



Transition pathways to sustainable and equitable water governance in Europe

Workshop

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and Innovation



GOVAQUA

Workshop context

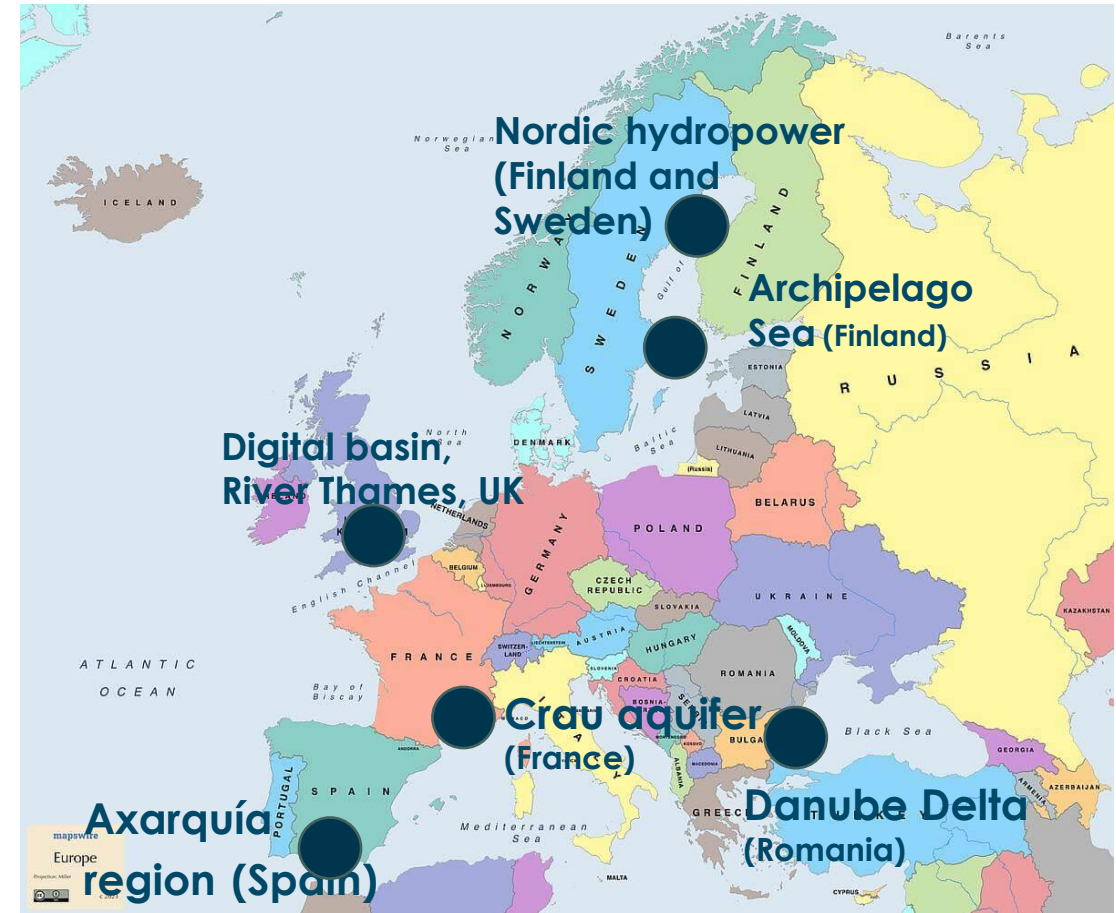
- Part of event series organised jointly with GOVAQUA and EUROPE-INBO, with contributions from InnWater and RETOUCH NEXUS Horizon Europe projects
- *Active engagement with the INBO river basin management community to advance sustainable and equitable water governance in Europe*



Latest developments

- Self-assessment tool
- Living Labs and Case studies
- Good practices
- Online Academy

Good practice case	Status of work
User based reallocation in agriculture (France)	● Ongoing;
Quantitative water resource management plans (France)	● Ongoing;
Planned conjunctive management of surface and groundwater (sub-national level)	● Not started;
Priorisation procedure for implementation of ecological minimum flows in a river network highly regulated for hydropower (Austria)	● Ongoing;
Hands-off flows to support river flows in dry conditions (England)	● Ongoing;
Public-access monitoring and controlling system of defined ecological flows (Spain)	● Not started;
Governance and regulation of international value chains of companies through legislation that adopts due diligence and liability-based approach (France)	● Ongoing;
Governance and regulation of international value chains of companies through legislation that adopts due diligence and liability-based approach (Germany)	● Ongoing;
The role of soft law in governing water stewardship (EU)	● Ongoing





Govaqua Transition Pathways

Jani Lukkarinen

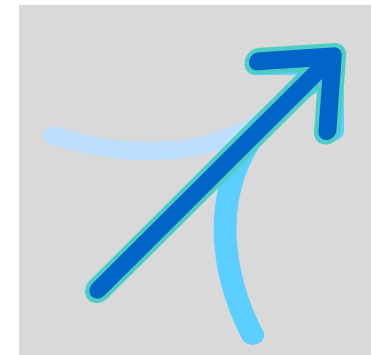
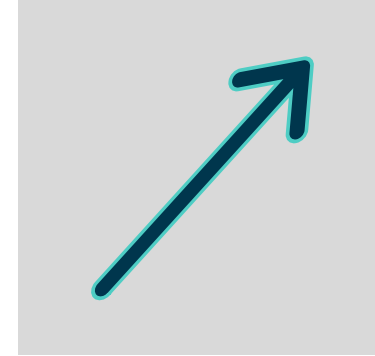
Transition pathways

- Transition pathways have become a popular way of trying to explain how a system moves towards a more sustainable state - from “A to B”.
- Not a single action will work, but a mix of different solutions is needed.
- We build on four types of governance innovations from case studies and living labs:
 - i) Legal and regulatory instruments;
 - ii) Economic and financial instruments;
 - iii) Participatory and collaborative approaches;
 - iv) Digital solutions and information sharing



Three uses of transition pathways

- **Evaluation Pathways:** Quantifiable pathways to measure progress on a predefined scale.
- **Alternative Pathways:** Show the variety of actions and a range of responses to the identified challenges.
- **Desirable Pathways:** Normative pathways showing a range of interventions needed to achieve the specific goal.



Different approaches to transition pathways

- **Modelling** the impact of innovations to provide estimations of future developments.
- **Co-creating** from different stakeholder perspectives and knowledge types to develop innovations in unsustainable contexts.
- **Experimenting** with different innovations to evaluate opportunities and constraints for future pathways.
- **Conceptualising** pathways to develop a deeper understanding on societal change dynamics.

In GOVAQUA...

- We focus on "**desirable water governance transition pathways**" based on experimentation.
- We aim to develop ideal pathways based on insights from **case studies, good practices and Living-Labs**.
- We are working on **three types of transition pathways**.

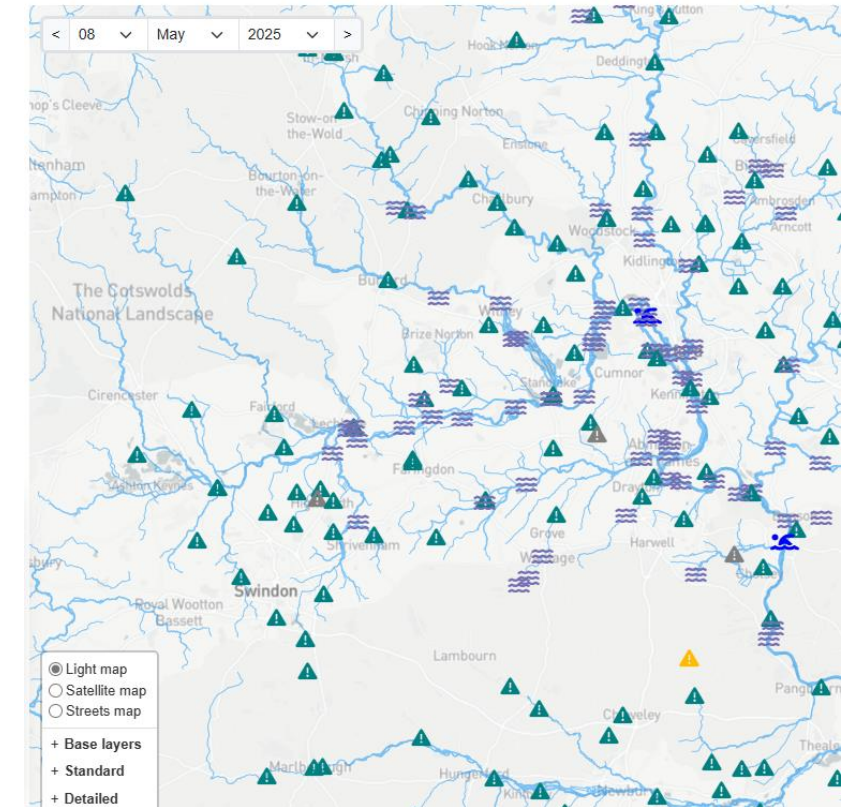
OUR GOAL: Not to come up with simplistic lessons, but to study how innovations might work or not.



Innovation-driven pathways

- Innovations developed and tested at **catchment/basin level**.
- **Examples:** Digital tools and collaborative approaches.
 - ✓ **Testing** novel approaches in local, practical settings
 - ✓ **Learning and replicating** experiences from other settings
- **Lessons on:** How to make innovations stick and travel to new contexts
 - ✓ All insights on what kind of information and insight you find relevant are very welcome.

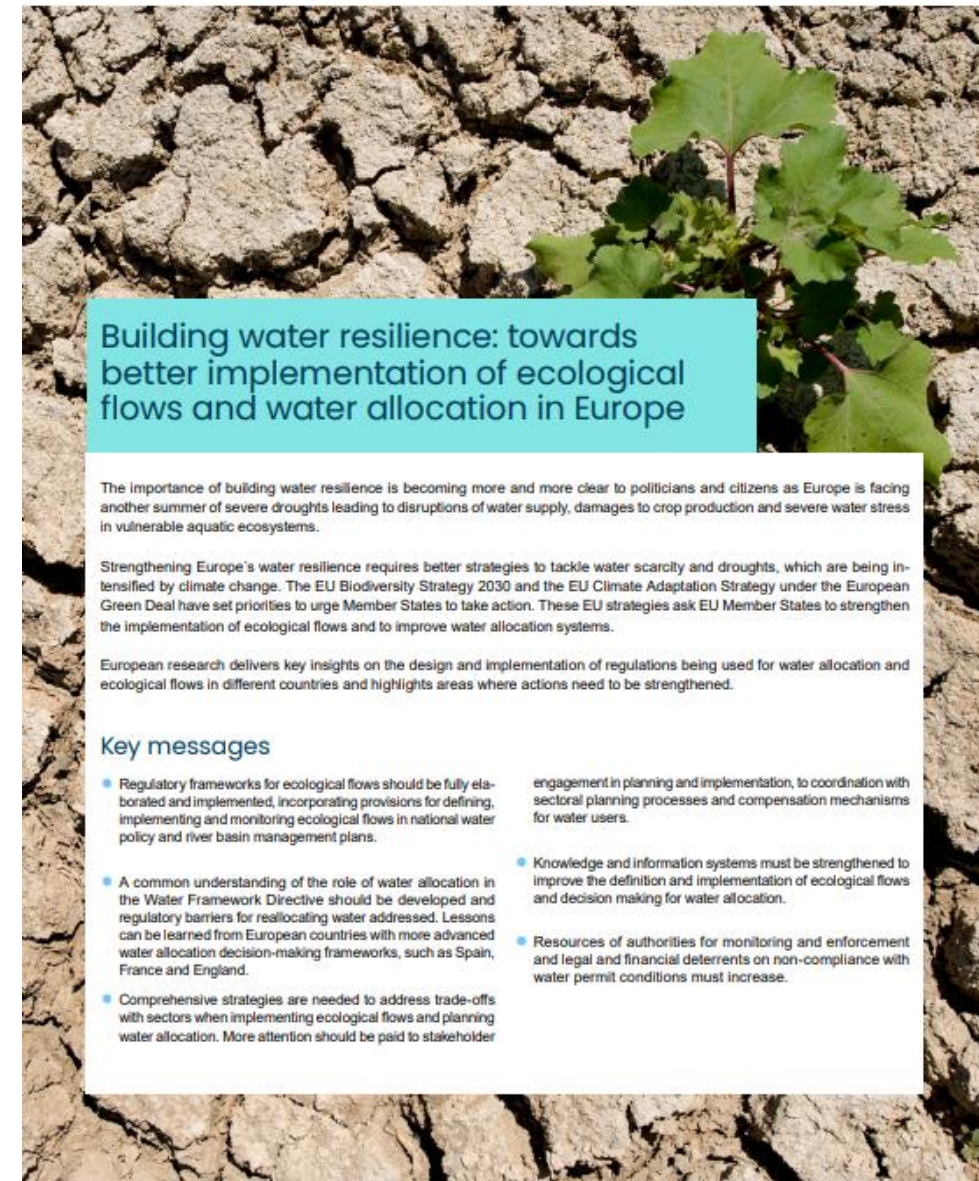
Oxford Rivers Data Portal



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Policy-driven pathways

- Innovative approaches through **legal and economic incentives**.
- **Examples:** Ecological flows and efficient water allocation.
 - ✓ **Enhancing the conditions** for sustainable water use
 - ✓ **Phasing out** the harmful practices and technologies
 - ✓ **Considering** vulnerability and adverse impacts
- **Lessons on:** How to design policy frameworks that enable sustainable and equitable water use at the basin level?
 - ✓ All insights on the national/regional policy contexts are valuable.



Pressure-driven pathways

- Systemic reactions to broader concerns of justice and equity in relation to water quantity and quality.
 - ✓ **Providing directionality** and continuation
- **Lessons on:** How to work towards equitable water use also in times when sustainability is not high on policy agendas?
 - ✓ Reflections on the recent ecological challenges are valuable.



What is the role of pathways in Govaqua

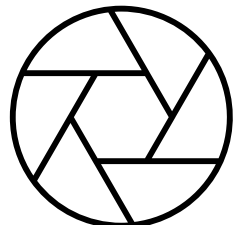
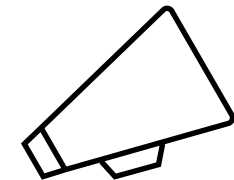
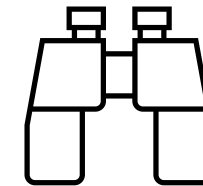
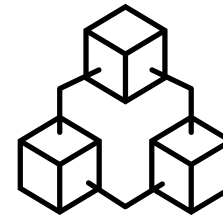


Summary:

- ✓ Transition pathways are **desirable pathways to support governance experimentation**.
- ✓ We look into **three types of pathways** – innovation, policy and pressure driven changes.
- ✓ To work contextually, we need look into **the conditions for pathways**.

In Govaqua, transition pathways...

- Bring together** lessons from cases and living labs.
- Help understanding** the policy conditions for sustainability transitions.
- Communicate** messages to a broader policy audience.
- Conceptualise** the research outputs in publications.





Governance innovations: water transition cases in Europe from a comparative lens

Cesar Casiano Flores

What is a governance innovation?

Innovation is the use of new ideas, products or methods where they have not been used before (Eurostat, N/D)



Towards a **sustainable and equitable** water management in Europe

Legal

Financial

Stakeholder
engagement

Digital (information and
knowledge sharing)

Our approach to innovations

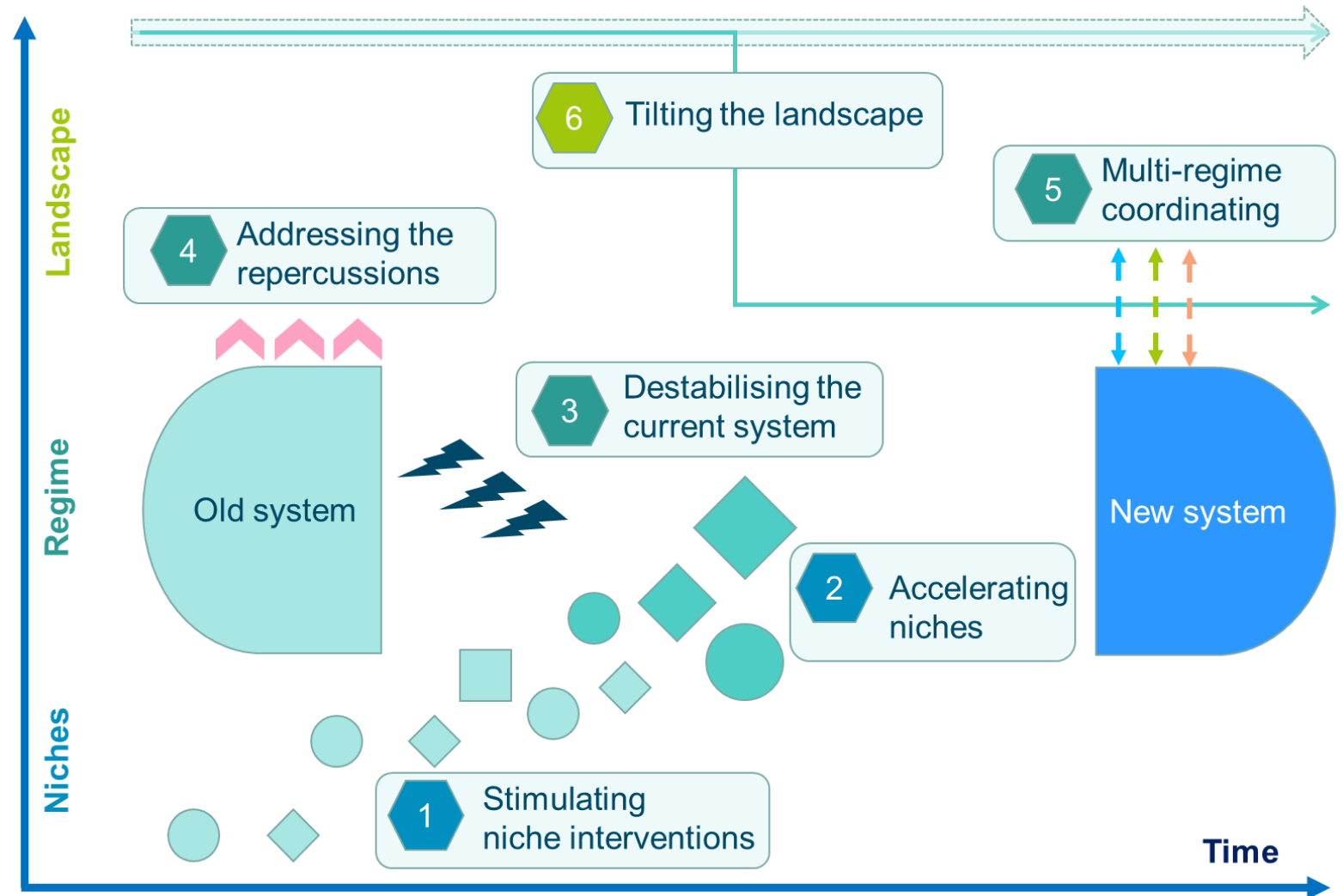
- Three levels under which innovations can transition: niche (radical novelties), regime (business as usual), and landscape (exogenous impacts) (Kanger, 2021).
- Subdivided into six policy intervention points. These points include:
 1. Promote various alternatives to change the system (different small innovation projects)
 2. Scale up single niches and/or align them with each other (align the different innovations)
 3. Weaken the structures that obstruct the transition (taxes, subsidies)
 4. Promote different changes at different scale levels (campaigns, open data)
 5. Alignment of different changes in the system (nexus and basin approach)
 6. Change the broader framework to facilitate transformation (WFD, SDG)

Transition to an equitable & sustainable water use in Europe

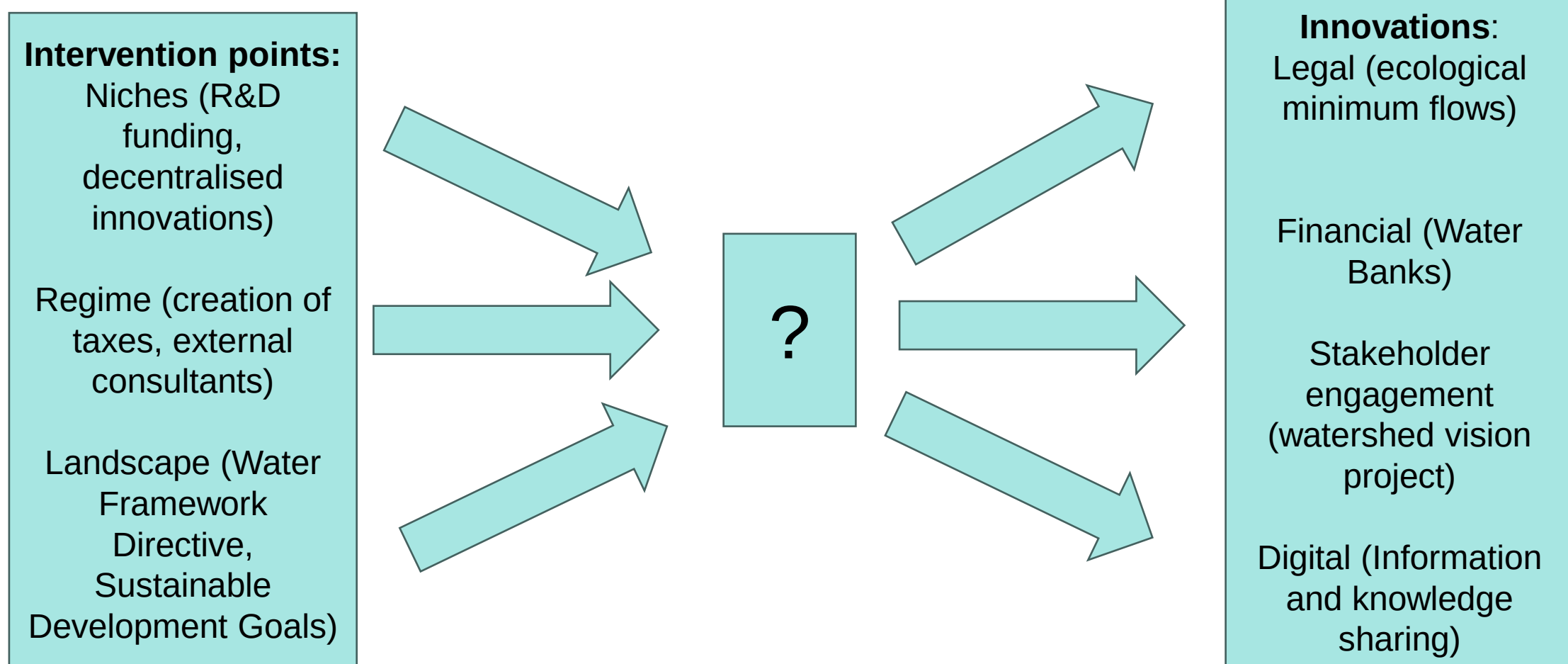
Pressure-driven pathways

Policy-driven pathways

Innovation-driven pathway



Intervention points supporting innovations for a sustainable and equitable water use in Europe





What have we learned from the cases so far

- Transitioning to more equitable and sustainable water management requires support at different levels
- Innovations also require support at different levels
- The Water Framework Directive is present in the four types of innovations.
- Stakeholder participation is relevant for the innovations.
- The innovations are also interconnected. Support each other.
- What are the necessary conditions?

GOVAQUA Assessment Tool for water governance innovations now online



<https://www.syke.fi/en/projects/govaqua/results>



GOVAQUA Assessment Tool for Water
Governance Innovations (syke.fi)



Thank you for the interest!



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