2. Climate Policy database
3. Coller Animal Law Forum

Policy mapping

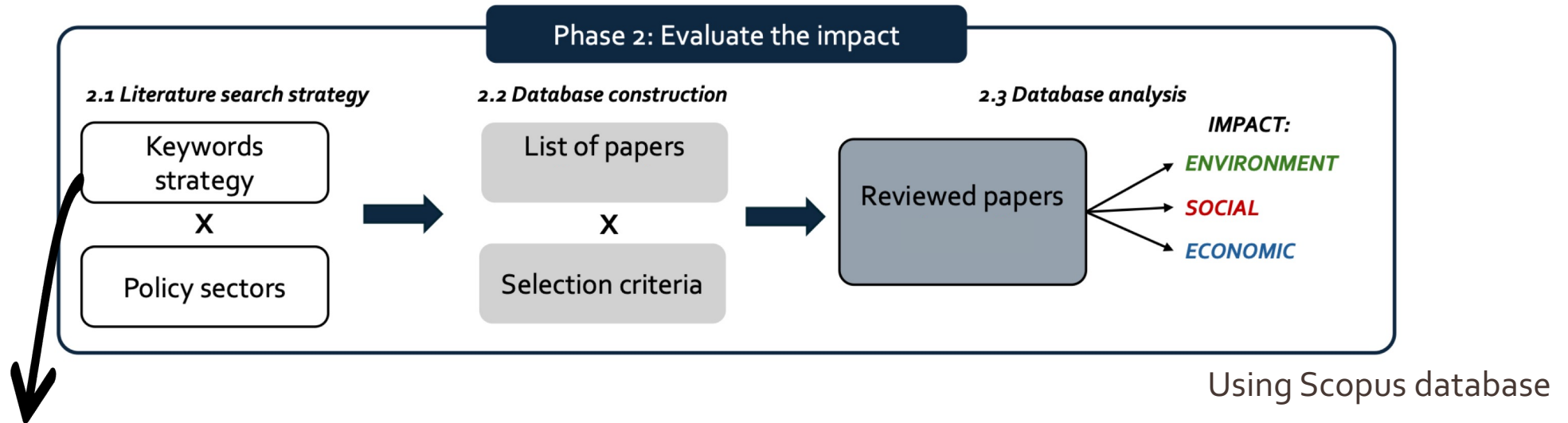


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1. CAP
2. GMOs
3. Pesticides
4. Fertilizers
5. Animal welfare
6. Fisheries

Policy evaluation



Examples

- Lexical fields of « policy », e.g. regulation, directives, prescription,...
- Lexical fields of « impact evaluation », e.g. impact, effect, externalities, costs,...

Policy evaluation

Phase 2: Evaluate the impact

2.1 Literature search strategy

Keywords strategy

X

Policy sectors

2.2 Database construction

List of papers

X

Selection criteria

2.3 Database analysis

Reviewed papers

IMPACT:

ENVIRONMENT

SOCIAL

ECONOMIC

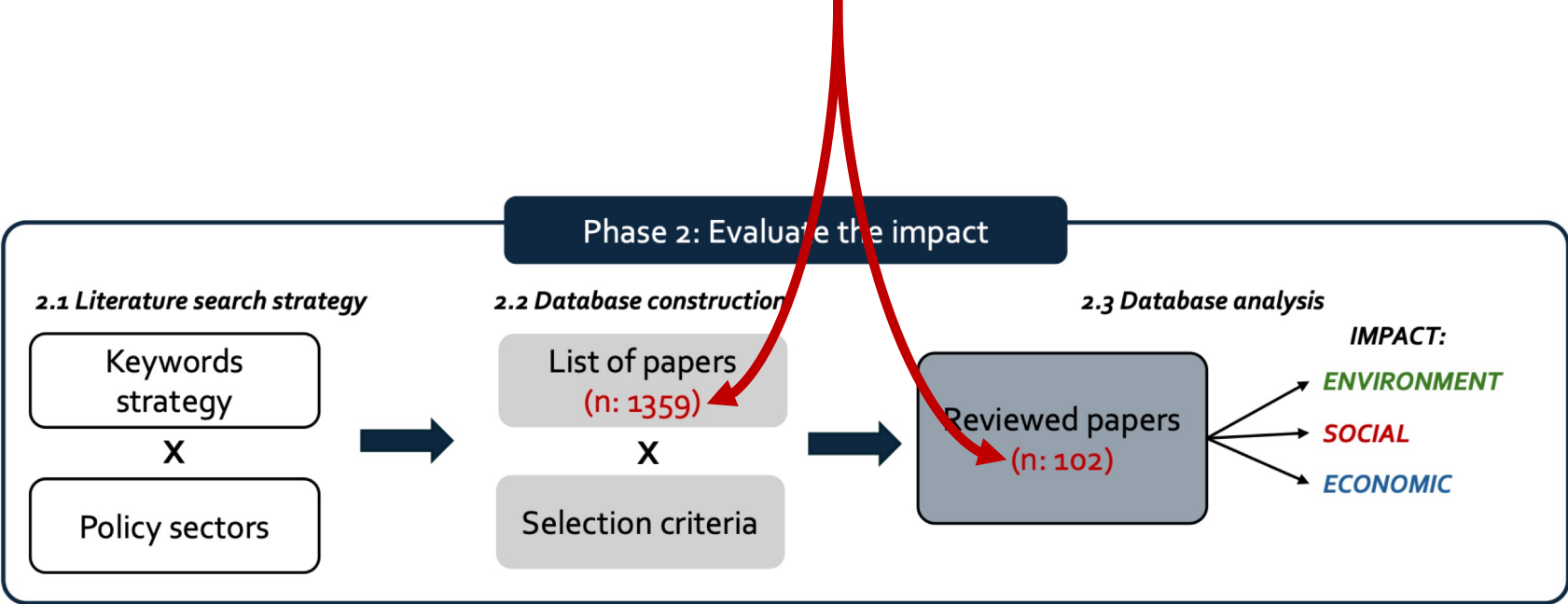
Using Scopus database

Examples

- Lexical fields of « policy », e.g. regulation, directives, prescription,...
- Lexical fields of « impact evaluation », e.g. impact, effect, externalities, costs,...

GMOs, Pesticides, fertilizers,...

High scholarly interest in the topic



Summary of policy mapping & reviewed papers

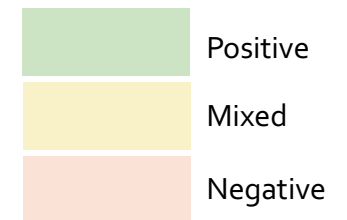
Policy sector	EU Policies	Number of articles retrieved	Number of articles reviewed
Common Agricultural Policy	3 regulations	116	26
Genetically Modified Organisms	4 regulations 1 directive	170	18
Pesticides	4 regulations 3 directives	448	18
Fertilizers	1 regulation 3 directives	123	11
Fisheries	9 regulations 1 directive	191	21
Animal health and welfare	8 regulations 1 directive	311	8
Total	29 regulations 9 directives	1.359	102

3. KEY FINDINGS

Mixed impacts across dimensions

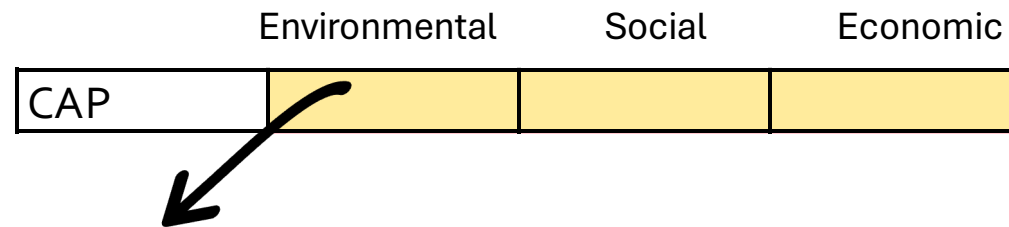
Overall impact trend of the policies evaluated under each sector

	Environmental	Social	Economic
CAP Pillar II	Mixed	Positive	Mixed
CAP Pillar I	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
GMOs	Mixed		Negative
Pesticide	Mixed	Positive	Mixed
Fertilizers	Negative	Mixed	Mixed
Fisheries	Negative	Negative	Negative
Animal health & welfare	Mixed	Positive	Mixed



NB: However, the lack of counterfactual situation precludes any comparison with the state the EU would be in today in the absence of these regulations.

Zoom in the Common Agricultural Policy

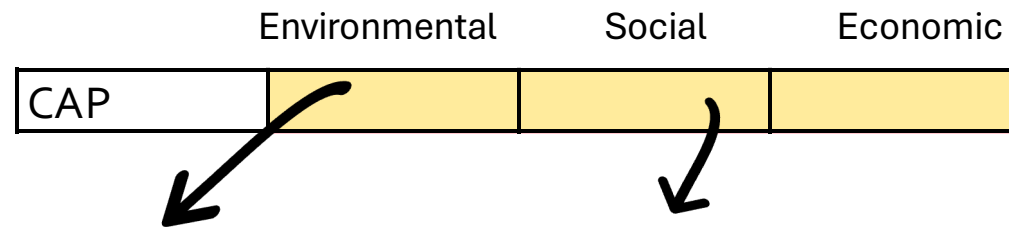


- Aim to define environmental standards across EU, yet limited effect on biodiversity preservation, and climate change



Batáry et al., 2015; Concepción & Díaz, 2019; Kleijn et al., 2011; Primdahl et al., 2003

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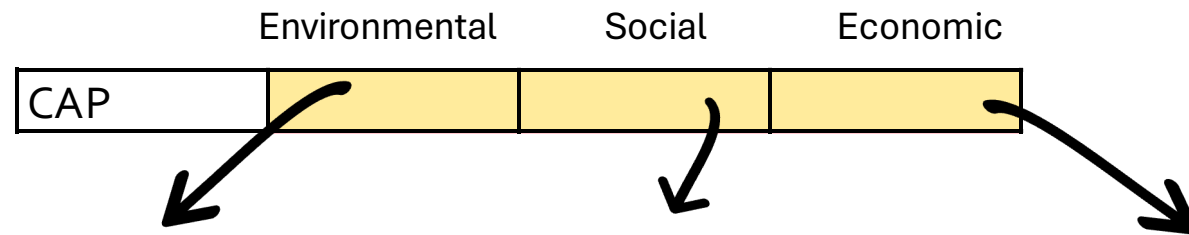
Batáry et al., 2015; Concepción & Díaz, 2019; Kleijn et al., 2011; Primdahl et al., 2003

- Supposed to stabilize rural livelihoods, but contributed marginally to socioeconomic development in rural areas



Lillemets et al., 2022; Schuh et al., 2016; Granvik et al., 2012 ; Galluzzo, 2013; Bournaris et al., 2014

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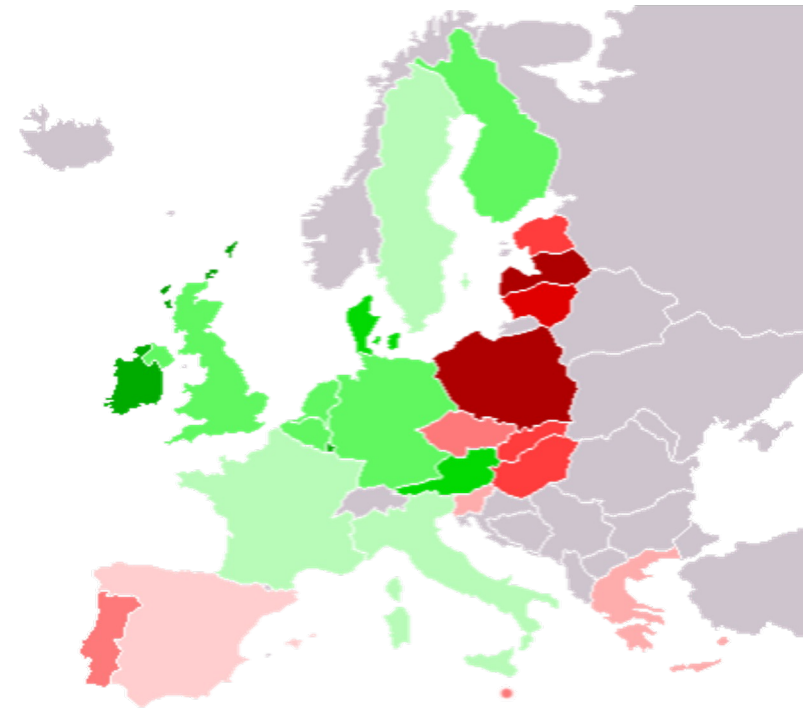
- Contribute to farm income support
- Large discrepancies between farms size and regions



Ciaian et al., 2015; Biagini et al., 2020; Bournaris et al., 2014; Bojnec & Fertő, 2022

No matter the policy topic, we observed a strong heterogeneity of impacts across EU regions.

Why is that?



4. DISCUSSION

Understanding this heterogeneity

Three reoccurring issues creating heterogeneity

1. Challenges in policy compliance
2. Tensions in decision-making power distribution
3. Inadequacy of policy targeting

Challenges in policy compliance

At Member State level



Regional disparities
(e.g., Eco-schemes & AES set of
requirement in the CAP)

(Paolacci et al. 2021)

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At stakeholder level

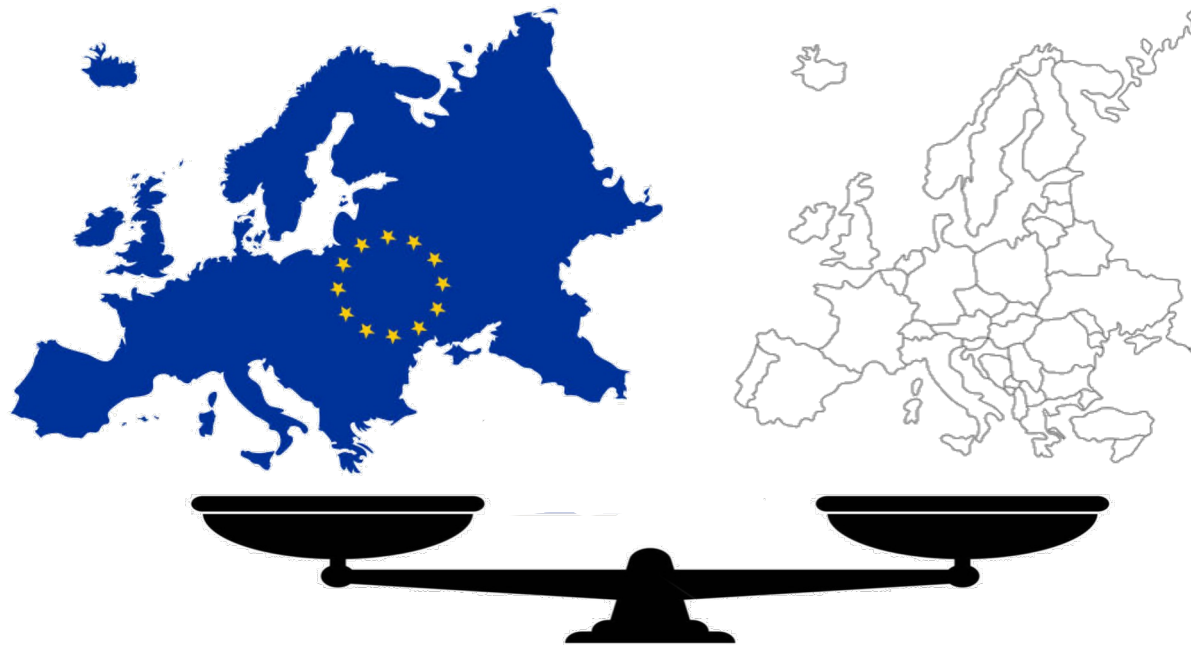


Unequal burden on small vs. large stakeholders
(e.g., cost of implementation + administrative
compliance with Agri-environment-climate
Measures)

(Matzdorf and Lorenz 2010)

Tensions in decision-making power distribution

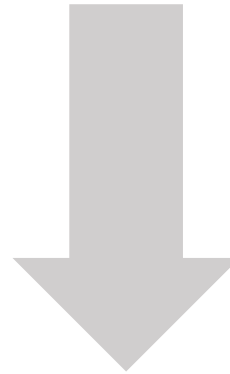
Centralization vs. subsidiarity



Inadequacy of policy targeting



Vague ambitions and guidance



Fragmented implementation

5. KEY TAKEAWAYS

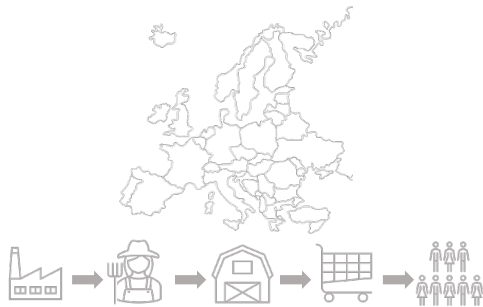
Our results in a glimpse

- Limited positive impacts of EU agrifood policies across dimensions

	Environmental	Social	Economic
CAP Pillar II	Yellow	Green	Yellow
CAP Pillar I	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
GMOs	Yellow	White	Red
Pesticide	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Fertilizers	Red	Yellow	Yellow
Fisheries	Red	Red	Red
Animal health&welfare	Yellow	Green	Yellow

- Strong heterogeneity, associated with 3 major issues :

1. Compliance difficulties



2. Governance tensions



3. Poor policy targeting



Overarching issue: weak monitoring and evaluation



Research focused on a hypothetical approach

Evaluations of intentions or compliance rather than evidence-based field outcomes



Information overload

Diluted messages and conflicting conclusions



Weak political commitment toward monitoring and evaluation

Rooted in both methodological shortcomings and data limitations

Thank you for your attention!



SYTRA

transition of
food systems

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