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Rationale for research on multifunctional agriculture

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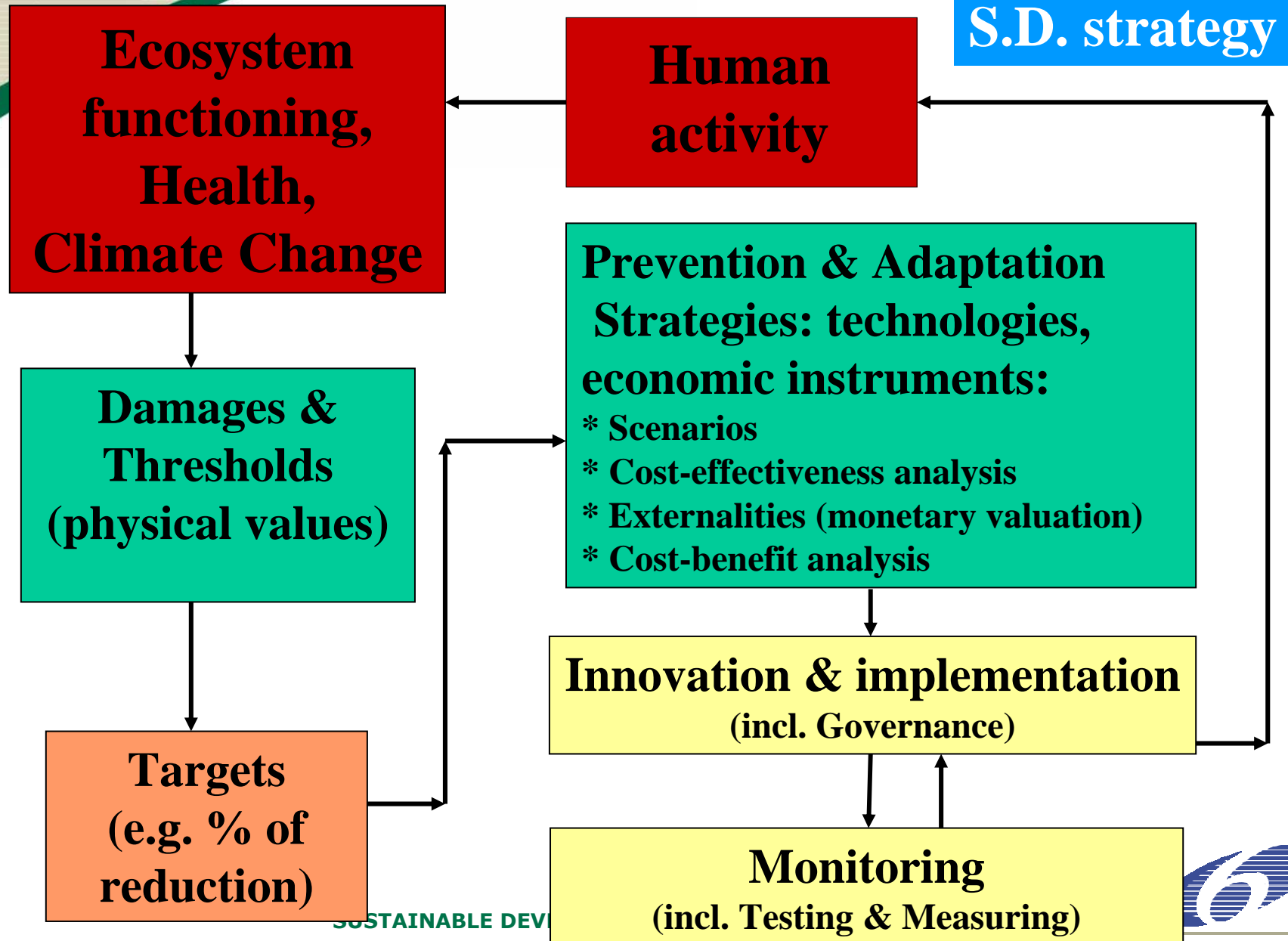
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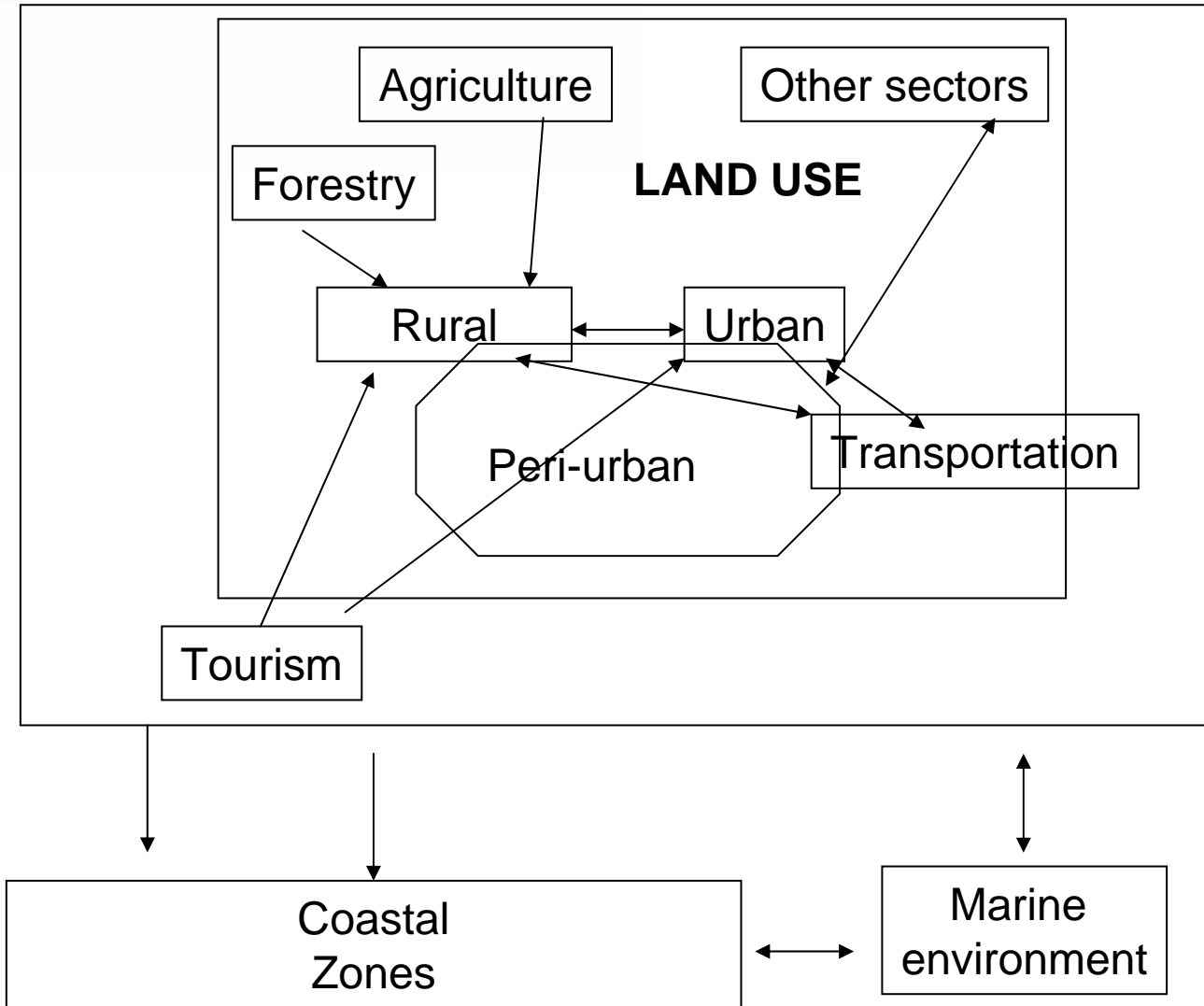
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Policy background

- Competitiveness agenda
- Sustainable Development Strategy
- Research Agenda: concepts, methods and tools to integrate science, economy, social aspects and technology
- Sustainable development and Land Use: a new concept has emerged and is being operationalized (Multagri, SENSOR, SEAMLESS, EFORWOOD, KASSA)









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Research gaps (1)

- More **conceptual research**
- A more thorough **empirical review** that considers the time and space dimension
- **Methodological development** to analyse multifunctionality, starting with the use of existing tools and available data, even if accessibility might not be always easy
- The **trade-off between functions** needs to be better analysed and quantified





Research gaps (2)

- **Improving the competitiveness** of farming, forestry, the environment and countryside implies analysing the positive and negative contributions of multiple functions of agriculture to competitiveness
- Sector approaches and forms of intervention need to be completed with territorially based schemes.
- Role of multifunctionality of agriculture in international trade
- **Improving sustainability**, preserving our unique rural environment
- **Rural development**: Improving the quality of life and diversification of the rural economy; innovation and economic development in the countryside
- A more **holistic concept** needs to be adopted in research, focused on the potential of agriculture to fulfil new societal goals, to contribute to rural employment, to improve the viability of rural areas, particularly in less favoured areas. It also needs to include the macro-economic perspective, considering the role of market mechanisms and the externalities generated.





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Research gaps (3)

- Multifunctionality as a result of ***multi-level transition processes***. European level assessment procedures and guidelines have to be harmonized with the concept of a multifunctional agriculture and rural space. Effectiveness and policy impacts need to be complemented by ***more comprehensive analysis of impacts on territorial developments*** and the appropriate degree of state intervention. The ***institutional dimension of impact assessment*** needs to be enhanced.

