

# Governance of food system transition in the EU: Roles for research and its interface with policy

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# About me

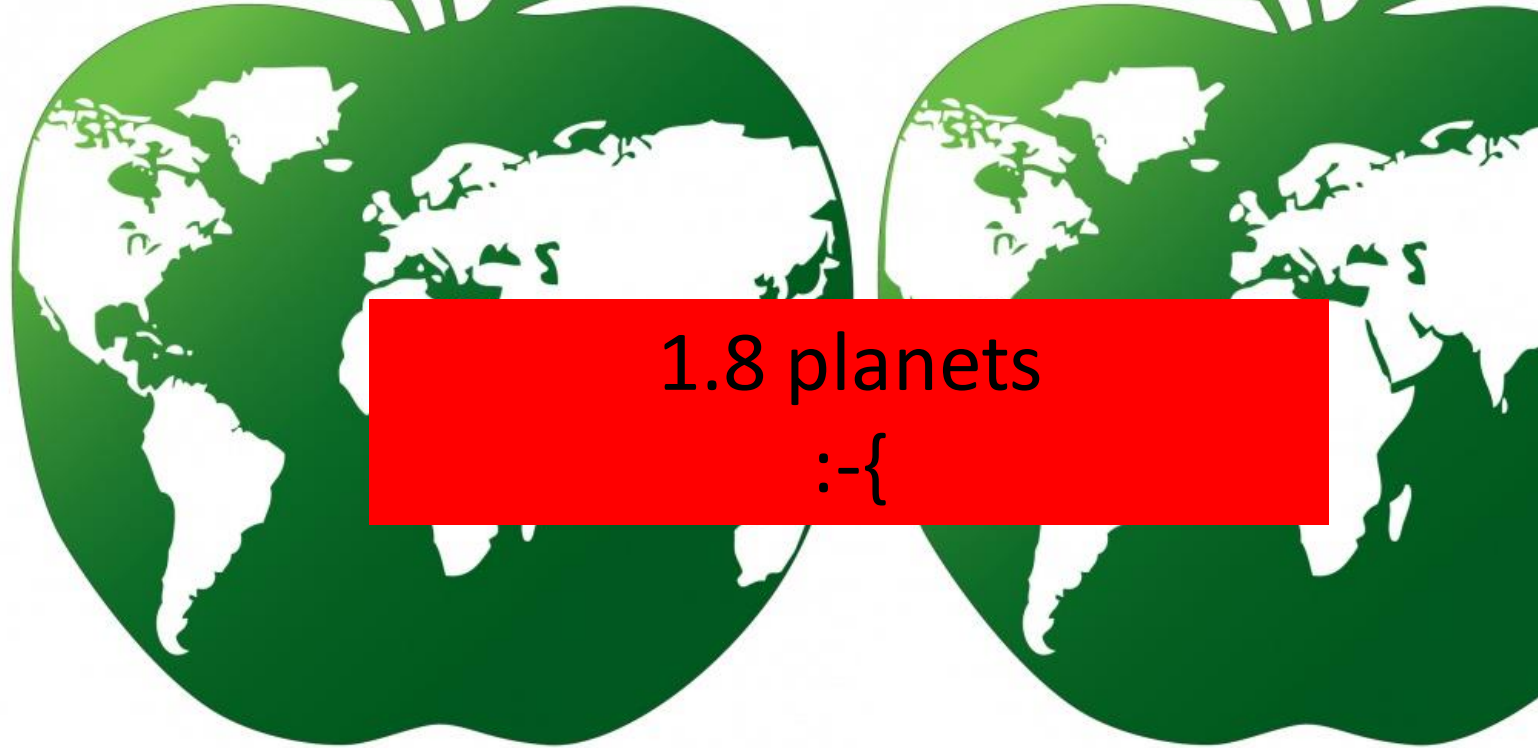
## Research

- Pathways to sustainable food systems and healthy diets
  - Global & EU food security
  - Economics of food systems transformation
  - Affordable healthy diets
  - Innovation systems

## Uptake/societal impact

- Working with practitioners on applying hands-on food systems approaches
  - Food policy, national & municipalities
  - Innovation policy
  - Impact investment

# Global carbon footprint of my flexitarian plate



# Agenda for the session



EU FOOD POLICY  
UPDATE



SCIENCE FOR  
POLICY



OPPORTUNITIES!

# Farm to Fork



Make sure Europeans have access to healthy, affordable and sustainable food



Tackle climate change



Protect the environment and preserve biodiversity



Ensure a fair economic return in the supply chain



Increase organic farming

27 actions: new legislations, revisions of legislations, other voluntary actions (EU code of conduct for businesses)

Flagship: A new sustainable food system framework law

# Establish a sustainable food system that:



- **has neutral or positive environmental impact** of food production:
  - preserving and restoring the land and sea-based resources;
  - mitigate climate change and adapt to its impact;
  - reversing the loss of biodiversity;



- **ensures food security and public health:**
  - Access for everyone to sufficient, nutritious, sustainable food;
  - high standards of safety and quality, plant health, animal health and welfare



- **preserves the affordability of food**, while (a.o.):
  - generating fairer economic returns & fostering the competitiveness sector
  - promoting fair trade
  - safeguarding occupational health and safety
  - ensuring integrity of the single market



Food security and food safety are cornerstones of our food system, and will never be compromised



# Adopted initiatives

- Contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security
- F2F perspectives on Common Agricultural Policy strategic plans

Marked: Initiatives with consumer orientation

# Ongoing initiatives

- Food labelling initiatives
- EU level targets for food waste reduction
- Revision of the EU school scheme
- Revision of Food Contact Materials legislation
- Revision of the animal welfare legislation
- Revision of the feed additives legislation
- Revision of the EU promotion programme for agri- food products
- Revision of EU **marketing standards** for agricultural products
- EU Carbon farming, ....

# New framework legislation on a Union sustainable food system

## OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE:

- Set the foundations for the systemic changes that are needed by all actors of the food system, including policy makers, business operators and consumers in order to accelerate the transition to a sustainable EU food system
- Promote policy coherence at EU and national level, mainstream sustainability in all food related policies and strengthen the resilience of food systems

Aim: Proposal by September 2023



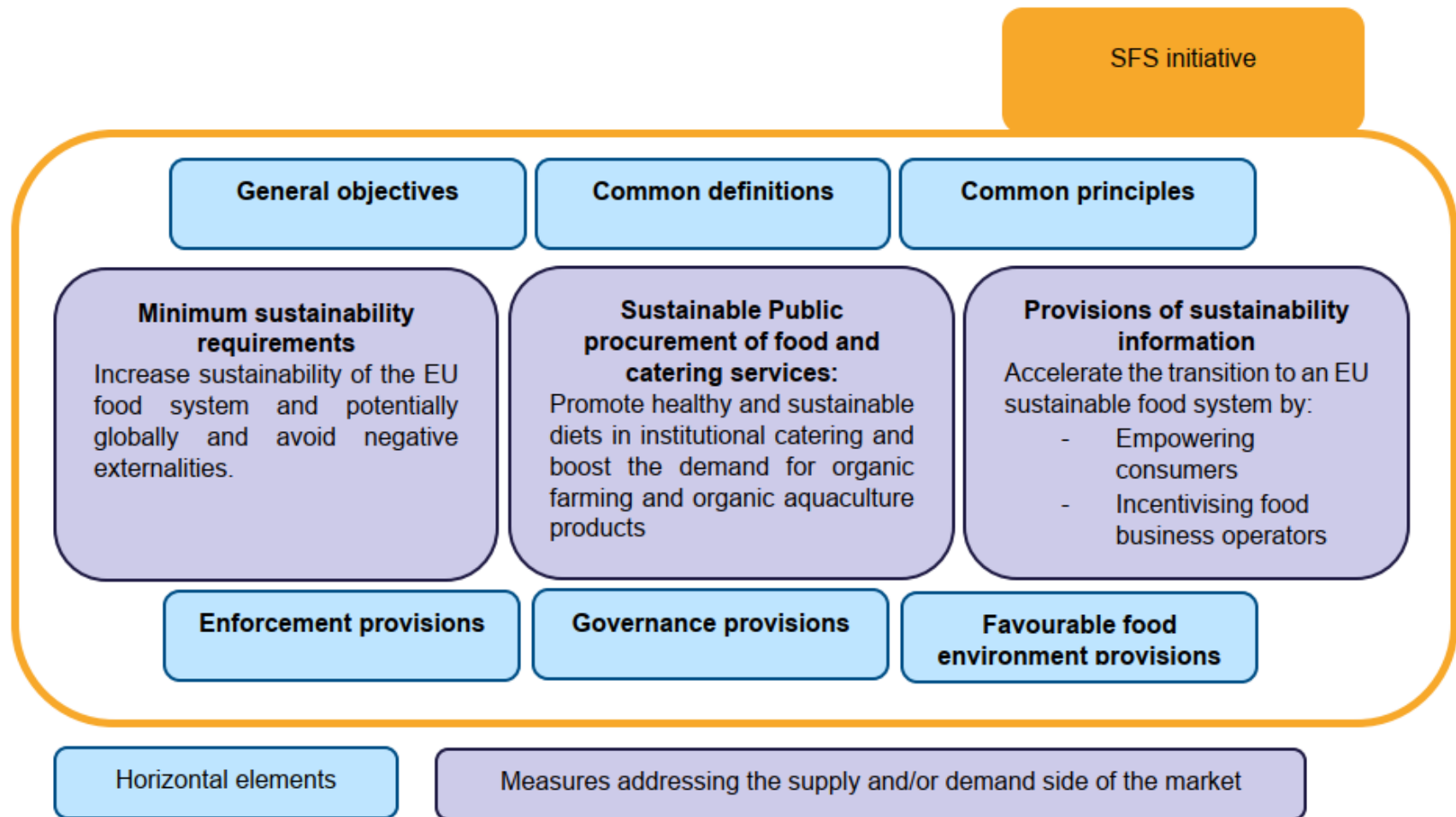


Figure 1. "Building block" of the SFS initiative

# Main elements

- Common definitions:
  - food system/ sustainable food system/ food environment/food system actors/sustainable diets
- General objectives to be pursued
- General principles targeting policy makers future and existing legislation will be aligned/adapted where relevant to those principles
- Governance provisions to frame and encourage multilevel engagement
- Favourable food environment' provisions
- Monitoring and enforcement provisions

# Sustainability requirements

Option 0	Option 1	Option 2	Requirements within FSFS			
			Option 3	Option 4		Option 5
Do nothing	Voluntary	Review and alignment of sectoral legislation through requirements, in line with FSFS objectives/principles	Increasing compliance with sustainability standards by explicitly establishing the primary responsibility of business operators (strengthened due diligence) for sustainability purposes	Elimination from the Union market of the least sustainable food systems operations/products by setting minimum sustainability requirements based on the 'do no harm principle'		A combination of options 2, 3 (primary responsibility) and 4 (sustainability requirement)
				<b>4A</b> – Only products produced in the EU	<b>4B</b> – Products produced and placed in the EU (imports are covered in the scope)	<b>The options are not mutually exclusive</b>
The baseline is characterised by the "no policy change" scenario, where the current acquis would remain unchanged and all current measures and processes in the food system remain in force.	Voluntary approaches that go beyond legal requirements, such as policy guidelines and/or private initiatives such as codes of conducts. No legislative initiatives.	The FSFS will lay down a set of legally binding general principles and objectives applicable to the entire Food system, including public authorities in order to mainstream sustainability in all EU and national food system policies and ensure their coherence. This can be achieved through the following mechanism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of existing vertical and sectoral legislation by [e.g. 2030] except those instruments reviewed under the F2F action plan;</li> <li>Where needs are identified, operationalize these principles/objectives via detailed requirements laid down in thematic/sectoral legislation (existing or, where needed, new).</li> </ul>	A general primary responsibility ( <b>strengthened due diligence</b> ) for business operators involved in the food system to ensure that their internal operations/ processes and/or products, within their businesses and under their control satisfy any sustainability-related requirements of EU/national law and to verify that such requirements are met.	Minimum sustainability requirements, based on the 'no harm' principle, requiring business operators to ensure that their operations on the EU territory and the food or feed that they are placing on the EU market do not significantly harm identified sustainability objectives, focusing on certain "non-negotiable" qualifiers around the three dimensions of sustainability.	Minimum sustainability requirements, based on the 'no harm' principle requiring business operators (EU and non EU) to ensure that their operations and the food or feed produced and placed on the EU market do not significantly harm identified sustainability objectives, focusing on certain "non-negotiable" qualifiers around the three dimensions of sustainability.	Cumulative 2,3 and 4.

# Sustainability label

Option 0	Option 1	Regulatory options		
		Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
			New EU framework for sustainability labelling	
Do nothing	Voluntary	Reinforcing existing legislation	Optional EU sustainability label	Mandatory EU sustainability label
Currently applicable EU food labelling legislation remains in force. Upcoming vertical sustainability dimension/component specific labelling initiatives (e.g. front-of-pack nutrition labelling (nutrition), "green claims" (environment)) are adopted and implemented.	Voluntary approaches that go beyond legal requirements are developed by the Commission such as guidelines, and/or private commitments are incentivised such as memorandums of understanding or codes of conduct.	Sustainability labelling provisions related to <u>more than one sustainability dimension</u> (e.g. environmental + social sustainability) are developed in sector specific legislation.	<p>1/ Development of an EU general framework for sustainability-related food information to consumers applicable to all foods (scope, definitions, objectives and principles/general rules), and</p> <p>2/ Development of a voluntary harmonised EU sustainability label for EU and imported food products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-option 3a:</b> voluntary label applicable only to food products of higher sustainability performance</li> <li>• <b>Sub-option 3b:</b> voluntary label applicable to all food products</li> </ul>	<p>1/ Development of an EU general framework for sustainability-related food information to consumers applicable to all foods (scope, definitions, objectives and principles/general rules), and</p> <p>2/ Development of a mandatory harmonised EU sustainability label on EU and/or imported food products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-option 4a:</b> label mandatory for all EU food products and voluntary for imported food products</li> <li>• <b>Sub-option 4b:</b> mandatory label for all EU and imported food products</li> </ul>

# Sustainable public procurement

Option 0	Option 1	Regulatory options	
		Option 2	Option 3
Do nothing	Voluntary	General provisions and requirements aiming to raise awareness and improve skills and knowledge of SPP, capacity building and support authorities in using public procurement strategically	Mandatory general and specific requirements
<p>Maintain the baseline, implementation of the Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement, and the use of the current Commission guidance documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria for food, catering services and vending machines</li> <li>• Buying Social – a guide to taking account of social considerations in public procurement</li> </ul>	<p>Extend current guidance on Green Public Procurement (GPP) to cover the three dimensions of sustainability, and in particular healthy diets.</p> <p>No legislative action foreseen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the European Commission e-competence centre with tools and information to help public buyers with sustainable public food procurement</li> <li>• Establish an EU network of food procurement professionals;</li> <li>• Create centralized MS focal points</li> <li>• Require MS to set up national actions plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of a general mandatory requirement of procuring sustainably with a clear reference to the environmental, social-health and economic dimension of sustainability of food products and some related operations;</li> <li>• Empowerment to the Commission to adopt delegated/implementing acts to specify SPP criteria</li> <li>• Providing for the setting of national minimum (mandatory) targets with timelines as part of national actions plans.</li> </ul>

# SFS framework law - Governance

## **Provide a frame for a multi level cooperation of food system actors**

- Laying down appropriate processes and arrangements to enhance, and frame multi level cooperation, engagement and public participation both at EU, MS and regional or local levels

## **Provide a basis for the development of food sustainability strategies by member states (MS)**

- Introduction of provisions requiring or recommending MS to develop plans to meet certain identified goals/objectives set out in the SFS or nationally set (quantified) goals in specific areas
- National Strategies should be regularly reviewed
- MS performance would be monitored via a monitoring framework with key indicators for the food system, the main features of which could be laid down in the FSFS

# Impact assessment on SFS law

- Unsustainability of current EU food system
  - Justify the need for EU intervention
- > need for a horizontal framework and provide common basis for action
- Feasibility of change with current crises
  - Analysis of policy options and their impact
  - Overall very positive

# Agenda for the session



EU FOOD POLICY  
UPDATE



SCIENCE FOR  
POLICY



NEEDS &  
OPPORTUNITIES!



# ALL food agents need to work on systems transition simultaneously

e.g. Consumer-centric pathways	Options for improvement
1- Improve product composition	-> Reformulation less sodium, sat fat. Oven baked instead of deep fry
2- Efficient value chains for improving sustainability of supply	-> Reduce carbon/land/water/energy footprint. Increase feed conversion
3- Substitute un-healthy or un-sustainable options in food supply	-> Alternative protein, slavery-free chocolate, deforestation-free soya
4- Change portion sizes	-> Consumer less and/or consume more on value or quality.
5- Change meal choice (e.g. more plant food)	-> Vegetarian options, seasonal consumption

# Instruments: patchy evidence on consumer-oriented policies to achieve required diet shifts

Intervention	Effectiveness - Evidence of diet change	Model instrument
Information campaigns	small <sup>1</sup> +18g F&V <sup>2</sup> absent for short intervention <sup>3</sup>	Preference shifters
Compulsory information on products	mixed <sup>1</sup> +10g F&V/ -0.4% fat <sup>2</sup> uncertain <sup>3</sup>	
Food advertising regulations	uncertain <sup>1</sup> +0.4% fat <sup>2</sup> weak but positive <sup>3</sup>	
Ensuring choice availability (e.g. at school)	suggestive <sup>1</sup> +38g F&V/ -1.6% fat <sup>2</sup> effective <sup>3</sup>	Taxes and subsidies
(Dis-) Incentives through taxes and subsidies	suggestive <sup>1</sup> +8.6g F&V/ -0.8% fat <sup>2</sup> effective but intrusive <sup>3</sup> likely effective <sup>4</sup>	
Restricting/ eliminating choice	seems effective but no size of evidence <sup>3</sup>	

Freedom of consumer choice

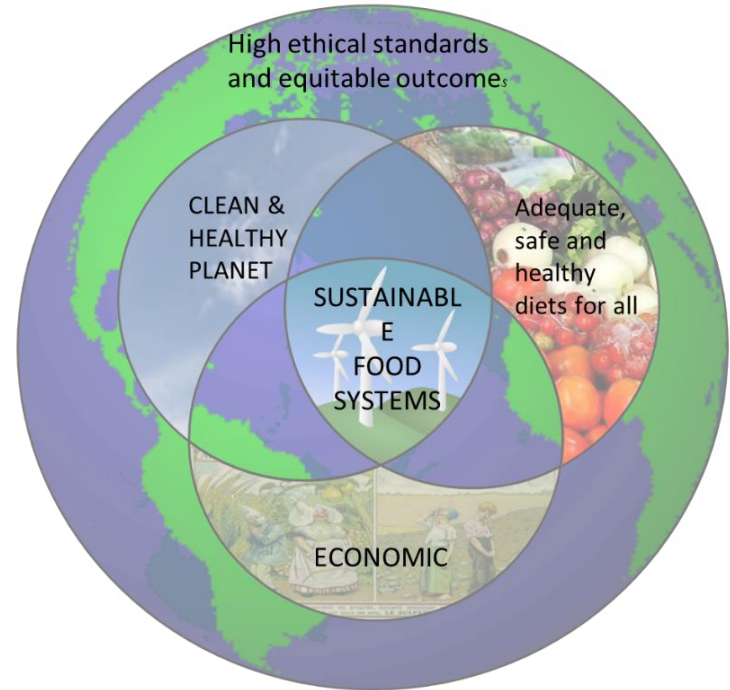
Freedom of supply chain actor choice

Latka et al.  
[10.1016/  
j.jgfs.2020.100437](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jgfs.2020.100437)



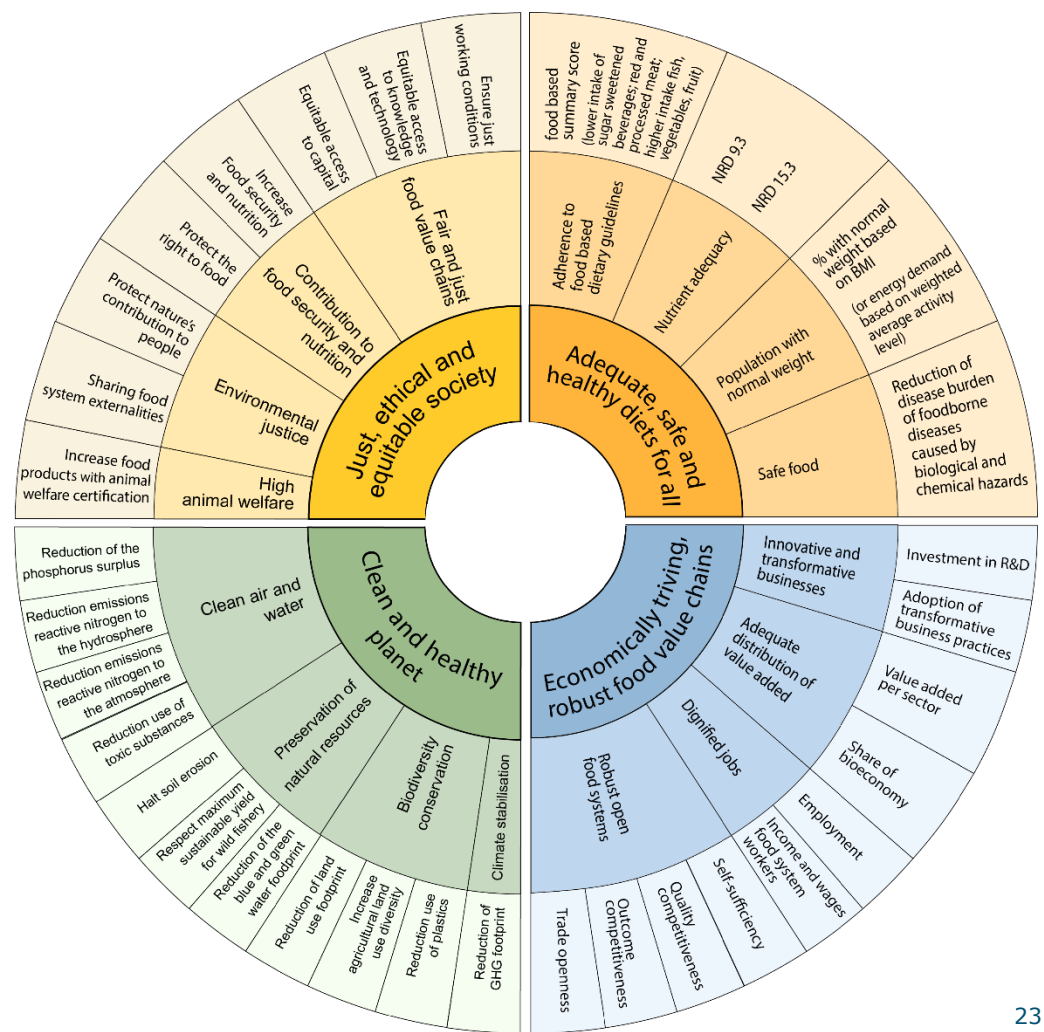
# Food as a system

- Outcomes
- Connections
- Rigidities & feedback loops
- Actions



# Policy compass for a sustainable food system

- Outcomes on 4 goals
  - Healthy people
  - Healthy planet
  - Vibrant economy
  - Social justice
- Global, EU, country, (city) region



# Detail: Compass for sustainable food systems

## Sustainability goal

*Adequate, safe and healthy diets for all*

*Clean and healthy planet*

*Economically thriving and robust food value chains*

*Just, ethical and equitable society*

## Sustainability criteria

1. Adherence to food based dietary guidelines

2. Nutrient adequacy

3. Population with normal weight

4. Safe food

1. Climate stabilization

2. Clean air, soil, and water

3. Biodiversity conservation

4. Preservation of natural resources

1. Innovative and transformative business models

2. Adequate distribution of value added

3. Dignified jobs

4. Robustness and openness in global trade

1. Fair and just food value chains

2. Contribution to food security and nutrition

3. Environmental justice

4. Animal welfare

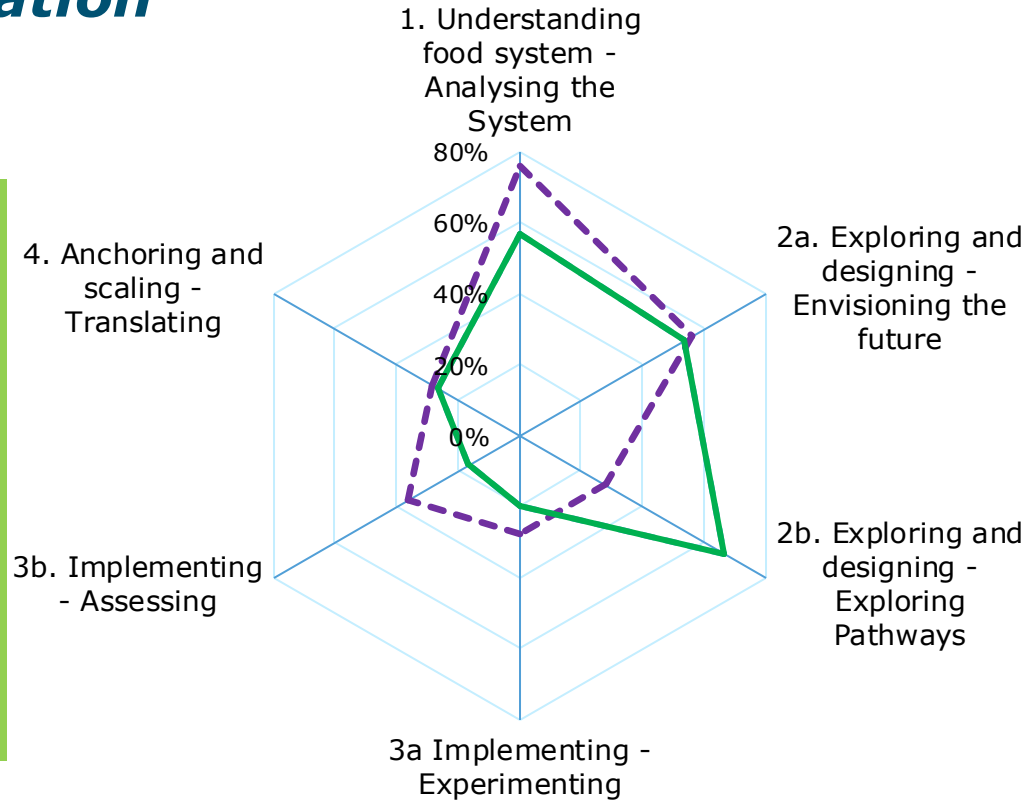
# Roles of Research and Innovation (R&I) in food systems transformation

And reorient from:

assessing innovations

To:

Experimentation of innovations, studying anchoring and scaling



Reorient R&I from:

analysing systems... and exploring pathways ...

To :

designing possible futures

Review of FOOD of 60+ cases of food systems research

Achterbosch et al. [EC report](#)

# Knowledge and Innovation system for **FO**od system transformation (FOKIS)

- Fostering structural **network relations** around food system transformation, among research, government, business, civil society/citizens
- Develop the **European Research Area for food systems** for interdisciplinary systems research
- Provide **policy incentives** for economic actors, scientists, civil society, government, to collaborate on mission-oriented research to develop food systems transformation.





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# Join The Sustainable Food Systems Network



a virtual platform where actors interested in the transformation of European food systems can connect, interact and inspire each other.

## RRI in a nutshell

Responsible Research and Innovation is:

- **Involving society in science and innovation** 'very upstream' in the processes of R&I to align its outcomes with the values of society.
- **A wide umbrella connecting different aspects of the relationship between R&I and society:** public engagement, open access, gender equality, science education, ethics, and governance.
- **A cross-cutting issue in Horizon 2020**, the EU Programme for Research and Innovation 2014-2020.



## PARTNERSHIP ON SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS FOR PEOPLE, PLANET AND CLIMATE





*The future of our planet  
lies on our plate*

Thom Achterbosch

[www.wur.nl](http://www.wur.nl)

[www.susfans.eu](http://www.susfans.eu)



# Candidate HE Partnership: Sustainable Food Systems for People, Planet and Climate

Collaborative EU-wide research & innovation on  
transition to sustainable food systems:

*'The future health of Europe's people  
and the planet lies on our plate'*

**Duration: 2024-2033**

**Budget estimate: EUR 525 million incl. 30% EU cofunding**

Since 2020 under preparation. Process initiated by SCAR Food systems SWG and European Commission. Expected start in 2024.

# PSFS Vision, Mission, Objectives

## MISSION

to mobilize  
Research and  
Innovation  
(R&I) to  
accelerate the  
transition  
towards  
Sustainable  
Food Systems  
with a wide  
range of actors,  
who are joining  
forces in PSFS

EN  
RESEARCH

SO1  
Change the way  
we eat

SO2  
Change the way  
we process and  
supply food

SO3  
Change the way  
we connect in  
food systems

SO4  
Change the way  
we govern food  
systems

GO1  
Understand what SFS are,  
how they function and how to  
enable their development

GO2  
Demonstrate that the  
partnerships 'systemic  
approach' functions as a  
catalyst to jointly transform FS  
into SFS

GO3  
Ensure that the Partnership  
contributes to SFS via  
frameworks and evidence-  
supporting policy options for  
EC objectives in Farm to Fork  
Strategy, Missions, Green  
Deal and the UN-SDGs

GO4  
Co-create with various actors  
in a diversity of Living Labs  
to develop SFS concepts



# Component: Food systems observatory

A process of transition in the EU will benefit from information on the sustainability performance of food systems:  
at different timelines...  
for different activities and outcomes  
and different geographical scales



Objective: Reflexive monitoring on the transition to Sustainable Food Systems in Europe for the purpose of food policy design and planning of mission-oriented R&I actions.

# WP5 Objectives / Tasks

## (combined in-kind and open calls)

### **Task 5.1 – Mapping of existing monitoring activities (BLE)**

- Indicators and metrics for food systems (FS) transition
- Data ecosystems and capabilities

### **Task 5.2 – Methods and protocols for combining and harmonizing data for a coherent State of the Food Systems Transition (CREA-AN)**

- Participatory and quantitative methods
- Practices in food business, consumption, waste, etc.

### **Task 5.3 – New forms of monitoring on FS transition in the EU (WR)**

- Piloting primary data collection in sentinel sites (incl linked to Living Labs)
- Data consolidation and analysis

### **Task 5.4 – Decision support and infrastructures for consolidating and using data (JSI & LW-ERIC)**

- Data management & research infrastructures
- Decision support system

### **Task 5.5 – Providing foresight and deliberation on potential future policy targets for SFS**

- Indicators on critical drivers of transitions
- Foresight on evidence-based SFS policy targets

### **Task 5.6 – Delivering a State of the Food Systems Transition assessment report in year 2, 5, 8, 10**

- Science for policy interface (with other WPs)

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**PARTNERSHIP ON SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS FOR PEOPLE, PLANET AND CLIMATE**





# Thank you for your attention



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[wur.nl](http://wur.nl) / [susfans.eu](http://susfans.eu) / [food2030.eu](http://food2030.eu) / [fosterfoodsystem.eu](http://fosterfoodsystem.eu)

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