



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Lessons learned ACRES

Agriculture and Environment

23rd June 2026



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Overview of ACRES



- Two approaches– ACRES General, ACRES Co-operation
- 6 templates
- Two tranches
- €1.5 billion allocated over the course of the scheme
- All things to all people





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February 2024

- Only 17,000 of a total 45,000 had received an advance payment
- No ACRES Co-operation participant had received a payment
- Many other areas of the scheme not implemented





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June 2026



- €786.45m now issued in core payments, all other aspects of the scheme implemented
- Scoring of lands
- Non Productive Investments
- Landscape Actions
- ACRES Training.

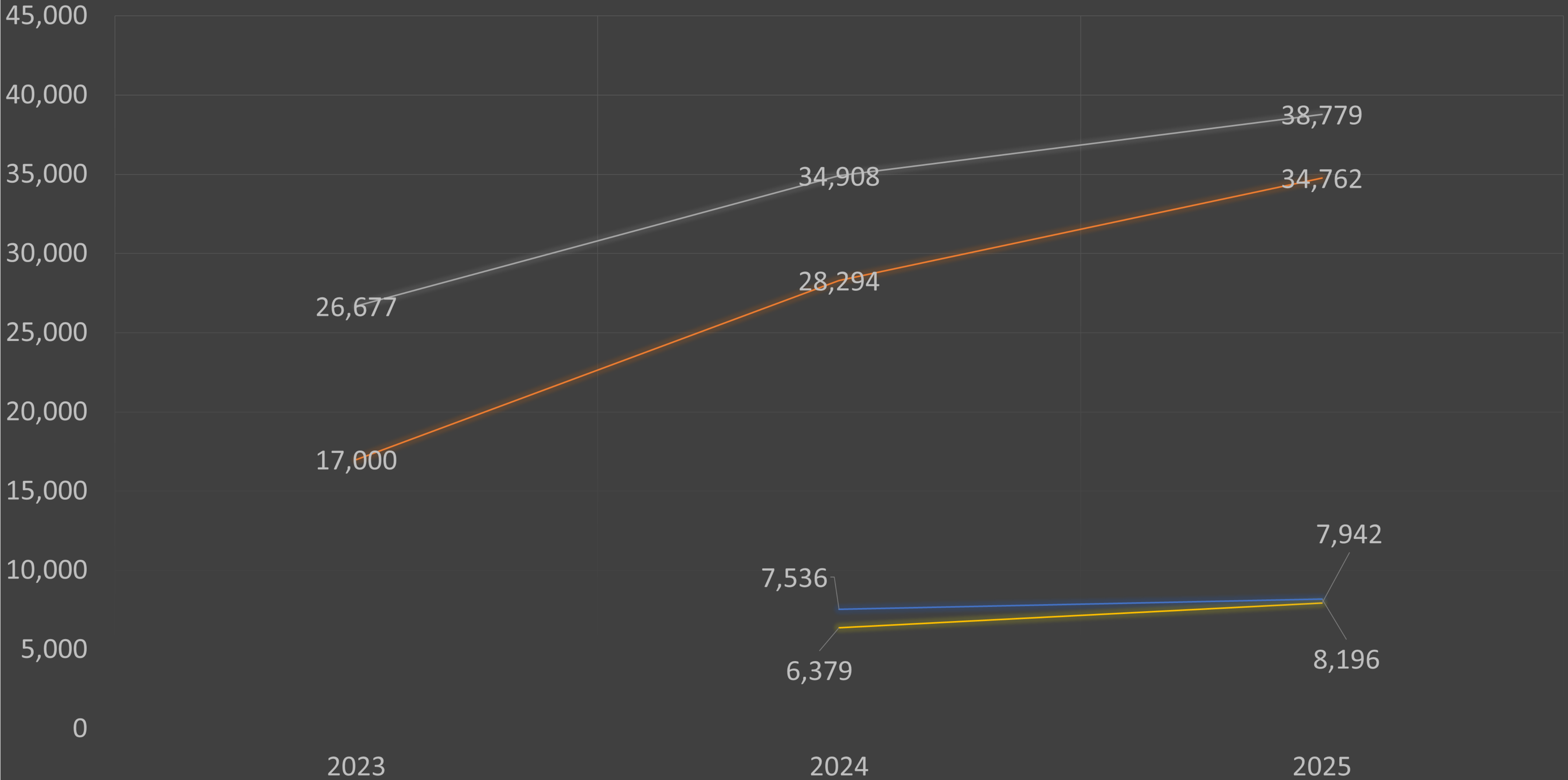
ACRES First Payment runs

—Tranche 1 Advance

—Tranche 1 Balance

—Tranche 2 Advance

—Tranche 2 Balance



ACRES – ENHANCING HABITAT FOR BIODIVERSITY



Extensively
Grazed Pasture
212,800 ha

Total
Trees Planted
557,000 trees

Traditional
Stone Walls
10,217 km

Total Hedge
Management
3,705km

Geese
and Swans
55,000 ha

Catch Crops
24,581 ha

Winter
Bird Food
6,812 ha

Barn
Owl Boxes
14,415 boxes

Approximately
54,000
Participants

Over Winter
Stubble
4,600 ha

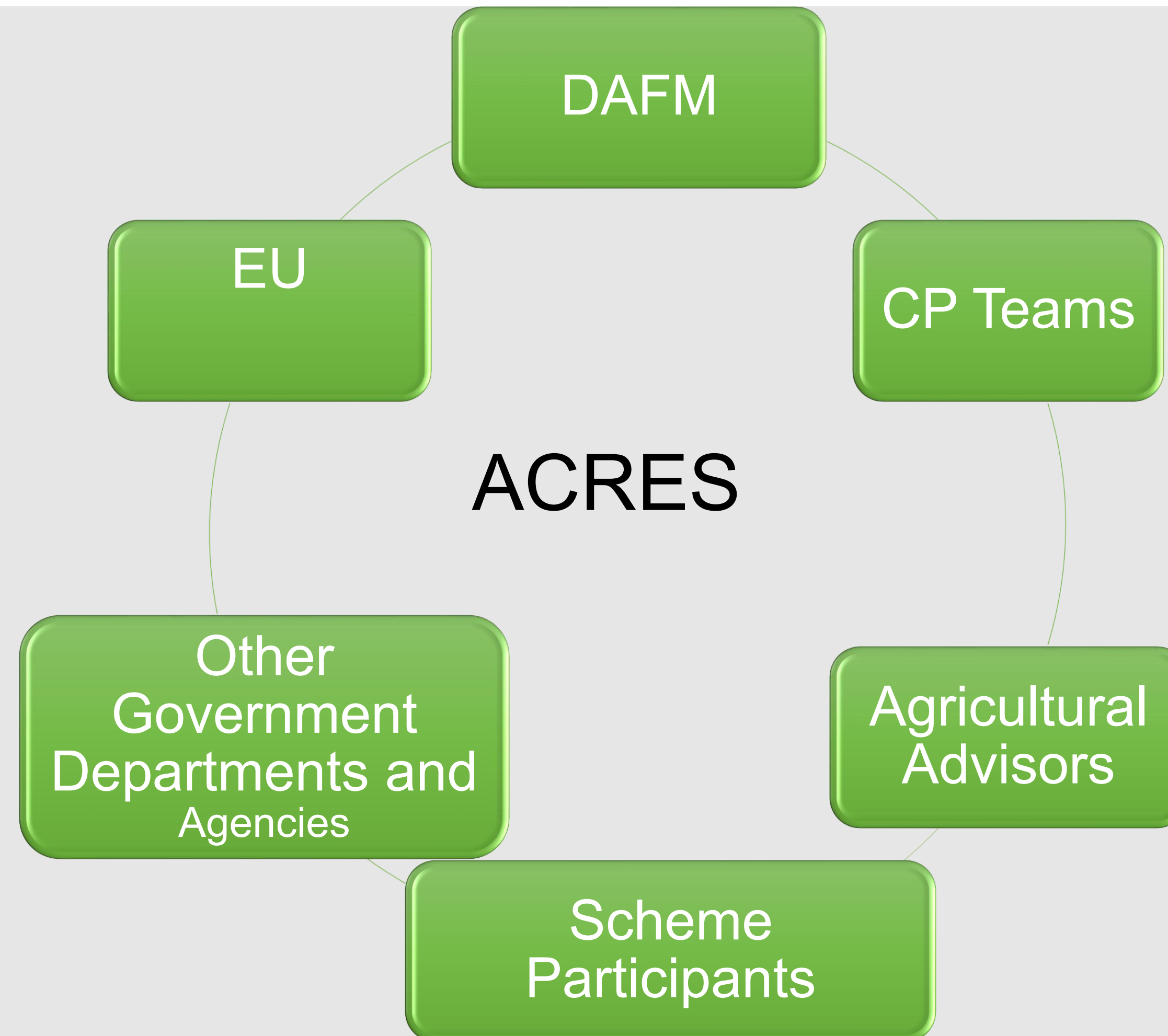
Minimum
Tillage
15,000 ha

Riparian
Buffer Zone
26,750 ha

Low Input
Grassland
129,000 ha

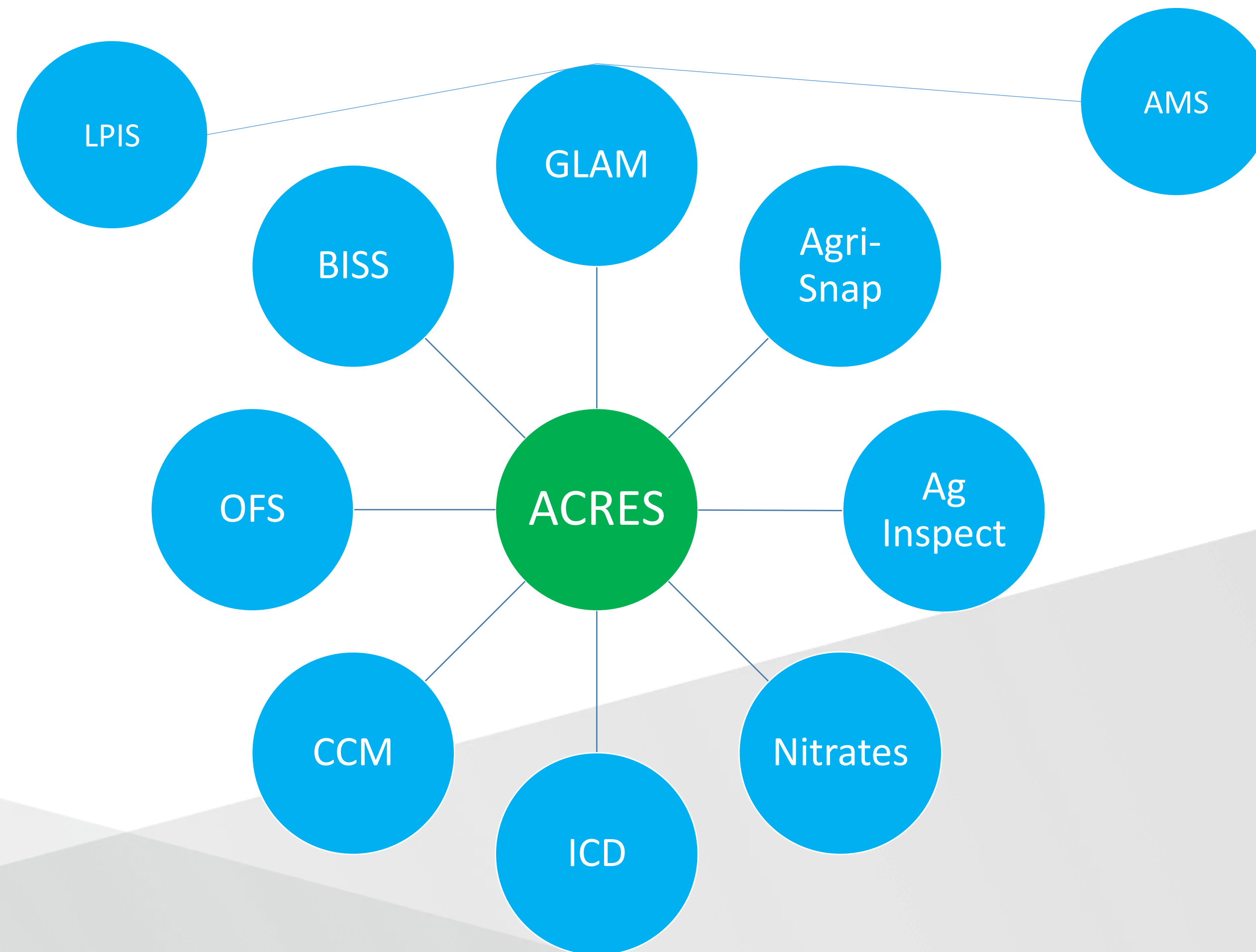


Actors within ACRES





ACRES System Dependencies





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Challenges Encountered

- More ambitious than previous agri-environment schemes
- “Schemes within a scheme”
- GLAS still active, ACRES being developed
- IT functionality delivered on phased basis as ACRES was live
- Significant upskilling of all involved



Poor planning and methodology main cause of project failure

Posted on May 17, 2010

CLOSE TO HOME

BY JOHN McPHERSON





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Lessons learned

- Collaboration

synergies and resources
eg Double Funding

- Simplification

Number of actions and scorecards

Annual rather than multi annual (clawback)

LESS and Rare Breeds

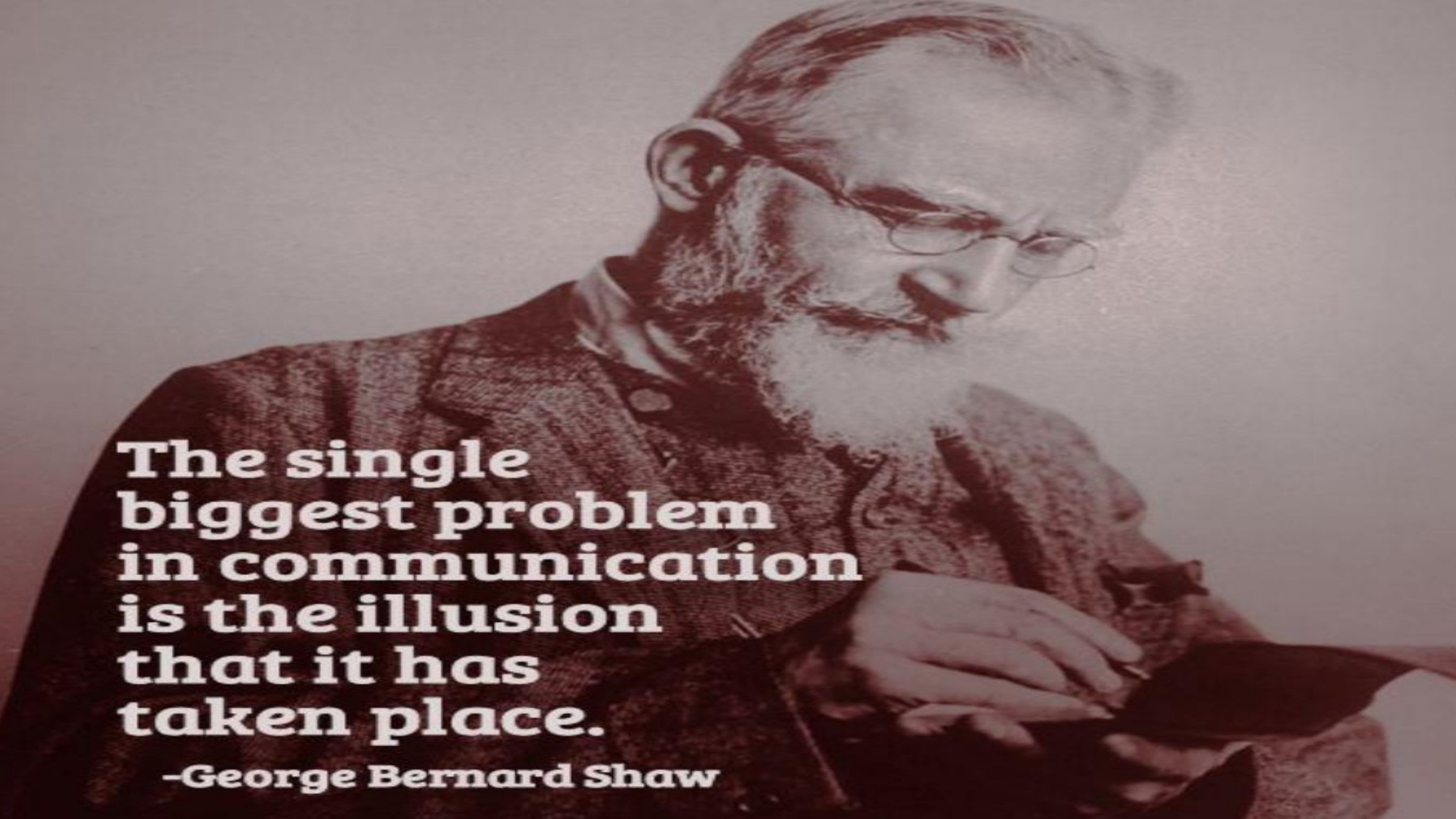


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Lessons learned

- Timeliness of decisions
 - Resources wasted eg Ranking and selection
 - Interim payments
- Communications
 - Any vacuum filled with negative publicity
 - CRM, PQs, Leaders Questions, etc



**The single
biggest problem
in communication
is the illusion
that it has
taken place.**

-George Bernard Shaw



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Lessons learned

More targeted measures

Coherent use of data across schemes (one identifier)


Greater autonomy for scheme operations teams

Procedures

“we’ve always done it this way”

Reviewed and standardised approach across schemes ?

(eg partnerships, forestry)



Opportunities come
to pass, not to pause.

James Wallace