

# Update on EU's SUR in pesticides

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**EGA**  
European Golf Association



**Sustainability**

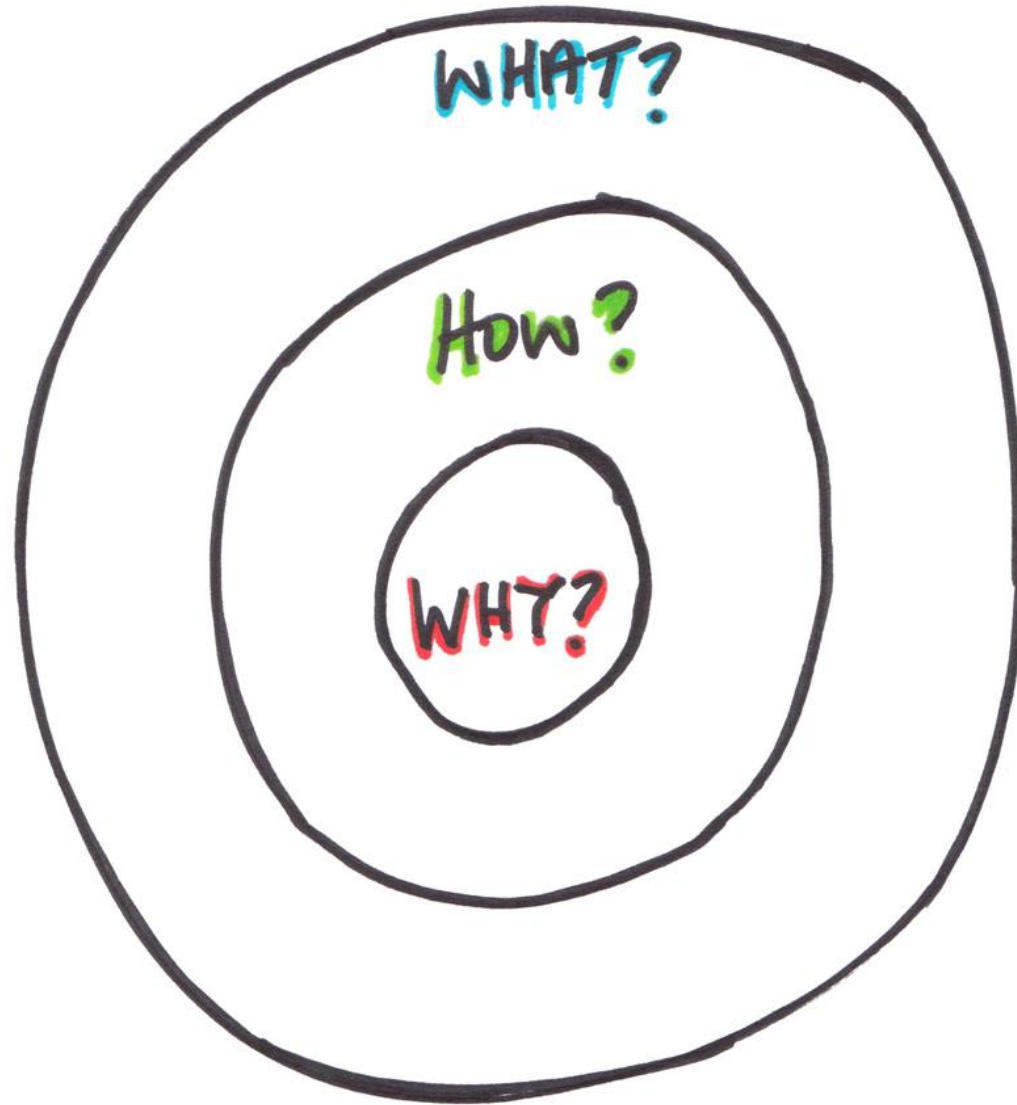
**Agronomy**

**Public Affairs**

**Turfgrass science @  
Pennsylvania State University**







# GOLFERS HEALTH (ANY RISK FOR EXPOSURE)



## GREENKEEPERS HEALTH (ANY RISK FOR EXPOSURE)



*“Pesticide use on golf courses is not as harmless as some golf course superintendents maintain.”*

Arcury-Quandt et al., 2011

# GOLF'S DNA: STEWARDSHIP

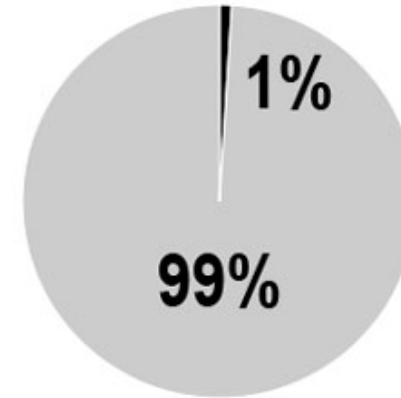


<b>Golf</b>	<b>Golfer</b>	<b>Non-golfer</b>
'Is green'	77%	42%
Is a sustainable sport	65%	29%
Does not harm nature	69%	26%
Is one with nature	67%	28%

\*winter 2023 survey by the Royal Netherlands Golf Federation



# PERCEPTION RULES POLITICS



## INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE

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*“The European golf industry has a unique opportunity to show leadership in sustainability.”*

Chris Boyd, Biodiversity Unit DG Environment,  
European Commission



*“The institutions and companies that manage golf, and profit from it, must take a lead and direct it strongly towards a more sustainable pathway.”*

Richard Holland, as Chief Conservation Officer at WWF



# ONGOING/INCREASING PRESSURE FROM SOCIETY ON

- Water use
- Pesticide use (risk for exposure and environmental considerations)
- Biodiversity increase (vs. manicured golf courses)
- Exclusive use of land
- Other current topics: CO<sub>2</sub>, climate change, energy



# INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



2000



2015

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



2015



2019



2020



Brussels, 22.6.2022  
COM(2022) 305 final  
2022/0196 (COD)

Proposal for a  
**REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL**  
on the sustainable use of plant protection products and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

2022

Considerable impact for the European Golf Sector

- The current **2009-Directive** on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (**SUD**) gives individual countries flexibility to implement proposed conditions with regard to timing, reduction targets, implementation of Integrated Pest Management, etc.
- European Green Deal and the Commissions Farm-to-fork-strategy → evaluations were carried out: **serious deficiencies in the implementation, application and enforcement of the SUD in some Member States**. This urged the Commission to introduce stricter rules, for example in the form of a regulation at EU level to increase coherence and introduce more effective policies in individual Member States.
- Hence, the **draft Regulation** on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (**SUR**) is more restrictive and does not provide countries flexibility. A Regulation is a **binding legislative act, applicable in its entirety in all EU Member States that overrules national laws and applies immediately**.

- A 50% (0-30-70-80%) reduction in pesticide use for agri- and horticulture by 2030.
- A ban on the use of all pesticides outside of agri- and horticulture in the European Union as of the second half of 2024.
- All chemical or biological substances, low risk and basic substances or more hazardous substances.
- Applicable in 'sensitive areas' and any public and private space including all sport fields.

# KEY-POINTS IN EUROPEAN GOLF'S POSITION STATEMENT

Active pesticide reduction and safety strategies

Regulated entrance

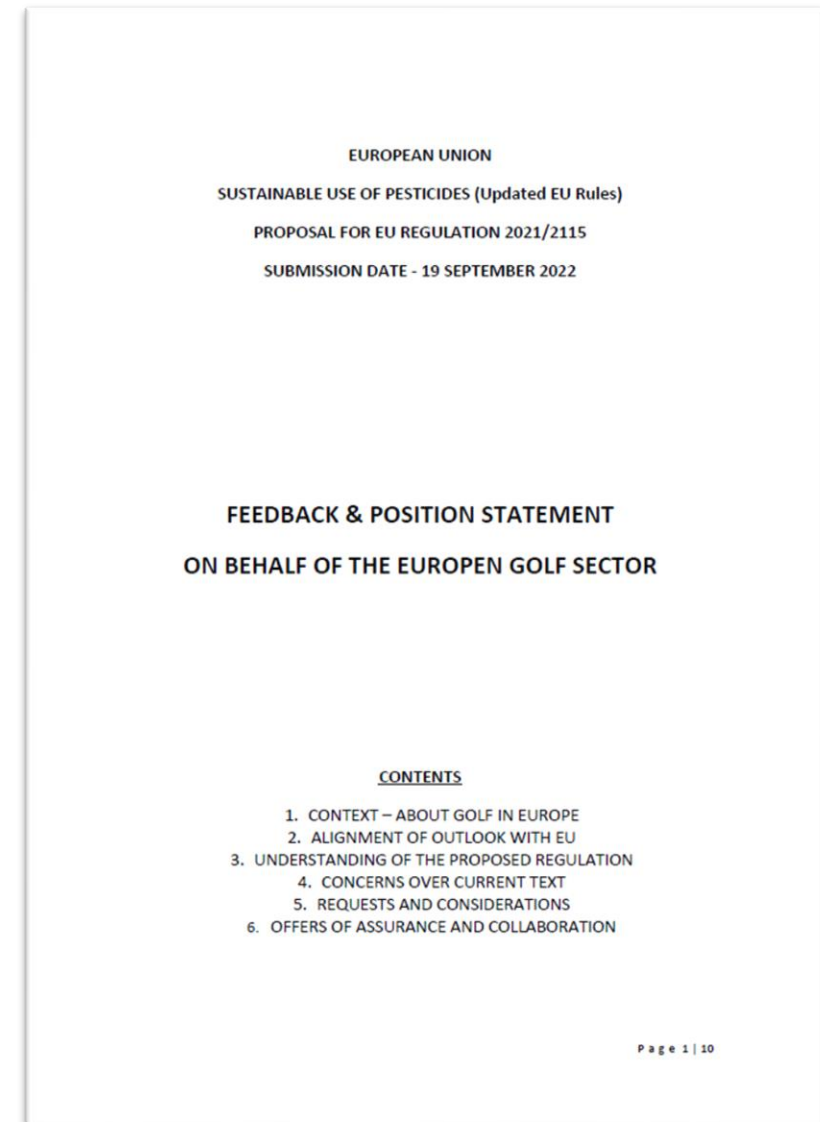
Low risk exposure profile

Co-regulatory system

Health benefits

Biodiversity development privately funded

Commerce/revenue/tourism investments



## CALL TO ACTION FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

1. Address human health (*any* risk for exposure)

2. Drastically reduce pesticide use

3. Biodiversity development

→ *Aesthetics are no argument towards governments to justify pesticide input*





- **PHASE I: Impact Assessment**
- **PHASE II: Strategy & Roadmap development  
Advocacy in Brussels**
- **PHASE III: Long term strategy in sustainable golf & representation in Brussels**

# EUROPEAN GOLF'S COLLABORATIVE PLATFORM

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# EGA



# EGA



# THE 3P POWERFIELD IN SUSTAINABILITY

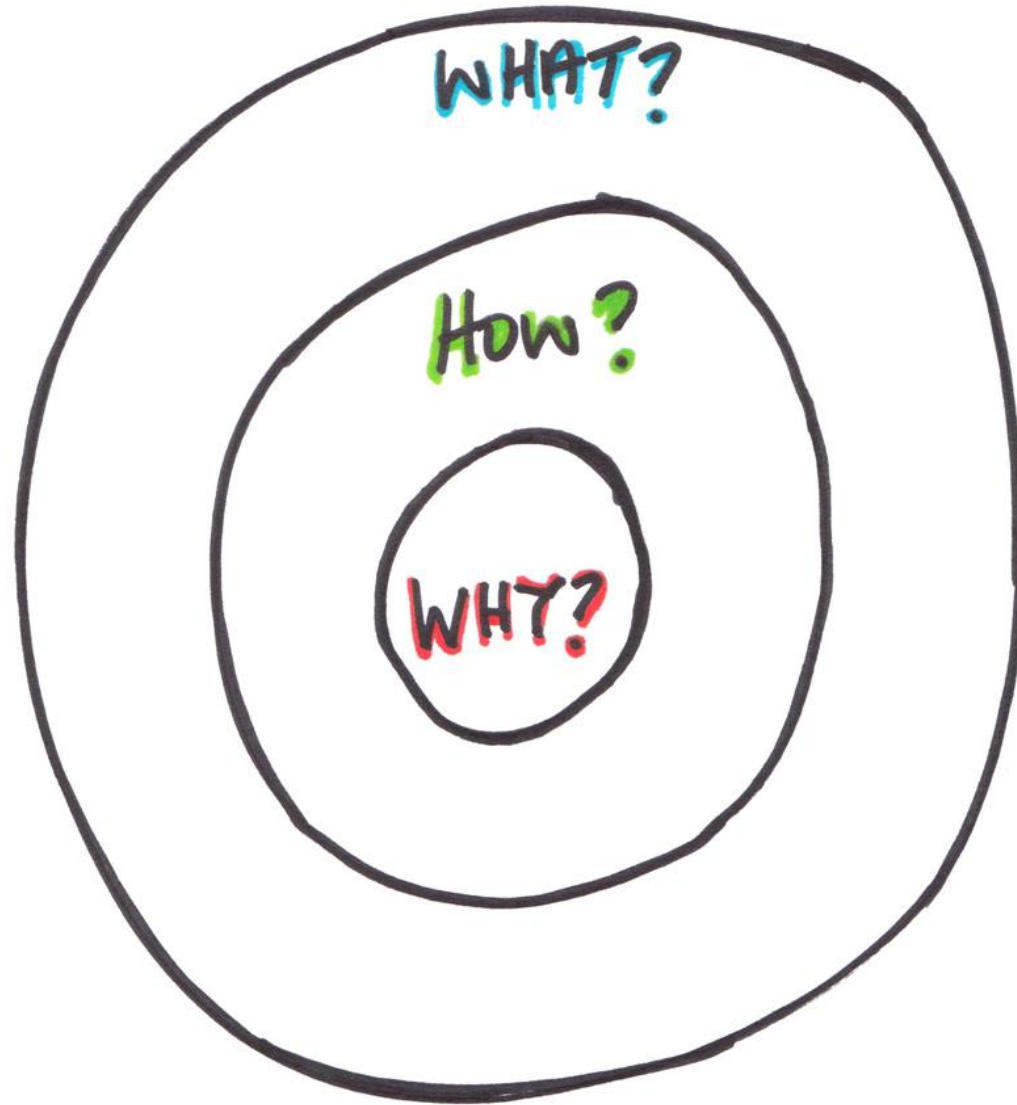
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Health benefits  
Playing quality  
Risk for exposure



Biodiversity development  
Environmental/water pollution

Business model

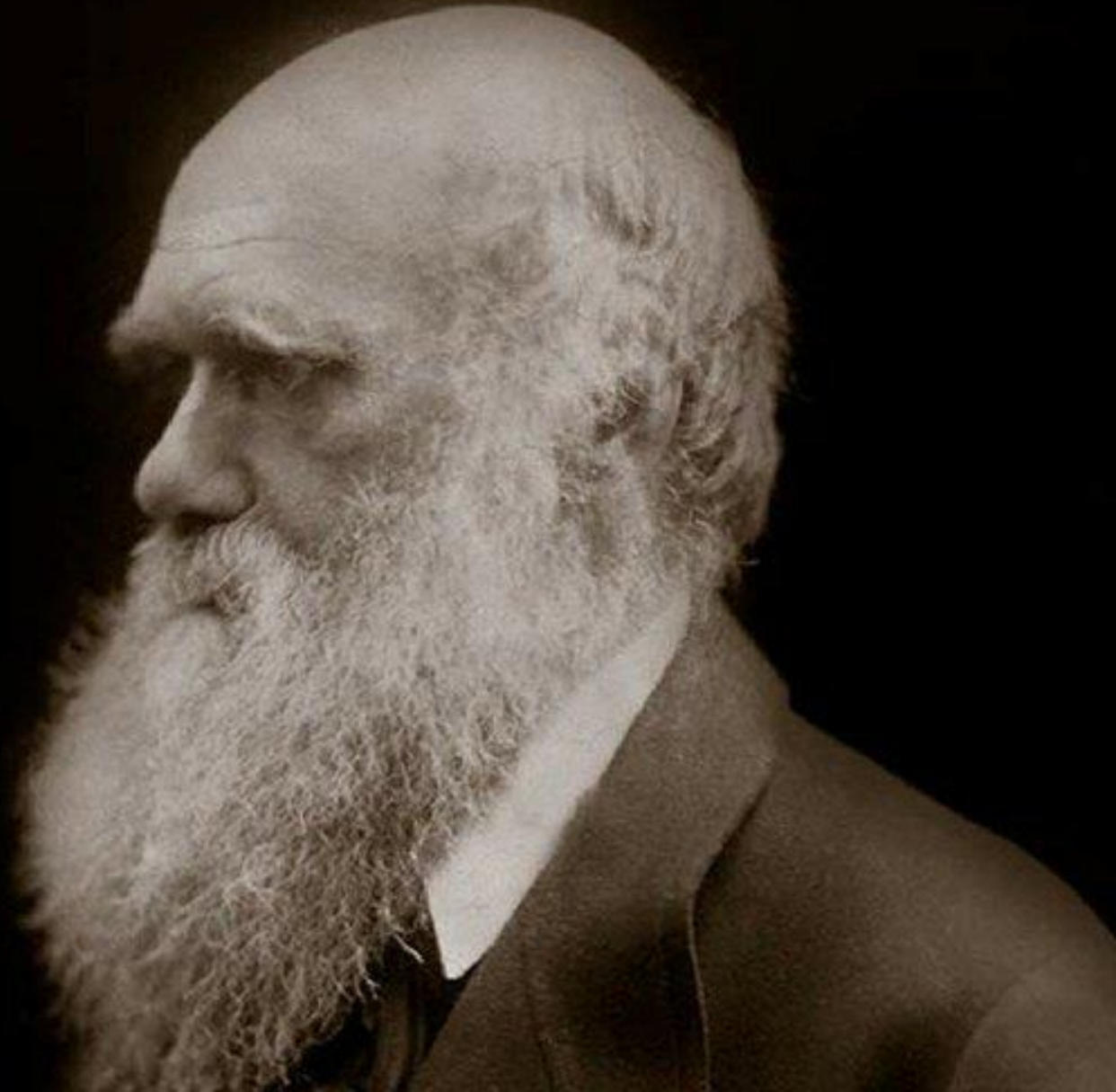




**CHANGES  
AHEAD**

"It is not the  
strongest species  
that survives, nor the  
most intelligent, but  
the most responsive  
to change."

Charles Darwin





# LEAD THE CHANGE OR THE CHANGE WILL LEAD YOU

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*"If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got."*

Albert Einstein

*"Don't manage. Lead change before you have to."*

Jack Welch, as CEO of General Electric







**2022**

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**2023**

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**2024**

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**2025**

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**2026**

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**2027**

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**2028**

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**2029**

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**2030**

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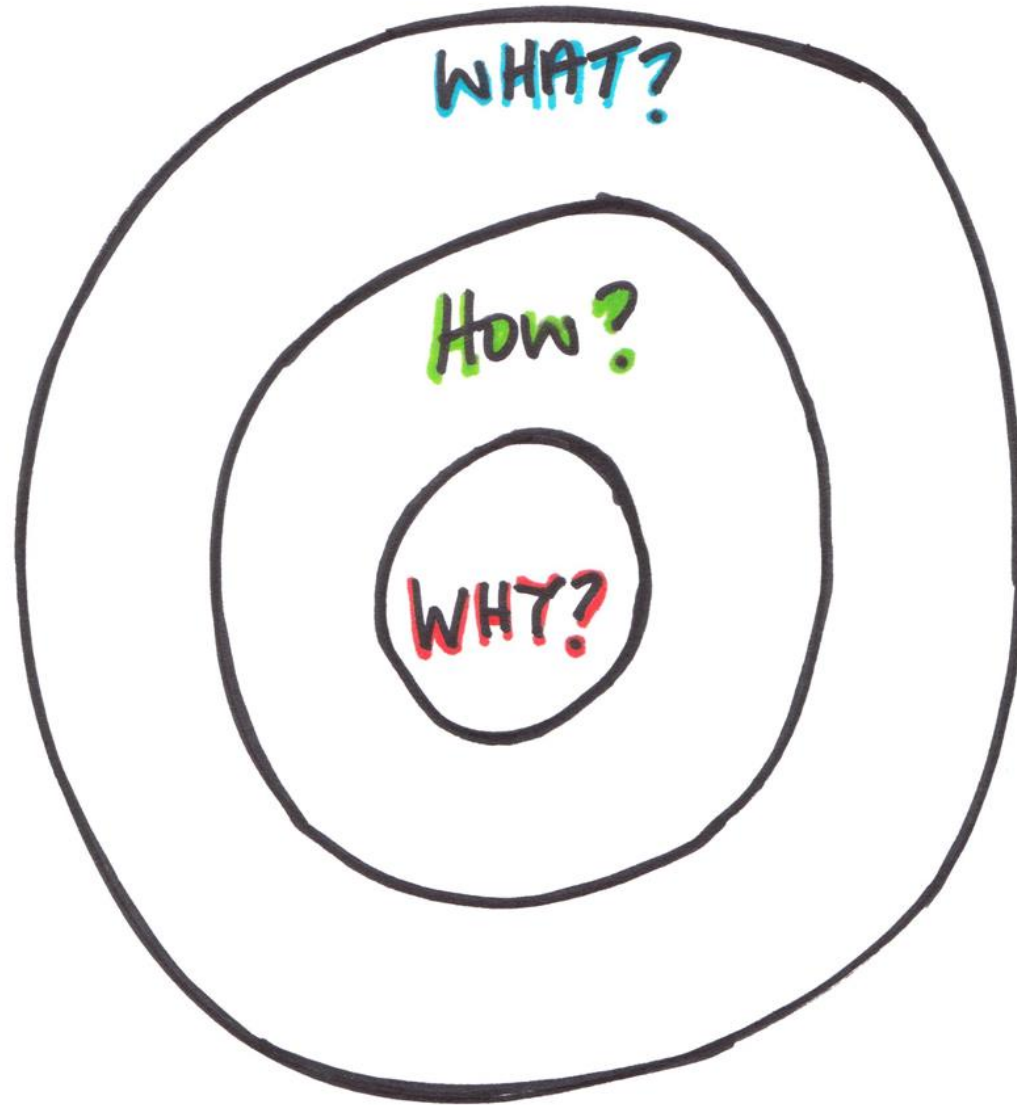
Stakeholder dialogue

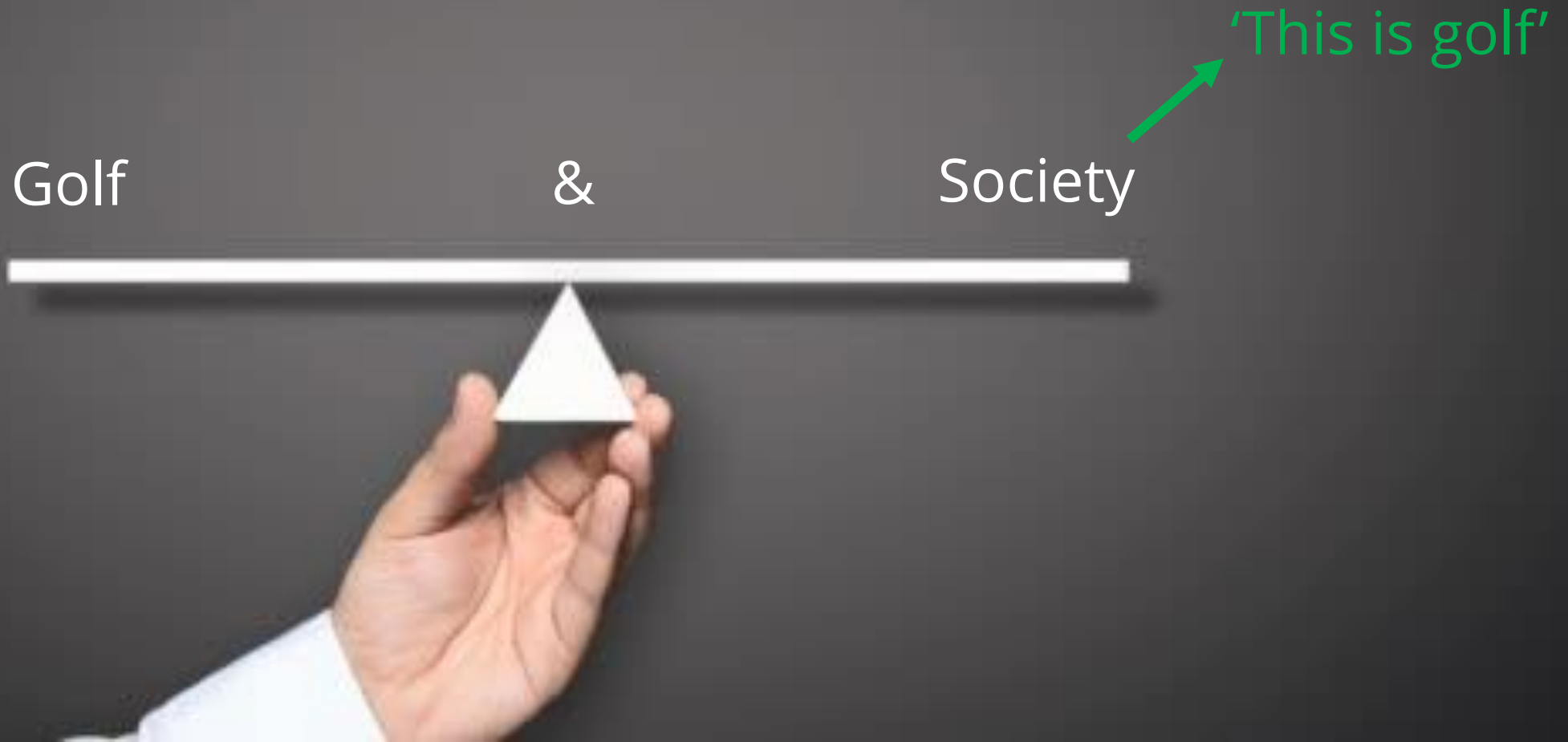
Esthablish  
partnerships

Evidence based  
communication



Pesticide use





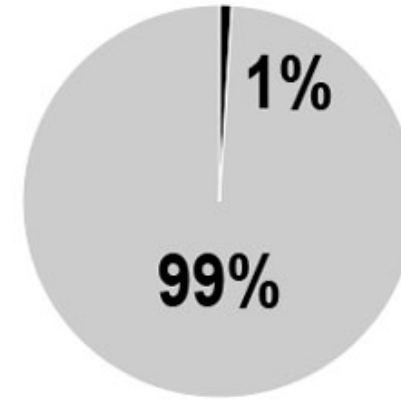
Health benefits



Ecosystem services, including biodiversity development

Business model

# PERCEPTION RULES POLITICS





**Co-regulation** after many years of successful self-regulation

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**Additional time but no postponement** to reach ambitious targets

## INITIAL RESULTS & UPDATES

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- Turfgrass sports and especially golf are being heard as a small sector
  - Increased level of collaboration in the European Golf Sector
  - Improved understanding accros all stakeholders; 'time to change further'
  - Possible changes to sensitive areas?
  - More flexibility for Member States?
  - Even more drastic reductions for non-food applications
  - Low-risk and biological substances will likely be allowed, potentially exceptions/derogations for minimal chemical pesticide use on sport fields?
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- It remains a highly political case!

## NEXT STEPS FOR YOU

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Connect with each other: **share best practices**

**Develop your own strategy towards a drastic reduction (*aim for zero*) in pesticide use**

Gather data: monitor usage of pesticides

Explore GEO sustainability certification

**COMMUNICATE to the golfer and society:** managing expectations & changing perception

**Stakeholder management & establishing partnerships**

THANK YOU

EGA

