

3 February 2021



Contents

- **Why a growing European interest in living laboratories in agriculture?**
- The Horizon EU partnership on agroecology living labs and research infrastructures
- Living labs under the Horizon EU mission on soil health

Change is urgent



Key targets & objectives to be achieved by 2030

-50% chemical pesticides

-20% chemical fertilizers

10% agricultural land under high-diversity landscape

25% share of organic production

protect soil fertility, reduce soil erosion and increase soil organic matter

Reduce GHG emissions by at least **55%**

...and many others

Time to step up the efforts...

...by 2030 = 9 years = 9 growing seasons.....

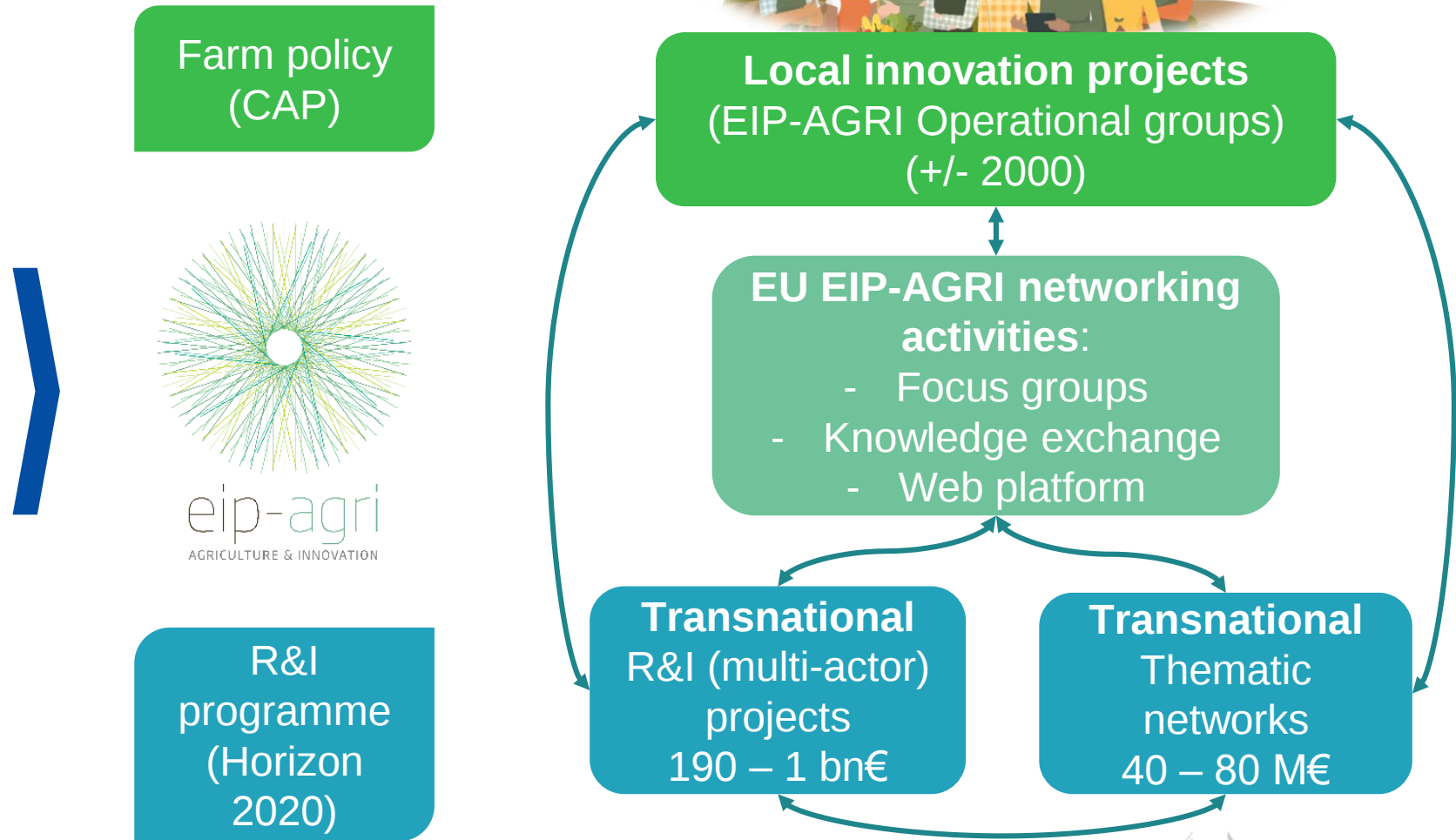


EU approach to agricultural R&I

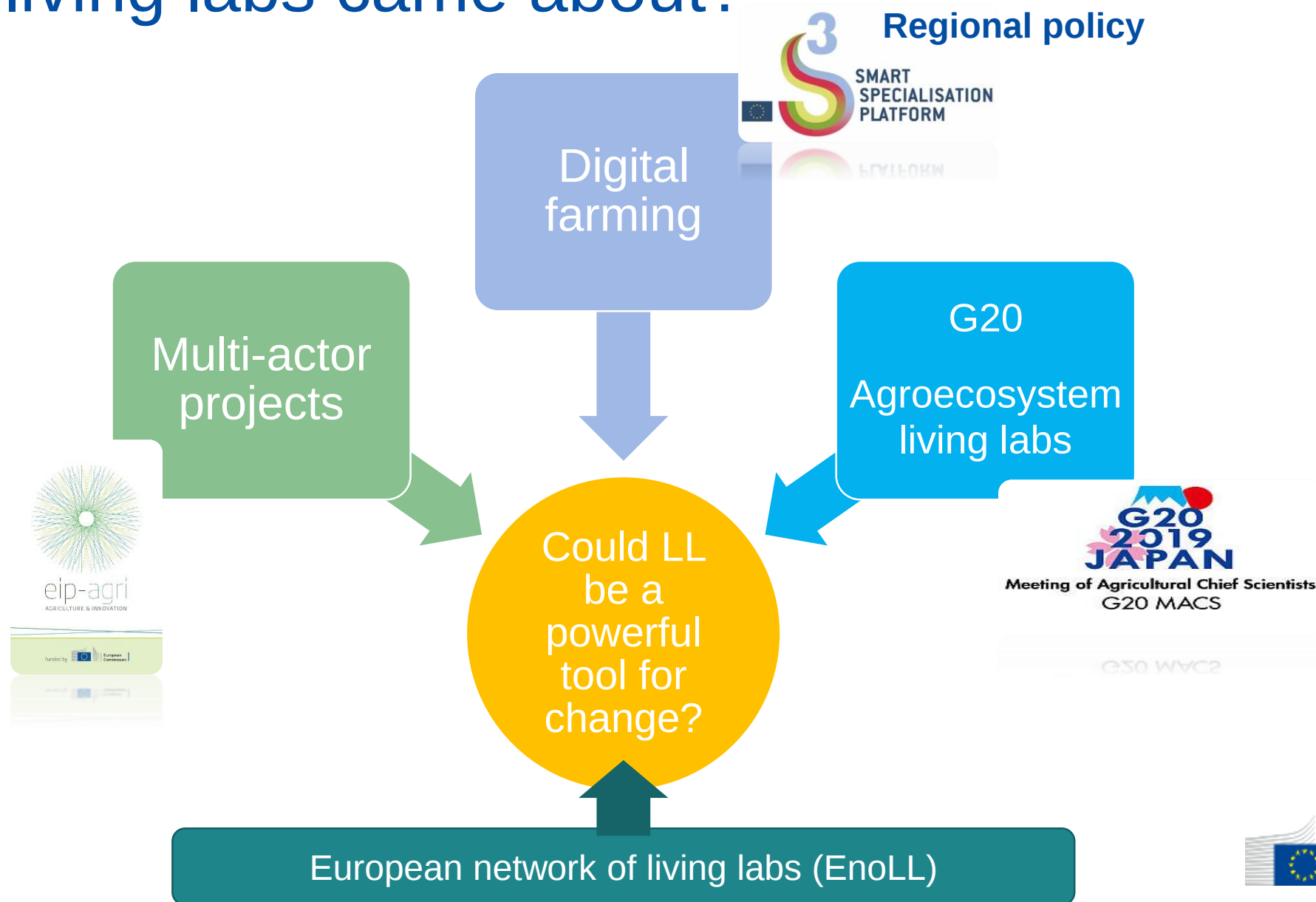
Interaction innovation (multi-actor approach)



2015 > 2016
Sustainability
+ interactive innovation



How living labs came about?



How could living labs enrich our R&I approach?

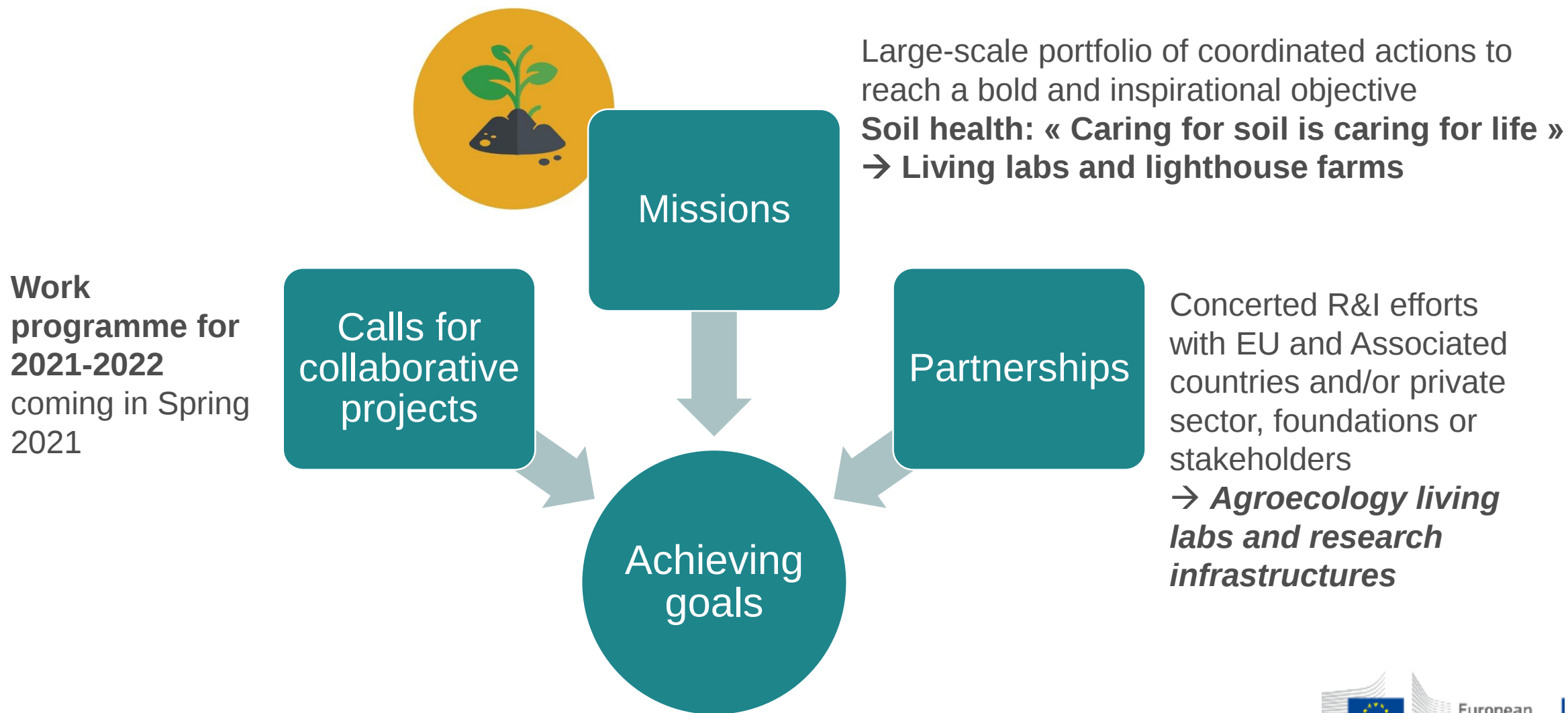
Key components :

- **Multi-actor approach**
- **Things that LL could strengthen**



R&I programme for 2021-2027 « Horizon Europe »

Various instruments to power the transition





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Why living labs on agroecology?

We want to empower a rapid green transition:

- Agroecology = using ecosystem services better
- Agroecology can provide a powerful contribution
- R&I are needed that can empower uptake and scale-up
- Living labs have the potential to accelerate change

Agroecology elements fit well with living labs principles:

- Adapted to local ecosystems → « Place-based »
- Involving actors at territorial level to achieve large scale impact
- Social and behavioural dimensions
- Systems approach



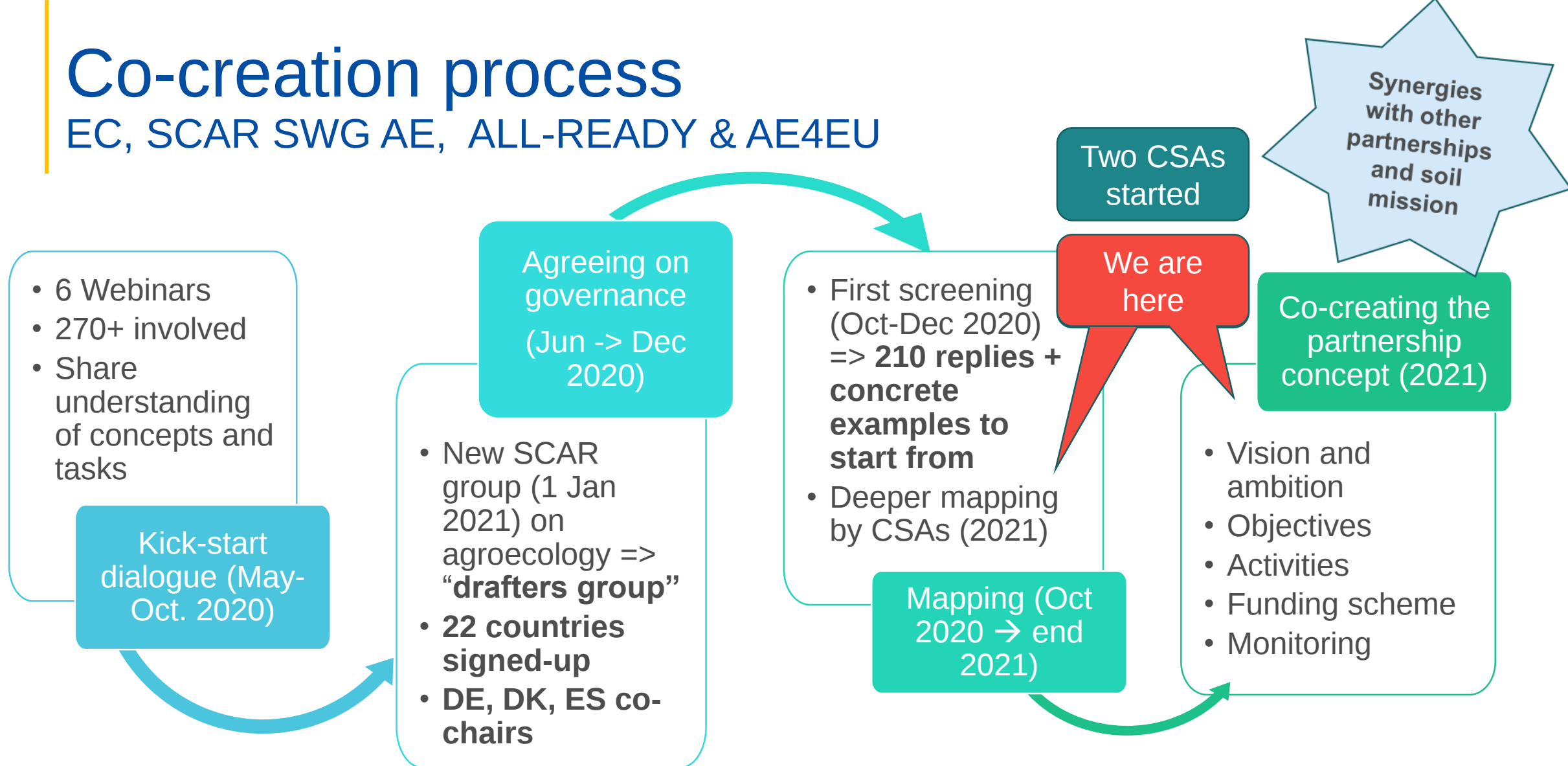
Agroecology living labs & research infrastructures

Objectives and activities

- **Goal:** **accelerate the transition** towards sustainable, climate and ecosystem-friendly farming practices by enabling to better grasp short to long-term agroecological processes from farm to landscape levels
- **Objectives:**
 - Strengthen the **agroecology research and innovation ecosystem**
 - Improve farmers' knowledge on **implementation of agroecology and its benefits**
 - Improving the **sharing of knowledge and experience across regions and countries**
- **Activities:**
 - Set-up a common framework for methods, protocols, data management etc.
 - Create spaces for **long-term, site-specific and real-life experimentation and innovation** (living labs or alike)
 - Create a **network of these spaces and knowledge-sharing mechanisms**

Co-creation process

EC, SCAR SWG AE, ALL-READY & AE4EU



>> Develop a **SRIA (2021-2022)** > **Pilot** the network (2022) > **Build capacities** to create and run AELL (2022)

>> ALL-READY & AE4EU contributing to all steps of the process.

Why is it interesting for urban farming?

- **Place-based approach** offers possibility to **connect urban and rural**
- **Regions are involved** (workshop at #EURegionsWeek, ERIAFF and CoR involved in webinars)
- Living labs = opportunities for **citizens to get involved (food issues)**
- **Agroecology** in focus in many of the **urban/peri-urban food gardening initiatives => lessons to be learnt**



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- Opportunities for cooperation

Mission “Caring for soil is caring for life”

What does this mission want to achieve?



by 2030, at least 75% of all soils in each EU Member State are either **healthy** or show a **significant measurable improvement for all indicators** where levels are below accepted thresholds, to support the provisioning of essential ecosystem services

for food, people, nature and climate

What does this mission want to achieve?



1. **Reduce land degradation** (Restore 50% of degraded land moving beyond land degradation neutrality)
2. **Conserve soil organic carbon stocks** (Increase carbon concentration on cultivated land by 0.1-0.4% per year);
3. **Stop soil sealing** and increase re-use of urban soils (increase rate of soil re-use from current 13% to 50%)
4. **Reduce soil pollution and enhance restoration** (25% area under organic agriculture; + 5-25% of land with reduced risks)
5. **Prevent erosion and stop erosion** on 30-50% of land with unsustainable erosion rates
6. **Improve soil structure** to enhance habitat quality for soil biota and crops; reduction of high-density subsoils by 30-50%
7. **Reduce by 20-40% the global footprint of EU's food and timber imports** on land degradation
8. Significantly improve **soil literacy** in all Member States



How to meet the mission objectives?

The role of living labs



- Mission built around four building blocks:
 - (1) Ambitious R&I programme
 - (2) EU-wide soil monitoring programme
 - (3) Communication and citizen engagement
 - (4) **Co-creation, testing and demonstration of solutions in living labs and lighthouses**
 - **Living laboratories** → create knowledge and design, test and disseminate innovative solutions
 - *Various land-uses (farming, forestry, **urban**, industry)*
 - *Diversity of themes, production systems, approaches*
 - **Lighthouses** → test and demonstrate good practices

Why is it interesting for urban farming?

- The mission will address all types of soils including **urban in all countries**
=> Opportunities to develop **living labs in urban settings**
- **Opportunities to connect with other living labs => learning**
- Approaches centred on **soil health** => urban **farming** can make key contribution
- Citizen engagement, soil literacy improvements are all opportunities for urban food & farming initiatives

Thank you
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- More information:
 - [European R&I partnership on agroecology living labs and research infrastructures](#)
 - [Webinars on building the European partnership on agroecology living labs](#)



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