

# Mainstreaming ecosystem services for improved agricultural and environmental policy integration: Conceptual lessons from the BONUS MIRACLE project

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## Context and objectives

‘Siloed’ sectorally based policy approaches will become increasingly unable to address eutrophication of the Baltic Sea. Greater coordination is needed between agricultural and environmental policies.

It is thought that coherent integration of the ecosystem service (ES) framework into agricultural and environmental policies could foster more effective cross-sector cooperation and consideration of multiple ecosystem benefits and trade-offs and win-win scenarios.

The question arises to what extent greater mainstreaming of the ES approach in agricultural and environmental policies could support better integration, refocussing agricultural policy objectives from primarily commodity production to providing ES.

In this overall context one of the main purposes of the MIRACLE project is to better understand and review if and how the ES approach can more effectively and efficiently address eutrophication and flooding in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) and provide multiple benefits. The main aim of this paper is:

- To develop a conceptual framework for mainstreaming the ES approach to promote greater policy integration and innovation in relevant sectoral policies with an emphasis on agricultural and environmental policies.

## Results

### Developing a conceptual framework

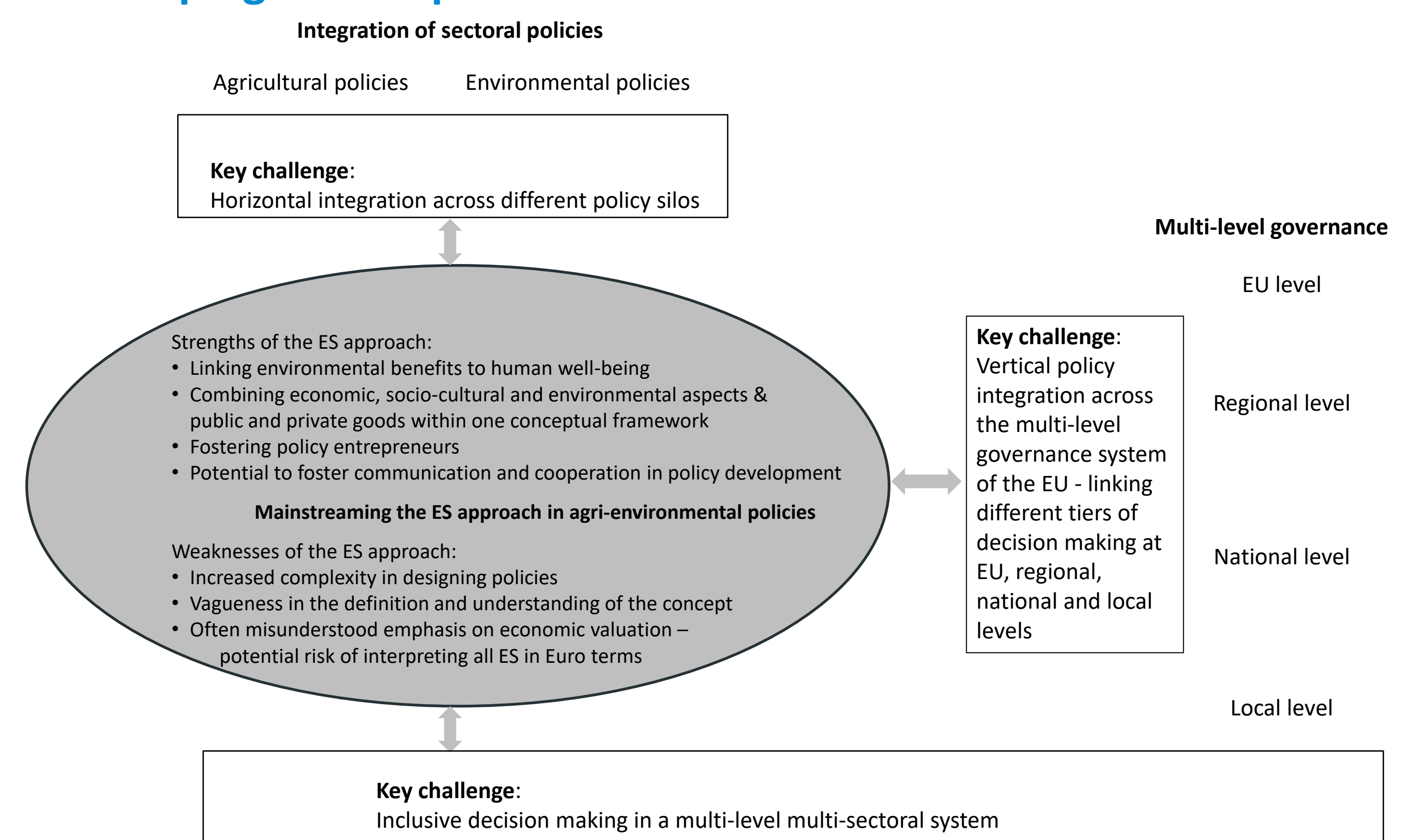


Fig 1: Conceptual framework for mainstreaming ecosystem services

### Some emerging key issues for mainstreaming the ES approach

- The ES approach can stimulate new types of conversations between stakeholders and strengthen community of practice across sectors.
- Important role of non-governmental actors in BSR governance to strengthen integration & coordination across sectors and policies.
- Lack of mechanisms for the coordination and cooperation in development of policy strategies and measures across sectors.

## Methodological approach

- Policy document analysis to (EU, BSR and partner country levels) to examine how current agri. and env. policies have considered aspects of the ES approach.
- Literature review of the strengths and weaknesses of mainstreaming the ES approach in agricultural and environmental policies.
- Stakeholder and expert workshops and interviews

The literature review and policy document analysis seek answers in relation to the following questions:

- What are the main challenges in implementing a more integrated approach and how would a mainstreaming of an ES approach improve the integration of sectoral policies and their objectives?
- What are the main strengths and weaknesses and key policy instruments to mainstreaming the ES approach in agricultural and environmental policies?

Assessed policies in the Baltic Sea Region
Common Agricultural Policy
Marine and Maritime Policy
Strategic Planning Policy
Water Policy
Biodiversity Policy
Climate Policy
Other Planning Documents

Tab 1: Overview of assessed policies



DELIVERABLE 6.1  
Report on the conceptual framework of the ecosystem services approach for improved policy integration

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## Conclusions and recommendations

- Combining polycentric policy systems and local engagement with innovative policy instruments, e.g. result-based PES suggests potentials in addressing and involving new stakeholders and creating new incentives to produce multiple ES benefits from reduced eutrophication.
- Government driven and financed incentive payments are not sufficient to improve nutrient governance in the BSR - the role of the private sector warrant more attention in the discussion of future EU land use policies.