

European Economic and Social Committee's Sustainable Development Observatory (SDO)  
- 11 March 2024 -

Interconnections between food, health, and sustainability:  
EU strategy and external response for sustainable food systems



EU DG  
INTERNATIONAL  
PARTNERSHIP  
INTPA.F.3  
Sustainable food  
systems and  
fisheries  
Philippe THOMAS

# Foresights: worsening trends

## Food systems at risk...

Number of  
undernourished



Pacific  
Ocean

### CONFLATING TRENDS

SEVERAL TRENDS ARE PUSHING AG-TECH FORWARD

**66% OF PEOPLE WILL LIVE IN CITIES BY 2050**  
COMPARED TO 54% IN 2014

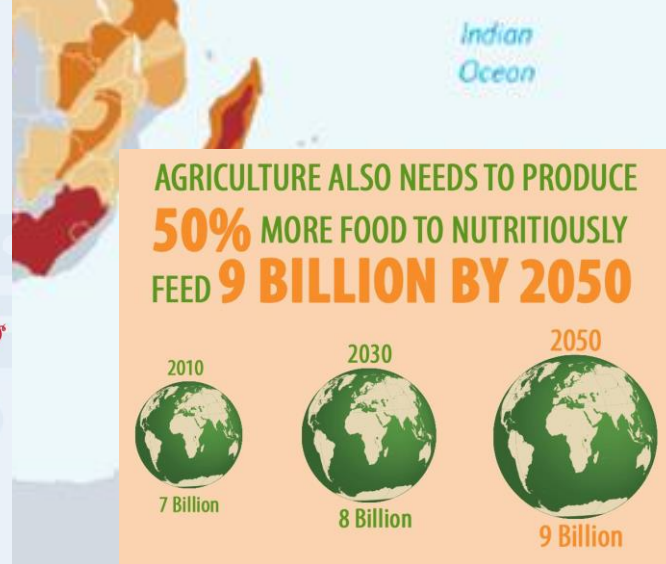
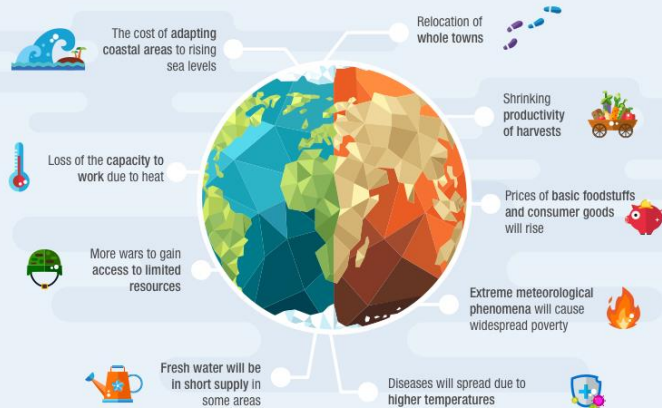
**50% INCREASE IN FOOD DEMAND BY 2050**



**3 BILLION MORE MOUTHS TO FEED BY 2050**

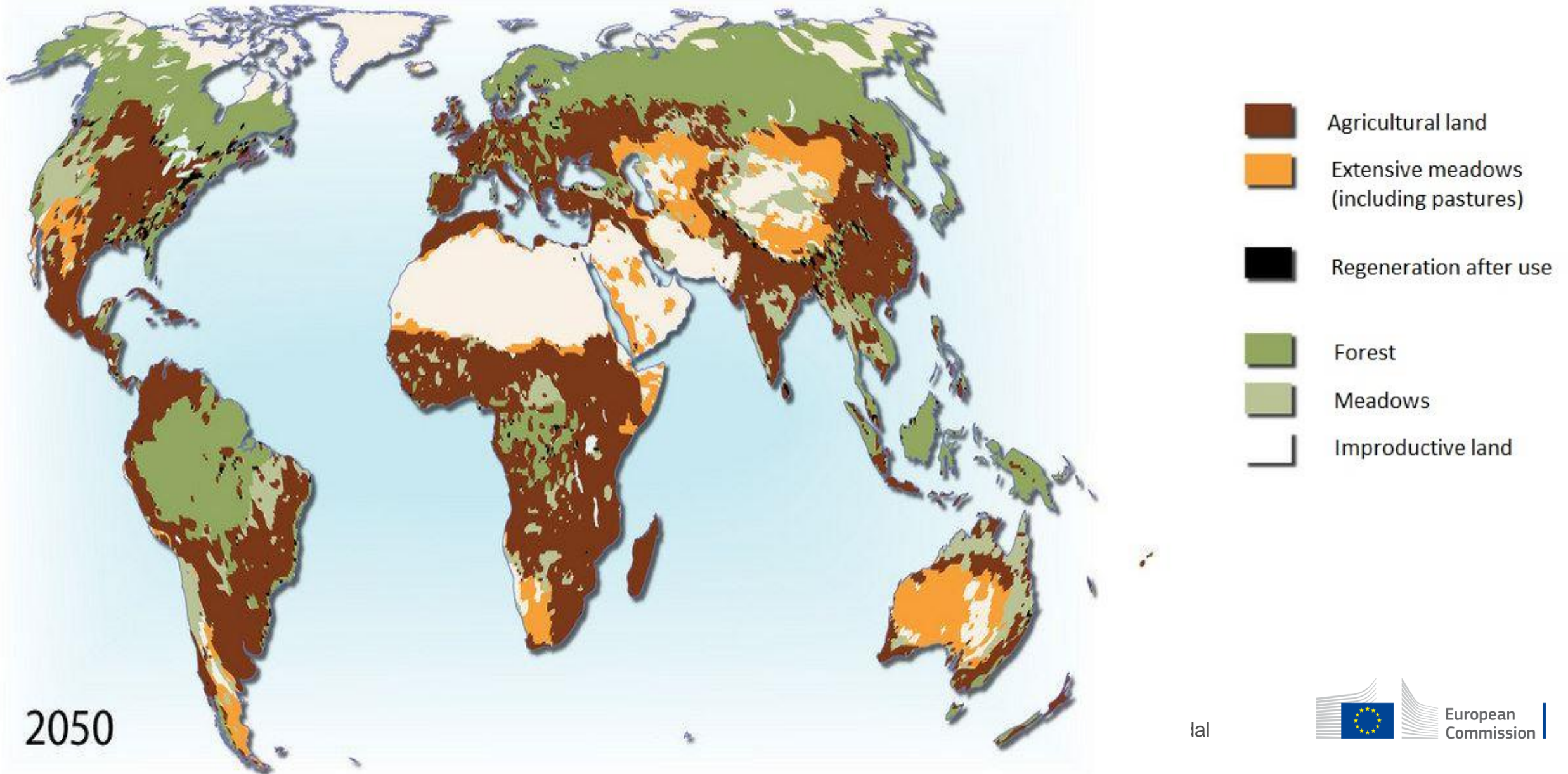
SOURCE: FAO

LA  
NIC IMPACT  
CHANGE



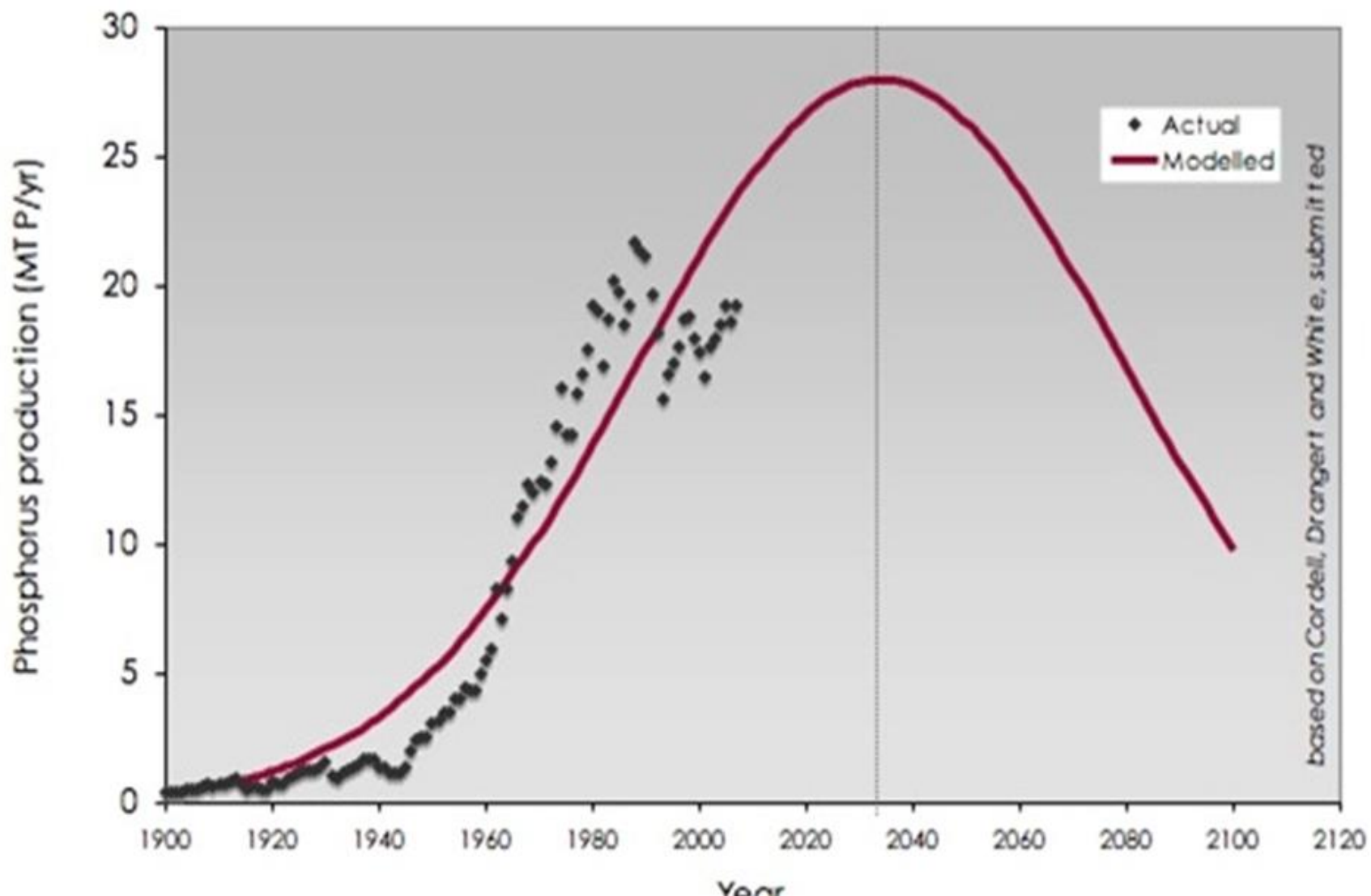
### Soil degradation

- Very high severity
- High severity
- Moderate severity
- Low severity
- Stable land, ice cap or non-used wasteland

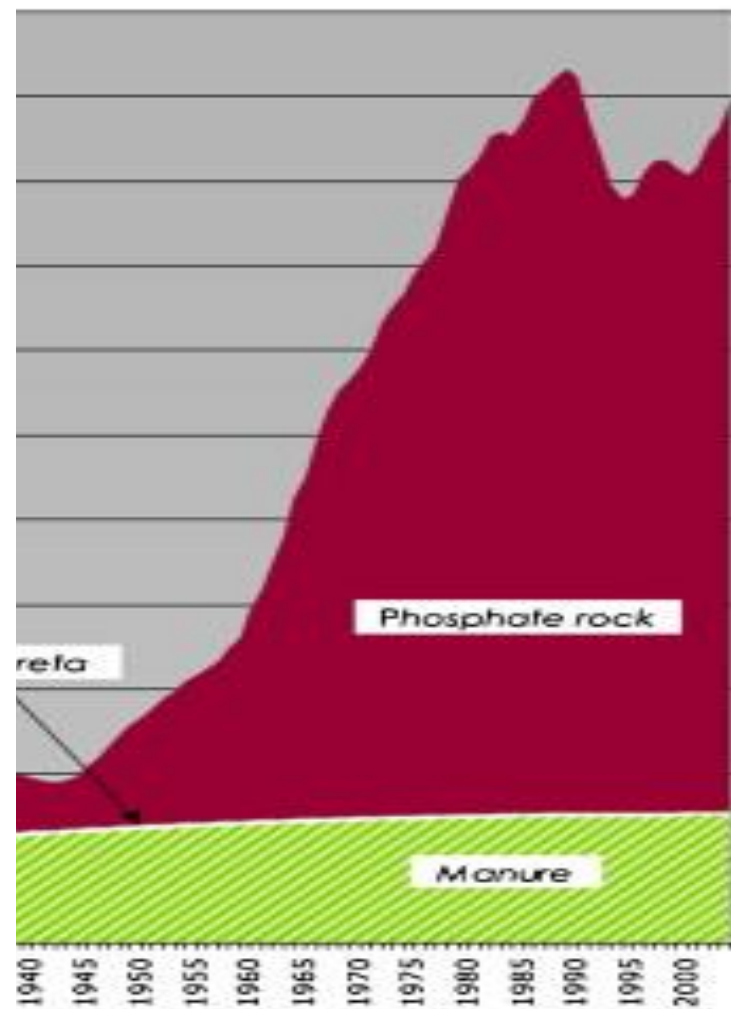


# Phosphorus : a need to change approaches

Peak Phosphorus curve



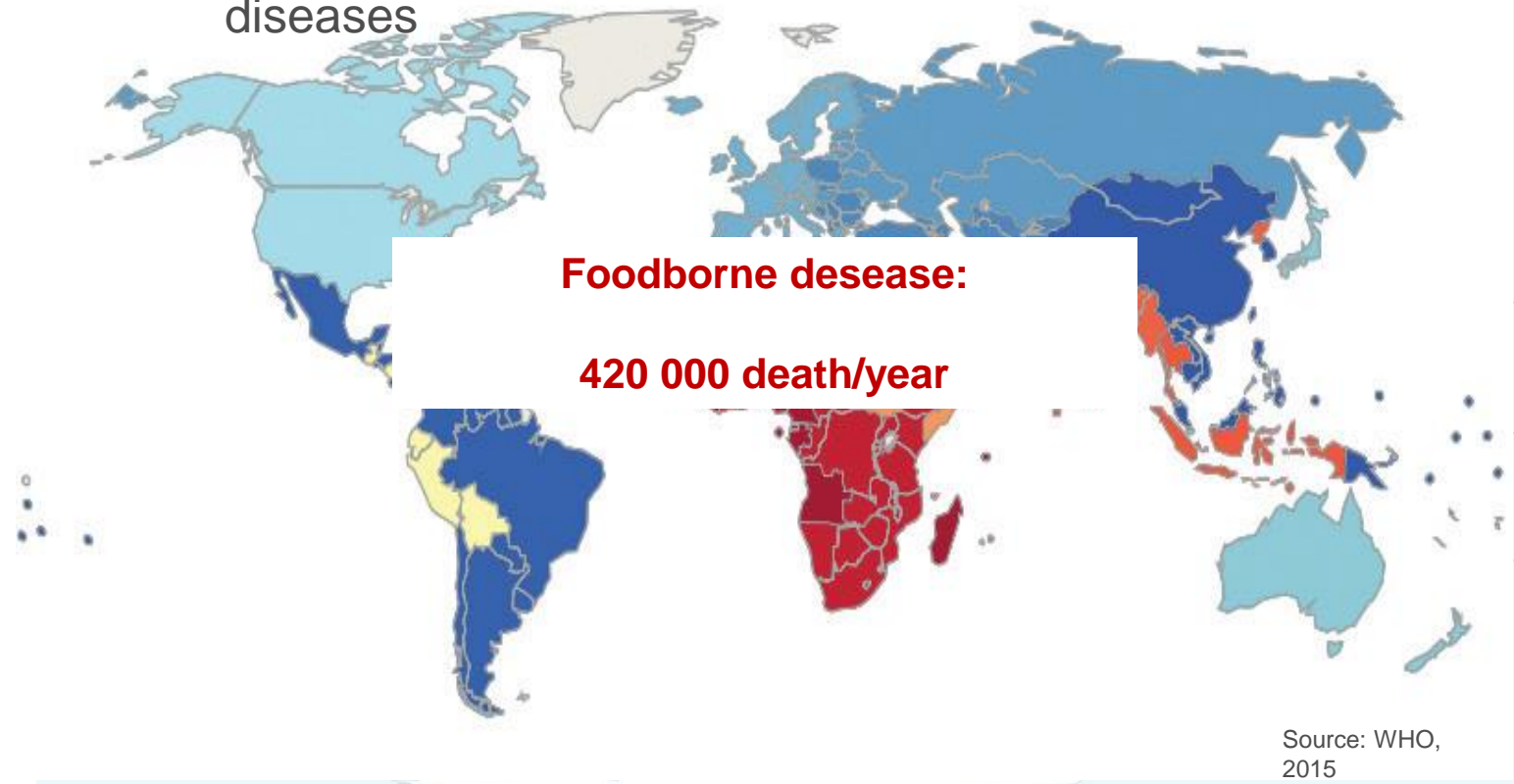
Phosphorus production (1800-2000)

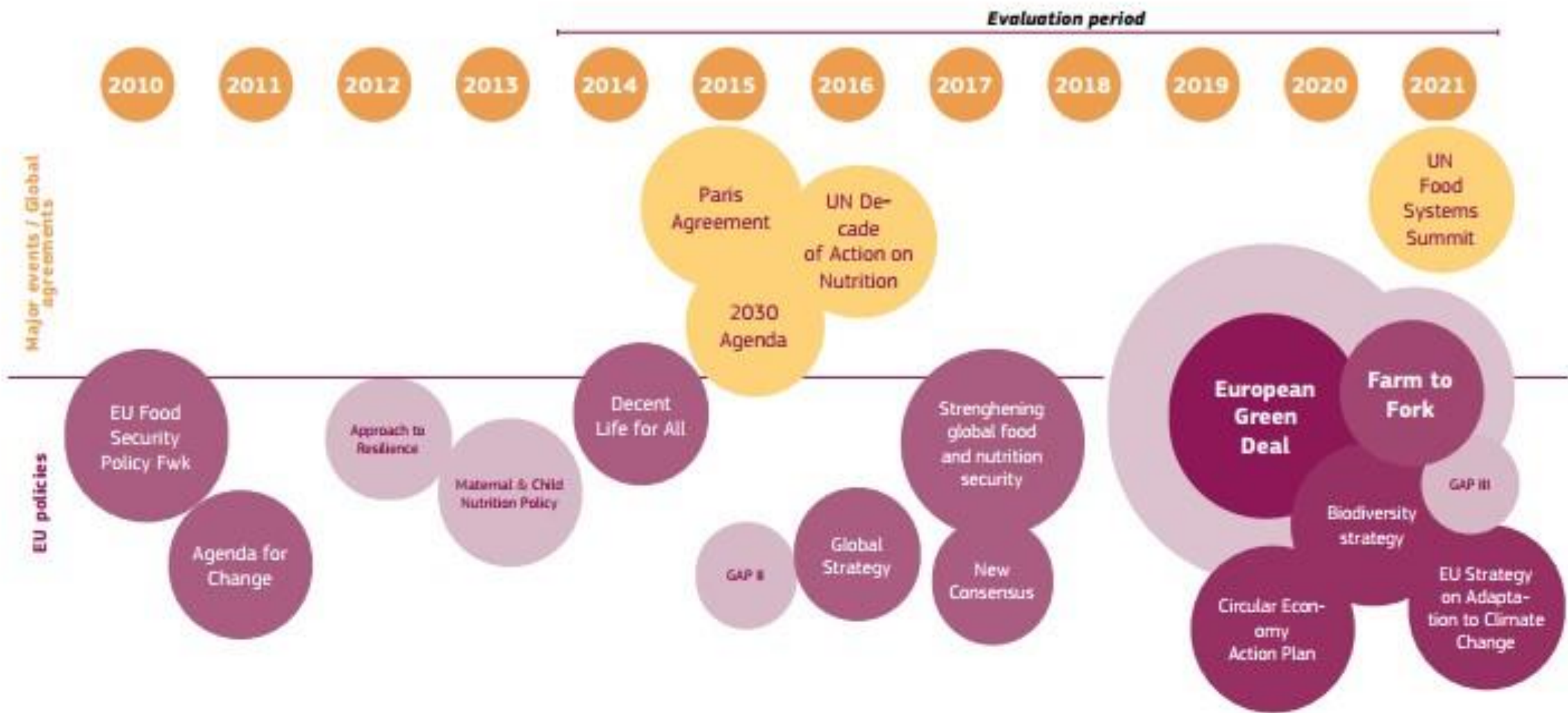


# Consequences on food demand and nutrition

- Need to produce more food in some regions
  - Animal products
  - Processed food
- A triple burden
  - Undernourishment
  - Micronutrient deficiency
  - + Obesity, diabetes, etc.

Estimate of the global burden of foodborne diseases







The **use of pesticides in agriculture** contributes to pollution of soil, water and air. The Commission will take actions to:

- ✓ **reduce by 50%** the use and risk of chemical pesticides by 2030.
- ✓ **reduce by 50%** the use of more hazardous pesticides by 2030.



The **excess of nutrients** in the environment is a major source of air, soil and water pollution, negatively impacting biodiversity and climate. The Commission will act to:

- ✓ **reduce nutrient losses by at least 50%**, while ensuring no deterioration on soil fertility.
- ✓ **reduce fertilizer use by at least 20%** by 2030.



**Antimicrobial resistance** linked to the use of antimicrobials in animal and human health leads to an estimated 33,000 human deaths in the EU each year. The Commission will **reduce by 50% the sales of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture by 2030**.



**Organic farming** is an environmentally-friendly practice that needs to be further developed. The Commission will boost the development of EU organic farming area with the aim to achieve **25% of total farmland under organic farming by 2030**.

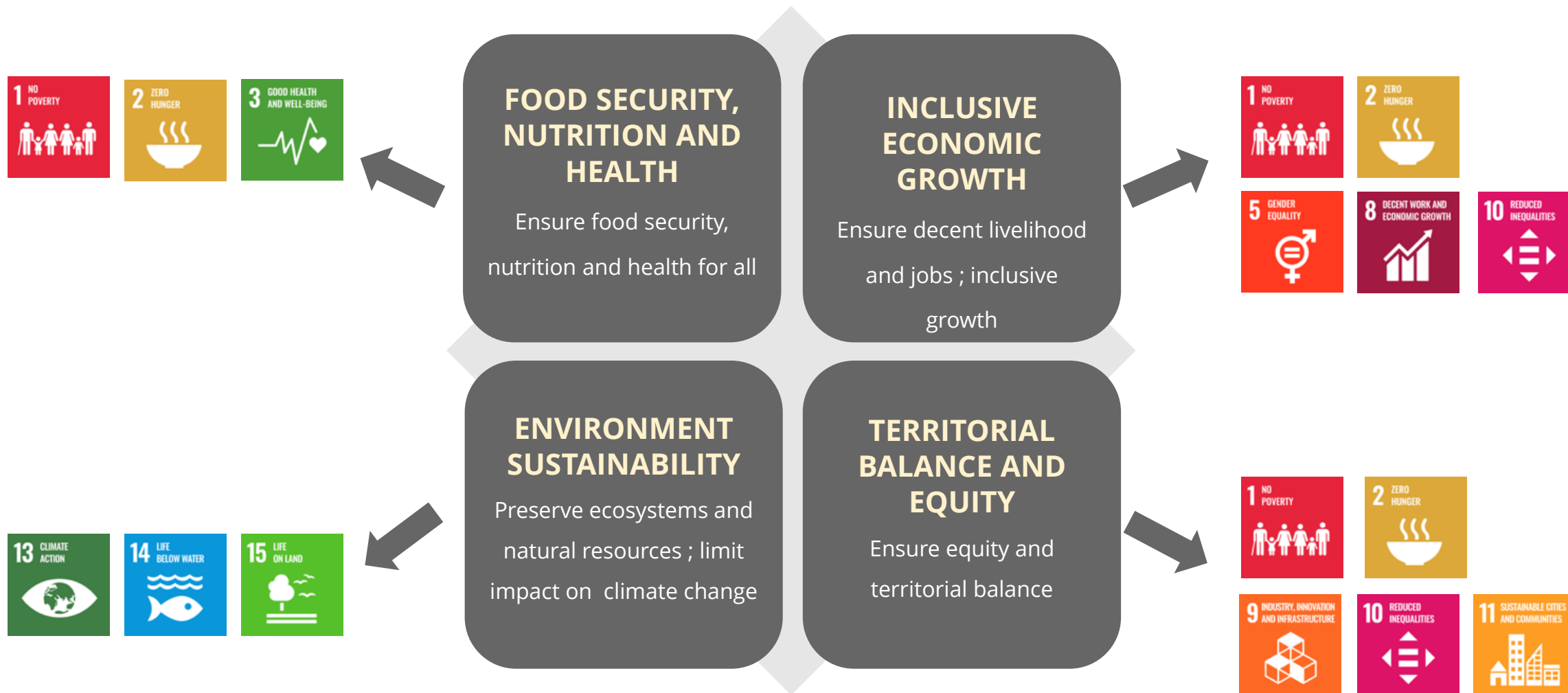
The Council of the European Union, in its conclusion of 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020, **reaffirmed EU's commitment to global cooperation on sustainable food systems (...)** and encouraged the inclusion of sustainable food systems as an objective of the EU external policies and the inclusion of specific chapters on sustainable food systems in all new alliances and agreements with all partners.

It further insisted on **the importance of the EU's support for sustainable African rural development**.

Source: Council Conclusion of 19 October 2020, Doc 12099/20

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/f2f\\_action-plan\\_2020\\_strategy-info\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/f2f_action-plan_2020_strategy-info_en.pdf)

# FSA methodology - centered around 4 Sustainable Food Systems Goals







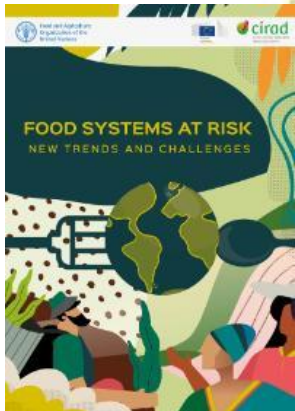
# Sustainable agrifood systems and fisheries = Sustainable aquatic and agrifood systems (SAAFS) as per mission statement

Global Network  
Against Food Crises



**“** The pandemic has revealed the clear interconnections between human health, animal health and the health of our environment. Europe cannot address these challenges alone. We need to support our partner countries in their food system transition.

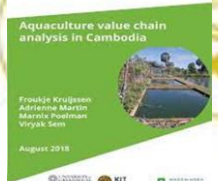
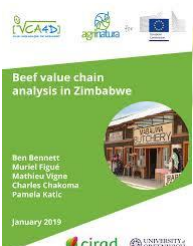
**Carla Montesi**  
Director Green Deal and Digital Agenda,  
DG INTPA



Session 1 (Commitment from Countries)



H.E. Ms. Jutta Urpilainen, European Commissioner for International Partnerships, EU



## EC's initiatives on sustainable food systems : Helping the transitions to take place

- From the understanding
  - **Food Systems Assessment initiative** (2020) developing relevant diagnostics and designing pathways toward more sustainable food systems in over 50 countries (UNFSS, STM+2, ...)
  - **Sustainable Agri-food systems Intelligence** (2023) institutional processes, policy and investment interventions; in-depth understanding of challenges, opportunities and trade-offs; greater guidance to EU and Government decision-makers for designing responses coherent with an agrifood systems' perspective; public, **private sector and civil society actors' understanding**
- To the implementation:
  - **EUR 3.4 billion in 2021-2024** for medium-term investments in food security and sustainable food systems in partner countries.
  - Transition to sustainable agrifood systems: Global Gateway investments (supporting production of **staple food** -ex of 350MEUR mobilized under EDF reserve- and **strategic value chains** like cocoa, coffee, cashew nuts, **livestock in drylands**, **fortified food**, etc...as well as local/regional processing capacities); environmental sustainability also dealt through major programmes on **agro-ecology** (Desira, etc...) ; struggle for **aquatic food**, ...
  - **Most vulnerable pay the price:** Food crises / HDP nexus at all levels: Global Network Against Food Crises; GAFS; G7; G20 hunger and poverty; SUN, etc.

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION*



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