

Exploration of (policy) options

Options for improving animal health in the organic dairy sector



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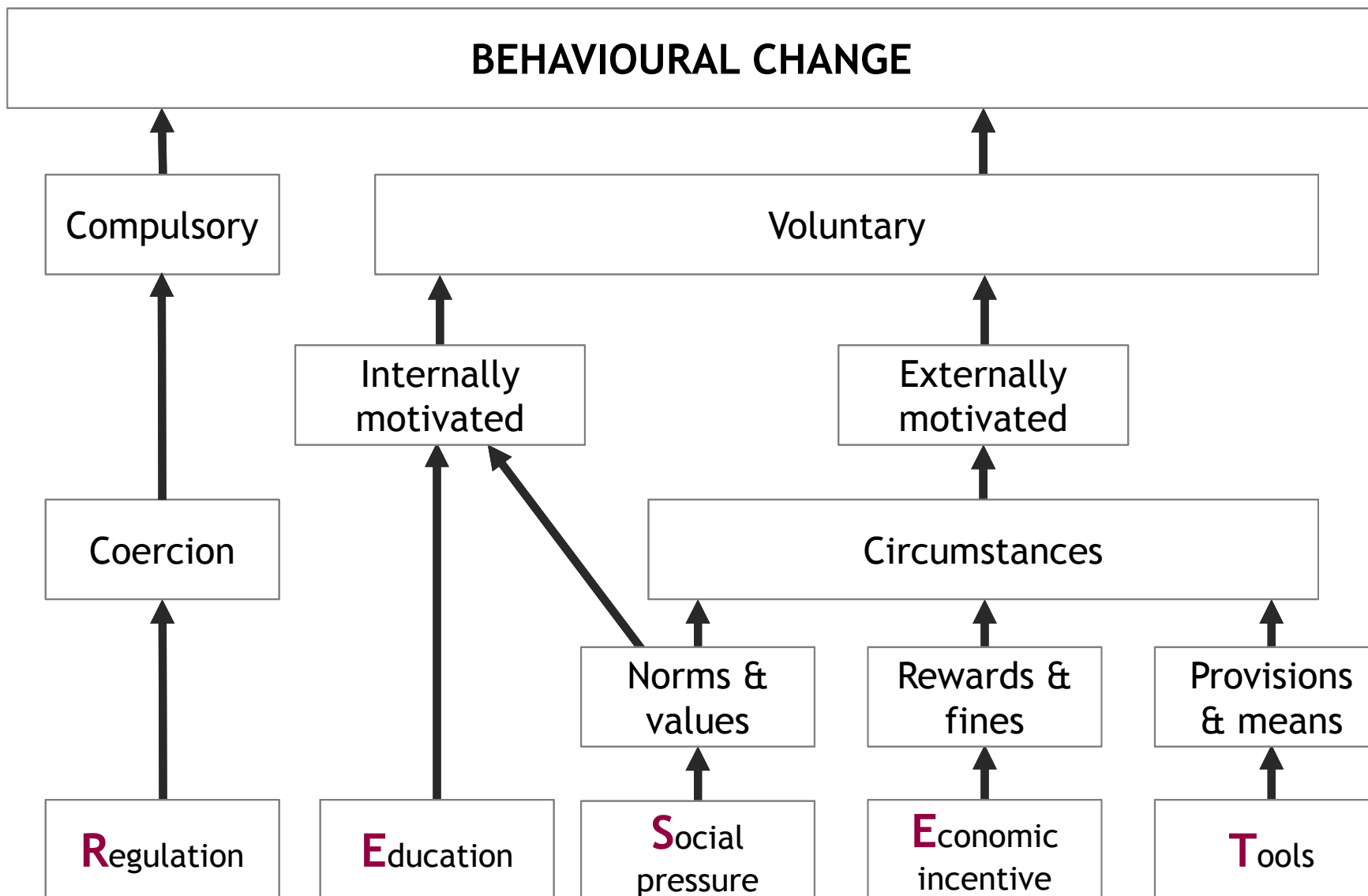


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Main conclusion from the IMPRO project

- Improvements needed (to ensure consumers' trust & AHW)
- Need to identify the most effective and efficient measures
- Input oriented approach lacks external validation regarding
 - Prevalences of production diseases
 - Effectiveness of treatments with alternative remedies
 - Prevention of unfair competition
- Behavioural changes and output orientation required

Stimuli for improvements



(Jansen et al., 2012. How to R.E.S.E.T farmers mindset? Experiences from the Netherlands.)



EU-Regulations on organic livestock farming

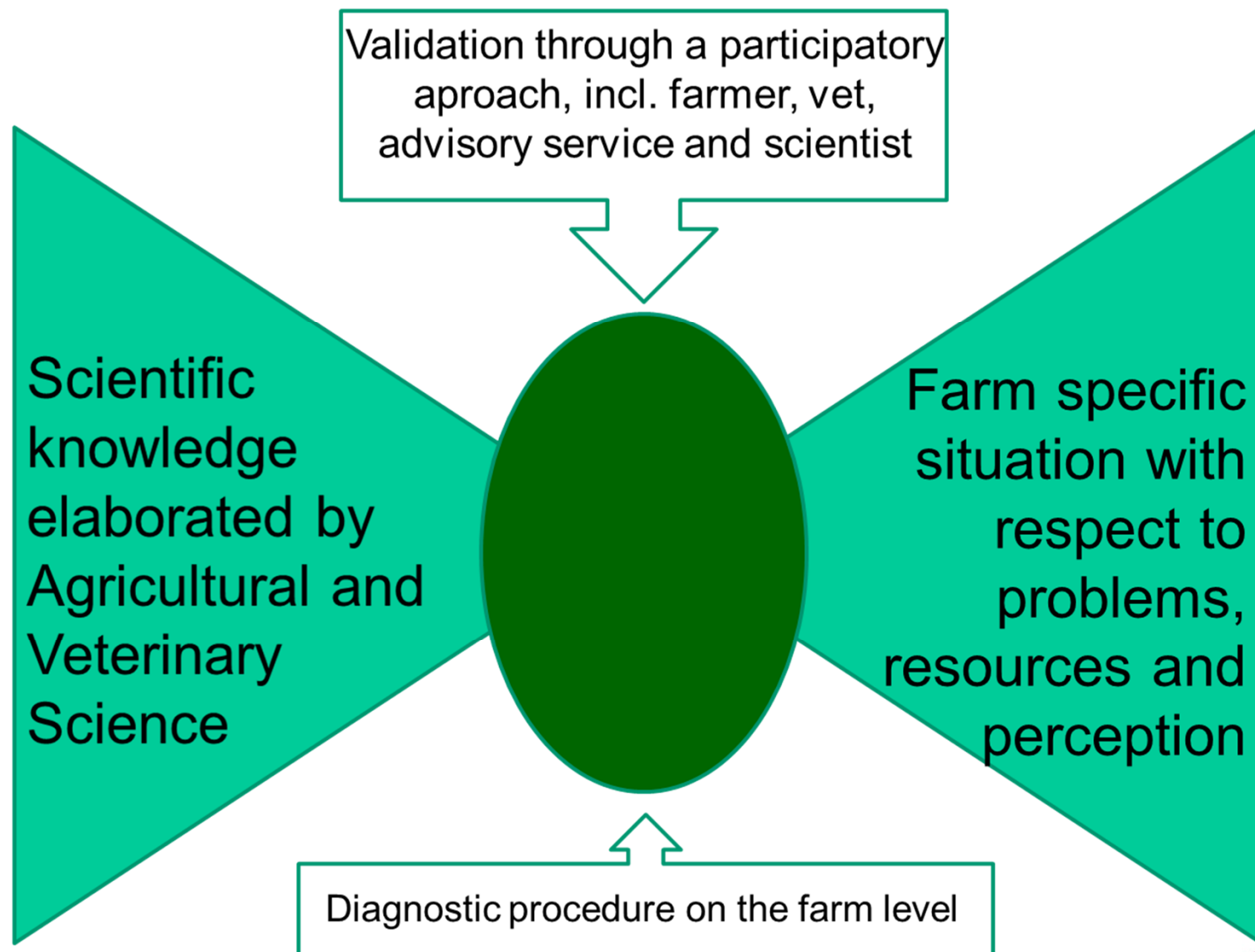
- Regulation based on minimum standards does not cover
 - the complexity of the production diseases (PDs) issue
 - the diversity of farm systems and of available resources
 - the variation of PDs between farms
- Definition of target values for prevalence of PDs
- Monitoring and control of production diseases
- Prohibiting unfair competition

Education

- Learning via textbook is not sufficient
- Limitation of scientific specialization
- Prevention of misleading generalisation
- Identifying options for internal incentives
- Utilisation of the participatory approach
- Transferring the available knowledge to the contextual problems at hand (lock-and-key principle)
- Establishing methodology for external validation of the effectiveness of measures in the specific context



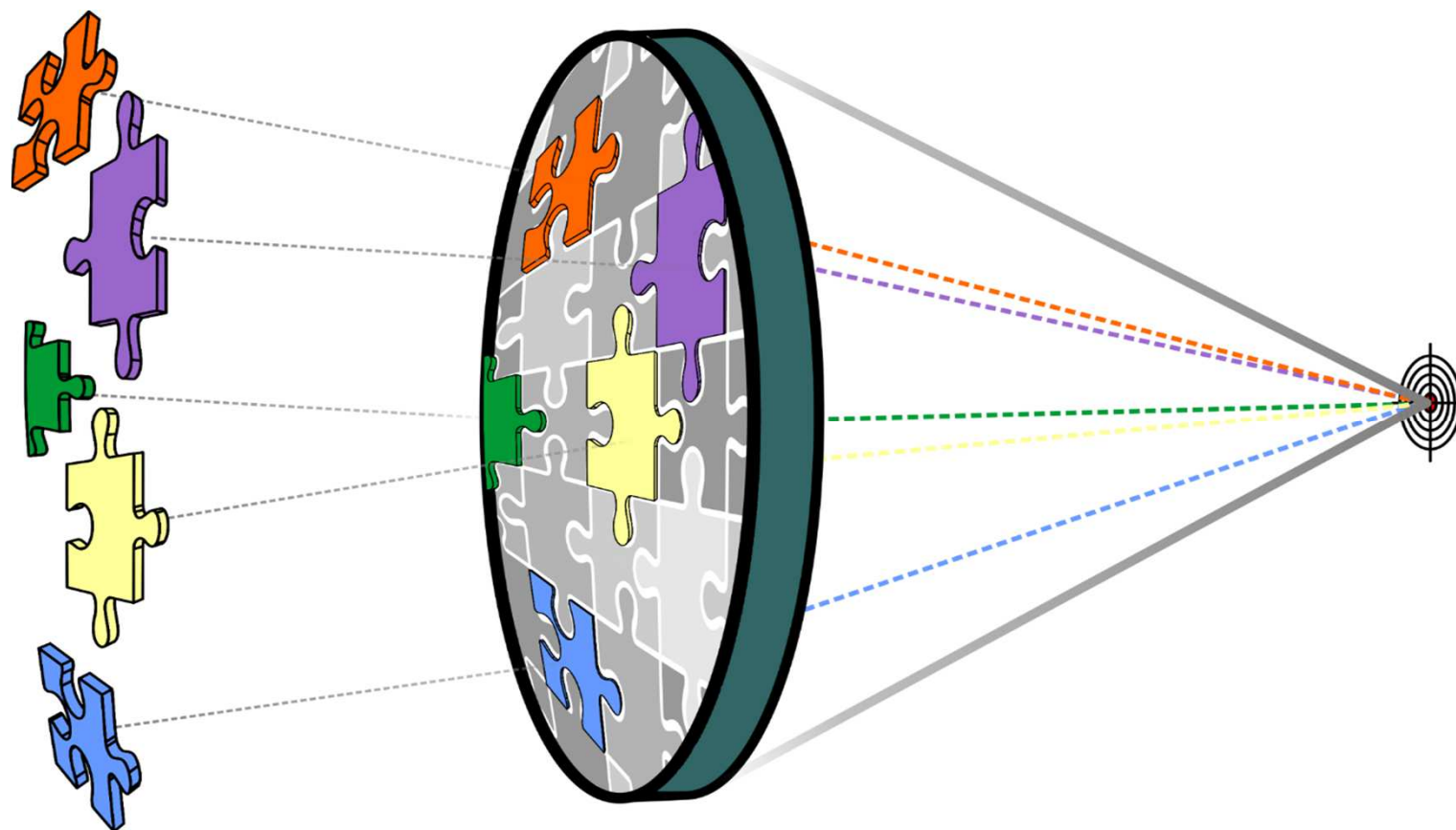
Challenge to identify effective measures



Social pressure

- Organic dairy products do not fully meet their claims
- Unfair competition not addressed
- Not sufficiently preventing suffering of farm animals
- Consumer-oriented production
- Justification of price premiums
- Improving animal health and welfare
- Target values, relevant for farmers, retailers and consumers

Equifinal and systemic approach



**Context-
invariant tools**

**Context-variant
effectiveness**

**Health-related
goals**

Equifinal approach, considering single tools and their contextual interactions as striving for the same health related goals

Economic incentives

- Market favours cost reduction over qualitative traits
 - Appropriate farm specific data often not available
 - High failure and often even higher preventive costs
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- Identification of farm-specific incentives (win-win)
 - Offering premium prices for a higher level of quality
 - Competitive advantages for qualitative performance

Tools to provide a tangible framework

- Need for a comprehensive overview on
 - Occurrence of production diseases (farm reports)
 - Effective, farm-adjusted measures for improvements
 - Knowledge on farm-specific cost-benefit relationships
- Health data report: provision of interpretable indicators of herd health status
- Impact matrix: fosters guided discussion between farmer, veterinarian and advisor on interrelation of farm factors
- Proactive protocols: for monitoring and prevention
- Cost-Benefit Tool: to assess failure and preventive costs

Outlook

- No simple solutions and no general recommendations
- Input-orientation needs to be supplemented by an output-oriented approach
- Provide options to improve animal health without compromising farms' income
- Animal health and welfare cannot be left in the responsibility and self-referential perception of farmers alone
- Improvements require a modification of legal framework and additional market incentives
- Unfair competition might be the most significant barrier to improvements in the currently unsatisfactory situation

