TOOLS4CAP CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Tools4CAP Conceptual Framework

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Authors	Daniele Bertolozzi-Caredio (ECR), Bérénice Dupeux (ECR), Ralph Rustom (ECR), Laura Van den Bossche (ECR), Roel Jongeneel (WUR), Ana Gonzalez Martinez (WUR), Marcel van Asseldonk (WUR), Simone Sterly (IFLS), Carla Wember (IFLS), Nikos Marianos (NP), Nicolaos Kalatzis (NP), Vasilis Pyrgiotis (NP), Emil Erjavec (UL), Ilona Rac (UL), Blanca Casares (AEIDL), Peter Witzke (EuroCARE), Petr Havlik (IIASA), Christian Schingo (ABACO), Trevor Donnellan (TEAGASC), Emma Dillon (TEAGASC), Alice Devot (OB), Zbigniew Floriańczyk (ERDN), David Nafría García (Itacyl), Alberto Gutiérrez García (Itacyl), Thomas Fellmann (JRC), Caetano Beber (JRC).
Work Package Leader	Ecorys
Project coordinator	Ecorys Brussels NV

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Acronyms

AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDE	Communication, Dissemination, Exploitation
CMEF	Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
CSP	CAP Strategic Plans
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GA	Grant Agreement
GD	Green Deal
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MS	Member States
Ms	Milestone
NDM	New Delivery Model
PMEF	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
Tools4CAP	Innovative Toolbox empowering effective CAP governance towards EU ambitions
WP	Work Package

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1. Introduction

1.1. Why Tools4CAP

The Tools4CAP project enters into play in the context of a changing Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The New Delivery Model (NDM) established in Regulation EU 2115/2021[1] introduces national CAP Strategic Plans (CSP), along with new monitoring, review and evaluation requirements. The new CAP comes with increased subsidiarity, a performance-oriented approach replacing the previous compliance-based model, more responsibilities and flexibility for Member States (MSs) for the design and monitoring of the CSP, as well as a new policy cycle entailing exchange and coordination with the European Commission.

Therefore, the NDM poses new challenges for MSs that are called to acquire new capabilities and set up proper methodological tools to design and implement CSP to ensure increased green ambitions, SMART accountability, consistency of the intervention strategy, and external coherence with other policies.

Tools4CAP aims to provide CAP decision-makers with suitable tools for a more evidence-based policy making, ultimately improving capabilities to design next-generation CSP, and to perform monitoring tasks to review performance of implementation and beneficiaries' compliance. To achieve its ambitions, the project pursues five specific objectives:

1) To provide a shared knowledge base and an evaluation of methods and tools used for the design and monitoring of the CSP.
2) To identify and adapt innovative methods and tools for the design and monitoring of the CSP, by taking stock of relevant and replicable solutions developed in recent and ongoing research projects and other EU initiatives.
3) To empower end users to adopt innovative solutions for the design and monitoring of the CSP, by providing them with methodological guidance on choosing the best solutions, their operationalisation, and associated good practices.
4) To establish a replication lab supporting the practical demonstration and uptake of innovative solutions for the design and monitoring of the CSP, by operationalising and testing methods and tools across case studies.
5) To set up a capacity-building hub to mobilise knowledge and transfer operational capabilities to end users for the design and monitoring of the CSP, by enabling mutual learning, participation, and science-policy dialogue.

1.2. The objective of the deliverable

Tools4CAP will primarily stock-take and map all the methods and tools adopted (or planned to be adopted) by MSs for the design and monitoring of the CSP, including relevant tools from science that are not yet being used, but could profitably be used. The project will evaluate the identified tools, benchmark the most interesting solutions and good practices, and adapt and test such tools in order to increase replication across MSs and adoption of innovative ones. Ultimately, the project will provide a dedicated space to support the transfer of knowledge, skills and capabilities to end users across all MSs.

The several novelties introduced by the new CAP pose significant challenges for the MSs to design and implement the CSP. Tools4CAP is aimed at providing support to MSs to deal with these challenges. However, the multifaceted and novel elements of the NDM make it complex to properly define an effective and successful support action.

Furthermore, due to the increased subsidiarity and the flexibility provided by the new CAP to MSs as regard the identification of needs, the design of interventions and targets, and the financial allocation, the way the NDM (hence the design and monitoring of the CSP) is being undertaken differs significantly across MSs. Consequently, comparison among MSs is not straightforward, whereas the way the CSP are designed and monitored is influenced by the national contexts. An in-depth understanding of the NDM and its implications and a clear definition of the scope of Tools4CAP's support action, are key for the successful implementation.

[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R2115

This deliverable aims to provide the overall, comprehensive conceptual picture of the CSP design and monitoring process, encompassing all the key elements and identifying those aspects that will need to be addressed within Tools4CAP, and those that will not. Central to the design and monitoring processes of the CSP is the selection and adoption by MSs of different methodological and technological tools to perform the required tasks. Thus, this deliverable seeks to shed light on the MSs' choice of tools for the CSP's design and monitoring, and the factors that are behind these choices. This is key to understand which levers and barriers influence the adoption of different tools, but also what different methodological solutions best fit in different contexts.

By drawing upon existing literature, and the experiences of informed actors across MSs, the expert knowledge of the Tools4CAP Consortium and its Expert Advisory Board were brought together to outline the key aspects of the NDM and the main challenges that it poses to MSs, and to draw the concepts framing the selection and adoption of tools at MS level. This deliverable provides, in the first place, a description of the NDM and understanding of the key aspects of relevance in the process of designing and monitoring the CSP. On this basis, the deliverable outlines a conceptualisation of the design and monitoring process, identifying the key factors entering into play when it comes to the MSs' choices of the methods and tools to be employed for optimal designing and monitoring. Understanding MSs' choices, and the levers and barriers behind these choices, will help guide the identification of tailored methodological solutions for different MSs and the replication of good practices across MSs, as well as define the MSs' skills and capabilities that can be developed further to foster the adoption of novel and innovative tools. Finally, this deliverable outlines the project's intervention logic towards the achievement of the project's objectives.

Importantly, this deliverable is intended to be a 'living' document, because concepts and further understanding of the CSP and NDM will emerge throughout the entire support action. While the content of this report should be considered consolidated, the report will be periodically updated by integrating new relevant concepts, aspects and discussion, when relevant. The updated versions will be made available online[2].

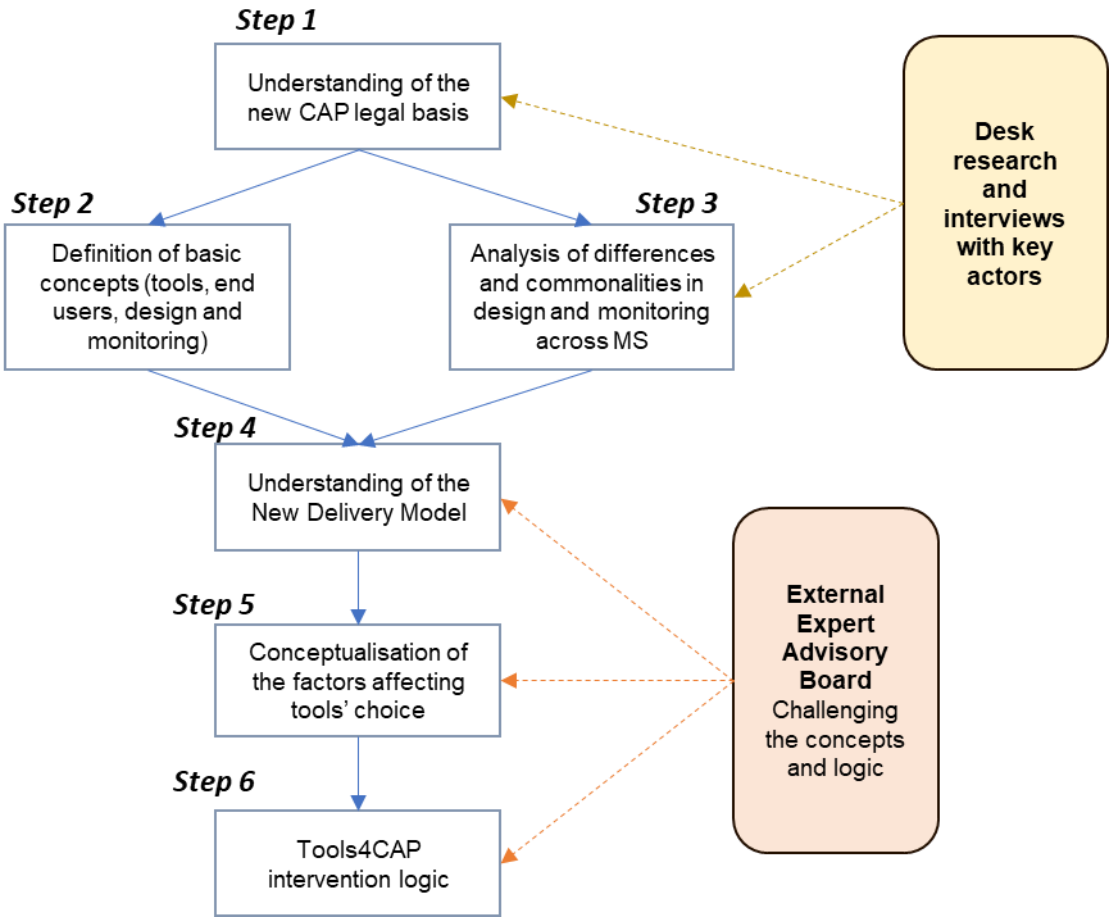
[2] https://www.tools4cap.eu/publications/

2. Approach to the conceptualisation

The conceptualisation process builds upon the essential goal of Tools4CAP, which is to **support MSs** in **designing the CSP fit for purpose** and **monitoring their implementation**. Hence, our concept is driven by the optimal realisation of design and monitoring objectives and takes the MSs' perspective with a specific focus on the choice of tools and the influencing factors. The conceptualisation intends to cast light on the functioning of the NDM, and the key elements and (causal) interrelations playing a role in the choice of tools by the MSs.

As shown in Figure 1, the conceptualisation followed 6 steps, and relied on analyses based on desk research and interviews with key actors across MSs, and the expert opinion of an external expert advisory board. In the first step, the key legal aspects defining the NDM were identified and discussed and, on this background, key concepts underpinning the project were outlined and defined in a second step. In the third step, and based on information from desk research and interviews, the way the NDM was undertaken across the 27 MSs was assessed, whereby relevant differences and commonalities were identified. Following, in the fourth step, the NDM has been scrutinised, disentangled and described. This was informed by the analysis of key differences and commonalities. Once the NDM was outlined, in the fifth step, the project focused on the process of tools' selection by MSs and the influencing factors. Finally, based on the identified factors and dynamics influencing the tools' choice, the project intervention logic was drawn, indicating the rationale of the key project's actions to achieve its goals. The project's expert advisory board was engage in the final steps, and asked to challenge and contribute to the understanding of the NDM, the identification of factors influencing tools' choice by MSs, and the project's intervention logic. This helped ensure the consistency and robustness of the project's concepts and logic.

Figure 1. Approach to conceptualisation.



3. Definition of key concepts

3.1. The design and monitoring of the CAP Strategic Plans

According to Regulation EU 2115/2021, MSs are required to design CSP covering the national territory and ensuring consistency with regional settings, and to establish a monitoring, reporting and evaluation system. The governance of the CSP, therefore, begins with their design and continues throughout their implementation. Design and implementation are inter-functional phases of the same process that complement one another.

We define 'design' as the process involving all activities performed by MSs, including the preparatory work, aiming at drafting the CSP, hence at creating a "sound intervention logic" of the CSP and the intervention strategy referred to in Article 107(1), point (b) for each specific objective. The CSP's design involves specific tasks, including socio-economic and context analysis, SWOT analysis, needs assessment, interventions setting, targets setting, financial allocation, ex-ante analysis and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and stakeholder consultations.

We define 'implementation' as the process involving all activities performed by the EC (and other EU agencies) and MSs, taking place after the formal approval of the CSP (January 2023), aimed at monitoring and evaluating the adoption of planned interventions and budget, and the achievements of the targets and objectives. We distinguish monitoring activities from evaluation activities, as follows.

Monitoring: all activities performed by EC and MSs to measure progress in CSP implementation and in achieving the milestones and targets (by reference to financial data and to output and result indicators, including at regional level where relevant). This includes two main tasks. First, the performance review (i.e. activities undertaken for the realisation of the annual performance report), which involves the set up of comprehensive, timely and reliable data sources to enable effective follow-up of policy progress towards objectives using output, result and impact indicators. Second, the control of beneficiaries' compliance, which is mainly conducted through IACS and paying agencies' control systems[3].

Evaluation: all activities performed by EC and MSs to evaluate progress in CSP implementation and in achieving the CSP set out objectives and the environmental and climate-related commitments of the EU. This includes activities such as:

- Activities undertaken by MS during the implementation period and ex-post to assess their CSP's effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact in relation to their contribution to achieving the CAP general objectives and specific objectives which are addressed by the CSP concerned;
- Activities undertaken by EC pursuant to Title VII, Chapter V of CSP Regulation

The project fully covers the design phase of the plans but, as for what regard the implementation, the project focuses on the monitoring process. The ex-post evaluation of the CAP Strategic plan is out of scope. In fact, the design of the next generation CSP will happen before the full evaluation of the current CSP. The monitoring process of the current CSPs' implementation will be fundamental in this regard, while the CAP evaluation will not likely have a role in informing those choices. Therefore, the scope of the Tools4CAP project is particularly focused on the monitoring process, rather than on the evaluation of the CAP. Nonetheless, qualitative and quantitative tools can also be of relevance for ex-post evaluations.

3.2. The tools for design and monitoring

The project focuses on the tools used for the design and monitoring of the CSP. The term 'tools' encompass all methodologies, methods and (technical/technological) tools that can be used through the design and monitoring processes. Within an overarching methodological framework, methods are about instructions, procedures and processes for attaining a certain objective, alongside different qualitative and quantitative tools are used. A tool is a device/product that help in accomplishing a task. Focusing on the process, there are good and bad methods. Good practices will focus on the right method to use the different tools (e.g. method for stakeholders engagements or

[3] https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/financing-cap/assurance-and-audit/managing-payments_en

intervention logic). Focusing on the end product, the use of the tool can be appropriate or not (e.g. models, stakeholder platforms, etc.). For simplification, hereinafter, we refer to methods and tools exclusively with the term "tools".

The tools, however, can be distinguished according to their purpose. Tools can be used for different purposes, such as for interpreting and analysing data to generate evidence, for collecting the data to be analysed, for facilitating the decisions' logic, or for identifying and assessing needs and opinions of stakeholders. Because the Tools4CAP project ultimately aims to provide tools for different users (and uses), and the same methodological tools can be used for very different purposes, we did not opt for categorising tools solely based on methodological characteristics. Within the scope of the project, we distinguish four categories of tools relevant to the design and monitoring of the CSP, which are defined below:

1) **Stakeholder needs assessment tools.** These tools are based on qualitative methodologies, including but not limited to participatory approaches, that enable the identification and assessment of stakeholders' perspectives and needs, which can be used to inform policy analyses and policy choices. Examples of these tools are workshops and focus groups (e.g. World Café methodology), as well as surveys and consultations.

2) **Policy analysis tools for evidence-based decisions.** These tools serve for generating (scientific or empirical) evidence through the analysis of policies, either ex-ante or ex-post, to inform decision-making, hence underpinning evidence-based policymaking. Tools for both ex-ante analysis (employed before policy implementation to evaluate the likely outcomes, benefits and risks associated with different policy options), and ex-post analysis (evaluation and comparison of past experiences, or similar experience elsewhere, as well as outcomes under different policies and policy mix analysis), can be employed along the design and monitoring process. Examples of these tools are quantitative (farm-level or macro-economic) models, econometric and statistical analyses, foresight and scenario analyses, as well as impact assessment and evaluation methodologies in general.

3) **Policy choices supporting tools.** These tools rely on logic-based methodologies to facilitate decision-making. The tools are particularly useful when dealing with complex systems, i.e. characterised by interdependencies, competitions, relationships, and interactions between their parts. When multiple policy options are available, information comes from multiple sources, and several actors are involved in decision-making, these tools help converge to a shared, coherent, consistent and logical policy choice. They can include participatory approaches to involve multiple actors (like agricultural organisation, syndicates, cooperatives, NGOs, environmental organisations, research and academia) in the decision-making process, thus making the process more transparent, inclusive and legitimate. They also include tools to facilitate participatory co-decision processes between policymakers at different governance levels, such as central and regional authorities, and other public agencies and control bodies. Examples of these tools are cumulative voting approaches and multi-criteria decision techniques.

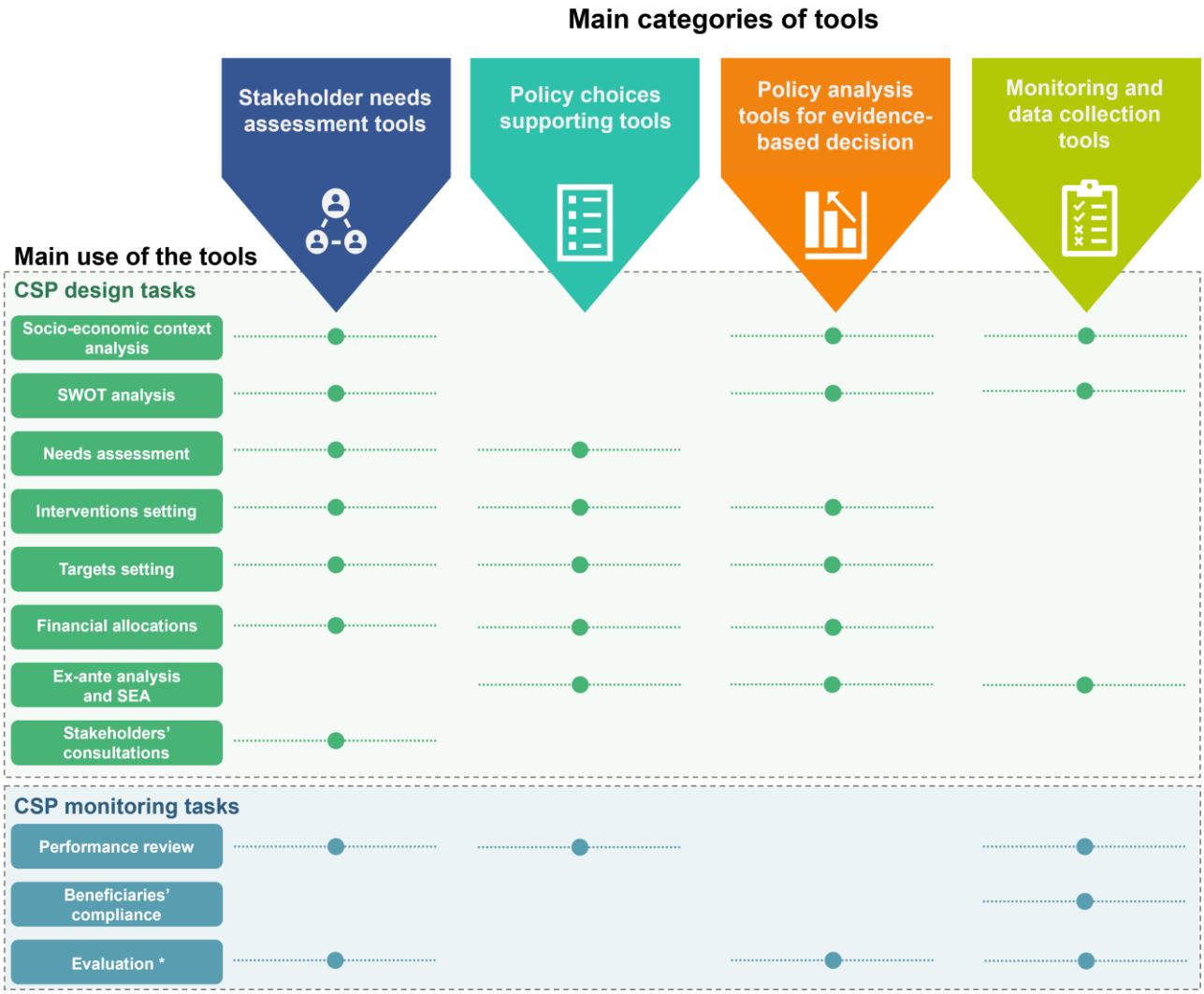
4) **Monitoring and data collection tools.** These tools serve to collect and make available (but not to interpret) the necessary information and data for the performance review of the CAP Strategic Plan, and to inform policy analyses and policy choices. These tools allow for collecting different types of qualitative and quantitative data, information and knowledge, with different levels of accuracy and based on different sources. They can rely on different methodological, technical or technological tools, such as satellite and precision farming tools, social media analytics, or on-spot surveys.

The categorisation of tools is useful to guide the research and technical work within the Tools4CAP project, as well as to inform a better and user-oriented tools' dissemination and communication strategy. It is evident, however, that such a categorisation is not perfectly applicable in the real world, as the use of the same tools can be diverse, and different tools are often used in combination. Therefore, two important dimensions must be accounted for: the possible use of the tools, and the complementarity between the tools.

Firstly, tools can have multiple uses along the design and monitoring processes of the CSP, whereby each design or monitoring task can be carried out through different tools (Figure 2). Figure 2 shows how the different categories of tools have been used (or are going to be used, as in the case of monitoring tasks by MSs, based on the results

of the Tools4CAP online inventory of tools[4]. The first aspect to be noted is that all categories of tools can be used for both design and monitoring tasks. For instance, stakeholder needs assessment tools have been widely used to inform the design of the CSP (e.g. needs assessment, context analysis), but can also be used to underpin the performance review and for the ex-post evaluation. Likewise, monitoring and data collection tools are (obviously) key for the monitoring tasks, but they also support other design tasks (e.g. context and SWOT analyses). The second aspect to highlight is that the each category of tools has been used for several design tasks (see section 3.4.3 for further discussion on this aspect).

Figure 2. Main categories and use of different categories of tools across design and monitoring tasks.



Note that the links between categories of tools and design and monitoring tasks were made based on the results of the Tools4CAP online inventory of tools (https://www.tools4cap.eu/tools/).

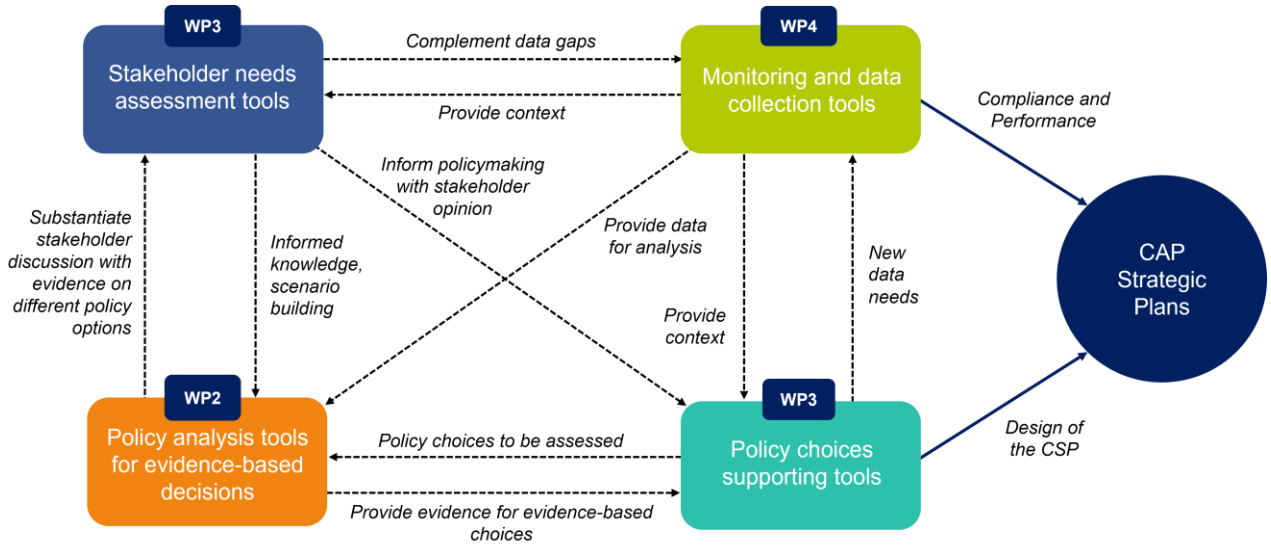
*Evaluation tasks are out of the scope of Tools4CAP. However, it is important to consider that different tools can be used also for evaluation.

Secondly, tools can be complementary one another, whereby each design or monitoring task can be carried out through a combination of tools, and the outputs of different tools concur to the final choices making up a CSP fit for purpose (Figure 3). For example, all tools can rely on the use of data and information from previous experiences, especially in the case of policy analysis tools. Monitoring and data collection tools complement other tools' categories as they provide the necessary data and contextual information. Thus, monitoring tools are key not only for the

[4] https://www.tools4cap.eu/tools/

monitoring process, but also in the design phase. Moreover, stakeholder needs assessment tools can complement policy analysis tools (e.g. by providing informed knowledge, expert judgment or scenario building), monitoring and data collection tools (by complementing possible data gaps), and can inform policy choices tools through stakeholders' opinion. Policy analysis tools can provide evidence to feed stakeholder discussions, as well as evidence to substantiate policy choices. Lastly, policy choice tools can inform policy analysis (by defining the policies to be assessed), and monitoring tools (by defining the indicators and targets for which data should be collected).

Figure 3. Interlinks between different categories of tools



Note: WP2, WP3, and WP4 identify the project workpackages within which the related categories of tools will be assessed and improved.

A comprehensive list of the tools belonging to each category is provided in the Tools4CAP inventory of tools (Deliverable 1.1 – Inventory of tools report, and online inventory[5]). The use made by MSs of different categories of tools for the design of the current CSP is further discussed in section 3.4.3.

3.3. The end users

In order to foster the adoption of innovative tools, Tools4CAP aims to engage tools' end users to provide them with methodological guidance and capacity building opportunities. All actors playing a role in the CAP design and monitoring processes at either the regional, national or EU level are considered the end users of the Tools4CAP coordination and support action. For both the design and monitoring phases, end users operate (or play a role) at different level of the governance. The CSP, for instance, identify a mix of actors including control bodies, managing authorities, paying agencies, competent authorities, certification bodies, monitoring committees, coordination and communication bodies, including AKIS. Thus, the types of end users addressed by Tools4CAP can be synthetised as follows:

- **Decision makers**: Ministry of Agriculture and Regional authorities where relevant, and their strategic working groups, regional and local authorities, as well as managing authorities and paying agencies;
- **Consultative agencies**: Other ministries and public agencies having relevant competencies (e.g. environmental, sanitary);
- **Executors and delegated organisations**: public and private organisations in charge of specific tasks of the strategic plan design or implementation, as well as developers/providers of services/tools functional to the design and implementation (e.g. research centres, universities, data collectors/managers, CAP network, Agri.Econ. groups).

[5] https://www.tools4cap.eu/tools/

4. Understanding of the New Delivery Model

4.1. The policy cycle and political backroom

In the complex landscape of political decision-making, two parallel processes intertwine to shape policy outcomes, namely: the formal policy cycle process and the political backroom dynamics.

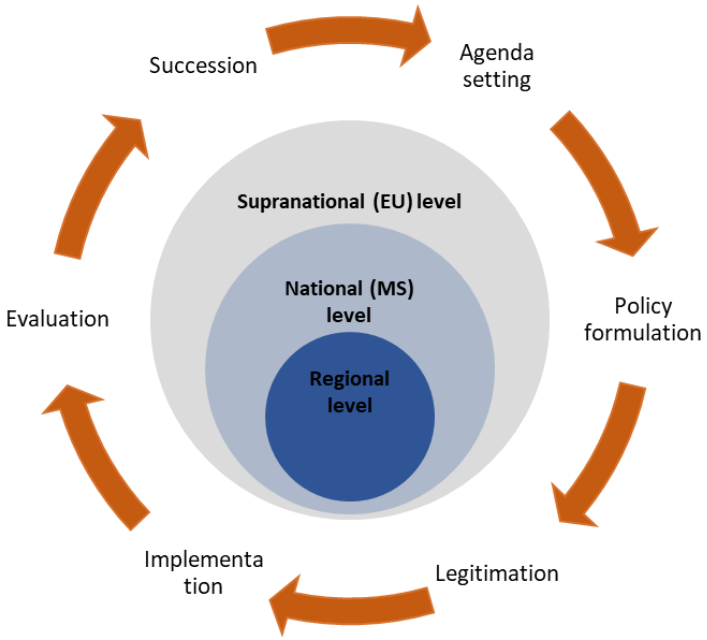
Firstly, the formal policy cycle operates within the public domain and adheres to established timelines, procedures, and transparency requirements. The general steps encountered in policy making are shown in Figure 4 below:

1) Agenda setting refers to the identification of the problems to be addressed.
2) Policy formulation, then, serves for setting objectives and choose instruments.
3) Legitimation is necessary to ensure that stakeholders' perspectives are taken onboard, which can include public consultations, but also the public institutions' view through debates in legislative assemblies, parliaments and councils.
4) Implementation refers to the definition of responsibilities, organisation of resources, and planning.
5) Evaluation is employed to assess the impact of policy choices.

Based on this, decisions are made on whether to maintain, modify or discontinue the policy (Erjavec et al., 2018).

A policy cycle is not necessarily limited to one governance level, but multiple policy cycles can take place (often in parallel, or interconnected) at multiple governance levels. Multilevel governance policymaking describes the dispersion or sharing of power and responsibility between supranational, national, regional (or local) government (Daniell and Kay, 2017). This is the case, for example, of the EU, where policy competencies are divided between the EU Institutions and the MSs (with EU competencies being distinguished in exclusive competences, shared competences and supporting competences) and, in certain cases, national competencies are splitted at regional or federal level (see for instance Garmany, Italy, and Spain).

Figure 4. Key steps of the policy cycle across multiple governance levels.

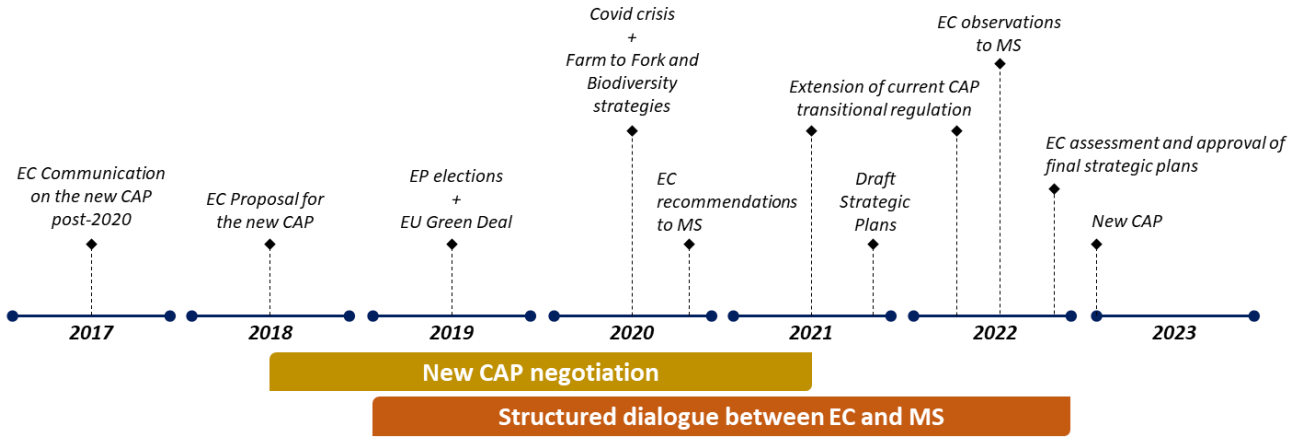


Source: re-adapted from Carney, 2012, p. 34.

These six steps of the policy cycle are a simplification of the reality, whereby further steps or feedback processes might take place in specific contexts. However, the six identified steps are generalisable keystones of policymaking. These can apply to multiple contexts, including the EU, where the CAP (agriculture is a shared competence of the EU) is an emblematic example of policy cycle involving multiple level of governance.

The policy cycle for the design of the new CAP materialised in several steps undertaken between 2017 (first European Commission's Communication on the CAP post-2020) and 2023 (entry into force of the CSP). Figure 5 shows the timeline of the undertaken policy cycle. The policy cycle involves both EU and MSs, and formal dialogue and negotiation processes. The process relied on the EU level negotiations, which involved the activities by the European Commission (publication of the Communication and first proposal on the new CAP), and the negotiations (trialogues) between the EC, the European Parliament and the Council (García-Azcárate and Folkeson, 2020). Importantly, the European Commission also published the Green Deal (GD) and related strategies (Farm to Fork and Biodiversity), which are of direct relevance to the CAP and informed the process, although the GD came after the publication of the first CAP proposal.

Figure 5. Timeline of the policy cycle milestones undertaken for the design of the new CAP



The policy cycle for the new CAP was structured according to the NDM, as established in the EU Regulation 2115/2021[6]. In the first place, MSs were called to prepare and submit to the EC a National CSP. The preparation of the CSP involved national and regional competent authorities, as well as other governance bodies and stakeholders through structured consultations, and consisted of a number of mandatory steps (see section 2.3 for further details). It is important to note that the preparation of the CSP started before the political agreement on the legal requirements for the content of the CSP. The European Commission (EC), on the other hand, was called to assess the proposed CSP as regards their completeness, consistency and coherence with the general principles of Union law, with a special focus on the adequacy of the strategy of the CAP Strategic Plan, the corresponding specific objectives, targets, interventions and the allocation of budgetary resources. On this basis, the EC formulated observations to the MS, which could update and improve their CSP. Finally, the EC had to approve the final SCP submitted by MS. Therefore, a structured dialogue between the MSs and the EC was held all along the process of Strategic Plan design, whereby MSs were provided with recommendations, observations and support tools by the European Commission.

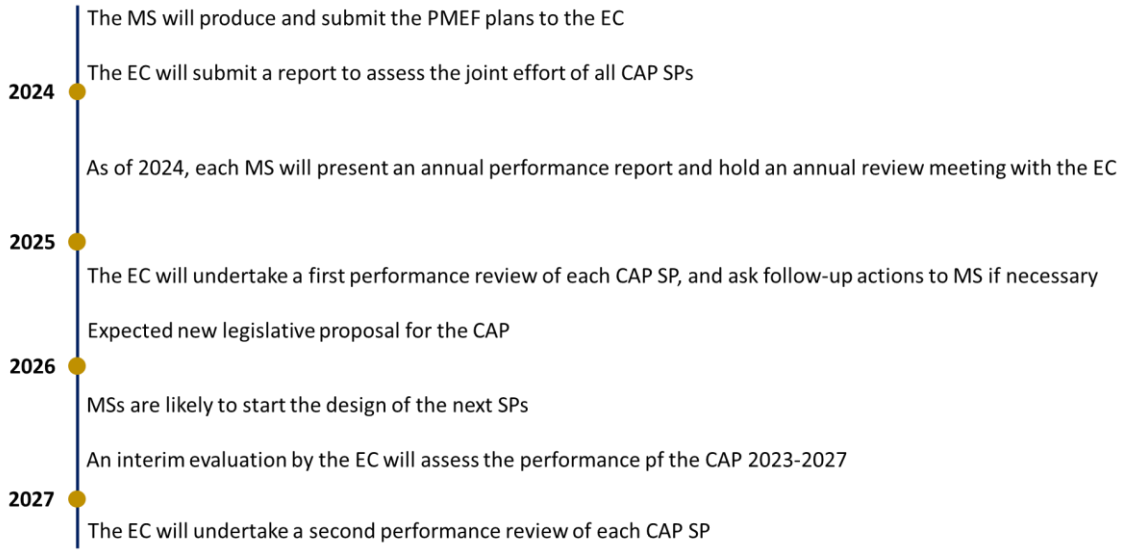
Besides the process undertaken towards the entry into force of the CSP, the EC and the MSs will go through further steps during the implementation of the CSP, and towards the design of the next generation CSP (post-2027). As shown in Figure 6, following the entry into force of the CSP in 2023, MSs will set up Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (PMEF) plans. These plans aim to establish a framework to monitor progress made towards achieving the targets of the CSP, and assess the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and coherence of the CSP. MSs will then be required to produce annual performance reports, to be reviewed firstly by the monitoring committee (established at MS level), and then by the EC (which can provide observations). The annual performance reports will contain key information to track the progress of the CSP's implementation, including the realised outputs, expenditure, the realised unit amount, and the results and distance to corresponding milestones.

The EC, on the other hand, will firstly assess the joint effort of all CSP to measure the collective contribution to the EU ambitions, by the end of 2023. Based on the annual performance reports provided by MSs, in 2025 the EC will carry out a first performance review of the CSP, and eventually indicate actions to MSs. Contextually, the new

[6] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R2115

legislative proposal for the CAP post-2027 is expected to be published in 2025, which entails that MSs will start working on the next generation CSP at least from 2026, in order to have new CSP ready to enter into force beginning 2027. In 2026, the performance of the CAP 2023-2027 will be assessed, whereas a second performance review will be carried out by the EC in 2027. Therefore, it is important to consider that the preparation of the next generation CSP will take place before the evaluation of the full impact of the CAP.

Figure 6. Future steps in the CAP policy cycle.



Source: re-adapted from European Commission[7]

However, running in parallel to this formal policy cycle is an equally significant but often less visible process: the informal and private decision-making process, commonly referred to as the political backroom. This realm exists beyond the public eye, where actors, including politicians, advisors, and invited stakeholders, engage in confidential discussions and negotiations. The political backroom serves as a crucial arena for forging alliances, brokering compromises, and making decisions that shape policy outcomes. While the formal policy cycle follows predefined procedures, the political backroom operates with flexibility, allowing for the consideration of diverse perspectives and lobby of interest groups, the navigation of political interests, and the formation of coalitions that may not align with public positions. Although distinct in their nature, these parallel processes intertwine and influence each other, resulting in the intricate tapestry of political decision-making.

In the EU context, the parallel processes of formal policy cycles and the political backroom become even more intricate due to the multi-level nature of governance. Decision-making within the EU involves interactions at the EU level and within individual MSs, often necessitates coordination and negotiation between these levels. Nowhere is this complexity more apparent than in the CAP, which requires harmonising diverse national interests and goals with overarching EU objectives. The interplay between the EU-level policy cycle and the political backroom dynamics at the national level further complicates the decision-making process. Different actors, such as EU institutions, national governments, interest groups, and stakeholders, each with their own agendas and power dynamics, engage in negotiations and strategic discussions. Consequently, tracing back the outcome of decision-making processes within this multi-level governance framework can be challenging.

While the political backroom significantly influences the decision-making process within the complex multi-level governance of the EU, it is important to recognise that the Tools4CAP project primarily focuses on enhancing the formal public process of the design of the national CSP. The project aims to provide valuable tools and insights to improve transparency, accountability, stakeholder engagement and ultimately performance of the policy, within the formal policy cycles of the CAP. However, it is equally crucial to acknowledge the broader context in which these processes unfold, including the role of the political backroom dynamics. By shedding light on the complexities and

[7] https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/common-agricultural-policy/cap-overview/cap-2023-27_en#keyareasofreform

acknowledging the influence of the political backroom, the Tools4CAP project contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the CAP decision-making process and empowers decision makers to make their national CSP fit for purpose.

4.2. Main novelties of the new CAP 2023-2027

According to the EC's regulatory fitness and performance programme (REFIT)[8], all EU laws, including the new CAP, should be 'fit for purpose', meaning that the new CAP should minimise regulatory burdens and simplify legislation without compromising the policy objectives. The idea of policies being "fit for purpose" draws upon the notion that public policies should be designed and implemented in a way that aligns with their intended goals and objectives. It reflects the need for policies to be relevant, appropriate, and well-tailored to address specific issues or problems in society. While the term "fit for purpose" may not be explicitly used within the EU decision-making framework, the underlying objective of developing policies that are appropriate, relevant, and well-suited to address specific challenges and needs is considered important (Wallace et al., 2020). The EU institutions strive to design and implement policies that are tailored to achieve the intended outcomes efficiently, effectively, and in a manner that respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality (Craig, 2012).

The new CAP introduces very important changes, as regard to both policy content and process. These changes have important implications for the roles, responsibilities and duties of competent authorities at EU and MS level. In particular, one of the driving aim of the latest CAP reform was the need to grant greater flexibility to MSs for tailoring the CAP design to country and local needs, hence, to allow for making CAP CSP fit for purpose.

In the first place, the new CAP defines nine key objectives covering the economic, environmental and social domains, plus a horizontal objective to fostering knowledge and innovation in EU agriculture. Although MSs must contribute to all objectives, these are not prioritised, thus MSs face the challenge to properly contribute to different objectives based on their national and regional needs (and to justify their choices), while ensuring a holistic view of all objectives and their interplay is account for (Lampkin et al., 2020).

The CSP should contribute to all these objectives. However, because of the entrance into play of new social, environmental and climate EU strategies, and the criticisms to the limited environmental benefits of the previous CAP (Hart and Bas-Defossez, 2018), particular emphasis has been put on environmental and social goals within the new CAP. Specifically, in 2019 the EU published the GD Strategy, inclusive of several other strategies like the Farm to Fork strategy (which aims to reduce the environmental and climate impact of primary production), and the Biodiversity strategy (a plan to protect nature and reverse the degradation of ecosystems). The GD strategies set up relevant overall environmental targets to be achieved by the EU through all standing and new policies, including the CAP.

Also due to the GD, the new CAP seeks to boost environmental and climate achievements. All MSs, in fact, are called to demonstrate a higher green ambition, and contribute to achieve relevant GD targets, such as making 25% of EU agriculture organic, reducing by 50% the use of pesticides and antimicrobials, and by 20% the use of fertilisers, by 2030. To this end, the new CAP comes with an enhanced environmental conditionality, introduces new interventions, and requires that at least 35% of rural development budget and 15% of operational programmes expenditure are allocated to environmental and climate objectives. For example, a relevant innovation is represented by the introduction of the eco-schemes, which should account for at least 25% of the direct payments' budget. The novelty of this instrument poses a challenge to MSs, as experience is limited, and because the eco-scheme design requires the definition of consistent environmental and climate targets (Lampkin et al., 2020). An additional challenge for MSs is to set (and achieve) increased green targets, for which they are accountable (García-Azcárate and Folkeson, 2020), which raises the risk of having the status quo prevailing (Matthews, 2019).

Besides the green ambitions, the new CAP also poses relevant social goals. Notably, a novel social conditionality is introduced with the new CAP, in addition to existing labour standards, whereby administrative sanctions should be imposed by MSs, by means of the reduction or the total exclusion of CAP payments, against those agricultural employers not complying with a given set of EU labour standards.

[8] https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/evaluating-and-improving-existing-laws/refit-making-eu-law-simpler-less-costly-and-future-proof_en

The growing environmental and social ambitions entails major efforts by MSs in drafting their CSP, not only for the compliance with mandatory financial allocations, but also for the necessity to develop capacity to design effective interventions (e.g., eco-schemes) and identify proper and measurable indicators.

A second significant novelty is represented by the shift from the previous compliance-based model, to a results and performance-based model. The further reduction of the CAP budget indeed requires a more result oriented approach to ensure the effectiveness of the policy (Was et al., 2018; Stierle, 2018; Féret, 2019).

A new PMEF, covering the performance of all instruments of the future CAP, replaces the 2014–2020 Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF). Compared to the previous programming period, the new PMEF comes with fewer indicators (of which some new mandatory ones) streamlined across all areas and funding sources, covering all objectives, aimed at the measurement of progress in achieving CSP targets (tracking of results). The PMEF foresees greater reliance on MSs' notifications and statistics, with new mandatory indicators, a new satellite area monitoring system and more detailed data collection on farming practices. The PMEF is intended to limit the burden on farmers and administrations through digital data sharing.

In relation to the EU specific objectives, a set of common indicators (context, output, result and impact indicators) are set as basis for monitoring, evaluation and the annual performance reporting. The PMEF will be organised around the following principles (Cagliero et al., 2021):

- context indicators remain pertinent in the intervention logic set up and follow up;
- output indicators will annually link expenditure with the performance implementation (performance clearance);
- result indicators will reflect whether the supported interventions contribute to achieving objectives;
- annual performance follow-up will rely on a more targeted set of result indicators (performance review);
- multiannual assessment of the overall policy is proposed based on common impact indicators (evaluation).

The PMEF comes with some procedural simplifications (e.g., the single audit approach avoiding multiple audits and inspections), but the enhanced reporting requirements entails increasing complexity for national authorities, whereas the differences with previous experiences is remarkable and will take time to be adequately set in motion (Carey, 2019). Further challenges come with the introduction of the new PMEF (McEldowney and Kelly, 2019). First, recent data on environmental indicators is scarce. Second, there is a time lag between programme implementation and the assessment of impact and a time gap between actions on the ground and data availability. Third, while reduced, management by MSs of a high number of indicators and sub-indicators, of which some not yearly available, remain complex.

Furthermore, EU MSs are required to evaluate their CSP during and after the 2023-27 programming period, with these evaluations designed to assess how each country contributes to achieving the CAP objectives and to improve the quality of the design and implementation of the agriculture and rural development policy. This fits into the EU's policy evaluation and impact assessment processes[9], which aim to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of policies, ensuring they are aligned with the intended goals and objectives. To this end, MSs should draft evaluation plans, which will help ensure that all the necessary evaluation activities take place, with sufficient resources and required data available – and in a timely manner and appropriate format.

A further relevant factor is the increased subsidiarity and flexibility granted to MSs with the new CAP. The EU decision-making process is guided by the principles of subsidiarity, proportionality, transparency, and democratic legitimacy (EC, 2018). These principles aim to ensure that EU policies and actions are effective, efficient, and responsive to the needs of MSs and their citizens. On this line, the new CAP brings higher flexibility and responsibilities to MSs as regard to the design and monitoring of the CSP (Jongeneel et al., 2019).

Greater responsibilities come with increased flexibility. Compared to the previous programming period, MSs are more accountable for their achievements of agreed targets (underpinning the assurance of the budget), while they are in charge of designing interventions, and have a greater say in designing the compliance and control framework for beneficiaries (García-Azcárate and Folkeson, 2020). For example, ensuring coherent identification of needs, intervention design and target setting can be challenging for MSs (Was et al., 2018).

[9] https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox/better-regulation-toolbox_en

4.3. Legal requirements for the design and implementation of the CAP Strategic Plans

The EU Regulation 2115/2021[10] lays down the provisions on the new CAP, as well as the requirements for the preparation of the national CSP. As per Regulation, MSs are required to establish CAP National CSP, which can include regional elements, covering the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2027. In their CSP, MSs are called to define an intervention strategy with a plan for the achievement of quantitative targets and milestones, and adequate allocation of financial resources to the interventions. MSs are required to ensure a greater contribution to environmental and climate-related objectives, compared to the previous programming period. The CSP should also outline the governance structure, including governance bodies, national and regional managing authorities, integrated administration and control system, the competent control bodies responsible for the checks, as well as the monitoring and reporting structure.

The procedure for the preparation of the CSP should rely on the involvement of all relevant national and regional authorities, as well as competent authorities for the environment and climate, and the relevant stakeholders, including economic and social partners (representatives of the agricultural sector), bodies representing civil society and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, gender equality and non-discrimination.

Several requirements need to be met through the designed CSP, including:

- alignment to CAP, GD and SDGs objectives and international commitments;
- increased sustainability ambition compared to the previous programming period;
- internal and external coherence of the intervention strategy;
- consistency from regional to national levels;
- accountability through SMART targets and reflected in funding allocation;
- reliance on ex-ante evaluations.
- wide stakeholder engagement and coordination with regional bodies, socio-economic partners, and environmental and climate authorities;
- process quality, simplification, and modernisation;
- cost-effectiveness of the adopted systems.

The Regulation identifies certain activities that MSs need to undertake through the process of the design and implementation of their CSP. For the design of the CSP, MSs are required to provide an intervention strategy based on a “sound intervention logic”, which should be reflective of:

- the socio-economic context assessment;
- the SWOT analysis: based on the current situation of the area covered by the CAP Strategic Plan, comprising, for each specific objective, an overall description of the current situation, based on common context indicators and other quantitative and qualitative up-to-date information such as studies, past evaluation reports, sectoral analyses and lessons learned from previous experiences;
- the assessment and the prioritisation of needs: to identify needs for each specific objective, based on the evidence from the SWOT;
- the Ex-Ante evaluation of the CSP and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): to assess the contribution of the CSP to achieving the specific objectives, the internal coherence of the CSP, the consistency of the allocation of budgetary resources, and the appropriateness of the quantified target values;
- Broad stakeholder consultations.

For the implementation of the CSP, on the other hand, MSs are required to collect, store and manage data to track the progress towards CAP and GD objectives, while also guaranteeing that legal requirements are met. Monitoring will serve multiple (legal) purposes (Cagliero et al., 2021), including:

- the control of beneficiary compliance;
- building performance clearance;

[10] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R2115

- drafting annual performance reports: covering the implementation of the CSP in the previous financial year, and including the realised outputs and expenditure;
- Performing evaluations: to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and coherence of the CSP, during implementation and ex post.

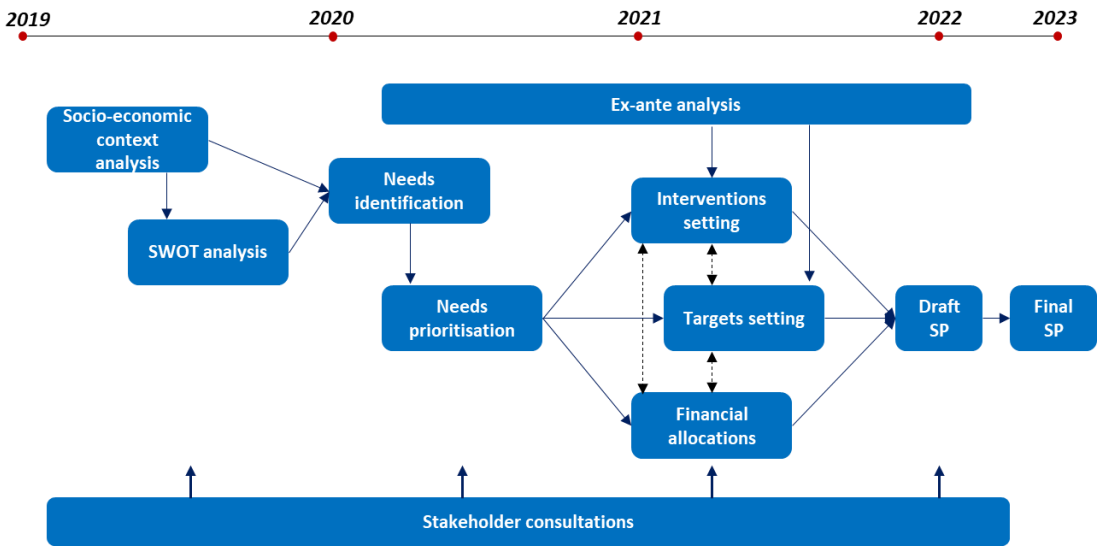
4.4. Differences and commonalities in Strategic Plan design across Member States

Under the NDM, MSs have the responsibility to design their own CSP. However, although the new CAP Regulation provides common legal requirements with which MSs must comply (see section 2.3), much room was left for MSs to adapt the design process. Thus, important differences can arise across MSs as regard the way they realised the CSP's design. In the first place, MSs had different needs and criticalities to deal with, which could influence the organisation of the design process. Equally important in the set up of the design process was the governance structure in the MS. For example, some MSs rely on a regional or federal organisation, which implies that regional authorities have direct responsibilities in the design process. Also, internal political dynamics could influence the process, such as the occurrence of general elections (in some cases multiple rounds of elections took place along the design process), or stronger negotiations with stakeholders in the political back-room.

Understanding the differences and commonalities across MSs in the design of the CSP is therefore useful to learn from past experiences how the design of the next generation CSP can be improved. Based on an extensive literature review and interviews with key actors across all EU-27, which were conducted within the scope of Tools4CAP, commonalities and differences can be identified as regard the way MSs carried out the design of their CSP. This section sheds light on the main commonalities and differences and, ultimately, provides a comprehensive picture on how the NDM materialised across the EU.

The NDM established an array of required activities or steps that MSs had to carry out for the design of the CSP. These activities include the conduction of context and SWOT analysis, ex-ante evaluations and strategic environmental assessments, the identification, assessment and prioritisation of needs, intervention and target settings, funding allocations, stakeholder consultations, and the actual plan drafting. These activities took place in the period between 2019 and the end of 2022 (the CSP entered into force 1st January 2023), and involved competent authorities at different governance levels (e.g., regional authorities in federalised MSs, or the EC when providing recommendations and observations), as well as other actors such as private consulting, or research centres and universities. A representative scheme of the process and its steps is shown in Figure 7 below. Note that while the figure represents the design process as a one-direction flow, several (two-ways) feedback loops could take place.

Figure 7. Schematic example of the CAP Strategic Plan design steps



There are three key aspects framing the CAP governance, and in particular the CSP's design across MSs: the undertaken process (i.e., the sequence of steps and activities carried out), the actors involved, and the typologies of tools adopted along the process. The way MSs designed their CSP differs in both process and typologies of tools

employed. Regarding the process, the CSP' design could differ in the logical and chronological sequence of undertaken activities, thus on the way one activity could inform another (e.g., whether the ex-ante evaluation could inform the selection of interventions). Moreover, differences can be found in the actors involved in the activities, or in the disaggregation of certain steps (e.g., whether context and SWOT are conducted jointly or not).

Overall, the results of the interviews and the literature review suggest that, while all MSs must comply with a number of mandatory steps and tasks, the way in which the process has been organised differs significantly across MSs, both in terms of sequence of the steps undertaken, actors involved, and tools used. The key differences and commonalities are described in the following dedicated sections.

4.4.1. The design process

The steps outlined in Figure 7 were basically performed by all MSs, but there were important differences across MSs as regard the temporal sequence and order of the steps, as well as the actors that carried out and/or were involved in the different steps. For example, in certain MSs (e.g. Netherlands, Poland) the process started earlier in 2018, which allowed the authorities to have a first draft of the CSP already in 2020. This was not the case for other MSs (such as Romania, Hungary, or Germany) where the draft CSP was finalised around 2022.

Normally, the socio-economic context analysis would underpin the SWOT analysis, which in turn would inform the needs assessment (identification and prioritisation). In some cases, however, the SWOT analysis was performed in parallel with the needs assessment, followed by the socio-economic context analysis. In other cases (e.g. Greece), multiple versions of the SWOT analysis were produced, intermediated by the needs assessment and various stakeholder consultations.

All MSs were required to ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders through consultation processes. These consultations assumed different forms, and were employed at different stages, for different purposes. Consultations could be used as a means to collect general feedback and opinions from the general public and civil society (e.g. France), usually upon a first draft of the CSP. Alternatively, it could be employed to perform certain design steps such as the SWOT analysis or the needs assessment. For example, in the Netherlands a first public consultation was carried out to underpin the SWOT analysis, followed by a second consultation to inform the needs assessment. In Greece, a first consultation was used to inform the update of the SWOT analysis, whereas a second consultation was undertaken to collect feedback on the final version of the SWOT analysis and the needs assessment. In Poland, three consultation rounds were carried out each following the publication of a CSP draft (three drafts of the CSP were subsequently produced).

The setting of interventions and targets, as well as the financial allocations, were three key steps of the CSP design. These steps were usually performed based on the results of the SWOT analysis and needs assessment, and served to outline the core elements of the CSP. In most of cases, the intervention setting preceded the targets setting and financial allocations, while these two latter steps were often conducted in parallel. However, there are some exceptions. For instance, in Poland interventions and targets setting and financial allocations proceeded concurrently (over a two-year period), and ran in parallel to the needs assessment. In France, intervention setting preceded targets setting and financial allocations, but it was mostly run in parallel with the needs assessment.

The needs assessment includes the identification of needs and their prioritisation, normally based on the results of the SWOT and context analysis. This activity was specifically required by the CAP Regulation[11]. While some MSs conducted identification and prioritisation jointly (e.g. Netherlands), other MSs conducted identification and prioritisation in separate and subsequent steps (e.g. Greece, Germany).

MSs were also required to perform ex-ante evaluations, including the strategic environmental assessment. The ex-ante analysis, however, could be performed at different stages of the process, and be focused on a varying array of aspects. In some cases, the ex-ante analysis was run prior to the intervention and target setting and the drafting of the CSP plan (e.g. Netherlands). Differently, in other cases the ex-ante analysis was run over a longer period, in parallel with targets and intervention setting, and financial allocations. This is the case, for example, of Romania and Germany. Moreover, the ex-ante analysis could focus on specific components of the CSP, such as the case of Ireland where a stronger focus was put on the direct payments envelope. In Germany, instead, the ex-ante analysis followed three steps focusing on (i) the SWOT analysis and strategic environmental assessment, (ii) the intervention design, and (iii) CSP coherence.

[11] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R2115

4.4.2. Actors involved in the Strategic Plans' design

The CSP design process can also differ depending on the actors performing the steps. Different types of actors could be involved, such as the National competent authorities (primarily the Ministry of Agriculture, and the regional competent authorities in regionalised countries, as well as other Ministries and public agencies), public or private research institutes, and external consultants.

Overall, Ministries of Agriculture led the activities in most cases. Nonetheless, they were often supported by other authorities (such as other Ministries, regional bodies, or environmental agencies) through the set up of working groups, or specific thematic committees (e.g. Ministries of Health to have a say on antibiotics use in livestock). In some cases, the regional authorities were at the core of the activities, such as the case of Italy were the Regions were responsible for intervention setting (this is due to the federalised nature of the governance system in these countries). Often, the work of the Ministries was facilitated through the set up of working groups, were other actors could be also involved. For example, in Slovakia, several working groups and sub-groups were created, bringing together policymakers, researchers and civil society, for the intervention setting.

It is interesting to note that MSs in which research centres had a direct role in (certain) steps of the CSP design are mainly located in Eastern Europe. Here, the research centres were in charge of different tasks, related to (but not limited to) the context and SWOT analysis, and the needs assessment. For example, in Poland, Czechia and Lithuania research centres were involved in the socio-economic context analysis, whereas in Bulgaria they were involved in the SWOT analysis. In Poland, Lithuania, Germany, Slovakia and Slovenia, research centres had a role in the intervention setting and/or financial allocations.

Often, external consultants had a role in the ex-ante analysis. However, they also participated in other tasks, such as the prioritisation of needs in Slovenia (alongside a national research institute), or the evaluation of CSP coherence (needs, objectives and financial allocations) in Romania. However, external experts were also frequently involved in (thematic) working groups.

4.4.3. Tools employed for the design of the Strategic Plans

While the undertaken process could differ across MSs, also the tools used by MSs along the process differ greatly. Three main categories of tools were employed by MSs for the design of the CSP (the categories of tools are presented in section 3.2), namely stakeholder needs assessment tools, policy choices supporting tools, and policy analysis tools. The fourth category of monitoring and data collection tools had a cross-cutting role by providing data and information.

Stakeholder needs assessment tools can follow different formats and serve diverse purposes. For example, in some cases (e.g. Finland and Germany) stakeholder consultation were undertaken in a World Cafè format. The world café method is a structured conversational process for knowledge sharing in which groups of people discuss a topic at several small tables. A slightly different approach was used in Ireland, where Town Hall meetings were held all across the country, ensuring broad participation at the local level. In other cases (e.g. France, Croatia), e-consultations were organised, whereby opinions from a wide range of respondents from the whole society were collected and then processed centrally. In many cases, the consultations were simply organised around thematic focus groups or working groups, often focusing on a specific component of the CSP (e.g. by specific objective, as in Spain).

Policy analysis tools serve for generating (scientific or empirical) evidence through the analysis of policies, either ex-ante or ex-post, to inform decision-making, hence underpinning evidence-based policymaking. To the best of current knowledge, mostly ex-ante tools were used by MSs. This can be due to the fact that, on the one hand, the ex-ante analysis was a compulsory part of the design process, on the other hand, the analysis of past policies was often captured in the socio-economic context analysis, which was mainly based on statistics and the use of context and impact indicators.

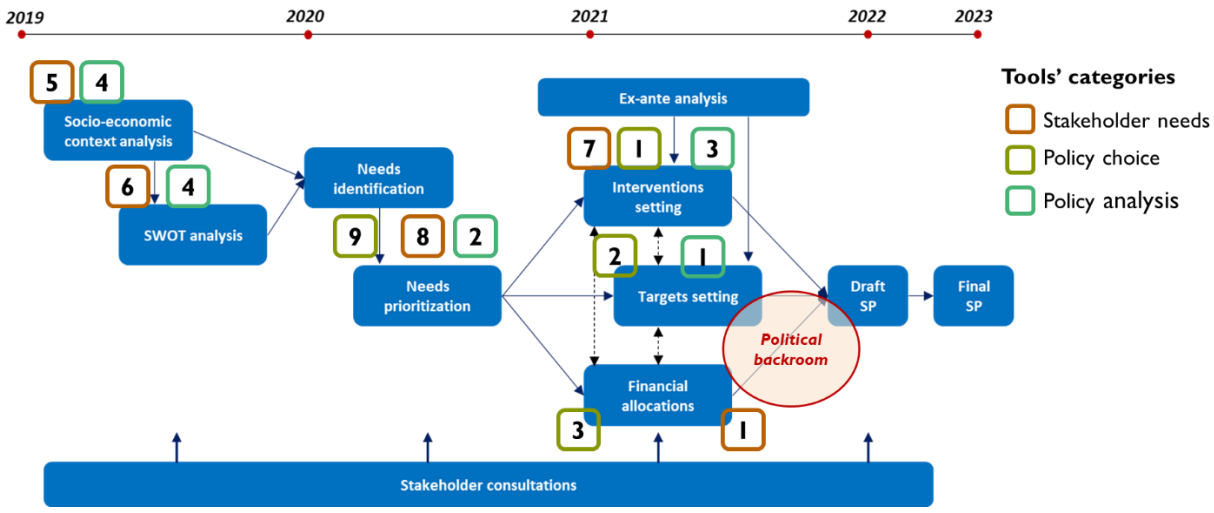
As for what regard ex-ante analysis tools, these were used to address different problems. For example, in Germany three different modelling tools were set up to assess the eco-schemes and inform their design. In Ireland, as part of the ex-ante analysis, an analysis was performed to examine the redistribution of CAP payments across famrs based on Pillar I reform, whereas in Wallonia (Belgium) a Support Simulation Tool (which is tailored to the Wallonia context) was employed to assess the impact of different aids on farms' income, which was particularly useful for interventions and targets setting. Lastly, in Slovenia the MKMG farm modelling tools was used to make a scenario analysis (based

on different hypothetical interventions design) to assess the effect of direct payments (coupled and decoupled), eco-schemes and less-favoured area measures, as well as the potential uptake of these measures.

Policy choices supporting tools support decision-making at different stages, such as need assessment, interventions and target setting, and financial allocations. In certain cases, choices were made into the "political backroom", meaning that decisions were mainly driven by the results of the negotiations with other authorities and stakeholders. However, there are several examples of policy choice support tools used by MSs. Most of these tools have been useful for the identification and prioritisation of needs, such as the (constrained) cumulative voting techniques (e.g. Italy, Lithuania), multicriteria-decisions analysis (e.g. Spain), a report-based method including online survey (e.g. Slovenia), analytic hierarchy process (e.g. Poland), or simply excel tools (e.g. Finalnd). Other tools served different purposes, such as the questionnaire-based approach used in Germany to facilitate coordination of funding allocation among Federal States, or the Logic Model developed in Romania to check the coherence between objectives, needs and financial allocations.

Figure 8 below provides an overview of the use of different categories of tools across different steps of the CSP design. The figure reports the number of MSs in which a certain category of tool has been used at a certain step of the process.

Figure 8. The use of different categories of tools across the steps of the Strategic Plans' design process



Source: based on the results of the Tools4CAP Inventory of methods and tools (D1.1).

Stakeholder needs assessment tools have been widely used for informing the socio-economic context analysis, the SWOT analysis, and the needs assessment, but also to inform the intervention setting. Differently, the **policy choices supporting tools** have been used mostly to facilitate the needs assessment and, to lower extent, to support intervention and target setting, and financial allocations. **Policy analysis tools** have been less frequently adopted compared to the previous ones, and have been used mostly for the socio-economic and SWOT analyses, needs assessment, intervention and target setting. From this mapping exercise, it appears that the lower use of tools coincides with the tasks of target setting and financial allocation. Here, it is likely that political dynamics (e.g. political negotiations), which we refer to as the political backroom, have played a major role.

The three categories of tools presented above complement one another along the design process, and their outputs concur to the final choices making up a CSP fit for purpose. Importantly, all these tools rely on the use of data and information from previous experiences. Therefore, **monitoring and data collection tools** are key to the design process. In some cases, these tools had a direct role in specific tasks, such as the case of the AGEA data platform and Classyfarm system used in Italy to inform intervention setting. It is also important to note that design of the next generation CSP will take place before the full evaluation of the current CSP. Consequently, the role of the monitoring process of the current CSP' implementation will be fundamental to inform choices for the next generation CSP, while the CAP evaluation will likely have no role in informing those choices. Having in place strong monitoring tools, therefore, is of strategic importance. This fact also helps explain why the scope of the Tools4CAP project is particularly focused on the monitoring process, rather than on the evaluation of the CAP.

5. Conceptual framework

MSs represent very diverse contexts, often with their regional heterogeneity, leading to diverse needs across the EU. MSs rely on different governance structures and practices, with relevant competencies distributed among different actors, which also contribute to determine what is (politically) feasible and what is not. In fact, the latest CAP reform, which gives MSs greater flexibility in designing their own CSP, reflects the need to account for such diversity.

Therefore, it turns out that there is not a one-fit-all solution or a single best solution to realise the NDM and design the CSP. On the contrary, the design of the CSP is about a 'fit for purpose' solution. What remains to be understood is how the process can be improved to ensure that CSP are actually fit for purpose to reach national and EU ambitions. Given the broad diversity of approaches across MSs, room for improvement can be found in peer-learning among MSs, in the introduction of new approaches (e.g. from science or third countries), or in technical improvements to existing methods.

The Tools4CAP conceptual framework lays the basis for understanding why specific tools have been chosen and how they can be of use. Ultimately, the framework allows for identifying tools worth further attention, which could be replicated elsewhere or improved to make the future CSP more fit for purpose.

5.1. CSP design and monitoring: definition of the factors at play

The design and monitoring of the CSP require MSs to identify and select the proper tools they will use to facilitate the process. Several factors, however, enter into play when it comes to the selection of the tools. Understanding how MSs choose their tools is critical not only to identify the best tools' characteristics, but also to shed light on the contextual factors that make the tools' adoption feasible and consequently to increase the potential applicability of new tools. This chapter provides the conceptualisation of the process leading to the MSs' choice of tools, including the array of factors that might enter into play. The identified factors, as well as the interrelations between them, are described below.

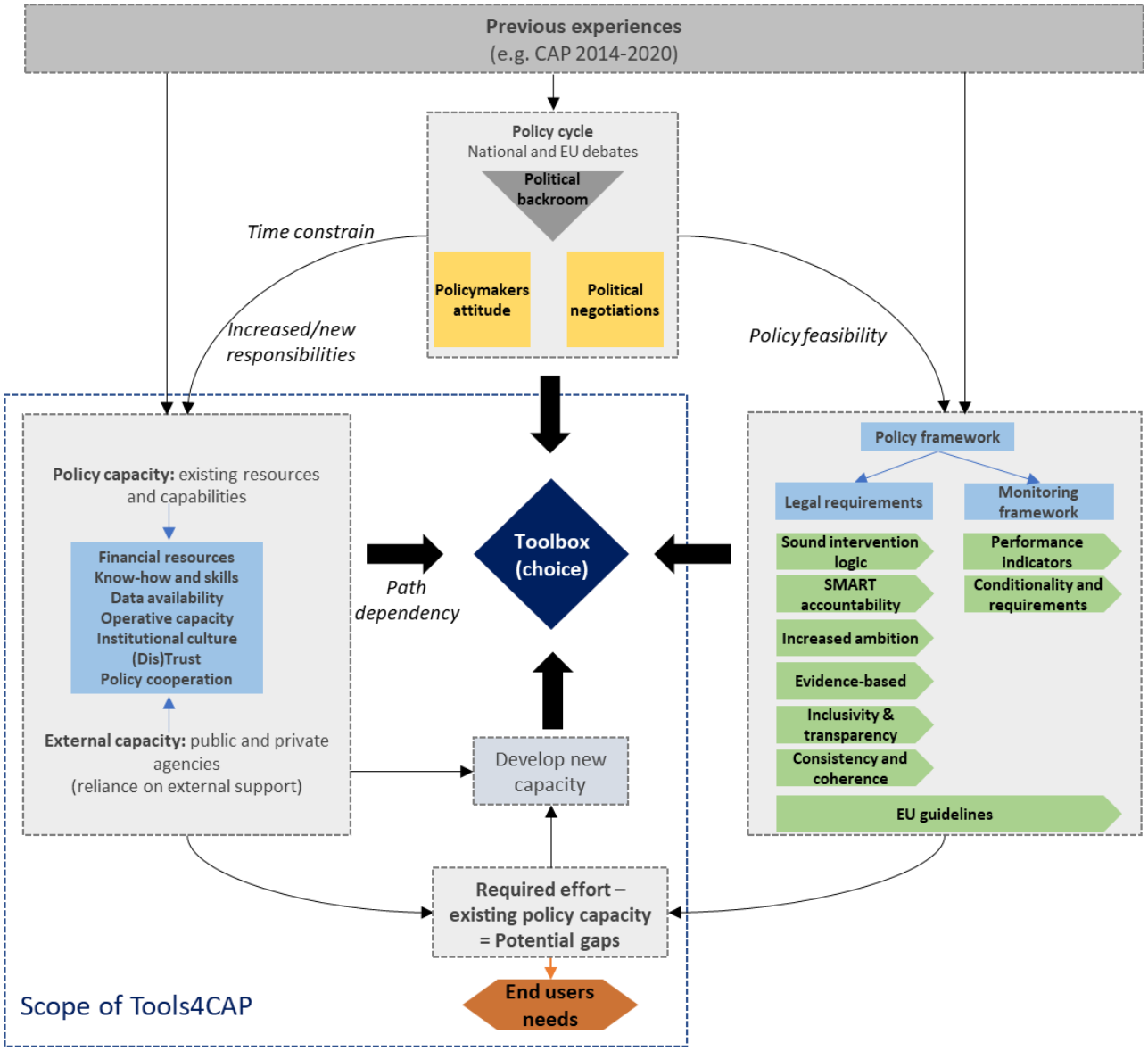
Figure 9 shows the conceptual diagram of the factors influencing the tools' choice. The conceptual diagram is meant to provide a comprehensive array of factors, and their causal relations. The conceptualisation is not meant to be a realistic representation of what took place during the past reform. Instead, it is drawn to include the general concepts that can be applicable to future design and monitoring processes. This reflects the Tools4CAP ambition to provide support and tools relevant to the design and monitoring of the next-generation CSP, knowing that at the end of this CAP programming period, legal requirements linked to the design process of the CSP might be reformed.

At the core of the CSP preparation and monitoring is the **toolbox**, i.e., the choice of the tools to be used along the process. To the extent possible, the tools need to ensure that policy requirements, such as those identified by the CAP regulation and, more in general, by the better regulation guidelines[12], are sufficiently (or optimally) addressed. MSs' selection of the tools is affected by several endogenous and exogenous factors, which can be grouped across three dimensions: the policy capacity, the policy framework, and the policy cycle.

The choice of the tools depends on the **policy capacity** of the MSs, which refers to the resources and capabilities available, which are to a large extent, built through previous CAP experiences. Financial, human (e.g., employees, skills and know-how), and technological and logistic (e.g., tech infrastructure, data, time) resources determine the set of possible options. Furthermore, policy capacity extends beyond governmental bodies, encompassing the external capacity of various private and public entities (e.g., private consulting firms, universities, and tech companies) within the MS.

[12] https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox/better-regulation-toolbox_en

Figure 9. Conceptual diagram of the key factors influencing the choice of tools for the design and monitoring of the CAP CSP.



The **policy framework**, which includes legal requirements and monitoring framework, influences the choice of the tools as it defines the minimum standards to be achieved through the design and monitoring of the CSP. In the optimal scenario, the existing policy capacity is sufficient to design and monitor CSP fit for purpose, according to the legal requirements foreseen in the policy framework. However, it might be the case that new policy requirements imply higher efforts by MSs, and that existing policy capacity is not enough to comply with such requirements. In this case, either the MS is able to develop the necessary capacity, or a potential gap might emerge and affect even the choice of the tools for the design and monitoring of the CSP. We identify the need for developing new capacity stemming from potential gaps as the end users' needs.

The tools' choice is also influenced by **the policy cycle**, which includes the multiple rounds of debates and negotiations taking place at multiple governance levels (regional, national, EU), but is also informed by the attitudes of the involved policymakers. On the one hand, the development of the policy cycle determine the time constraints within which MSs should develop the CSP, as well as the introduction of new or increasing responsibilities for MSs. On the other hand, the outcome of the policy cycle (especially the outcome of policy negatiations) determines what is politically feasible for inclusion in the policy framework (e.g. whether certain requirements should be in the policy framework).

The scope of Tools4CAP (outlined by the dotted blue line in figure 6) covers the **policy capacity** (actual resources and capabilities) of the MSs, the **toolbox**, and the **emerging needs and gaps**. All the elements strictly related to the CAP reform process, the policy framework and political discussions and debates at MS and EC level, and the policy cycle and approval processes are out of the scope of tools for CAP.

The identified factors affecting the MS's choice of tools are further described in the following sections.

5.1.1. Policy framework

The intertwined dynamics of the EU and MS policy cycles result in consolidated and formally approved EU and National **policy frameworks**, which determines how the policy should be designed, monitored and evaluated. Yet, the final policy framework may be mediated by the actual political feasibility. **Political feasibility** is a measure of how well a solution to a policy problem will be accepted by a set of decision-makers and the general public (Bardach, 2005). Thus, political feasibility represents the spectrum of policy options, which can be enabled or constrained by target group support or opposition (Skodvin et al., 2010). Accordingly, the results of the design process need to be mediated by policymakers according to political and societal expectations.

The policy framework defined along the policy cycle covers all those legal requirements and technical frames that must be met to ensure the correct realisation of a policy, in this specific case, the CAP SP. The realisation of CSP fit for purpose can be defined as one reflecting the **legal requirements** and policy objectives identified as relevant through the CAP reforms. **Legal requirements** include for example increased environmental ambition, inclusiveness, or accountability. They also include defining quality standards of policymaking such as policy coherence and internal consistency (Erjavec et al., 2018). Besides, the policy framework also encompasses guidance and recommendations made by the EU to MSs to fulfil legal requirements such as developing a sound intervention logic. This, of course, influences the MSs' choice of the tools to be used.

For example, for the design of the CSP, MSs are required to provide an intervention strategy based on a sound intervention logic that should consistently and coherently reflect the socio-economic context assessment, the SWOT analysis, the assessment and the prioritisation of needs, the Ex-Ante evaluation of the CSP and strategic environmental assessment; and a broad stakeholder consultations. There should be external coherence with other policies as well. In addition to that, MSs are called to acquire new capabilities and implement SPs to ensure increased green ambitions, accountability, and external coherence with other policies. While for evidence based policy making, new tools are being developed and used to generate (scientific or empirical) evidence through the analysis of policies, either ex-ante or ex-post, to inform decision-making, hence underpinning evidence-based policymaking. The decision-making process should also be inclusive and transparent by including multiple actors.

On the other hand, when talking about CSP **monitoring framework**, **performance indicators**, **conditionality and requirements** are considered the two main factors, leading to an optimal monitoring of the CSP (European Commission, 2022c). There is an increasing awareness (or perception) that policies do not succeed or fail on their own merits. Governments are interested in how the policy process – especially the implementation phase – can be strengthened and supported (Hudson et al., 2019).

Public organisations worldwide are being growingly expected to deliver better results with fewer resources, this is also the case in the EU. By employing the appropriate tools and techniques of monitoring and evaluation, public organisations can ensure that "what is planned" becomes "what is achieved" (Ile et al., 2012). Policy tracking structures set up for the purpose normally aiming to fulfil three main functions (Hudson et al., 2019):

- performance monitoring: to track the progress against key policy priorities through the analysis of a constant stream of data;
- problem-solving: to identify whether additional resources or changes are needed to address specific problems;
- progress assessing: to provide government top-heads units/agencies with routine progress reports.

Such policy tracking rationale has been adopted, though re-adapted, in the EU. The last CAP reform (2023-2027) introduced remarkable changes in the approach to implementation and monitoring. In the first place, it brought a drastic shift from compliance-based (whereby MSs must demonstrate to comply with minimum requirements and conditionality) to performance-based monitoring and evaluation (by which MS must demonstrate to reach the planned targets). Secondly, the new CAP pushes towards increased (environmental) ambition compared to the previous programming period. It introduces new social and environmental policy goals, underpinned by new social and environmental conditionalities, that farmers need to comply with. Although high aspirations are meritorious,

these increase the complexity of the performance structures necessary to ensure accurate tracking. Thirdly, MSs are charged with new responsibilities requiring them to develop additional capacity. As for the design of the CAP SP, adapting to new responsibilities may represent a burden, at least in the short term, even though MS are granted more flexibility in their choices.

The PMEF is a new framework that replaced the CMEF for the 2023-2027 CAP period. It is composed of a set of elements, including common objectives for both CAP Pillar I and II, common indicators, quantified targets and milestones, and data management and reporting activities. The PMEF aims to demonstrate the achievements of the CAP and improve its efficiency through CAP indicators (European Commission, 2022b). According to Ehler et al. 2021, the design of indicators in the CAP influences the type of data needed to monitor them, and consequently the tools needed to collect this data (Ehler et al., 2021).

The PMEF moves away from mere rule compliance and toward achieving performance and tangible outcomes. This approach to delivery relies on a shared set of performance indicators. This set consists of output, result, context, and impact indicators. Output indicators are used for the monitoring of the CAP, there are 37 output indicators in total, out of which 35 are used for performance clearance (to link expenditure with the performance implementation) as well as monitoring, communication and evaluation. Result indicators (44 indicators are defined) are used for target setting and to monitor EU countries' progress towards targets (and overall to assess the CSP contribution to the CAP specific objectives). Context and Impact indicators are used for the multiannual assessment of the overall policy will rely on impact indicators (evaluation). Additionally, Context indicators provide information on the agricultural sector and rural areas as well as general economic and environmental trends (European Commission, 2023b). The definition of indicators at multiple levels of accuracy, for multiple purposes and with multiple actors involved in the data collection and assessment, implies that different tools might be needed to collect the necessary data. Thus, the definition of indicators influence the choice of the tools.

Besides indicators, **conditionality and requirements** of the CAP are a set of mandatory rules that all beneficiaries of the CAP must follow. These rules are known as "conditionality" in the new CAP and comprise of statutory management requirements (SMRs) and good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAECs) (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2020). Conditionality sets the baseline requirements for farmers in receipt of CAP payments and replaces the "cross compliance" requirements in the previous CAP. Conditionality relates to the climate and the environment, public health, animal health and plant health, and animal welfare. SMRs are legal requirements that farmers must follow to receive payments under the CAP. For example, SMR 1 relates to the conservation of wild birds and requires farmers to take appropriate measures to protect wild birds and their habitats on their land. While GAECs are environmental standards, for example, GAEC 1 relates to the protection of water and requires farmers to establish buffer strips along watercourses, protect wetlands and avoid overgrazing or burning of vegetation on their land. The compliance of CAP beneficiaries to the conditionalities and requirements is checked by the MSs, which demands complex infrastructures and processes. An example of that is the MSs' accreditation granting to paying agencies based on detailed criteria provided by the Commission which are based on the COSO (Committee of Sponsoring Organisations) framework. The CAP paying agencies then execute payments to beneficiaries and provide guarantees that the admissibility of claims and compliance with EU rules are met. They also perform administrative and technical support activities required to implement the CAP, including surveys and monitoring, audit and inspection measures, and the maintenance of agricultural accounting IT systems (European Commission, 2022c). MSs are required to check the beneficiaries' compliance to conditionality and other requirements. Here, again, the complexity of the conditionality and requirements influence the choice of the tools needed to track compliance.

Summing up, the policy framework determines, to a significant extent, the complexity of the MSs' tasks for the design and monitoring of the CSPs. The more complex or articulated the policy framework, the more the MSs' need for methodological or technological solutions (tools) to comply with their tasks; thus, the policy framework has a direct impact of the choice of the tools.

5.1.2. Policy capacity

Policy capacity is a crucial factor that can influence the choice of the tools for the design and monitoring processes (Wu et al., 2015; Pe'er et al., 2020). As shown in Figure 9, the five factors that constitute **policy capacity** for both CAP design and monitoring are**: financial resources, know-how and skills, data availability, operative capacity and technology, institutional culture, and distrust**.

Policy capacity is defined as the set of skills and resources—or competences and capabilities—necessary to perform policy functions (Wu et al., 2015). Such resources and capabilities can be distinguished in analytical, operational, and political, which are all relevant in translating broad policy goals into operational programmes and specific policy instruments. For example, effective design requires technical know-how to conduct practical policy analysis and disseminate knowledge, while leadership and negotiation abilities are additionally relevant for those in managerial positions. In government organisations, information mobilisation capabilities to enable timely and relevant policy analysis, administrative capital for ongoing coordination between policymaking agencies, and political backing all fundamentally build overall policy capacity. At the system level, effective policy design requires institutions for knowledge creation and utilisation, alongside mechanisms to coordinate across different levels of government, and overall trust and political legitimacy (Mukherjee et al., 2021; Mukherjee & Howlett, 2016)

On the other hand, policy capacity is essential for monitoring the progress of policy implementation and evaluating its effectiveness. Monitoring helps in identifying any gaps or shortcomings in the policy implementation and enables policymakers to take corrective measures. Policy capacity is also crucial in ensuring that policies can adapt to changing circumstances and evolving needs (Pe'er et al., 2020), it also ensures transparency and accountability in policy monitoring as it enables policymakers to establish clear mechanisms for data collection, reporting, and dissemination of information related to policy implementation and outcomes. This transparency allows stakeholders, including citizens, to have access to relevant information and hold policymakers accountable for the results achieved (European Commission, 2022a).

Starting with **financial resources**, their availability can affect policy capacity by enabling the acquisition of necessary technology, data, and personnel. In the case of CAP, the budget allocated to the policy can affect the capacity to monitor its implementation and evaluate its outcomes. For example, a lack of financial resources can limit the ability to collect and analyze data, which can hinder the ability to make informed decisions (Wu et al., 2015). **Know-how and skills** are essential for robust policy monitoring, exemplified by the CAP. CAP's effectiveness relies on skilled professionals for data collection, economic analysis, stakeholder engagement, legal compliance, and adaptation to evolving trends. Proficiency in technologies and legal nuances ensures accurate monitoring and alignment with regulations. The adaptive workforce's continuous learning fosters informed policy adjustments. These skills collectively ensure evidence-based monitoring, enabling timely responses to dynamic challenges and the achievement of policy goals (OECD, 2022). Meanwhile, the **availability of data** can affect policy capacity by enabling evidence-based decision-making. For example, data on agricultural production, environmental impact, and economic outcomes can inform policy monitoring and evaluation, and thus decision-making (Howlett, 2009). **Operational capacity** is a crucial factor in policy monitoring, influencing various aspects of policy capacity. Strengthening operational capacity enhances the implementation, data collection, evaluation, and adaptability of policies (Kim and Lee, 2021). In the context of the CAP, operational capacity plays a vital role in effectively implementing the policies outlined in the CAP, such as distributing subsidies and enforcing regulations. It also enables robust data collection and monitoring, allowing policymakers to assess the effectiveness of the CAP and make informed decisions (World Health Organisation, 2021). Additionally, operational capacity influences the evaluation of policy outcomes, facilitating rigorous assessments and identification of areas for improvement. When it comes to technology, its availability can affect policy capacity by enabling efficient data collection, analysis, and communication. Technologies such as remote sensing and geographic information systems can enhance the capacity to monitor the policy's impact on the environment. The development of technology can also enhance policy capacity. For example, the use of machine learning algorithms can improve the ability to analyze large datasets, which can enhance the capacity to make informed decisions (Wu et al., 2015).

Lastly, **(dis)trust and institutional culture** can also influence the choice of the tools. Institutional culture reflects the core values of the institution and the way people in the institutions are used to working and carrying out regulatory and policymaking procedures. Trust refers to the societal belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of public institutions. The lack or existence of trust can influence the way policymakers work and behave, including their choice of tools. For instance, stakeholders' distrust of public institutions can lead to a reduction in policymakers' confidence in

evidence-based policymaking, whereby policymakers could prefer political negotiations rather than the use of scientific tools.

External agencies can bring capacity to policy making. For example, private consulting companies can be involved in creating new monitoring tools that would help keep track of the effect that new policies are having. For instance satellite monitoring technology can be used to keep track of area-based aid. Furthermore, public universities and agencies can provide research, data collection and analysis. This can include data on agricultural production, land use, environmental impact, and socio-economic indicators. By analyzing this data, they can identify areas where the MSs is falling short of its targets and suggest ways to improve performance. This can help member states to make informed decisions about which measures to prioritise and how to allocate resources). Meanwhile, for external capacity in the design of the CSP, different stakeholders can be involved by offering their expertise in favour of the CSP design. For example, universities and public agencies can use their knowledge to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the plan and provide recommendations for improvement. Additionally, consultancies are also involved in the ex-ante and ex-post evaluations of the MS's CSP.

It is crucial to mention that policy cooperation is an important factor for policy capacity as it brings an added value. For example, policy cooperation can help different stakeholders share knowledge and expertise, which can enhance their policy capacity. For instance, cross-agency collaboration can help agencies learn from each other's experiences and best practices, which can improve their policy competencies. Additionally, cooperation between different agencies and governmental bodies can help achieve these objectives by sharing knowledge, resources, and best practices. In this regard, it is relevant the role of shared competencies, and how they are practically undertaken. For example, some articles of the CAP Regulation are under shared competencies, which can result in very different political dynamics among MSs. They way policies are designed and implemented under shared competencies also influence the choice of the tools, whereas policy cooperation is a crucial factor.

Morover, another factor that can also affect policy capacity is time availability or time constrain. The time left between the release of the final version of the CAP regulation and the set entry into force date of the CSP can limit the policy capacity ofMSs especially if the time is short. This, in turn, can influence the choice of the tools, because certain tools require time to be set up. This is the case, for example, of modelling tools (policy analysis tools), which require time for set up and calibration.

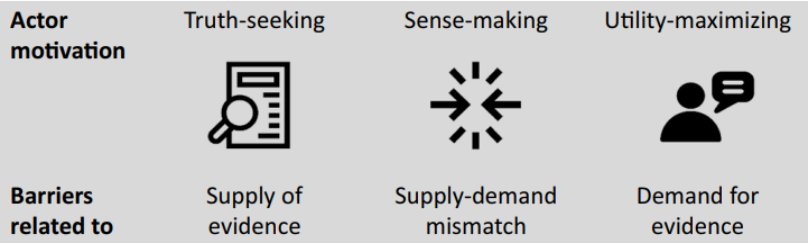
5.1.3. Policy cycle

The final design of the CSP evolves along the policy cycle, which takes place at both EU and MS level (see section 4.1). Within the policy cycle, political dynamics (such as political discussion and negotiations) take place. It might be the case that not all decisional phases are performed through the use of a tool, but the political discourse can enter into play. There are decisional steps critical for the definition of key features of the policy, which might be dealt with through a **political backroom dynamic**, i.e., through political discussion and negotiations (either internal to the governmental organisation, or among agencies). Here, again, the political backroom affects the choice of the tools.

As shown in Figure 9, under the political backroom, two types of factors can affect the tool's choice. The first one is the **type of policy makers**. According to El Benni et al. 2023, and as shown in Figure 10 ,there are three types of actors or policymakers who influence the impact of scientific evidence on polycmaking. The first type is truth-seeking actors who take decisions that are based on available scientific evidence in order to identify and select a pathway towards sustainable transformation. Science can support these actors by providing more and better evidence. The second is sense-making actors who integrate scientific evidence into their belief systems. Consequently, the impact of science on preferences depends on whether the results of an evaluation match the beliefs and knowledge of these actors.The third type is utility-maximizing actors, who use scientific results strategically for them to fulfil predefined interests, substantiate their preferences in political conflicts, and change others' perceptions.

Consequently, the choice of the tools also depends on the attitude of the policymakers towards evidence-based policymaking (El Benni et al., 2023). All three actor types must be considered for scientific evidence to affect policy designs and decisions. Evidence-based policy changes can only be expected if the strategic demand of these policymakers is met, that is, if evidence-based supply and demand match and if policymakers are interested in the necessary transformation (Hofmann et al. 2022). Because the tools for the design and monitoring of the CSP can produce scientific evidence to underpin policymaking (especially policy analysis tools), the attitude of the policymakers towards the use of scientific evidence can influence the choice of the tool. It should considered, however, that multiple types of policymakers can be involved in policymaking, whereas a policymaker can have different attitudes (truth-seeker, sense-maker, or utility-maximiser) depending on the policy context and decision).

Figure 10. Types of policymakers according to their attitude towards scientific evidence.



Source: adapted from Hofmann et al., 2022.

Policy negotiations are the second factor under the political backroom that influences the choice of the tool. More precisely, negotiated agreements involve policy changes that come about through consensus on a common policy by previously warring coalitions and in the absence of a major external or internal perturbation (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). According to Metz et al., 2020, policy changes coming from negotiated agreements are characterised by the actors' compromise at the level of secondary beliefs rather than by changes in the actors' policy core beliefs. Additionally, policy changes that come about through negotiated agreements are a partial policy success to most involved actors (Metz et al., 2020).

In the context of the CAP, policy negotiations take place at multiple levels, including international (e.g. WTO negotiations), EU (i.e. the trilogue, EU-MS dialogue), and MS level (i.e. negotiations between public agencies and governmental bodies, and with stakeholder groups). When it comes to the design and monitoring of the CSP, being of prominent MS responsibility, the policy negotiations occurring at the national level play a determinant role. Generally, it is often argued that CAP reforms are influenced by the desire of farm ministers and heads of state or government to avoid blame for unpopular decisions (Daubjerg and Swinbank, 2007). It is not unfrequent that political conflicts (often leading to protests and strikes) arise among governments and stakeholder groups, such as farmers' organisations, during policy preparation. Here, policymakers may opt for policymaking solutions that can facilitate the convergence of interests among groups of interests, and the policymakers. Besides, CAP reforms are highly complex and depend on particular contexts in which several institutional mechanisms interact, with the outcomes of these interactions not being entirely predictable (Erjavec and Erjavec, 2015). In these contexts, the reliance on political negotiations prevails over using more rigid methodological tools.

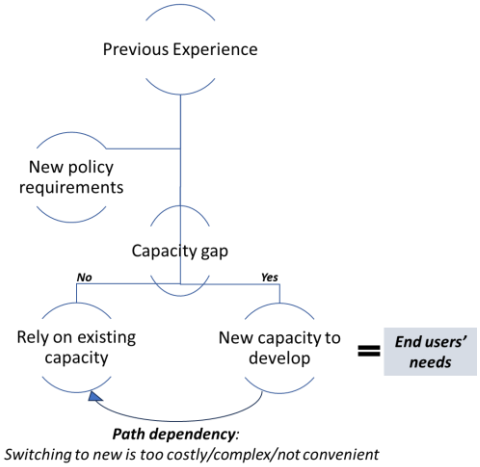
5.1.4. Capacity gaps and emerging needs

The new requirements and/or responsibilities that are introduced by the CAP reforms can represent a burden for the MSs, whereby there could be a **capacity gap** between capacity and resources needed to comply with new responsibilities and those that are available based on previous experiences and existing structures (Figure 11).

The selection of tools is inevitably affected by potential capacity gaps. An example of a gap concerns the case of the monitoring and evaluation framework of the CAP: existing structures and capacity might be inadequate to capture the environmental and social impacts of the CAP (Lovec et al., 2020), whereas available financial resources and know-how might be not sufficient to develop new capacity. Therefore, the capacity gap can be defined as the difference between the effort required by the MSs to satisfy the new policy requirements and the existing policy capacity. To some extent, policy managerial capacity can bridge the gap by developing new capabilities when possible (Mukherjee & Giest, 2019). It is plausible to assume also that, when existing capacities satisfy new requirements, policymakers replicate previous approaches and practices (**path dependency**) (Torfing, 2009), either because they proved successful, or because it is convenient compared to the complexity of elaborating new solutions. Switching to new tools, in fact, can be too costly, complex, or not convenient.

The mismatch between the new policy requirements and the policy capacity, that is the capacity gap, implies a need for the MSs to develop new capacity. More specifically, end users' needs refer to the resources and capabilities necessary to bridge the gaps and overcome the barriers that inhibit the usage of improved tools in the design and monitoring of the CSP. End users' needs varies significantly across MSs, as they rely on different governance structures, different actors involved, different CAP-governance experiences and approaches, and different infrastructure, technologies and expertise available now.

Figure 11. Conceptualisation of the potential capacity gap and end users' needs.



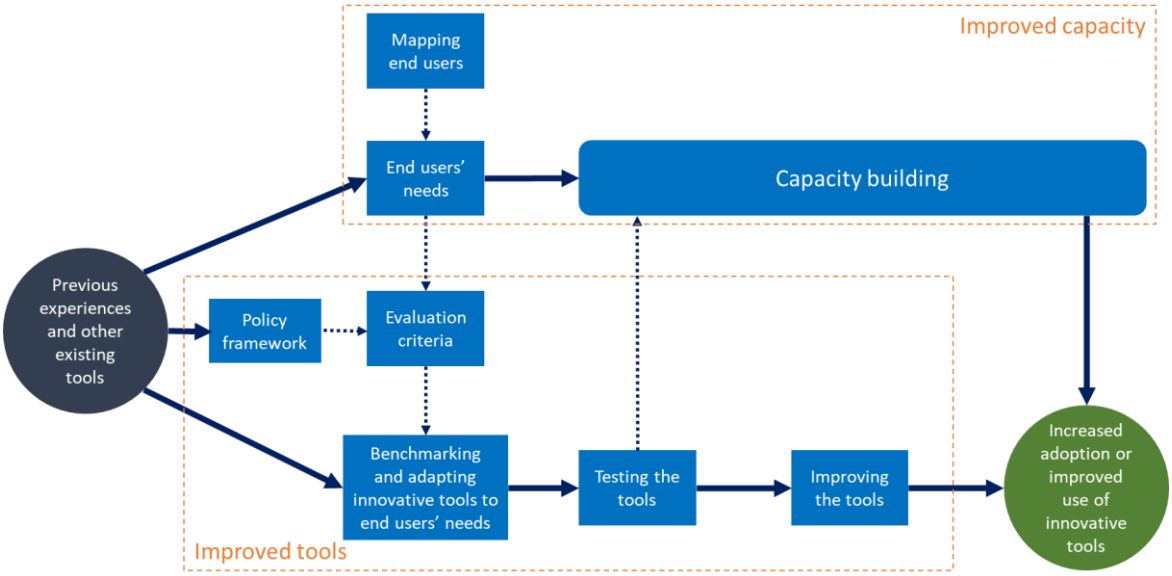
5.2. Tools4CAP Intervention Logic

The development of a specific intervention logic underpins the project coordination and support action, and guides the identification of relevant logical steps. The developed intervention logic identifies the key elements necessary to understand the logical steps to follow for the project's operationalisation, towards achieving the project's ambition to increase the adoption or improve the use of innovative tools in the design and monitoring of the CSP. In order to improve adoption and use of innovative tools, the project will leverage the capacity of end users on the one hand (capacity building), and provide a set of improved tools that MSs may adopt on the other hand. In particular, there are three focal areas defining the support action of Tools4CAP:

1) The identification, adaptation and testing of tools able to ensure that an optimal CSP is designed.
2) The enlargement of the array of potential tools (the toolbox) that can be used by, or replicated across, MSs.
3) The increased capacity of MS to comply with new responsibilities and requirements (or reduced potential capacity gap), including the identification and support of end users' needs.

Figure 12 below depicts the Tools4CAP intervention logic, where the increased adoption or improved use of innovative tools is the final goal to achieve.

Figure 12. Tools4CAP intervention logic.



The construction of the intervention logic relies as a first step on the stocktaking of previous experiences and available existing tools, i.e., the tools that are being use by MSs for the current CSP design, as well as other tools offered by science or employed in third countries. Understanding previous experience serves to (i) map the array of tools already in use, and (ii) outline the main successes and difficulties emerged (or expected in the case of monitoring). Learning about previous experiences allows for identifying the end users' needs, highlighting the most promising tools that can be further improved and/or replicated elsewhere (benchmarking), and defining the criteria to identify benchmark most promising tools.

Secondly, the intervention logic builds on the definition and mapping of end users, and the identification of their needs as for what regards the adoption of innovative tools. On the one hand, end users' needs allow for defining the potential gaps in policy capacity, hence to depict a capacity building strategy. The end users' needs, as well as the elements of the policy framework (such as policy capacities and policy requirements) underpin the definition of the criteria that would make a tool fit for purpose. In turn, such criteria can be used to benchmark the most promising tools to be further adapted for adoption across MSs.

Within the project, the adapted innovative tools selected will be tested in practical case studies. This will allow to provide further guidance to end users as for what regard the use of the tools (capacity building), and to define whether and how the selected tools can be further improved. As a result, a wider array of innovative tools, and increased end users' skills, will contribute to inmproved adoption and use of innovative tools.

6. Conclusions

The Tools4CAP project aims to support Member States (MSs) in designing and monitoring Strategic Plans (CSP), particularly in light of the challenges presented by the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The project will inventory and map various methods and tools currently in use or planned for use by MSs, including untapped scientific tools that could be beneficial. It will evaluate and benchmark these tools, adapting them for broader application across MSs.

This specific deliverable aims to provide a comprehensive view of the CSP design and monitoring process, and identifying key elements that need to be addressed within Tools4CAP. It focuses on understanding the factors influencing MSs' choices of tools, drawing on existing literature and expert insights. The deliverable will help identify tailored solutions for different MSs, promote the replication of best practices, and improve innovative tools. It lays out the project's intervention logic for achieving its objectives.

Under the New Delivery Model (NDM), MSs have the flexibility to design their own CSP within the framework of the new CAP. This leads to varied approaches influenced by differing needs, governance structures, and political dynamics. Key design activities range from context and SWOT analyses to stakeholder consultations and plan drafting. Three main aspects shape the CSP design: the sequence of activities, the actors involved, and the types of tools used. MSs had different governance structures, leading to diverse needs and varied feasibilities for implementing tools. Given the diversity of approaches, there is potential for improvement through peer-learning among MSs or by introducing new approaches.

Several factors affect the MSs' choice of tools for the design and monitoring of the CSP. These factors belong to three domains, namely the policy capacity of MSs which is strongly based on previous experiences, the policy cycle and the related political backroom, negotiations and policymakers attitudes, and the policy framework that includes all new qualification criteria, legal requirements and frameworks that need to be met for the design and monitoring of the CSP. However, the mismatch between the efforts required by the policy framework and the actual policy capacity of the MSs can lead to capacity gaps, which in turn can affect the choice of tools. The gap can be bridged, to some extent, by developing new capacity. End users' needs, which vary across MSs, are the focus of Tools4CAP, which aims to provide the resources and capabilities needed to bridge these gaps.

The deliverable outlines the intervention logic of the Tools4CAP project, aimed at improving the adoption of innovative tools in the design and monitoring of CSP through, on the one hand, improving tools, and on the other hand, improving end users' capacity. The intervention logic relies on understanding previous experiences and identifying end users' needs to build capacity and set criteria for tool selection. Practical case studies will test the chosen tools to provide further guidance and potential improvements, ultimately contributing to wider adoption and better usage of innovative tools.

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