

Food in a green light– A systems approach for sustainable food



Dr Cathy Maguire, 16th October 2017



Netherlands Environmental
Assessment Agency

European Environment Agency



The EEA: a network organisation with a direct link to policy

The European Environment Agency is an EU body that operates at the interface of science and policy.

With a network of more than 300 institutions in 39 European countries, the EEA provides timely, reliable and relevant information to support sustainable development.

EEA work is targeted at EU institutions, EEA member countries, civil society and the general public.



EEA coverage

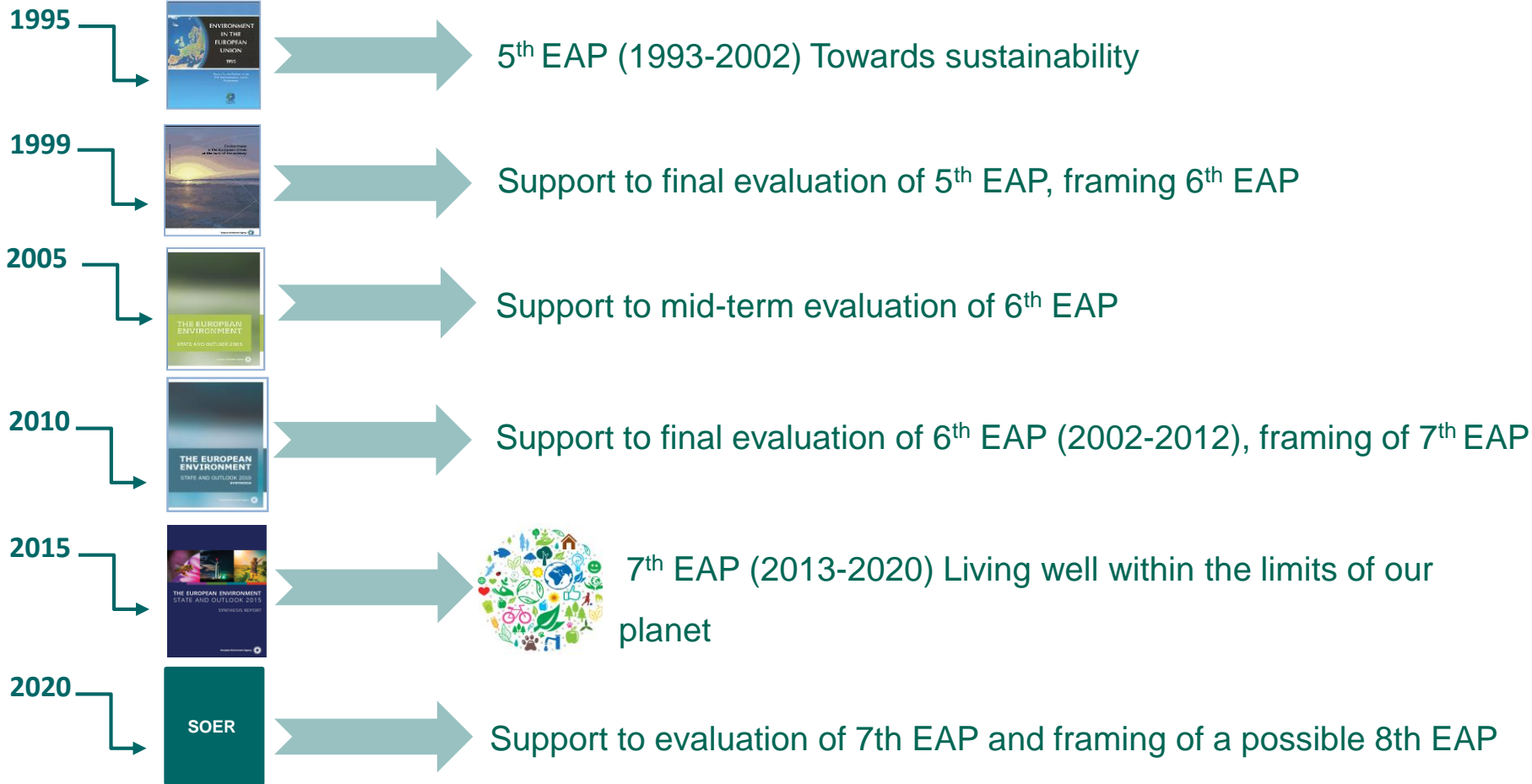
Member countries

Cooperating countries

*Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99



SOER support to EU environmental action programmes



SOER 2015 concluded on the need for system transitions



THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT STATE AND OUTLOOK 2015

SYNTHESIS REPORT

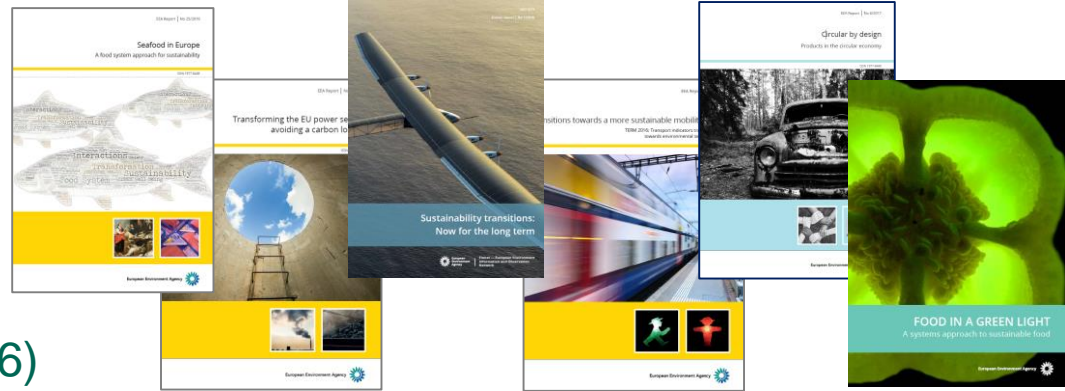
Living well within ecological limits will require fundamental transitions in the societal systems of production and consumption that are the root cause of environmental and climate pressures.

Main systems: energy, mobility, food, urban, fiscal and finance

Such transitions will entail profound changes in dominant institutions, practices, technologies, policies, lifestyles and thinking.

EEA has been exploring different systems and analytical approaches

- **Seafood in Europe (Oct 2016)**
- **Avoiding carbon lock-in (Oct 2016)**
- **Sustainability transitions report (Dec 2016)**
- **TERM 2016 (Dec 2016)**
- **Circular by design (Jun 2017)**
- **Food in a green light (Oct 2017)**



Each involved developing our understanding and analytical approaches, how to relate this to established policy and indicators and how to communicate the outcomes.

Food in a green light report 2017



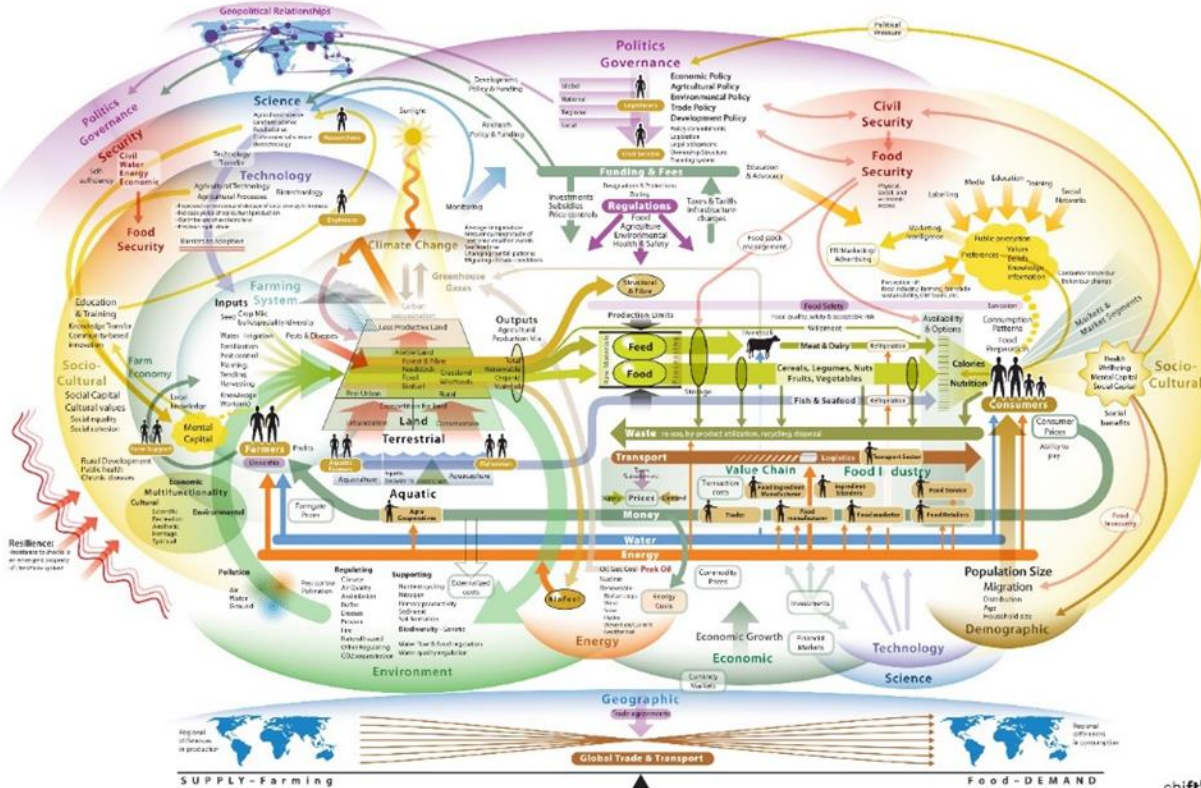
Takes a food system approach to analyse European production, consumption and trade of food and associated environmental and human health aspects.

Analyses the challenges ahead and identifies opportunities to respond.

Understanding the patterns, processes and actors involved allows for more coherent and effective policy interventions.

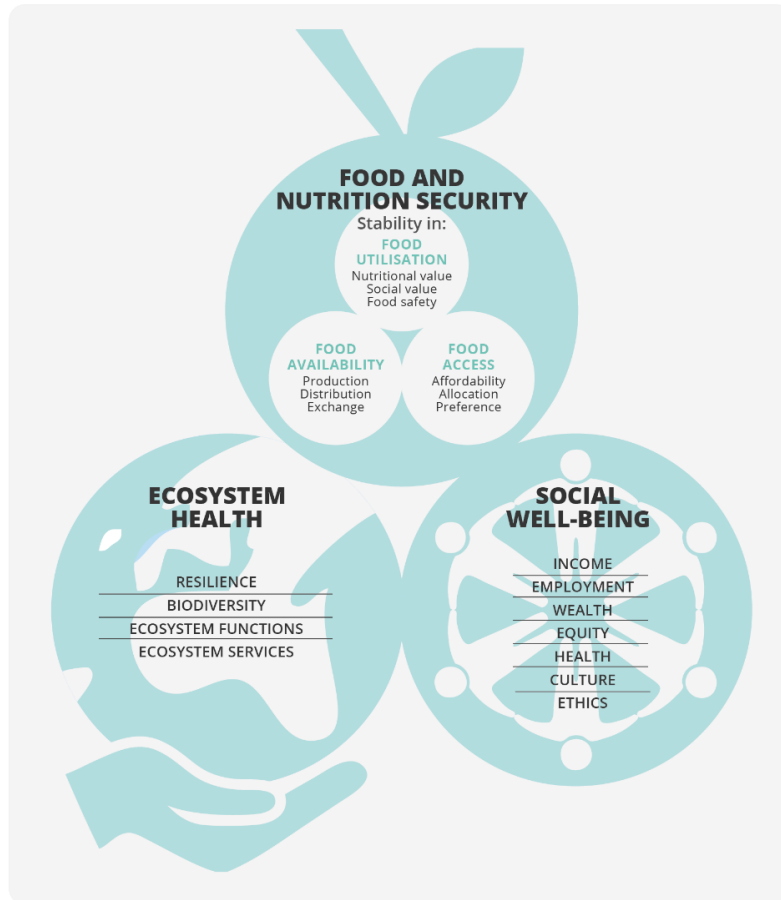
Understanding the food system

Global Food System Map



Source: shift^o

Sustainable food system outcomes

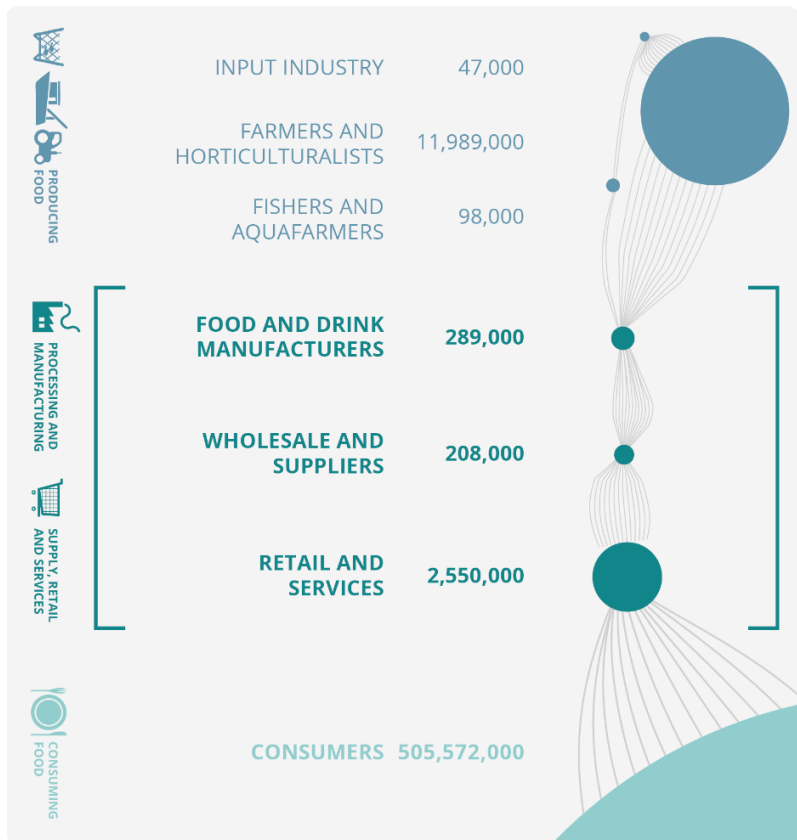


A food system that ensures food security and nutrition, sustains livelihoods and ecosystem health.

Based on the EU's 2050 vision of 'living well, within the limits of our planet'.



The food system – where and how to intervene



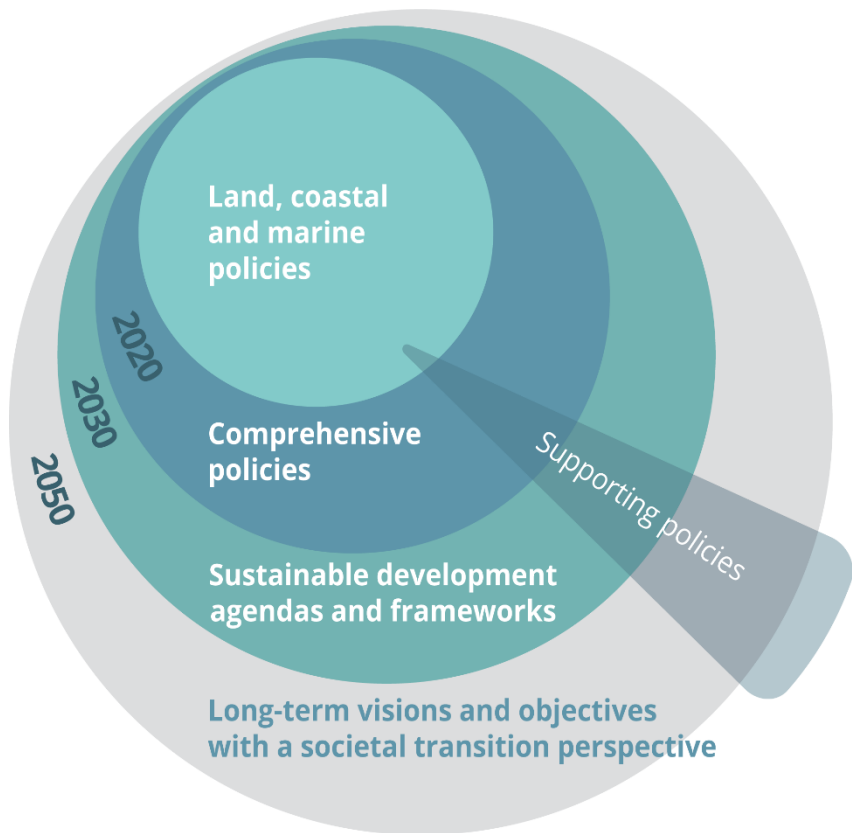
Current policies and initiatives mainly target primary producers and consumers.

While these actors are the largest in numbers, they do not necessarily have the most power or influence to bring about change in the food system.

Main focus is on improving resource efficiency of the food system and consumer awareness.

This can improve environmental performance but will not deliver the transformation needed to meet sustainability goals.

The challenges ahead



Achieving more sustainable outcomes involves:

- Moving from a sectoral approach to a food systems approach.
- Strengthening policy coherence and coverage.
- Targeting actors with influence.
- Governance arrangements that involve stakeholders and address complexity.

Greening the food system – food for thought



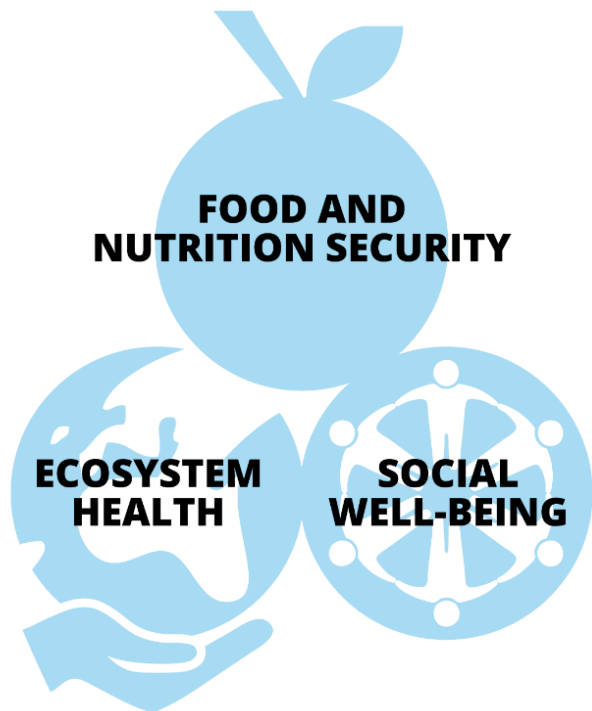
@106_2 Picture 2050

Three areas where opportunities exist to transform policy and practice are explored:

- Changing mindsets
- Seizing current opportunities
- Developing knowledge



Greening the food system – current opportunities



- **Improving the resource efficiency of food systems** (e.g. reducing food losses and waste, higher nutrient recycling).
- **Enhancing resilience** (e.g. diverse production, ecosystem based management approaches).
- **Protecting and improving social well-being** (e.g. healthier diets, good livelihoods).
- **Responsible and effective governance** (e.g. stakeholder partnerships, economic and fiscal reform).

Strengthening the EEA's knowledge base

Understanding systemic challenges
and the need for transitions

Identifying knowledge, skills and
governance approaches for transitions



PROBLEM-FOCUSED

SOLUTION-ORIENTED



Thank you

cathy.maguire@eea.europa.eu

Sign up to receive EEA news, reports
and alerts on your areas of interest at
<http://eea-subscriptions.eu/subscribe>