

# Policies for sustainable products: successes and future needs



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# Overview

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- **Terms, origins and events**
- **The European Union's IPP**
- **Some preliminary impressions**
- **Rise and decline**
- **Science focus – some remarks**
- **Some strategic thoughts**

# Terms

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- **Different names:**
  - Product oriented environmental policy
  - Ecological product policy
  - Integrated Product Policy (IPP)
  - Sustainable Product Policy (SPP)
  - Policies for sustainable products

# The origins

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- **Roots:**
  - 70ies: “How to live in the future?” → Consumption criticism
  - 80ies: Successes of process-related environment policy  
→ Shift to other sources of pollution
  - End of 80ies/90ies → Topic of research
- **First “events”**
  - 1993: First “Green goods” conference
  - 1994: Dutch policy document

# The European Union's IPP

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- **Agenda setting:**

- 1992: 5th EAP: Some (modest) reference to products
- 1996: Progress report on EAP: Explicit reference to IPP
- 1996-1998: Study of E&Y/SPRU on behalf of DG XI/DG III
- December 1, 1998: IPP-workshop Brussels

- **Policy formulation:**

- May 7-8, 1999: Informal EU-Environmental Council on IPP
- February 2001: Green Paper (COM [2001] 68 final)
- Integration of IPP in 6th EAP (2001-2010) and European SD-Strategy
- June 2003: IPP-Communication (COM [2003] 302 final)
- April 2004: EU Parliament decision

- **Policy implementation:**

- Activities of different DG's

- **Policy monitoring:**

- December 2009: Report from the Commission on the state of implementation (COM [2009] 693 final)



# IPP Practises: The example of the EU I

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## – **Governance philosophy:**

### – Green paper (2001):

- Preference for getting the prices right
- But “as long as this is not the case: Self regulatory and voluntary instruments

### – Communication (2003):

- Preference for voluntary instruments
- Description of tasks of stakeholders
- But: Missing clarification of relationship between roles and responsibilities of policy and market actors

### – Pilot projects: Voluntary approach

## – **Priorities:**

### – List of actions according to EU-Communication, especially:

- Public procurement
- Promotion of application of life cycle thinking
- Possibilities of obligations for product design
- Pilot projects
- Identification of the products with greatest potentials for environmental improvements



# IPP Practises: The example of the EU II

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## – **Institutional embedding:**

- Modest (quantitative) staff capacity and permanent changes (missing „memory“)
- No own horizontal working group, case-by-case consultation
- Regular IPP network EU-MS- (some) stakeholders (in the past also: informal IPP-network)

## – **Implementation:**

- Co-operation and coordination
  - Energy using products (EuP)
  - Eco-labelling
  - European Platform on LCA
  - Green Public Procurement (GPP)
- Insufficient co-operation and coordination
  - REACH
  - Market based instruments (e.g. taxes and incentives)
- Missing indicators, insufficient monitoring



# IPP Practises: The example of the EU III

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## – **Integration:**

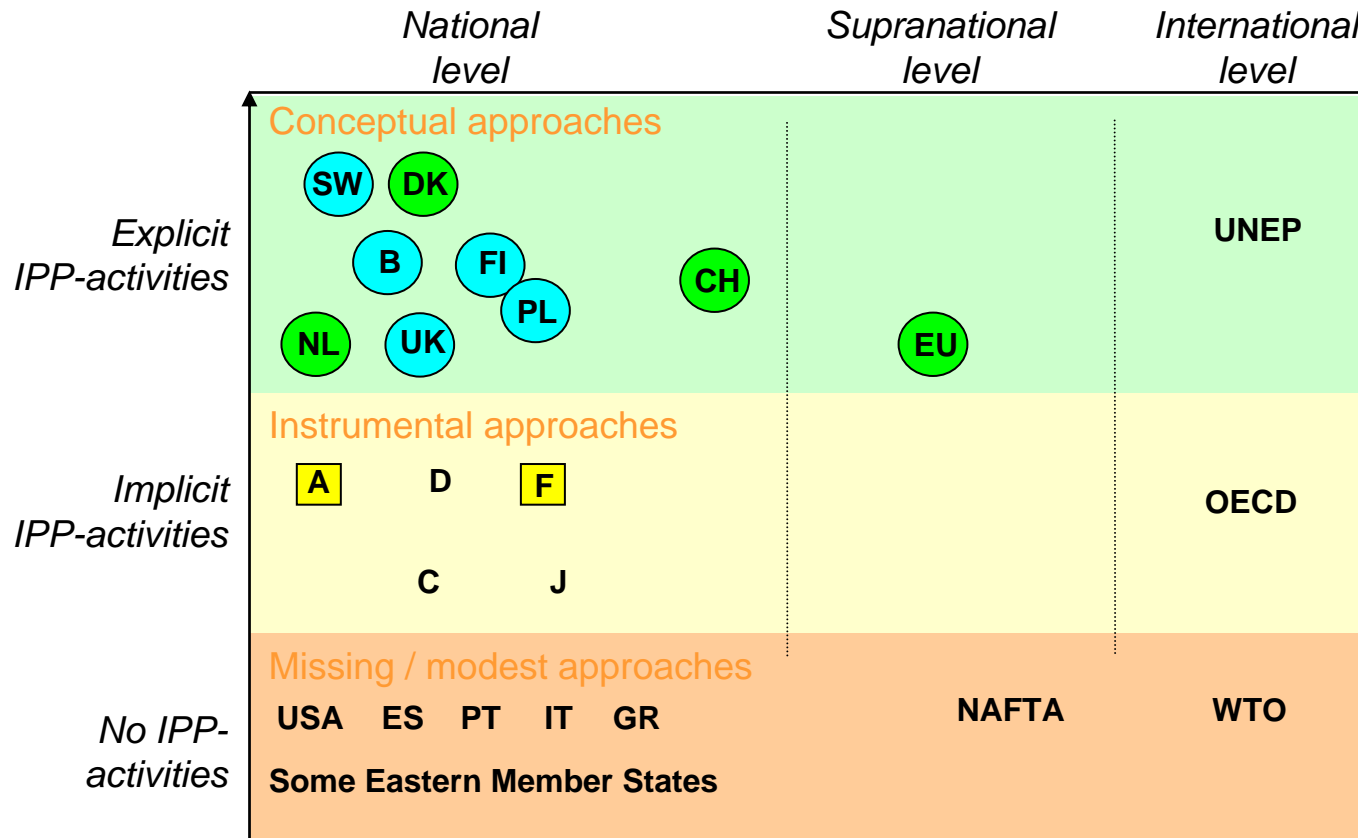
- Positive: Linkages with EAP and SD-strategy but:
  - Inconcrete
  - Missing corridors for goals and actions
- Surplus of superstructures (→ see other slide)
- Positive example: Linkage with ETAP of 2004
- Negative example: Innovation action plan of 2004
- Relationship IPP – SCP

## – **EU and Member States**


- IPP-network: Communication, (best) practises and learning
- No explicit implementation obligations
- No explicit reporting (→ voluntary self-indications, documented on website)
- No monitoring



# IPP practises: Some multi-level impressions



 = explicit formulated product policy

 = explicit formulated product policy with important linkages to strategy for sustainable development and/or sustainable consumption and production (SCP) - strategy

 = product policy dealt in strategy for sustainable development

# IPP practises: Some preliminary impressions I

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- **Top-down approaches ~ conceptual approaches**
- **Bottom-up approaches ~ instrumental approaches**
- **But: Neither conceptual nor instrumental approaches do necessarily mean that implementation takes place:**
  - **Conceptual approaches:**
    - Implementation deficit, i.e. mismatch concepts and practises, example: UK
  - **Instrumental approaches:**
    - Let 1,000 flowers flourish or “Anything goes”
    - Implementation deficit, example: France
    - Structural randomness

# IPP practises: Some preliminary impressions II

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- **“Experimental implementation” (Matland 1995)**
- **“Implementation was to shape the policy rather than the inverse” (Pallemaerts 2006)**
- **No explicit evidence for reformulation**
- **Implicitly: Perception as “left” project**
  - Changes of governments – freezing, refocusation and/or reinterpretation of IPP-activities
- **Strategic “overload”:**
  - EAP (Environmental Action Programme)
  - SDS (Sustainable Development Strategy)
  - Europe 2020 - Strategy
- **But: DG ENTR: Product policy as “Sustainable Product Policy” for European industry’s competitiveness**

# Science‘ focus – some remarks

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- **Swedish FLIPP-programme** (Furthering Life Cycle Considerations through Product Policy)
- **About 25 DG RES-projects**
  - Life cycle thinking
  - Eco-design
  - Framework conditions
- **Some DG ENV consultancy projects**
- **Instrumental related research (e.g. labelling, GPP, incentives)**
- **Roles of social media (Web 2.0, Facebook etc.)**
- **Socio-demographics and policy instruments**
- **Product-service systems**
- ...



# Rise and decline...

## Integrated Product Policy (IPP):

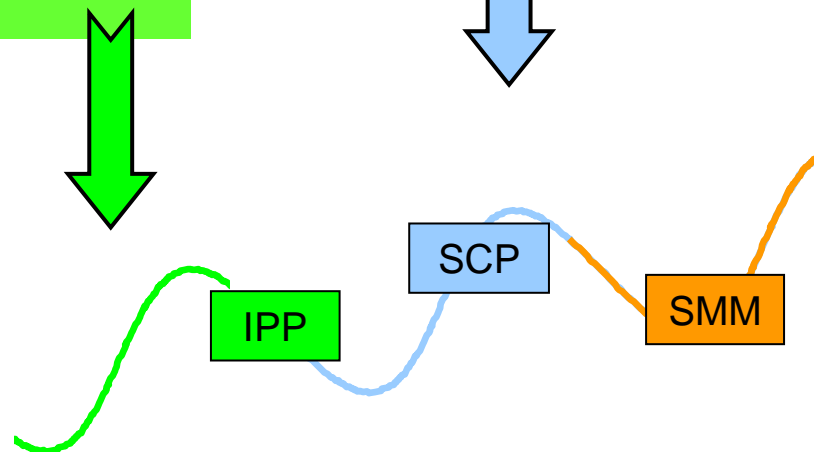
*“Integrated Product Policy (IPP) seeks to support sustainable development by reducing the negative environmental impacts of products throughout their life-cycle ‘from cradle to grave’. The life-cycle of a product is (...) covers all the areas from the extraction of natural resources, through their design, manufacture, assembly, marketing, distribution, sale and use to their eventual disposal as waste” (EU 2003)*

## Sustainable consumption and production (SCP):

*“The challenge is to create a virtuous circle: improving the overall environmental performance of products throughout their life-cycle, promoting and stimulating the demand of better products and production technologies and helping consumers to make better choices.” (EU SCP/SIP AP 2008)*

## Sustainable material management (SMM):

*“SMM is an integrated policy approach that seeks to reduce environmental impacts of material use and conserve natural resources throughout the life cycle” (EU Informal Environment Council 2010)*



# Some strategic thoughts

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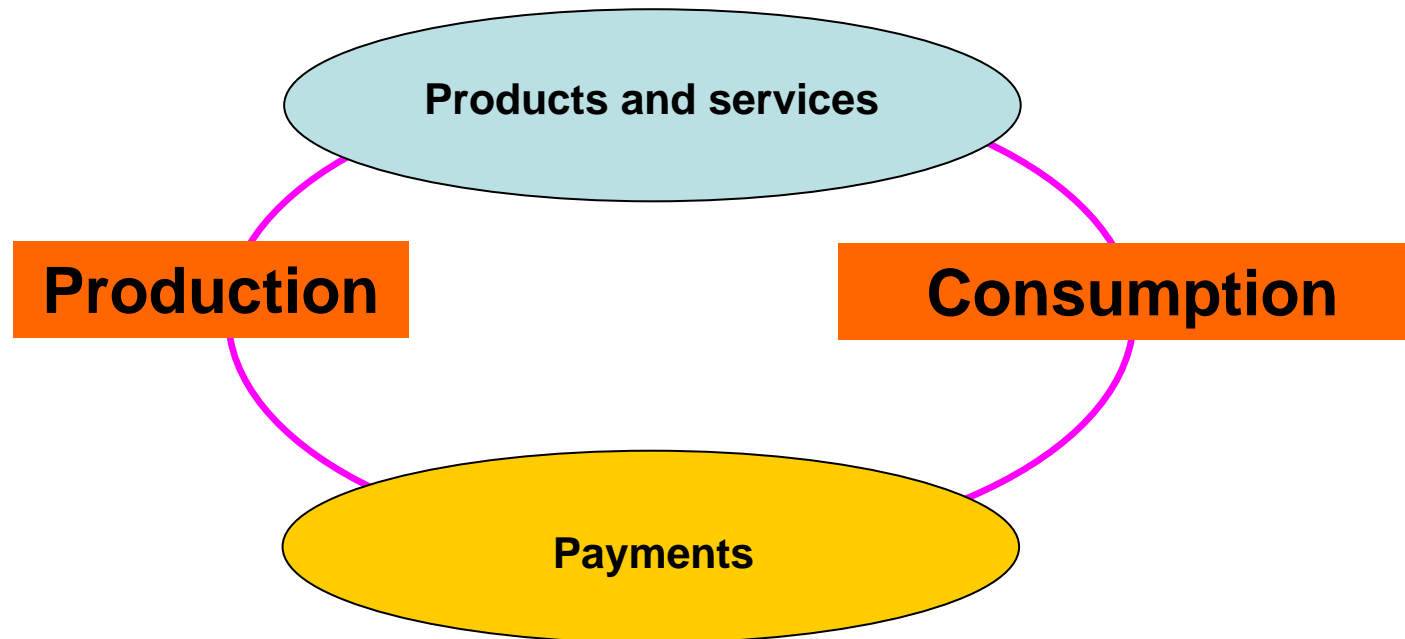
- (1) Integrate IPP and SCP**
- (2) Goals, governance and indicators**
- (3) Sustainable innovation**
- (4) Synergy and combination**
- (5) Contextualisation**
- (6) Institutionalisation**
- (7) Gains and added values**

# 1. Thought – Integrate IPP into SCP

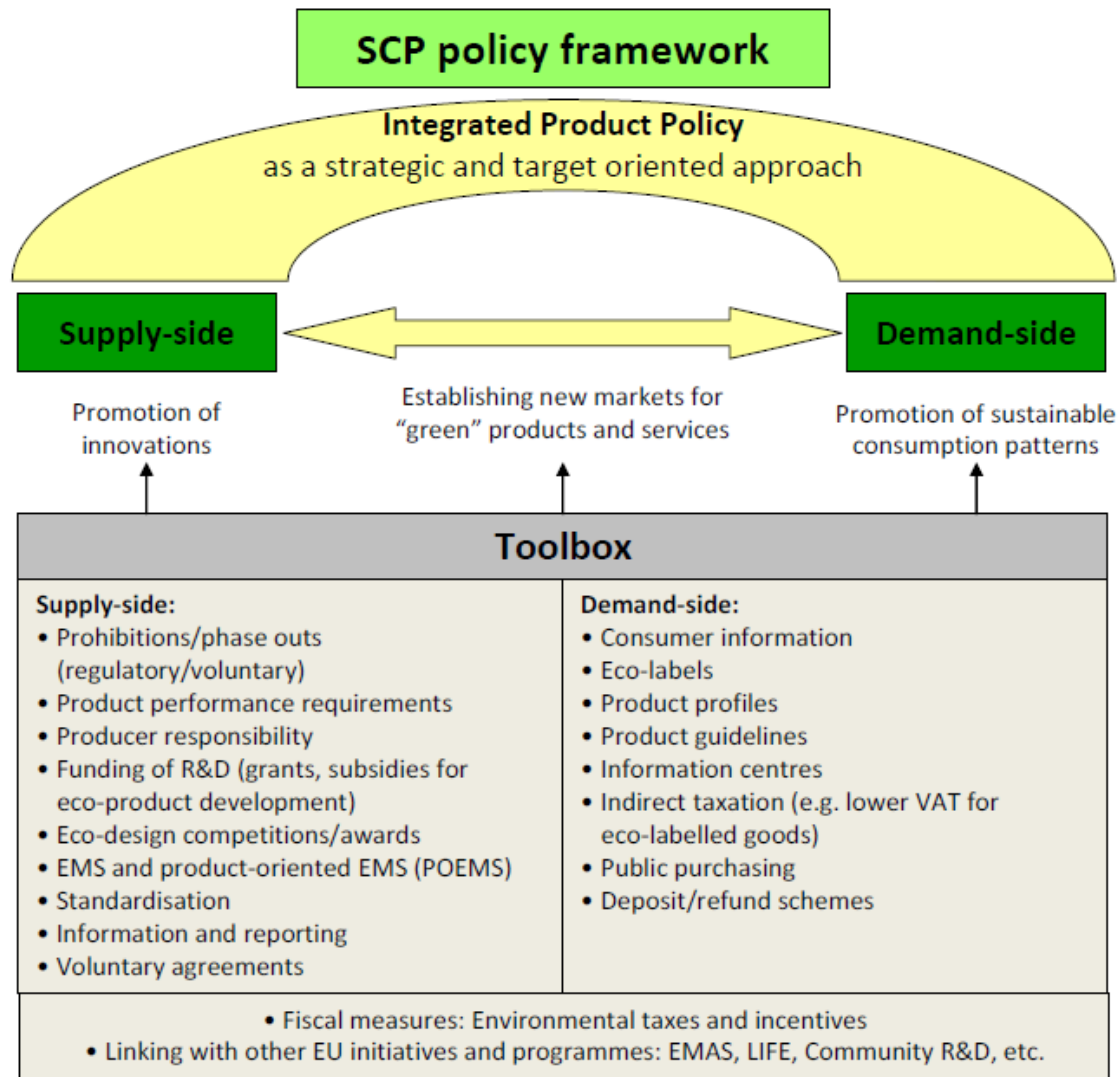
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- Products as “inherent” connection



# 1. Thought – Integrate IPP into SCP





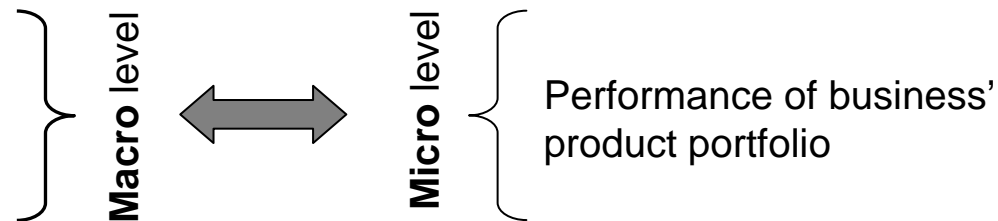
## 2. Thought – Goals, governance & indicators



- **Goals → “Slimming diet”**
  - Develop quantitative targets (e.g. reduction of energy consumption of household electronics along life-cycle by 90%) → Quality economy instead of throughput economy
  - Link to “Millenium consumption goals” (MCG) proposed for Rio+20
- **Governance → Clarify governance “philosophy”**

### – **Indicators**

- Implementation
- Output
- Outcome
- Impact



### 3. Thought – Stimulate sustainable innovation

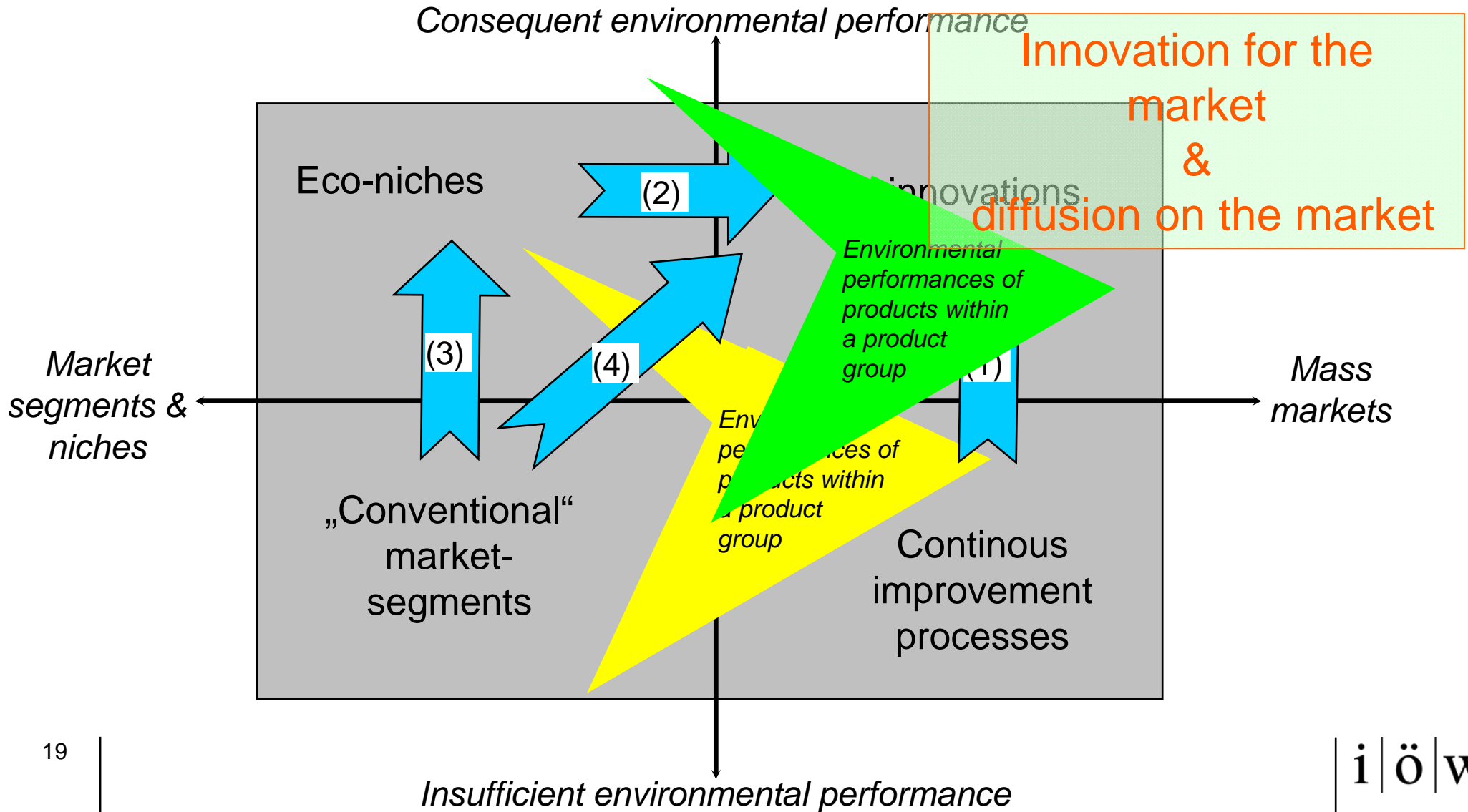
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- **Focus: More prospective than retrospective – Innovation**
- **In general, four types:**
  - Type 1: Product improvement (incremental innovation)
  - Type 2: Product redesign
  - Type 3: Function innovation
  - Type 4: System innovation
- **Commission: concentration on first two types**
- ⇒ **SD needs all types → consider it.**
- ⇒ **Transition management (e.g., NL, UK)**
- ⇒ **Commission does not touch this strategy, also pilot projects did not examine this path.**
- ⇒ **Start experimenting with transition paths!**

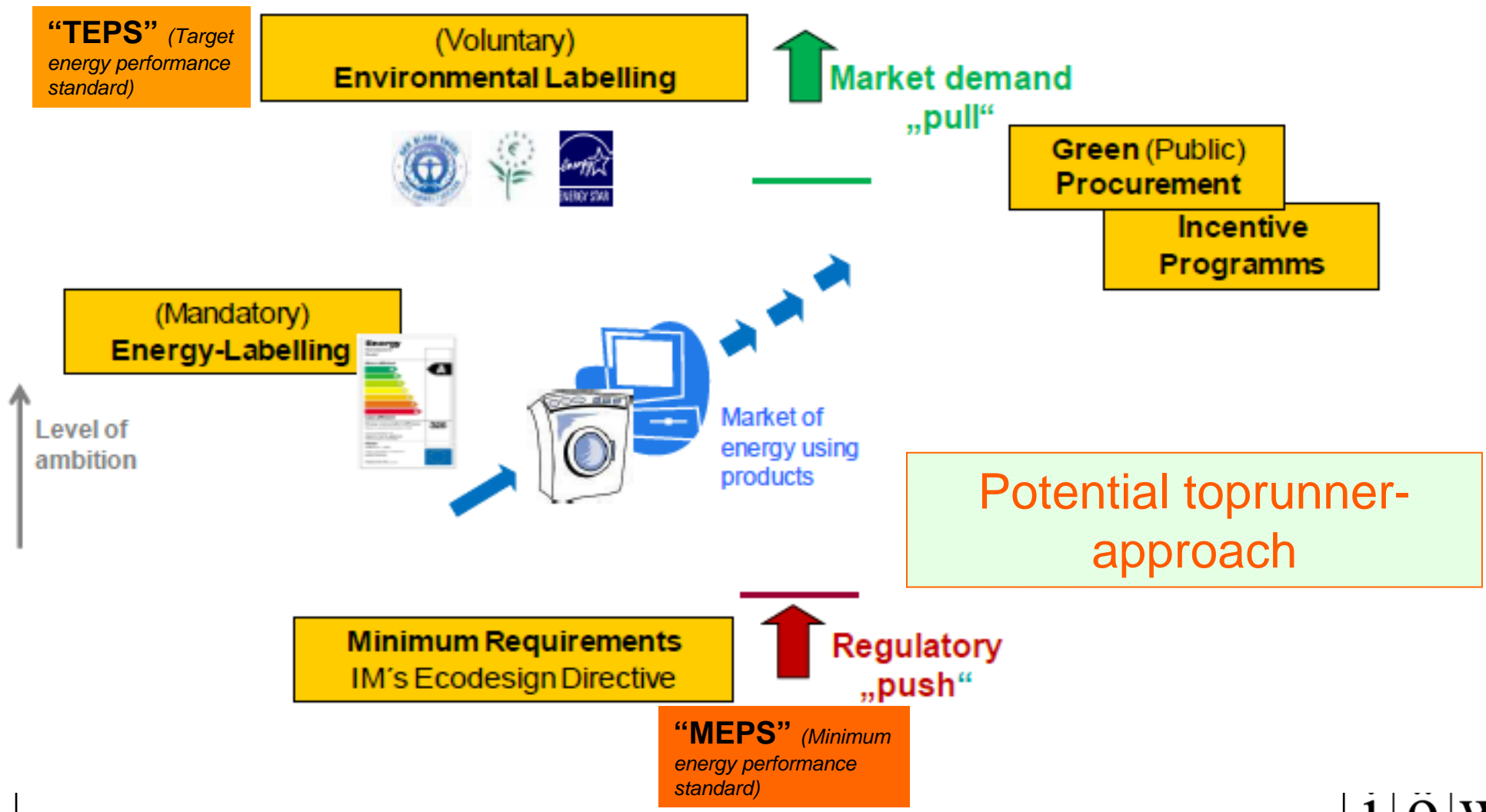


### 3. Thought – Strategies and the boomerang





# 4. Thought – Synergy & combination





## 5. Thought – Contextualisation

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- **Conceptual level:**

- Goal setting, monitoring, principles etc.

- **Implementation – “tailored” policy approached**

- Reference to concrete area (e.g. personnel mobility, housing, food)

- Heterogeneity of target groups

- Business

- Retailers

- Consumers

- Linkage production and consumption

- Consideration of windows of opportunity – time strategies

- Policy packages necessary – no one fits-all solution

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## 6. Thought – Institutionalisation

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- **Horizontal working group (interministerial).**
- **Sufficient and permanent staff.**
- **Leadership and responsibilities at DG ENV & environmental ministries.**
- **“Ownership” & competences for instruments often allocated to other DG’s/ministries, i.e. reallocation and co-operation needed**
- **New and modified institutional answers necessary**
- **Support of institutional learning, exchange of experiences, transfer of know how**
- **International evidence database**
  - Experiences with instruments and approaches
  - Qualitative and quantitative data
  - Evaluations

## 7. Thought – Clarify gains

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- **Business:**
  - Economic gains
  - Administrative reliefs
  - (Inter)national competitiveness
- **Retailers**
  - Economic gains
- **Consumers**
  - Economic gains

# What is most needed to progress towards sustainable products?

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- **Shift from placebos to actions**
- **Visions → “Slimming diet” of European patterns**
- **Linkage between innovation, diffusion and consumption policies**
- **Clear leadership, e.g. toprunner approach**
- **Institutionalisation**



# Thank you for your attention



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