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Biowaste, bio-economy and circular economy: experience of Flanders

Sofie Bouteligier – OVAM – Public Waste Agency of
Flanders

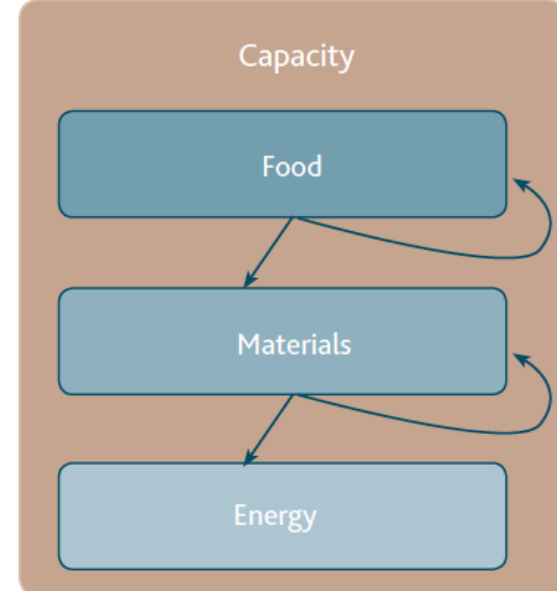
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Background: Vision and strategy



- ▶ **Approved by the Government of Flanders in July 2013**
- ▶ **Interdepartmental Working Group for the Bioeconomy (°2012)**
- ▶ **7 starting points:**
 - Bioeconomy: necessary because of major societal challenges
 - Bioeconomy: an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable economy
 - Transition required in order to make switch to an economy based on renewable raw materials



- Biomass as a factor in the energy mix
- Available biomass streams will be used according to an accepted cascade
- European strategy and action plan for a bioeconomy serves as a framework
- Learning from cooperation opportunities and inspiration from the strategies of other countries and regions

Why close biomass(residue) cycles?

- ▶ **Transition from fossil-based to bio-based economy**
- ▶ **Biomass and biomass residues have multiple functions in sustaining ecosystems and their services**
- ▶ **Biomass is a renewable but scarce resource**
- ▶ **Multiple sectors want to use biomass and biomass residues**
 - Agriculture
 - Wood and paper industry
 - Chemistry
 - Energy sector
 - ...
- ▶ **Sustainable production and consumption needed due to multiple functions, scarcity and time dimension**

From vision and strategy to action

▶ **Food & food waste**

- Interdepartmental Working Group (°2011)
- Study: Food losses throughout the chain (2012)
- Declaration of commitment Together against food losses (2014)
- Roadmap Food waste (2015)

▶ **P**

- Flanders' Nutrient Platform (°2011) & European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform (°2013)
- Business cases

▶ **Biomass residues action plan**

- Focus on 3 sectors: agriculture/food; nature management & public space; wood from industry and households
- Prevention, separate collection, recycling, energy (synergies with Flanders' 2020 RE-goals)
- Stimulating involvement of stakeholders by giving responsibility for elaborating actions

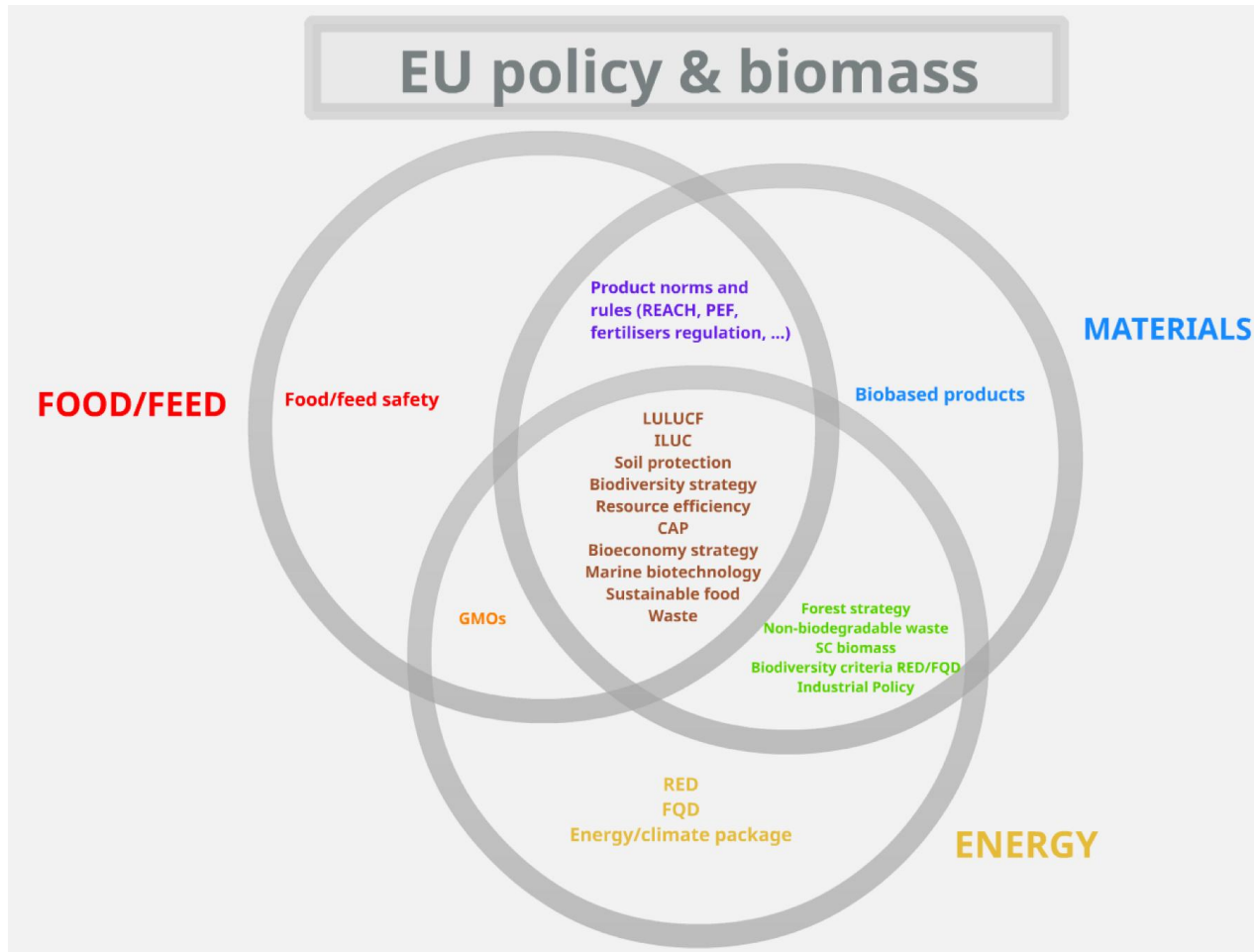
▶ **Renewed policy on household waste and similar industrial waste (2016)**

- Intensifying and expanding separate collection of biowaste

Challenges

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

Need for a coherent EU framework



Need for a coherent EU framework

- ▶ **Several DGs develop relevant policies, but policies are not aligned – Circular economy approach offers a way forward**
- ▶ **Various important policy initiatives are on hold – uncertainty about future policy initiatives**
- ▶ **Strong incentives in one policy domain affect policies and policy development in other domains – no level playing field between sectors**
- ▶ **Market creation and market distortion: without coherent EU framework multiple difficulties can be foreseen**

Useful links

- ▶ **Bioeconomy in Flanders. The vision and strategy of the Government of Flanders for a sustainable and competitive bioeconomy in 2030**

<https://www.vlaanderen.be/nl/publicaties/detail/bioeconomy-in-flanders>

- ▶ **Food losses**

<http://lv.vlaanderen.be/nl/voorlichting-info/publicaties/studies/voedselverlies>

- ▶ **Flanders' Nutrient Platform**

<http://www.vlakwa.be/initiatieven/nutrientenplatform/>

- ▶ **Draft biomass residues action plan**

<http://www.ovam.be/afval-materialen/specifieke-afvalstromen-materiaalkringlopen/biomassa/openbaar-onderzoek-van-het-ontwerp-van-actieplan-duurzaam-beheer-van-biomassareststromen-2015-2020>



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Vlaamse overheid
Openbare Vlaamse
Afstofstoffenmaatschappij
Stationsstraat 110
2800 Mechelen
T: 015 284 284
F: 015 203 275
www.ovam.be
info@ovam.be



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