

# Unlocking the legume economy

EU policy considerations for legume production and consumption

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# Climate mitigation in agriculture: problem definition



Insufficient integrated **planning** at MS level



Barriers to the **uptake** of emission reduction practices



Complicated monitoring, reporting and verification (**MRV**) systems

# Barriers to cultivation of high protein crops



- Lock-in by major EU crops
- Revenue-related profitability barriers
- Cost-related profitability barriers
- Limited capacity, ability, willingness





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# Incentivising climate action for a sustainable and competitive agri-food value chain

Study for DG Clima

Partners: Trinomics, IEEP, Wageningen University Research, Ricardo

# Boosting finance for certified on-farm climate mitigation activities



Stronger alignment of CSRD reporting with CRCF rules



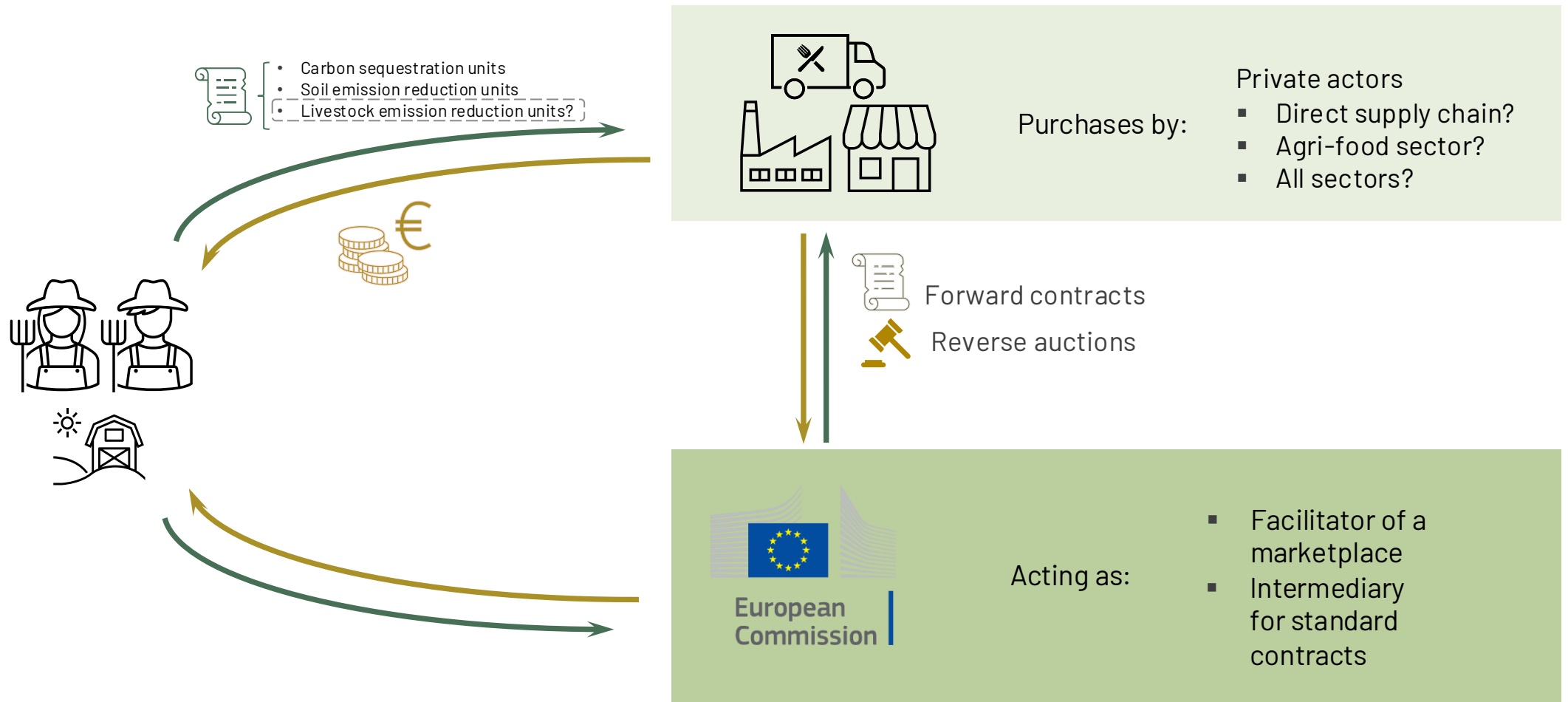
Public procurement of CRCF units



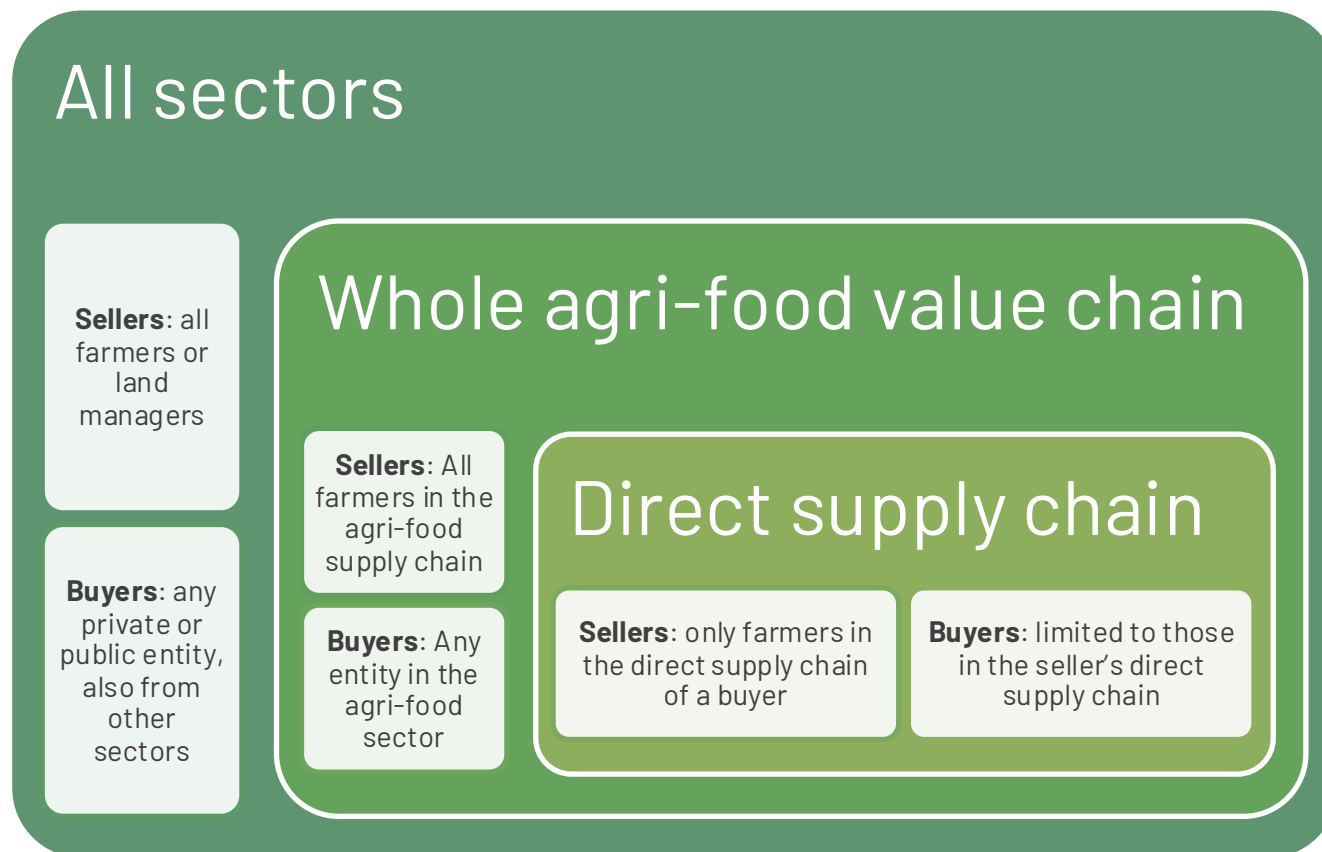
Facilitation of forward contracts for CRCF units by public authorities

# Policy options

## CRCF Procurement



# Design choices for trading CRCF units



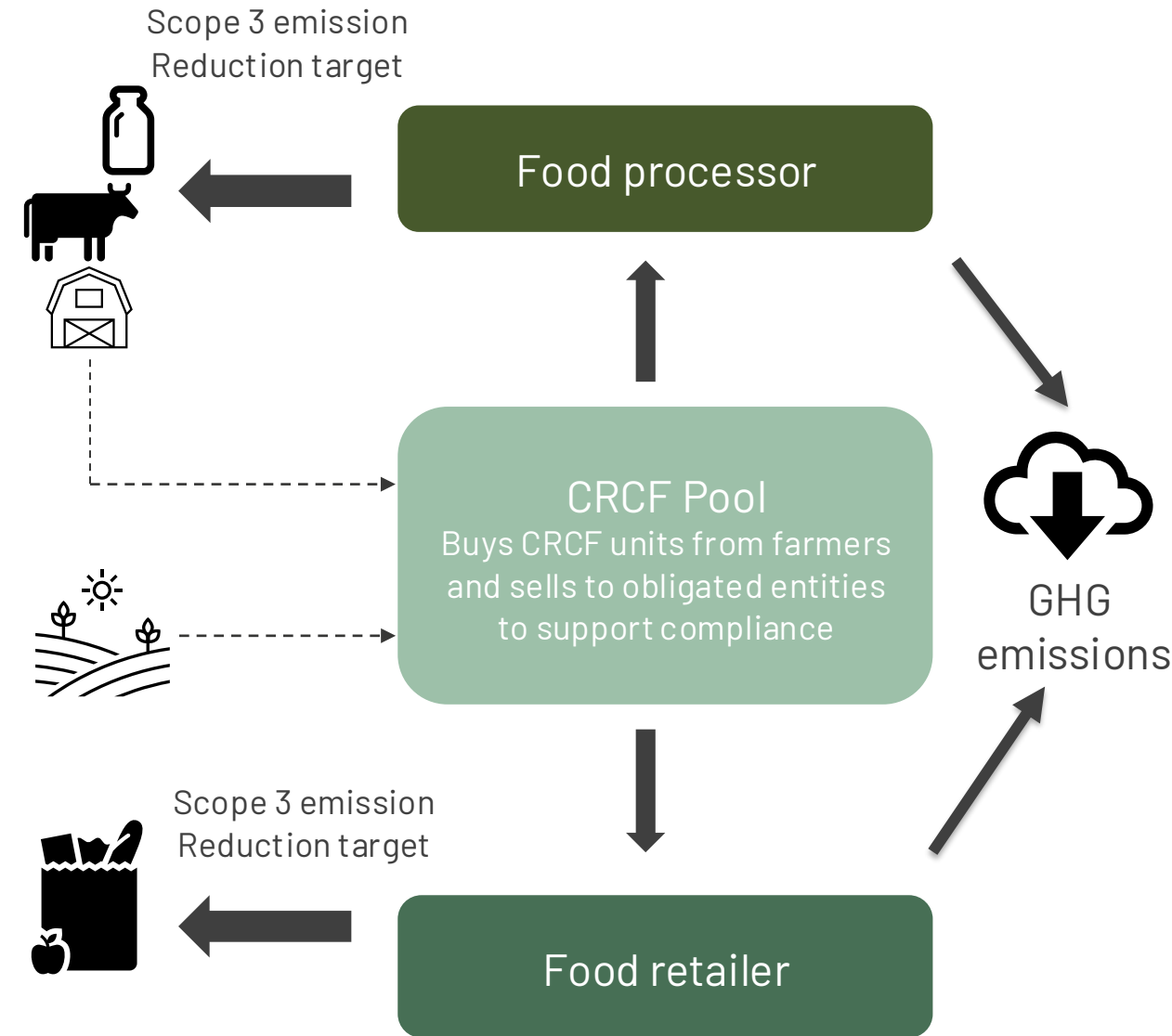
Centralised pool

Separate contracts for food and carbon delivery

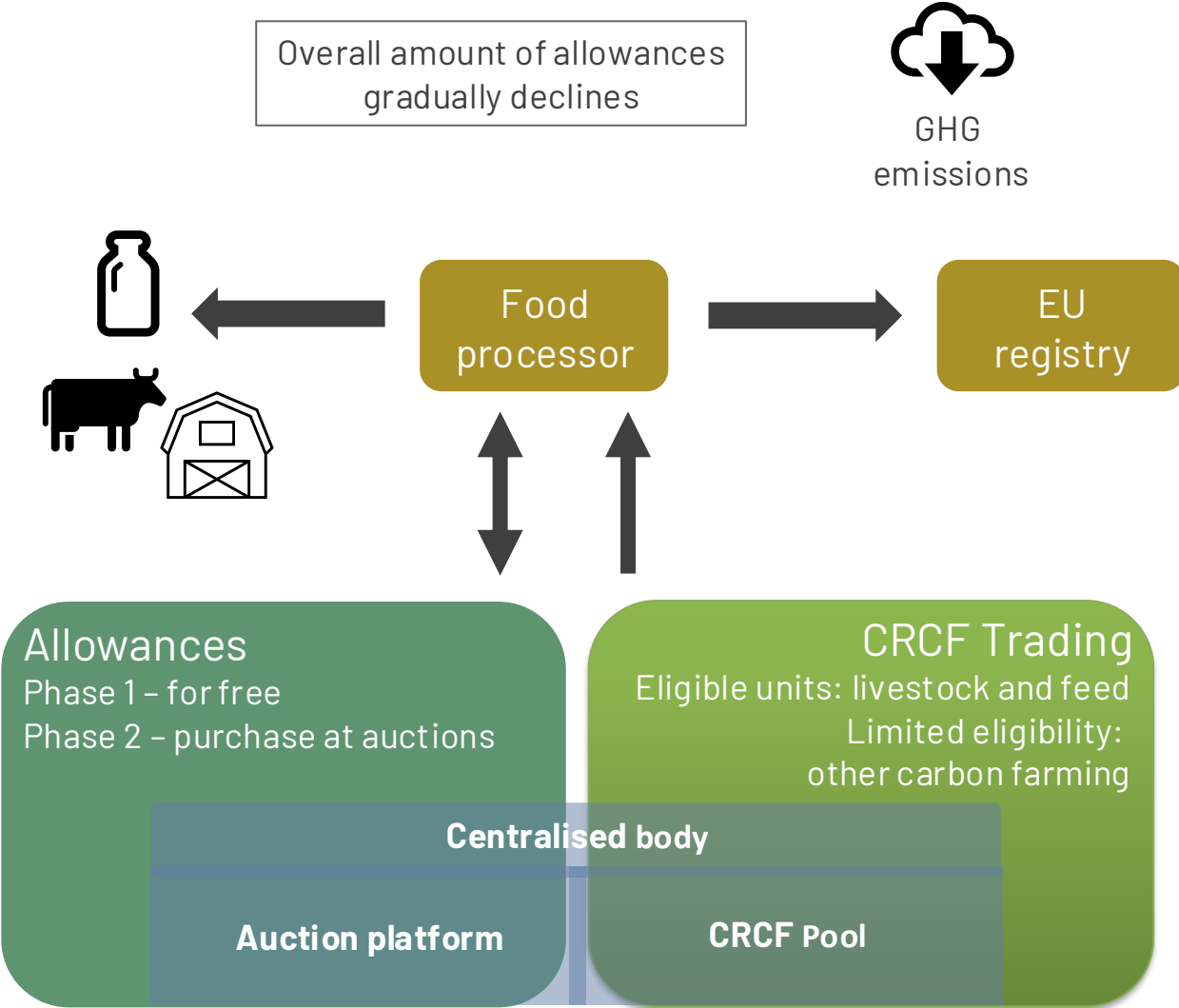
Contracts for both food and carbon delivery

# Policy Options

## Mandatory Climate Standard



## Emission Trading System





# Downstream levers

- Supplier engagement and incentives: contracts, finance, insurance, performance requirements
- Product portfolio and innovation: diversification, plant-based options, reformulation
- Consumer-facing levers: information, placement, pricing, marketing





# Key Enabling Factors



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## Knowledge & advisory

- Challenges
  - Access to knowledge unevenly distributed across the EU
  - Relatively low public budget allocations
  - Transfer of knowledge into practice lacking
- Potential enablers
  - New governance mechanisms – stronger role for the public sector?
  - Advisor training and capacity building



## Financing

- Challenges
  - Unmet credit demand exacerbated by rising input costs and extreme weather
  - Significant barriers to accessing finance for new entrants/young farmers
  - Growing demands on public budgets
- Potential enablers
  - Clarity over direction of travel and policy certainty
  - Just transition finance
  - Public-private finance



## Transaction costs: MRV

- Challenges
  - Fragmented landscape of sustainability and accounting standards
  - Costs of data provision to different stakeholders
  - Allocation of emission reductions to value chain actors
- Potential enablers
  - Standardised digital MRV system → benchmarking
  - Decision support
  - Data provided once for multiple stakeholders and purposes



## New value chains

- Challenges
  - Existing infrastructure and traditional value chains not always fit for purpose
  - Lack of stable demand and infrastructure
- Potential enablers
  - Targeted development of markets and infrastructure
  - Public procurement
  - New forms of organisation





## Policy consistency

- Better alignment between Common Agricultural Policy and climate ambition
- Ensure downstream actors support mitigation through reporting in Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive
- Develop emerging benchmarking systems



## Addressing consumer demand

- Sustainability labelling to understand footprint of products
- Public procurement guidance and minimum requirements/targets to make plant-rich food the default option
- Fiscal tools at Member State level to make low-emissive foods more affordable

# European protein diversification: growing opportunities for farmers

2025 report by IEEP





## Profitability drivers for farmers to diversify to legume cultivation

- Increase legume crop revenues by raising legume demand, producer prices and yields
- Reduce or compensate legume crop diversification switching and opportunity costs

# Policy recommendations



Develop an EU protein diversification strategy



Redirect CAP funds to de-risk and reward crop diversification initiatives by farmers



Support diversified value chains with a strong position for European farmers



Leverage research and establish an innovation cluster



Balance plant-based demand



Improve access to finance



# Resources

- Study for DG Clima
  - Workshop 1 – policy options: [Input paper Recording Report](#)
  - Workshop 2 – effectiveness: [Input paper Recording Report](#)
  - Workshop 3 – competitiveness: [Input paper Recording Report](#)
  - Workshop 4 – cohesion: [Input paper Recording Report](#)
  - Workshop 5 – enabling: [Input paper Recording Report](#)
- IEEP Report on European Protein Diversification
  - [Report Event](#)
- IEEP How farming in the EU can benefit from plant-based protein
  - [Brief](#)



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