

Drivers of food security

DG AGRI.A-1 (European Commission)

Civil Dialogue Group “CAP Plans and Horizontal matters”

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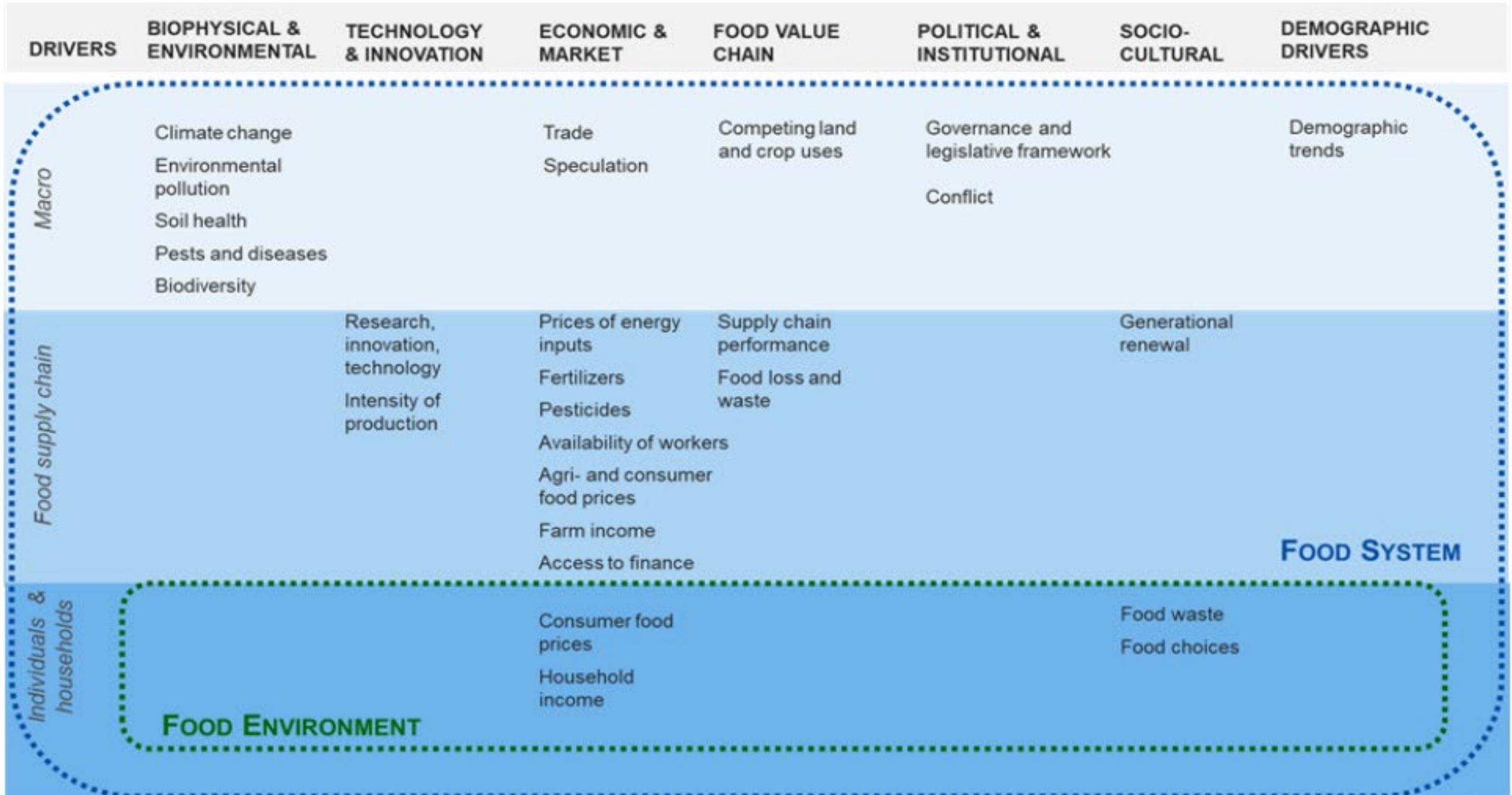
Drivers of food security (SWD (2023) 4 final)

- Publication on the 4/1/2023
- Objective of the Staff Working Document: analysis based on existing studies and recent data, with the aim to provide an overview of the drivers of food security in the context of the current energy crisis and the war in Ukraine.
- Two oral consultations (19/10 and 14/11/2022), including the **European Food Security Crisis preparedness and Response Mechanism** (with stakeholders, Member States and MEPs)
- **This analysis does not constitute an impact assessment of a legislative proposal.** In line with better regulation guidelines, any new Commission proposal will be based on a specific impact assessment.

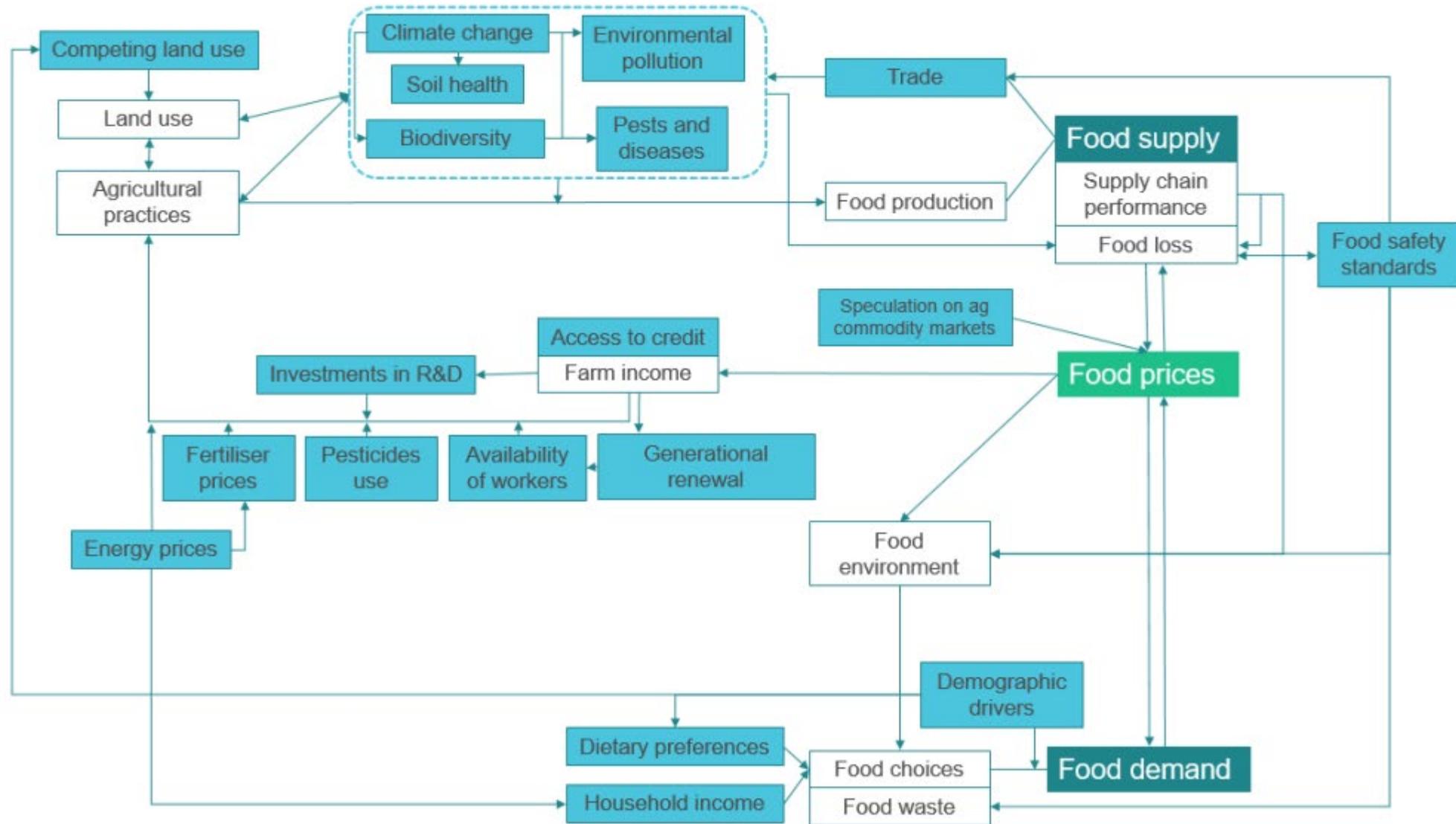
General framework

- Methodologies and definitions previously used by international bodies: food security is approached taking into account its four dimensions used by FAO and widely accepted since the World Food Summit in 1996: **Food availability, Food access (affordability), Utilisation and Stability.**
- **Conceptual framework to structure the many drivers** follows previous analysis developed in 2017 by the **High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition** of the **Committee on World Food Security**
- Analysis focussed on issues that are especially relevant for ensuring **EU food security** today and tomorrow and for each of the drivers there is a brief section on the international dimension.

Conceptual framework of the SWD Drivers of food security (SWD (2023) 4 final)



Interlinkages between the drivers of food security in the EU (SWD (2023) 4 final)



General assessment (I)

- The availability of food is not at stake in Europe today, but the affordability of food is a growing concern for an increasing number of low-income households.
- Availability, access (affordability), utilisation, and stability cannot be taken for granted in the short or the long term, and some of these drivers may become risks for food security and expose vulnerabilities in our food system, if not properly addressed.
- Current pressures on production costs and producers' income in a context of a growing decline of the farming population need to be taken into account to guarantee production capacity.

General assessment (II)

- **Production is also facing increasing pressure on natural resources** (water scarcity, pollution, decreasing soil fertility, and air pollution), biodiversity and pollinators decline.
- The energy crisis confirms the need to move away from fossil fuel-based fertilisers; and extreme climate events urge cutting emissions and scaling up nature-based approaches.
- If not duly addressed with urgency, we will not be able to provide food to an increasing world population.
- While chemical/synthetic pesticides contribute to stabilising yields in the short-term, their use and risks needs to be progressively and smartly reduced to avoid detrimental effects on the utilisation and stability dimension of food security in the mid- to long-term, while preventing further environmental degradation.
- **Access (affordability) dimension:** special attention needs to be paid to low income households that are not able to access diverse, healthy, and nutritious food due to the expected persistence of high levels of food prices and high energy prices in a context of low economic growth or even recession in some countries in the short-term.

Consistency in policy required...

- The ability to ensure food security in the long term requires consistent policy interventions that reinforce sustainability and resilience of the food system.
- But **policy interventions alone cannot deliver success**: scaling up the share of best practices, disseminating the most advanced techniques and technologies as well as actively involving all actors across the value chain are critical!
- **Concentrations of power upstream and downstream** have reduced efficiency and fairness of food supply chains, with primary producers and consumers bearing the costs.
- A **well-functioning food system** that also integrates in the value chain environmental/health externalities will require action in particular by empowering consumers.

International dimension

- Although mainly oriented towards the export of high value-added food products, the EU also plays a major role in supplying staple food, such as wheat, to import-dependent third countries, in particular developing countries.
- In an increasingly interconnected world, **there is a need to ensure effective multilateralism, support diversification, increase market transparency, and avoid trade-restrictive policy measures.**
- Leading by example, using its **internal market and its global trade relations and partnerships to leverage global standards**, the EU can promote ambitious food systems strategies through partnerships across the world.

Conclusion

- Costs of inaction hugely outweigh the costs related to the transition: bold and decisive action is needed at all levels: the transition to a sustainable and resilient food system should continue to guide the EU's political and policy agenda.
- A consistent and comprehensive implementation of the **European Green Deal**, including the **Farm to Fork, Biodiversity and other relevant strategies**, should help the EU secure a sustainable, inclusive and resilient food system within a realistic timeline and with necessary support instruments.
- The **Common Agricultural Policy**, in particular, as well as the **Common Fisheries Policy**, will remain instrumental to support the EU's farming and fishery communities, including in the transition towards a more sustainable farming and fishery model.

Thank you

Document available at:

https://commission.europa.eu/publications/analysis-main-drivers-food-security_en