Timeline misalignment in the CAP: why ex-post evaluations currently fall short of informing next policy cycles

Group of Public Administration and Policy meeting - 3 July 2025

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Background

- Research question both from academic and EC experience (Joint Research Center)
- First discussion (lasted three years' time span)
- Joint project with Daniel
- Crossed competences: agronomy, political science, governance, EU bubble

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Research process

- Literature review
- Expert consultation: academic, commission staff, academic policy advising position
- Two literature streams: (EU) policy evaluation, Common Agricultural Policy

Main aim: Understand the causes and consequences of timeline misalignment between evaluation and new rounds of policy making.

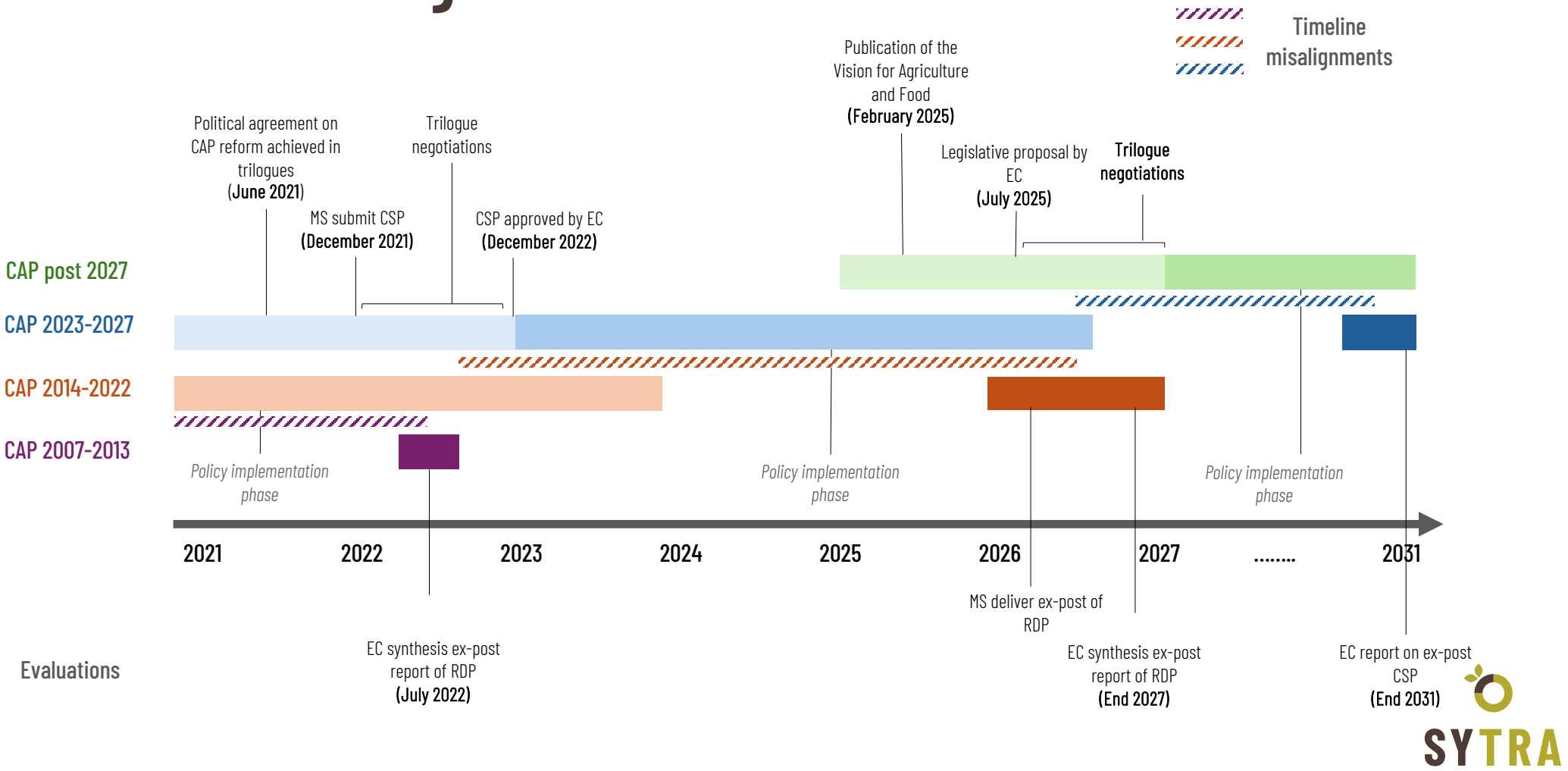
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Main results

- Timeline misalignment by design:
    1. Intersecting timelines
- Go beyond the ‘by design’ explore the underlying dynamics:
    2. Evaluating compliance vs performance
    3. Evaluation as a (learning) process and the role of informal evaluations
    4. Evaluation in public debate and beyond

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1. Intersecting timelines



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2. From compliance to performance (?)

- Performance highly dependent on impact timeline
- Compliance indicators vs performance indicators*
- EC approach in the new CAP – from the EU to MS evaluation framework

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3. Evaluation as a (learning) process

- Due to the timeline misalignment : suboptimal output and informal process trying to learn from implementation experience
- If the learning process is informal: lack of transparency and accountability (power?)
- Better Regulation paradox?

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4. Evaluation in public debate & beyond

- To which decision-making arenas do they arrive, in which committees are they discussed, how do they concretely inform strategic choices
- Public debate: poorly discussed even though the Helpdesk is trying to do better
- Beyond: evaluations hold great potential if those key questions can be answered: to who, when, for what?

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