Smarter consumption in Europe

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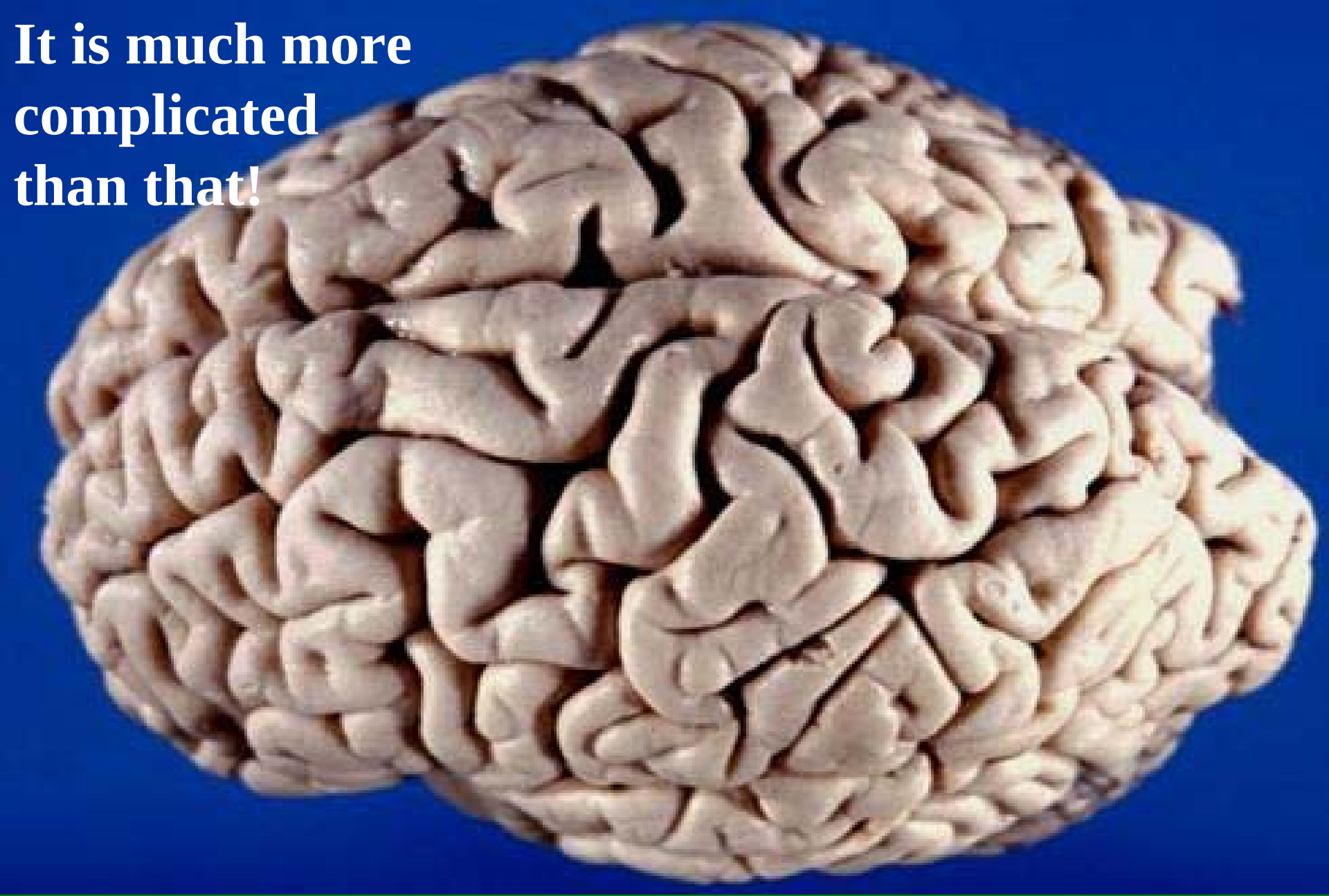
Achieving sustainable consumption is not rocket science...

It is much more complicated than that!



Messages

1. European consumption is not sustainable and current trends make it even less sustainable
2. The global economic crises provides an opportunity to make long lasting changes in consumption
3. We are in the middle of a paradigm shift from production to consumption

4. The EEA can support actors in the triangle of change by building an evidence base

Message 1

European consumption is not sustainable and many trends are pushing into an even less sustainable direction

Europeans consume

15 % of world energy production

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Europeans consume

25 % of world paper production

Europeans consume

15 % of world meat production

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Increasing demand for food, feed,energy from biomass

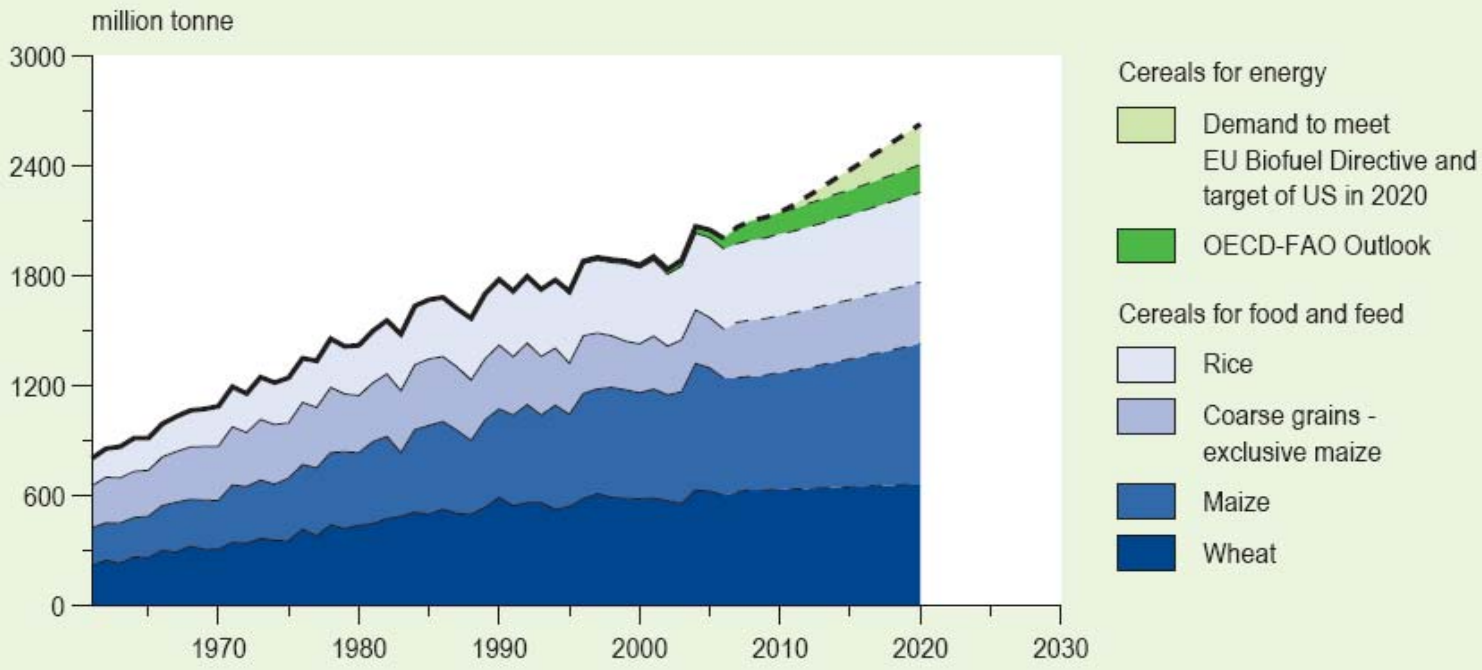


Figure 4.2 Global production of all cereal products from 1961 to 2020, including implementation of biofuel policies by the EU and US. Food and feed projection is based on OECD-FAO Outlook (2007).

Key trends: consumption and its effects on the environment

Household expenditure was increasing until economic crisis

Expenditures on transport and communication, housing (including utility payments), recreation, health and education are growing the fastest. EU-10 consumption patterns are moving closer to those of EU-15.

Transport, housing and recreation have been identified to have very high environmental impacts. Growing expenditures in these categories cause potentially additional pressures on the environment.

Growing consumption outweighs efficiency gains

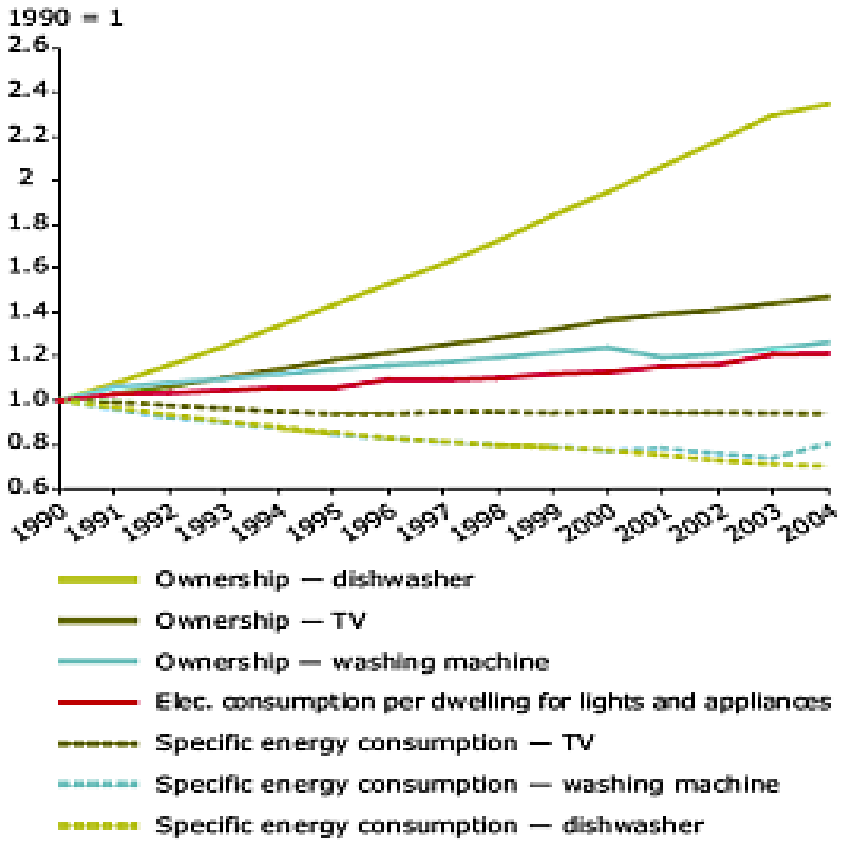
Despite efficiency improvements, the overall energy consumption of households is increasing in the EU, due partly to rebound effects (changes in behaviour in response to technological efficiency improvements and lower prices (EEA, 2007)).

Growing energy consumption has the potential to enhance emissions of air pollutants, greenhouse gases etc.

Image left side: EEA Report No 11/2005, Image right side: Wikimedia Commons

Consumption growth has outweighed efficiency gains

Figure 6.15 Trends in energy efficiency, ownership, and overall electricity consumption of selected household appliances, EU-15



Source: Enerdata, 2006.

- Dishwashers, TVs and washing machines are much more efficient than 15 years ago, (dotted lines) but…
- the numbers in use have increased significantly (solid lines)
- Hence, higher electricity consumption (red line)

Source: Europe's environment – the fourth assessment (EEA, 2007)

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Key trends: consumption and its effects on the environment

Growing demand for housing space

Demand for housing space is growing due to reduced number of persons per household, more households and increasing space demanded per person (Wilson & Boehland 2005).

Pressures and impacts: generally higher energy use for heating, acceleration of urban sprawl

Increasing personal mobility

Over the past 50 years the number of vehicles worldwide increased from 50 million cars to about 700 million (EU-UNEP, 2005). Every year 4.3 million extra cars are added to Europe's roads (EurActiv, 2007).

Pressures and impacts: increasing fuel consumption, CO2 emissions, air pollution, noise, deteriorating quality of life in cities etc.

Increasing demand for high-impact processed food

There has been increasing demand for processed and imported food, individual portions and packaging (EEA, 2005).

Pressures and impacts: e.g.higher carbon footprint of food

Message 2

The global economic crises provides an opportunity to make long lasting changes in consumption

The economic crisis and SCP

Some problems

- Growth and jobs before environment
- Difficult to agree on policies and targets
- Less available for private sustainable investments
- Consumers incentive to buy cheap goods and services

Some opportunities

- Prices – become more important. Opportunities for green tax reforms.
- Opportunities to redirect investments (public and private) towards sustainable technology
- Pressures to rethink balance between market and regulation
- Increased need for business to focus on ressource efficiency
- Window of opportunity for long-lasting change in behaviour

Message 3

We are in the middle of a paradigm shift from production to consumption

Paradigm shift

Past	Future
Reduce environmental pressures from **production** in Europe	Reduce global life-cycle environmental pressures from our **consumption**
Protect **Europe**'s Environment	Protect the **global** environment
Technology is solution	Technology AND **behaviour** is solution
Public authorities responsible	Shared responsibility in **triangle of change**

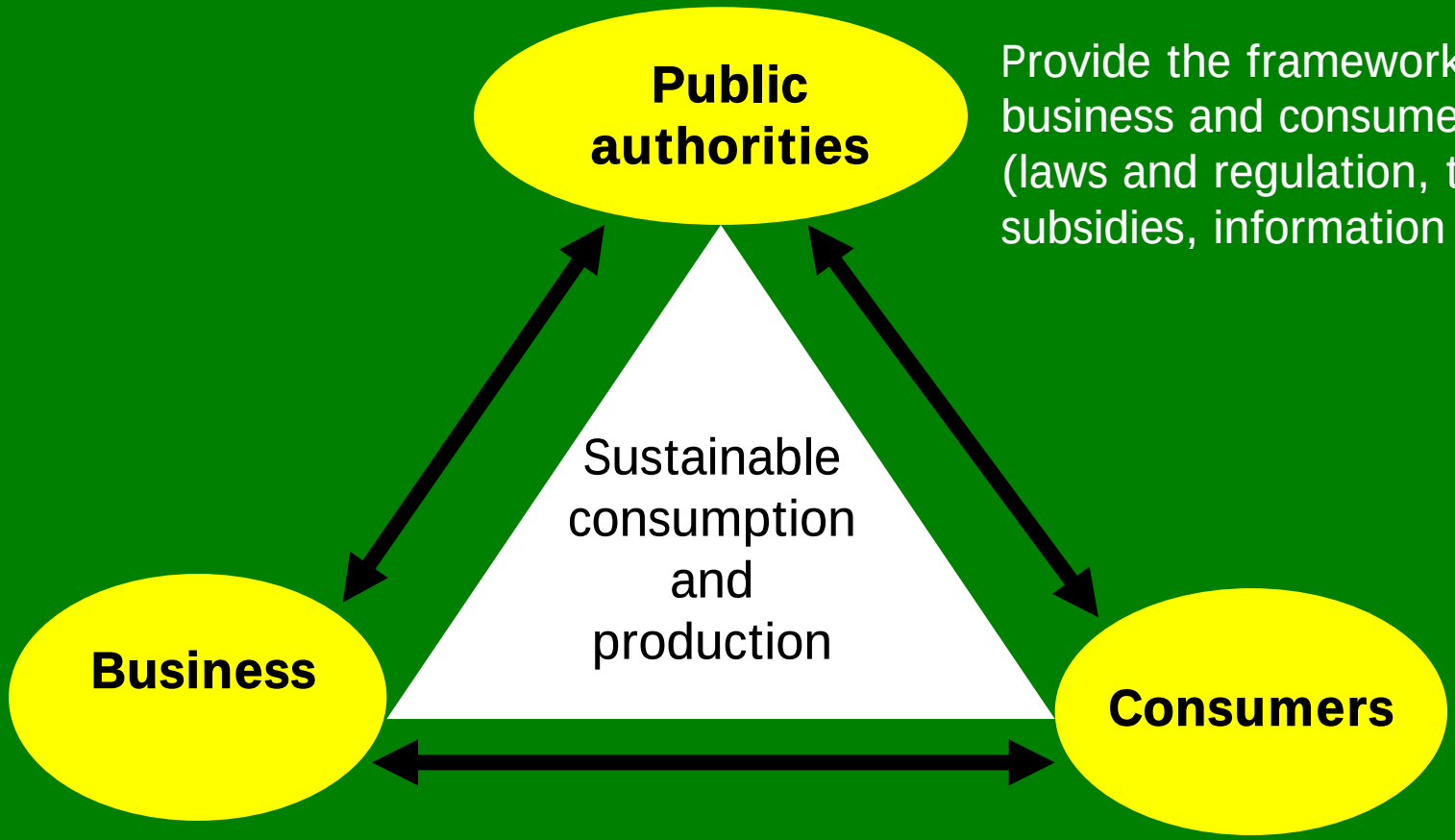
Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan

Smarter consumption and better products	• Eco-design Directive: Extension • Labelling: Revise Ecolabel and Energy Labelling • Incentives: Public procurement • Consistent data and methods on products • Promote GPP: Communication • Work with retailers and consumers: Retail Forum
Leaner production	• Boosting resource efficiency • Supporting eco-innovation • Enhancing the environmental potential of industry: Revise EMAS regulation; help SMEs
Global markets	• International initiatives

Message 3

The EEA can support actors in the triangle of change by building an evidence base: Example NAMEA accounts

Opportunites in the triangle of change



Provide the framework within which business and consumers operate (laws and regulation, taxes and subsidies, information etc.)

Produce and supply food and drink to make profits and at the same time minimise environmental and climate pressures

Buy and consume environmental and climate friendly food and drink, minimize food waste etc.

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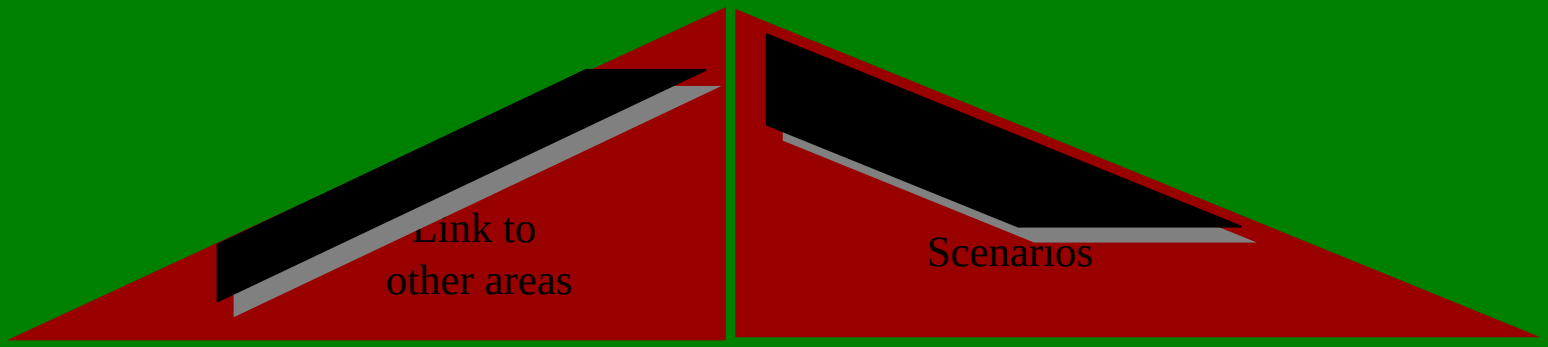
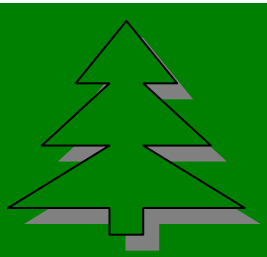
The EEA building blocks





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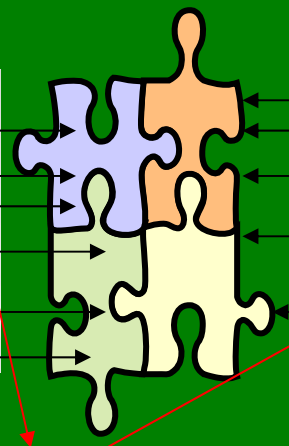
Example: Our NAMEA project

National Accounts (NA-)

Since 1950s

Indicators:

- GDP
- Production value
- Value added
- Imports/exports
- Consumption expenditure etc.



Matrix

(based on input-output analyses)

Environmental Accounts (-EA)

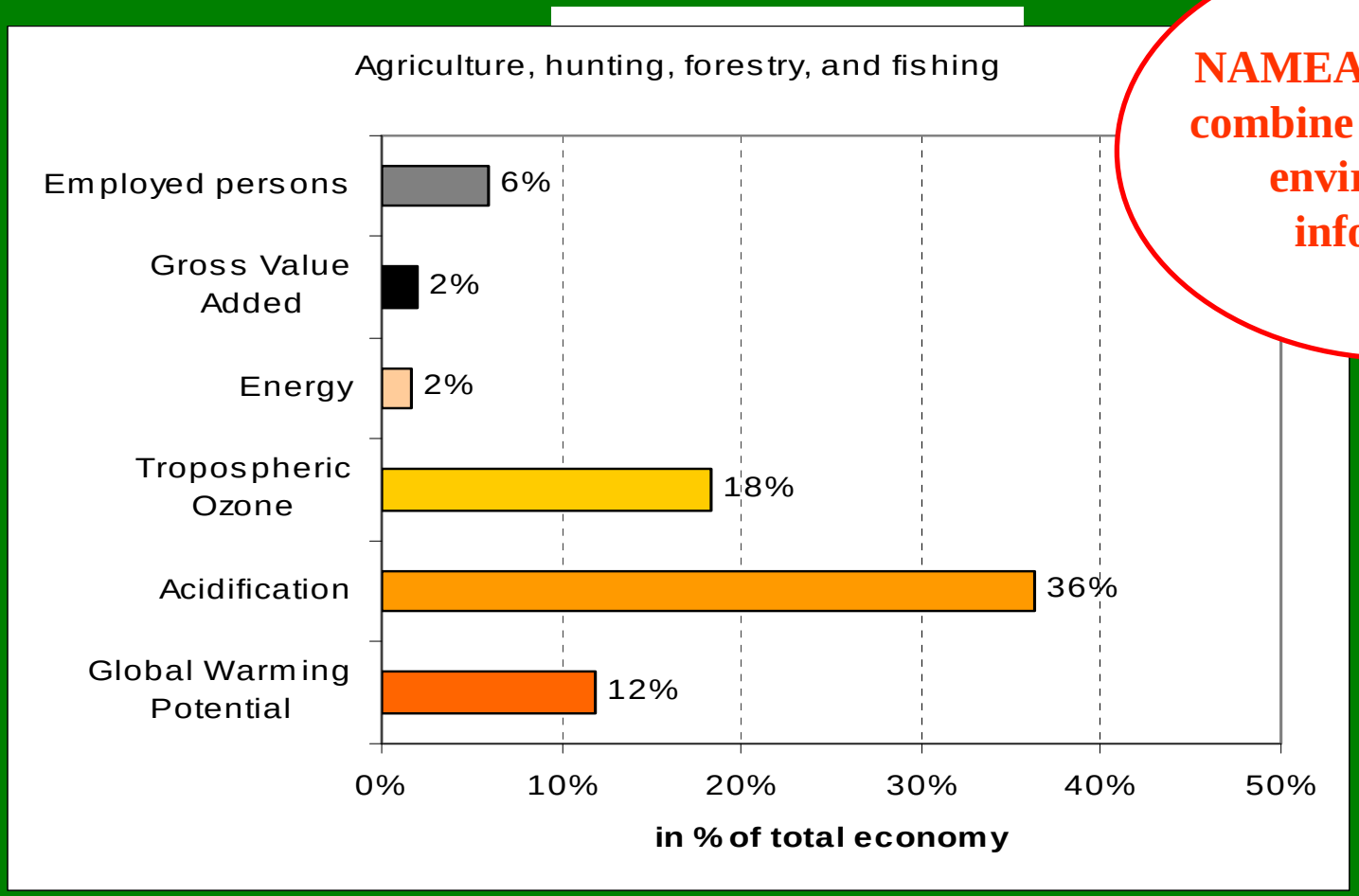
Being developed based on environmental data

Indicators

- Global Warming Potential: CO2, N2O, CH4
- Acidification Potential: SOx, NOx, NH3
- Tropospheric Ozone Formation Potential NOx NMVOC, CO, CH4
- Domestic Extraction Used (DEU)

- Time series: EU-25: 1995-2004;
  .EU-8: 1995 & 2000, 2005 forthcoming

Production perspective – focus on sectors (EU25, 2004)



NAMEA added value: combine economic and environmental information

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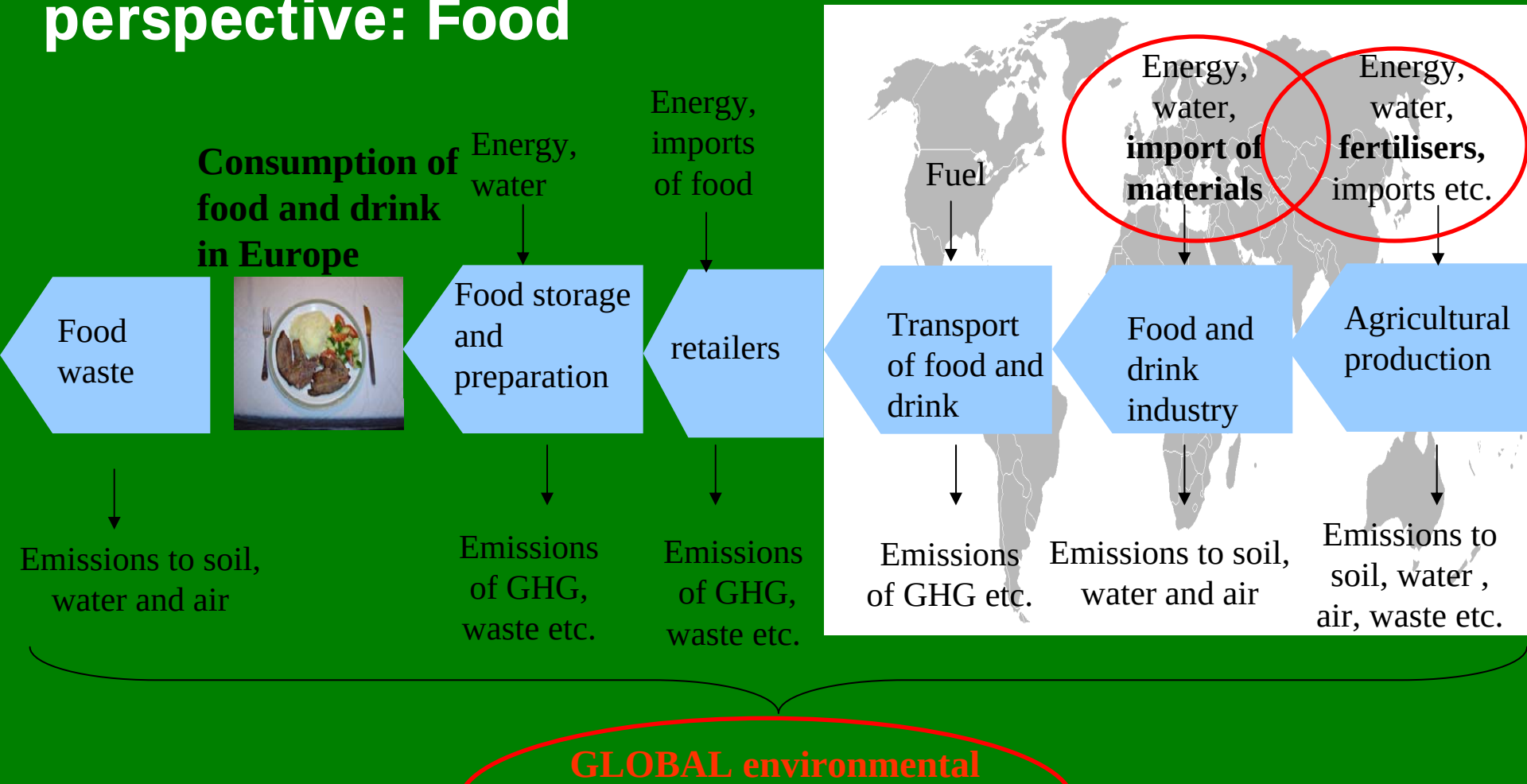
Example of consumption perspective: Food



GLOBAL environmental and climate pressures from consumption

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Consumption perspective

18 % of GHG emissions

23 % of material use

29 % of GHG emissions

32 % of material use

19 % of GHG emissions

7 % of material use

SCP priority areas

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Thank you for your attention

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Suggestions for discussion

- Main priorities for action – in your country?
- Main priorities for action – in your profession?
- What can you do – as consumer, citizen, business actor, professional?