

Putting the European Green deal to work

The governance challenge in sustainability transitions



Global context: unprecedented challenges

1. IPCC: **climate change**

2. IPBES: **biodiversity loss** and ecosystem services

3. IRP: unsustainable **resource use**

4. WHO: environment and **health**

Complexity
Uncertainty
Risk

Global Warming of 1.5°C

An IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission scenarios. The report is the first of its kind to provide clear evidence on the impacts of 1.5°C warming and the global response to the threat of climate change in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, and efforts to eradicate poverty.



UN
environment

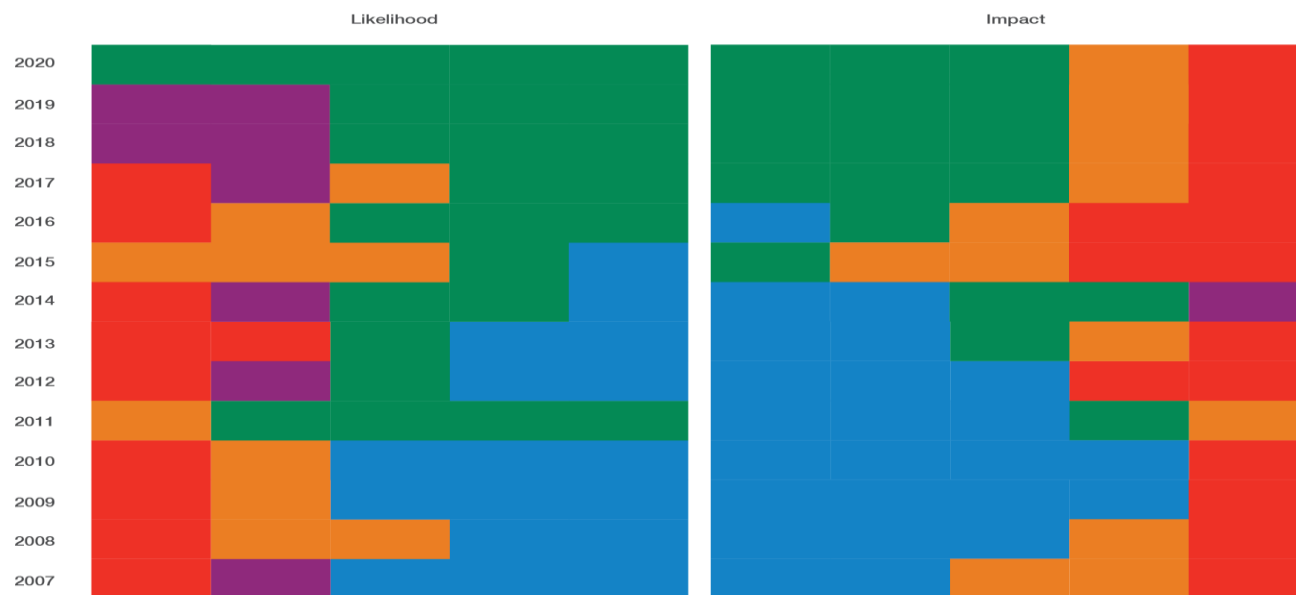


A Prüss-Ustün, J Wolf, C Convalán, R Bos and M Neira



TOP GLOBAL RISKS

From economic to environmental. Climate now tops the risks agenda, while the economy has disappeared from the top five.



A context of risk and uncertainty

Economic

- Asset bubble
- Critical infrastructure failure
- Deflation
- Energy price shock
- Financial failure
- Fiscal crises
- Illicit trade
- Unemployment
- Unmanageable inflation

Environmental

- Biodiversity loss
- Climate action failure
- Extreme weather
- Human-made environmental disaster
- Natural disasters

Geopolitical

- Global governance failure
- Interstate conflict
- National governance failure
- State collapse
- Terrorist attacks
- Weapons of mass destruction

Societal

- Failure of urban planning
- Food crises
- Infectious diseases
- Involuntary migration
- Social instability
- Water crises

Technological

- Adverse technological advances
- Cyberattacks
- Data fraud or theft
- Information infrastructure breakdown



European Green Deal: a paradigm shift in politics/policy?

- First **climate-neutral** continent
 - Biodiversity Strategy 2030
 - New Circular Economy Action Plan
 - Zero pollution strategy
 - Farm to fork strategy
 - Just transition
 - Sustainable European Investment Plan
 - Future-ready economy – new industrial strategy
- The political, economic, investment, ..., priority for Europe**
- Strong systemic transitions logic**
- Link with sectoral policies**
- Interconnected**
- Longer time horizon**
- Social dimension**
- Innovation, digitalization**
- Governance agenda**



Ambitious, innovative, interconnected, systemic



Transforming the Green Deal into (social) action

- Fir
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- ## Sustainability as a process of societal transitions
- How to improve conditions for **well-being**?
 - Fundamental reflections and policy responses necessary to strengthen **social capital, social cohesion**, ...
 - ... within the limits of our disturbed relationship with natural capital
 - Future **visioning** based on **ethical** considerations about the future
 - Recognizing that **current metrics** that dominate the debate about economic performance are part of the problem
 - Serious **innovation** needed in how we **understand societal change**
 - Finally **doing** something about this, after often decades of theorizing...



EUROPEAN CLIMATE LAW

2050

CO₂



Bringing nature back into our lives

Restoration
Nature Based Solutions

EU 2030 Biodiversity strategy

May 2020
#EUGreenDeal



“Making nature healthy again is key to our physical and mental wellbeing and is an ally in the fight against climate change and disease outbreaks. It is at the heart of our growth strategy, the European Green Deal, and is part of a European recovery that gives more back to the planet than it takes away.”

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

“Make sustainable products the norm in the EU”

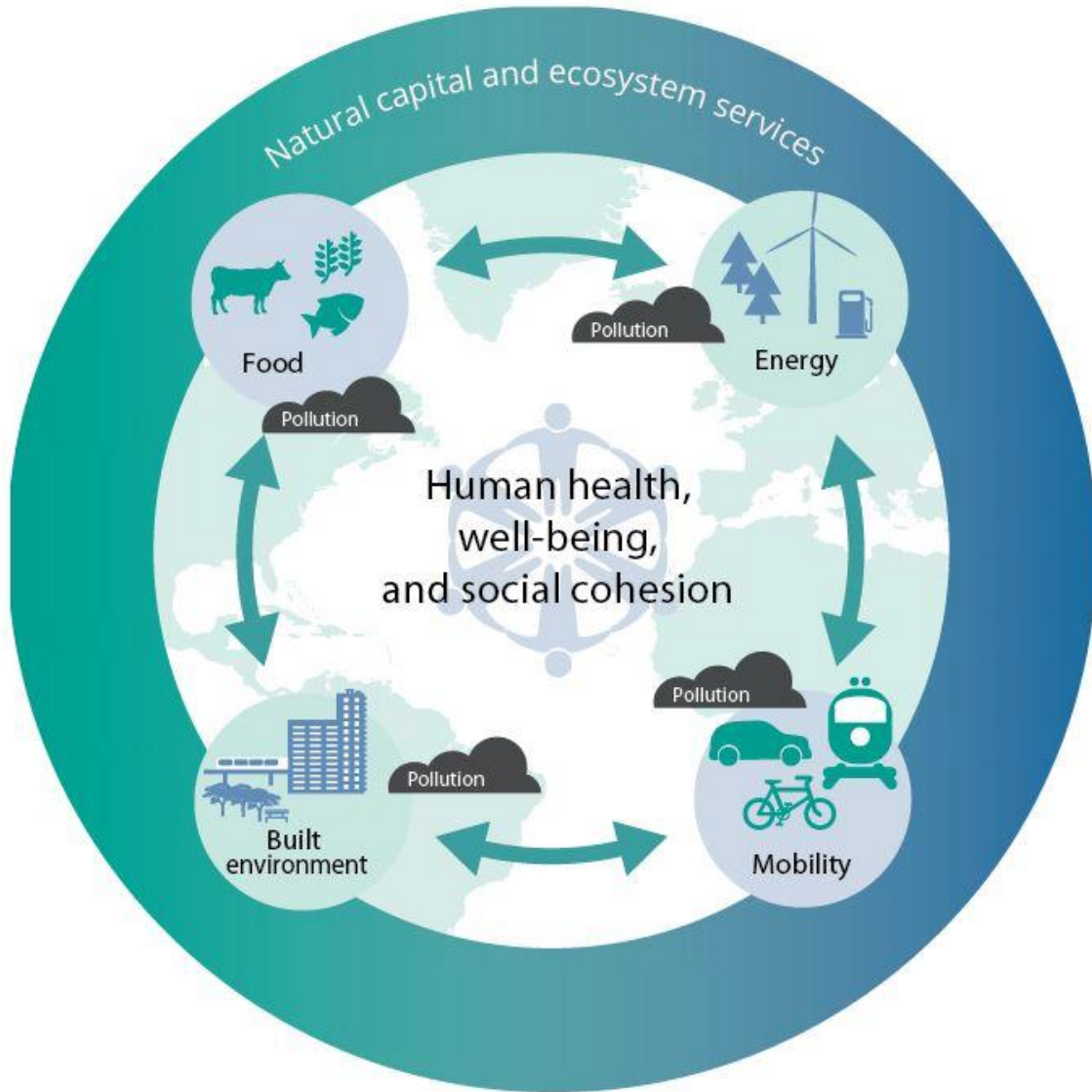
New circular economy action plan launched



What does it really mean?



Catalysing **systemic change**



- Recognise fundamental **drivers** and system **interlinkages**
- Adopt transformative **policy frameworks**
- Fill **crucial policy gaps**:
 - Food
 - Land and soil
 - Chemicals
 - **Social dimension**
- Leverage the power of **cities, businesses and communities** for society-wide action



Recognizing the scope of systemic challenges & transitions

- Transformations should be of a **'deep' character**
- No **'silver bullets'** to solve complex challenges.
- We are deeply **locked-in** and entrenched in **social practices and paradigms**
- These can become **barriers to fundamental change**

Governance responses

- Strong vision, needle on the compass (including fundamental reflections on what type of society we want)
- Embracing systemic starting point
- Policy coherence
- Policy consistency
- Engaging
- Strong implementation
- Scaling-up and speeding-up mechanisms
- Emphasis on what we should stop doing
- Knowledge4Action perspective

Understanding wicked problems



Based upon Rittel and Webber (1973)

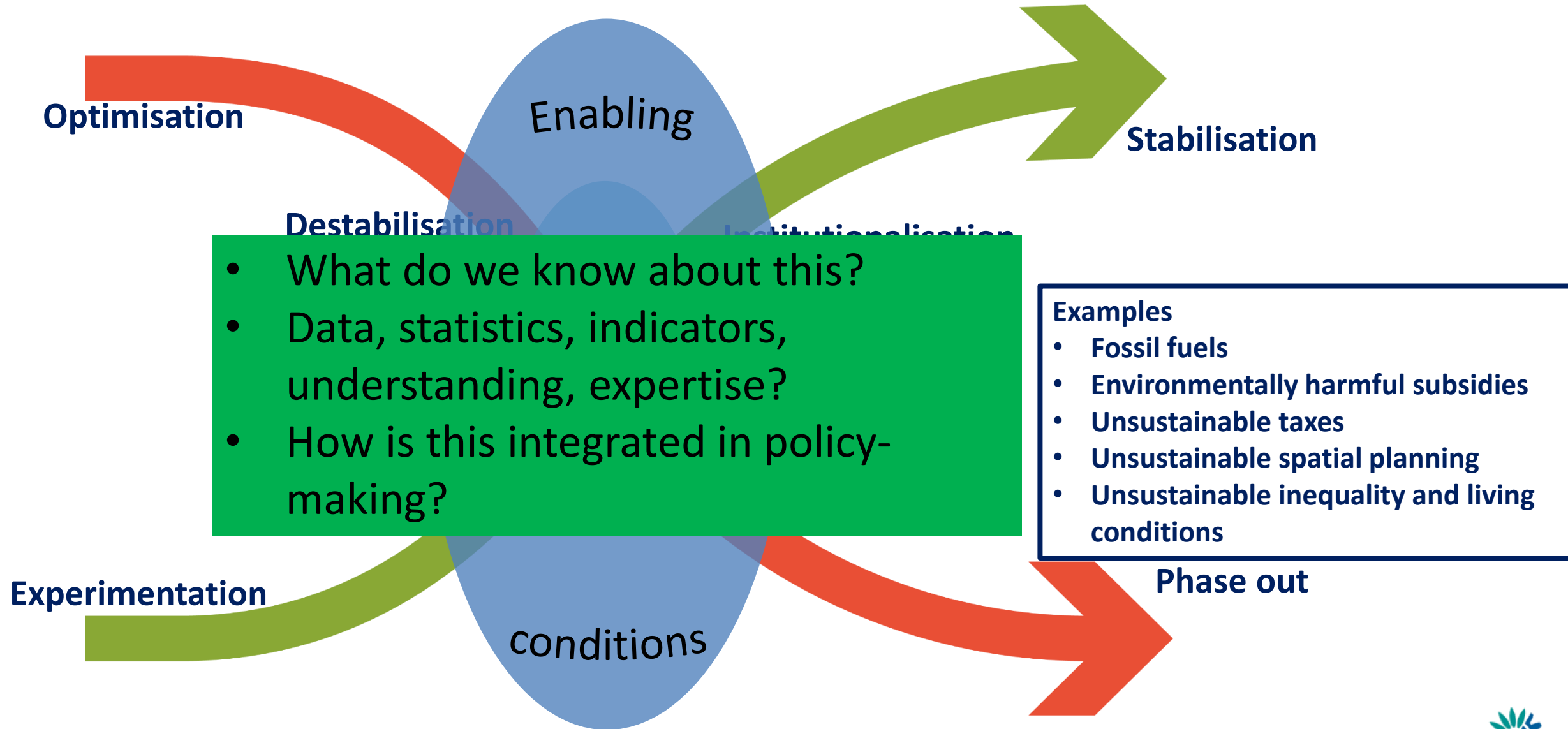
A paradigm to deal with Super-wicked problems?

Super-wicked problems have the following additional characteristics:

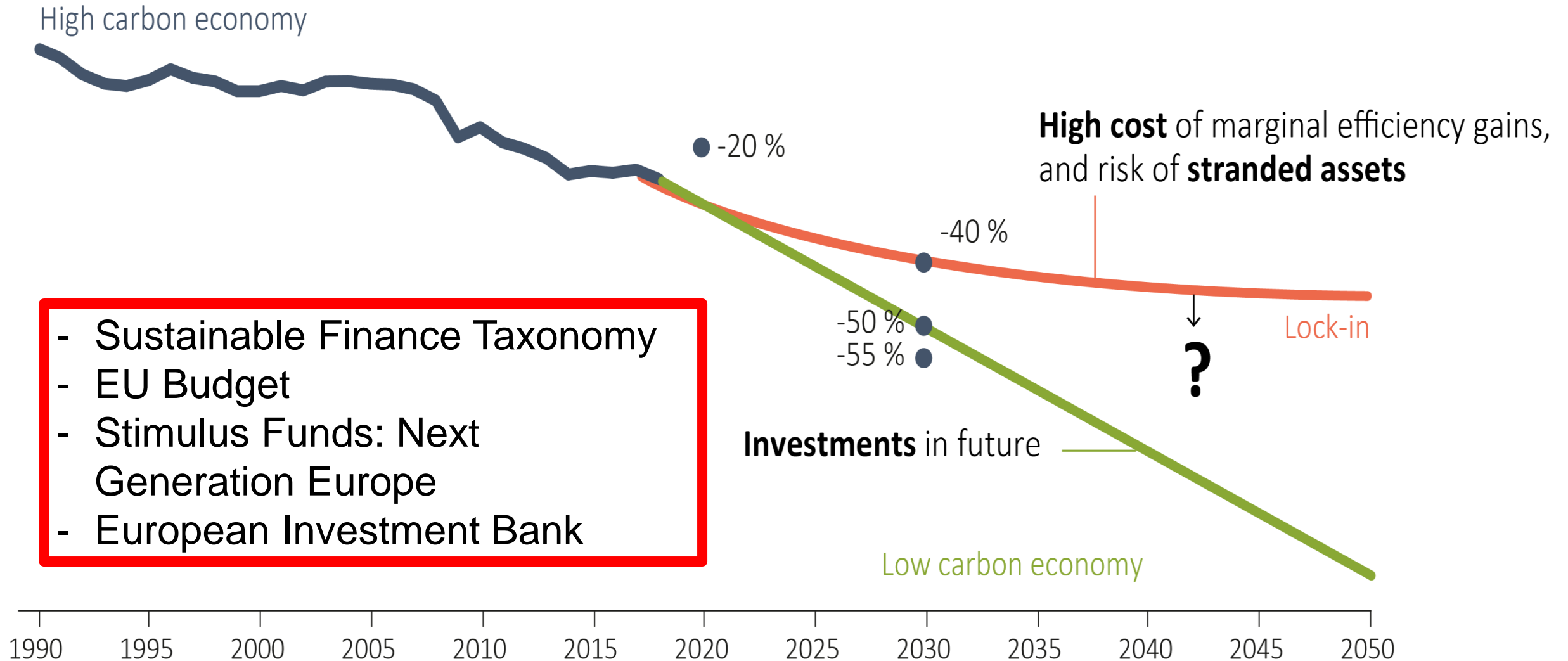
1. Time is running out.
2. Policies discount the future irrationally.
3. Those seeking to solve the problem are also causing it.
4. No central authority.

(Kelly Levin, Benjamin Cashore, Graeme Auld and Steven Bernstein, 2012, *Policy Sciences*)

The 'x-curve': lacking attention for the **difficult part**



Investing in sustainability, not dead-end streets



Societal change: vulnerability, resilience and just transition

Social dimension:

- Underdefined
- Poor knowledge base
- Linked to fundamental debate on distributional issues
- Linking Europe to the rest of the world



The Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) will prepare the most affected by the transition towards a green economy.

THE JUST TRANSITION MECHANISM
Helping address the social and economic effects of the transition and workers who will face the greatest challenges.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- a new Just Transition Fund of investments;
- InvestEU "Just Transition" scheme, mobilising **€45 billion** of investment;
- a new public sector loan facility with the EIB backed by the EU budget, mobilising **€25-30 billion** of investments.

TRANSITION PLANS for beneficiary regions to steer the investments

ATTRACTIVE CONDITIONS and risk sharing for public and private investors

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE via a Just Transition Platform to advise and support

Just Transition Fund

- **€7.5 billion** new funding
- match each € from the JTF with **€1.5-3 from the ERDF/ESF+**
- national co-financing



Innovating

December 2019
#EUGreenDeal

significant amounts of energy and

✓ The current rates of renovation of public and private buildings should at least double

Better energy performance of buildings

- Prices of different energy sources should incentivise **energy-efficient buildings**
- Design of buildings should be in line with the **circular economy**
- Increased **digitalisation**
- More **climate-proofing** of buildings
- Strict enforcement of rules on **energy performance of buildings**

EGD: promising a **speeding-up** of the transition

- **Urgent** challenge
- The EGD will **accelerate** ... the transition needed in all sectors
- More ambitious climate action in coming decade: **rapid phasing out** of coal and decarbonizing gas.
- To be ready in 2050, decisions and **actions need to be taken in the next 5 years**
- The transformation (towards a circular economy) is taking place a **too slow pace**.
- The EGD will ... **accelerate** the EU's **industry transition**
- **Breakthrough** technologies in Key industrial sectors **by 2030**. E.g. zero-carbon steel making.
- Rate of renovation of **buildings** is **too slow** and needs to double.
- **Accelerating** the shift to sustainable **mobility**
- ...

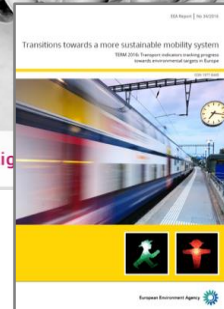
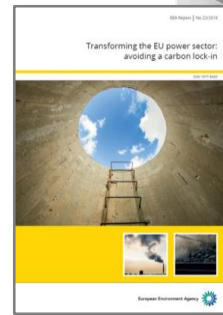
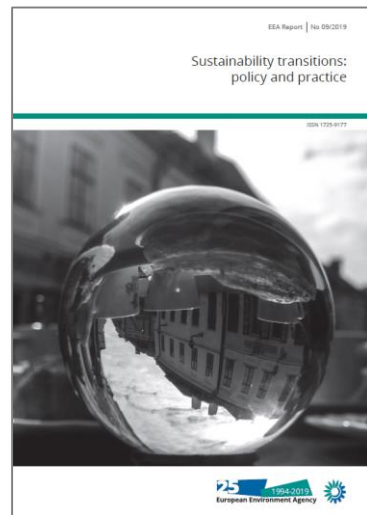
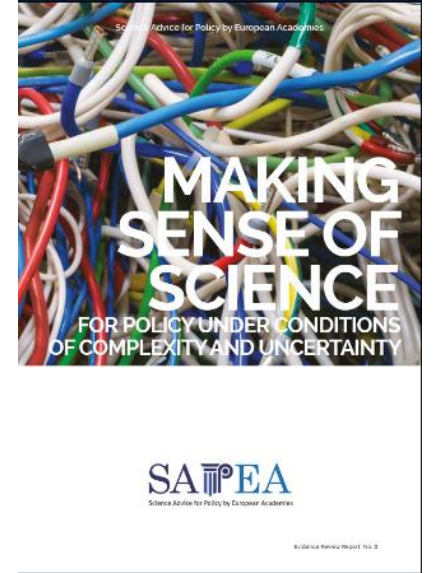
Mechanisms to speed-up of the transition

- *Race-to-the-top* logic
- From a 'cost' to an 'investment' logic
- Institutional set-up fit for purpose to stimulate speeding up?
- Phasing-out of non-sustainable practices
- The role of investments and capital: sustainable finance
- Digital society
- Urban setting
- Understanding the cost of the 'new normal'
- ...

Implications for knowledge creation, organisation and use

Developing solutions-oriented knowledge - how

- Developing **knowledge that reflects the nature of** (super-wicked) **problems**: systemic; drivers; uncertain; agency; time; scale; ... transition dynamics
- Knowledge **co-creation** at the science-policy-society interface
- Knowledge **use**: engagement with academic communities and policy audiences



Expansion of sustainability science needed for the SDGs , 2019

Dominant research modes are not enough to guide the societal transformations necessary to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Researchers, practitioners, decision makers, funders and civil society should work together to achieve universally accessible and mutually beneficial sustainability science.

Peter Messerli, Eun Mee Kim, Wolfgang Lutz, Jean-Paul Moatti, Katherine Richardson, Muhammad Saidam, David Smith, Parfait Eloundou-Enyegue, Ernest Foli, Amanda Glassman, Gonzalo Hernandez Licona, Endah Murniningtyas, Jurgis Kazimieras Staniskis, Jean-Pascal van Ypersele and Eeva Furman

Developing solutions-oriented knowledge – what



An EU knowledge strategy could help **create, organise, communicate, and use diverse** knowledge:

- **Complex** environmental change and **systemic** risks;
- **Societal systems** – actors, lock-ins, trends, etc.
- **Transition dynamics** in production and consumption systems
- **Integration:** methods, technology (data intelligence), understanding
- **Future:** foresight, modelling, scenario's, expertise
- **Early warning** systems: harms and opportunities
- **Practice-based evidence:** innovations, impacts, successes, failures at various levels
- **New knowledge skills,** infrastructures, institutions



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- **Biodiversity**
- New Circular
- **Zero pollution**
- **Farm to fork**
- **Just transition**
- **Sustainable**
- **Future ready**

Yes, ...

... if ...

... but ...

... and ...

European
Green Deal

European Commission



Thank you

