

CAP reform: Achieving Biodiversity & Water Quality Objectives

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Overview

- CAP History
- Pillar I measures
 - SMRs & GAECs
 - New Greening elements
- Pillar II measures
 - GLAS, Organics
 - Output-based schemes

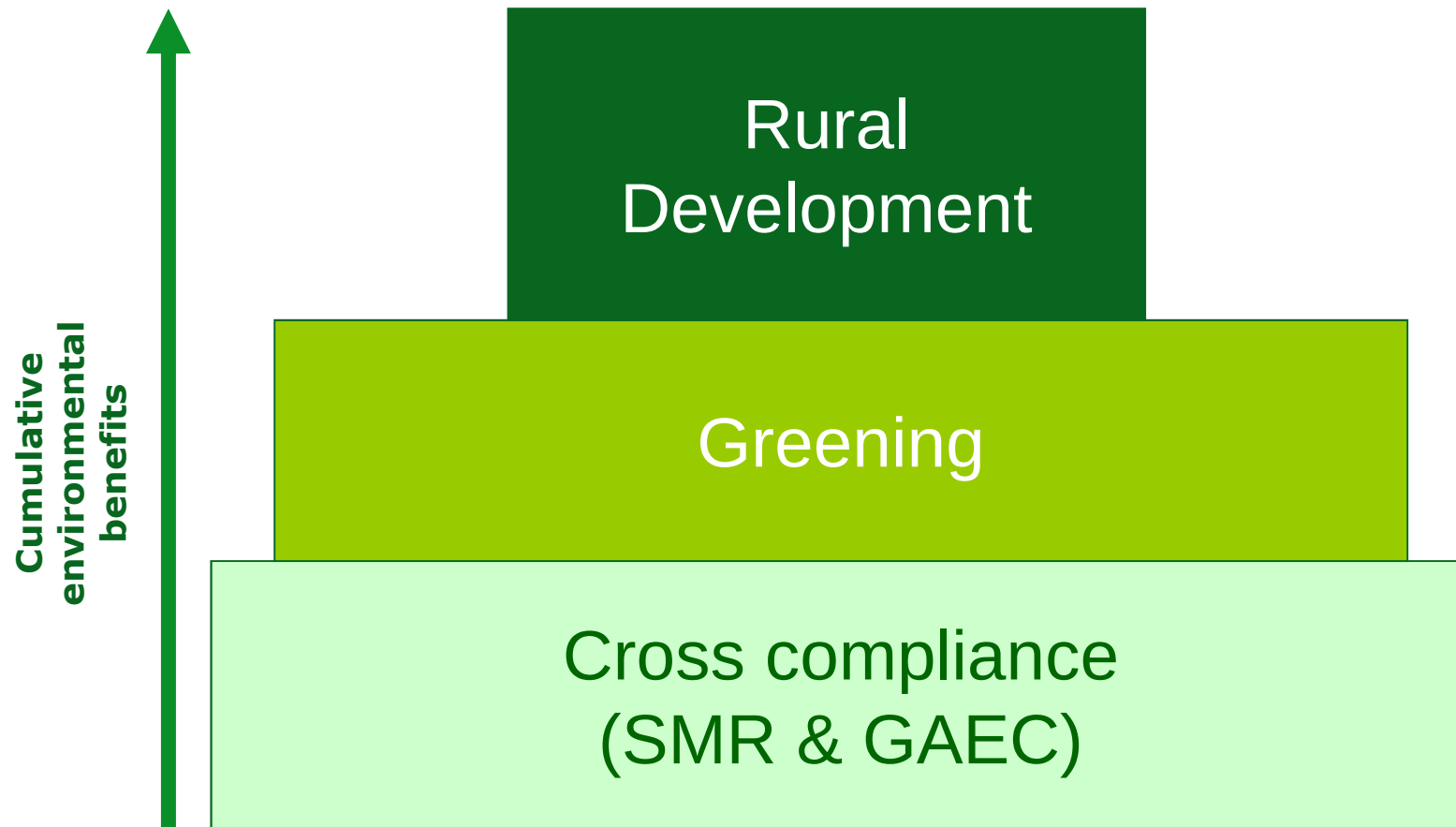
CAP History

- Earlier CAP (1960 - 1980s)
 - Production focused
 - Food security, rural income
- More recent reforms (1990 - 2013)
 - Intervention, set aside, agri-environment schemes
 - Shift from product support to producer support
 - Decoupling, cross compliance
 - Integration of environmental considerations
- CAP Post 2013

Background context

- The Water Framework Directive
 - Groundwater Directive
 - Nitrates Directive
- Birds Directive, Habitats Directive
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- EU and National biodiversity Strategies
 - halting the loss of biodiversity by 2020.

The New Architecture of the CAP



Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs)

- SMR 1 Nitrates
 - GAP regulations (SR limits, fertiliser rates, storage requirements)
- SMR 2 Birds Directive
 - Compliance with requirements for SPAs
- SMR 3 Habitats Directive
 - Compliance with requirements for SACs

Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC)

Standards for Water quality

GAEC 1 Buffer strips along watercourses

- Nitrates/GAP buffers sufficient

GAEC 2 Irrigation water

- If irrigation water is subject to authorisation
 - but not applicable in Ireland

GAEC 3 Protection of groundwater

- Prevent discharges of chemicals, fertilisers, waste oils, sheep dip etc.



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GAEC Standards continued

Standards for Soil and Carbon stock

GAEC 4 Minimum soil cover

- Controls yet to be confirmed
- Green cover, no tilling without establishment

GAEC 5 Soil Erosion

- No overgrazing, poaching, appropriate use of machinery

GAEC 6 Soil organic matter

- No burning of crop residues



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GAEC Standards continued

GAEC 7

Retention of landscape features

- Hedgerows, gappy hedges, trees in line
- Ponds, drains, ditches etc.
- Areas under features are Eligible
- Control invasive plant species



Pillar I Greening

Retention of Permanent pasture

Benefits for:

- Biodiversity, Soil, Water management, Climate
- Permanent Green cover for nutrient uptake
- Flood prevention
- Landscape amenity

Pillar I Greening Crop Diversification

Benefits for:

- Soil organic matter, structure and reduced nutrient leaching
- Better nutrient management and input reduction
- Water quality
- Improved habitats and landscape diversity



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Pillar I Greening

Ecological Focus Areas (EFA)

Benefits for:

- Biodiversity: Habitat for natural predators, Pollinator species, other insects, birds
- Water quality: buffer zone, barrier
- Landscape value

Pillar II CAP priorities (RDP)

1. Knowledge transfer and innovation
2. Enhanced competitiveness
3. Promoting food chain organisation, animal welfare and risk management
- 4. Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems**
5. Promoting resource efficiency and a low carbon economy
6. Promoting social inclusion and economic recovery

Pillar II Schemes*

- Green Low-carbon Agri-Environment Scheme (GLAS)
- Organic Farming Scheme
- Areas of Natural Constraint
- Locally-led Output-Based Schemes

*NB – awaiting Commission approval

GLAS Structure

- Tier 1 and 2 entry via priority assets and actions
- Tier 3 General actions
- Core requirements
- Actions targeted within farm rather than whole farm approach

Core requirements

- An approved FAS planner must prepare GLAS application
- Nutrient Management Planning
 - within 12 months
 - Soil sampling, lime requirement
- Training in environmental practices and standards
- Record keeping on actions delivered

Tier 1

Priority Environmental Assets (PEA)

1) Farmland Habitat (private Natura sites)

2) Farmland Birds:

Corncrake, waders, hen harrier, grey partridge, geese and swans, twite, chough

3) Commonages

4) High status water sites

5) Rare Breeds

GLAS + applicable if more than 1 PEA



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Tier 1

Priority Environmental Actions

- Farmers with > 140kg livestock manure N / ha or >30 ha of arable crops and who select specific actions
 - Low Emission Slurry Spreading
 - Minimum Tillage
 - Green Cover Establishment from a Sown Crop
 - Wild Bird Cover (grassland farmers only)
- Registered Organic farmers

Tier 2

Secondary Environmental Assets and Actions (SEA)

- Applicants within a Vulnerable Water Sites (VWS) may get Tier 2 access by selecting watercourse actions (fencing of watercourse or arable grass margin)
- Applicants outside VWS, may select one of:
 - Low emission Slurry Spreading
 - Minimum Tillage
 - Green Cover Establishment from a Sown Crop
 - Wild Bird Cover (grassland farmers only)

Tier 3

General Environmental Actions – Targeting Biodiversity

- Hedgerow Establishment
- Coppicing / Laying hedgerows
- Arable Grass Margin
- Bird / Bat boxes
- Conservation of Solitary Bees
- Low Input Permanent Pasture
- Traditional Hay Meadow
- Wild bird cover



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Tier 3

General Environmental Actions

– Targeting Water quality

- Protection of Water Courses
 - Exclusion of bovine access
- Riparian Margins
 - Fenced buffer margins
 - Various widths: 3m, 6m, 10m, 30m
- Biodiversity actions located beside water courses
 - Hedgerow establishment, arable grass margin

Locally-led Output-based Schemes

- Expansion of the Burren Farming for Conservation Programme
- New Scheme for Fresh Water Pearl Mussel priority catchments
- Opportunity for smaller locally-led projects (e.g. by river catchment area) with an output-focused approach

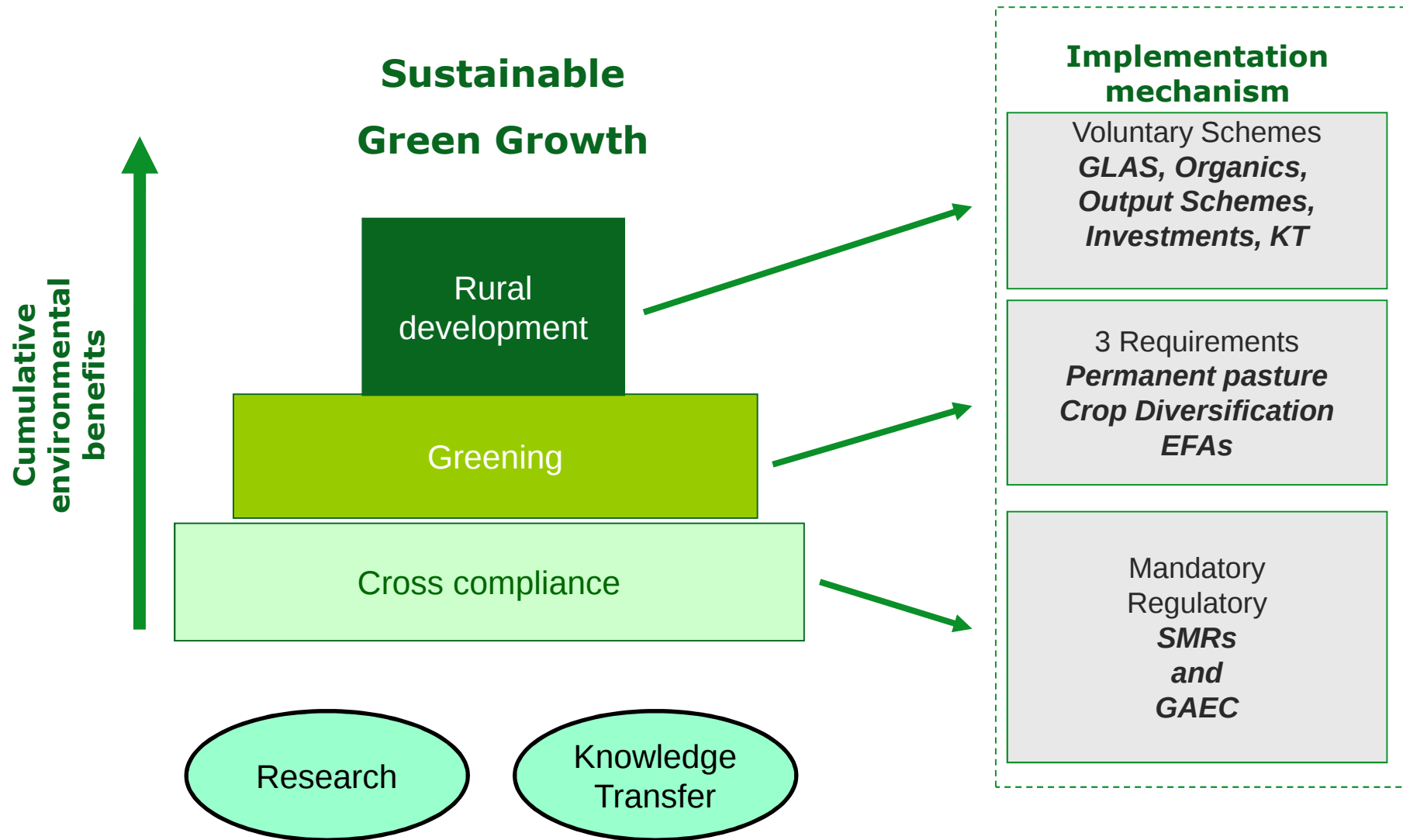
Organic Farming Scheme

- ✓ Sustainable farming systems
- ✓ Soil and water quality
- ✓ Crop rotation
- ✓ Nutrient recycling & reduce inputs

Areas of Natural Constraint

- ✓ Sustainable management of marginal areas
- ✓ Mitigate land abandonment

CAP: Environmental Benefits



Thank you
for your attention



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