



Institute for Advanced  
Sustainability Studies



**SDTF 2022**

**Session 4: Life on Land – How Covid-19 recovery and 2030 Agenda can only be fully achieved through addressing SDG 15**

## **EU's SDG Implementation: European Green Deal for SDG 15**

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# Overview

1. What makes SDG 15 so fundamental?
2. EU SDG implementation & the European Green Deal
3. European Green Deal & SDG 15:  
EU measures to address the nature crisis

# **1. What makes SDG 15 so fundamental?**

# Agenda 2030 is more than the sum of all SDGs

## 17 SDGs

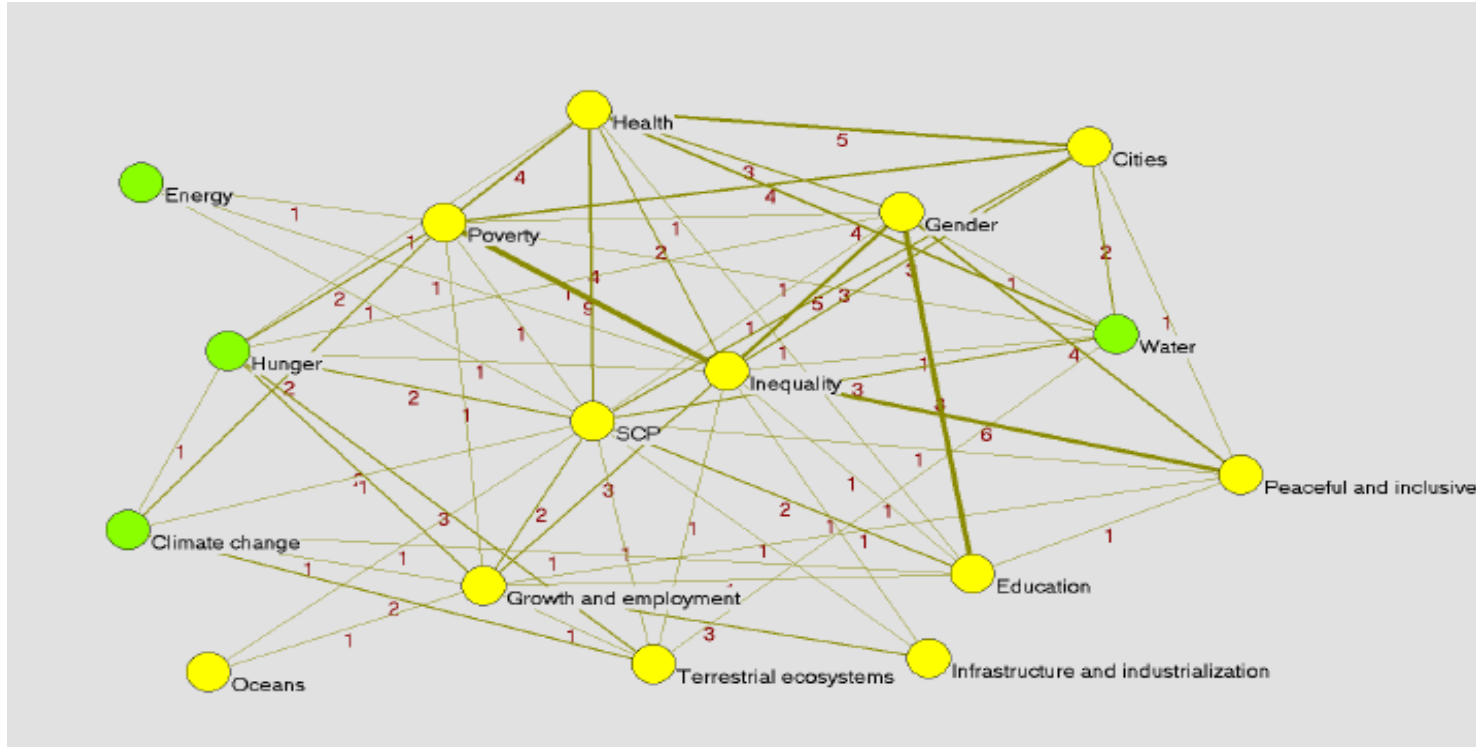


## Principles

- **Universality**
  - Leave no one behind
- **Indivisibility: Integrated approach**
- Shared responsibility
- Accountability

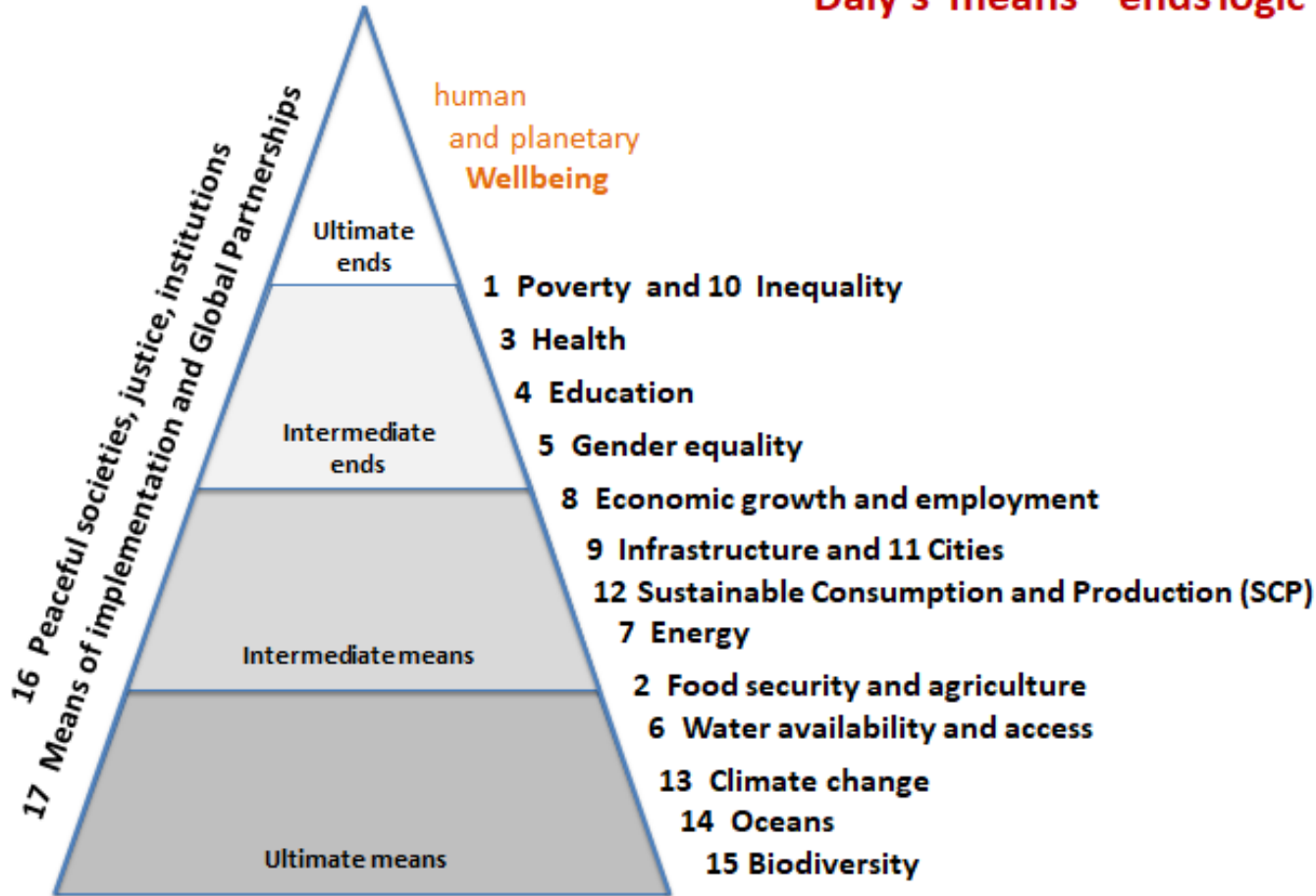
=> This supports that multiple concerns/interests are included, and not being addressed separately

Sustainable Development sophisticated:  
SDGs are **“indivisible”** -> should not be treated separately  
-> underlines **interlinkages** and **interactions**



*Le Blanc (2015) SDGs as a network of targets*

## Daly's means – ends logic



well being

Happiness, harmony,  
identity, fulfilment ...

“human & social  
capital”

Health, knowledge,  
mobility, communication ...

“built & human  
capital”

Labour, tools, processed  
raw materials ...

“natural capital”

Solar energy, the  
biosphere, earth material,  
the biochemical cycles ...

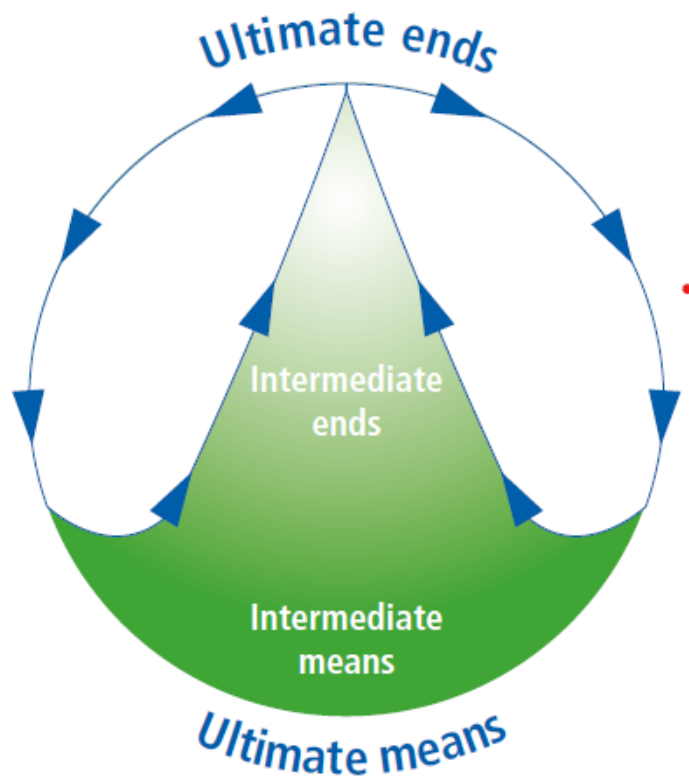
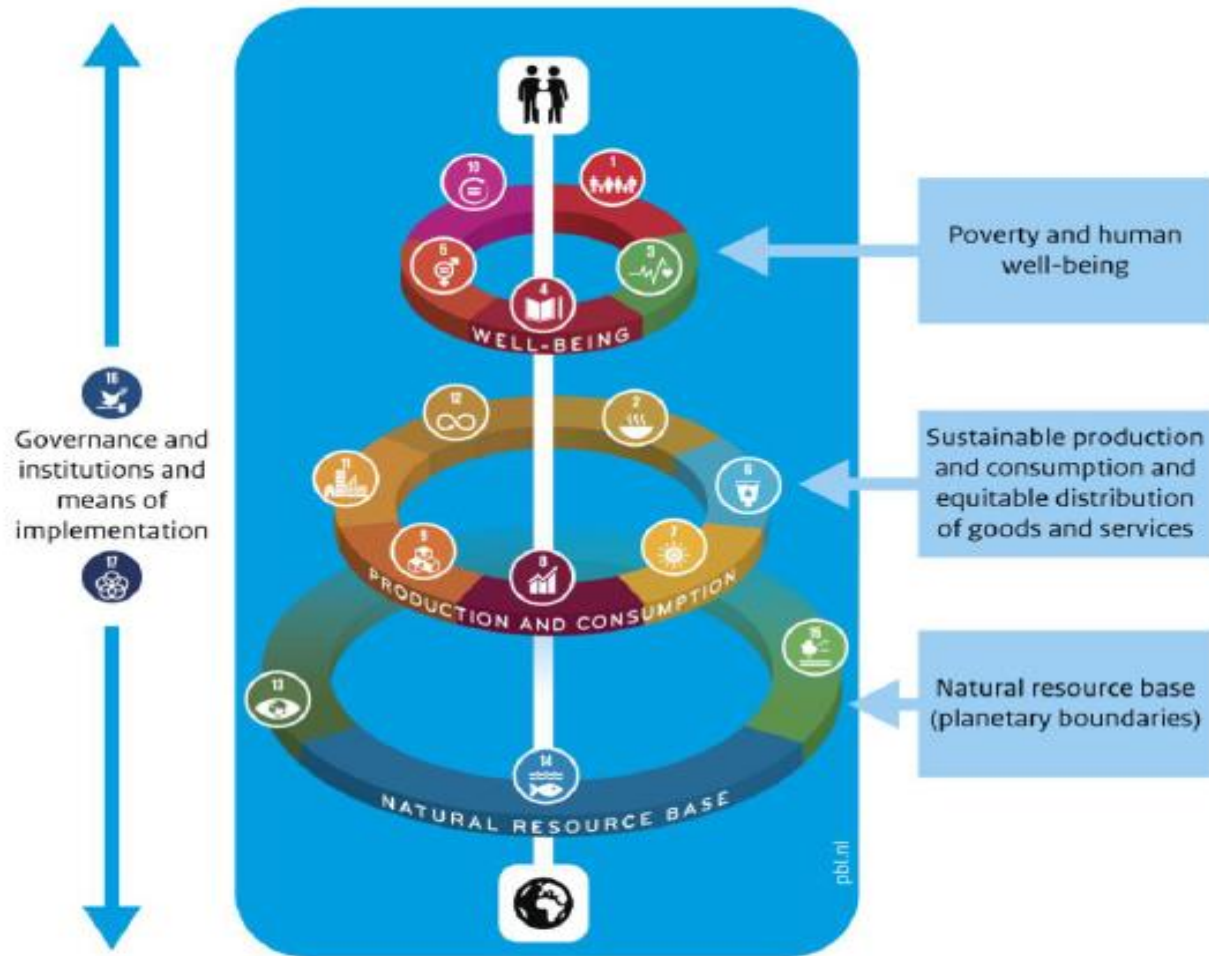


Figure 2.3: Circular representation of the means-ends framework (adapted from Meadows [1998] and Daly [1973])





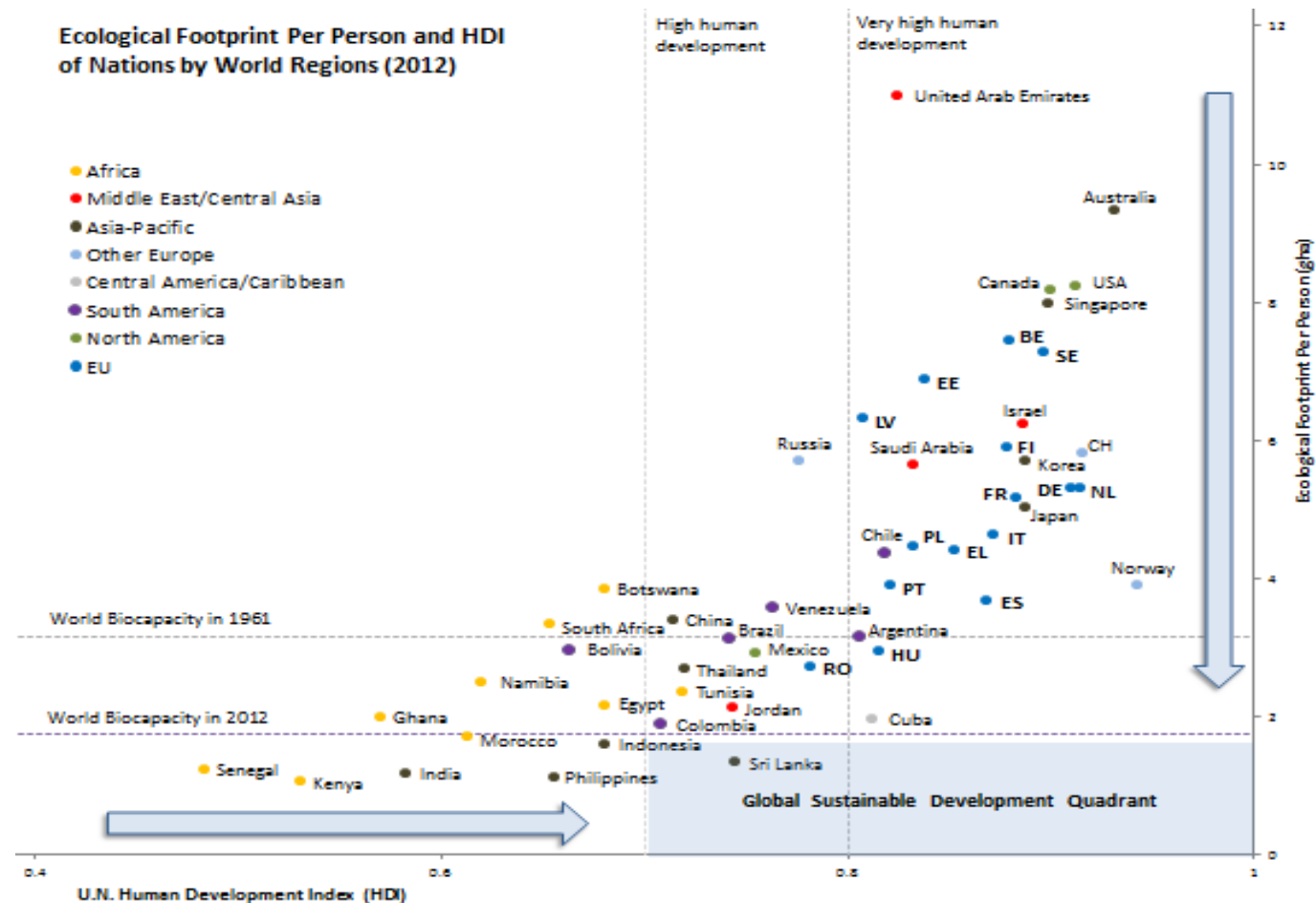


Source: PBL

PBL (2018 ), Niestroy (2016) - based on Waage et al. (2015) ; "Wedding cake" by Folke et al. (2015)

## **2. EU SDG implementation & the European Green Deal**

# Universality: SDGs as compass for different pathways towards sustainability



Niestroy (2016), after Global Footprint Network (online data, and provided), graph: WWF, UNDP



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” My main message, Europe's message .., is:  
it's also *our* turn now to step out of our  
comfort zone. ...

How **we have to turn around our economies**  
to make them circular – leaving behind our  
“take-make-consume and dispose” growth  
pattern.”

EU 1<sup>st</sup> VP Timmermans  
UN SD summit , 27.9.15



## New Commission 2019 – 2024: Proposals for the SDGs

now post Covid  
Recovery Plans RRP

1. Political guidelines (July 2019) ... with:  
***“refocus the European Semester into an instrument that integrates the SDGs”***

-> Dez. 2019:

Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy  
(was: Annual Growth Survey)

2. Mission letters (Sept. 2019):  
***“Each Commissioner will ensure the delivery of the UN SDGs within their policy area.***

*The College as a whole will be responsible for the overall implementation of the Goals.”*

3. The **European Green Deal** (Dec. 2019) ... ***is our new growth strategy.***  
*It puts sustainability – in all of its senses – and the well-being of citizens at the center of our action. This requires bringing together four dimensions: **environment, productivity, stability and fairness.***



**(2.2) Mainstreaming sustainability in all EU policies** (-> incl. Better regulation)

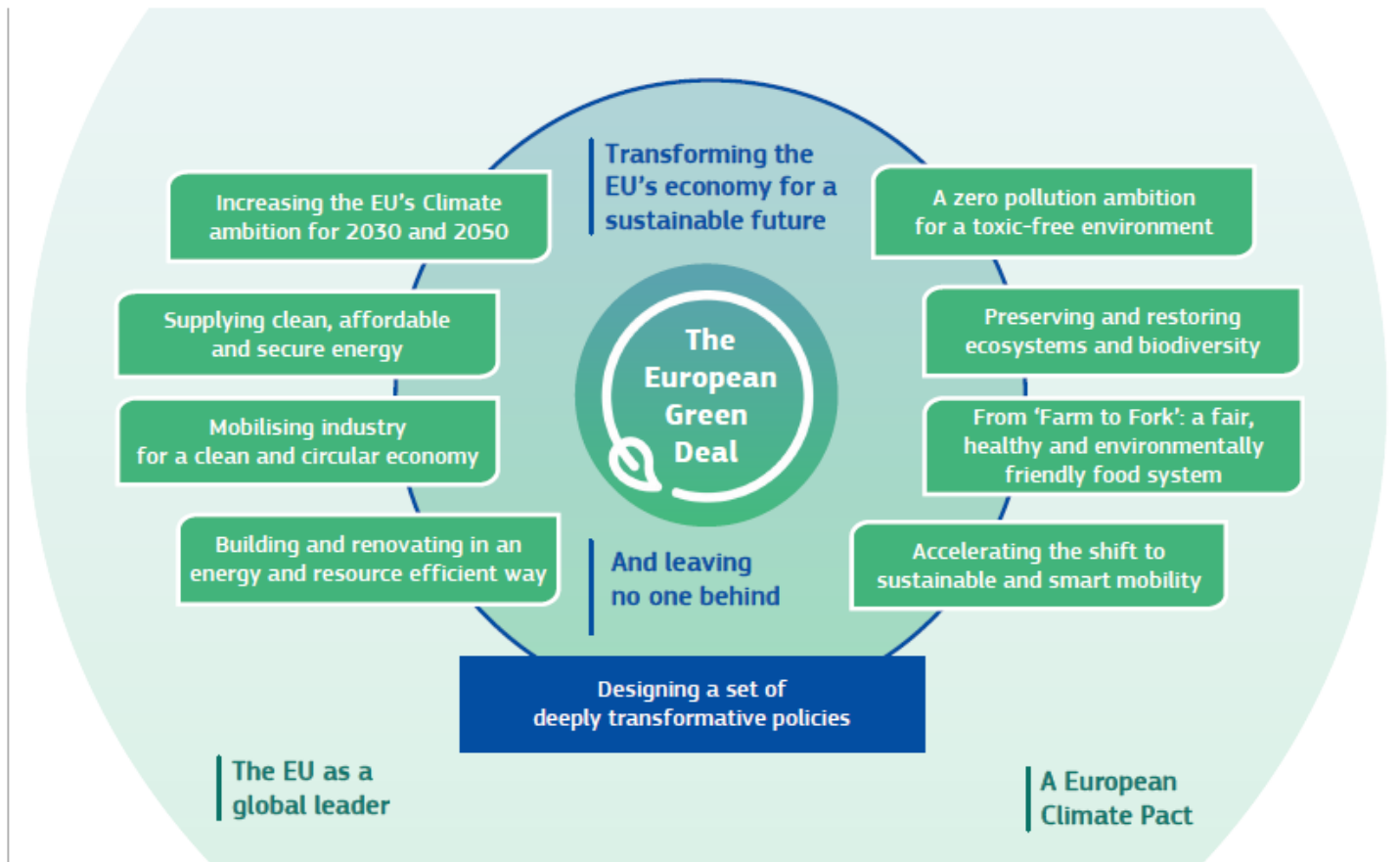
*(-> i.e. no “specific” EU SD strategy / SDG Implementation strategy)*



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## The European Green Deal



### **3. European Green Deal & SDG 15: EU measures to address the nature crisis**



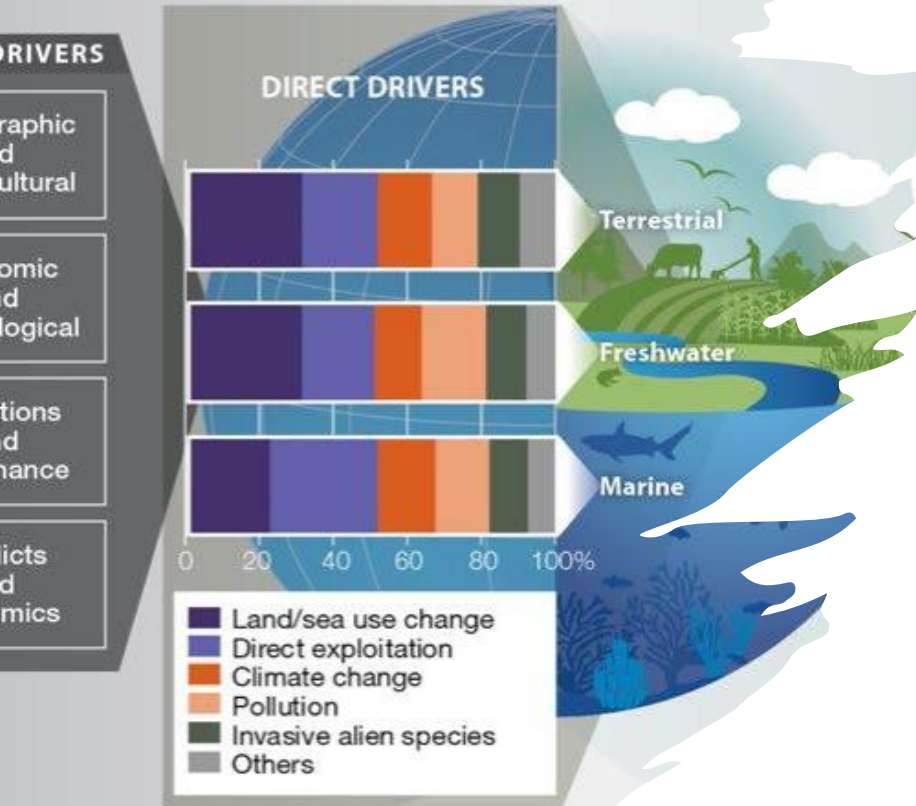
## Biodiversity matters

- Food security
- Clean water
- Flood retention
- Carbon storage
- ...





## DRIVERS



Yet, the state of nature is alarming...

- Biodiversity crisis as existential as climate crisis
- We know the drivers: land use change, etc.
- Biodiversity crisis even less in the spotlight, decline going on!



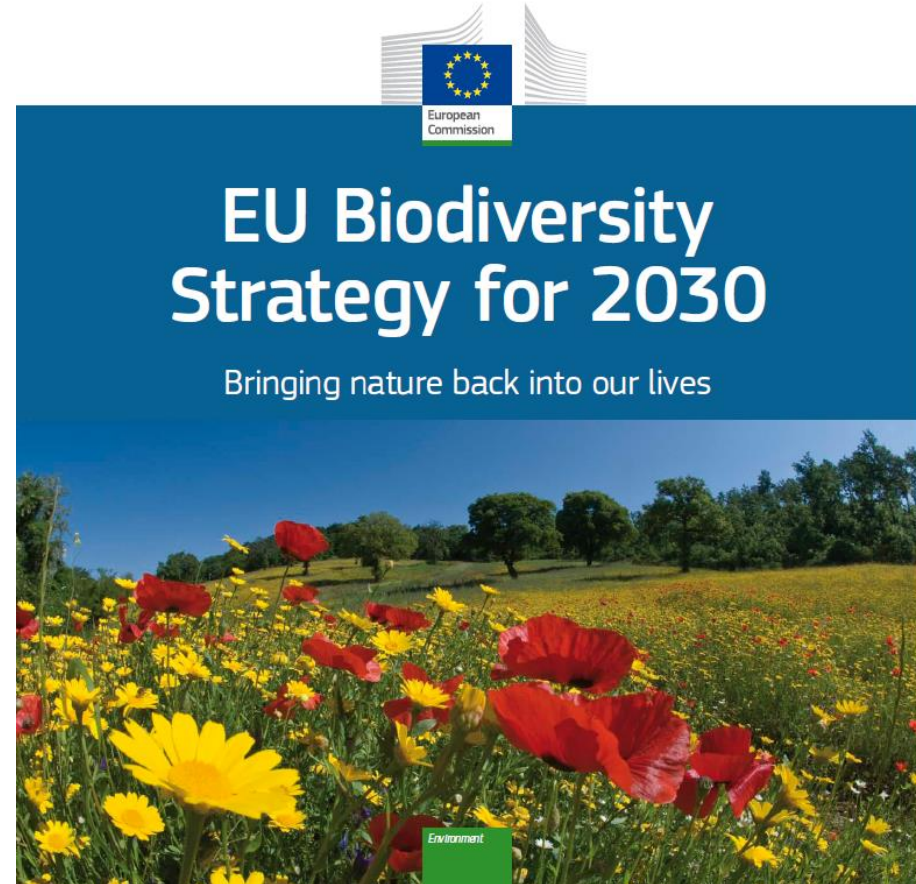
A slight wind of change ...

- CAP: rather business as usual  
But: EU Farm 2 Fork Strategy
- EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030:  
Good (also legislative) elements
- Further/existing legislation:  
EU's Nature Directives  
Ban leadshot (through REACH)  
Biodiversity target EU-Budget (MFF)



## Potential gamechangers #EUBiodiversity

- Protected Area target  
(30% of EU land/sea, 10% strictly)  
Natura 2000 (30th anniversary)
- Addressing the drivers (agriculture)  
10% landscape features  
50% pesticides reduction (SUD)(23/3)  
25% organic agriculture
- Nature Restoration Legislation (23/3)  
Targets for Member States  
I.a. on peatland, grassland, forests...
- Much more. But:  
Implementation needed!







## Conclusion...

- The EU Green Deal is much more than a narrative
- There are limitations, support Member States + implementation crucial
- Healthy nature benefits climate (see also IPCC, 28.02.2022)



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# Thank you!

*„The SDGs are a gift to the world – a universal compass to navigate towards sustainability“*

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