



Biostimulants: Framing a New Tool for Agricultural Innovation

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THE BIG PICTURE: THE CONTEXT DRIVING THE EMERGENCE OF BIOSTIMULANTS

The paradox for 2030: we need to overcome resource constraints to meet higher demand

WATER



30%
DEMAND INCREASE
(IFPRI)

FOOD



50%
DEMAND INCREASE
(FAO)

ENERGY



50%
DEMAND INCREASE
(IEA)

The Green Revolution was a triumph for increasing the food supply, but also has undesired side effects

WHITE SIDE

WE CONTRADICTED THE PROPHECY OF MALTHUS

WE HAVE MANAGED TO FEED PEOPLE USING LESS SOIL THAN BEFORE:
38% OF WORLD LAND FARMED
(VS 82% NEEDED AT 1961 PRODUCTION RATES)



BLACK SIDE

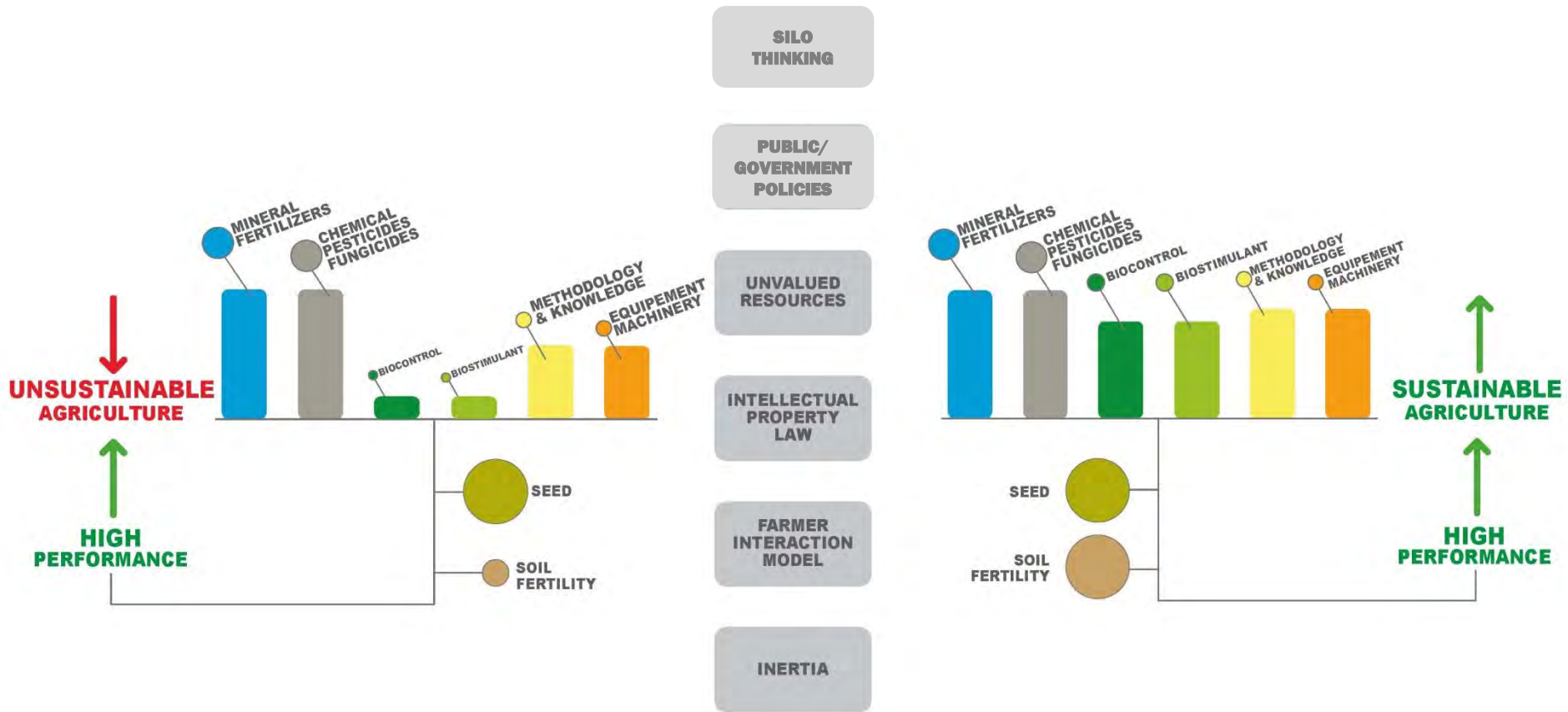
WE HAVEN'T TAKEN ENOUGH CARE

NUMEROUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

IMPORTANT ENERGY FOOTPRINT

HEALTH RISKS FOR USERS & CONSUMERS

Numerous obstacles prevent bio-based technologies from making their full contribution to a more sustainable system



Ever more demanding consumers have more and more influence on agriculture and how it is regulated

Healthy and safe food without a lot of chemicals

Enough food for my family



Protect Nature until I grow up

Be nice to animals

Farmers also need many things from agriculture

A photograph of two smiling farmers in a lush green cornfield. The farmer on the left wears a wide-brimmed straw hat and a brown long-sleeved shirt. The farmer on the right wears a white cap and a blue t-shirt. They are both holding white plastic containers. Four thought bubbles are overlaid on the image, each containing text.

**Fertile land
for future
generations**

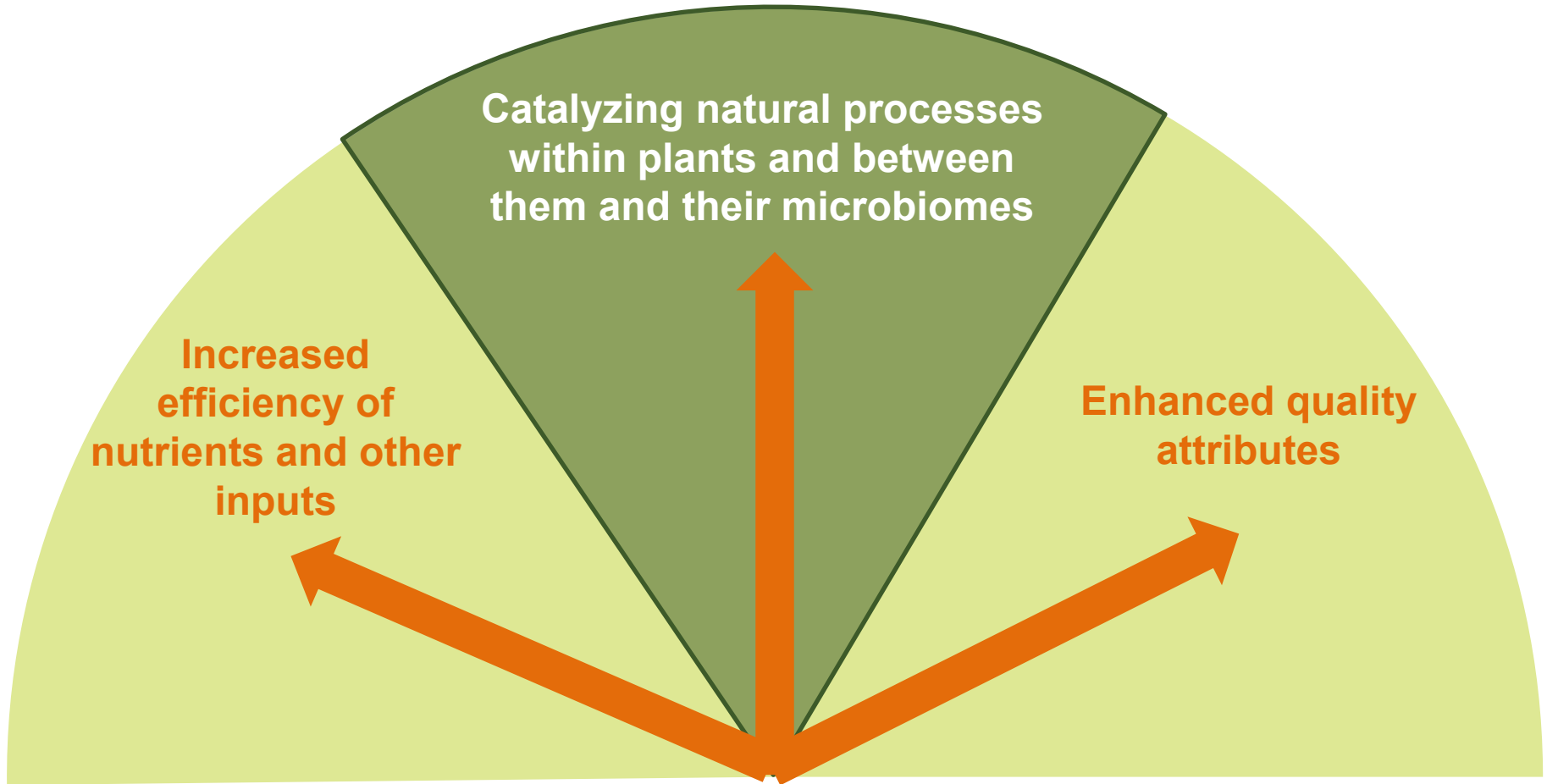
**A
livelihood
for my
family**

**High-quality
crops that I can
sell anywhere in
the world**

**Crops that
grow in
difficult
conditions**

THE ROLE OF BIOSTIMULANTS IN SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION

Biostimulants are enablers



Biostimulants support the 3 pillars of the EU's 2020 Strategy

Smart
growth



Inclusive
growth

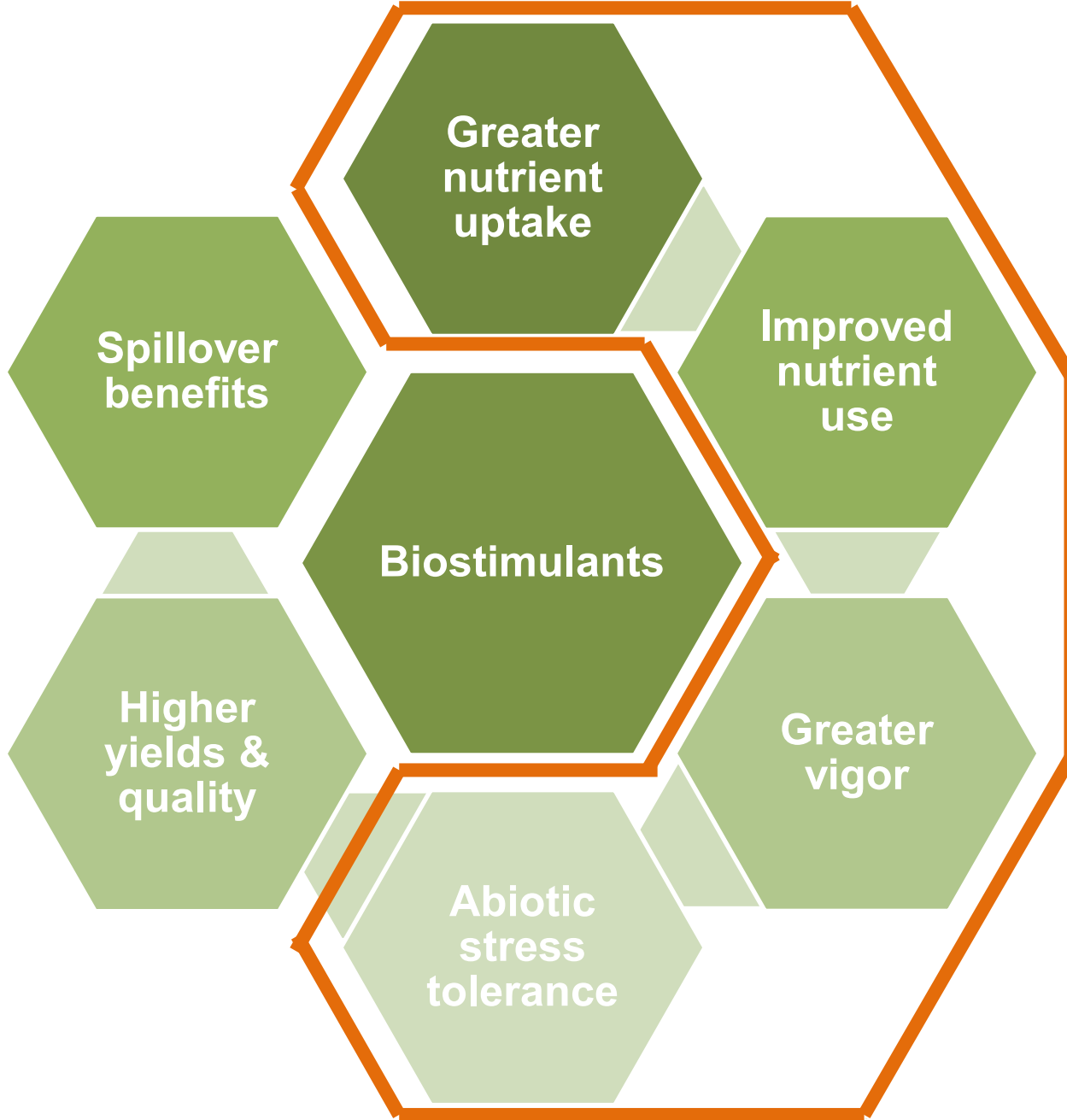


Sustainable
growth



“Biostimulants are defined more by what they do than by what they are.”

**Prof. Patrick du Jardin
Université de Liège - Gembloux**

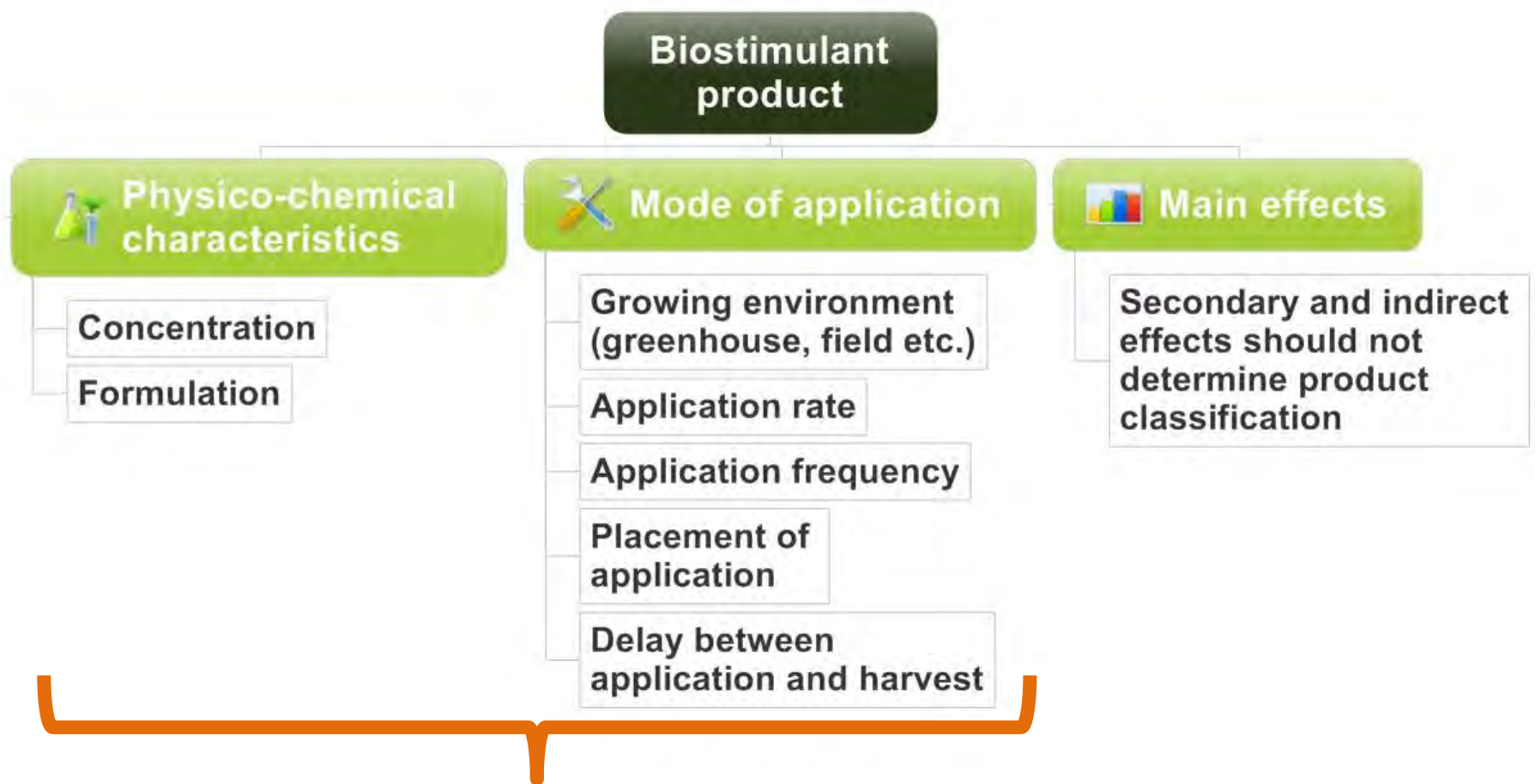


**The basis of
EBIC's
“functional
use”
definition**

Plant biostimulants defined:

“A material which contains substance(s) and/or micro-organisms whose function when applied to plants or the rhizosphere is to stimulate natural processes to enhance/benefit nutrient uptake, nutrient efficiency, tolerance to abiotic stress, and crop quality, independent of its nutrient content.”

A holistic concept of a product



The risk profile can only be derived from this holistic view.

EBIC at a glance

- 11 members in June 2011 → **37 members** today
- Dedicated to creating a **truly European market for biostimulants** to achieve:
 - More sustainable agriculture
 - Innovation-based job creation
- Milestones:
 - Secured the place of **biostimulants in the revised fertilizer regulation**
 - Negotiated a regulatory **definition** with EU authorities and other stakeholders
 - Co-designed (with authorities) an **innovative regulatory framework** for ensuring safety and quality and fostering continuing innovation and competition
 - Recognized as the **global reference** for the biostimulant industry
- Launched Code of Conduct for Placing Biostimulants on the Market
 - 15 October 2013

APPROPRIATE REGULATION: THE FOUNDATION FOR MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Regulatory needs

FOSTER INNOVATION THROUGH A **REGISTRY SYSTEM**,
BETTER ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE NEW PRODUCTS AND
TECHNOLOGIES THAN TRADITIONAL LIST SYSTEMS

TO LET COMPANIES INVEST:
THE REQUIRED **DOSSIER**
SHOULD BE **MANAGEABLE**,
EVEN FOR **SMEs**

**FOR RELATED
INDUSTRIES**

TO REGULATE RELATIONSHIPS

PROPORTIONATE

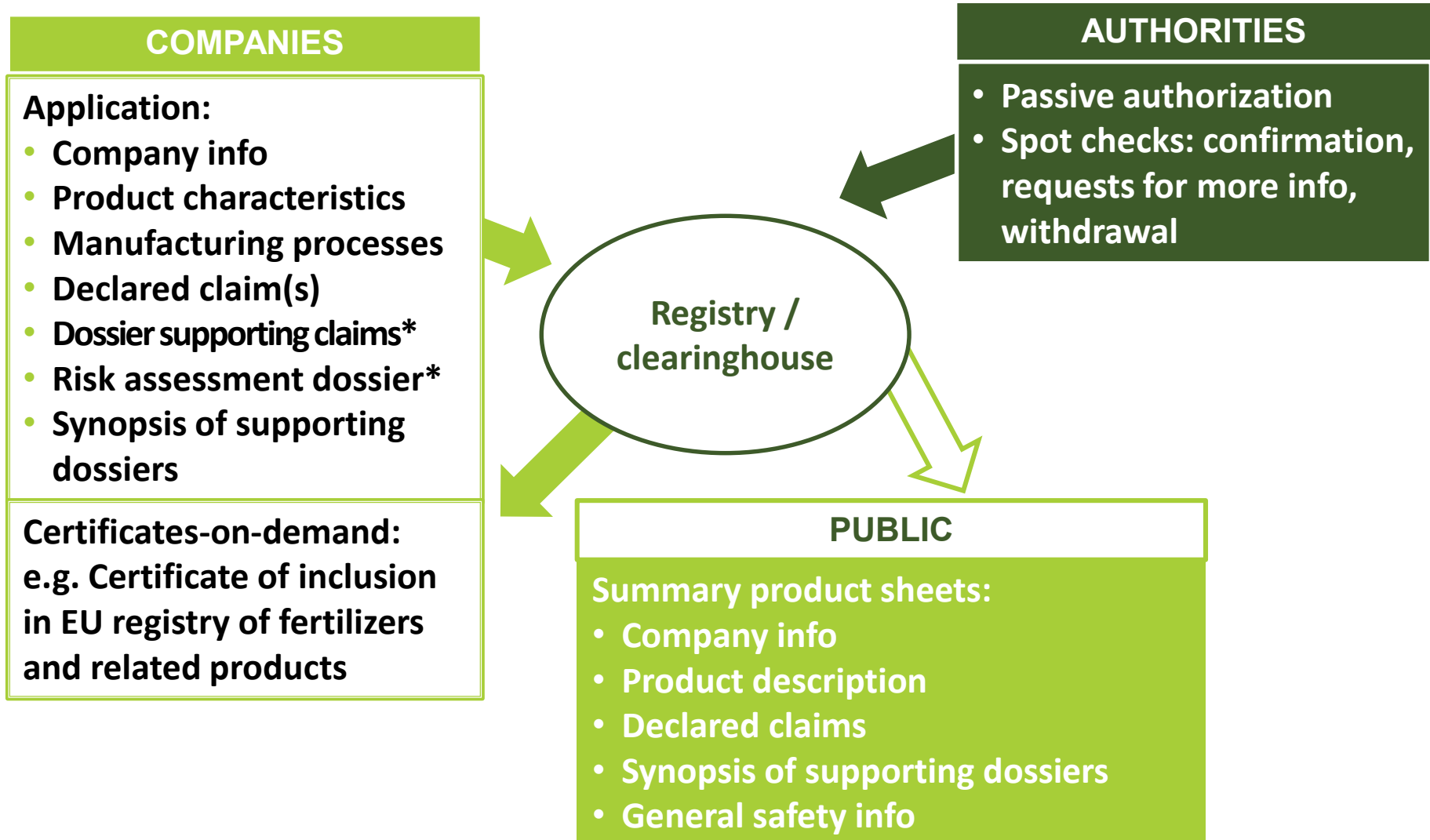
FAIR

FOR CONSUMERS

TO PROTECT THEM AND
GUARANTEE FOOD
SAFETY & QUALITY

NEW REGULATION

The registry proposed by EBIC



* Data will be held by companies, accessible to authorities on request.

“Dual-use products” and fair competition

- ✓ The claims justification needs to be compelling that the product has biostimulant effects otherwise it cannot be registered as a biostimulant.
- ✓ Products need to be registered/authorized for any claims made. According to Dir. 2009/128/EC it is already illegal to make PPP claims for a product that is not authorized for use as a PPP.
- ✓ To make claims of two different natures for an identical (and not just similar) product, a producer must seek authorization under both frameworks; to lighten the burden, only the more stringent risk assessment would apply.
- ✓ In the case of doubt, a procedure will be established for review on a case-by-case basis.
- ✓ The EBIC Code of Conduct requires members to commit to respect these provisions. EBIC offers guidelines to help members comply, especially when products have a different status in various markets.

Code of Conduct on Placing Plant Biostimulants on the Market

- Launched 15 October 2013
- Implementation steps/resources:
 - Required for EBIC membership
 - Members to develop individual compliance plans
 - Guidelines for communicating about products that are regulated differently in various markets developed
- Process for investigating alleged violations
 - Independent review panel
 - Attempt to seek amicable resolution
 - Expulsion from EBIC as the ultimate recourse
 - Possibility of a quality mark in future

Why was the Code developed?

To respond to issues that affect the reputation and market potential of biostimulants and of the companies that produce them by committing to high ethical standards.

- The science behind our products will give customers a choice of effective and proven products (not “snake oil”!).
- The science behind our products will also demonstrate that they are safe for users, consumers and the environment.
- This emerging technology is a unique niche, not an attempt to bypass regulations for registering plant protection products.
- The process for placing biostimulants on the market will not create “disloyal competition”.



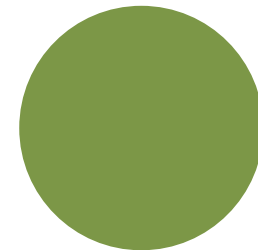
The Code is about convergence and iterative adjustments

The Code represents a journey of continuous improvement towards the future European regulation.

**Gradual convergence
through the application of
EBIC's Code of Conduct**



**Today's practices, based on
national rules, where they exist**



Future EU regulation

www.biostimulants.eu/ebic-code-of-conduct

The beginning of a journey



More information

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