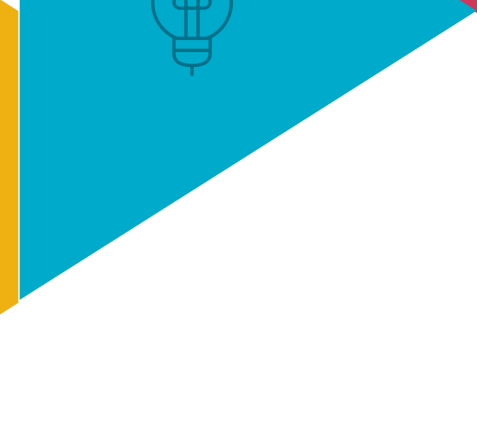
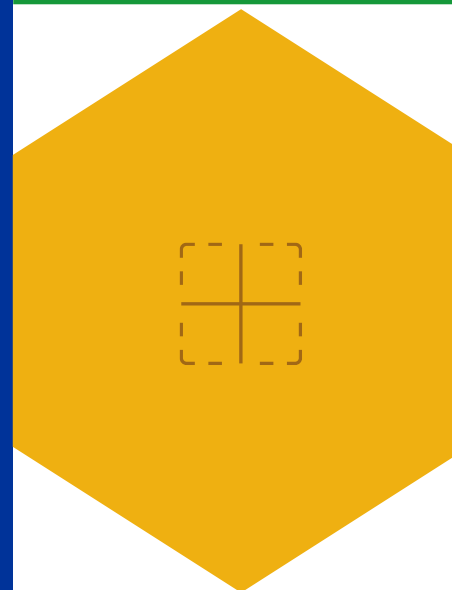
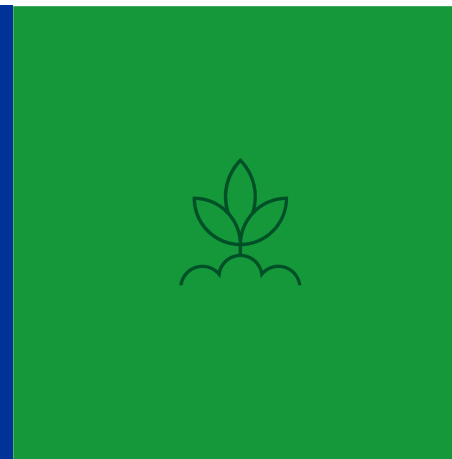




Cross-border cooperation between Flanders and the Netherlands for a better Europe

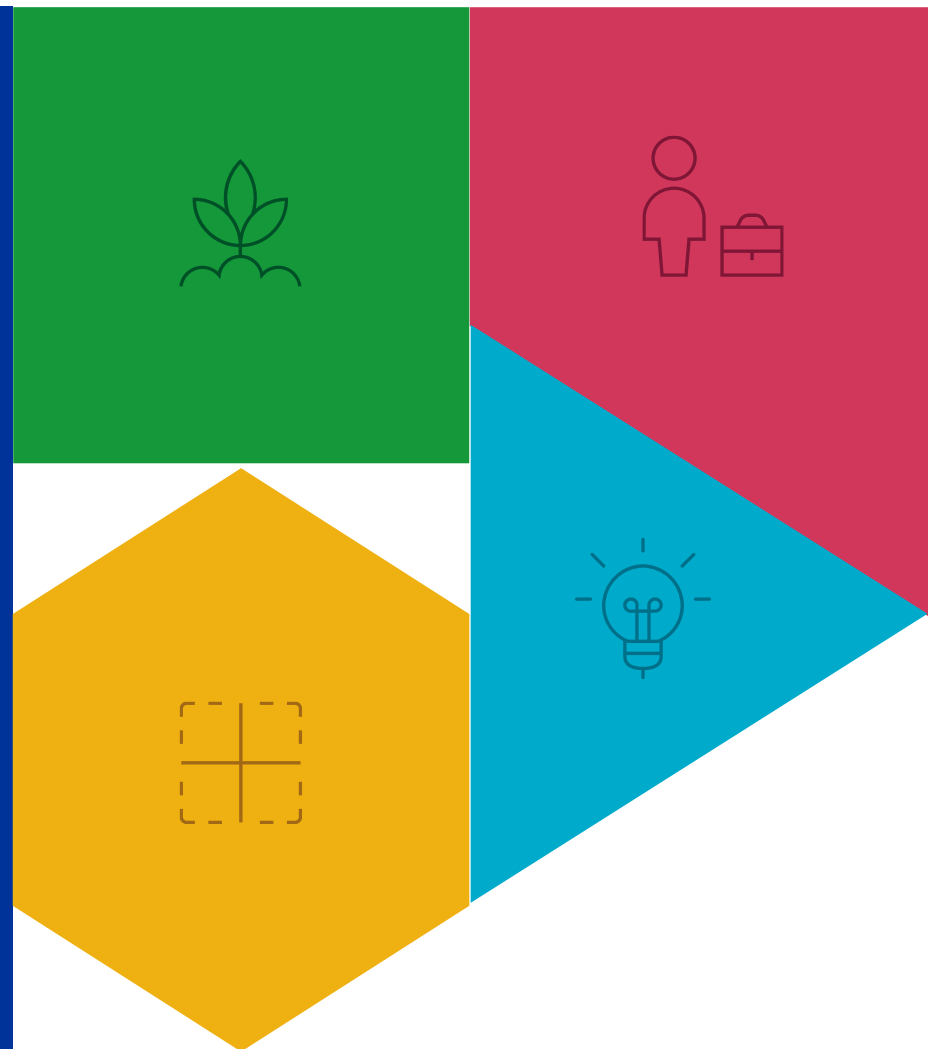




Impact pathways in Interreg Flanders–Netherlands

Methodology, focus and lessons learned

by Sofie Van Overschelde and Jip Wolterinck





Agenda

1. Research questions & methodology
2. Developing the Pathways
3. Case Selection
4. Next steps
5. Challenges
6. Peer review



Developing impact pathways to
demonstrate the added value of Interreg

1. Research questions & methodology



Objective

The impact evaluation's objective is to analyse the contribution to the objectives of the priority axes (“the programme priorities”). The evaluation will primarily (but not exclusively) focus on the objectives to which the largest share of programme resources is allocated.

The criteria are

1. Relevance
2. Effectiveness
3. EU added value compared to national interventions.



Defining 'impact' in operational terms

- What are the (expected) results for the different specific objectives?
- What are the effects of the projects within the programme?
- How can the programme's impact be assessed in light of EU policy objectives?
- What are the programme results in relation to horizontal principles?

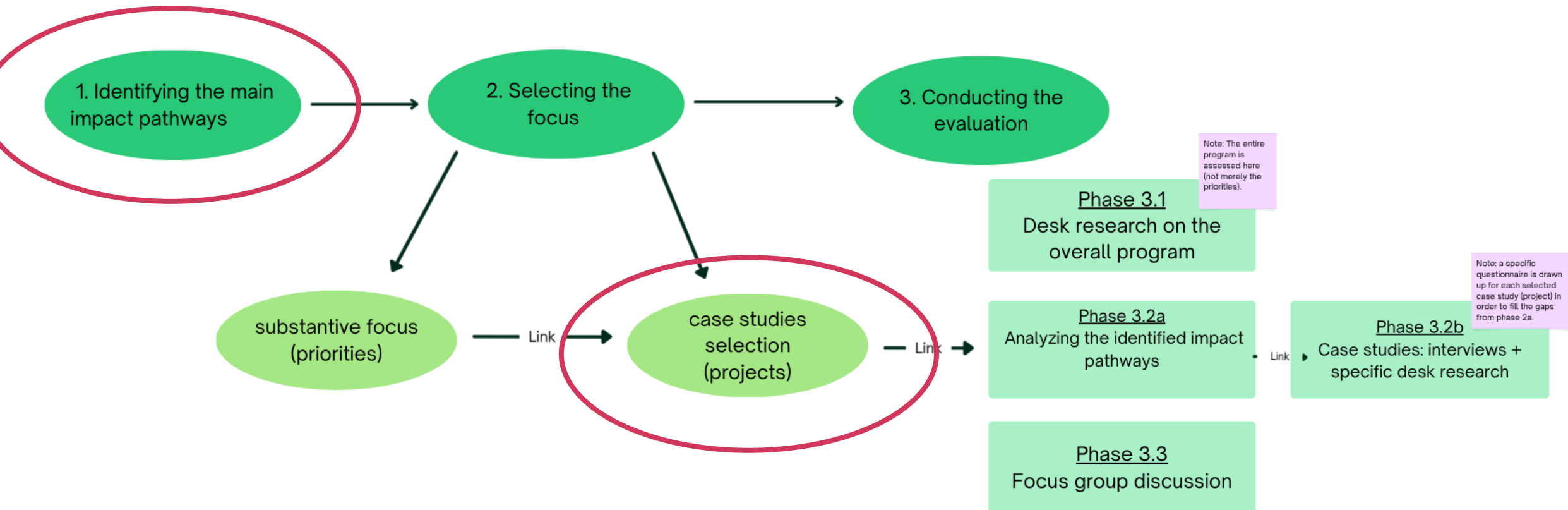
These questions are addressed through **a theory-based approach** (= methodology)



Disclaimer (1)

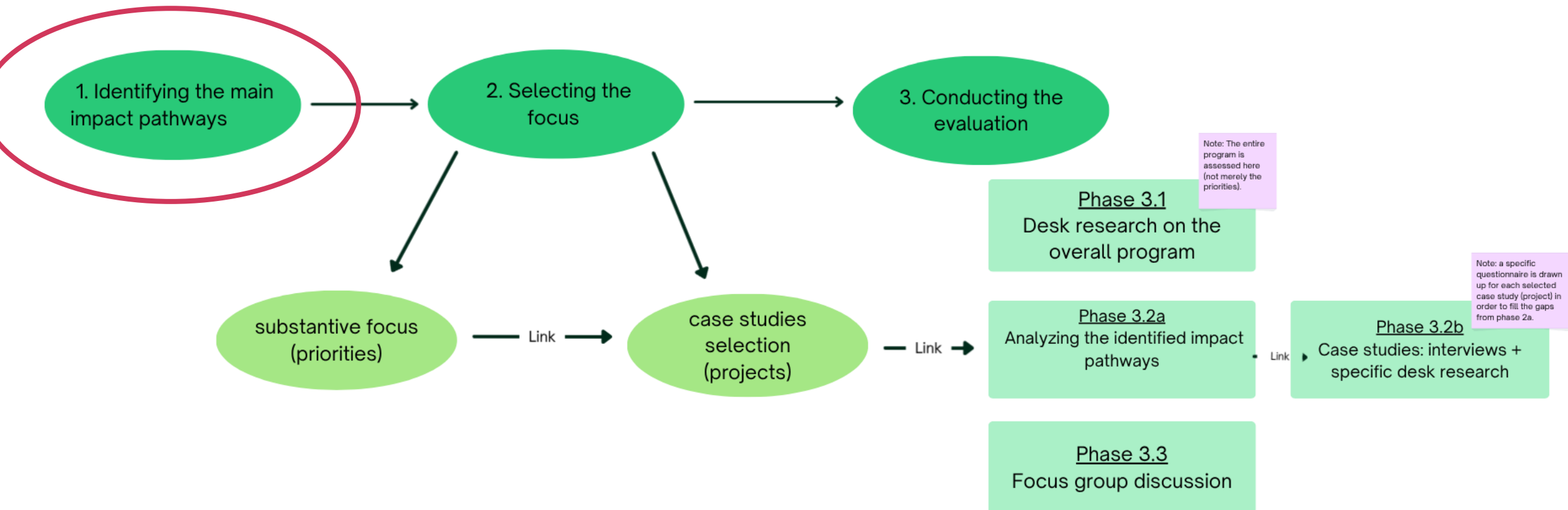
As the programme and most projects are still ongoing, it is not possible at this stage to draw conclusions on the final results and overall impact of the programme. This was not the intention of the evaluation plan.

The objective of the evaluation is therefore to analyse and describe, as comprehensively as possible, the current impact of ongoing projects on the programme's intended objectives, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence.



Developing impact pathways to
demonstrate the added value of Interreg

2. Developing the Pathways





Developing the impact pathways

approach inspired by the Interact 'impact pathways workshop (Vienna 2025)' methodology

Based on this framework, impact pathways were developed by:

1. Defining the **goal** (on Interreg programme level)
2. Defining the **intermediate goals** (+/- aligned with the programme specific objectives)
3. Mapping the **activities** leading to these outcomes
4. Identifying the necessary **preconditions** for success

During Interreg VI Flanders-the Netherlands programme design, a framework was established, including:

- Broader programme objectives
- Activities contributing to these objectives (+/- aligned with the programme specific objectives)
- Intervention logic

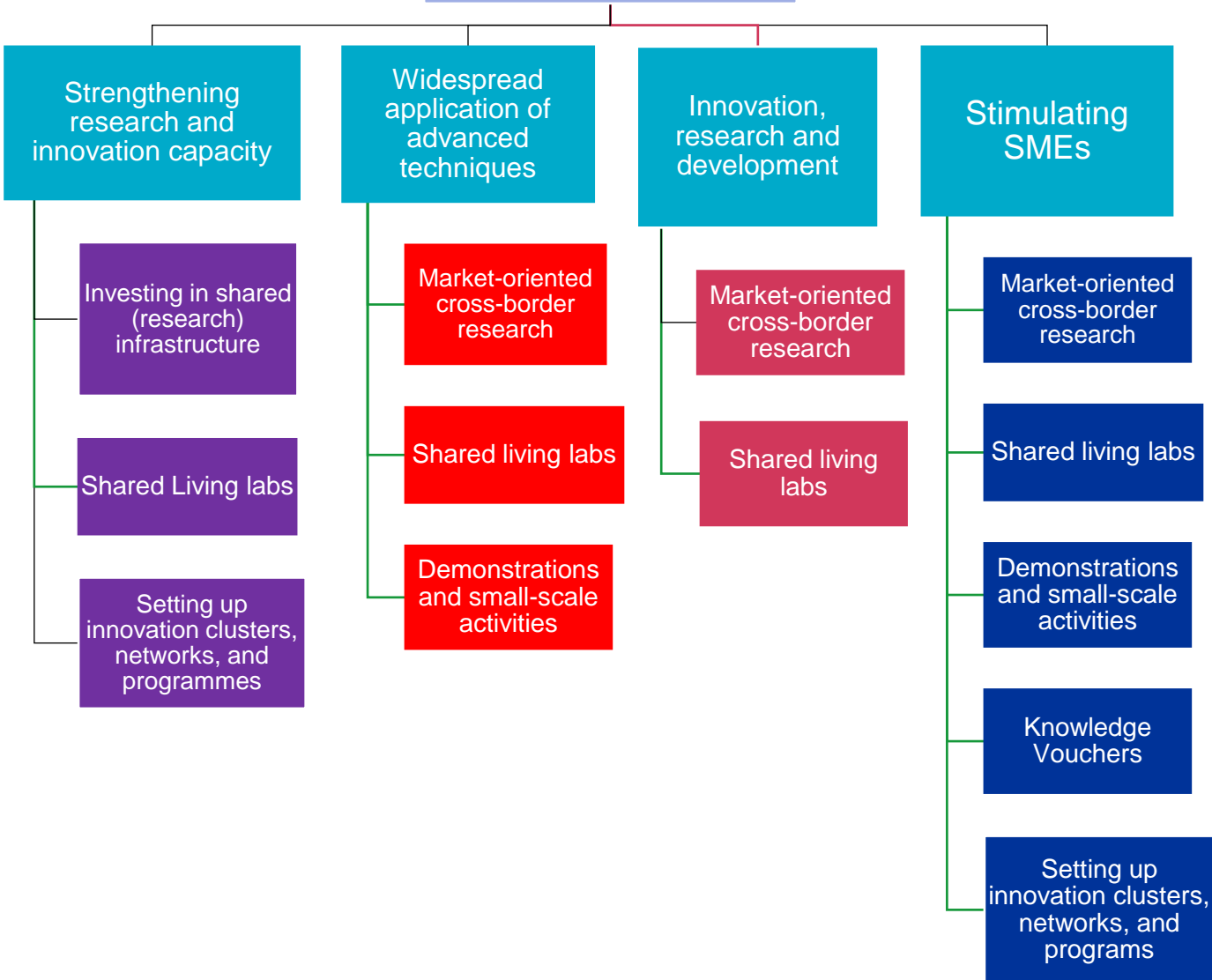


The pathways

1. Promoting cross-border cooperation
2. Stimulating innovation and demonstrations
3. A sustainable, healthy environment in the border region
4. A well-functioning, inclusive and competitive labour market
5. Sustainable tourism based on the needs of the local community
6. “A Europe without borders” - Mitigating cross-border obstacles

7. Communication?

Example: Innovation and Demonstration pathway

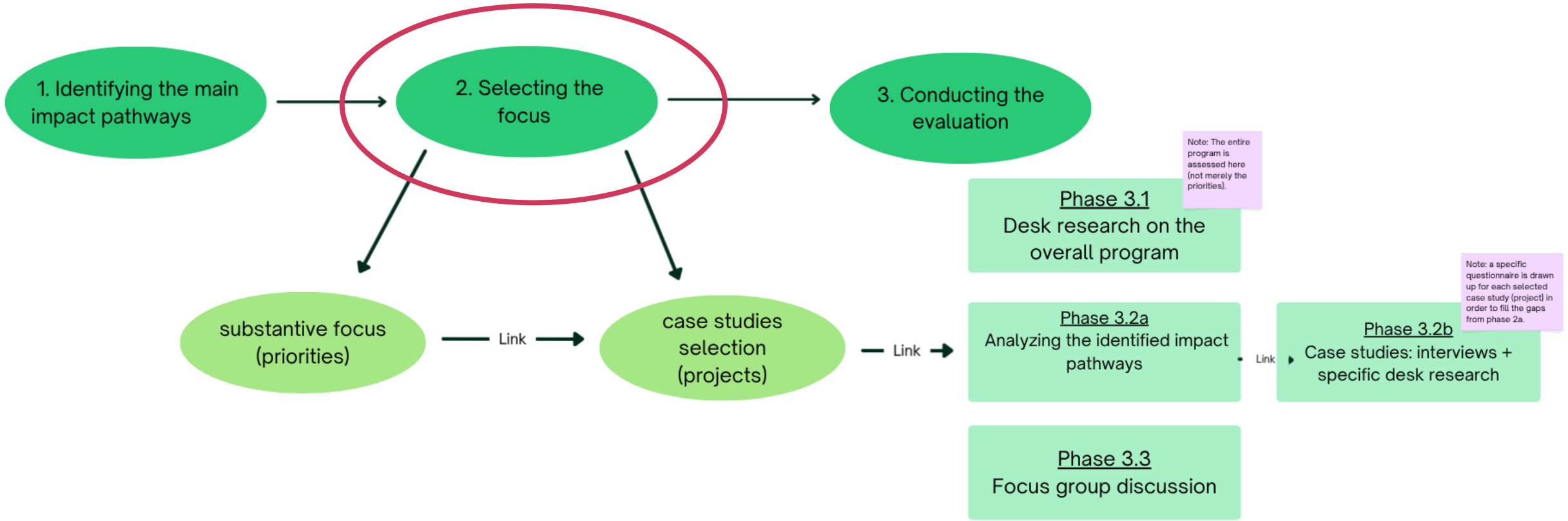


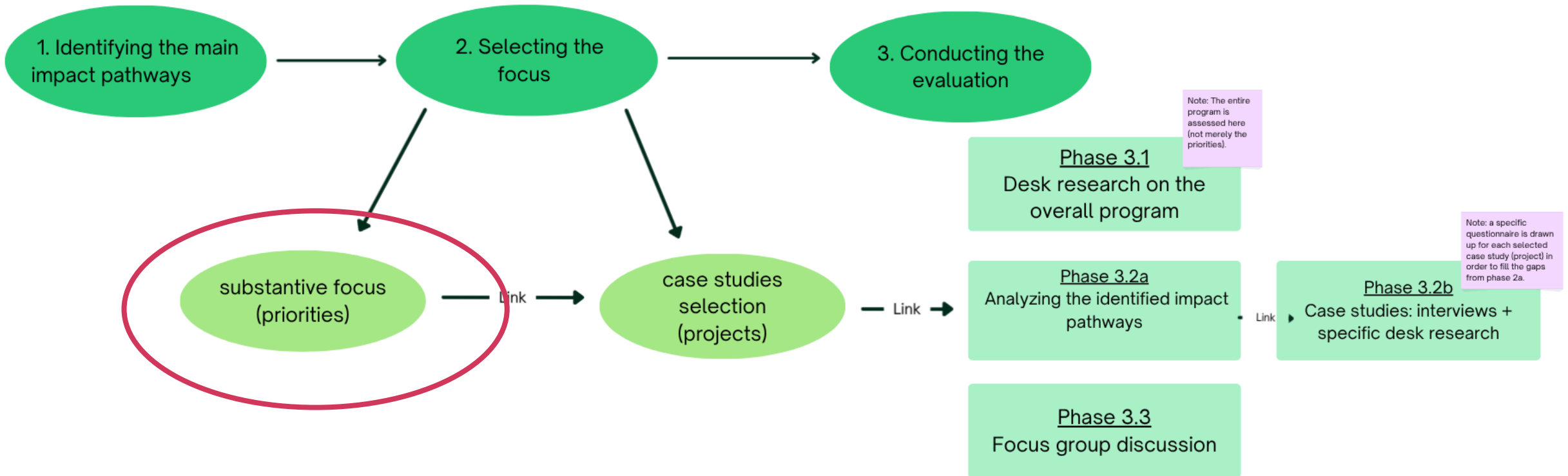
Preconditions

- Innovative character
- Complementarity in knowledge and skills
- SMEs with the right skills and knowledge
- SMEs wanting to collaborate across borders

Developing impact pathways to
demonstrate the added value of Interreg

3. Case selection







Determining the evaluation focus - substantive focus (priorities)

Not all impact pathways can be evaluated within a single study. As suggested in the Interact workshop, it is important to select pathways that:

- are **relevant** (i.e. form the backbone of the programme and represent the largest share of the budget)
- address **unanswered questions**
- are **aligned with available data**
- can generate **meaningful insights and lessons learned**

Focus of the evaluation

Our evaluation primarily focuses on:

- Innovation & demonstration (4 cases)
- Nature, tourism and labour market (2 cases each)



Determining the evaluation focus

1. Innovation and demonstration

- Four case studies
- Most projects and most funds

2. Nature, tourism and labour market

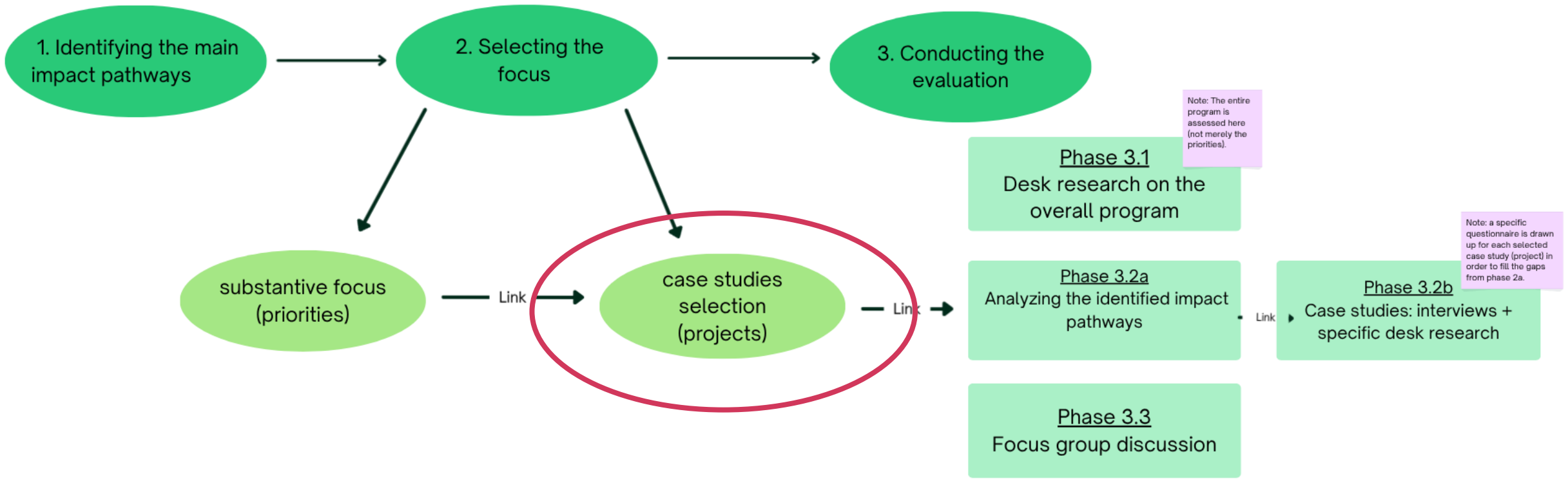
- Two case-studies each

3. “A Europe without borders”

- No case studies
- Programme-wide, descriptive assessment via desk-research and a focus group

4. Cross-border cooperation and Communication

- Cross-project objectives
- No separate case studies, but will be questioned in every interview





Selecting case studies

Criteria for selection

- Fit with selected pathways
- Maturity (start date)
- Project size (in terms of budget)
- Link to Interreg V (continuation projects)

Selection logic

- Criteria: best fit + largest + most advanced
- Bonus for follow-up projects
- Representativeness of the total sample

Innovation and Demonstration

Prioriteit	Project name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 1: fitting the pathway			Criterion 4	
		Starting date	Total budget	Innovation?	Demonstration?	Infrastructure?	SME-focussed?	Follow-up
A1	Crossroads VLANED SPF + WI	1/01/2023	€ 25.864.420,02	ja			ja	3
B2	Offshore for Sure (OFS)	1/07/2023	€ 9.959.799,68		ja			0
A1	CrossCare 2.0	1/04/2023	€ 7.999.999,72	ja			ja	3
B1	ENERGLIK	1/03/2023	€ 5.399.965,37		ja		ja (landbouwers)	2
A1	Prosperos-II	1/03/2023	€ 4.999.999,20	ja				3
A1	Smart farming & foodprocessi	1/05/2023	€ 4.987.893,86	ja			ja	0
B2	Smart dHYstrict	1/07/2024	€ 4.790.530,98	ja				2
B2	FOTON	1/02/2024	€ 4.789.114,24	ja				2
A1	ReJuice	8/04/2024	€ 4.499.999,07	ja				ja
A1	BIO-CAPPP	15/06/2023	€ 4.278.111,24			ja	ja	3
A1	Molecular Brain Tumor Detect	1/02/2024	€ 4.239.533,00	ja				
B6	Schone waterlopen door O3G	1/09/2023	€ 4.236.535,58		ja			
A1	ADaM & PreciLa	1/04/2023	€ 4.199.999,70	ja			ja (landbouwers)	
B1	Duurzaam Zomercomfort	1/03/2024	€ 4.076.861,54		ja			
B1	MAI-HOME	1/09/2023	€ 3.999.997,04		ja			
B5	Circulaire Teelt en Chemie	1/02/2023	€ 3.999.402,04	ja				
A1	Food Pioneers Accelerator	29/02/2024	€ 3.986.902,19	ja			ja	ja
A1	Smart*Light 2.0	1/09/2023	€ 3.900.000,00	ja				ja
A1	LIGHTUP	1/10/2023	€ 3.884.798,25			ja	ja	0
A1	Hemp2Comp	1/03/2024	€ 3.590.509,40	ja				
A1	B-SMARTT!	1/04/2024	€ 3.399.953,42	ja			ja	
A1	Art-Ie	1/09/2023	€ 3.218.315,00			ja	ja	
B1	Holistic, Social Retrofit	19/09/2023	€ 3.180.275,80			ja		
A1	SMART-NeonaTo N.V.	1/04/2024	€ 2.992.017,32	ja				
B3	LOGES	1/06/2024	€ 2.745.681,85		ja			
B6	RAMBO	1/09/2023	€ 2.693.968,69		ja		ja	ja
A1	U-Save	1/02/2024	€ 2.596.902,05	ja				ja
A1	Plantgoed	1/02/2024	€ 2.558.238,77	ja				ja
B5	CASCO Carbon Sink Constructi	15/05/2024	€ 1.598.721,23	ja				

Routes		
Innovatie	Prosperos II	Smart farming & foodprocessing
Demonstratie	Offshore4Sure	Energlik
Infrastructuur	BioCapp	LIGHTUP
KMO/MKB's	CrossRoads	CrossCare 2.0

Labour Market

Objecti	Project Name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 1: fitting the pathway			Follow up?
		Starting Da	Total Budget	Smart Specialisatio	Labour participation	Bottleneck professi	
A2	COBOTASSIST	1/03/2024	€ 2.797.055,06	Ja			
A2	Energie(k) Onderwijs	1/05/2023	€ 4.240.364,22	Ja		ja	
A2	CAMBIUM: boslandbouw	1/03/2024	€ 1.344.804,40	Ja			
A2	AMV ELC	1/09/2023	€ 3.149.699,03	Ja	ja	ja	0
C1	Samen aan Z	1/05/2023	€ 2.951.669,26			ja	ja
C1	North Sea Port Talent 2.	1/05/2024	€ 2.859.830,38			ja	ja
C2	StimulanZ	1/09/2023	€ 3.689.239,71			ja	
C2	LERAAR+	1/01/2024	€ 742.733,59			ja	
C2	TATOE	1/04/2024	€ 2.038.683,73			ja	
C2	Magazijnhelden van Mor	1/07/2024	€ 2.799.029,35	Enigzins	Ja	ja	0

Routes		
Slimme Specialisatie	AMV-ELC	
Participerende burgers	AMV-ELC	Magazijnhelden
Knelpuntberoepen	AMV-ELC	Magazijnhelden
Toegankelijke arbeidsm	Samen aan Z	North Sea Port District

The cases

Pathway 1: Innovation and Demonstration

1. CrossRoads Vlaanderen-Nederland
2. Offshore for Sure
3. Prosperos II
4. BIO-CAPP

Pathway 2: Healthy, sustainable environment

1. Klimaatrobuust Watermanagement
2. ADMIRE

Pathway 3: Labour Market

1. AMV ELC
2. Samen aan Z

Pathway 4: Sustainable tourism

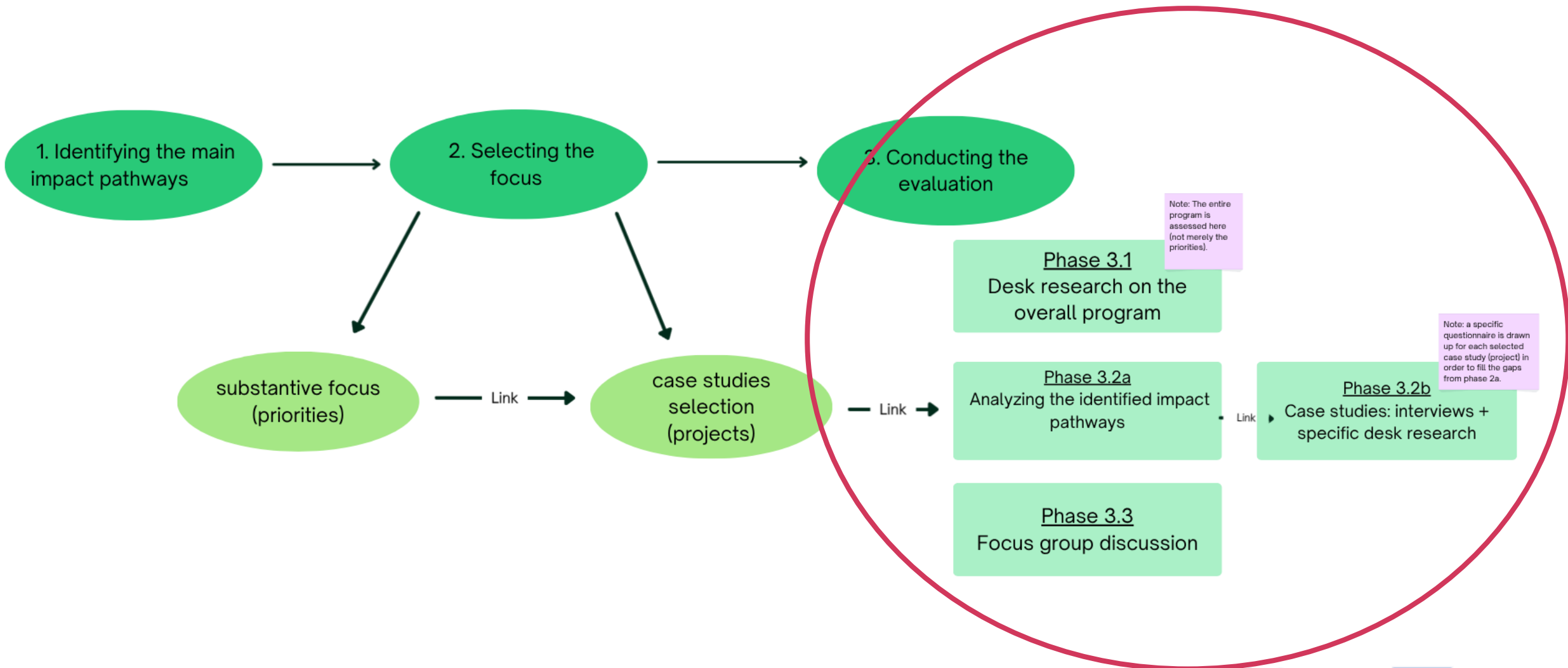
1. (Be)Leefbare Schelde
2. Wijnstraat

Check representativeness

- Total budget
- Implementation success
- Specific objectives

Developing impact pathways to demonstrate the added value of Interreg

4. Next steps conducting the evaluation





Conducting the evaluation (phase 3)

Part 1: Desk research on the overall programme

- Addressing evaluation questions based on available programme data (e.g. financial progress, indicators, reporting data) for all programme objectives

Part 2. a) Analysing the identified impact pathways

- General desk research assessing the impact pathways at programme level (substantive focus)

Part 2. b) Case studies: in-depth interviews & case specific desk research

- We are currently drawing up the questionnaires for each selected case (project)

Part 3. Focus group discussion

- Addressing the evaluation questions within a group discussion. The group is formed by priority project partners

Developing impact pathways to
demonstrate the added value of Interreg

5. Challenges



Challenges

Defining the pathways

- Pathways are defined from a programme perspective
- Activities influence multiple Intermediate Outcomes
- Pathways influence each other
- Additional pathways: communication

Case study selection

- Representativeness
- Expected results vs. Actual impact

Workload

Research biases



Some insights

- Impact pathways do not need to be fully predefined
 - New or alternative pathways can emerge during the analysis. Pathways may change during the proces according to new insights
 - New preconditions may be defined later
- Allow room to identify unexpected impact routes
 - Especially through case studies and interviews
- Focus on critical points rather than well-functioning elements
 - explore gaps rather than already answered questions
- Include projects with a longer track record
 - Provides valuable insights on longer-term impact
- External validation



Developing impact pathways to demonstrate the added value of Interreg

6. Peer review



Group discussion

Your feedback and/or questions are more than welcome!