



Taighde, Idirphlé, Comhairle
Research, Dialogue, Advice

Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use

NESCC Report Number 162

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Overview

1. Background.
2. Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use Research and Report.
3. Reflections on Agroforestry.
4. Conclusion.



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Background



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NESCC Membership

The Council

- Chairperson – Department of the Taoiseach
- Business & Employers (3)
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions (3)
- Farming & Agriculture (3)
- Community & Voluntary (3)
- Environment (3)
- Public Service (4)
- Independent Nominees (8)

NESCC is the national advisory body to the Taoiseach and the Irish Government, providing research, dialogue and advice that helps achieve Ireland's sustainable economic, social and environmental development.

Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use

NESC was asked to consider just transition in agriculture and land use.

- × Not an exploration of what emission reduction targets should be.
- × Not an identification of new approaches or measures for mitigation.
- ✓ Explored how to achieve targets in a way that is socially inclusive, economically viable and environmentally sustainable.
- ✓ Explored the range of mitigation measures from social, economic and environmental perspectives, including farmer attitudes to barriers and enablers for wider uptake.
- ✓ Aimed to ‘walk the talk’ and focused on both process and outcomes, establishing a stakeholder group and engaging directly with farmers in an 18-month project.
- Developed an integrated framework of interventions, embedded in the four principles of just transition, to support uptake of measures to meet mitigation targets.



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Research: process and findings

Considering Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use

What is just transition? Fair process and fair outcomes. Four principles.

Just transition in the agriculture and land use sector should reflect characteristics that make it different to just transition in other sectors, such as energy.

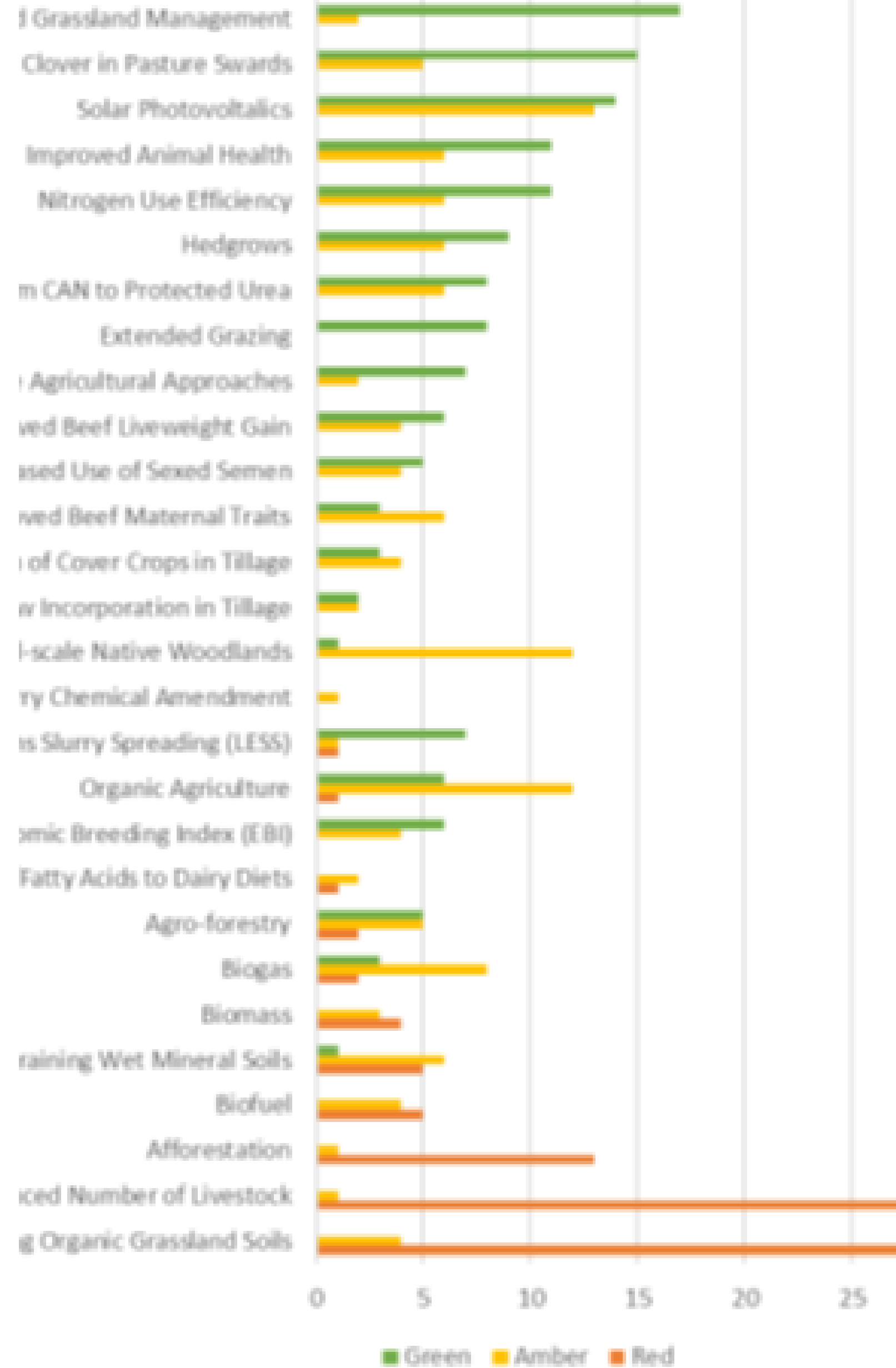
- Complexity of the Agriculture and Land Use system: multiple transitions, uncertainty.
 - Individual farmers and small businesses.
 - Geographically dispersed rather than specific region, regional differences.
 - Cultural and social significance of land and agricultural practices.
- Agriculture can increasingly be part of the solution.
- Not a transition out of agriculture but a transition into making optimal use of land.

Tullamore - SF

1. Potential Soil and Land Management Measures

Reduced Fertiliser Use	
Nitrogen-Use Efficiency (NUE)	Orange, Orange, Green
Inclusion of Clover in Pasture Swards	Orange, Green, Orange
Switching Fertiliser Formulation from CAN to Protected Urea	Green
Draining Wet Mineral Soils	Red
Organic Agriculture	Green, Green, Orange
Regenerative agricultural approaches	Green
Slurry Chemical Amendment	
Low Emission Slurry Spreading	Green
Improved Grassland Management	Orange, Green
Re-wetting organic grassland soils	
	Red, Red, Red, Red, Red, Red, Red, Red, Orange

Workshop Exercise: assigning 'green', 'amber', 'red'



Tullamore - SF

1. Potential Soil and Land Management Measures



Workshop Exercise: assigning 'green', 'amber', 'red'





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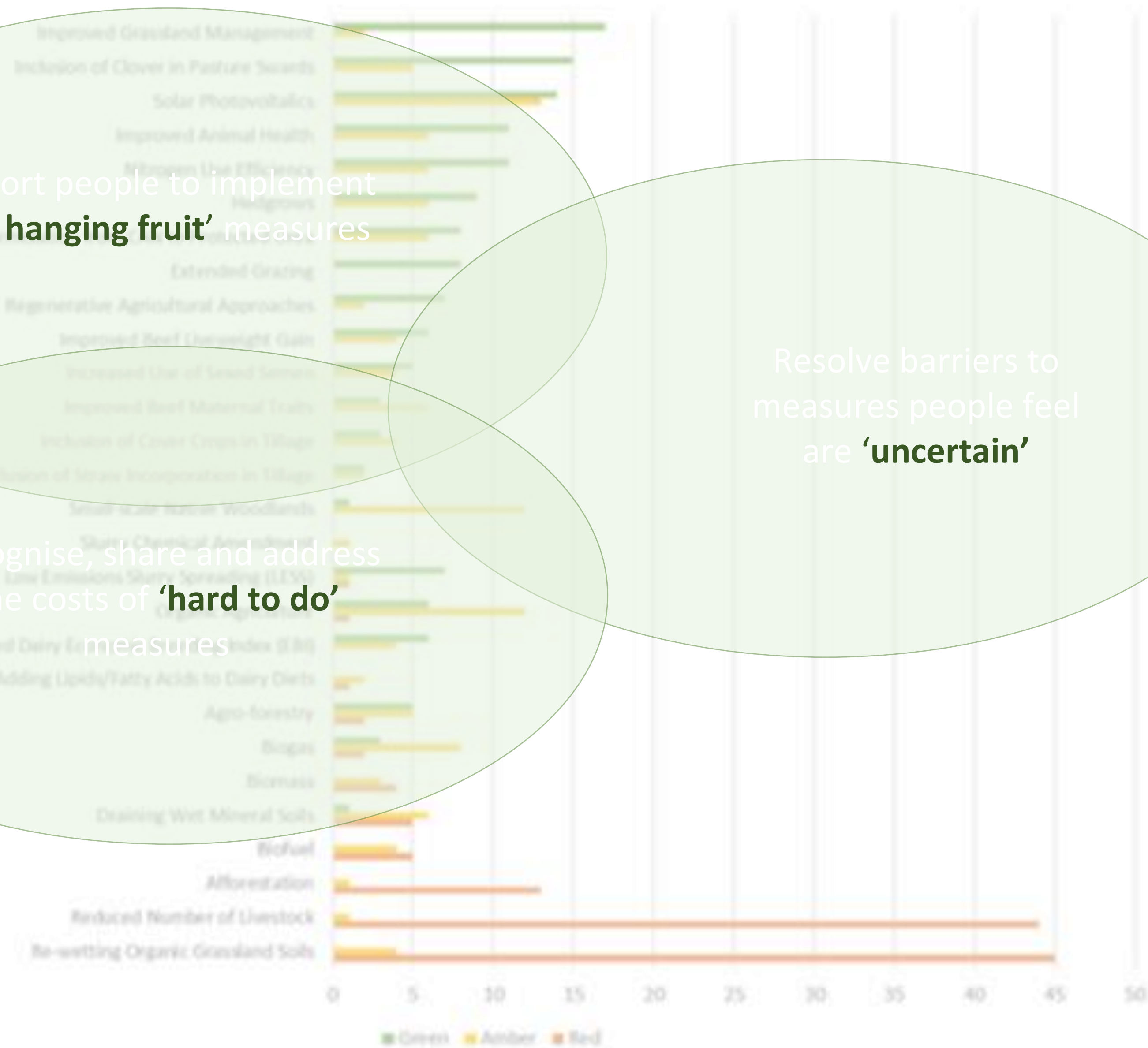
Framework and recommendations

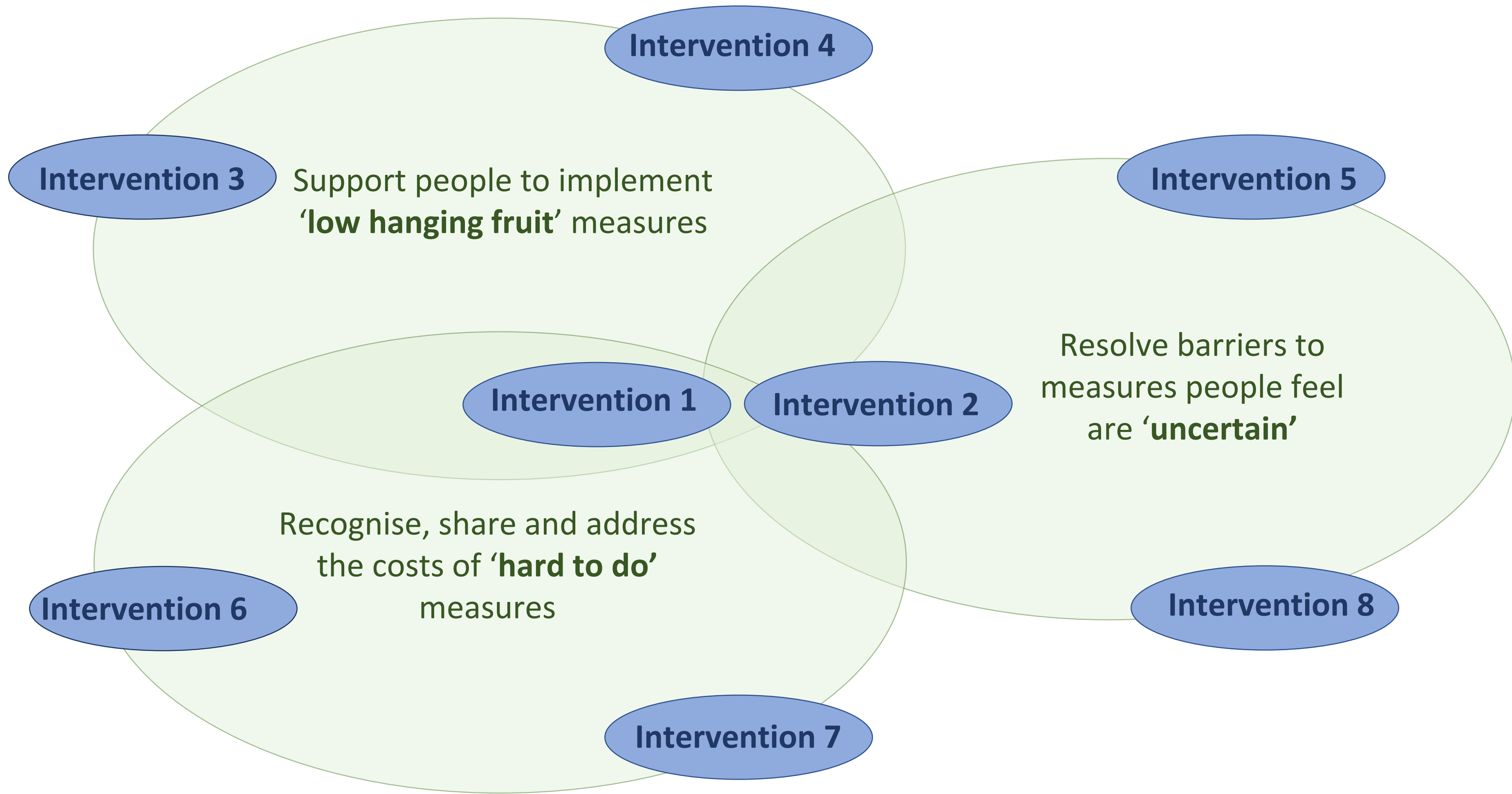
Results of Workshop Exercise: assigning 'green', 'amber', 'red' dots to measures

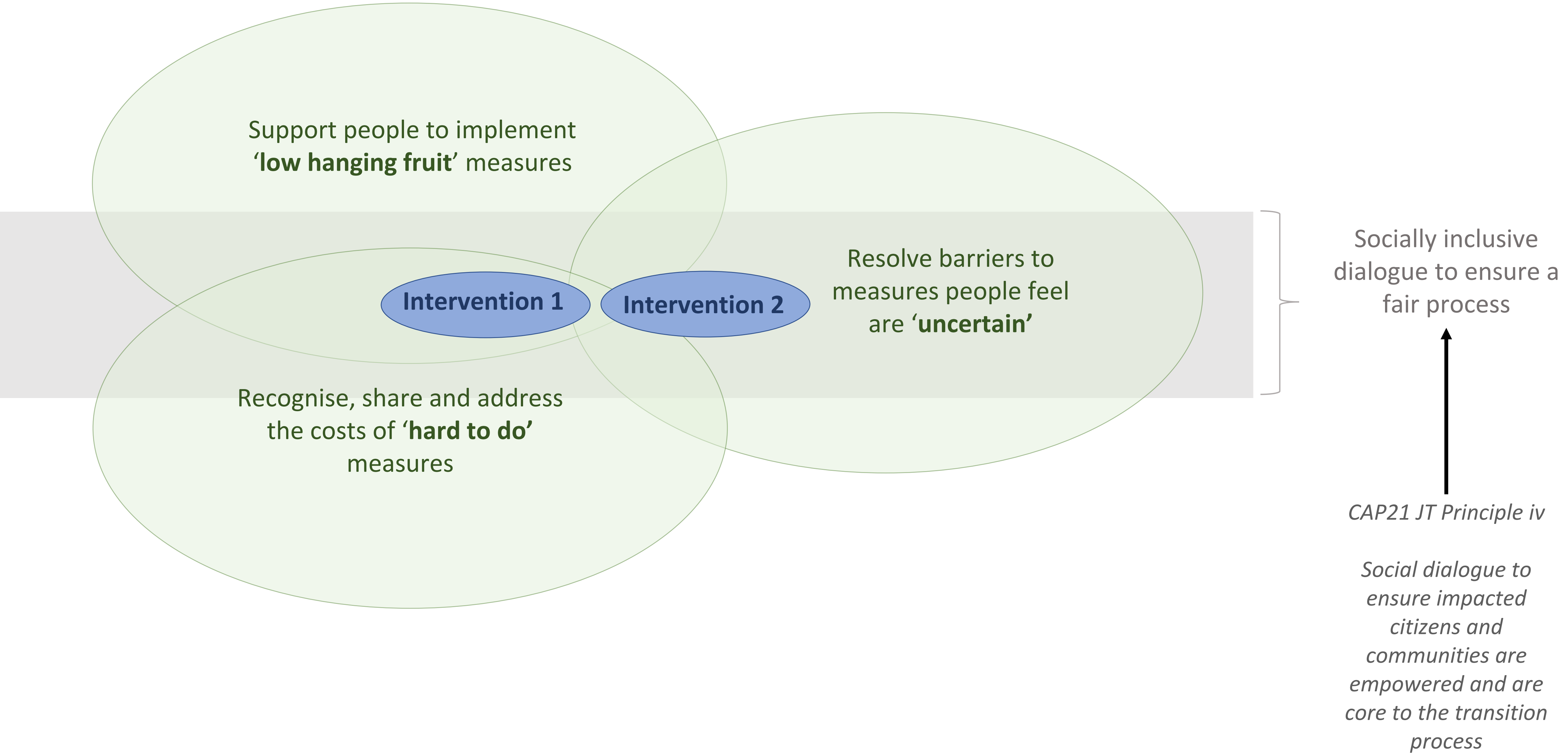
Support people to implement
'low hanging fruit' measures

Recognise, share and address
the costs of **'hard to do'**
measures

Resolve barriers to
measures people feel
are **'uncertain'**

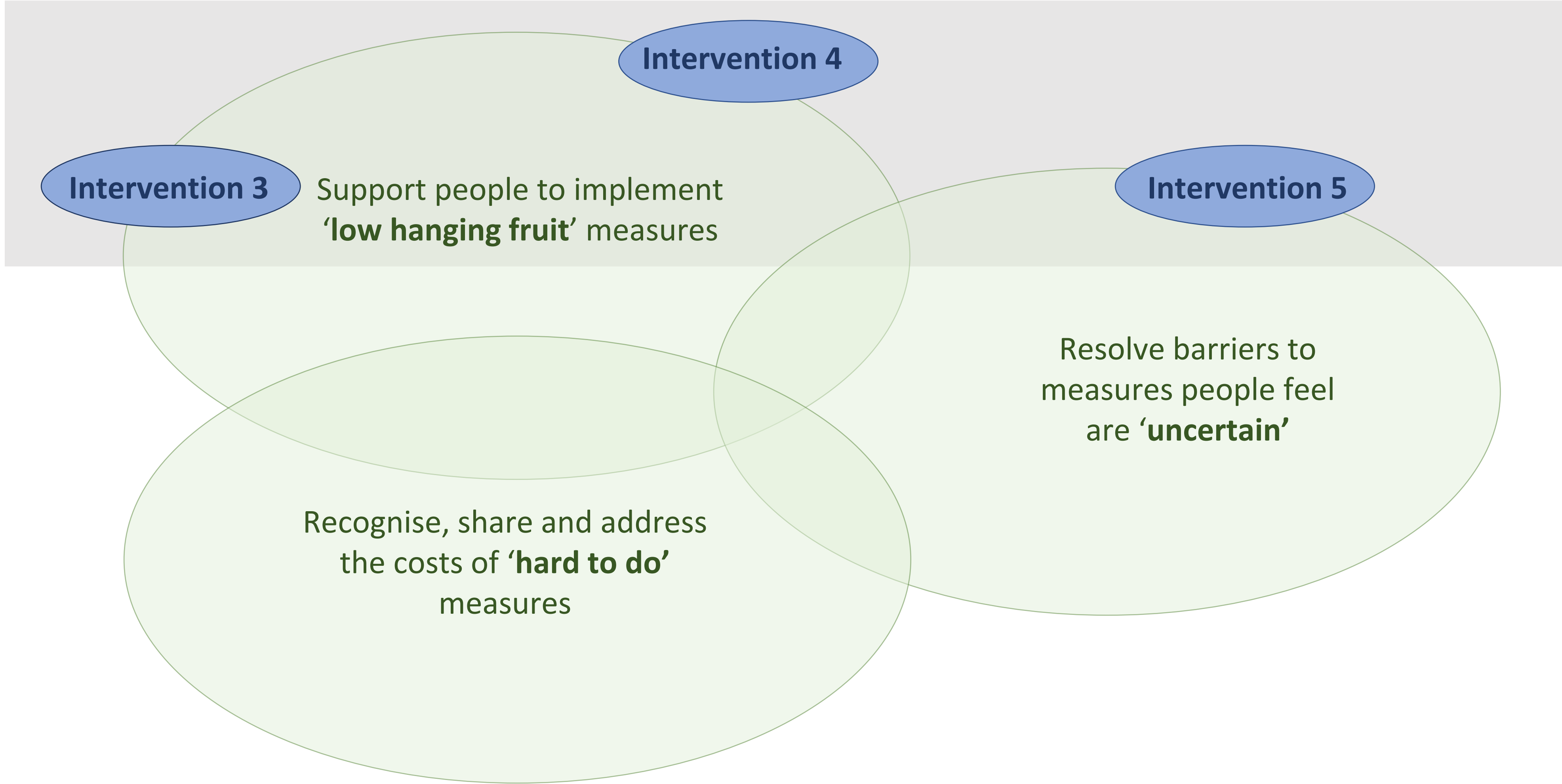






Enhancing Socially Inclusive Processes

- The Council recommends that a deep and wide process of further engagement with stakeholders should be undertaken in order to build a greater sense of shared direction for transition in the agriculture and land-use system.
- The Council recommends that a strand of shared island collaboration and dialogue should include a focus on climate and agriculture, and just transition in particular.
- The Council recommends building on local and context-specific participation and experimentation in order to ensure that approaches that have been impactful at the local level are successfully scaled up nationally.



Intervention 3

Support people to implement
'low hanging fruit' measures

Intervention 4

Recognise, share and address
the costs of **'hard to do'**
measures

Intervention 5

Resolve barriers to
measures people feel
are **'uncertain'**

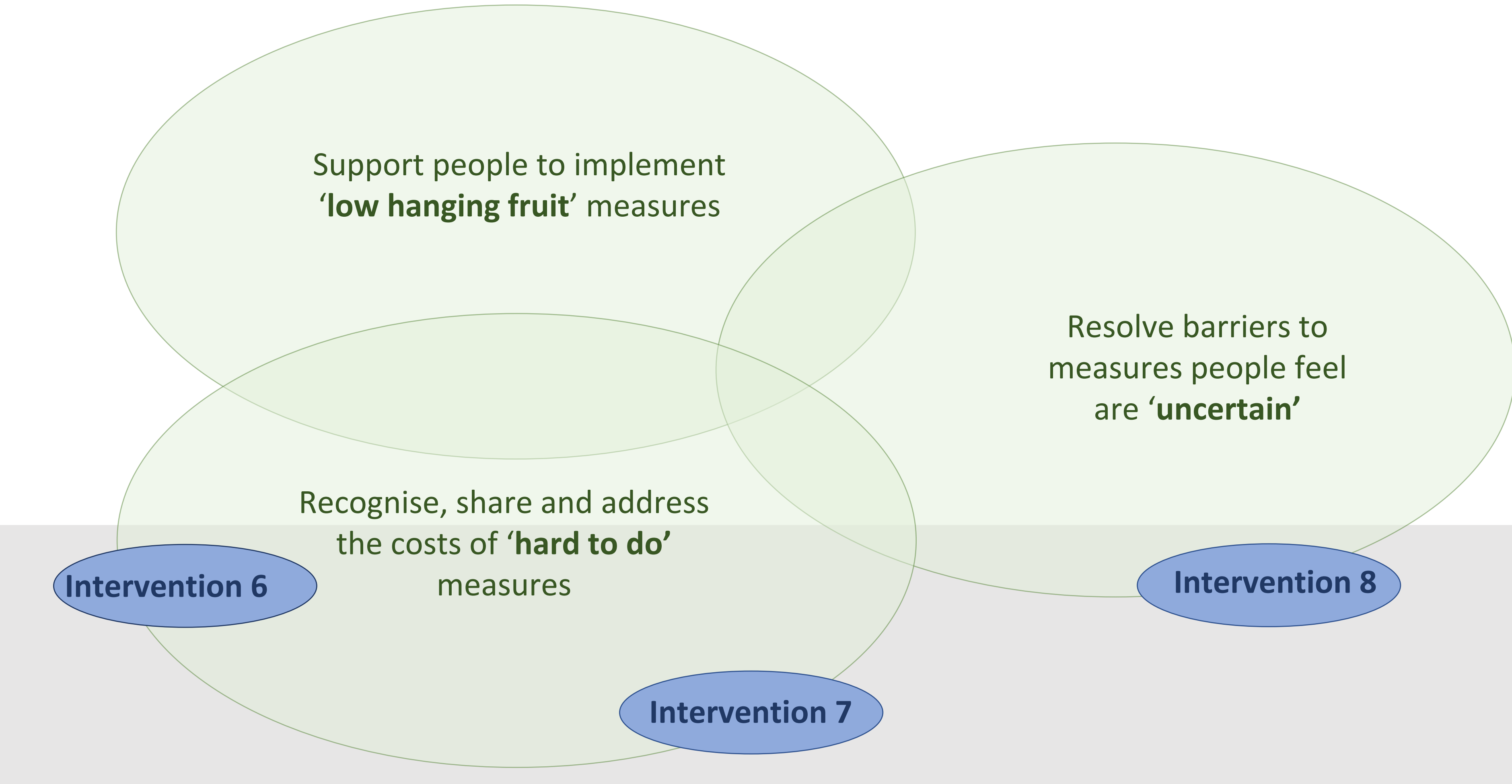
Enabling people to benefit
from the opportunities of
transition

↑
CAP21 JT Principle ii

*People are equipped
with the right skills
to be able to
participate in and
benefit from the
future net-zero
economy.*

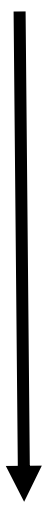
Enabling People to Benefit from the Opportunities

- The Council recommends that farm advisory services should scale up and more fully align with environmental objectives and ensure that bespoke ecological expertise can be provided at farm level.
- The Council recommends that more research is needed on the opportunities and implications of transition for workers in the supply chains and downstream activity associated with agriculture and land use.
- The Council recommends that work on accounting for nature should be accelerated. This is an area where NESC can play a role and work is already underway.
- The Council, while recognising the importance of current schemes, recommends that the financial resources available from EU, public and private sources to reward farmers for protecting and enhancing ecosystem services should be significantly increased.
- The Council recommends further work to reduce uncertainty around diversification options experienced by farmers and other stakeholders.



JCAP21 T Principle iii

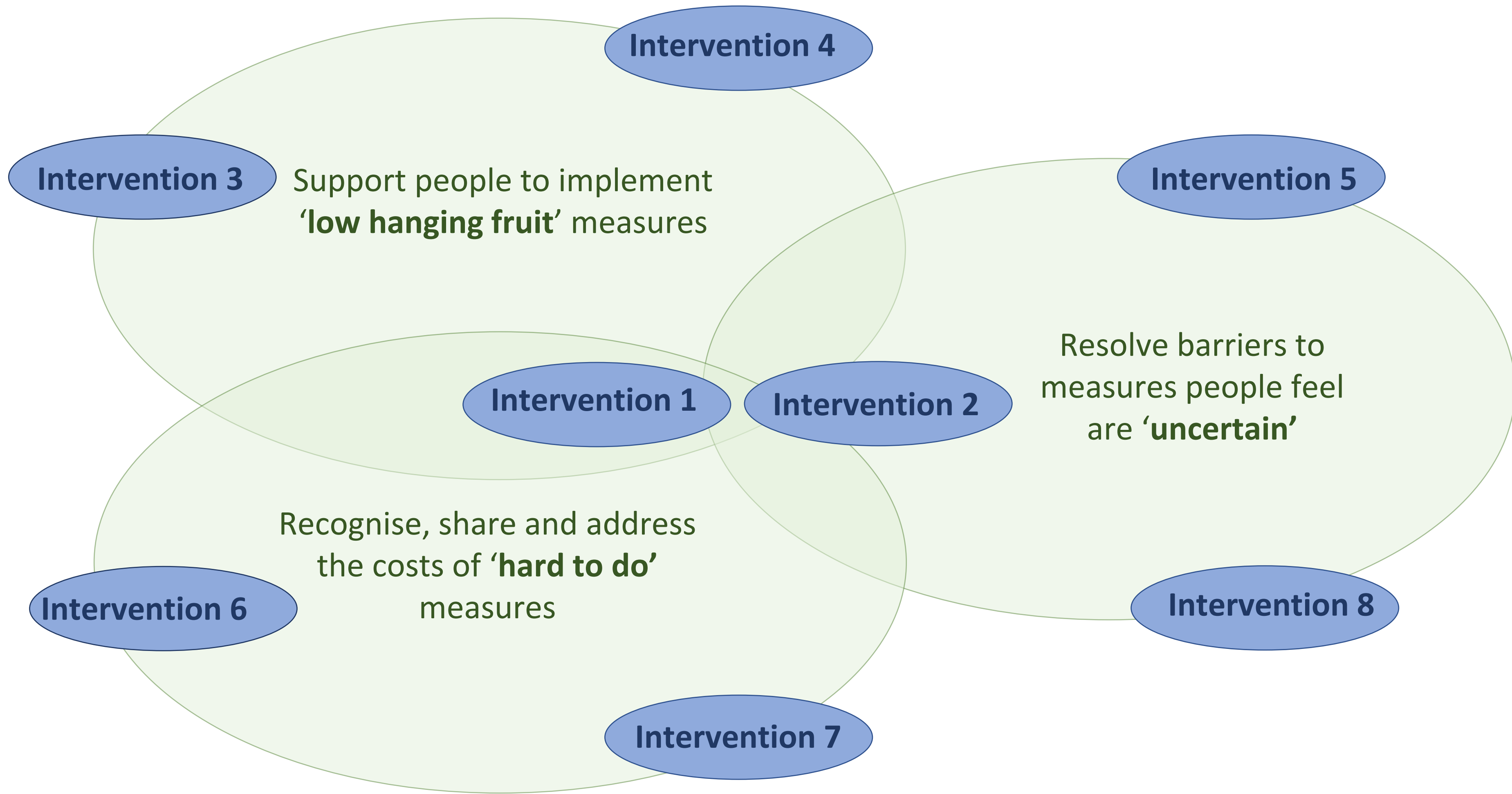
Costs are shared so that the impact is equitable and existing inequalities are not exacerbated.



Mitigating and sharing the costs to ensure equitable distribution of impacts

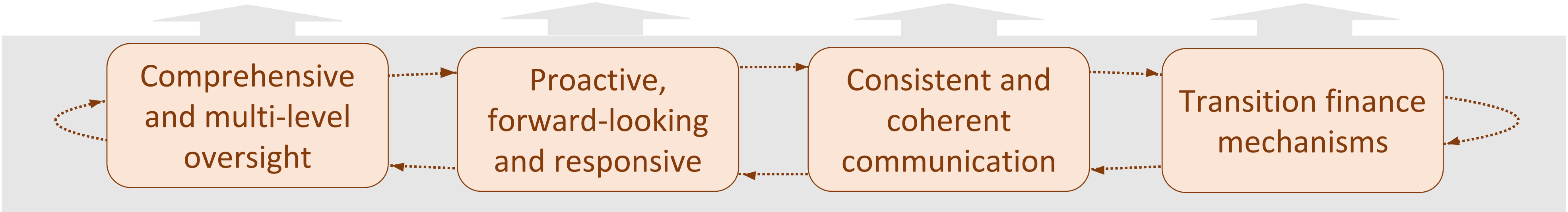
Share and Mitigate the Costs of Transition

- The Council recommends developing a strategy for effort sharing based on additional investment in research, data, evidence and monitoring of the distributional impacts across the agriculture and land use sector.
- The Council recommends that the strategy for effort sharing (Recommendation 16) should also be informed by new research to consider existing and potential effort-sharing mechanisms across the agriculture and land-use system.
- The Council recommends that more robust standards and certification should be developed to support effort sharing along agriculture and land use supply chains.
- The Council recommends that an examination of the spectrum of supports for those vulnerable to transition in agriculture should be conducted and progressed to ensure that no one is left behind.
- The Council recommends more robust screening of policies and measures of transition in agriculture and land use, and greater compliance with regulations, to avoid unintended consequences.



CAP21 JT Principle i

An integrated, structured, and evidence-based approach to identify and plan our response to just transition requirements.



Coordinating action to drive ambition & ensure an integrated, structured, evidence-based approach

Coordinating Action & Driving Ambition: The Council recommends:

1. ...establishing an Implementation Group for Climate Transition in Agriculture in 2023 in order to consider the recommendations arising from this report.
2. ...that NESC's work on just transition in agriculture and land use should inform and shape the next stages in the development of the Land Use Review.
3. ...the agriculture and land-use transition should be a focus of current and future dedicated climate communications work.
4. ...that the agriculture and land-use system should be a priority focus for just transition of institutions, processes and resourcing in Ireland, notably in the work of the forthcoming Just Transition Commission, which should be established as soon as possible.
5. ...the establishment of a Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use fund, consolidating available carbon tax revenues and other public resources.
6. ...applying a just transition lens to climate adaptation in agriculture, forestry and other land use.
7. ...a wide scope in the monitoring of transition, including economic, social and environmental aspects and data at local scale in support of place-based transition.



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Reflections on Agroforestry

Supporting agroforestry as an opportunity in transition

- The research focused on how to achieve a Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use.
- A key message: an opportunities-led transition is vital for enabling people to benefit from transition.
- Agroforestry has significant potential with environmental, economic and social benefits.
- Key interventions to enable the wider uptake include:
 - Scale up and align advisory services with environmental objectives – including bespoke ecological expertise at farm level.
 - More research on opportunities – including on agroforestry.
 - Accelerate work on accounting for nature – better data on ecosystem services provided by agroforestry.
 - Financial resources from EU, public and private sources to reward farmers for protecting and enhancing ecosystem services should be significantly increased – rewarding the enhanced environmental outcomes arising from agroforestry.
 - Further work to reduce uncertainty around diversification options experienced by farmers and other stakeholders.