

FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION: SYSTEMS APPROACH AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY

Prof.dr. Jacqueline Broerse
Athena Institute, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam



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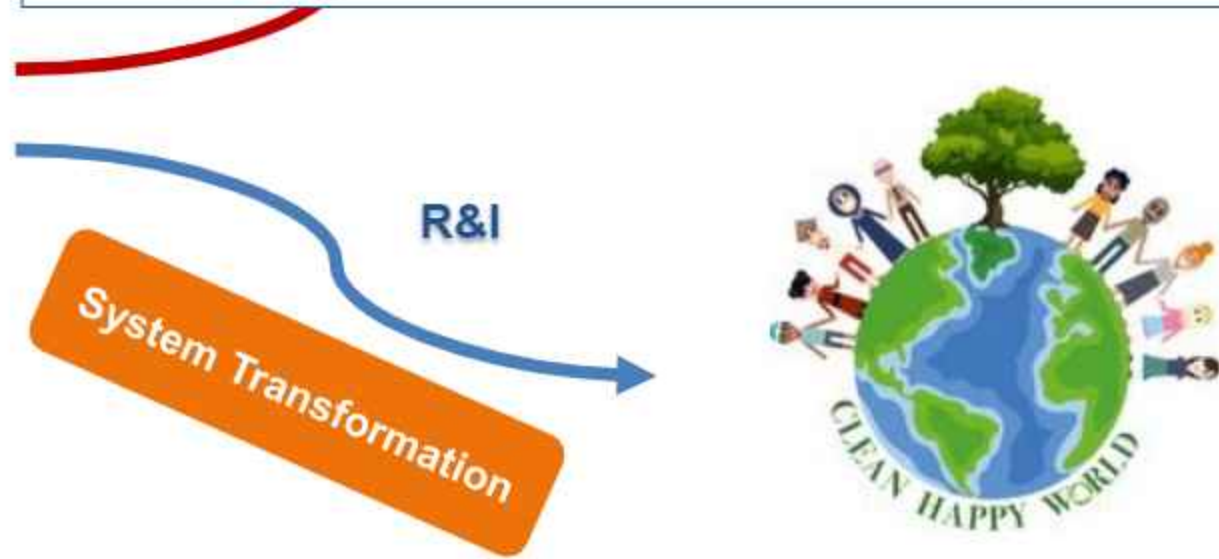


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CHALLENGES IN THE FOOD SYSTEM



- Determine extent of the problem
- Understand causes of the problem
- Identify and experiment with innovations (technical and social)
- Support governance of transformation process



RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AS CATALYST



Much R&I done to solve problems in the food system

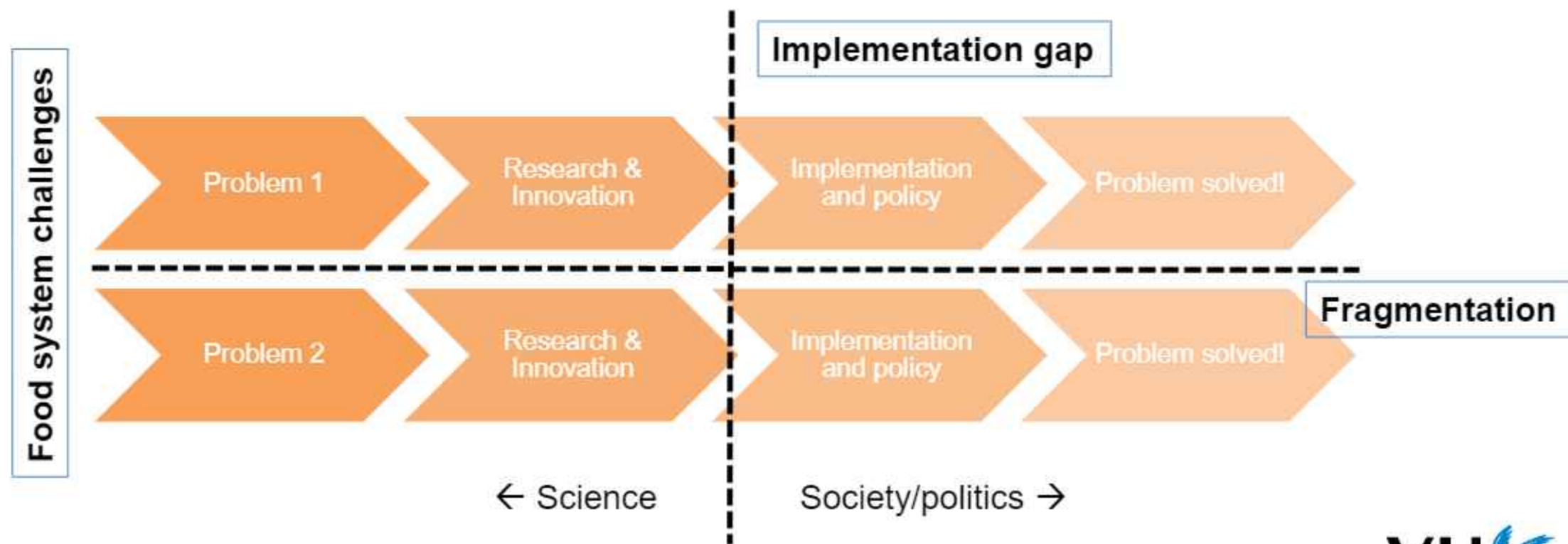
However... although there are examples where innovations find their way into society relatively smoothly, often there are problems:

- Low rate and level of adoption
- Slow or no scaling up (embedding in existing structures)
- Unforeseen side effects

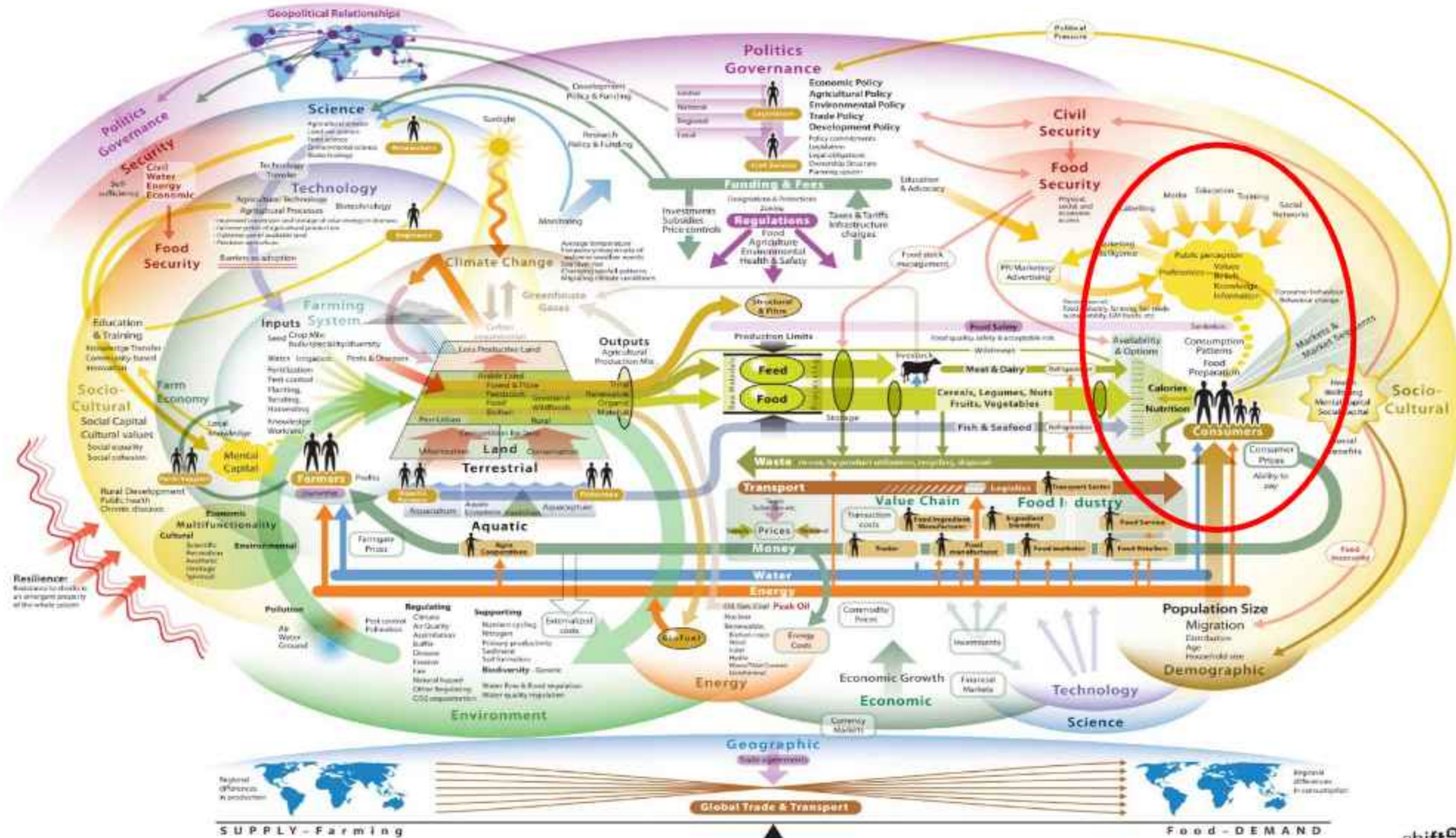
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AS CATALYST

Traditional linear approach

Solving problems by breaking system down in 'solvable' sub-problems in sequence:



FOOD SYSTEMS



SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

'Landscape'

Broader societal trends



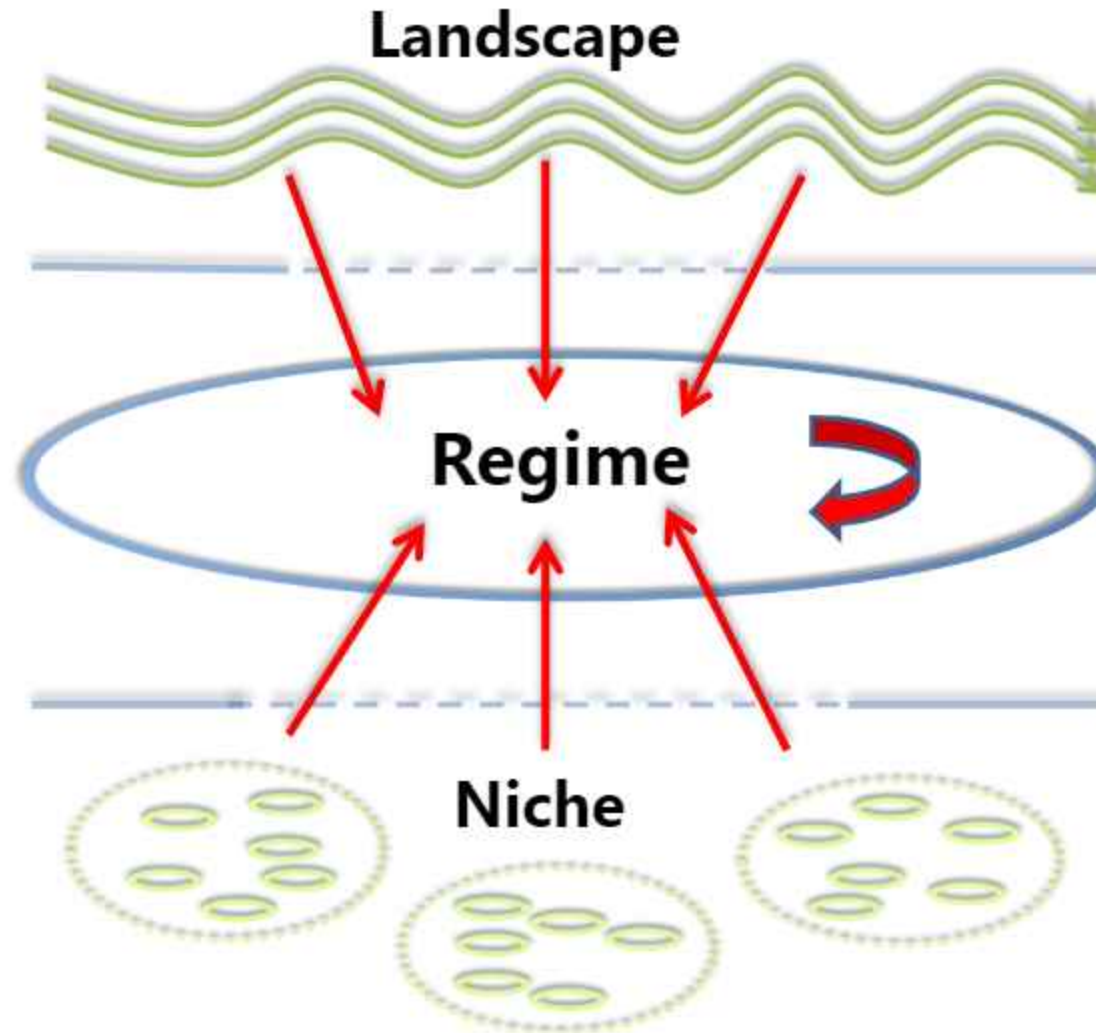
'Regime'

Dominant culture, structure and practice of system

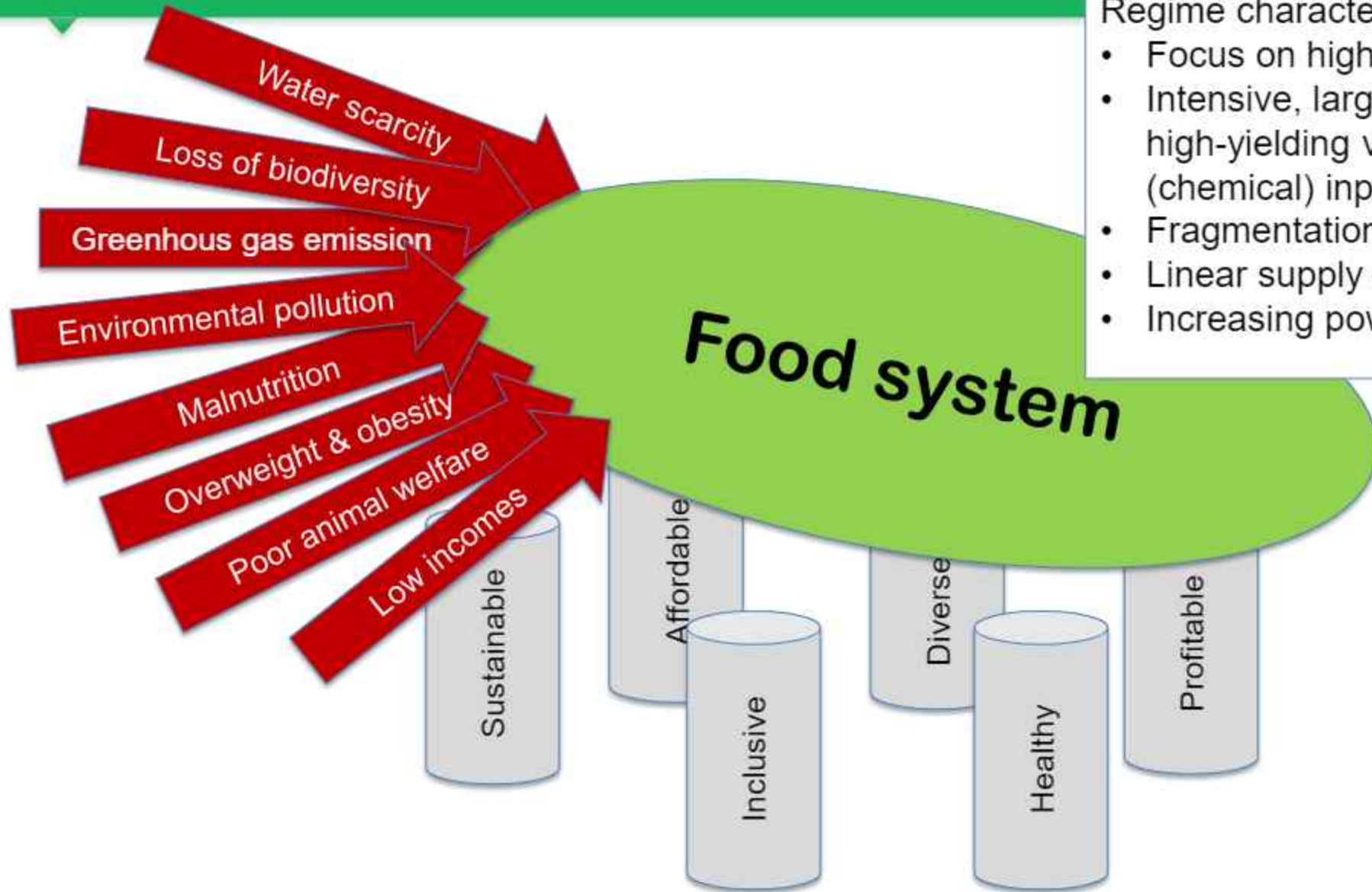


'Niches'

Innovative experiments in which actors create alternative practices (compared to regime)



FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

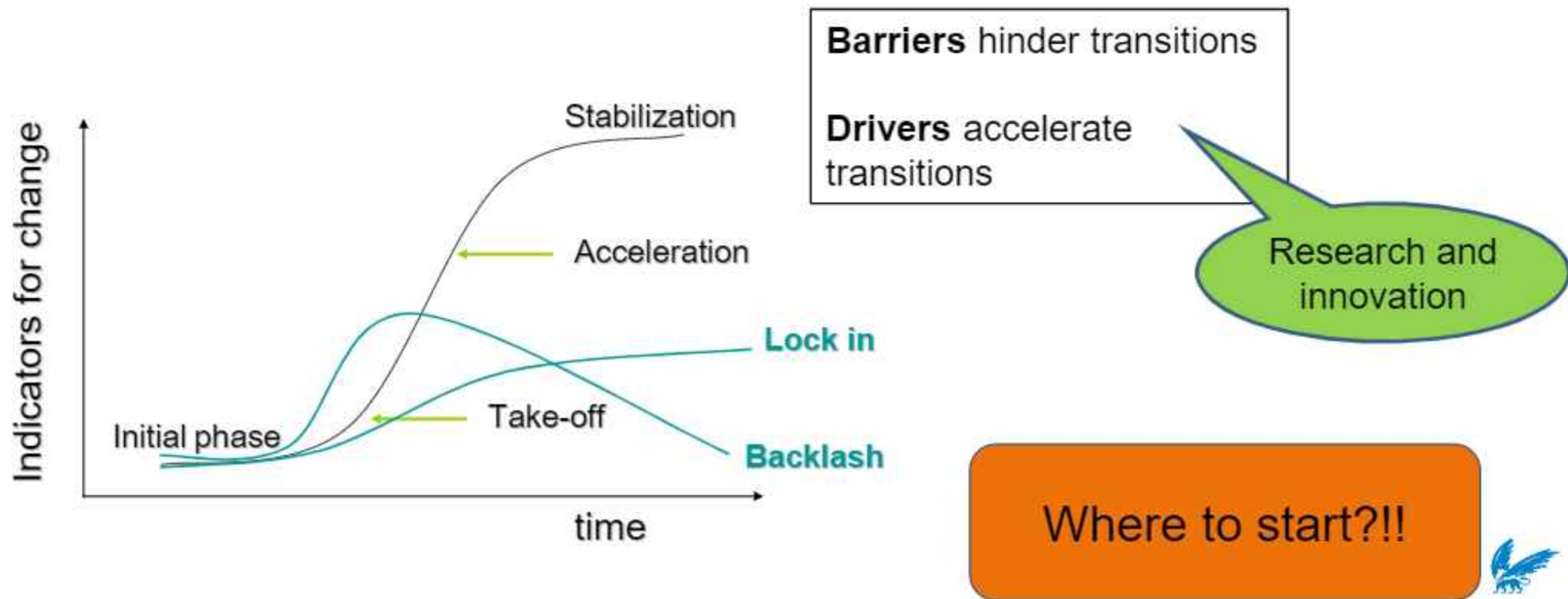


Regime characteristics (success factors):

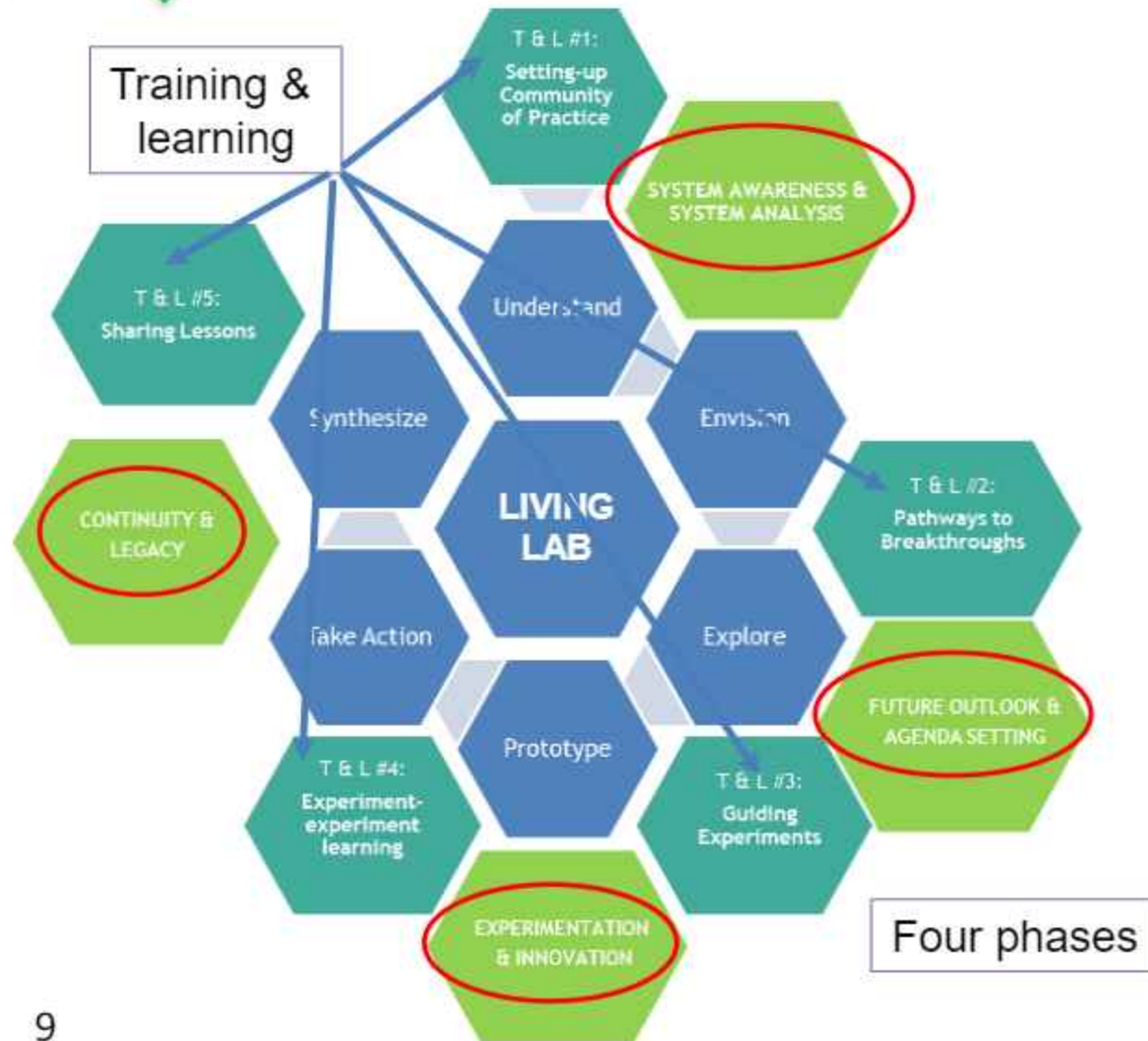
- Focus on high quantities at low cost
- Intensive, large-scale agriculture with high-yielding varieties/breeds and (chemical) inputs
- Fragmentation at all levels and sectors
- Linear supply chain
- Increasing power concentration

TRANSITIONAL DYNAMICS

Transitional dynamics is determined by interactions between and within niches, regimes and landscapes

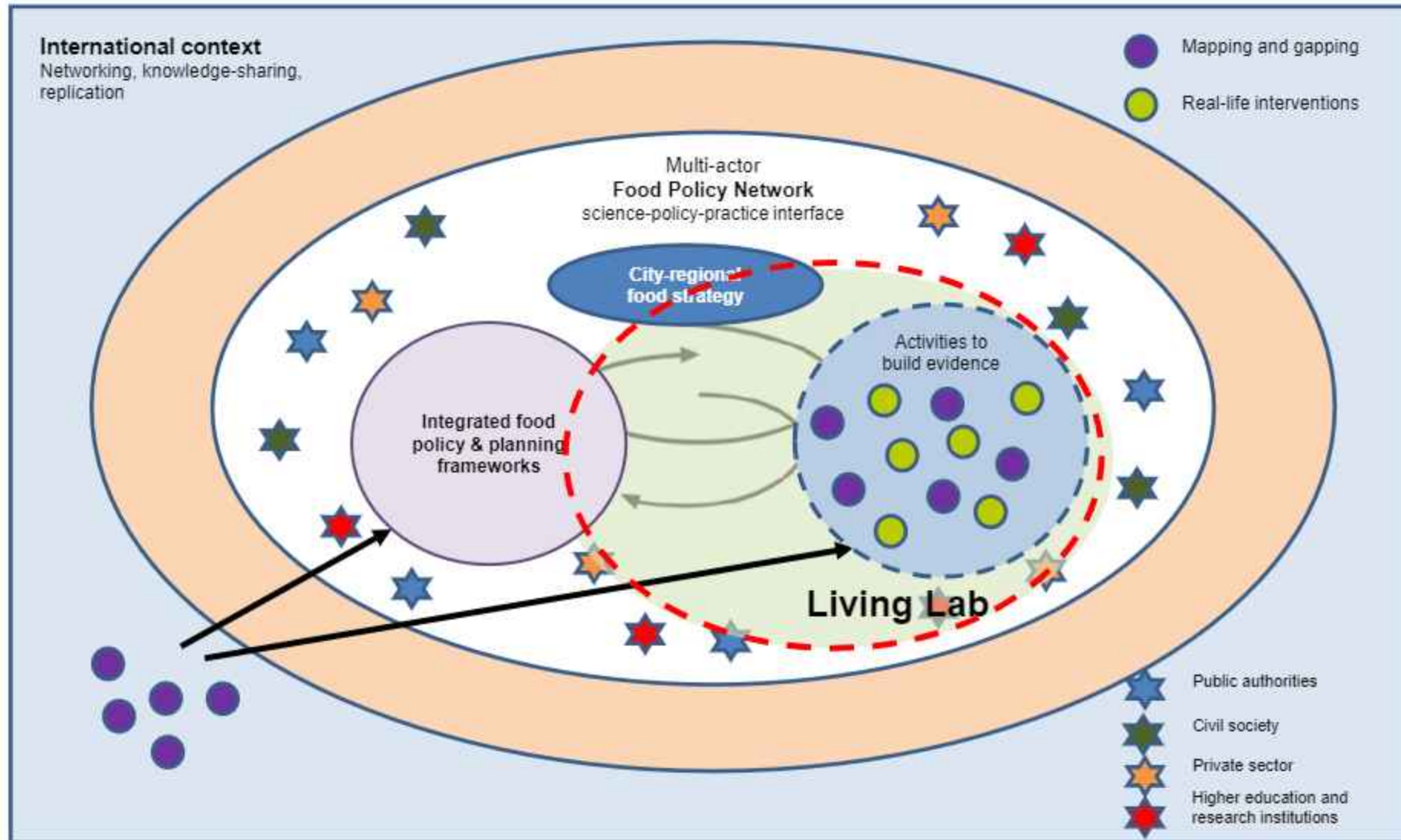


FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION – LIVING LABS PATHWAY

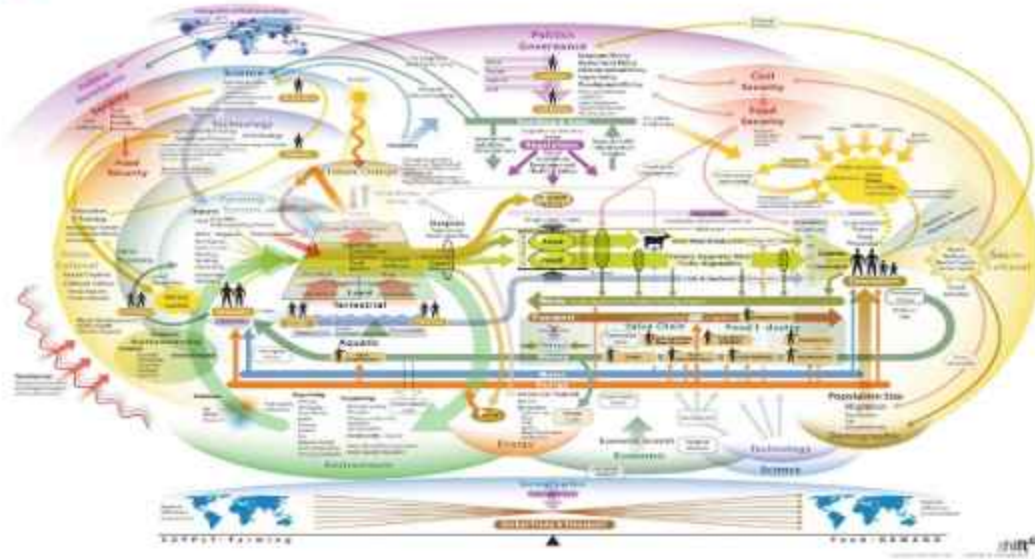


- **Living lab** = participatory and experimental space – structure to **bring stakeholders together, using systems approach**
- FIT4FOOD2030 provided support for setting up living labs for food system transformation:
 - guidelines
 - training workshops
 - on-the-job support
 - financial support
- FoodCLIC is now implementing the lessons learnt

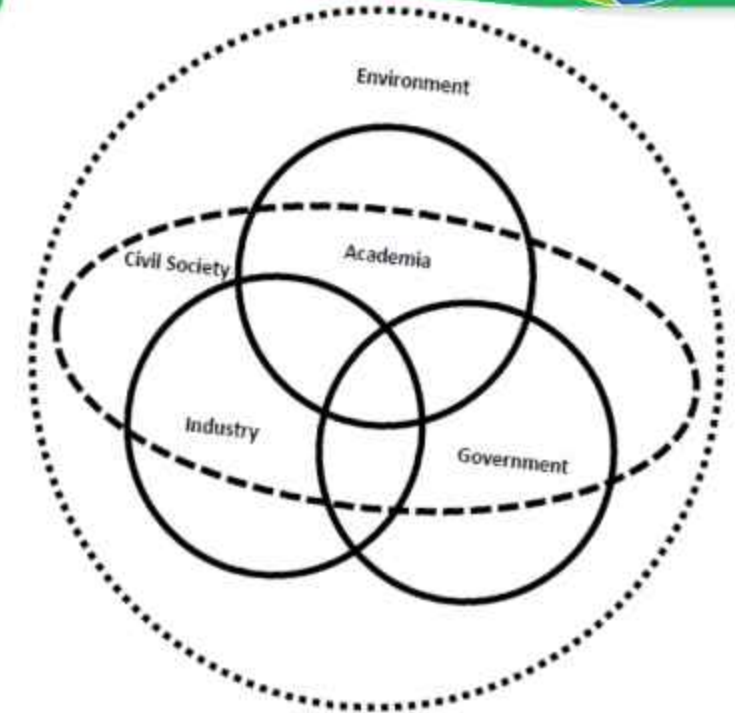




PHASE 1. SYSTEM AWARENESS & ANALYSIS



System analysis



Stakeholder analysis

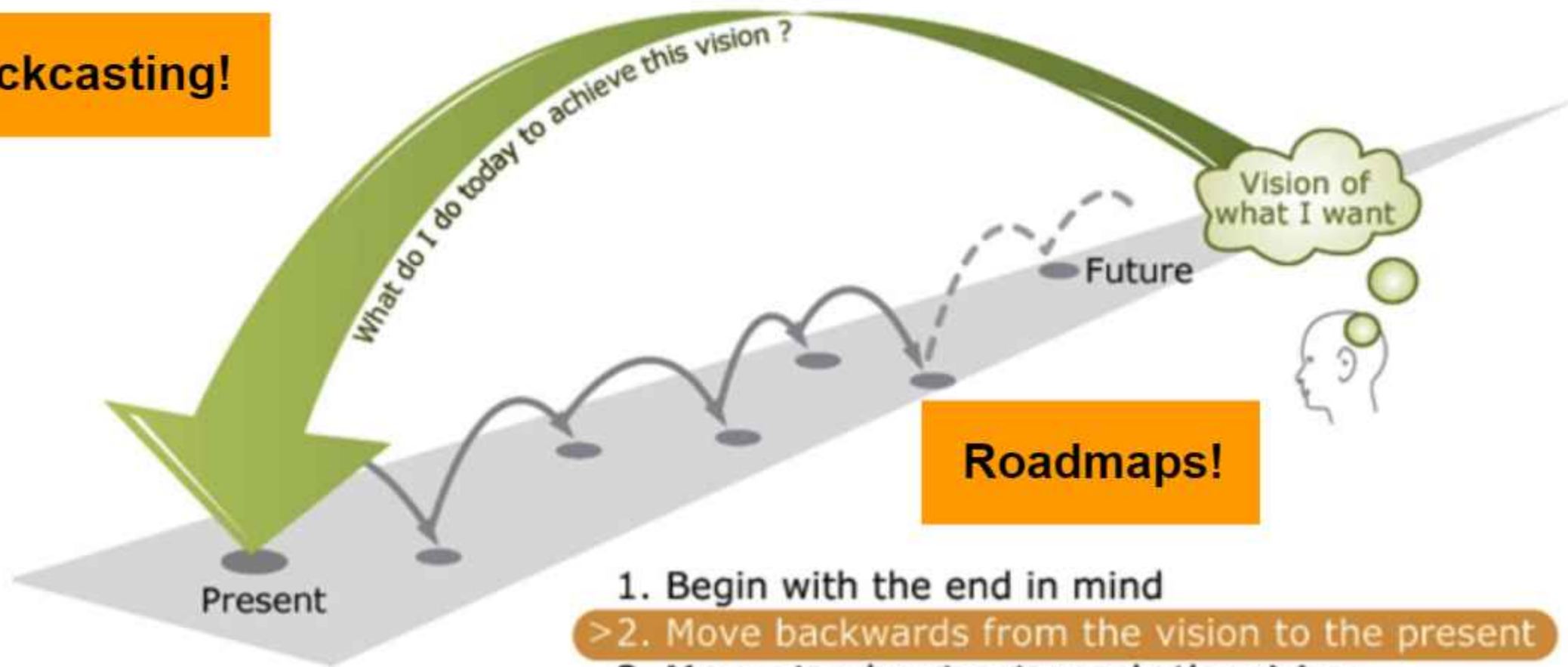
Mapping relevant programs, policies and initiatives



Networking

PHASE 2. FUTURE OUTLOOK & AGENDA SETTING

Backcasting!



Roadmaps!

1. Begin with the end in mind
- > 2. Move backwards from the vision to the present
3. Move step by step towards the vision

PHASE 3. EXPERIMENTATION & INNOVATION

- Co-creation of **experiments towards transformation**
- **Integrated intervention packages** around leverage points (leverage point is not a silver bullet)
- Anticipate barriers and facilitators





Co-benefits

Between social, environmental and economic objectives



Linkages

Between urban and rural areas



Inclusion

Of all stakeholders and their knowledges



Connectivities

Between food and other policies

EXAMPLE – CREATING SYNERGIES AROUND SCHOOL LUNCHES

SCHOOL LUNCHES



Challenge

Lunches often unhealthy → provide healthy food



Many missed opportunities from the perspective of food system transformation

Innovations & Interventions

- Make sure diet is healthy, tasty and more plant based
- Only use ecologically produced food
- Give food classes and let children prepare their own lunch (competences)
- Enhance affordability: pool resources / differential pricing
- Ensure that food is obtained from farmers nearby (e.g. by linking it to short food supply chain or UA initiatives)
- Get children acquainted with these food producers (where does food come from)
- Maybe include some volunteer activities to learn about food production (instead of, or in addition to, school gardens)
- Include children and parents in discussions on diet, menus and where to obtain the food



Co-benefits



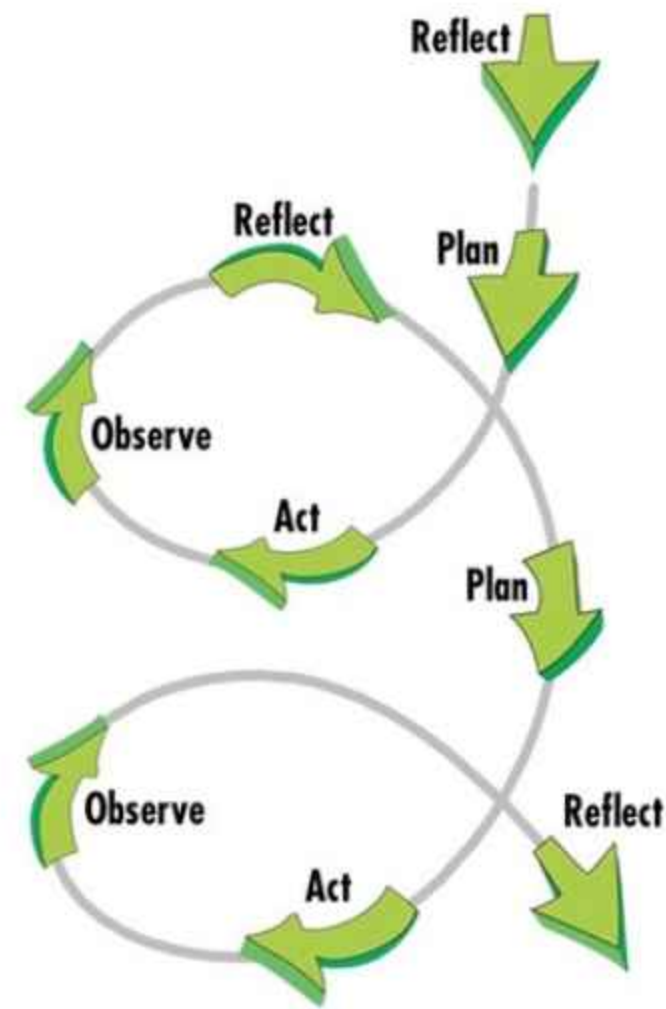
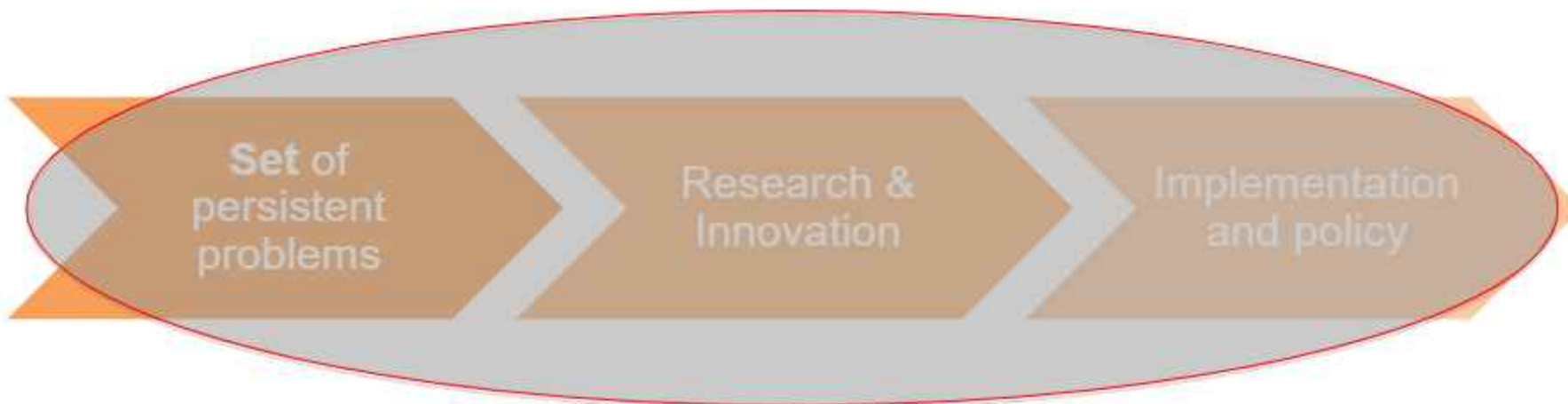
Linkages rural-urban



Inclusion

PHASE 3. EXPERIMENTATION & INNOVATION

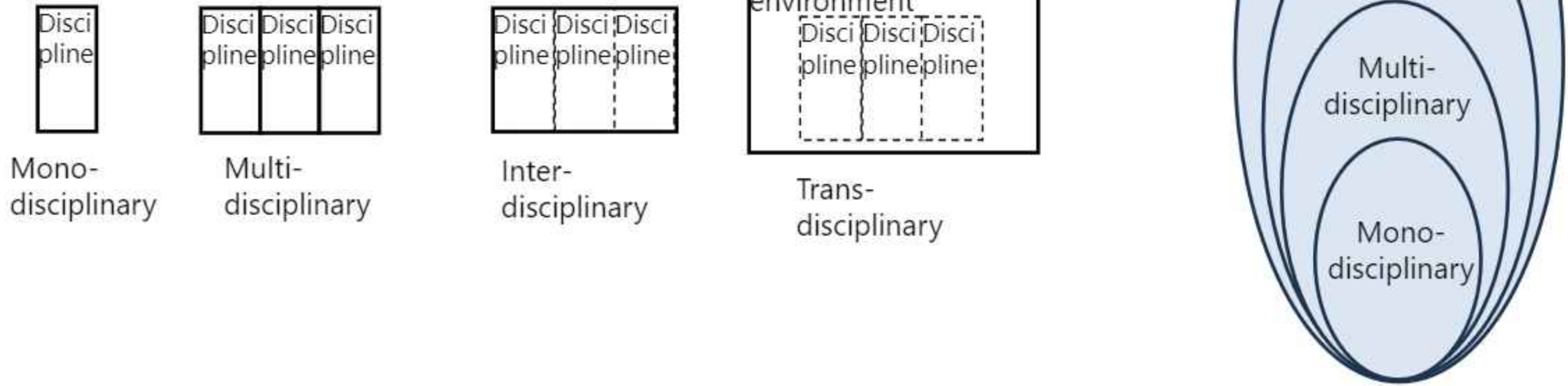
Transdisciplinary research → action-learning cycles (M&E)



Action-learning spiral

PHASE 3. EXPERIMENTATION & INNOVATION

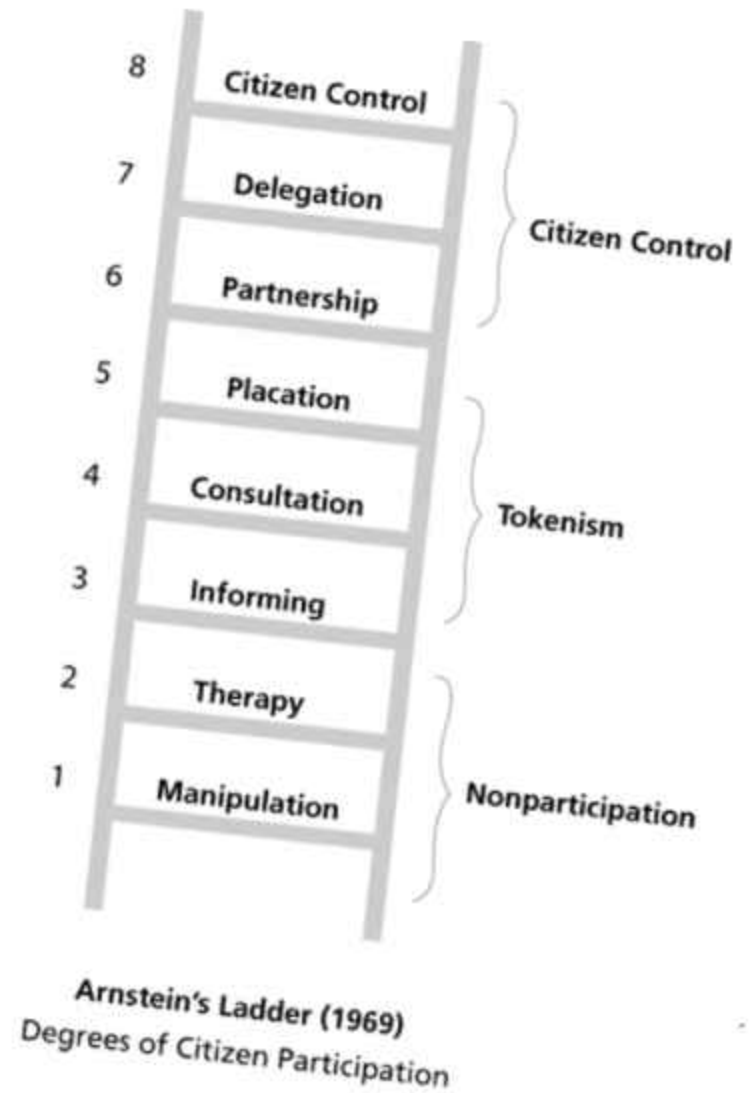
Transdisciplinary research



CHALLENGES – DEALING WITH POWER DYNAMICS

Difficulty in realizing **inclusiveness**, particularly in decision making (tokenism)

- Whose voices are dominant or silenced?
- Sidelining inputs of less powerful groups: opinions about legitimacy and relevance of experiential knowledge; discussion and doubts about 'suitability' of citizens
- Lack of '**know how**' about explication and integration experiential knowledge
- How to deal with conflict?



CHALLENGES – PROJECTIFICATION CONSTRAINING IMPACT



- Funding structures drive (and limit!) scope of impact (agendas and call conditions)
- Due to need for resources, Labs often ‘mold’ their identity and actions into project calls, becoming **project-driven** instead of impact-driven
- Many projects have **too narrow** a perspective on interventions to act as leverage point for transformation
- Funding bodies have important role to play!

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Chicago, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings, streets, and green spaces. A large, semi-transparent text overlay is centered in the middle of the image. The text is in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The background shows a mix of modern high-rise buildings and older, lower-rise structures, with a prominent highway or expressway running through the middle ground. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, providing a wide view of the city's layout.

THANK YOU!!