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# Biowaste in a circular economy

## Vision and experience of Flanders

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**OVAM**

# Policy background: key principles

## ▶ **Prevention**

- Especially food and distribution sectors are progressing on food waste prevention
- Circular gardening

## ▶ **Separate collection at source**

- Key for high value valorization
- Waste and material policies have increased separate collection of biomass residues from households and companies

## ▶ **Valorization of waste and residues**

- Aim to have high value valorization: waste hierarchy and cascading principle
- Some biomass residues have several applications
- Policies (e.g. waste, fertilisers, energy) influence biomass residue flows

## ▶ **Cost, (raw) material and energy savings**

- Monetising the true value of recovered biowaste
- Internalising environmental damages for non-circular materials
- Policy can influence financial balance of management schemes

# Why moving towards a circular bioeconomy?

- ▶ **Important role of biomass in the climate challenge (C-stock, C-buffer, renewable energy)**
- ▶ **Transition from fossil-based to biobased economy**
- ▶ **Biomass and biomass residues have multiple functions in sustaining ecosystems and ecosystem services**
- ▶ **Biomass is a renewable but scarce resource (time dimension)**
- ▶ **Multiple sectors want to use biomass and biomass residues**
  - Agriculture
  - Wood and paper industry
  - Chemistry
  - Energy sector
  - ...
- ▶ **Sustainable production and consumption needed due to multiple functions, scarcity and time dimension**

# From vision and strategy to action

- ▶ **Vision and strategy for a sustainable and competitive bioeconomy in 2030 (2013)**
  - Result of work from Interdepartmental Working Group Bioeconomy
  - Approved by the Flemish Government in 2013
  - Sets the scene with general principles and announces action to be taken
- ▶ **Food & food waste**
  - Interdepartmental Working Group (°2011)
  - Study: Food losses throughout the food chain (2012)
  - Declaration of commitment Together against food losses (2014)
  - Roadmap Food waste (2015)
  - Monitoring of Food waste and food losses (2017)
- ▶ **Renewed policy on household waste and similar industrial waste (2016)**
  - Intensifying and expanding separate collection of biowaste

# From vision and strategy to action

## ▶ Action plan for the sustainable management of biomass streams 2015-2020

### → Focus on 3 sectors:

- × Agriculture/food chain;
- × Nature management & public space;
- × Wood from industry and households

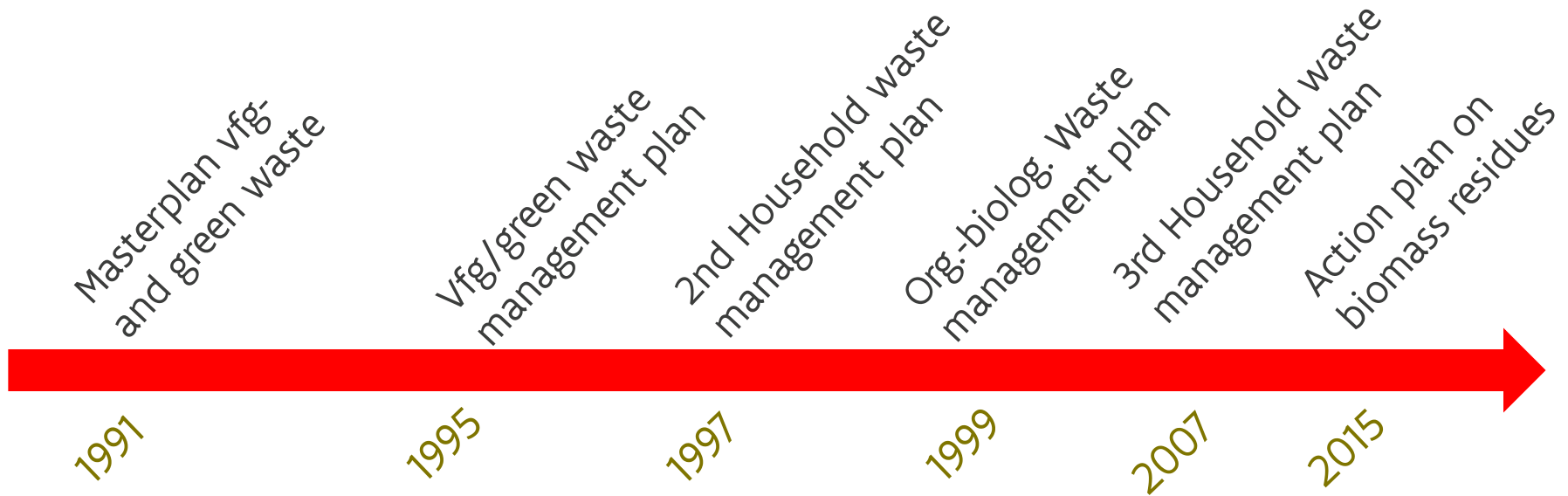
### → Prevention, separate collection, recycling, energy (synergies with Flanders' 2020 RE-goals)

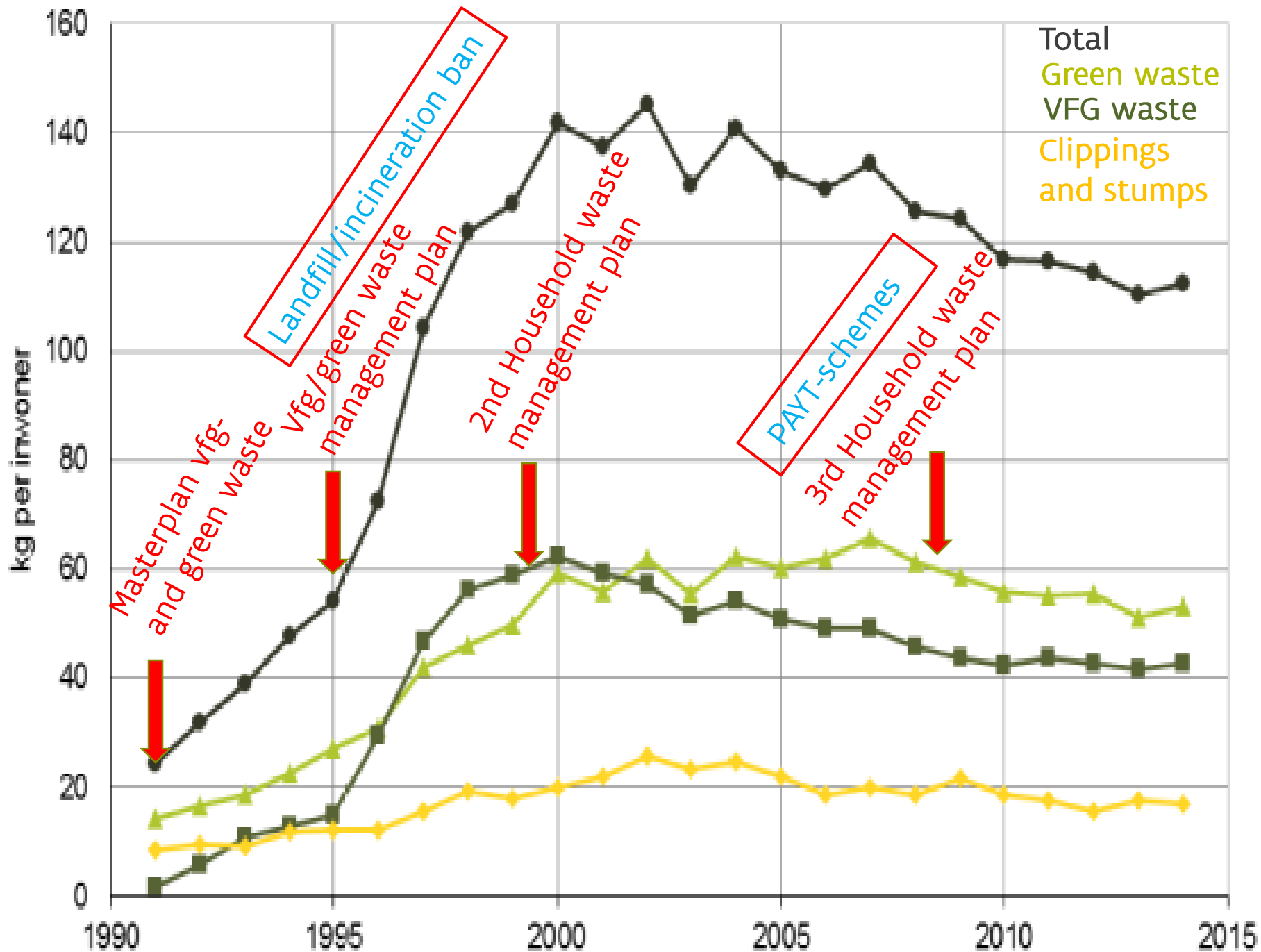
### → A multi-stakeholder approach

- × Consulting stakeholders from the beginning of the process
- × Providing comments and creating co-ownership for realising the targets of the Action Plan.
- × Co-ownership increases public support for the approval of the plan.
- × Stakeholders take the lead in implementing several actions of the Action Plan.

# Biowaste policy in Flanders

- Biowaste is the main component of household waste
- Intensive policy and use of instrument mix to promote prevention and recycling of biowaste (incl. food waste)
- Promotion of end products of biowaste processing





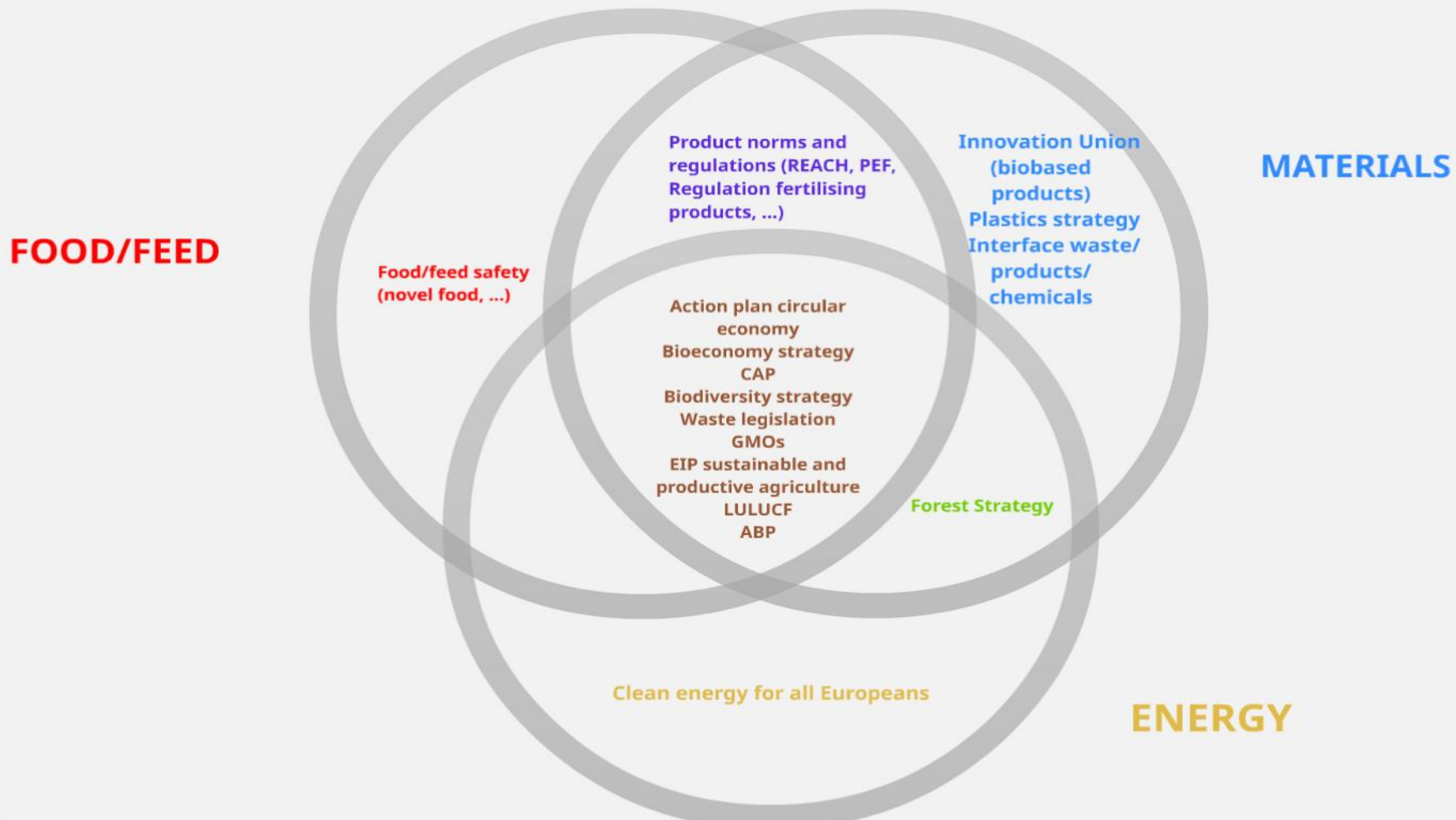
# Policy challenges

- ▶ **Cooperation between policy domains and with a wide variety of stakeholders**
- ▶ **At a more abstract level agreement that a sustainable, circular bio-economy is what we should aim at**
- ▶ **BUT difficult to find agreement on what sustainable production and consumption of biomass and biomass residues is and how to achieve it (e.g. sustainability criteria, concretization of cascading principle)**
  - Try to find synergies (e.g. biogas plants) in policy domains in an early stage of policy development



# Need for a coherent EU framework

## EU policy & a (circular) bioeconomy



# Need for a coherent EU framework

- ▶ **Several DGs develop relevant policies**
  - but policies are not aligned
  - circular economy approach offers a way forward
- ▶ **Strong incentives in one policy domain affect policies and policy development in other domains**
  - no level playing field between sectors (e.g. competition between application in materials or energy)
- ▶ **Market creation and market distortion**
  - without coherent EU framework multiple difficulties can be foreseen
- ▶ **Current policy discussions which will be key for a sustainable and circular bioeconomy:**
  - waste package, renewable energy directive, fertilisers regulation,...
- ▶ **Prevention, separate collection, high value valorization, waste hierarchy, cascading principle, sustainable production and consumption as guiding principles**

# Useful links

- ▶ **Bioeconomy in Flanders. The vision and strategy of the Government of Flanders for a sustainable and competitive bioeconomy in 2030**  
<https://www.vlaanderen.be/nl/publicaties/detail/bioeconomy-in-flanders>
- ▶ **Food losses**  
<http://www.voedselverlies.be/>
- ▶ **Action plan for the sustainable management of biomass streams 2015-2020**  
<http://www.ovam.be/afval-materialen/specifieke-afvalstromen-materiaalkringlopen/biomassa/actieplan-duurzaam-beheer-van-biomassareststromen-2015-2020>



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