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Environmental opportunities in the rural development 2007-2013

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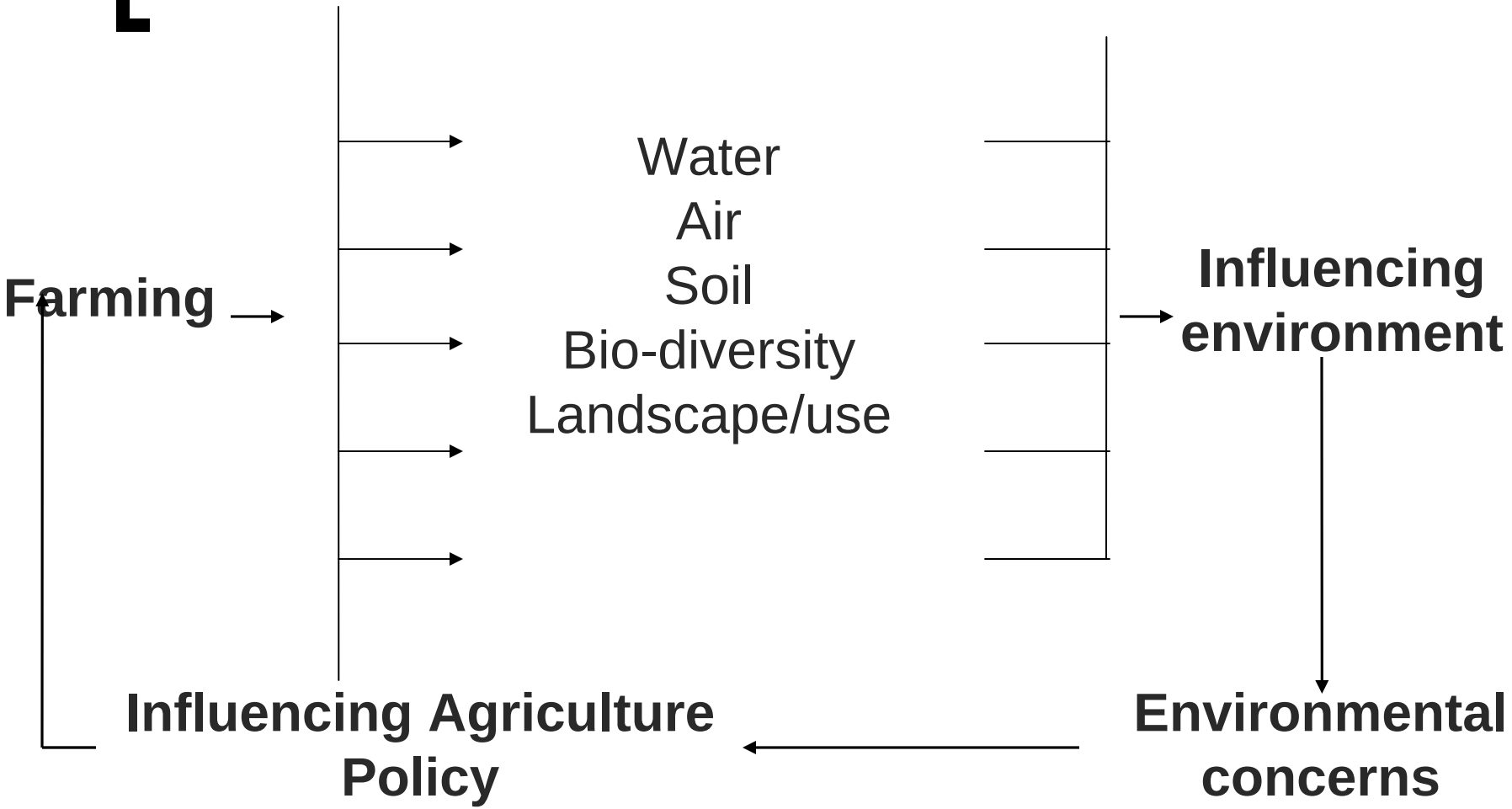
Coexistence: agriculture & environment



Environmental problems raised by changing farming situation and practice

Water:	Nitrates, phosphates, pesticides.
Air:	Ammonia, Greenhouse gases (methane and nitrous oxide), Pesticides.
Soil:	Erosion, declining organic matter, contamination.
Biodiversity:	Habitat disturbance and destruction, decline in farmland birds.
Landscape:	Threatened by intensification and land abandonment. Removal/change of features contributing to protection of water, soil, biodiversity.
NB:	Many positive aspects: CO_2 sequestration, soil protection, protection of landscape & wildlife habitats etc.

Two forces: intensification & marginalisation

- Intensification
  - overuse of fertilisers and pesticides (inappropriate use),
  - increase livestock density and overgrazing
  - conversion of semi-natural grassland to arable lands, monoculture
  - removal of landscape elements like hedgerows, stonewalls, ditches

- Marginalisation (abandonment)
  - elimination of positive management practices such as:
  - mowing of meadows
  - insufficient grazing livestock to maintain grassland

Results

- pressures on biodiversity but also water, soil and air
- elimination of species-rich semi natural habitats (meadows, pastures)
- decline and loss of biodiversity
- changes in landscape

Example: 40% of all declining bird species in Europe affected by intensification and > 20% by abandonment

Policy responses

- Amsterdam Treaty – integration
- Communication « Directions towards sustainable agriculture »
- The EC Sustainable Development Strategy and
- 6th Environment Action Plan (2002 – 2012)
- Presidency conclusions Göteborg 2002 feeding into Lisbon Strategy
- Legislative responses

EU legislative response

Water

- Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)

Relevant for nitrates, general good practice and phosphorus particularly when derogations are concerned.

- Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

Relevant for all agriculture through river basin management planning. Now working towards plans to apply from 2009

EU legislative response

Biodiversity

NATURA directives

- Wild birds (79/409/EEC).
- Habitats (92/43/EEC).

The basis for nature protection and involving not just a managed network of sites but also more general care.

Air

- National Emissions Ceilings (NEC) directive (2001/81/EC).

Target to reduce ammonia emissions from agriculture (93% EU total).

- Air quality (1999/30/EC).

Ammonia contributing to particulate matter in the atmosphere.

- Air Thematic Strategy 2005 with further targets for 2020.

Soil and Landscape – currently through Annex IV of R1782/2003 (common to water, biodiversity, air, soil).

EU legislative responses

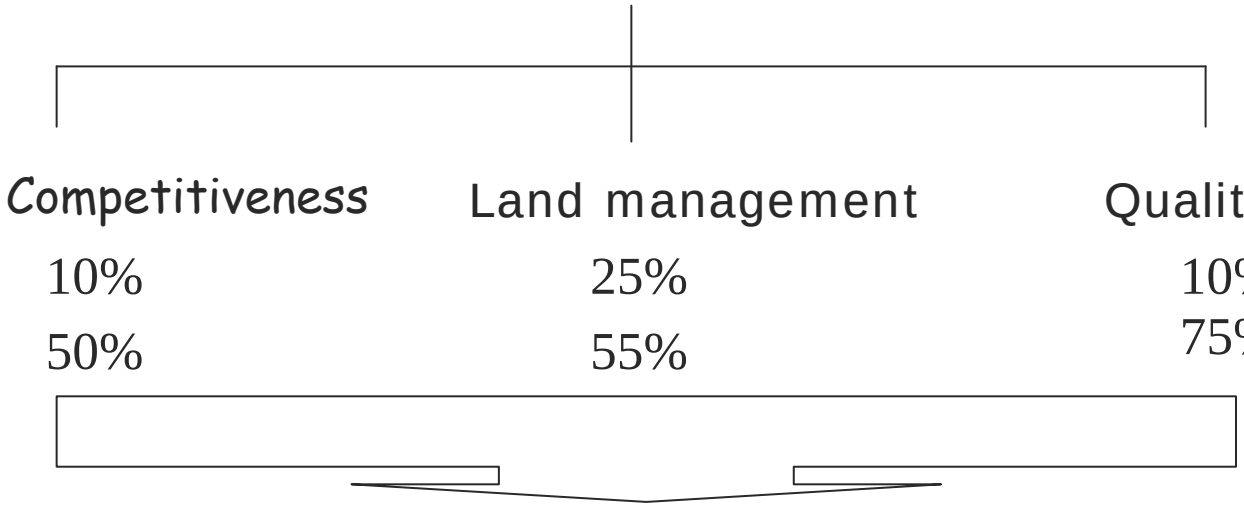
- Cross compliance (Council regulation (EC) n° 1782/2003)

- Farmers receiving direct payments must respect:
  - Statutory Management requirements (Annex III).
  - Good AGR and ENV conditions (Annex IV).
- Central role with respect to environmental and other legislative relationships of agriculture.
- Pivotal role with respect to:
  - Excessive concentration and intensification
  - Avoiding land abandonment.
- Farmer – general society relationship.
- Replacing good farm practice in rural development 2007-13 with however strengthened basis for agri-environment.
- Key requirement: good implementation of Nitrates and Natura Directives (even the MS with very difficult situation progress now).

Environmental problems & rural development policy

- Main environmental priority areas to be addressed by rural development policy:
  - Biodiversity/Natura 2000: halt the loss of biodiversity + implementation of the network of sites
  - Air/climate change: meet NEC + Kyoto commitments
  - Water/Nitrates: WFD-achieve good qualitative/quantitative/ecological status
  - Soil: combat erosion/loss of organic matter
- Interrelations between the above

Rural Development Package 2007-13



EU strategic guidelines – adopted February 2006

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National Strategy Plans – in preparation

↓

National/regional Rural Development Plans

Total EU funding €67 billion + national funding

Community strategic guidelines

For improving the environment and countryside::

- Biodiversity and preservation and development of high nature value farming + forestry.
- Water
- Climate change

Biodiversity & NATURA 2000 (1)

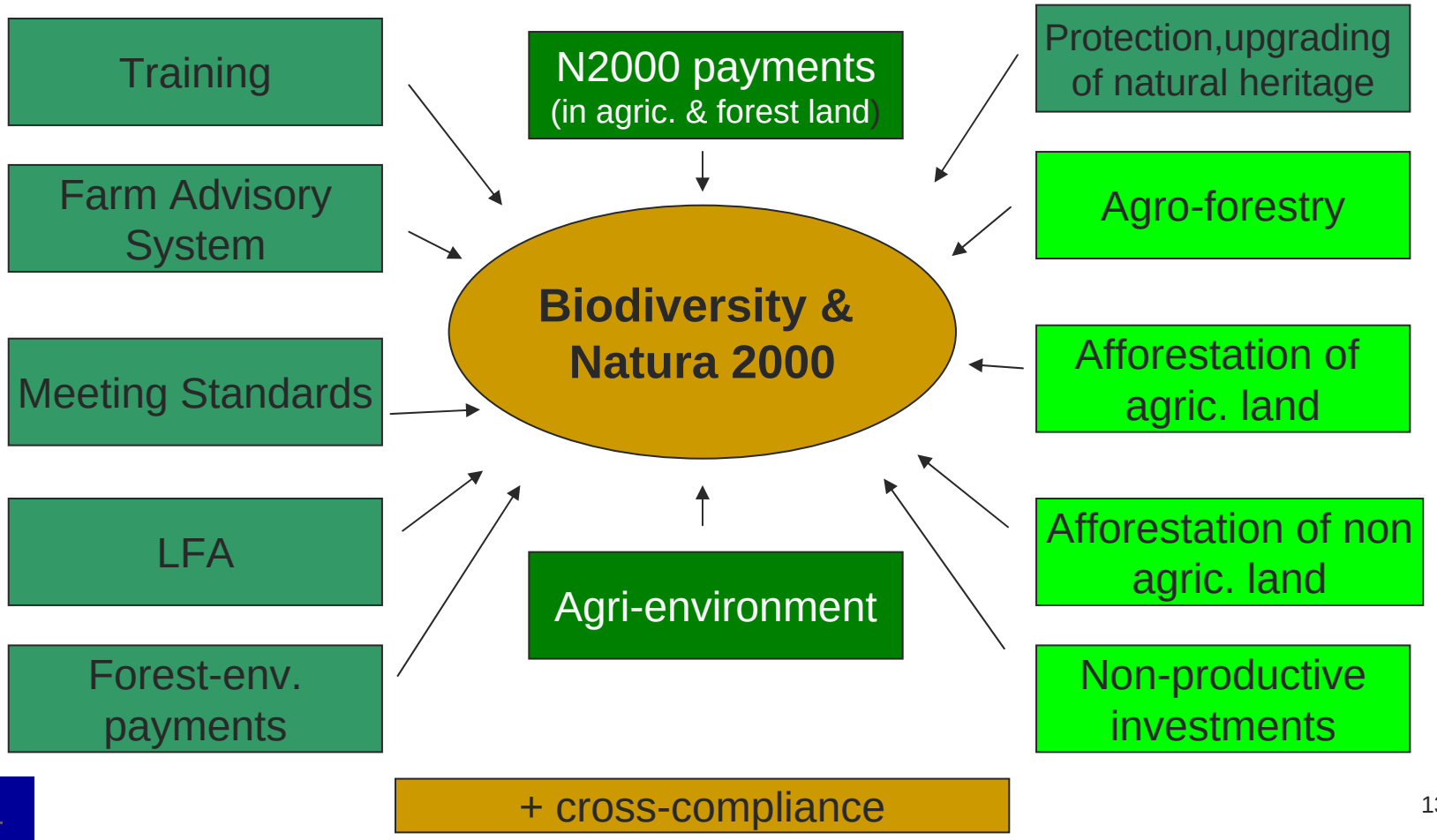
- The EU network of ~ 18.000 sites = 17.5% of the EU-15

- Aim: to maintain and enhance the biological diversity via promoting sustainable development

- Putting into practice - policy responses:

- Göteborg conclusions: halt of loss of biodiversity
- Biodiversity action plan for agriculture
- Message from Malahide with its roadmap
- A real RD challenge: designing & putting the mgt plans into place

Biodiversity & Natura2000 (2)



Air/Climate change (1)

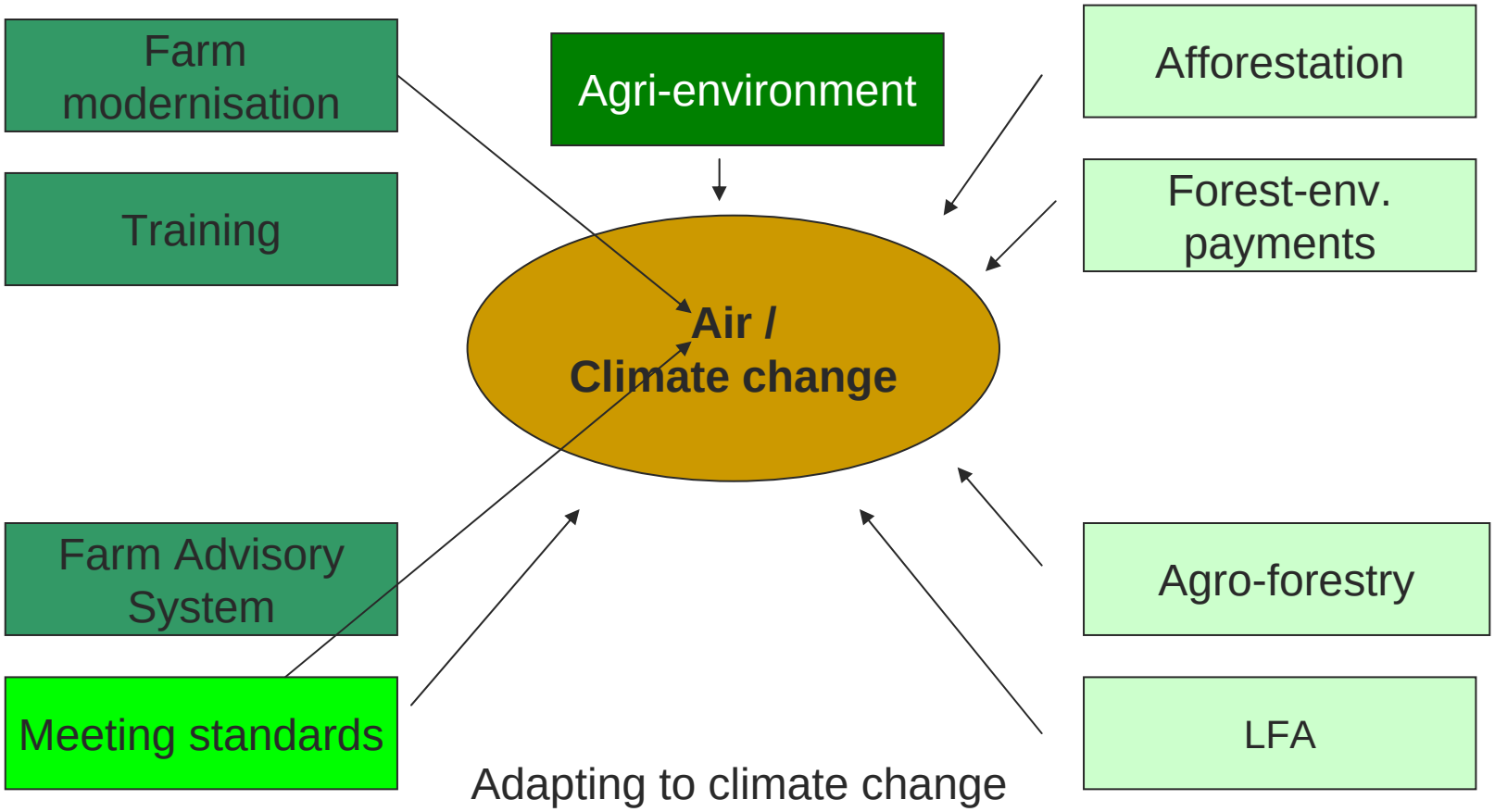
- Kyoto Protocol and goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions of the EC to 8% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012
  - Reducing agriculture's contribution

    10% of EU total; Methane and Nitrous Oxide.
  - Replacing fossil fuels

    Energy crops support

  - NEC Directive and the Göteborg Protocol and goal of reducing ammonia emissions from agriculture (93% of NH3 coming from this source)

Air/Climate change (2)



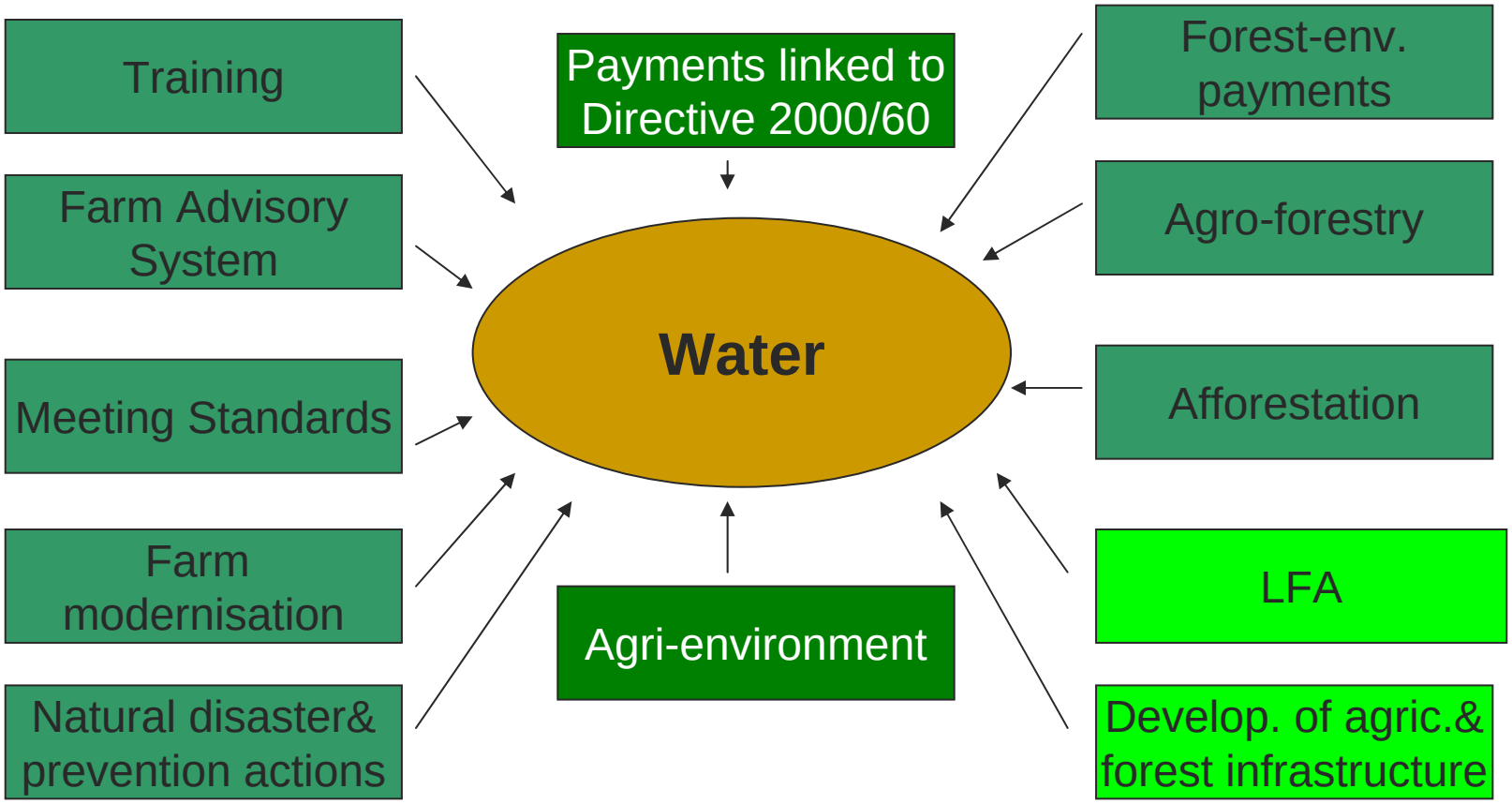
Water (1)

- Water Framework Directive with its objective of achieving good status of waters by 2015 via…
- River basin management plans to apply from 2009 therefore…
- Need to include measures for these plans already into RD Plans in 2007.

AND

Nitrates directive 676/91 – completing implementation

Water (2)

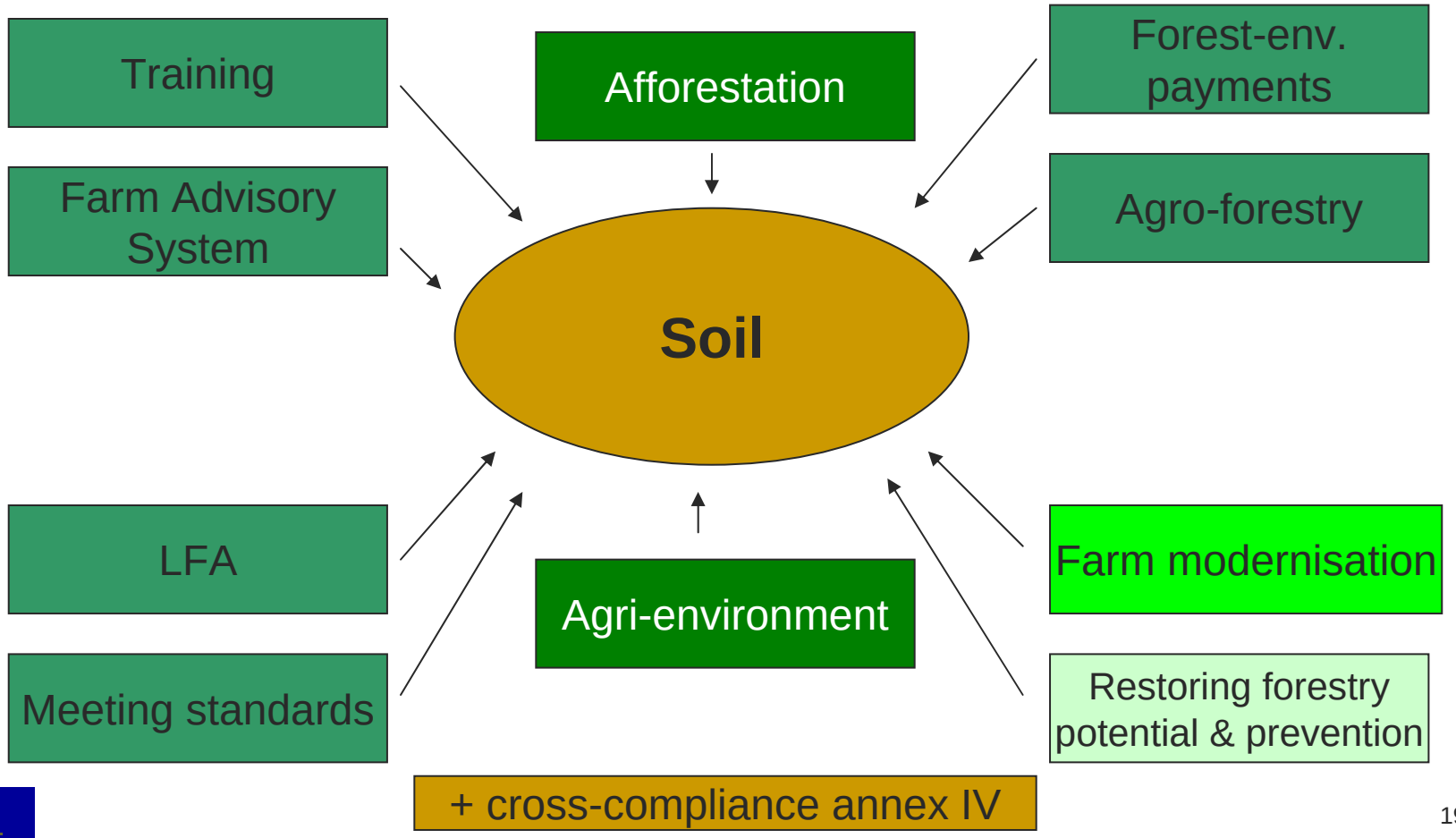

Training
Farm Advisory System
Meeting Standards
Farm modernisation
Natural disaster& prevention actions
Payments linked to Directive 2000/60
Agri-environment
Forest-env. payments
Agro-forestry
Afforestation
LFA
Develop. of agric.& forest infrastructure
Water
+ cross-compliance

Soil (1)

- The current Annex IV of the R1782/2003 with its GAEC requirements regarding soil protection within farming (soil erosion, soil organic matter, soil structure, minimum level of maintenance and avoidance of deterioration of habitats)

- Forthcoming Thematic Soil Strategy

Soil (2)


Training
Farm Advisory System
Afforestation
Forest-env. payments
Agro-forestry
Soil
LFA
Meeting standards
Agri-environment
Farm modernisation
Restoring forestry potential & prevention
+ cross-compliance annex IV

Possible actions under certain RD measures (1)

Measures	Biodiversity/ N 2000	Air/Climate change	Water/Nitrates	Soil
Farm modernisation	-	-biogas installations; -renewable energy; -animal housing (reduction of NH3): stable construction with reduced emissions; -liquid manure storage containers + coverage; -Spreader maintenance;	-water savings irrigation investment; -coverage of manure storage; -storage facilities;	-anti-erosion machinery;
Meeting standards	-all obligatory standards in relation to faming activities, as set by MS at farm level, based on requirements of nature directives;	- Machinery treatment of slurry;	-compulsory measures from mgt plans; -manure storage facilities; -manure application techniques;	-appropriate manure/sewage sludge application;
Less Favoured Areas	-prevention of land abandonment; -maintenance of sustainable farming (extensification)	-maintenance of sustainable farming (agricultural extensification);	-maintenance of sustainable farming (extensification);	-prevention erosion; -maintenance of sustainable farming (extensification);

Possible actions under RD measures (2)

Measures	Biodiversity/N 2000	Air/Climate change	Water/Nitrates	Soil
Agri-environment	-nature mgt (measures to protect specific species of flora&fauna) -reduction of input use: integrated plant/crop production; -organic farming; -mgt of linear features (hedges, stonewalls, river bank areas etc); -conversion of arable to grassland;	-increase carbon content in soil (sequestration); -reduced cultivation (tillage); -maintaining the permanent pastures; -stock density reduction; -reduction in use of fertilisers & PPP; -fertilisers free zones;	-buffer strips; -reduction of input (fertilisers, plant protection): integrated plant/crop production; -ground cover; -stocking density rate; -convert arable land to grassland; -fertilisers free zones;	-Organic cover; -prevention erosion; -winter cover; - rotation of crops; -grassland strips; -greening arable land;
Forestry measures	-forest mgt in N2000 areas; -ecological stability of forest; -prevention of forest fires;	-carbon sequestration; -GHG emissions; -energy from forest biomass & wood waste biomass;	-protection of freshwater resources	-general soil protection; -prevention forest fires;
Natura payments	Positively influencing →	the state of the natural →	resources (interrelations →	between the measures)
Training/ FAS	Spreading knowledge →	on the environmentally →	friendly farming practices →	and land management

Timetable

- Final, legal text of the RD Reg. – Sept./Oct.
- Ongoing discussion on the EU RD Strategic Guidelines should be accomplished this autumn
- Importance of the national strategies indicating MS's priorities which should ensure consistency with the Strategic Guidelines (end 2005)
- Drafting and discussing RD plans (2006)

DG ENV assessment of RD strategies and programmes

- Consistency of the national strategies and RD programmes with the EU RD Strategic Guidelines
- Assessment – main points:
- Consultation process
- Environmental description
- Relevance of the strategy proposed and the measures selected and their link to existing environmental problems
- Synergies between measures and axes
- Financial balance between axes and measures
- BUT subsidiarity principle remains…

Conclusions

• Agriculture has both negative and positive impact on the environment.

•A strong legislative response exists.

•CAP has changed to a great extent in favour of the environment through its reforms.

•Rural development policy is capable of significant environmental delivery – but money is scarce

•Synergies between axes and measure beneficial for the environment.

efforts now can ease problems later