

# How improved transparency will make food more sustainable

Koen Boone, WUR, 22 May 2024

F&A Next 2024

Nominated for  
the WUR  
impact award  
2024

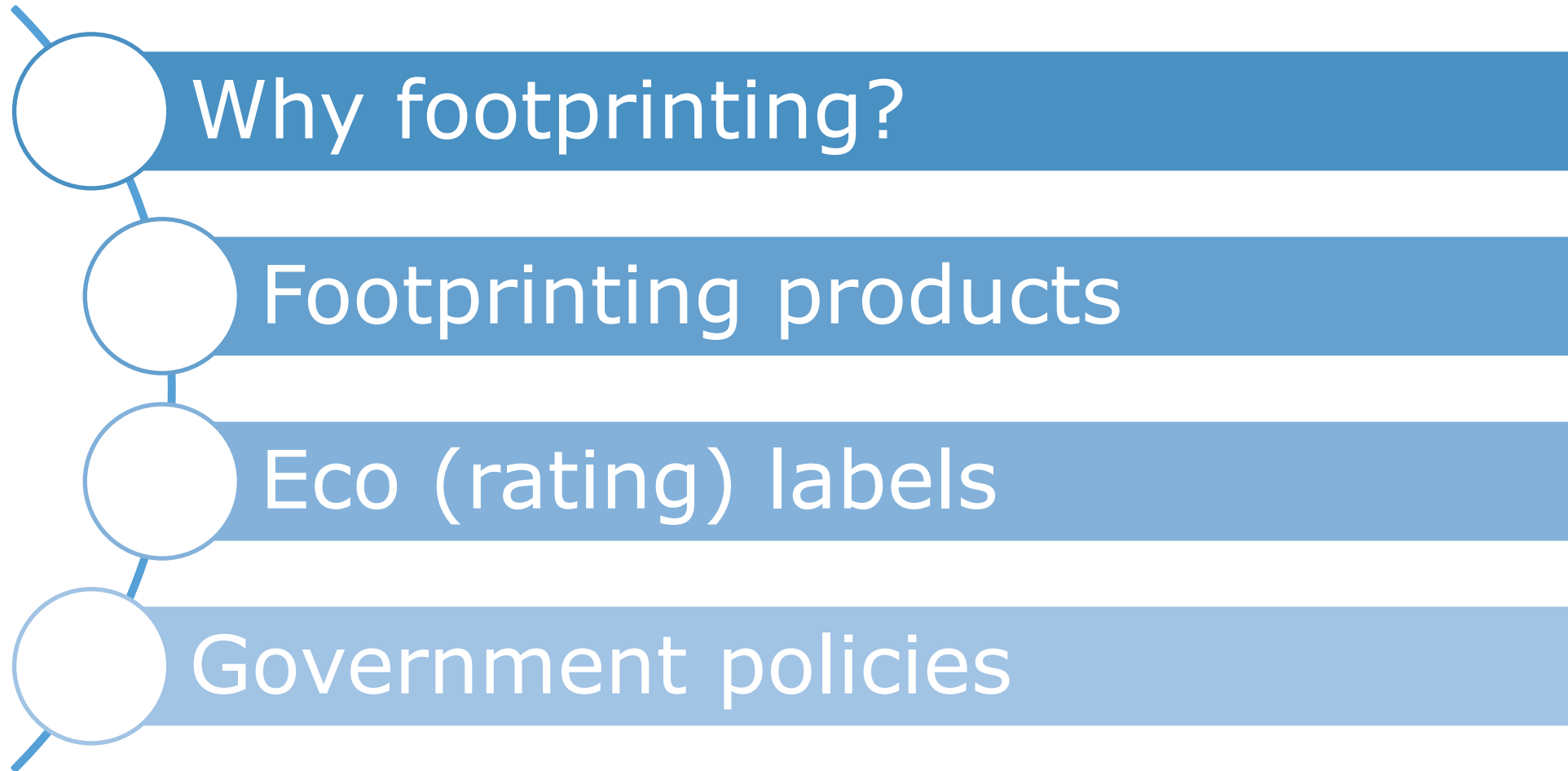


# Game changer

- Currently: Transparency on sustainability on voluntary base using non-comparable methods
- Governments and retailers are demanding transparency for all food products using harmonized **impact** methodology
- Same development on investment (Taxonomy, SFDR) and corporate (CSRD, SBTI) level
- Game changer



# Agenda



# Why footprinting?



- Original sustainable measurement by input/process indicators
  - How to identify greenwashing?
  - How to compare performance of companies
- “Companies can only be sustainable in a sustainable world” / Fair share
  - Paris climate agreements
  - Planetary boundaries
- Measure absolute impact



# Footprinting products



# Life Cycle Assessment

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA):

The systematic analysis of the potential environmental impacts of products or services during their entire life cycle.



# LCA method: Product Environmental Footprint





# Application PEF still limited

- Only available for limited number of product categories
- No comparison between product categories
- High cost, limited tools and implementation
- Green Claims: PEF incomplete





# Eco rating labels food





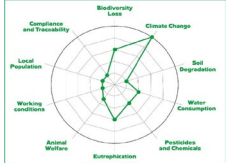




# LCA based Eco rating labels



- Nutriscore for environment: (A to E) Label for all food
- **Absolute** total footprint that incentivizes continuous improvement
- Start with product category average databases
- Comparison between product categories and within product category
- Option to aggregate over all products of organisation for scope 3 reporting (CSRD, SBTI, CDP)

# Eco rating labels – State of the art

Eco-Score	Planet-Score	Enviroscore	Eco Impact	Coop Sweden Sustainability Declaration	Made Green in Italy	French initiative
						

beelong.chi 

M-Check Migros

S U S T A I N E D 

 CarbonCloud

 Foodsteps

inoqo

IGD

 mondra

 eaternity

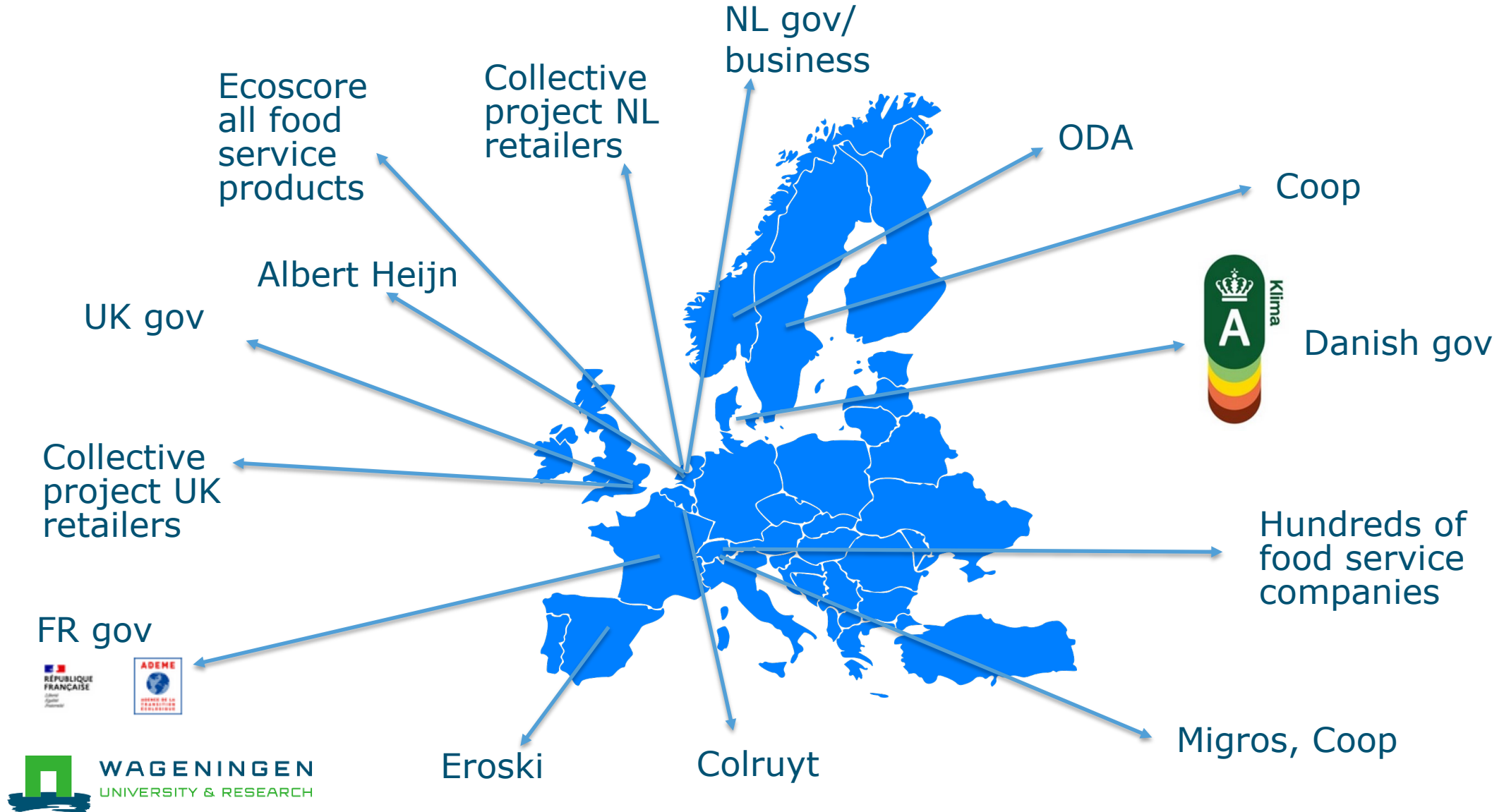
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 HowGood

- First ecolabels mainly based on EU PEF and public French Agribalyse database
- New private ecolabels develop their own methodologies and private databases
- Several retailers and national governments started piloting/implementing
- Main motivation for most retailers to start: scope 3 reporting (CSRD, SBTI, CDP)



# Implementation of Ecolabeling in Europe



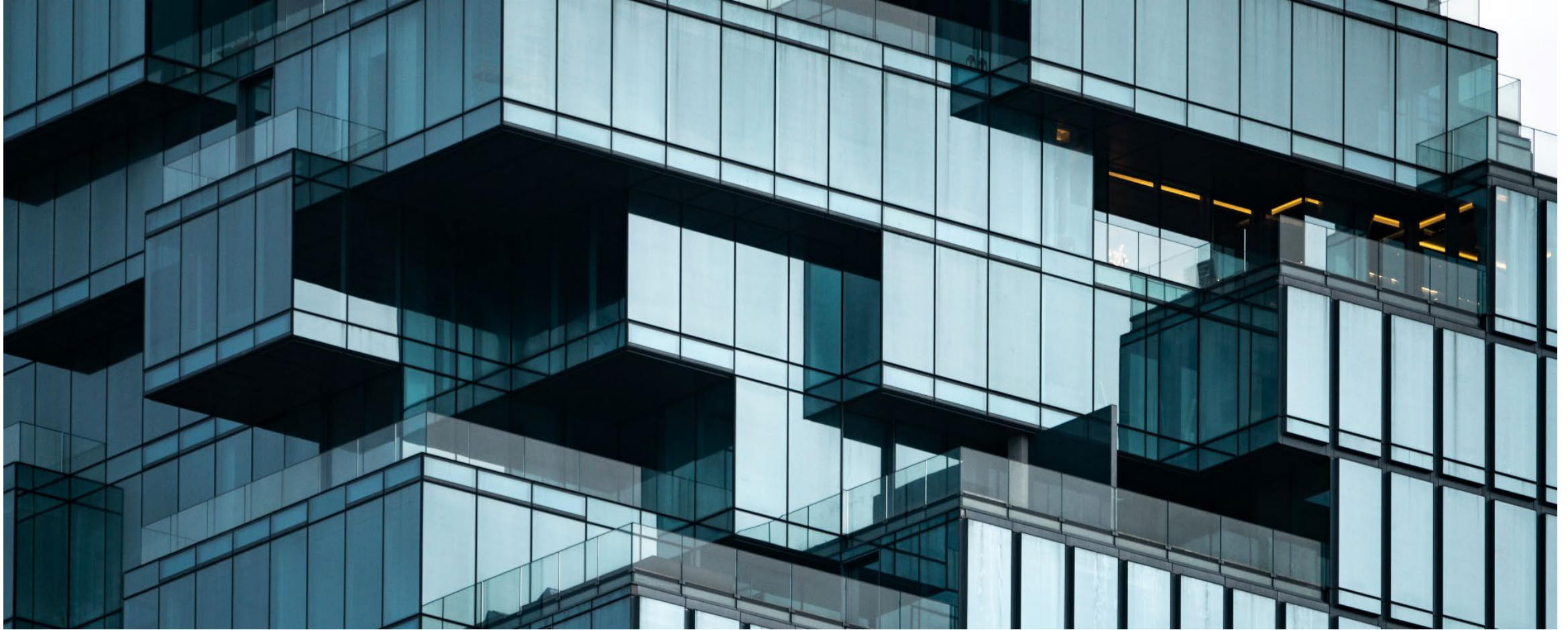
# Ecolabeling: Potential high impact

- Available for all food
- Broad set of **impact** categories
- Continuous improvement
- Category average models decrease burden and facilitate comparability
- Comparison within & between product categories
- Company level scope 3 reporting

- Comparison within product category depended on use of sufficient primary data
- Workload/data availability
- Assurance
- Methodological challenges
- Proliferation risk

**Potential to have high impact on sustainability of food**

# Government policy





# European Union



Green Claims initiative

- Criteria for voluntary environmental claims made to consumers

March 2023

Farm to Fork strategy

- Sustainable Food Labelling Framework: nutrition, environment, social and animal welfare

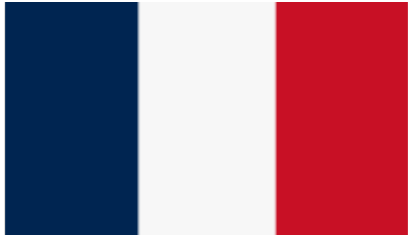
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# Green Claims

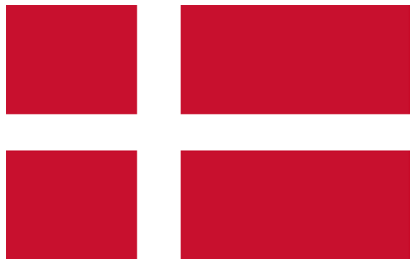
- Set of criteria for environmental claims (scientific, LCA based etc.)
- Claims need to be approved by national governments before being published
- PEF can be used for aggregated reporting if integrating
  - Marine fisheries: Sustainability of the targeted stock
  - Agriculture: Biodiversity, (extensive) farming practices and animal welfare



# Government supported initiatives in EU



- Government plans to introduce Ecolabel in 2024
- All food producers are expected to report
- Methodology finalised. Ecolabel textiles implemented
- First year voluntary, then mandatory



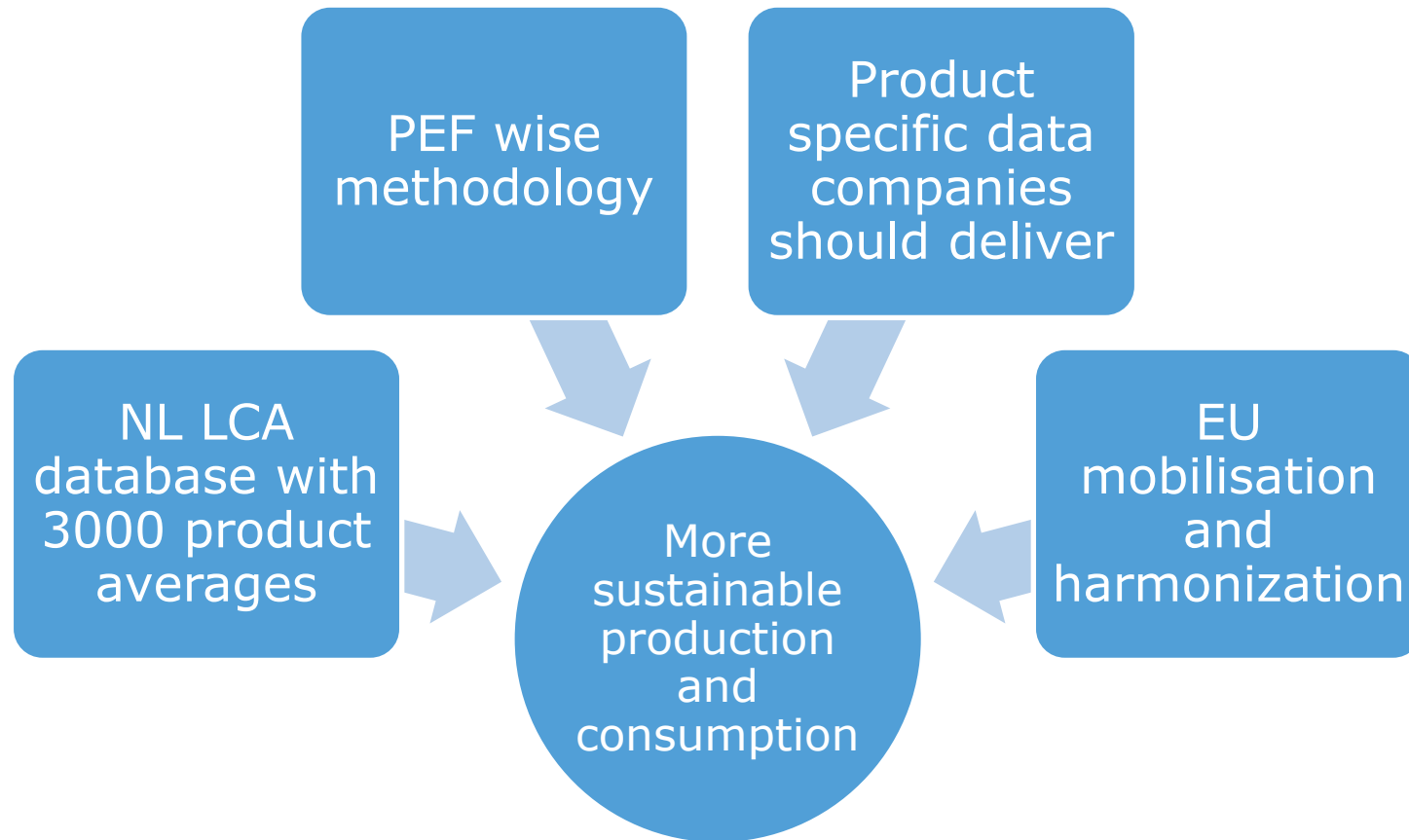
- Climate label in development
- Government initiated



- Development ecolabel in policy brief
- Voluntary but if you report, methodology is mandatory
- Focus on prevention greenwashing



# Dutch Ecolabel initiative



## Footprint working group members:

LNV, WUR, CBL, FNLI, MVO, Nepluvi, Nevedi, ANEVEI, COV, NZV, Groenten en Fruithuis, NB/FWS, Vereniging Schelpdierhandel, Avebe, Cosun, Friesland Campina, Do it organic, Agrifirm, Unilever, HAK, Delinuts, Vion, DSM, Hutten, Superunie, Jumbo, Lidl, ABN AMRO, Rabobank, RIVM en Milieu Centraal



# Eco Food Choice project:

Provide Europe with an operational and collectively supported environmental labelling system

## Objective 1

**Harmonized databases** with product category average environmental impacts

## Objective 2

Develop a **methodology for an eco label**

## Objective 3

**Test the labelling in real life**

- *Cooperation between France, Netherlands, Germany and Spain*
- *Financed by DG environment*
- *Many other countries and stakeholders connected*
- *Project start: November 2023*
- *4,5 years duration: 2023-2028*



# Harmonized footprinting is first step but not sufficient

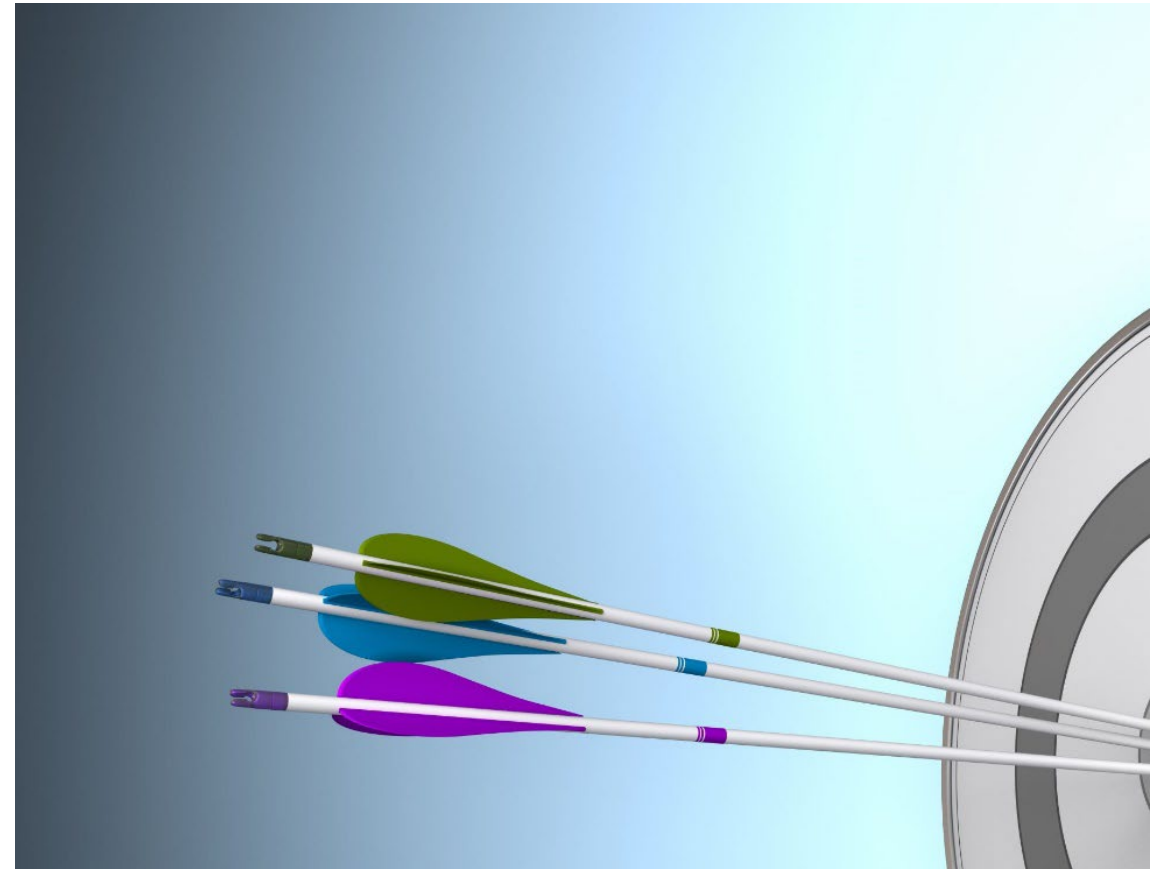
Footprinting makes harmonized sustainability impact data available. Necessary condition for many other solutions:

- Marketing mix retail (green points)
- True price, financial incentives
- Farmer2B, B2B, B2R, B2Finance
- Government policies
- (Scope 3) reporting retail /foodservice



# Conclusions

- Footprinting is introduced by private and public sector
- More transparency and competition around sustainability
- Opportunities for more sustainable products
- Game changer if (primary) data will be made available and right incentives applied





# Thanks for your attention

Questions?

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More information: <https://www.wur.nl/nl/en/onderzoek-resultaten/onderzoeksinstituten/economic-research/food-ecolabel.htm>

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