



Sustainable Land Use as part of a Common Food Policy for the EU

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- **Holistic approach.** Bringing together different disciplines in a “systems” approach.
- **Transdisciplinarity.** Bringing together different sources of knowledge to capture food system complexity.
- **Political economy focus.**
Understanding what reforms are required to build sustainable food systems, and *how* these might occur in a context of major power imbalances.

➔ **Work programme: 1) policy-oriented research & 2) regional policy development processes**



TOWARDS A COMMON FOOD POLICY FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION

THE POLICY REFORM AND REALIGNMENT THAT IS REQUIRED
TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN EUROPE



**EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY**

Towards an EU Common Food Policy: a 3-year process of research & reflection



Transition in food systems: key challenges

- **Cross-sectorial: a transversal strategy**
- **Learning from national experiences**
- **Linking the short-term reforms to the long-term vision: the adequate role of strategic thinking, to escape path dependency**
- **Support local and regional initiatives towards the re-territorialization / relocalisation of food systems**
- **Support legitimacy and accountability in food systems: the case of a EU food policy council**



Common Food Policy blueprint with 80 proposals: a roadmap to sustainable food systems in Europe



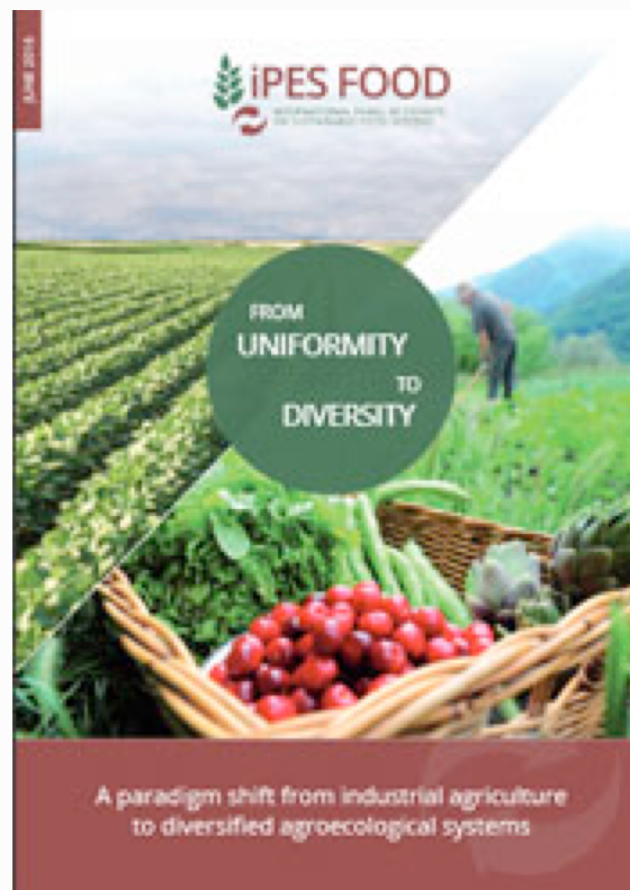
- First building block = **new governance architecture** in EU institutions, including VP Food & EU Food Policy Council.
- Reforms grouped under **5 transition pathways** (Land & resources; Agro-ecosystems; Healthy diets; Fair supply chains; Sustainable trade)
- Distinct proposals for **short- medium- & long-term**: ambitious but politically feasible.

Land in the EU: key challenges

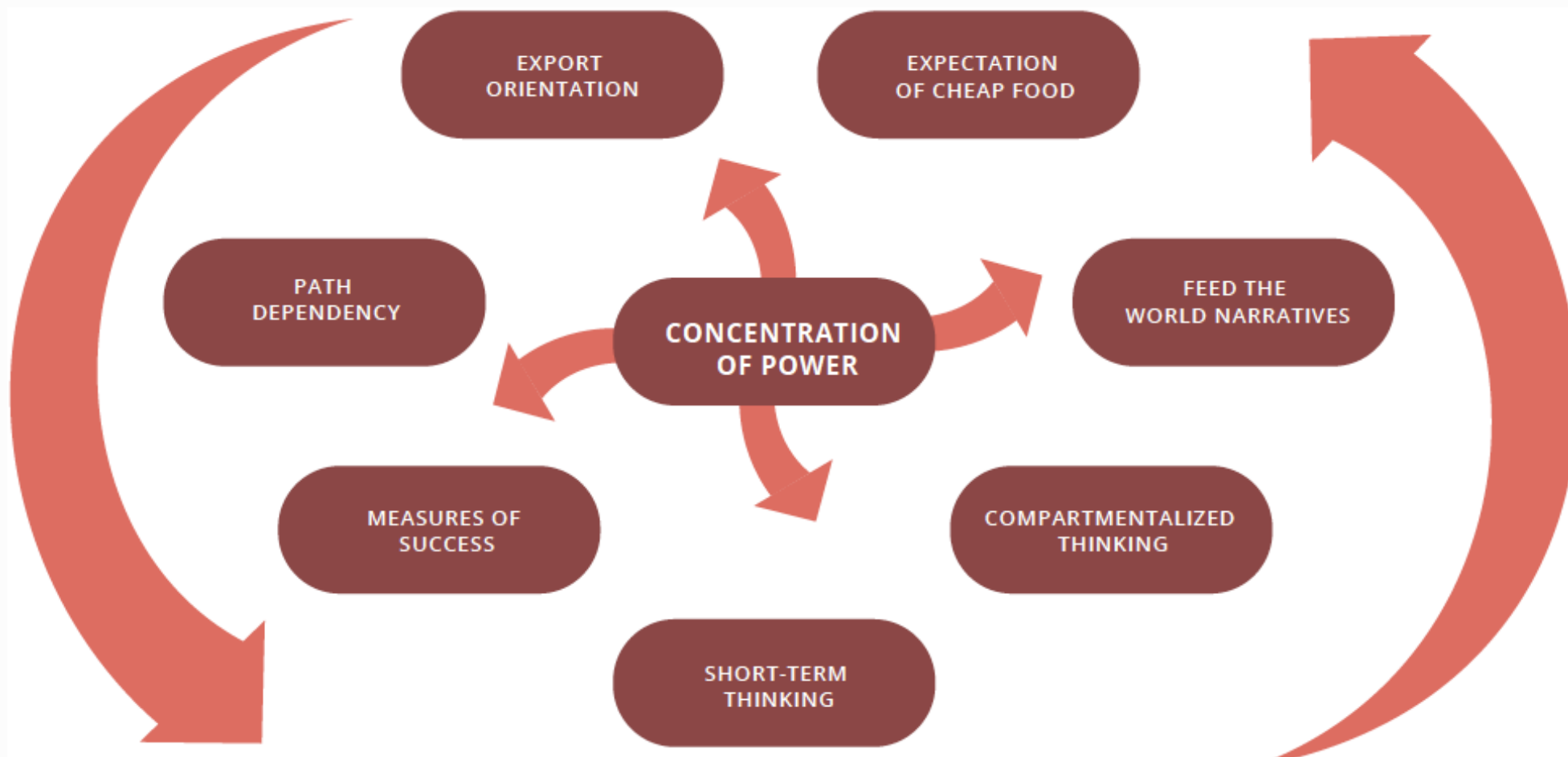
- Reduction of utilised agricultural area (UAA) resulting from urban sprawl, development projects, etc.
- Increased concentration of land: see eg European Parliament resolution of 27 April 2017
- Inflation of the price of land – obstacle to access to land for young farmers
- Unsustainable agricultural practices: leads to soil degradation (pollution, compaction, erosion, salinisation, loss of organic carbon content)
- Pressures on water resources from nitrogen runoff and eutrophication



Land in the EU: key challenges



The main lock-ins : obstacles to agroecological transition



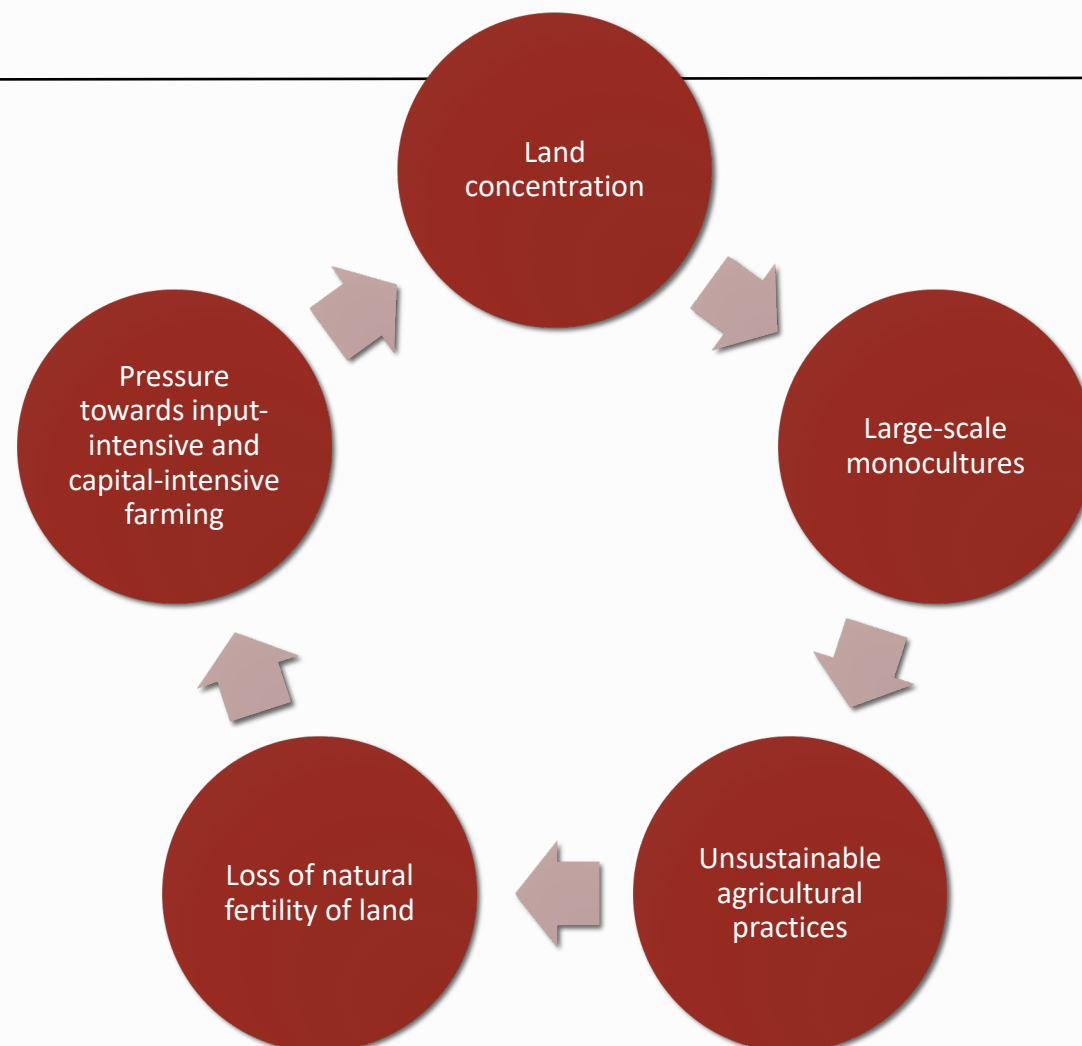
European Parliament resolution of 27 April 2017 on the state of play of farmland concentration in the EU: how to facilitate the access to land for farmers:

- in 2013, in the 27-member EU, only 3,1 % of farms controlled 52,2 % of farmland in Europe; by contrast, 76,2 % of farms had the use of only 11,2 % of the agricultural land; this trend runs counter to the European sustainable, multifunctional agricultural model, in which family farms are an important feature; this places inequality of land use in the EU – with a Gini coefficient of 0,82 – on a par with that of countries such as Brazil, Colombia and the Philippines
- this unequal distribution of farmland is the counterpart of unequal distribution of CAP subsidies, as direct payments – which account for a large proportion of CAP expenditure – are mainly made per hectare
- ...

European Parliament resolution of 27 April 2017 on the state of play of farmland concentration in the EU: how to facilitate the access to land for farmers:

- ...
- land is an increasingly scarce resource, which is non-renewable, and is the basis of the human right to healthy and sufficient food, and of many ecosystem services vital to survival, and should therefore not be treated as an ordinary item of merchandise; ... land is, furthermore, doubly threatened, on the one hand by the loss of agricultural land through soil sealing, urban development, tourism, infrastructure projects, changes of use and afforestation and the spread of desertification caused by climate change, and, on the other hand, by the concentration of land in the hands of large-scale agricultural undertakings and investors from outside the farming sector; ... at the same time, it is the responsibility of the authorities to control and limit the loss of agriculture land through such activities

How these challenges are interconnected



Land in the EU: policy inconsistencies

- Young farmers' entry supported through CAP direct payment scheme and measures proposed in the CAP-post 2020 reforms, however undermined by inflated price of land (each euro in CAP direct payments leads to increase of 0.06 to 0.94 euros increase in land rents)
- CAP insufficiently equipped to encourage sustainable agricultural practices: area-based payment logic predominates; "coupled" support to thirsty crops (cereals, oilseeds, sugar beet) leading to higher water extraction rates and potentially clashing with 2006 Water Framework Directive
- Maximum tree density levels in the past discouraged agroforestry (improvement with the Omnibus 2017 mid-term CAP adjustment), biofuels production still not phased out
- Soil Framework Directive proposed in 2006, withdrawn in 2014
- No harmonized monitoring of pesticide residues in the soil or of land degradation

Land in the EU: key proposals

- **CAP payments** from an area-based logic to composite criteria (labor intensity, farm size, priority to young farmers, ecosystems services)
- **Capping payments** to individual farms
- **EU Land Observatory** to complement work done by Eurostat and European Soil Data Centre (ESDAC), in particular 1° to monitor pesticide residues and organic carbon content in line with climate mitigation objectives, and 2° to monitor land prices and rents (beyond work already done by Eurostat)
- **Right of first refusal (pre-emption right)** on land to favor young farmers' access to land and agroecological practices (as a condition for approval of national CAP strategic plans)
- **Establishment of public agencies** (cf. SAFER – sociétés d'aménagement foncier et d'établissement rural) to ensure land deals serve the public interest, including the preservation and sound management of natural resources and the diversification of farming

t **THANK YOU**

