

# Applying a Strategic Approach to Environment and Health

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# Aims of Presentation

- To describe a new context for policy and action on environment and health with particular reference to Scotland
- To describe the approach which is being adopted
- To outline the components of Scotland's new strategic approach to environment and health
- To consider what this may mean for how we do environmental health in the future

What are the drivers for doing things differently?

# A Scottish Health Context

- Scotland's health record
- Chronic diseases of middle age – cancer, COPD, strokes & cardiovascular disease
- Lifestyle issues
- Children – allergic disease, injury and obesity
- Inequalities

# An International and UK Strategic Context for Environment and Health

- Children's Environmental Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE)
- European Environmental Health Strategy (SCALE)
- A UK Strategic Approach?

# A Philosophical Context for a New Environmental Health

- Concerns over limitations of a compartmentalised approach
- New, more “holistic, aspirations in relation to the environment – “sustainability” and “environmental justice”
- A poor fit between professional and public perceptions of priority and risk in relation to environment....issues of trust
- An acceptance of a psychosocial dimension

# The Practical Challenges

- Moving physical environment closer to the centre of the health debate
- Defining the “public health (and environmental health) problems” in a way which points to solutions
- Demonstrating in practical terms how we can make a difference

We need to be much more  
strategic

# Strategy

- Strategy is a plan to achieve a long term goal
- It is about developing and integrating the appropriate systems and the means for their maintenance and evaluation
- It is not a once and for all exercise

# The Goal of Strategy in Scotland

To develop and integrate systems to pursue a physical environment consistent with and promoting of human health broadly defined and with a society of equal opportunity

## In other words....

1. Concerned with the development and coordination of a discrete set of key **systems**.
2. As much about the positive aspects of environment we wish to create as the negative ones we wish to prevent, and
3. (by extension from 2 above) It is as relevant to health improvement as it is to health protection.
4. A country of equal opportunity is unlikely to be defined without at least some reference to the physical environment.

# Why Bother?

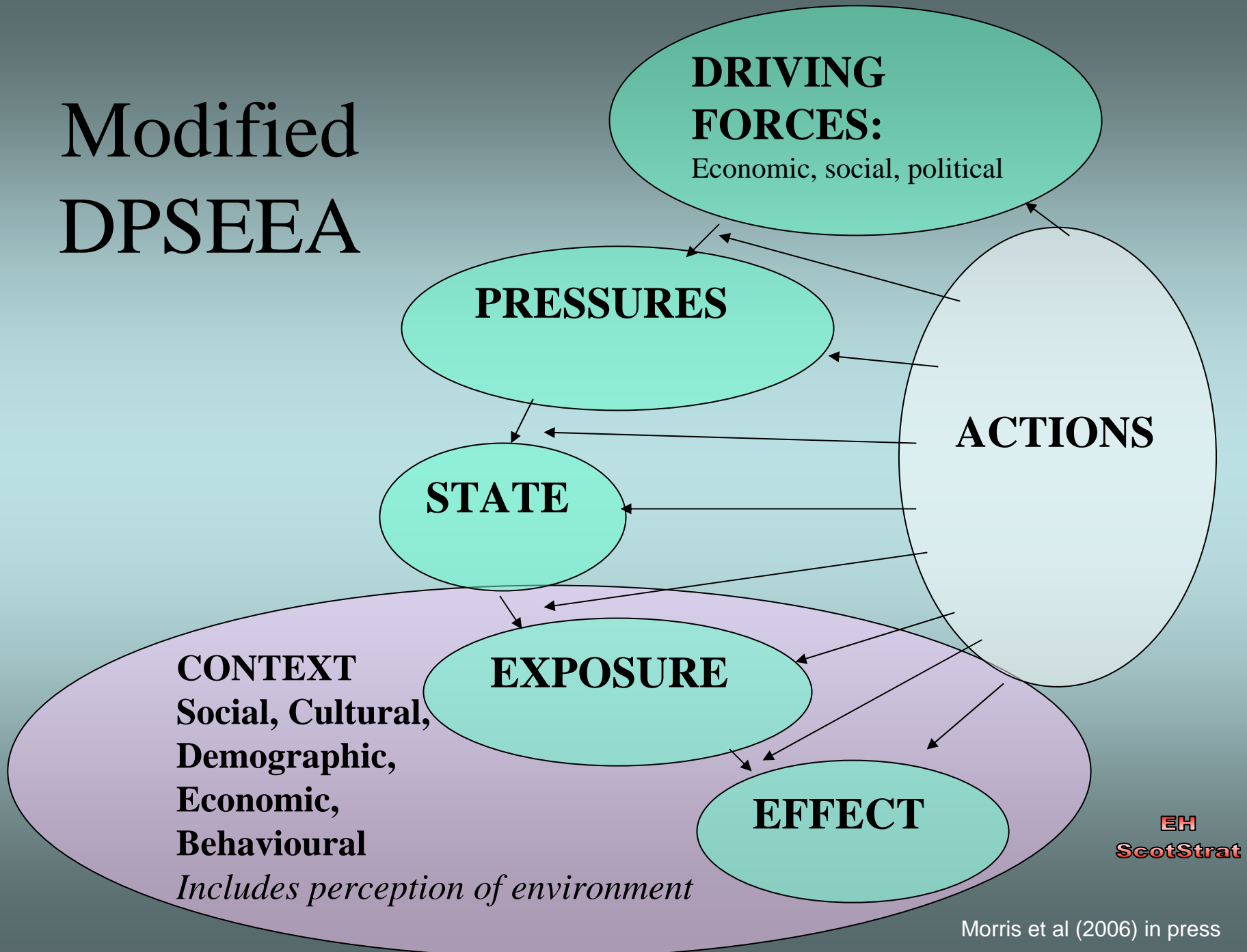
## A conceptual model can be:

- A framework for strategy
- A basis to examine the environment/health relationship and the factors which bear upon it
- A focus for sectoral convergence
- A tool for planning and mapping and evaluating intervention
- A means of configuring a new systems

# How would we recognise a good conceptual model?..... a checklist ?

- Easy to use and to understand
- A focus on the **physical** environment
- Maps environmental influences on specific health states – assemble evidence on causal processes
- Maps drivers of environmental change
- Differentiates between environmental state & exposure
- Maps possible & current interventions
- Represents the interacting determinants of health
- Maps environmental influences on positive health states as well as disease

# Modified DPSEEA



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From concepts to policy to action

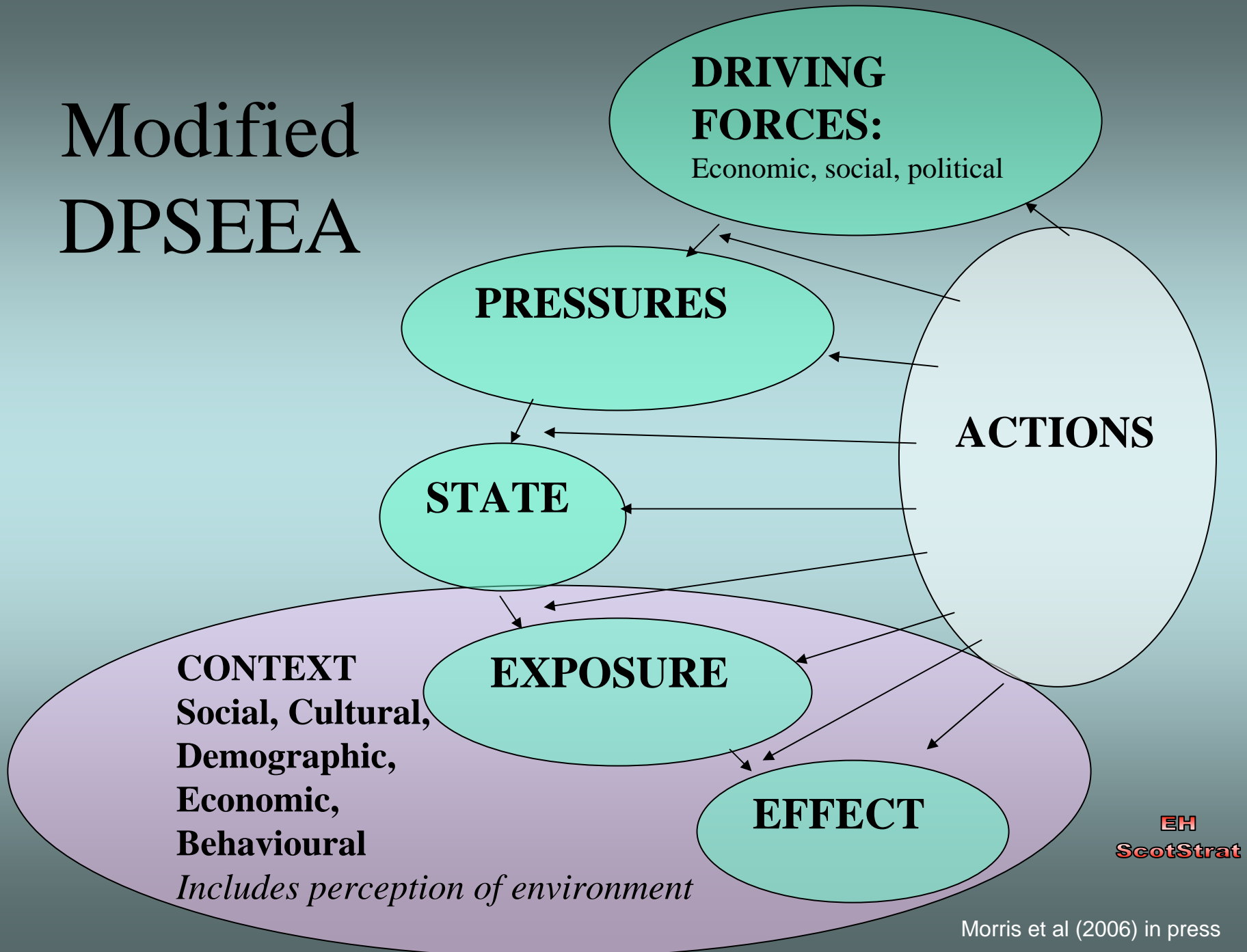
# The Approach:

Working around a clearly articulated concept

# 3 Core Systems

- An Intelligence System
- An Evaluation System
- A “Levers of Change” System

# Modified DPSEEA

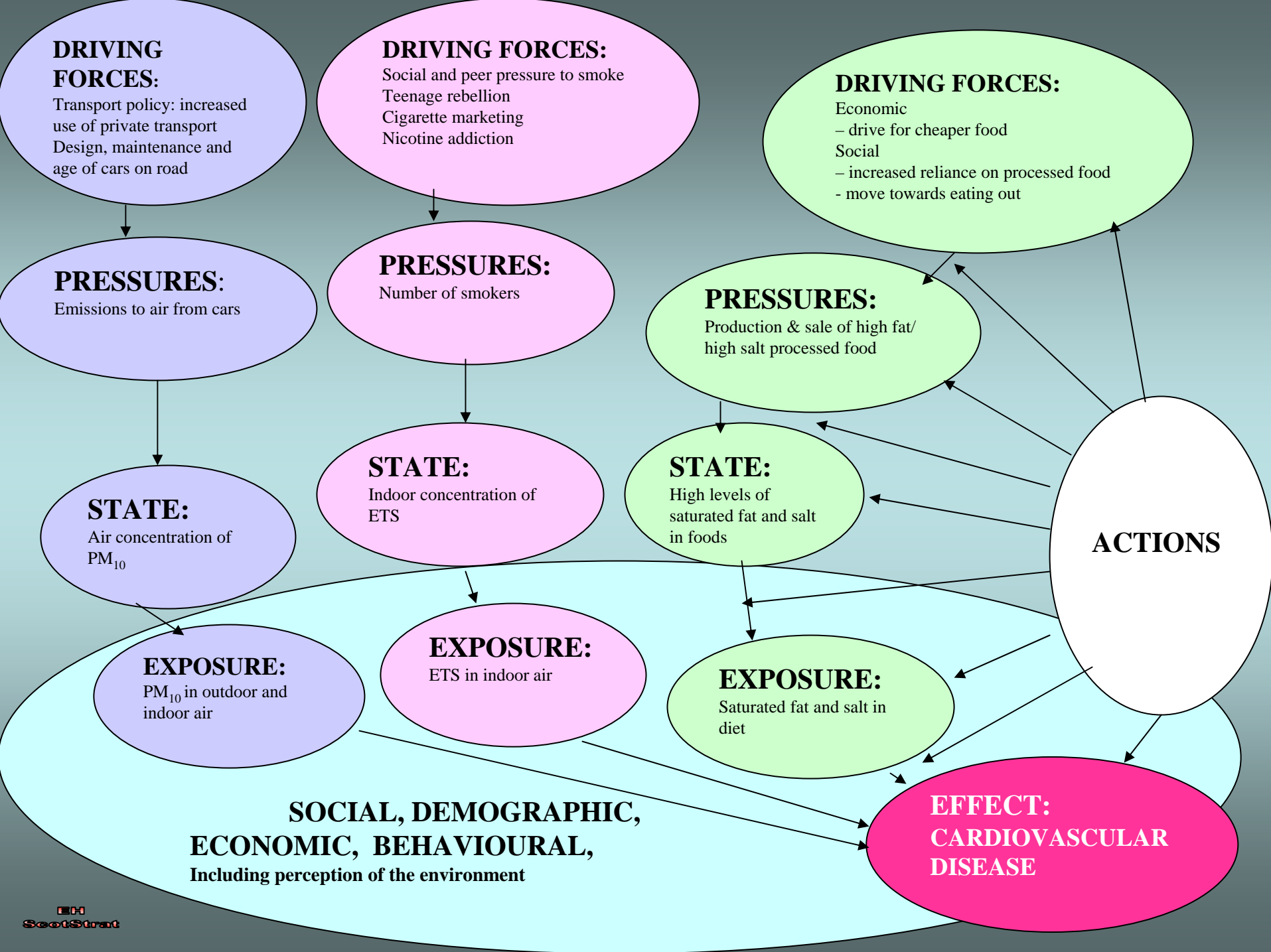


# Our Initial Priorities.....

- **Cardiovascular issues**
- **Asthma**

# Why did we choose them?

- They are headline Scottish health issues
- Environmental factors are accepted influences in each case
- Each has cross-cutting policy relevance
- Each illustrates the positive and negative influence of physical environment



## Where are we now on?

- Stage 1: Scope the Problem
  - Stage 2: Map the Policy Maze
  - Stage 3: Develop the Conceptual Model
  - Stage 4: Obtain High Level commitment
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- Stage 5: Identify the Necessary Systems
  - Stage 6: Define the Work Streams
  - Stage 7: Develop Action Plans for Delivery
  - Stage 8: Get Started

# 7 new things about a Strategic Framework built around the proposed conceptual model

1. **Complex relationships depicted in a linear fashion....it is simple without being simplistic**
2. **Environmental health goals can be expressed as environments we wish to create in addition to those we wish to prevent**
3. **Underpins information systems relevant to policy and its evaluation**
4. **Facilitates application of standard risk management protocols**

7 new things about a Strategic Framework built around the proposed conceptual model

5. **Unites constituencies** around shared goals
6. Can represent **the local dimension**
- 7 **Maps the environmental health territory**