



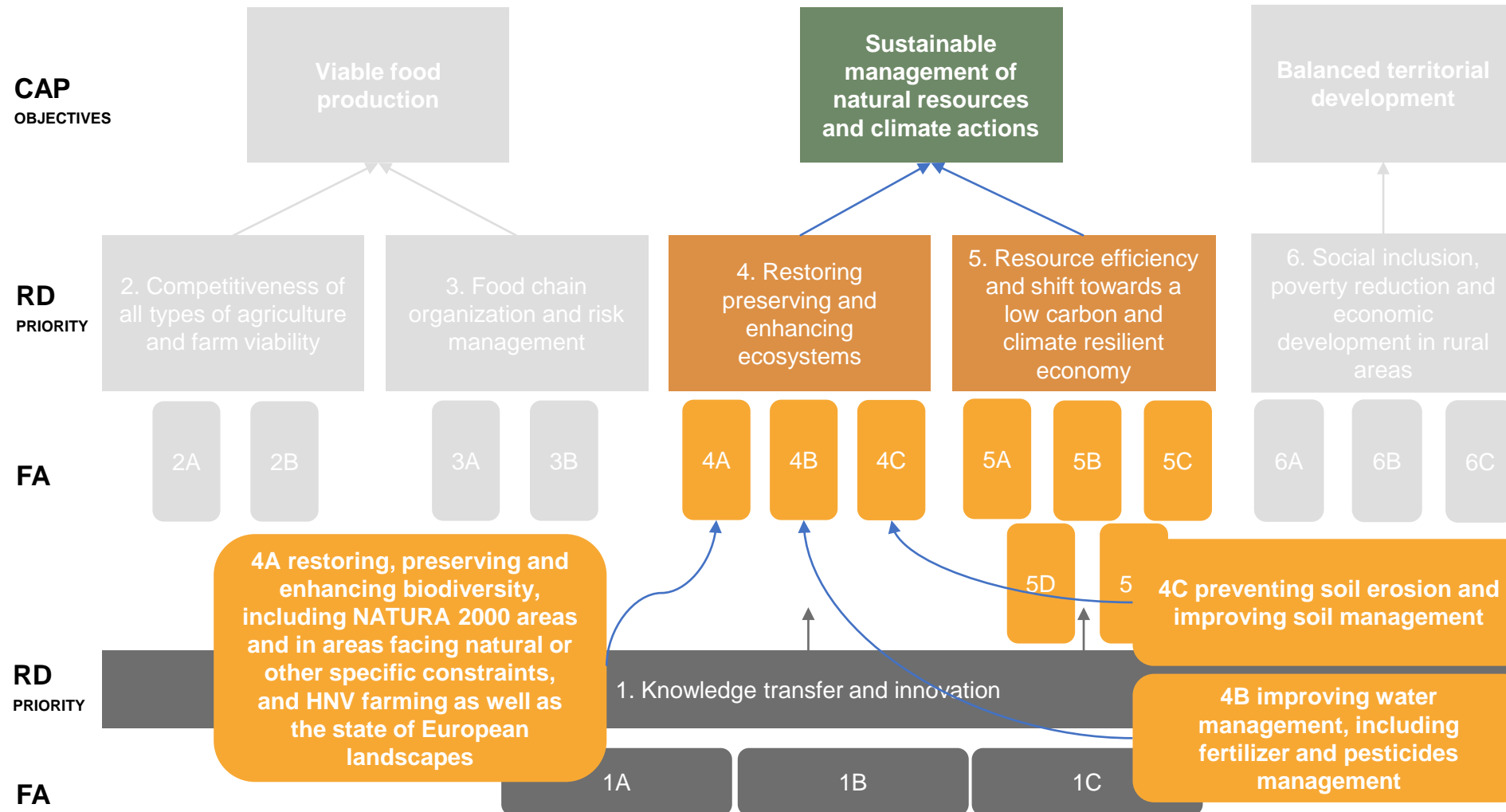
Assessment of RDP results under the Focus Area 4A, 4B, 4C - the combination of spatial analysis and qualitative assessment in Latvia

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RD priority 4 – case of Latvia



Common Evaluation Question 8 related to FA 4A*: “To what extent have RDP interventions supported the restoration, preservation and enhancement of biodiversity including in Natura 2000 areas, areas facing natural or other specific constraints and HNV farming, and the state of European landscape?”

Common Evaluation Question 9 related to FA 4B*: “To what extent have RDP interventions supported the improvement of water management, including fertilizer and pesticide management?”

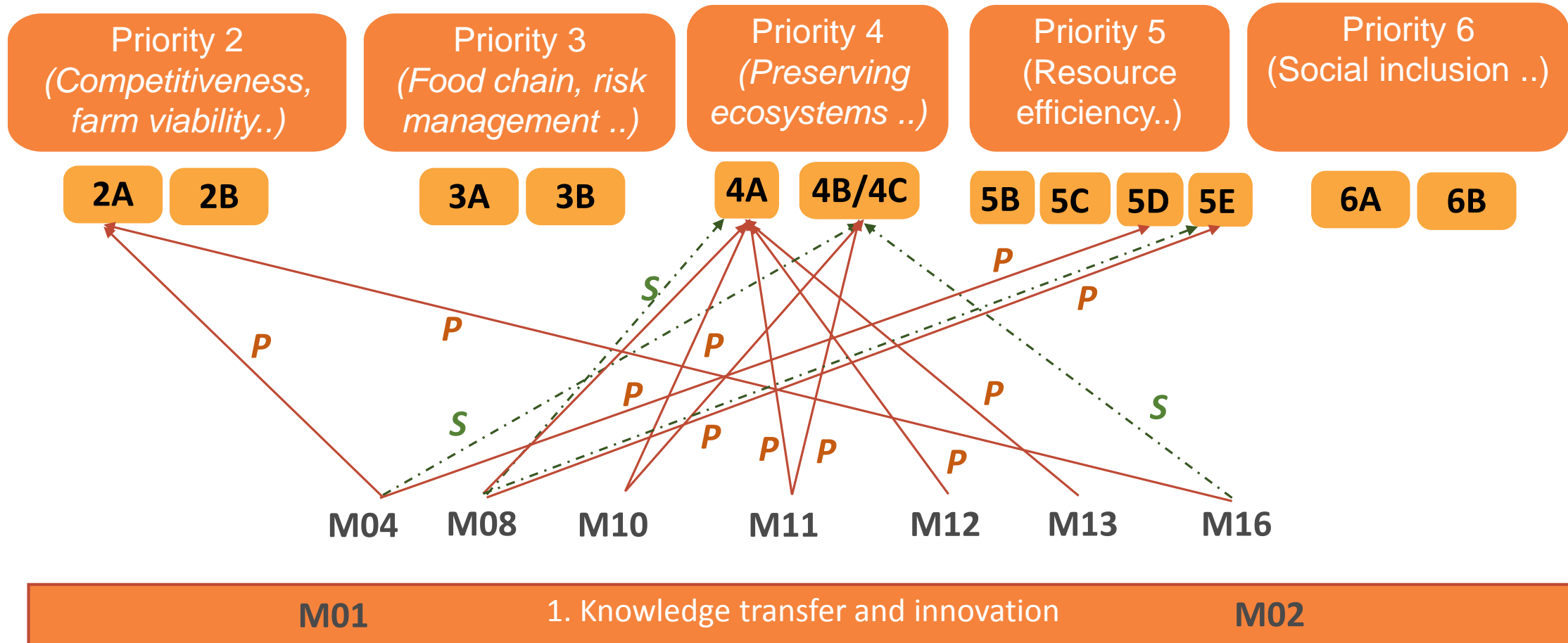
Common Evaluation Question 10 related to FA 4C*: “To what extent have RDP interventions supported the prevention of soil erosion and improvement of soil management?”

Outline

1. RDP design and uptake
2. Planning and preparing for the assessment of FA 4A, 4B and 4C
3. Structuring and conducting the evaluation
4. Evaluation findings
5. Methodological challenges and limitations
6. Evaluation report and its use
7. Lessons learnt for the AIR in 2019



RDP design



Uptake of measures related to FA P4A, P4B, P4C



| Measure | Supported area | Beneficiaries |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Agriculture</i> | | |
| M10.1: | | |
| MBG | 35 009 | 3 988 |
| EFMH | 4 816 | 277 |
| SFWP | 70 005 | 1 433 |
| EFNP | 544 | <i>n.d.</i> |
| M11 | 258 730 | 3 575 |
| M13 | 1 298 209 | 41 848 |
| <i>Forestry</i> | | |
| M12 | 35 299 | 2 353 |
| M08 | 234 | 734* |
| <i>Secondary</i> | | |
| M04 | 23 377 | 40* |

* - operations



Planning the assessment

Evaluation steps for answering CEQ8, CEQ9, CEQ10:

Dec. 2016 Introduction with guidelines, analysis of related materials (*RDP, national regulations, annual implementation report, publications etc.*).

Jan. 2017 Arrangement with MA/RSS about necessary data.

Jan. 2017 Discussion about additional evaluation sub-questions.

Feb. 2017 Defining additional evaluation indicators (4 indicators).

Feb. 2017 Data collection, spatial data analysis, calculation of indicator values.

Apr. 2017 Focus group interview with measure managers from RSS.

Apr. 2017 Electronic survey of beneficiaries (867 respondents).

March 2017 Reporting on AIR 2017.

June 2017 Presentation of AIR 2017 in monitoring committee.

- *Internal meetings with MA and expert discussions regularly due to evaluation process*
- *Consultations with Helpdesk*



Developing the assessment

Evaluation elements for answering CEQ8, CEQ9, CEQ10:

- No additional evaluation sub-questions.
- To make more precise answers we defined additional evaluation judgment criteria and indicators for CEQ8, CEQ9, CEQ10, for example:

| CEQ | Additional judgment criteria | Additional indicator |
|------------|--|--|
| CEQ8 | Unmanagement agricultural lands has decreasing in areas with natural or other specific constraints. | % of unmanagement agricultural lands in areas with natural or other specific constraints. |
| CEQ8 | Areas of supported permanent grasslands are stable or increasing in Natura 2000 sites | % of permanent grasslands under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes in Natura 2000 sites |
| CEQ9 | Agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management are stable or increasing in (nitrates) vulnerable zone and risk water bodies. | % of agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management in (nitrates) vulnerable zone and risk water bodies. |

Developing the assessment



Data:

- Spatial data from IACS (Integrated Administration and Control System).
- Statistics from annual implementation report (prepared by MA).
- Quantitative data and qualitative information from Rural Support Service and Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre about ongoing operations.

Methods:

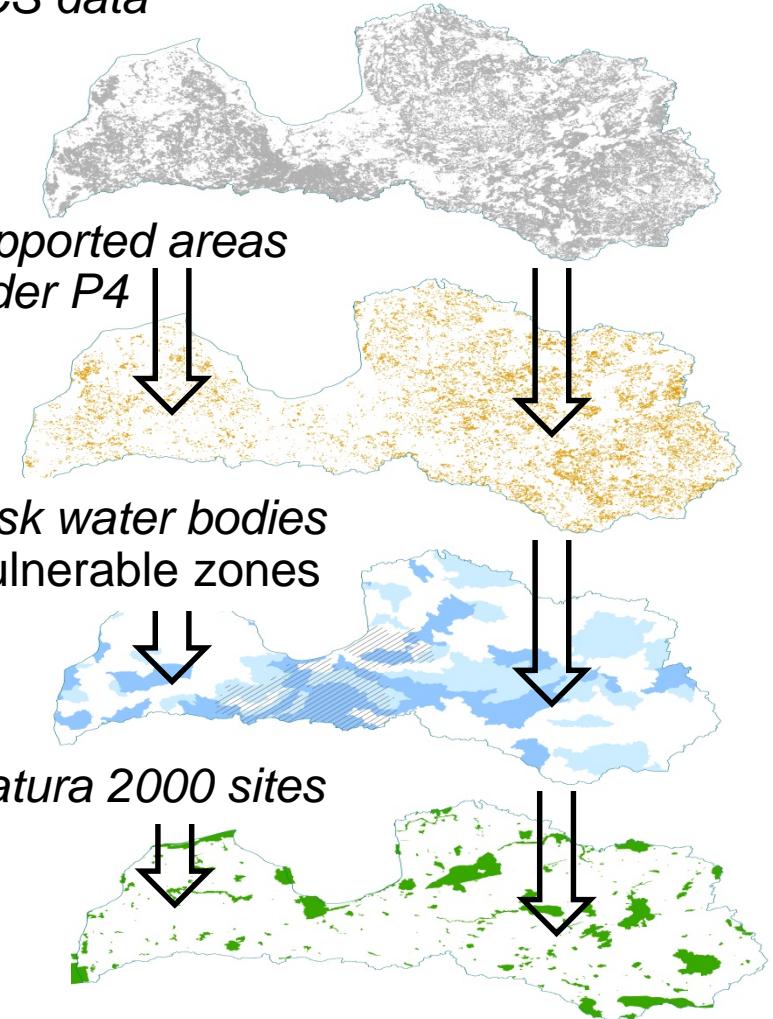
- GIS – analysis of spatial data, incl., calculation of the area (excluding overlap), calculation of supported areas in Natura 2000, Nitrates Vulnerable Zones.
- Qualitative assessment through surveys of beneficiaries and structured focus group interviews with managers of measures/sub-measures.
- Expert assessment.

IACS data

*Supported areas
under P4*

*Risk water bodies
Vulnerable zones*

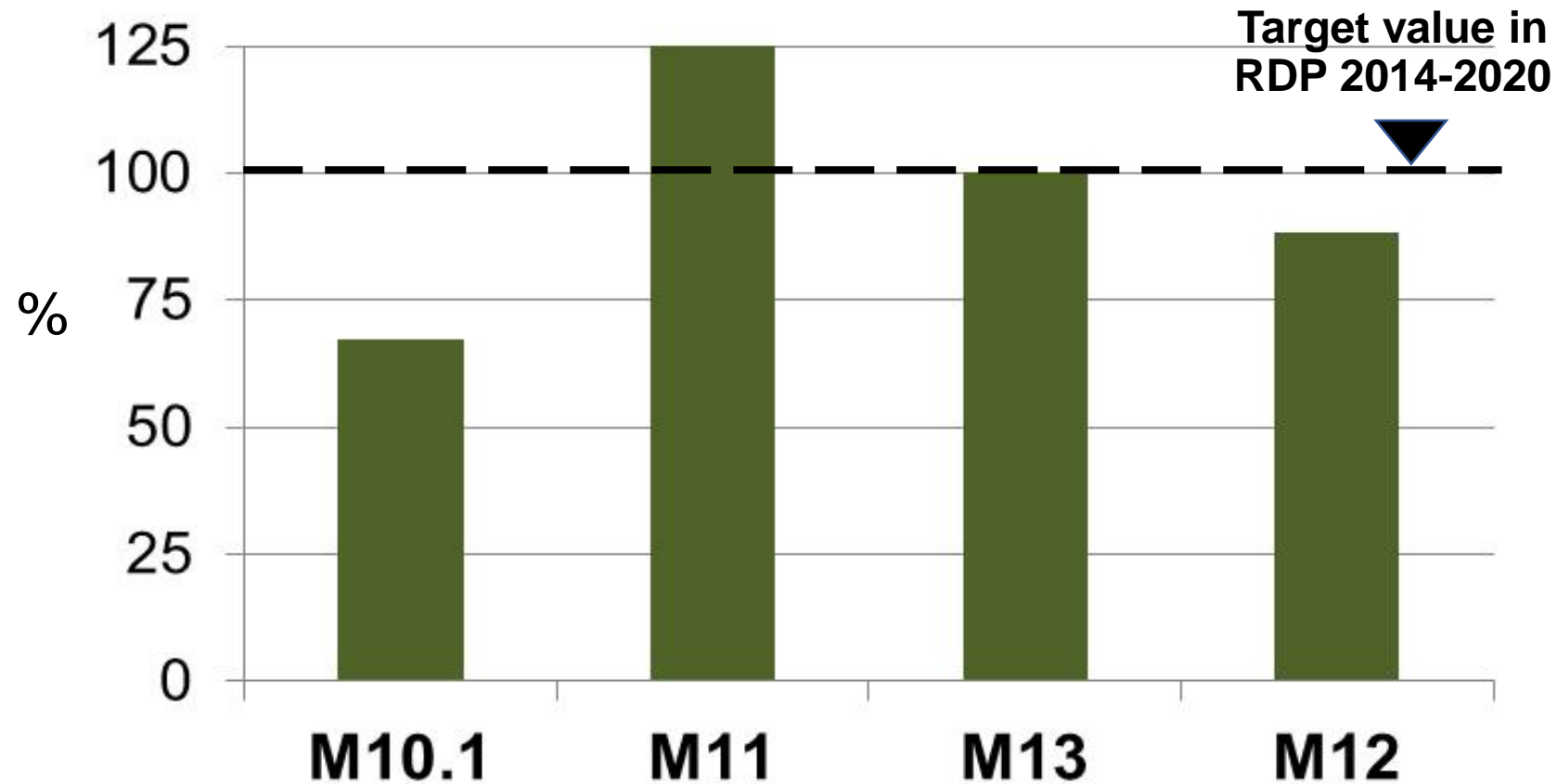
Natura 2000 sites





Evaluation findings

Assessment of output indicator
Physical area supported (ha)



M11 – significant changes in measure conditions, increasing demand for the OF products



Evaluation findings

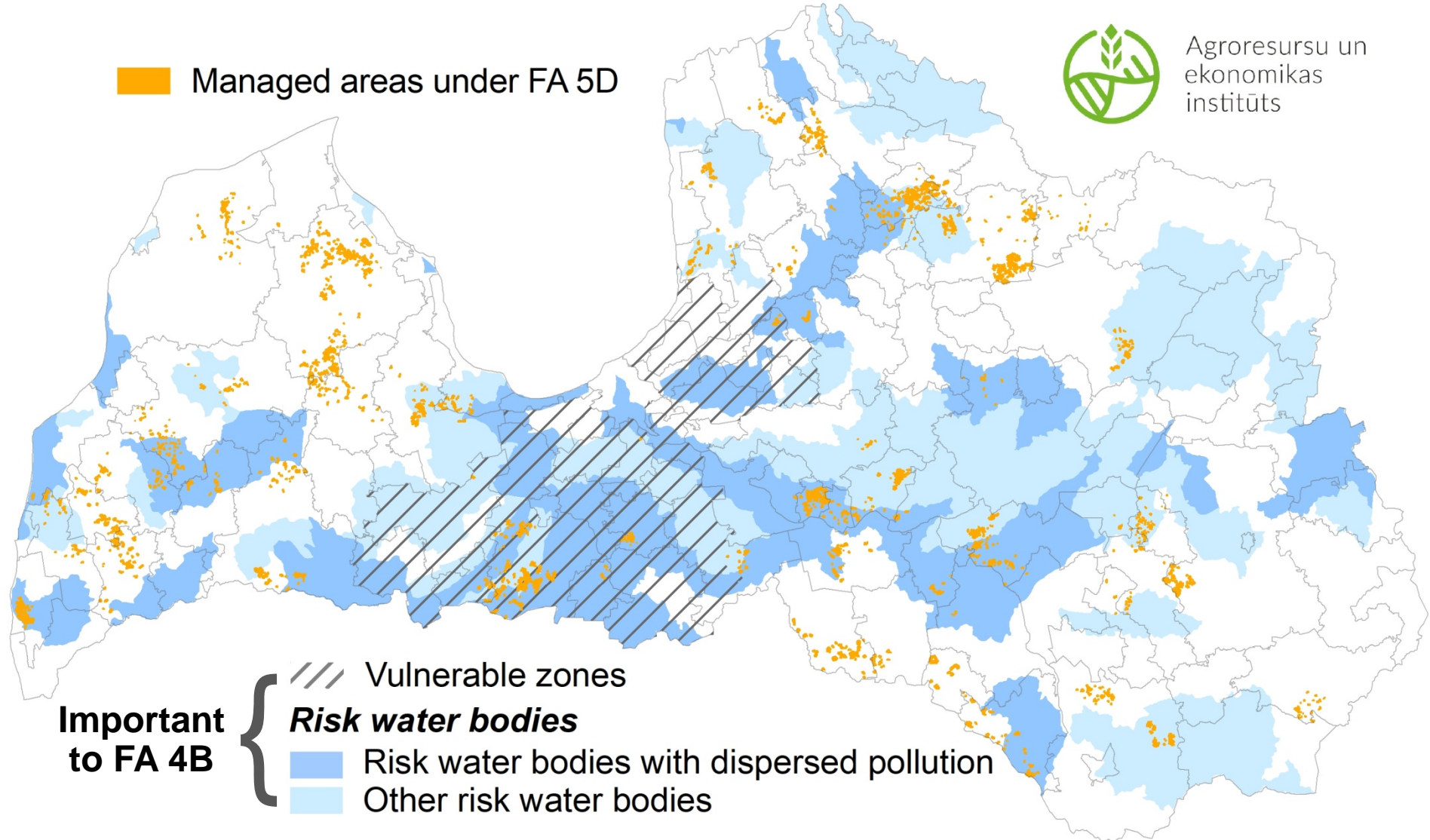
Common
evaluation
indicators

| Indicator | FA | Value | |
|---|----|-------|---|
| R6/T8 - % of forest areas under management contracts supporting biodiversity | 4A | 1% | ← |
| R7/T9 - % of agricultural land under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes | 4A | 72% | ← |
| R8/T10 - % of agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management | 4B | 18,5% | ↑ |
| R10/T12 - % of agricultural land under management contracts to improve soil management | 4C | 18,5% | ↑ |
| <i>% of permanent grasslands under management contracts supporting biodiversity and/or landscapes in Natura 2000 sites</i> | 4A | 60,5% | ↙ |
| <i>% of unmanaged agricultural lands in areas with natural or other specific constraints.</i> | 4A | 13,4% | ← |
| <i>% of agricultural land under management contracts to improve water management in (nitrates) vulnerable zone and risk water bodies.</i> | 4B | 16% | ← |

Additional
evaluation
indicators

Evaluation findings

- Secondary contribution to FA 4B from 5D:





Evaluation findings

- Target values related to FA 4A, 4B, 4C have been reached. Agricultural land under management contracts have significantly increased in 2016;
- 72% of agricultural lands are under management contracts supporting biodiversity, at the same time the proportion of permanent grasslands in Natura 2000 sites are decreasing by 5%;
- The results from the survey indicate that there have been positive effects on the conservation and improvement of the natural values, as well as 58% of beneficiaries proved the reduction of the amount of fertilizers and pesticides (per unit area);
- Evaluation confirms that the contribution to the FA 4A, 4B and 4C is medium.



Evaluation reporting and use

For the majority of conclusions drawn, follow-up recommendations were proposed, *for example*:

1. *Contribution of RDP 2014-2020 should be realized more in targeted Natura 2000 sites (FA4A) and vulnerable zones (FA4B).*
 2. *Revise an availability of public funding for FA 4A, 4B, 4C by 2020.*
- The evaluation report was prepared according to guidelines, incl., we use SFC form structure and reporting requirements. The MA accepted AIR 2017 as useful, but it was not common for some stakeholders.
 - Evaluation findings are being discussed with the MA. We hope that the next amendments will include recommendations from the AIR 2017.

Methodological challenges and limits



Limits

- National Environmental Monitoring Programme does not provide enough data for evaluation;
- Double lack of time: 1) period 2014 -2016 was too short to assess the environmental indicators, especially because most measures started from 2015; 2) environmental data for 2016 was not available at the beginning of 2017.

Challenges

- Take into consideration differences between basic and targeted measures, *for example, FA 4A include (basic) measure to preserve open landscapes or (targeted) measure to improve biological diversity of grasslands.*
- Define appropriate evaluation scale – fields, farms, Natura 2000 sites, (nitrates) vulnerable zones.
- Construction of treatment and control groups (areas) for evaluation of environmental impacts.

Open issues

- AIR deadline is in the first half of the year, but most of the indicator values for the previous year only become available in May/June.
- Planning of case-studies/methodological approaches has limited funding.
- We plan case-studies related to the *quality of grassland habitats, number of ground beetles, soil quality, in-depth spatial data analysis for FA 4B.*



Lessons learnt for the AIR in 2019

- a) An action plan of evaluation activities (incl., topics of case studies, funding, terms) should be done at the beginning of the RDP period, at least one and a half years before the AIR deadline;
- b) Availability of environmental indicator values is crucial for evaluation. The data from the ongoing operations could be useful for FA 4A, 4B, 4C;
- c) Additional EQ/JC/Indicators would be important and useful, but there are limitations for resources (money/experts/time);
- d) Define clear questions for a survey to the beneficiaries and the structured focus group interviews → to separate contributions from RDP and *Greening* measures.



Thank you for the Attention!

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