

Data collection and use for evaluation of rural development programmes

France case study

Evaluation office
Center for strategic studies and foresight
French Ministry for agriculture

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European Evaluation Network
for Rural Development

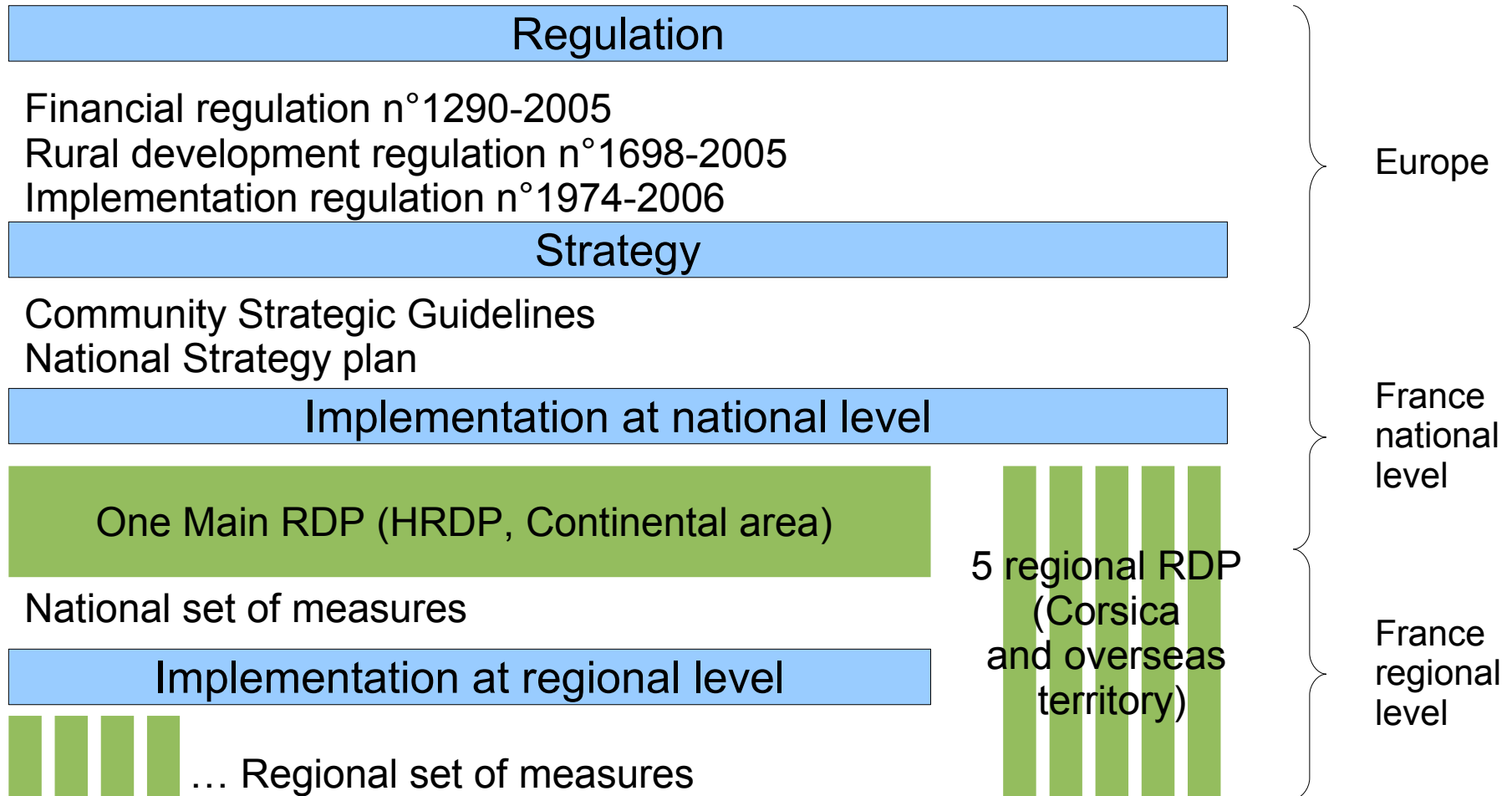
Good practice workshop
Targeted data management for evidence based evaluation in rural development

Introduction

Structure and implementation of rural development in France

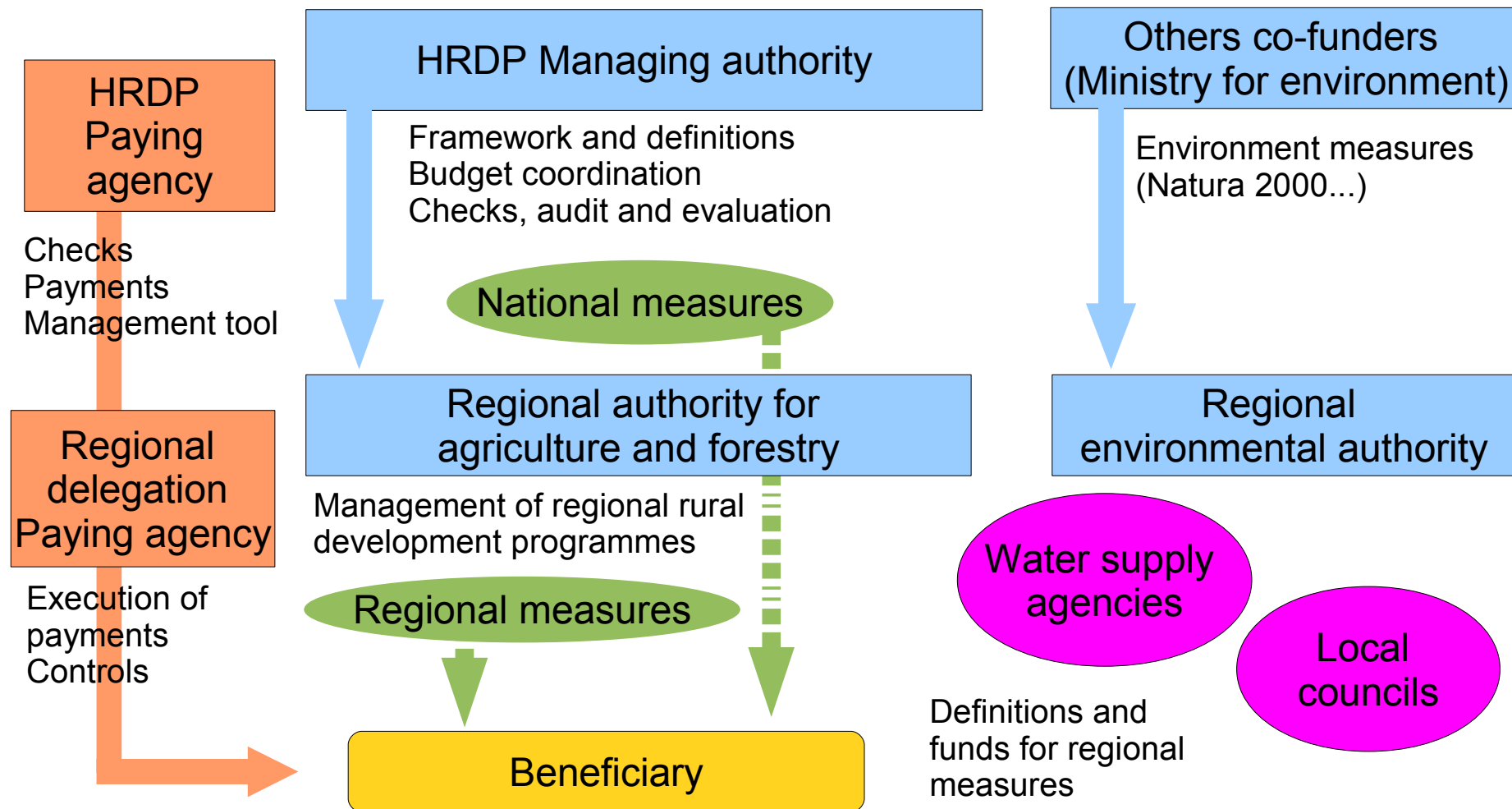
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Structure of the rural development in France



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Implementation of French RDP



Part 1. Data collection for evaluation

Needs and existing data

Collection system for beneficiary data

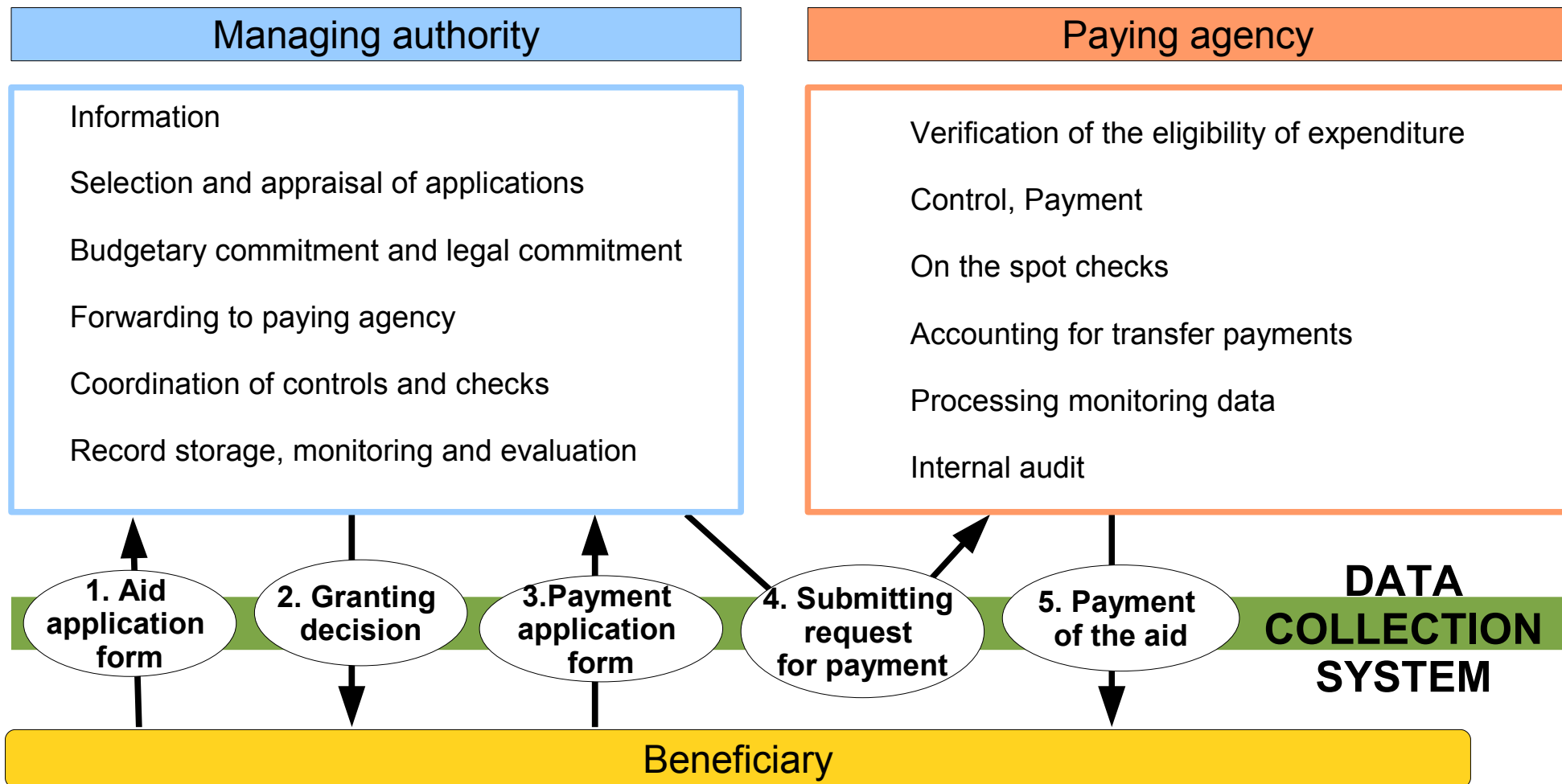
General statistics for contextual and non beneficiary data

Data platform for evaluators and other users

Needs and existing data

- Data for evaluation
 - Budgetary data at different level → *Paying agency*
 - Beneficiary data: broad descriptive data and more technical data → *Paying agency (and general statistics)*
 - Non beneficiary data, a reference for evaluation → *General statistics*
- Beneficiary data
 - Collected for granting and paying the aid
 - Both mandatory and optional data, evaluation needs not always anticipated
 - The priority for paying agency is...paying ! → *data for evaluation depends on available human resources*

Collection system for beneficiary data



General statistics for contextual and non beneficiary data

- Internal statistical service in charge of collecting essential data for agriculture
 - Mandatory request from Eurostat
 - Data independent of any political agenda → *Historical series*
 - Cover the entire farmers population, by surveys or comprehensive census
 - Statistics on farm structure, accountancy, land use, agricultural practices
- ➡ Valuable information to clarify the context of the RDP
- ➡ Potential information to build a non beneficiary data set, but difficulties to match different databases
 - Not elaborated for the same purposes
 - Not the same frequency of data collecting
 - Not the same perimeter and structure

Data platform for evaluators and others users

- Data for evaluation :
 - selected from a huge implementation database
 - match the evaluation questions → *specific indicators to be build*
 - extracted from primary sources hosted by different institutions
 - compared with external data sets
- ➔ A specific management tool for the needs of rural development evaluation, *Observatoire du Développement Rural (ODR)*
 - hosted and managed by an independent research unit
 - contract between: managing authority, paying agency and research institution
 - primary data provided by the paying agency
 - *ODR* is a dynamic database coupled with a portal online
 - Evaluators get their own indicators, with complementary geographical data or other sets of data

Part 2. Data use and methods for evaluation

Back to the initial objectives of evaluation

Multidisciplinary approach and stakeholder involvement

Contribution of data to the evaluation process

Example of the mid term evaluation

Impacts: estimating the treatment effects or highlighting the trends ?

Back to the initials objectives of evaluation

- A definition

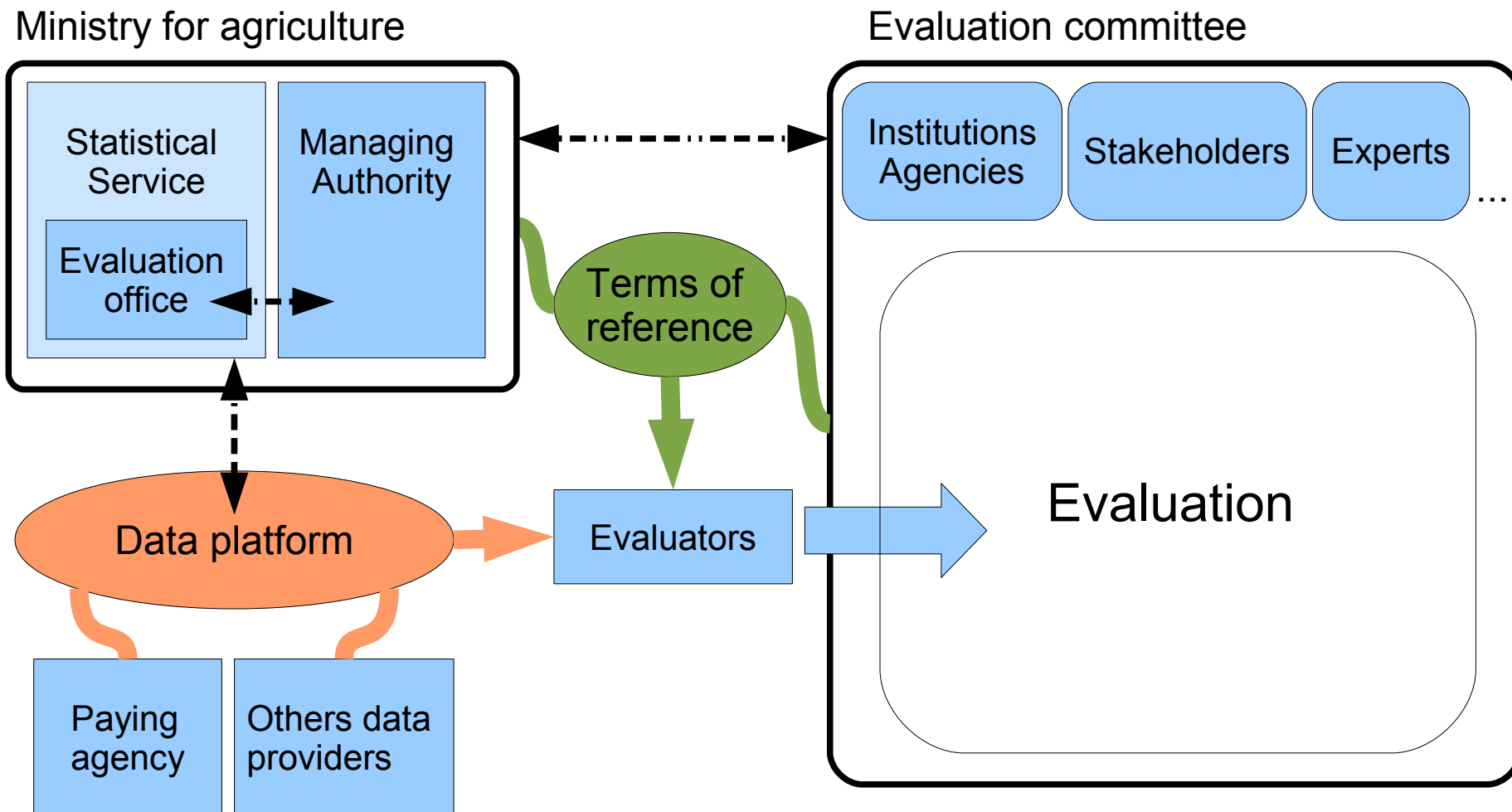
"Understanding, explaining and judging the value of a public action by analysing its objectives, results, and its effective implementation"

- Main objectives

- Accounting for the actions undertaken in the perspective of an efficient use of public funds
- Contributing to the improvement of implementation and results of ongoing and future public policy
- Offering the opportunity to share analysis and point of views between stakeholders, leading to a better consideration of the evaluation results
- Pointing the necessary improvements in the monitoring system

➡ Evaluation results need to be clear, argued explicitly and understandable for stakeholders and public in order to be useful for public action

Multidisciplinary approach and stakeholder involvement

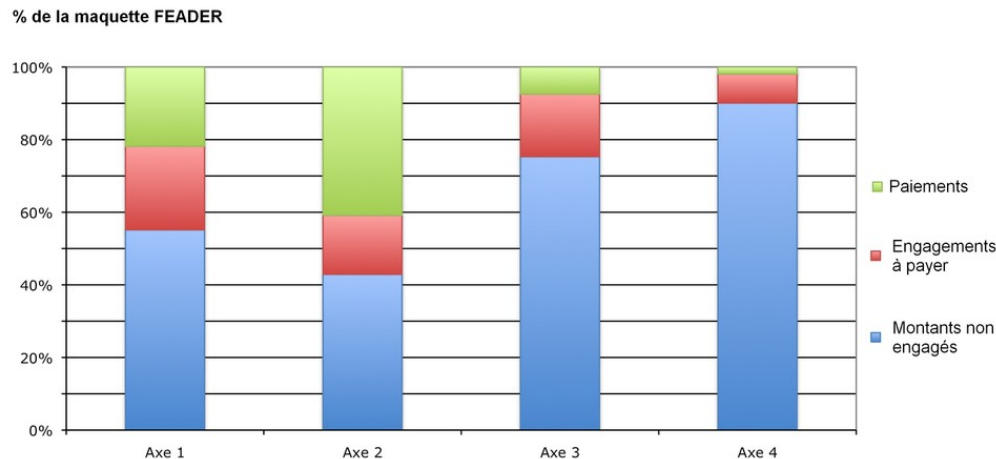
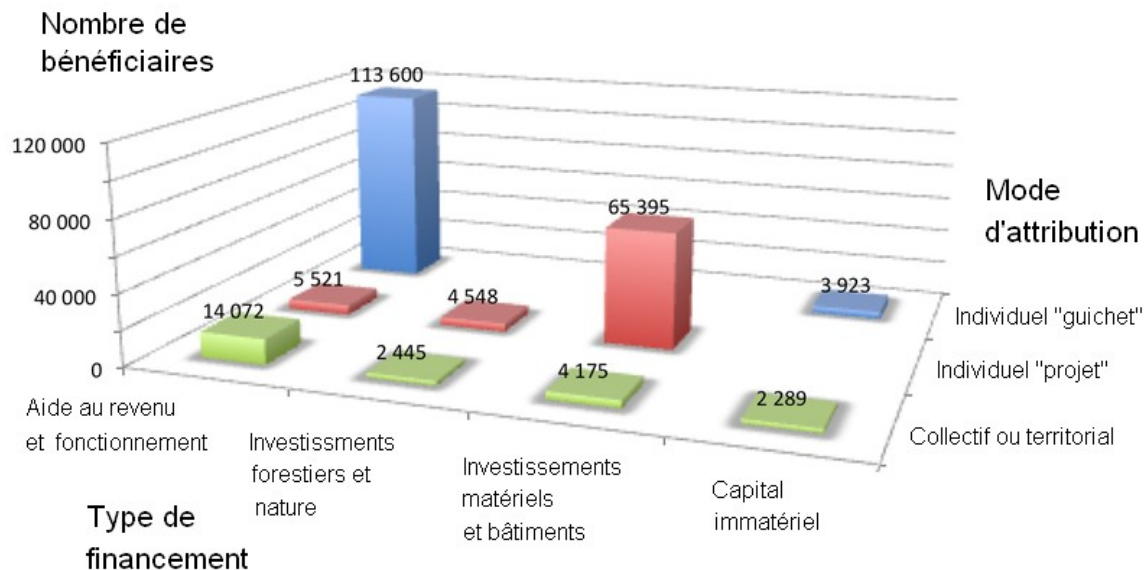
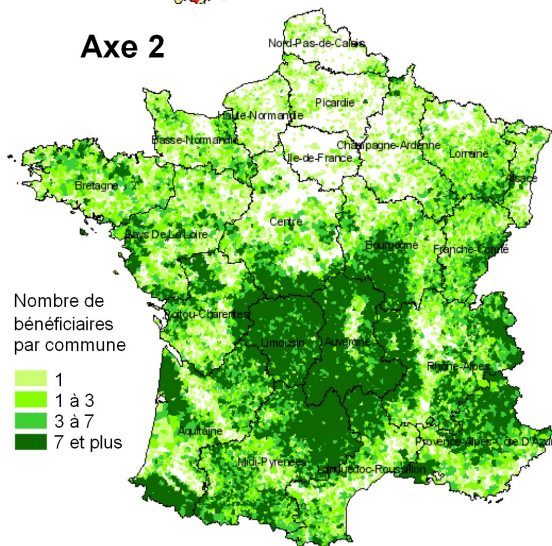
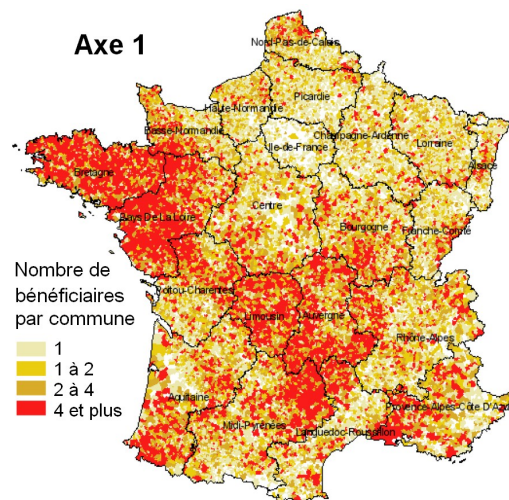


Contribution of data to the evaluation process

- Data, figures and indicators are fully necessary to:
 - Account for the implementation level, measure the results → *state of play*
 - Elaborate explicit and objective criteria to judge the quality of the programme in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and coherence
 - Steer and adapt the implementation along the way
- But data and indicators have to be complemented with:
 - Local or thematic case studies and interviews of the stakeholders
 - Analysis and opinion of the evaluators
 - Debates and arguments of the evaluation committee

➡ In order to lead to fully operational recommendations !

Example of the mid term evaluation



Impacts: estimating the treatment effects or highlighting the trends ?

- Evaluating the impacts of public policies is a great methodological challenge
 - Work to quantify the contribution of public policies in the observed changes of indicators value exists
 - Require an enormous amount of properly designed data
 - Not suitable for measures concerning all the eligible population
 - Do not provide information on factors leading to success or failure
- ➡ Quantitative estimation of the impacts does not seem to be a usable tool within range of the public administration but more a field for research work
- ➡ Nevertheless, impact indicators are fully necessary to tell whether the direction taken is relevant or not with the overall objectives of the policy.

Conclusion

Maximising the efficiency of data contribution to evaluation

Maximising the efficiency of data contribution to evaluation

- Both limited budgetary and human resources encourages to correctly size the data collection and monitoring system
 - Anticipating the needs of data
 - identifying the essential information required for the evaluation
 - including it in the monitoring system and general statistical system
 - Creating an independent platform gathering data for evaluation purposes
 - a good way to address the multiples needs of evaluation...
 - ...without being a burden for implementation and monitoring system
- ➡ To produce evaluation results based on realistic data, understandable for stakeholders and public, and useful for managing authority

Thank you for your attention !

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