

# Certification schemes in France - Paying farmers for their carbon footprint reductions



with Anaïs L'Hôte,  
*Project Manager at Idele*



## National Beef Conference 2023

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November | 5pm

Shearwater Hotel, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway



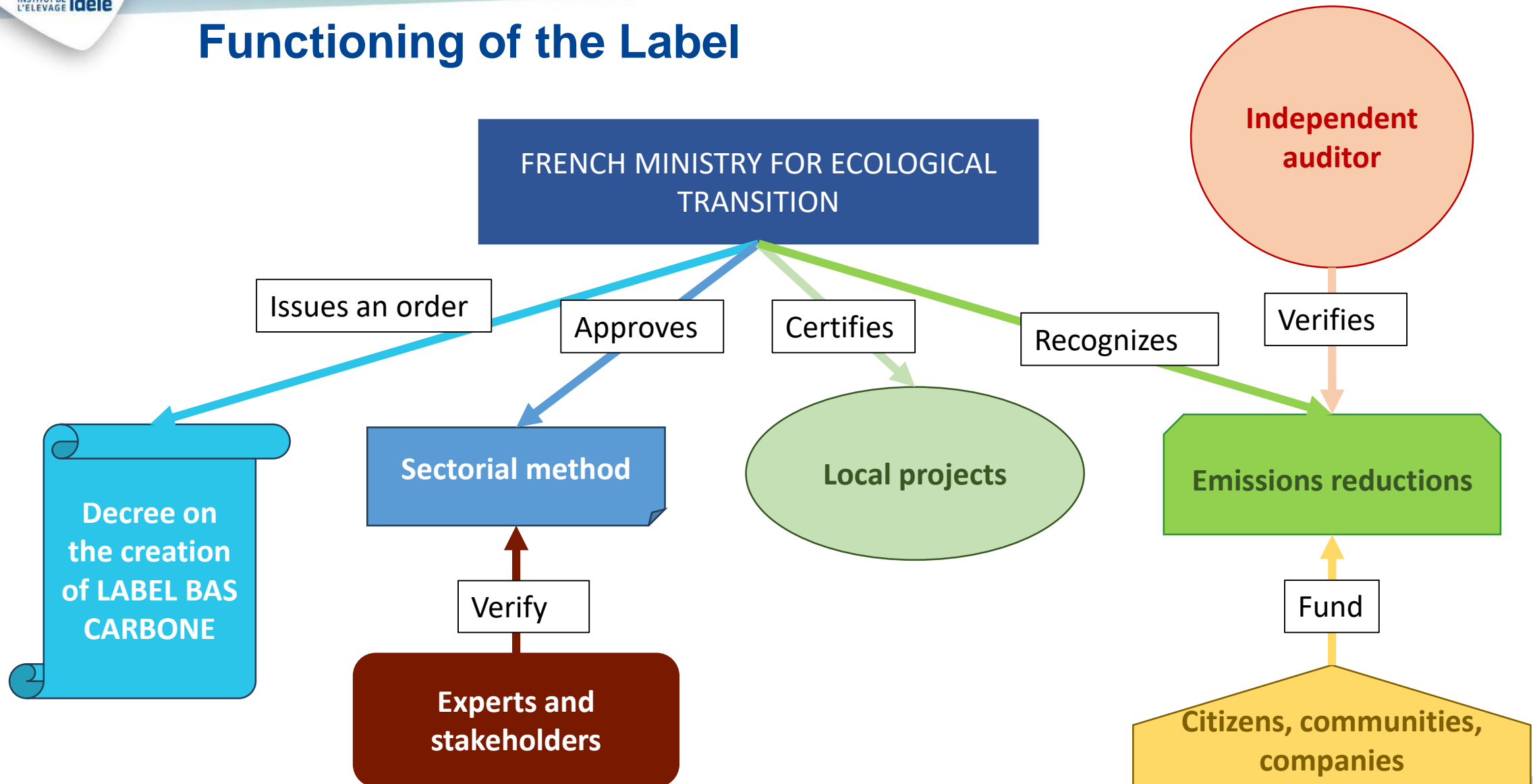
# Certification schemes in France

**Paying farmers for their carbon footprint reduction**

Anaïs L'HÔTE – French livestock Institute – National Beef Conference

# THE FRENCH LABEL BAS CARBONE

## Functioning of the Label



## Objectives of the Label

### Framework set in the decree:

- Baseline
- Calculation method
- How additionality must be taken into account
- Verification
- Co-benefits
- Follow-up
- How the risk of non-permanence must be taken into account

### Attract fundings towards these French projects by guaranteeing their environmental quality :

- Growing interest for local projects
- Funders : communities, citizens, companies

### Methods that have been approved:

3 methods in the forestry sector, 2 in the building sector, 1 in the transport sector, 1 in the marine environment and 6 in the agricultural sector.

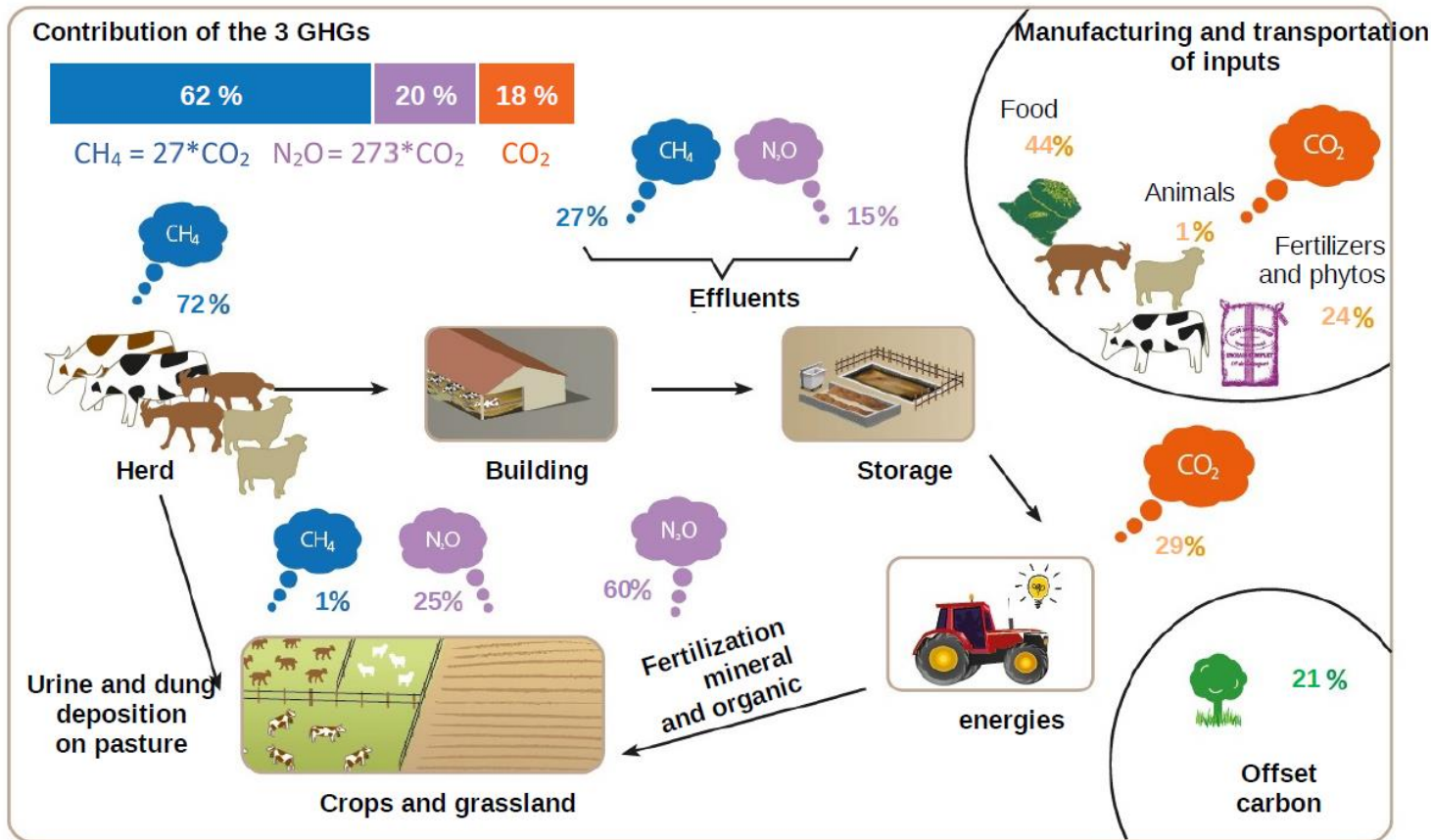
# CARBON AGRI METHOD

## Eligibility criteria:

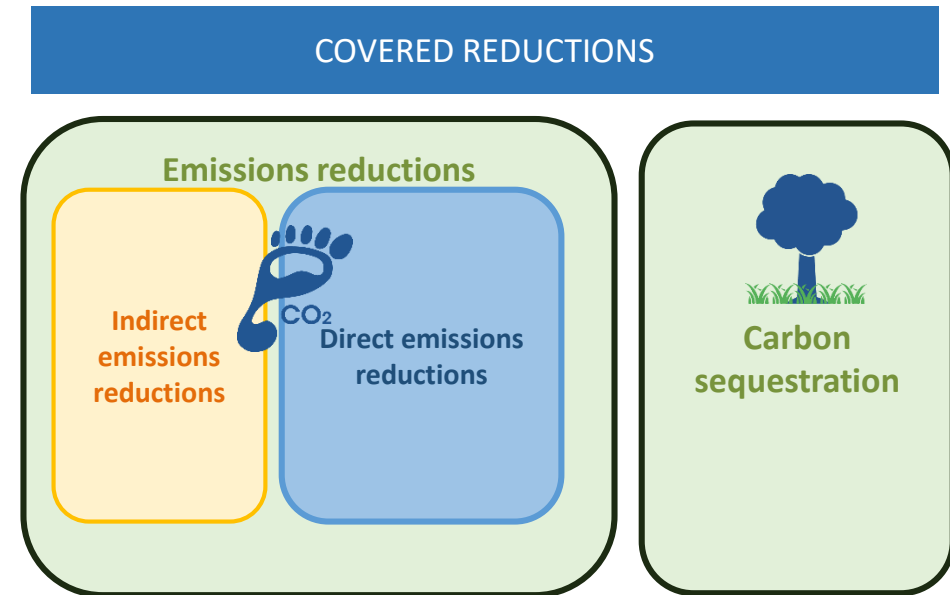
- Farms with at least a dairy, beef or crops production unit.
- Respecting Nitrate Directive with not more than 170 kg organic nitrogen/ha
- Maintaining or increasing carbon storage.



## What scope?

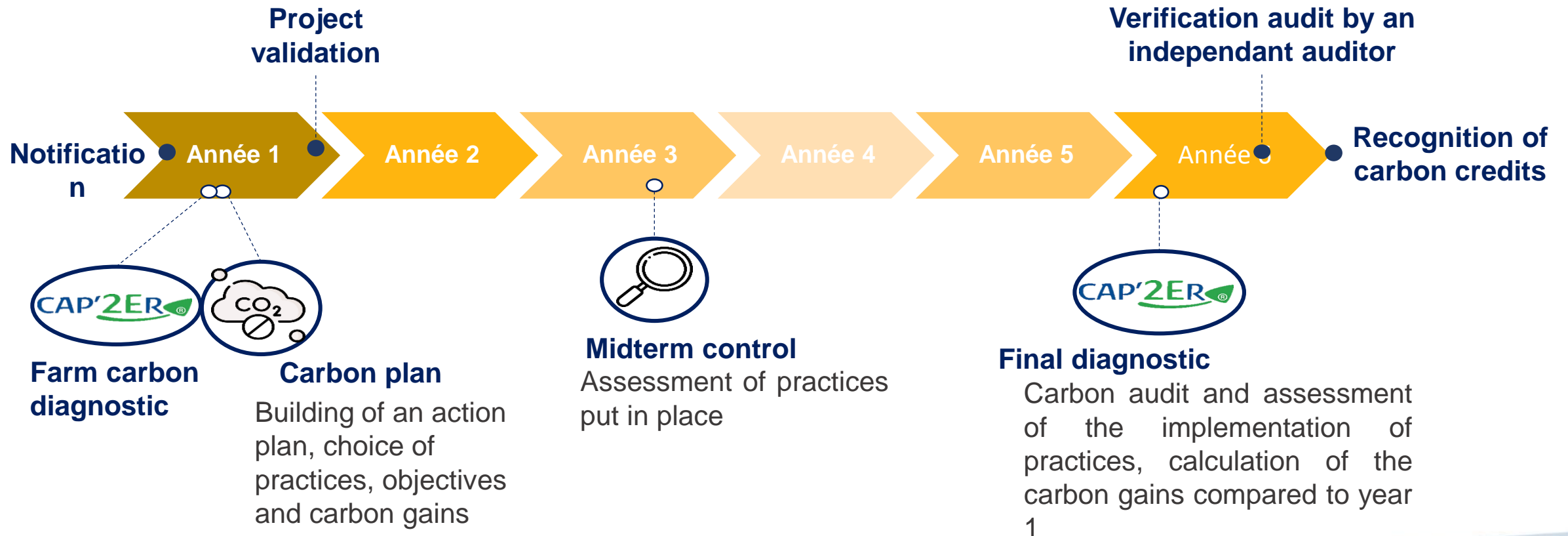


**Life Cycle Analysis with a follow-up tool: CAP'2ER or any other tool recognised by the Ministry.**



## Follow-up steps

Maximum duration: 5 years, revolving project for 5 years



## Practices to be put in place



### GHG Emissions

### Carbon sequestration



#### Herd management

Health conditions,  
Age at first calving, genetic  
performance,...



#### Herd feeding

Forrages quality, grazing,  
concentrates consumption,  
protein self-sufficiency, lipids...



#### Effluents management

Grazing length, storage & spreading of  
effluents, biogas plant,...



#### Crops management

Fertilisation optimisation, seeding  
légumes, crops rotation,...



#### Energy consumption

Electricity consumption, economical  
management...



#### Cultivated surfaces management

Intermediate crops, temporary  
grasslands length, direct  
seeding,...



#### Management of agroecological elements

Putting grasslands in place,  
planting and managing  
hedgerows, developing  
agroforestry



## Co-benefits



Water quality: excess of  
nitrogen balance → kg N



Air quality: amount of NH<sub>3</sub>  
spread in the air → kg NH<sub>3</sub>



Energy consumption: direct  
and indirect energy → MJ



Agronomy: plants cover,  
irrigation



Biodiversity → ha eq of  
biodiversity



Energy production →  
MJ



Deforestation: soya  
consumption



Direct distribution

## Carbon gain calculation

Baseline GHG emissions  
and carbon sequestration

After 5 years GHG emissions  
and carbon sequestration

Milk carbon footprint  
x milk production

-

Milk carbon footprint  
x milk production

=

GHG gains in dairy

+

Beef carbon footprint  
x beef production

-

Beef carbon footprint  
x beef production

=

GHG gains in beef

+

Crops carbon footprint  
x crop area

-

Crops carbon footprint  
x crop area

=

GHG gains in crops

+

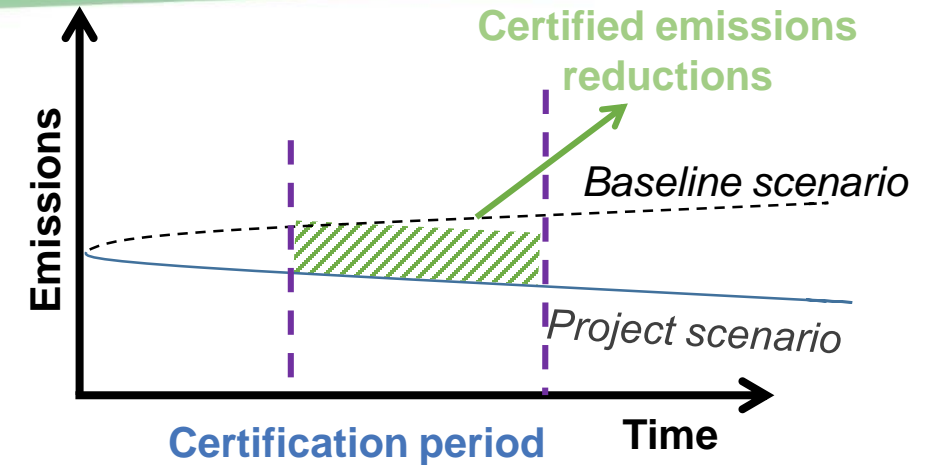
Carbon sequestration x area

-

Carbon sequestration x area

=

C sequestration  
gains



CARBON AGRI  
methodology

$\Sigma$   
**Carbon reductions** <sub>farm</sub>

# INVOLVING FARMERS IN LOW CARBON STRATEGIES

## Projects implemented in France

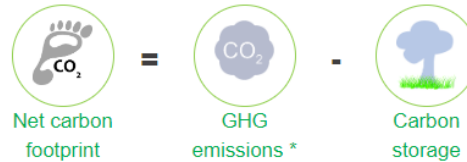
- Several projects to involve farmers in low carbon initiatives:
  - Projects with public funds: on regional, national or European scale
  - France Carbon Agri projects
- Stakeholders following farmers (advising, carrying out carbon audits, technical visits, etc): local organisations like Chambers of Agriculture, milk control, coopératives, farmers' associations, advisory companies.

## Case study of a beef farm

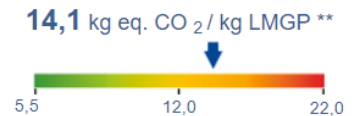
- 95 suckler cows, 185 ha including 20 ha of cash crops and 32 ha of permanent grasslands.
- Age at first calving: 36 months, 291 kg of live meat/livestock unit. Stocking rate: 1,2 livestock unit/ha.
- Initial carbon footprint: 14,1 kgCO<sub>2</sub>eq/kg Live meat

### MEAT PRODUCT RESULTS

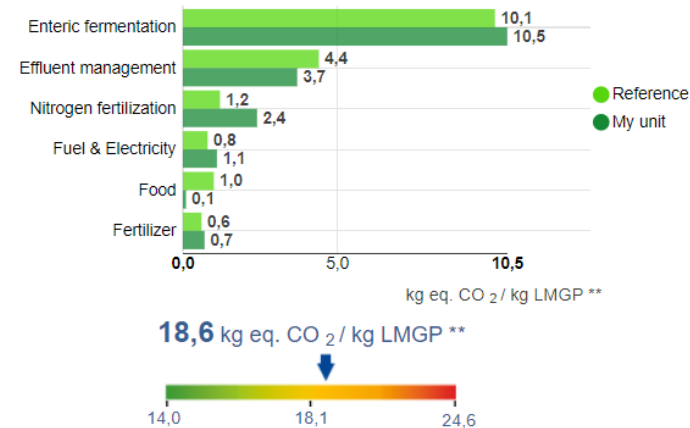
#### Net carbon footprint



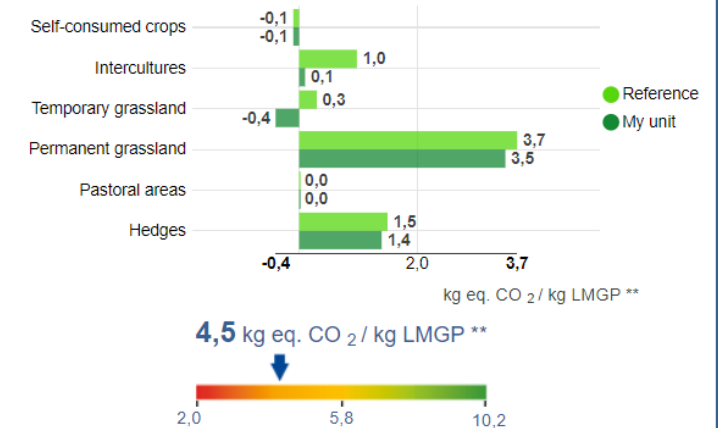
**24%** of my GHG\* emissions are offset by carbon storage



#### GHG emissions\* (CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O and CO<sub>2</sub>)



#### Carbon storage



## Case study of a beef farm

### Mitigation action plan:

- Increasing the surface of catch crops from 12 to 27 ha,
- Reducing the use of chemical fertilisers,
- Improving the sanitary conditions of animals by reducing the calving interval from 395 to 380 days
- Producing renewable electricity with photovoltaic panels.

## Case study of a beef farm

- **Emissions reduction**
  - from 14,1 to 12,1 kgCO<sub>2</sub>eq/kg Live meat
  - from 1242 to 564 kgCO<sub>2</sub>eq/ha of cash crops.
- Reduction of the nitrate surplus from 87 to 55 kgN/ha of UAA.
- Carbon gain: 608 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>eq, including 30 tons of carbon storage and 578 tons of emissions reduction.

### MEAT PRODUCT RESULTS

#### Net carbon footprint



Net carbon footprint

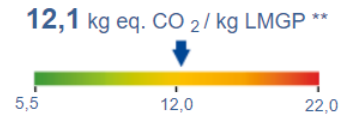


GHG emissions \*

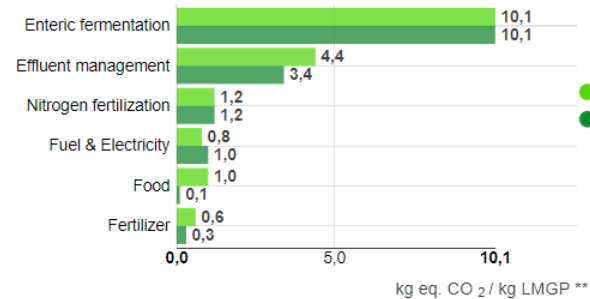


Carbon storage

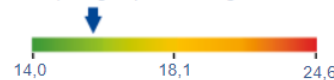
**25%** of my GHG \* emissions are offset by carbon storage



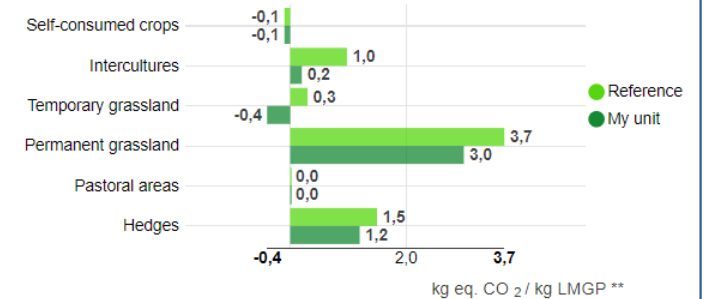
#### GHG emissions\* (CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O and CO<sub>2</sub>)



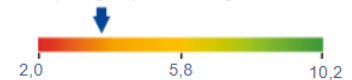
**16,1 kg eq. CO<sub>2</sub> / kg LMGP \*\***



#### Carbon storage



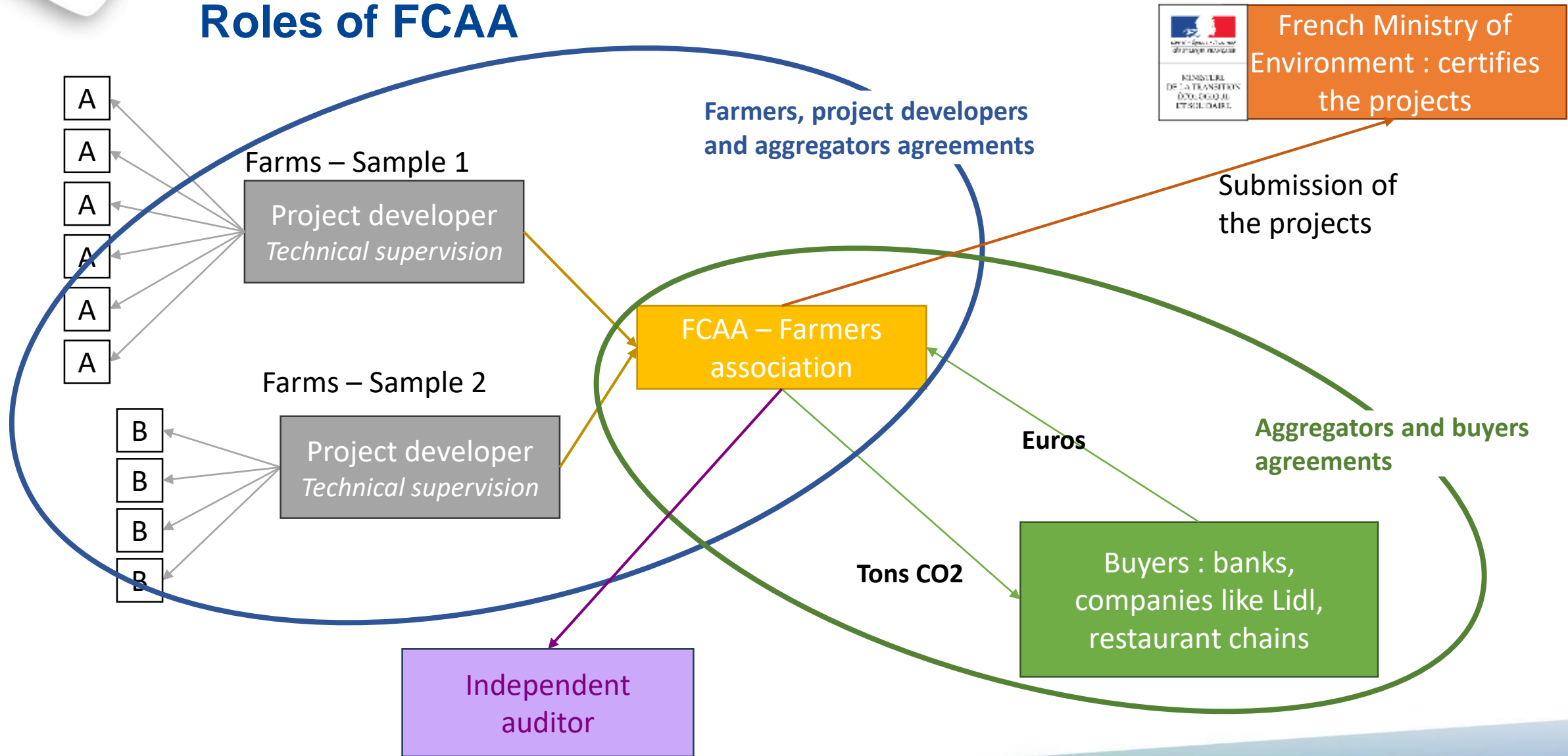
**4,0 kg eq. CO<sub>2</sub> / kg LMGP \*\***



Comparison with an equivalent forage system

# HOW TO PAY FARMERS? FCAA, AN EXAMPLE OF NATIONAL AGGREGATOR

## Roles of FCAA



## Four call of projects involving around 2500 farmers

Carbon credit – total  
price:  
40€/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq



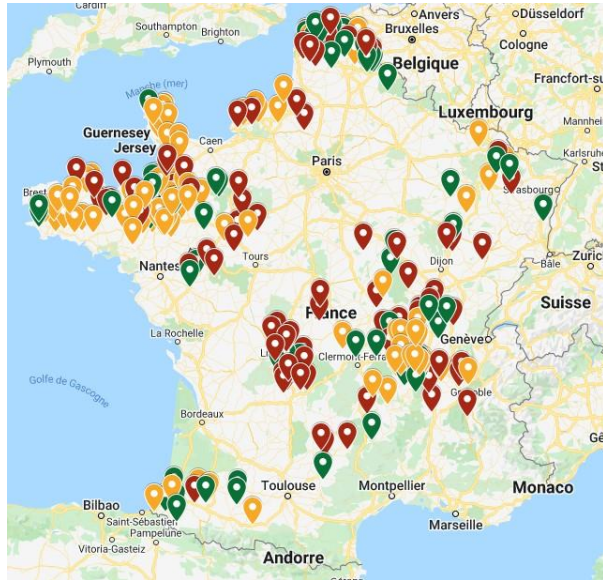
Farmer:  
32€/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq



Project developer:  
5€/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq

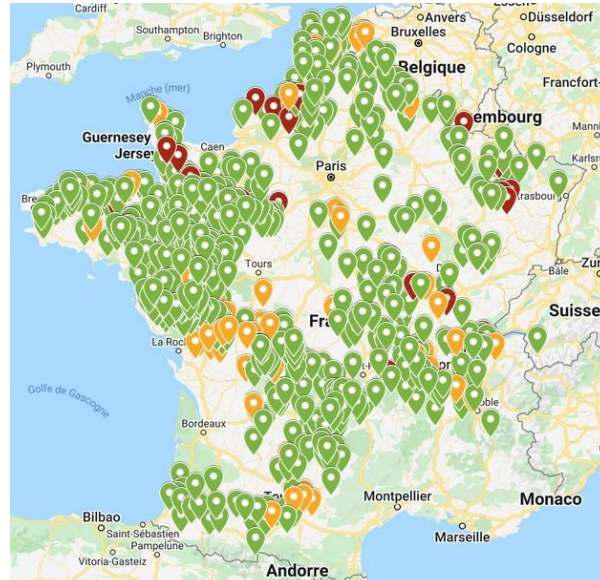


FCAA:  
3€/tCO<sub>2</sub>eq



**1<sup>st</sup> project accredited in 2020**

- 300 farmers
- 137 000 t CO<sub>2</sub>eq reductions



**2<sup>nd</sup> project accredited in 2022**

- 930 farmers
- 511 000 t CO<sub>2</sub>eq reductions

**3<sup>rd</sup> project submitted in November 2023**

- 330 farms
- 214 500 t CO<sub>2</sub>eq reductions

**4th project to be submitted in December 2023**

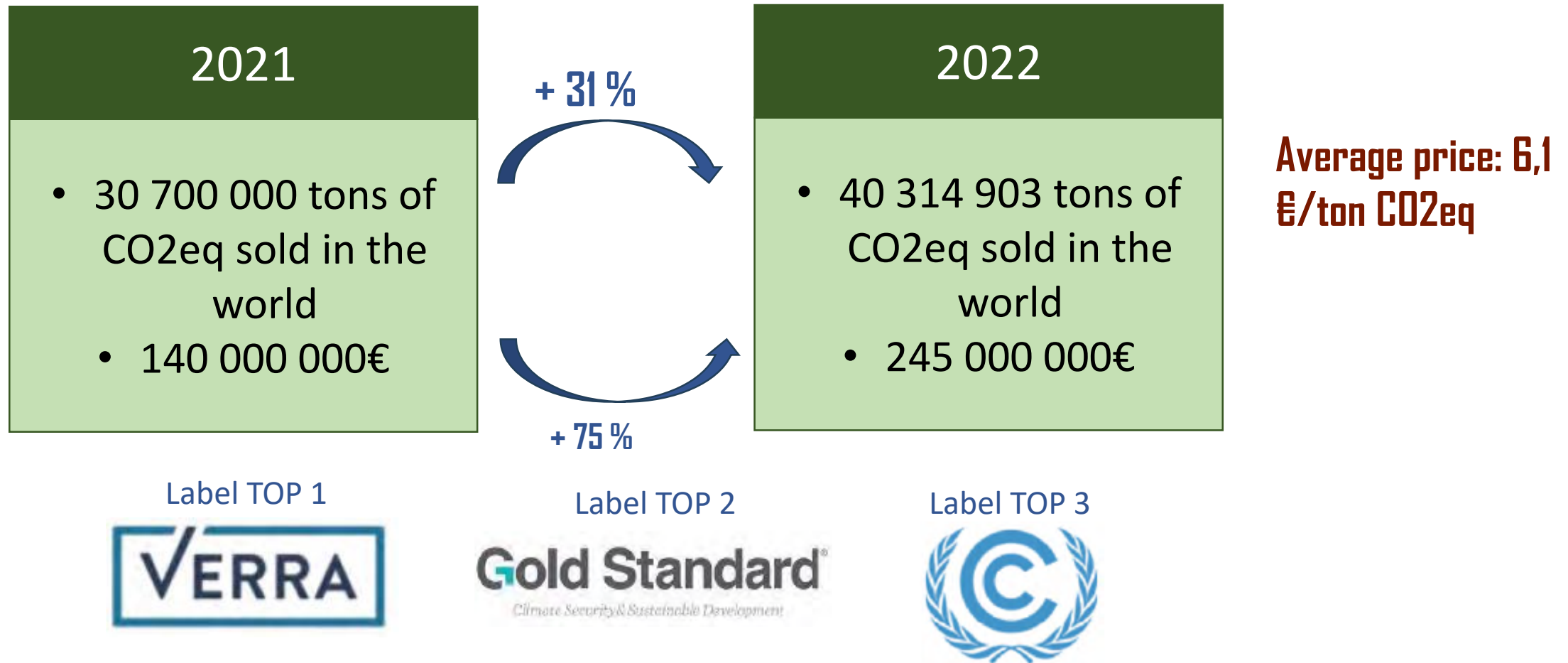
- 1000 farms

# **STATE OF THE VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKET AND STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY COMPANIES**

## What is a Label Bas Carbone certificate?

- Purchase of these certificates is considered as the purchase of a service delivery:
  - Offsetting of the residual emissions of a company
  - Voluntary contribution to the climate change mitigation
  - Reduction on scope 3
- Once bought, certificates are not transferable to another company

## Evolution of the voluntary carbon market



## What level of trust in carbon credits system?

**Low level of trust:** scandal described in the Guardian in January 2023, lack of transparency.

### What about Label Bas Carbone?

- Reservations about it: strictly speaking, certificates are not carbon credits, certificates are not transferable, audit is too late in the lifetime of projects.
- Advantages: high quality of low carbon projects certified, high level of remuneration for these projects.

→ **French voluntary carbon market: only 8% of tons of CO<sub>2</sub>eq avoided come from Label Bas Carbone projects.**

## What companies?

- Buyers are: banks, luxury companies, agrifood industries, restaurant chains, service companies, energy companies, etc.  
→ Example of Lidl: reduction on scope 3 by purchasing Label Bas Carbone certificates generated by its own beef suppliers.
- Main purchase criteria: price of carbon credit, farms' location, co-benefits, practices implemented.
- **Voluntary carbon buyers are the companies that reduce the most their GHG emissions in a first place.**

## Law evolution regarding voluntary carbon market

- On France scale
  - From 01/01/2023: obligation of integrating scope 3 in the carbon footprint for companies with at least 500 employees and several public organisations
  - Mandatory offsetting of GHG emissions coming from domestic flights
  - Mandatory offsetting of GHG emissions caused by coal-fired power plants
- On European scale: obligation of publishing a CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) report every year for biggest companies.

# **CERTIFICATION SCHEMES IN EUROPE - PROPOSAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND LIFE CARBON FARMING PROJECT**

## Union certification framework for carbon removals

### Only for carbon sequestration

- Permanent sequestration
- Carbon Farming
- Carbon sequestration in products

### Major features of this framework

- Quantification
- Additionality
- Long-term storage
- Sustainability

### Functioning

- Verification by an independent auditor
- High-quality certification methods
- Public register of carbon removals

**Published in November 2022 by  
the European Commission**

**Adopted by the EU Parliament's  
Committee on Environment,  
Public Health and Food Safety**

## LIFE Carbon Farming project

**Main objectives of the LIFE CARBON FARMING project:**

- Reducing by 15% the carbon footprint of agricultural products in 6 years in 700 farms
- Building a result-based rewarding mechanism



**Action C.1. : Elaboration of harmonized tools and standards for implementing carbon farming initiatives - Tool farm kit, MRV standard, engineering tools**

**Action C.2.: Implementation of low carbon projects in 700 livestock farms in France, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Spain**

**Action C.3. : Elaborating low carbon projects referential costs**

**Action C.4. : Applying result-based carbon funding mechanism**

- Certification frameworks like Label Bas Carbone can be one of the solutions to fund the transition towards low carbon production systems.
- Incentive for farmers: 1250 agricultural projects of beef and dairy farms have been certified by the Ministry for Ecological Transition in France, representing 660 000 tCO<sub>2</sub>eq avoided.
- Creation of an Union certification framework for carbon removals, but without taking into account emissions reductions.
- Within this dynamic voluntary carbon market, rules must be clarified for companies wishing to fund low carbon projects.



**Thank you for your attention**