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Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Demand Planning and Management In the Salinas Valley

A Strategic Framework for Long-Term Groundwater Sustainability

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Groundwater Management is an Immediate Economic Necessity, Not a Future Concept

The Salinas Valley economy is fundamentally dependent on groundwater for agriculture, communities, and regional stability.

Under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), basins must achieve sustainability within 20 years **(now 15 years).**

The Risks to the Subbasins

Seawater Intrusion

Declining Groundwater Levels

Water Quality Degradation

Loss of Groundwater Storage

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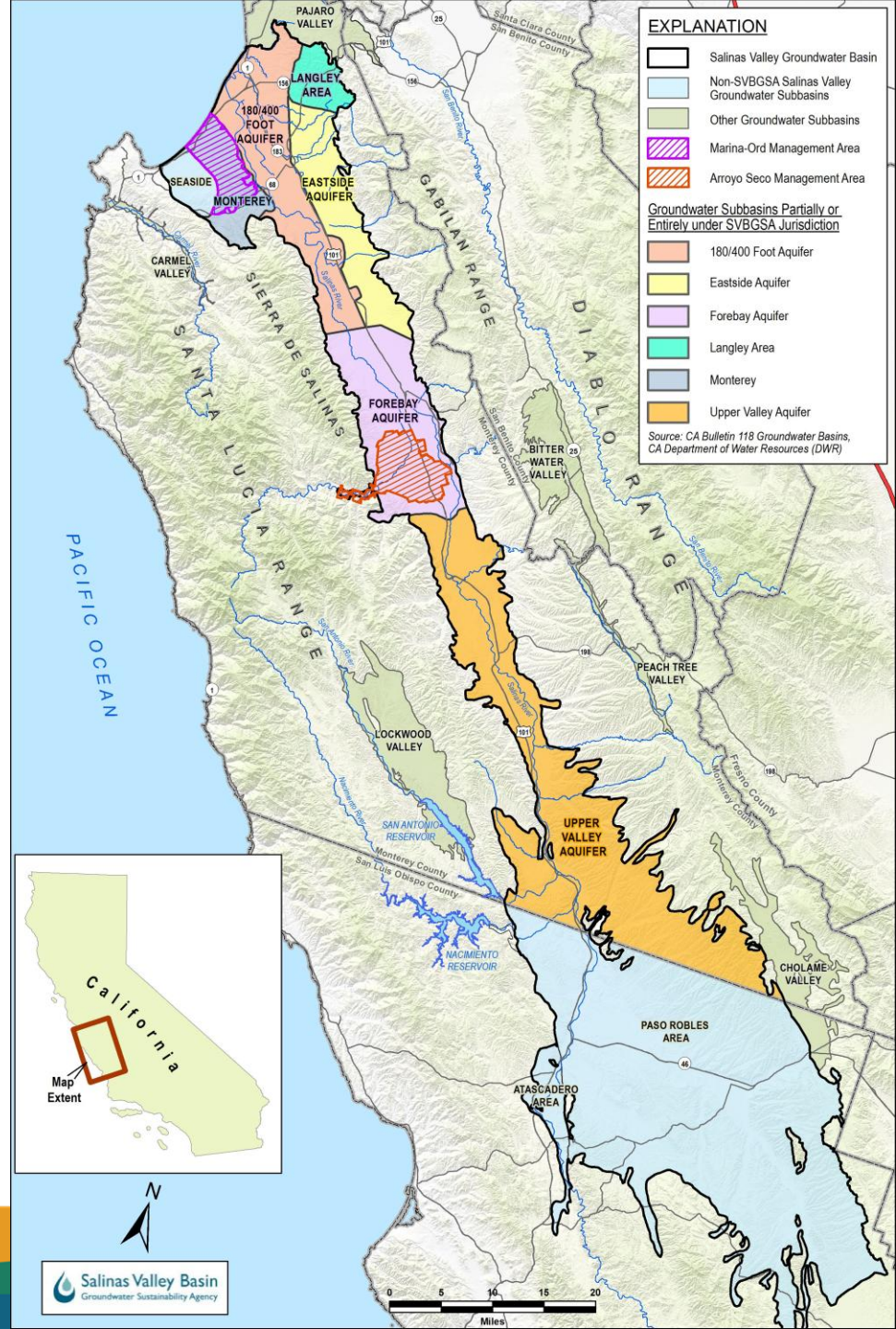
One Agency Managing the Diverse Needs of Six Subbasins

- 6 Basins (Subbasins) & Groundwater Sustainability Plans
  - 180/400
  - Monterey
  - Langley
  - Eastside
  - Forebay
  - Upper Valley

- Partner GSAs
  - Marina Coast Water District GSA
  - Arroyo Seco GSA
  - County of Monterey GSA



Projects Alone Cannot Guarantee Success

The SGMA Requirement

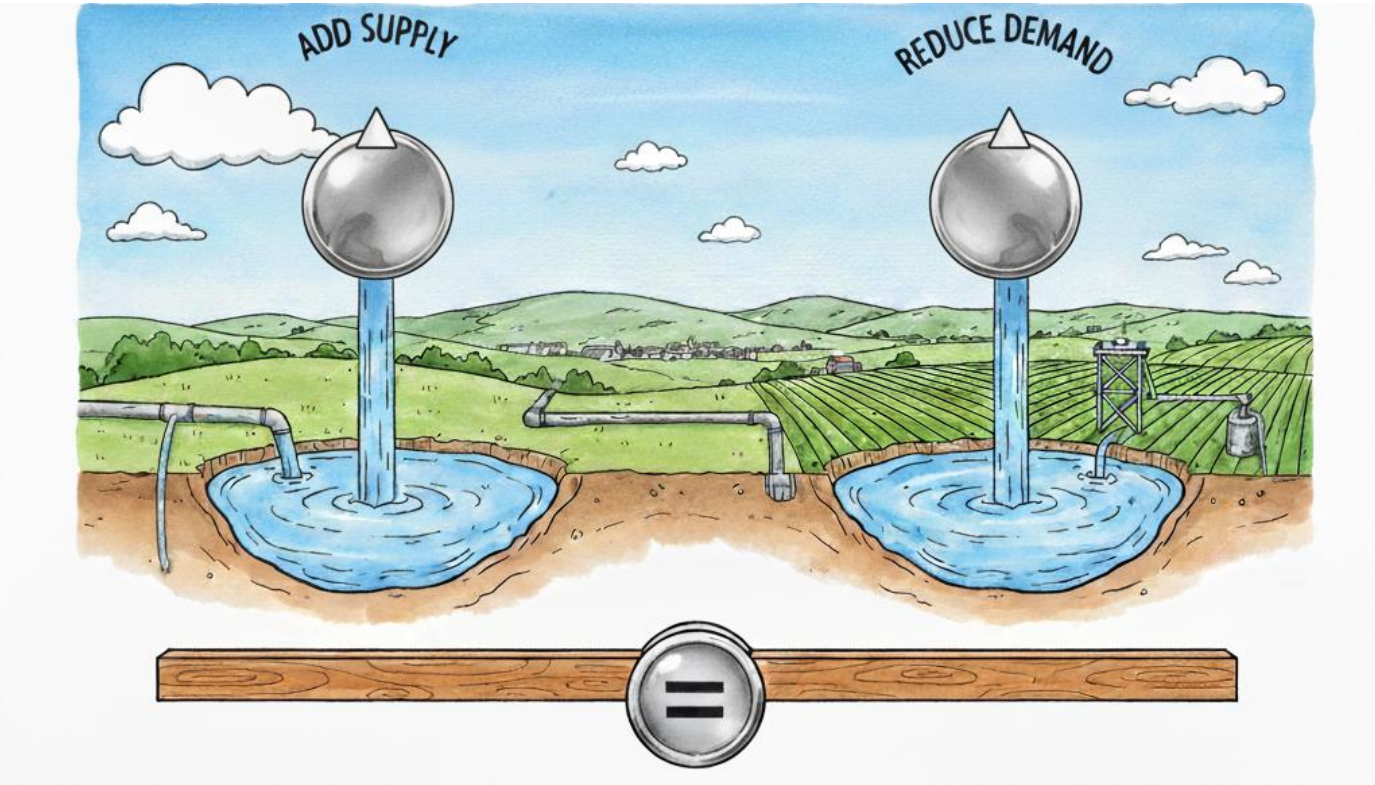
Subbasins must understand conditions, set sustainability criteria, and avoid "undesirable results".

The Practical Implication

Projects (recharge/supply) are the primary goal, but they are not a silver bullet. Management actions – changes in pumping behavior – are necessary to bridge the gap.

Key Takeaway: We cannot build out way out of every deficit. We must have a mechanism to balance use if supply project fall short.

Defining "Demand Management": Managing the Net Balance



Note:
Demand Management works alongside recharge and supply projects, action as the lever for stability when new water supplies are insufficient or still being planned or constructed.

Demand management is the active management of the withdrawals. Its purpose is to maintain balance and prevent undesirable results (like declining groundwater levels).

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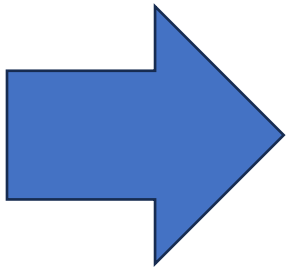
The Current Framework is a Planning Tool

Demand Planning (Current Phase)

- Studying conditions
- Evaluating options
- Analyzing economic and legal impacts



Demand Management (Implementation Phase)

- Implementing specific actions
- Adjusting pumping behavior
- Tracking water use against limits

Key Takeaway: The Framework itself is not a regulation. It is the roadmap that guides how and when regulations would be applied if necessary.

A Framework Built on Rigorous Analysis and Stakeholder Input (2022-2025)

2022-2023: Input

- Stakeholder assessments and community workshops

2024: Scrutiny

- Legal analysis to ensure SGMA compliance

2024-2025: Viability

- Economic & financial evaluations of potential impacts

2025: Result

- Demand Management Framework

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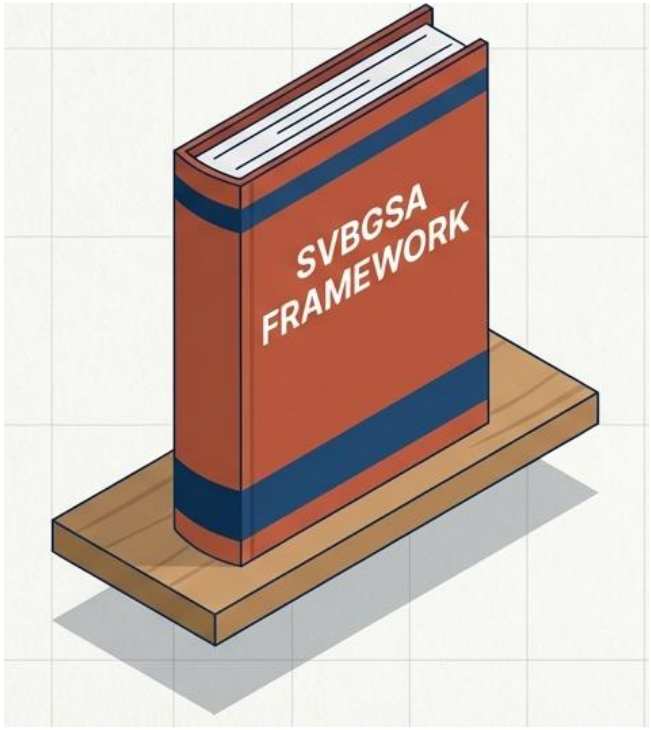
The Framework Acts as a Strategic Playbook, Not an Immediate Restriction

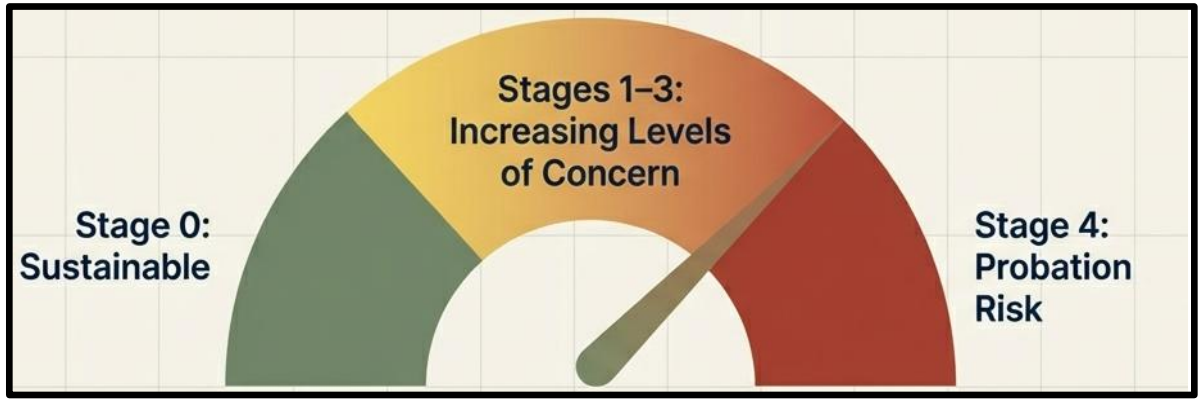


What is does NOT do: Immediately impose pumping restrictions.

What it DOES do: Provide a structured logic to evaluate the health of the subbasins, prioritize issues, and implement demand management only when conditions dictate.

Analogy: Think of it as an emergency playbook. It defines the rules of engagement so that if action is needed, the response is predictable, fair and effective.

A Phased Approach: Understanding the 5 Stages of Groundwater Concern



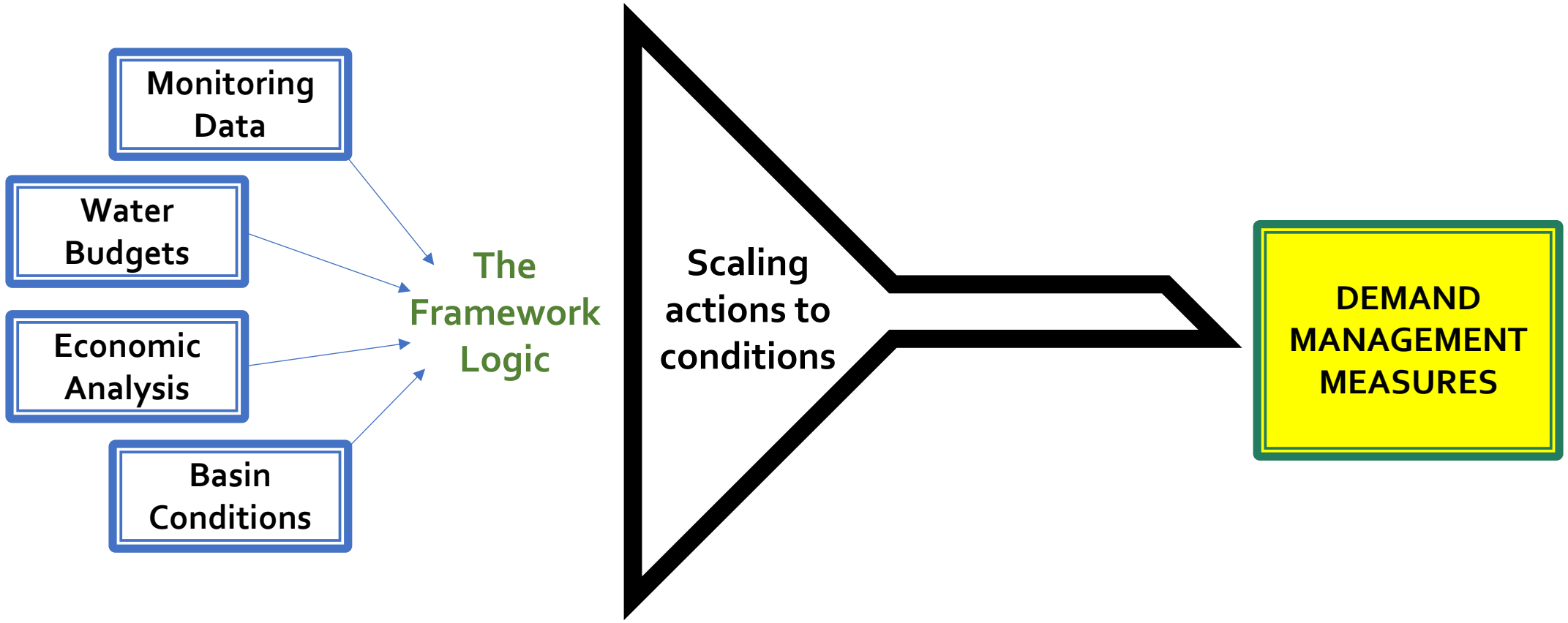
The Triggers

Subbasins move between stages based on:

- Long-term Trends (Evaluated in 5-year cycles)
- Short-term Indicators (e.g. falling groundwater levels, chloride measurements)

Key Takeaway: We measure specific triggers to determine the severity of the response. Warning signs appear before the red zone.

Data-Driven Decisions:
How Demand Management Actions are Selected



Not One-Size-Fits-All: Actions are specific to the subbasin's reality

Scalability: Intensity of action matches the severity of the groundwater conditions

The Agricultural Toolbox:
A Menu of Demand Management Measures/Options

Incentives

Disincentives

On-farm Efficiency

Improvements in technology

Rotational Fallowing

Temporary reduction in acreage

Land Repurposing

Converting to lower water- uses

Pumping Limits

Caps on extraction (Allocations)

Extraction Fees

Costs associated with usage

Excess-Use Penalties

Deterrents for over-pumping

A Shared Responsibility: Domestic and Community Measures

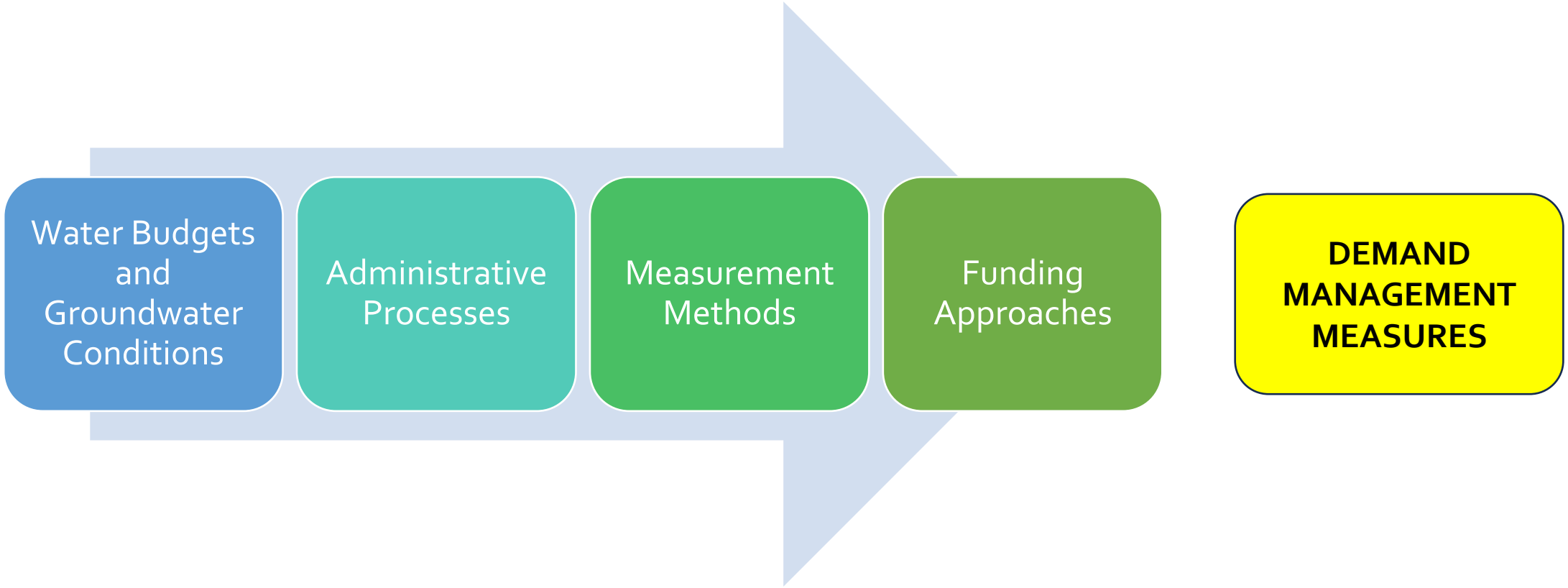
Agriculture is not bearing the burden alone.

The Framework outlines specific measures for municipal and domestic users.

- ✓Education and Outreach programs
- ✓Rebates and Incentives for water-saving technologies
- ✓Mandatory Efficiency standards
- ✓Pricing Mechanisms (Tiered rates)

Sustainability requires contribution from all groundwater users in the Salinas Valley

A Foundation of Management: Measurement Must Precede Regulation



We cannot manage what we do not measure.

A Roadmap Ahead:
Moving from Framework to Implementation

Step 1:
- Classify subbasins by their Stage (0-4)

Step 2:
- Expand economic analysis to refine impact assessments

Step 3:
- Develop specific rules for prioritized measures in at-risk areas

Step 4:
- Integrate with project planning

Step 5:
- Implementation of Demand Management Measures

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Questions?

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