



# **Build Coherent Policies for Sustainable Trade**

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# Policy coherence

Coordination between Members States lies in the foundation of the EU.

*Policy coherence is both a **principle** and a **process** through which governments seek to minimize conflicts and enhance the cumulative effect of their actions between and within different policy areas to achieve the goals set.*

In a complex political system synergies and trade-offs inevitably exist between policies while addressing the three different dimensions of sustainability.

# Main policy frameworks (Green Deal, F2F, CAP) / international agricultural trade/ SDGs / coherence

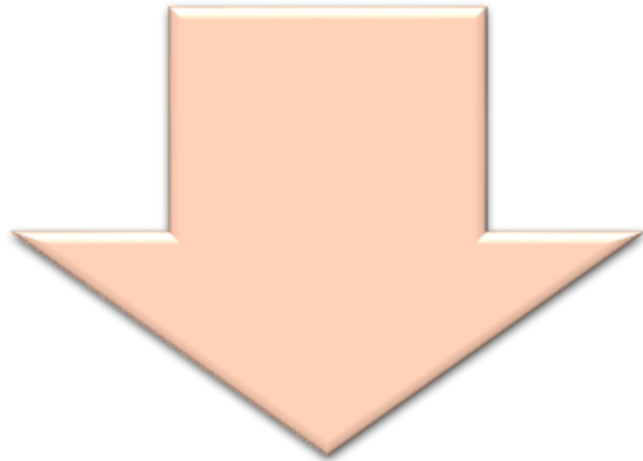
EU has a leading role in international agricultural trade's sustainability, but its performance could be improved.

EU's internal policy coherence is insufficient, although the principle is established (Policy Coherence for Development PCD, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development PCSD).

Continuous gradual progress: a fairly well-rounded but somewhat environmentally prioritized sustainability approach which has evolved over a long period of time under different Commissions and Parliaments.

Social sustainability least developed implying policy incoherence – a sensitive issue.

# Obstacles and enablers of policy coherence in EU's international agricultural trade as to the SDGs



## Obstacles

- Complex and overlapping policies
- Conflicting policies across sectors & governance levels
- Fragmented governance between different levels & sectors
- Siloed thinking, narrow, sector-specific focus, limited collaboration between departments & organizations
- Limited financial, human & legal resources for coordination



## Enablers

- Strong & effective leadership for commitment across sectors
- Integrated and aligned policy frameworks across sectors
- Participatory approaches and inclusive platforms
- Adequate financial, human, legal and institutional resources
- Regular monitoring & evaluation of policy impacts



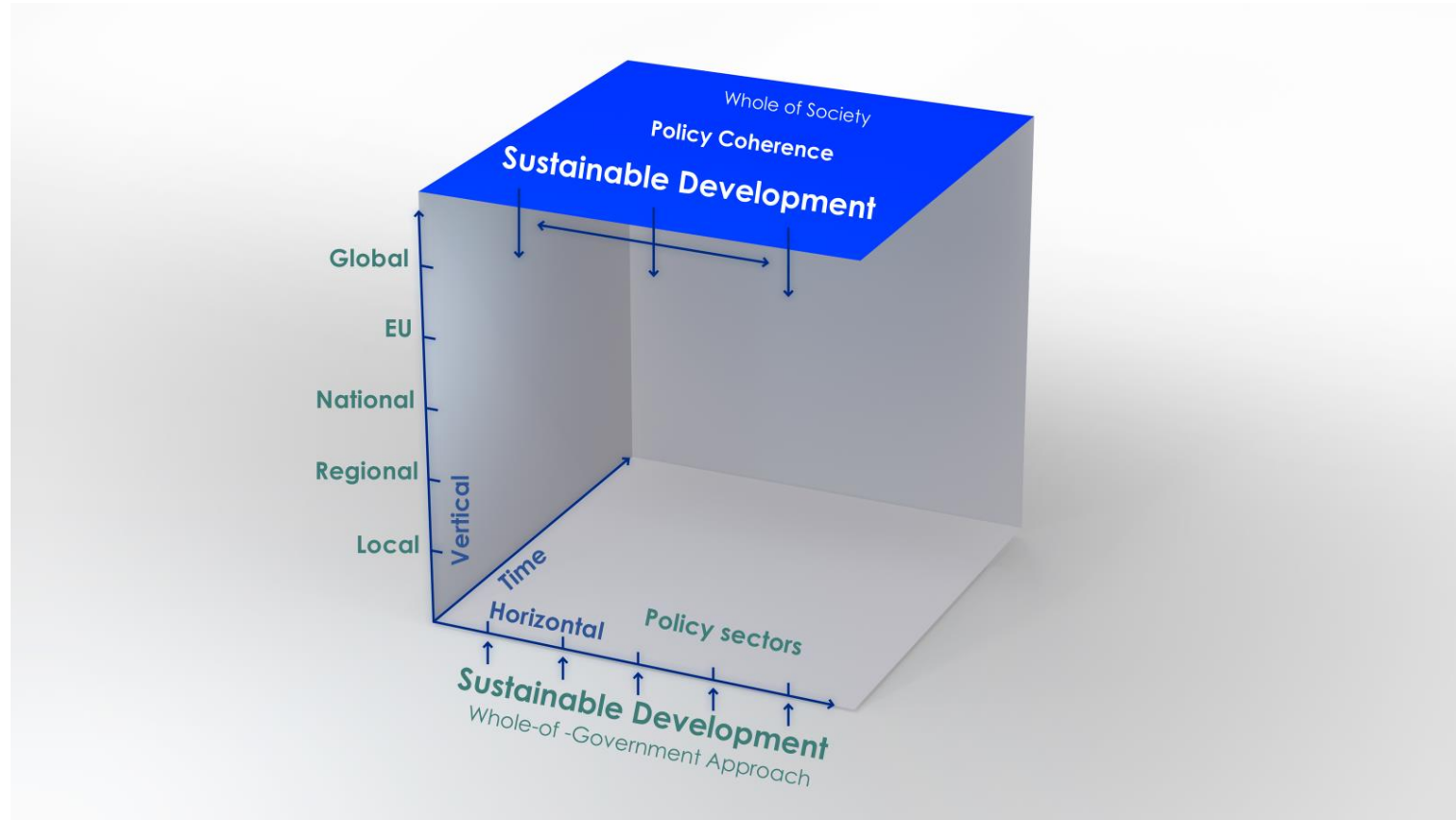
# From empirical findings to process level insights



# Policy coherence framework

## WP5 Position statement

Policy coherence problems in promoting SDGs with the EU international agricultural trade are threefold: **horizontally** sectoral limitations of the EU food systems strategy (F2F), **vertically** both between the Commission and the Member States and other levels, and the **insufficient coherence dynamics (time) of the EU policy processes**. Commitment to and continuous development of food systems and a whole-of-government approach, including sufficient legal basis for implementation, are keys for improvement.



# Conclusions: Policy coherence as a process in time

Progress in policy coherence meagre when focusing on policy instrument level; there is no "silver bullet" to be found. (recognizing trade-offs still essential)

Both policy coherence and SDGs are systemic phenomena: Enhance systemic/holistic/whole-of-government thinking. **Frame & Goals ("F2F 2.0")**

Choosing between goals that can be justifiably disagreed about and cannot be maximized simultaneously requires deliberative political discussion on values. Evidence-based policy processes using indicators, robust evidence and sustainability proofing offer facts. In addition, interests have to be reconciliated. **Skill, will and trust**

Strengthen capacities to adopt a systemic approach in the Commission and EU decision-making and decision-taking (collegial decision-making, vice-chairs in the Commission)  
Team Europe –type joined forces for SDG implementation  
Anticipatory systems thinking (e.g. foresight)  
Understanding and utilizing opportunity windows in policy-making (timing, leverage points, political realism)  
**Recommendation: Public sector innovations**

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