

FUTURES4FOOD

Accelerating transitions in the agri-food sector
Looking back and moving forward



Closing event
26/02/2025

Program of today

13:00: **Opening** by Erik Mathijs

13:10: **Reflecting on the external conditions** by Philippe Baret

13:40: **Two cases** by Caroline Amrom and Ines Cottignie

14:20: **Q&A**

14:40: **Break**

15:10: **How can policy makers and food system stakeholders further accelerate these two transitions?**
by Erik Mathijs

15:40: Panel

16:10: Reaction and discussion animated by Sien Luyten

16:40: **Networking**

Opening
by Erik Mathijs

"New way of working: Building trust and dialogue"

"The experience shows that certain topics related to food and agriculture can be very polarising and societal consensus is more likely to emerge from inclusive approaches"

"The new European Board on Agriculture and Food will be supporting the Commission in creating inclusive policies by providing strategic advice and fostering a new culture of dialogue among the different players in the agri-food chain"

"Knowledge, Research & Innovation as catalysts of change"

EC, 2025, A Vision for Agriculture and Food, p. 4 and 25

NEED FOR NEW
MODES OF
GOVERNANCE

"New way of working: Building trust and dialogue"

"The experience shows that certain topics related to food and agriculture can be very polarising and societal consensus is more likely to emerge from inclusive approaches"

"The new European Board on Agriculture and Food will be supporting the Commission in creating inclusive policies by providing strategic advice and fostering a new culture of dialogue among the different players in the agri-food chain"

NEED FOR TRANS-
DISCIPLINARY
APPROACHES

"Knowledge, Research & Innovation as catalysts of change"

EC, 2025, A Vision for Agriculture and Food, p. 4 and 25

Project

FUTURES4FOOD

BELSPO – BRAIN 2.0

4 **years**: 2020 - 2025

3 **academic partners**



Project

Objectives

Aims at the **co-creation of sustainable futures in the food production sector in collaboration with the actors of the cereals and proteins value chains at the Belgian level.**



Participative



Trajectories of transition



Cereals

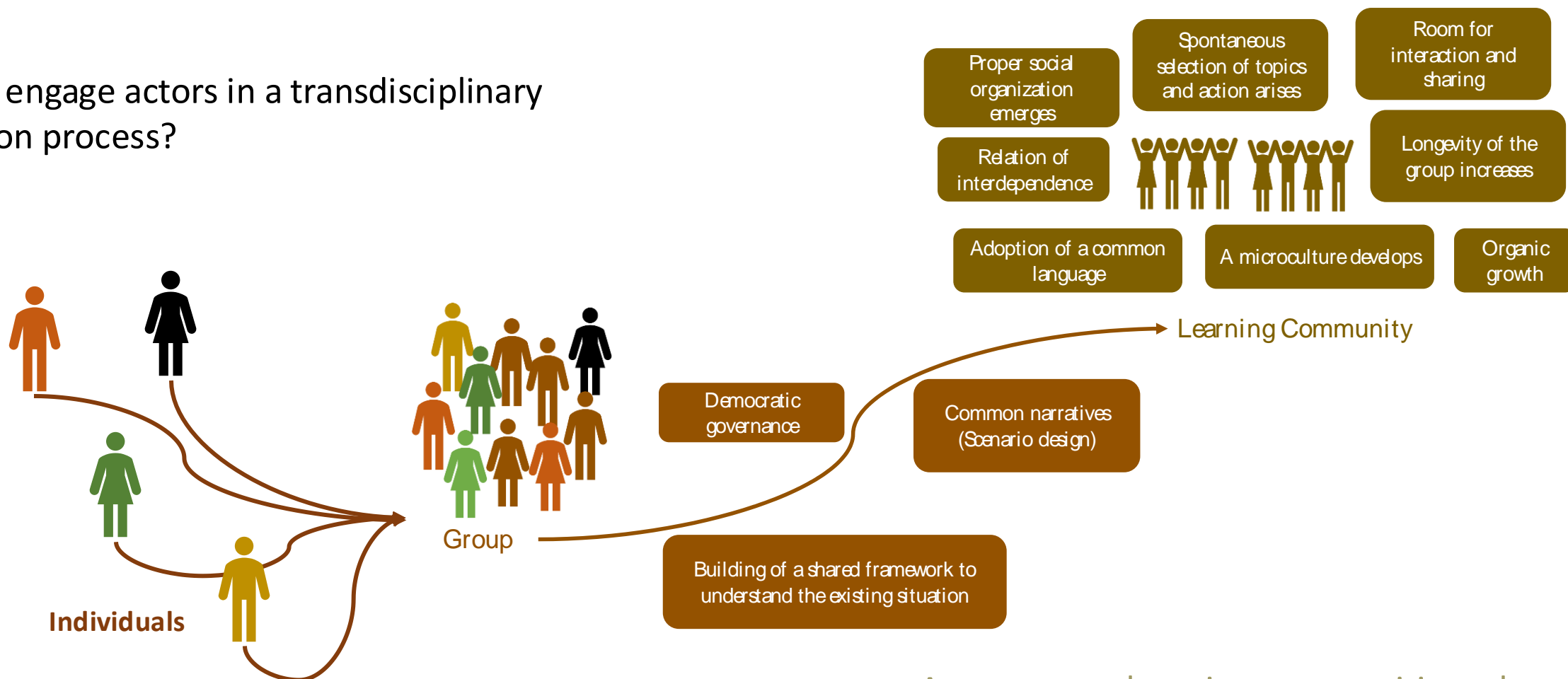


Protein transition

Two experiments in network governance and transdisciplinarity

Project dynamic/ Expected result

How to engage actors in a transdisciplinary transition process?



Source: Schemes established on the basis of information collected in "Communautés d'apprentissage: Comment apprendre ensemble?" (Cristol, 2017)

Autonomous learning communities take charge of the transition in their sector

Framework

Wicked problems,
sustainability transitions,
collaborative problem
solving

New knowledge needs
and (policy) approaches

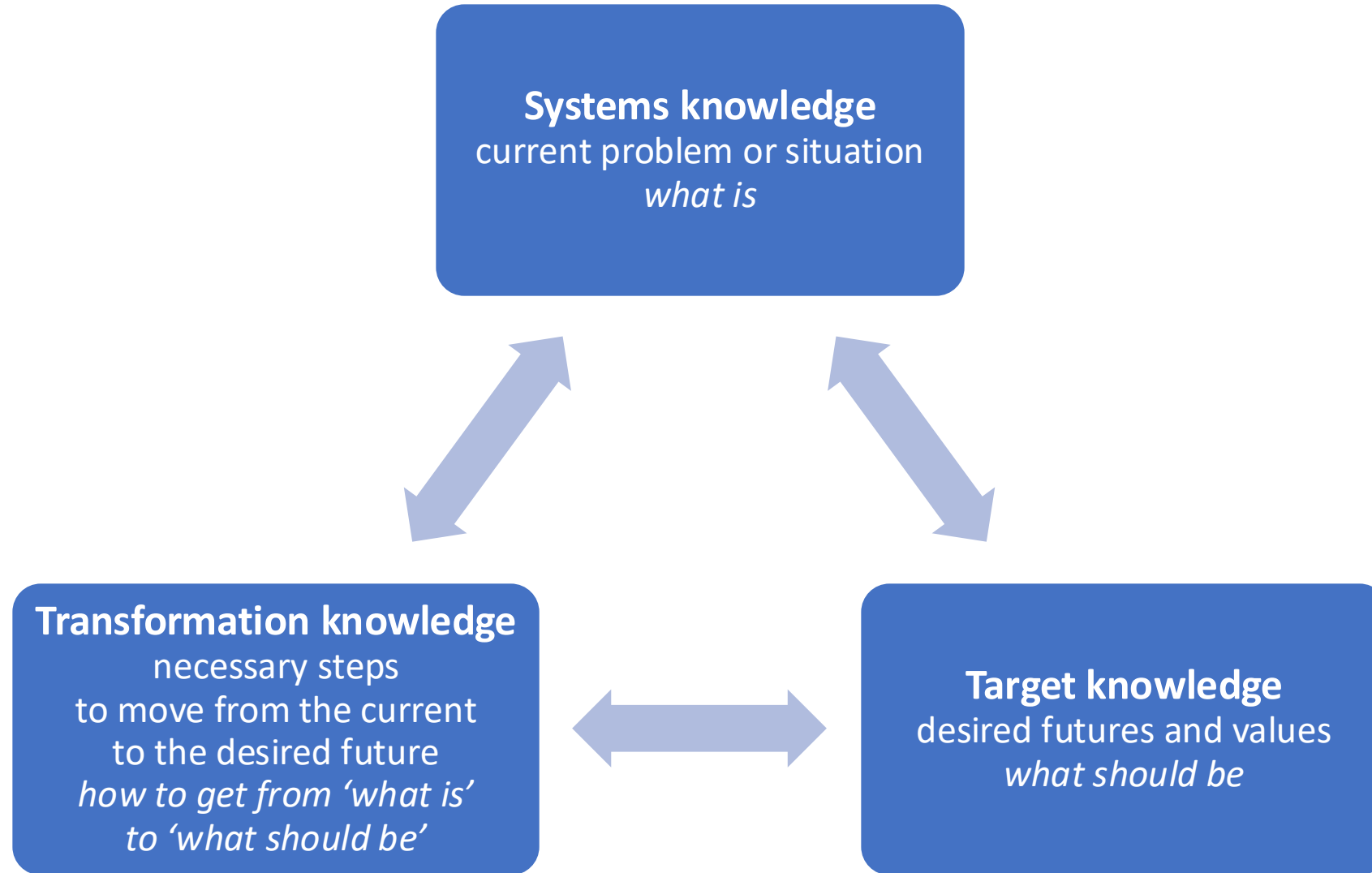
- Target knowledge
- Systems knowledge
- Transformation knowledge

New (policy) processes
and capacities

- Framing
- Complexity
- Futures

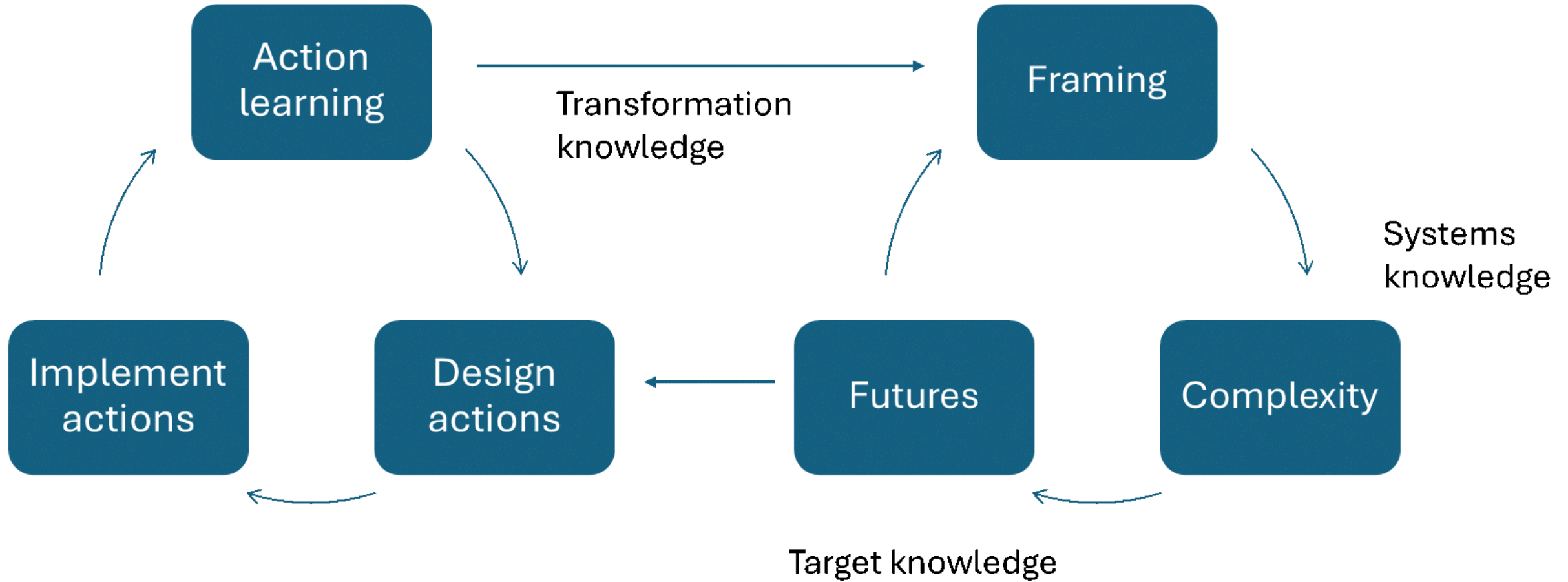
Social learning

Three types of knowledge needed for transitions



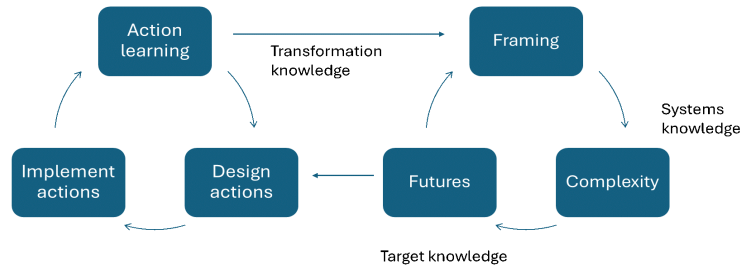
Pohl and
Hirsh Hadorn,
2007

Framework



Case ①:

- Cereal sector



Case ②:

- Protein transition



- 2021-2025
- Multi-actor partnership with the aim to contribute to a sustainable transition
- Voluntary agreement to participate
- Progressive and iterative inclusion of participants

From Farm-to-Fork Strategy to a Vision for Agriculture and Food

Zooming out: Reflecting on the external conditions by Philippe Baret

Zooming in: two cases by Caroline Amrom and Ines Cottignie

Zooming out: Towards new modes of governance by Erik Mathijs

Panel debate

Reflecting on the external conditions
by Philippe Baret

Transition of food systems

Food systems have a long history

They are central in our society

They are highly efficient today

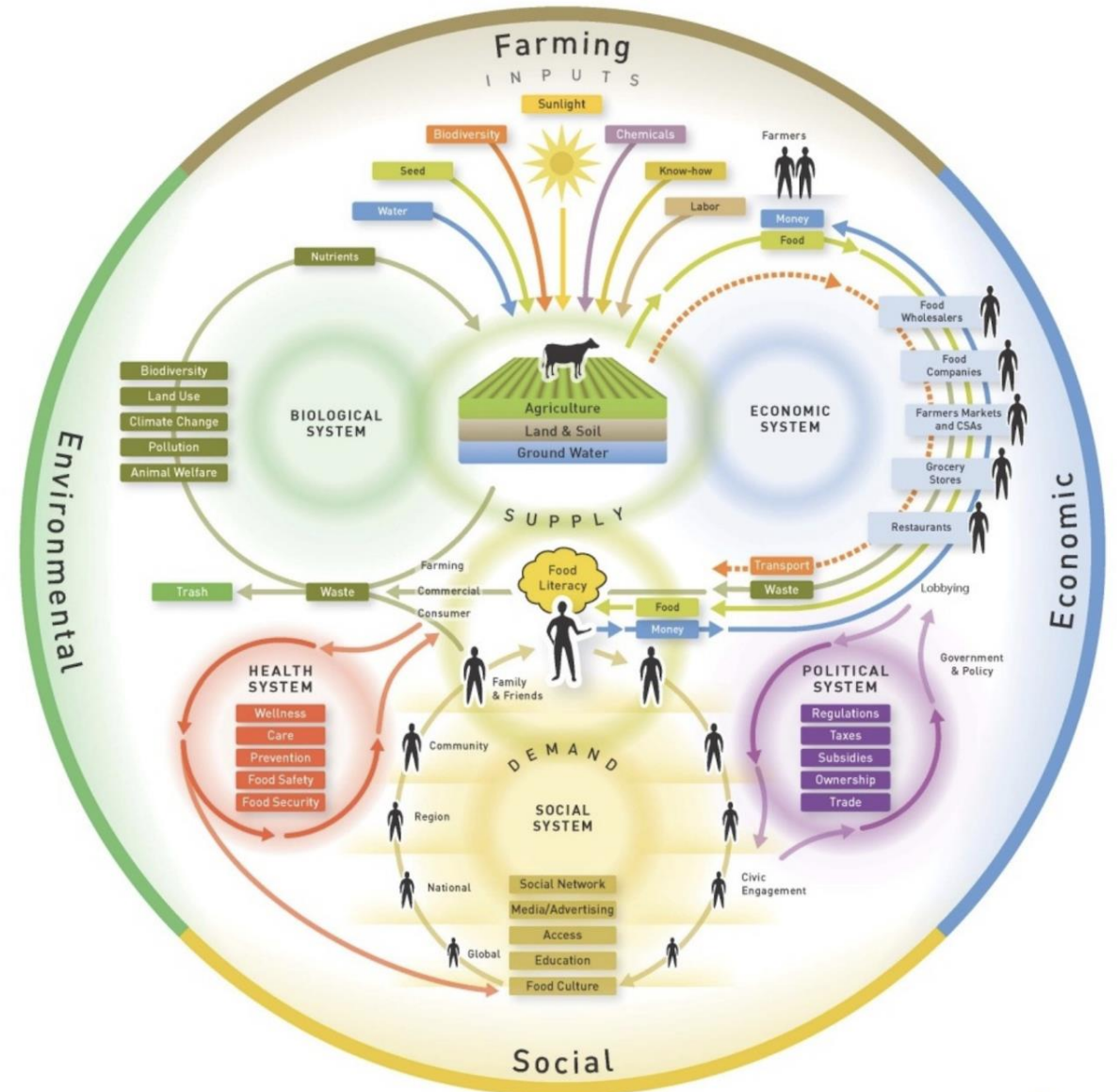
Their outcomes are unsustainable in the future

-> The need for a transition

Agenda for a transition

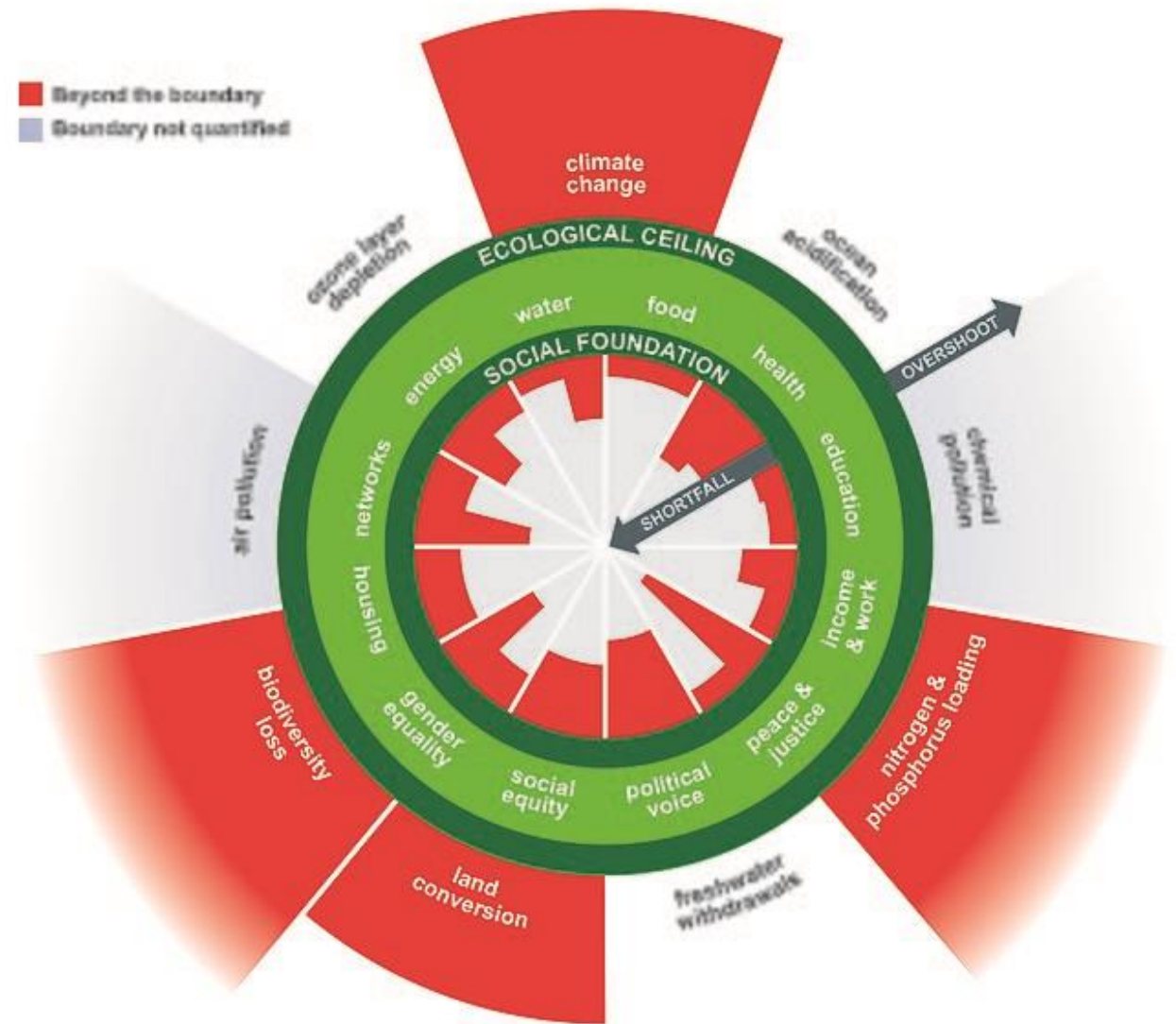
A new frame

The food system framework



Agenda for a transition

A comprehensive vision



Green Deal and Farm2Fork

2019 Green Deal

A pack of policy measures to ensure a climate-neutral EU in

2020 Farm2Fork

The Farm to Fork Strategy is a new comprehensive approach to how Europeans **value** food sustainability.



January 2024 protests

Deregulation

New narratives

New power dynamics



2024 A transition year



Strategic Dialogue
on the Future of
EU **Agriculture**

The future of European competitiveness

Part A | A competitiveness strategy for Europe

SEPTEMBER 2024



Safer Together Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness

Report by **Sauli Niinistö**, former President of the Republic of Finland,
in his capacity as Special Adviser to the President of the European Commission

2025 A vision for agriculture in Europe

Contents

1. Shaping together an attractive EU farming and food sector for future generations.....	2
2. Vision and objectives for 2040: an agri-food system that is attractive, competitive, sustainable and fair for current and future generations	5
3. Designing together the policy responses for a thriving agri-food Sector.....	6
3.1. Building an attractive sector that ensures a fair standard of living and leverages new income opportunities	6
3.2. A competitive and resilient sector in the face of global challenges	11
3.3. Future-proofing the agri-food sector that works hand in hand with nature	17
3.4. Valuing food and fostering fair living and working conditions in vibrant rural areas	20
4. Creating An enabling environment: Putting research, innovation, knowledge and skills at the heart of Europe’s agri-food economy.....	24
5. CONCLUSION	26

New vision, new balance

Farmers are at the center of attention

Drivers are competitiveness and security

Environmental targets are fading

Role of technology is confirmed

Attention to rural areas

Some points of attention

Policy layering

More resources with a shrinking budget

Stakeholders driven but low attention to real life actors

No figures, few scientific facts

Sustainability is also a business issue (1)



PROMISING SOLUTIONS TO ENHANCE THE TASTE OF PLANT-BASED FOOD

“ Collaborations help us build knowledge about plant-based foods that meet consumers’ expectations.

SALIHA BELAID
PLANT PROTEIN DESIGN
SENIOR TEAM LEADER



RESEARCH & INNOVATION



Federal and regional complementarity



A clear horizon

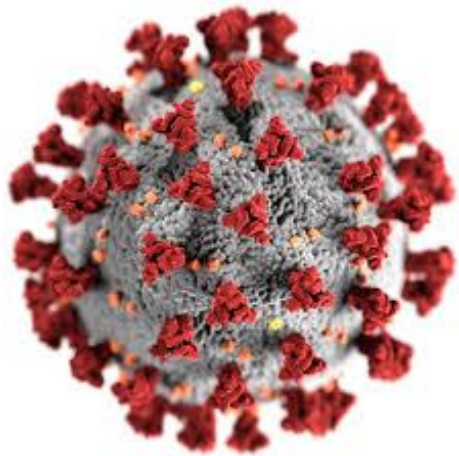


Public hearing

The Common Agricultural Policy post-2027

06/11/2023 | 10:00-13:00 | ROOM JDE62 | EESC | Rue Belliard 99 | 1040 Brussels

Thinking the futures in a fast changing world



Two cases

by Caroline Amrom and Ines Cottignie



Cereals

Social importance

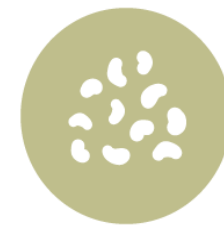
- Historical context and actors (e.g. grain cooperatives)

Economic importance

- Major production in Belgium
- Progressive specialization
- Strong relation with international market

Environmental importance

- Needed shift on the production methods
- Efforts already made (vs. potatoes or beetroots)



Protein transition

Social importance

- Health repercussions
- New food products & habits

Economic importance

- New actors and emergence of new skills of different actors
- Very limited production in Belgium

Environmental importance

- Environmental repercussions of animal-based food consumption
- No real debate on protein crop production

Accelerating transition discussion in those two sectors

How?

Initiation

A crucial step in the perspective of multi-actor dynamics

Initiation (2020)

- No specific framing or impulse from the region for transition in the sector
- Quick mapping of the actors
- Short interviews to get reactions from actors of the sector
- Identify the key added values (& key risks) of the project
 - *Long term engagement, national approach and flexibility*



Cereals

Key take-aways

- A general mistrust of collective and forward-looking exercises, coupled with a strong demand for tangible results and actions;
- A desire for direct impact, highlighting the need for policymakers' involvement or the promise of policy changes;
- Need of relevant entry points that are useful for the actors, inclusive and not yet treated
- Efficiency is expected, along with a genuinely participatory process, rather than a mere consultative one.

Initiation

- *2018*: Protein transition was first broached within the Flemish Government
- *2020*: Farm to Fork Strategy in EU was launched
- *2021*: Flemish Green Deal 'Protein Shift on our plate' was launched by Department of Environment and Spatial Development
<-> Futures4Food researchers = co-initiators and steering committee members



Protein
transition



Framing

What aspect of transition will be discussed and by whom?

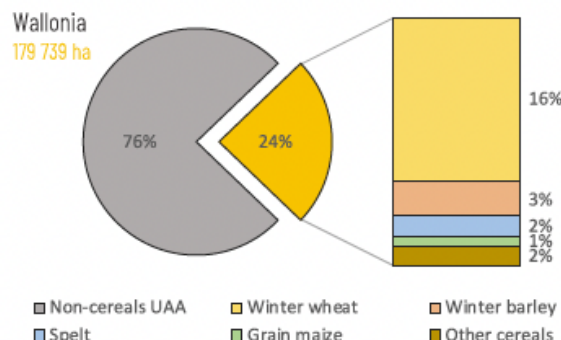
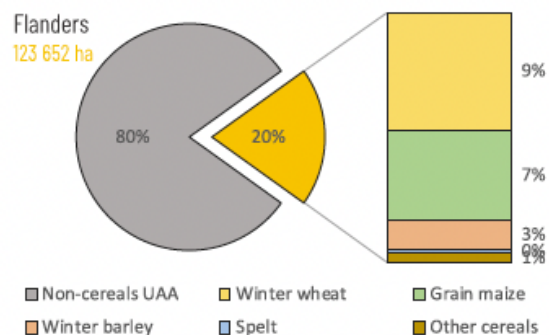


Cereals

Framing – What aspect to be discussed?

Baseline, actors mapping (through interviews and literature review)

Open posture to progressively define the framing of the research



Segment of the chain	Themes
<i>Collection and Sale</i>	Sort-Collect-Store-Sell: the important role of collectors in the cereals and proteins sectors
<i>Processing & consumption</i>	Ongoing trend: Actors develop their own value chain: multiple big and small value chain development
<i>Production</i>	Conservation & organic agriculture: a common horizon?

The most vibrant topic...

“In the near future, we will sustainably produce more cereals for human consumption in Belgium.”



Framing – By whom

- Strong choice of an inclusive approach
- Economic actors from each step of the value chain (Research on seeds, union of farmers, collectors, millers, processors, retail)
- Identified through previous studies led in the cereal sector and snowball effect throughout interviews
- Marginal changes of participation along the process

APAQ-W
ARNB/Moulins de Statte
BioForum
BioWallonie
Bioplanet
B2B - Service of Good Food
Broodnodig
Collège des producteurs
Colruyt
CRA-W
Dandoy
Diversiferm
Dossche Mills
Farm4Good

Fegra
Flietermolen
FWA
Inagro
Molens Nova
PNHS-Epeautre d'ardenne
Puratos
Sfere
SPF Santé publique
Tartine & Boterham
ULB - Agroecology
ULG
Wagralim
Walagri



Framing

Green Deal with 8 steering committee members and 57 other signatories at the launch that all signed an agreement to commit to make an effort, incl. government bodies, knowledge institutes, non-profit organisations, companies, ...

Before launch: through one-on-one calls and group meetings to define the Green Deal

After launch: actions per organisation, plenary sessions, collaboration actions, workshops and webinar



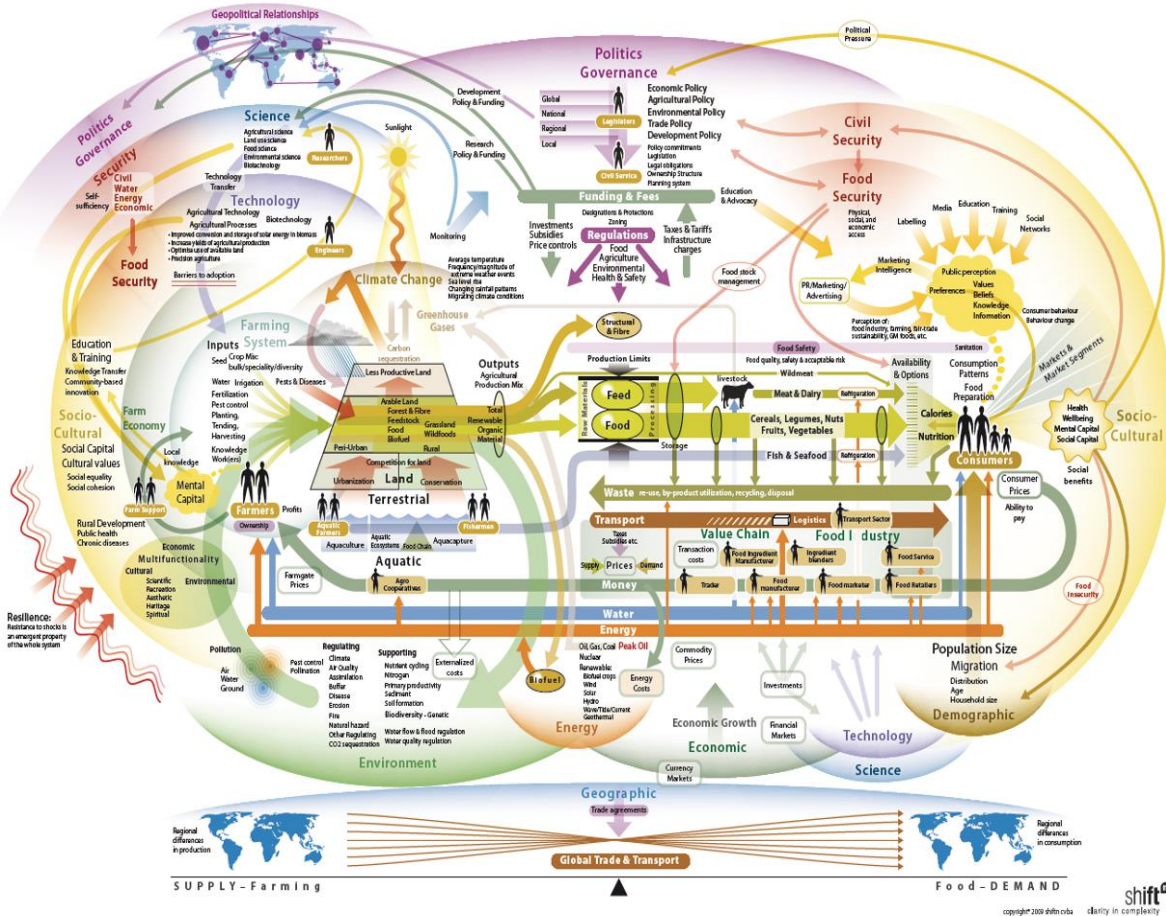
Protein
transition

Complexity?

How to tackle it? Systemic approach from complex to simplex :)

Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

Global Food System Map



*Move from an individual/organizational perspective...
... To a common understanding of what is*

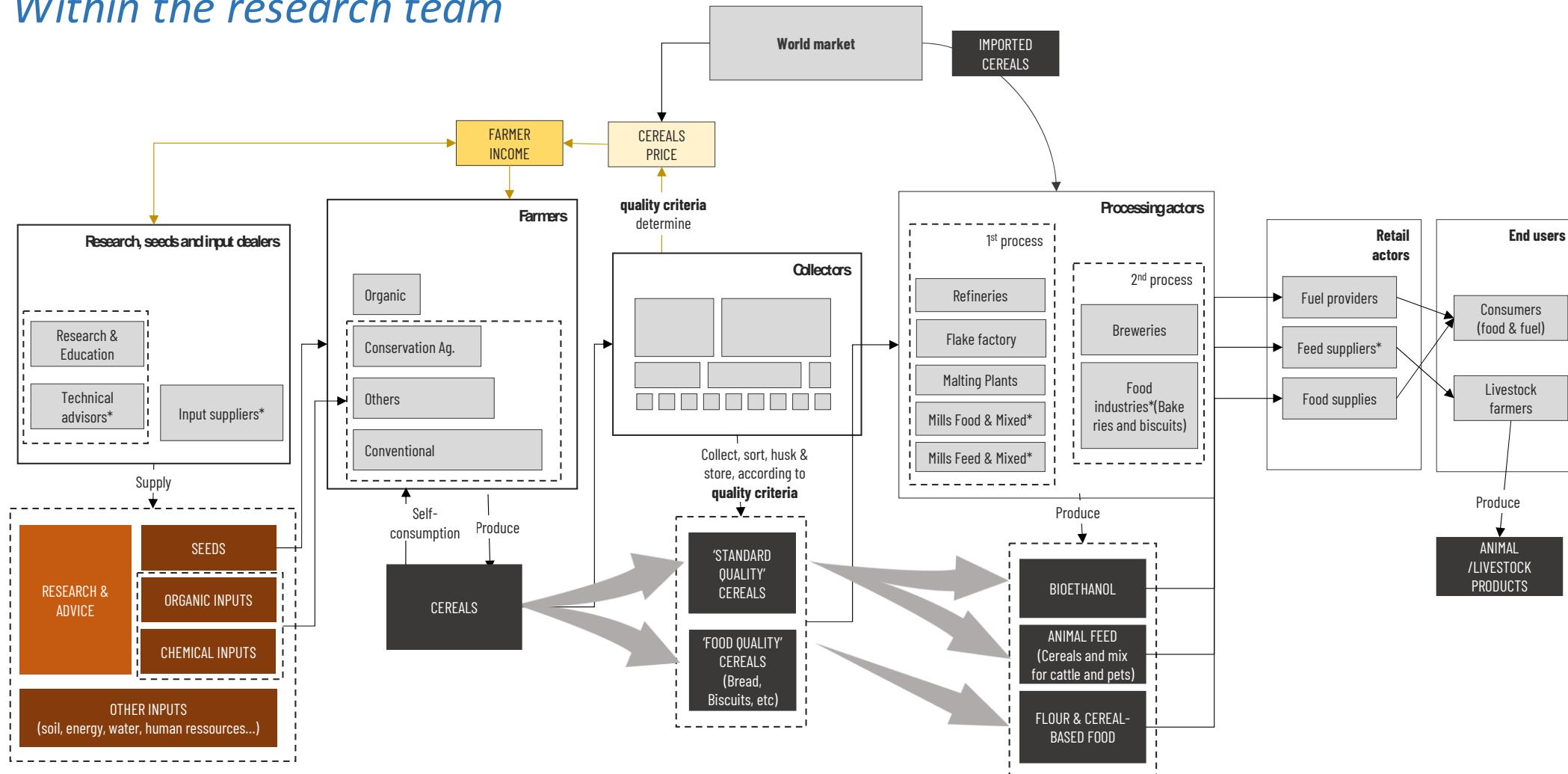
Source: Global food system, Shift'N

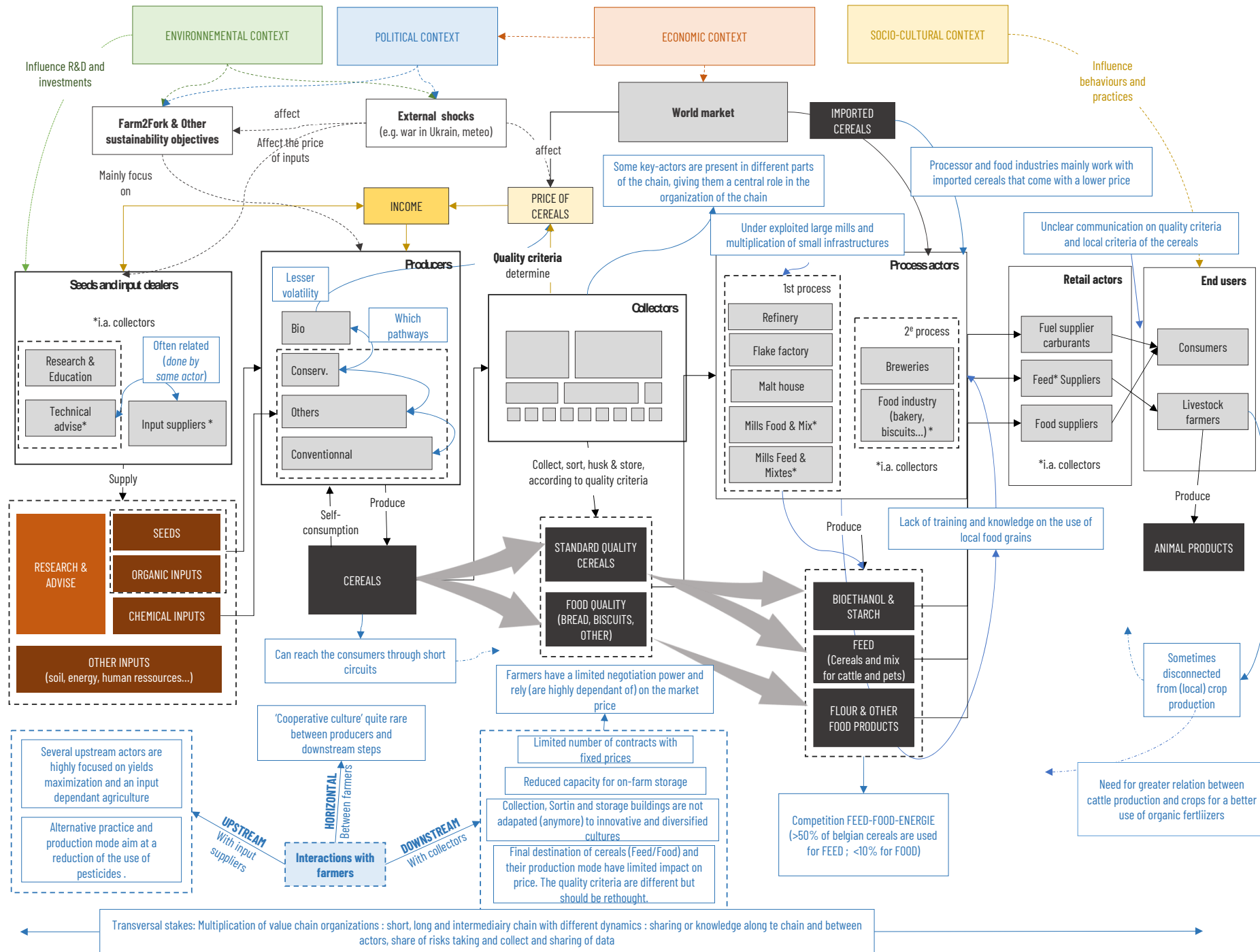
Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

Within the research team



Cereals





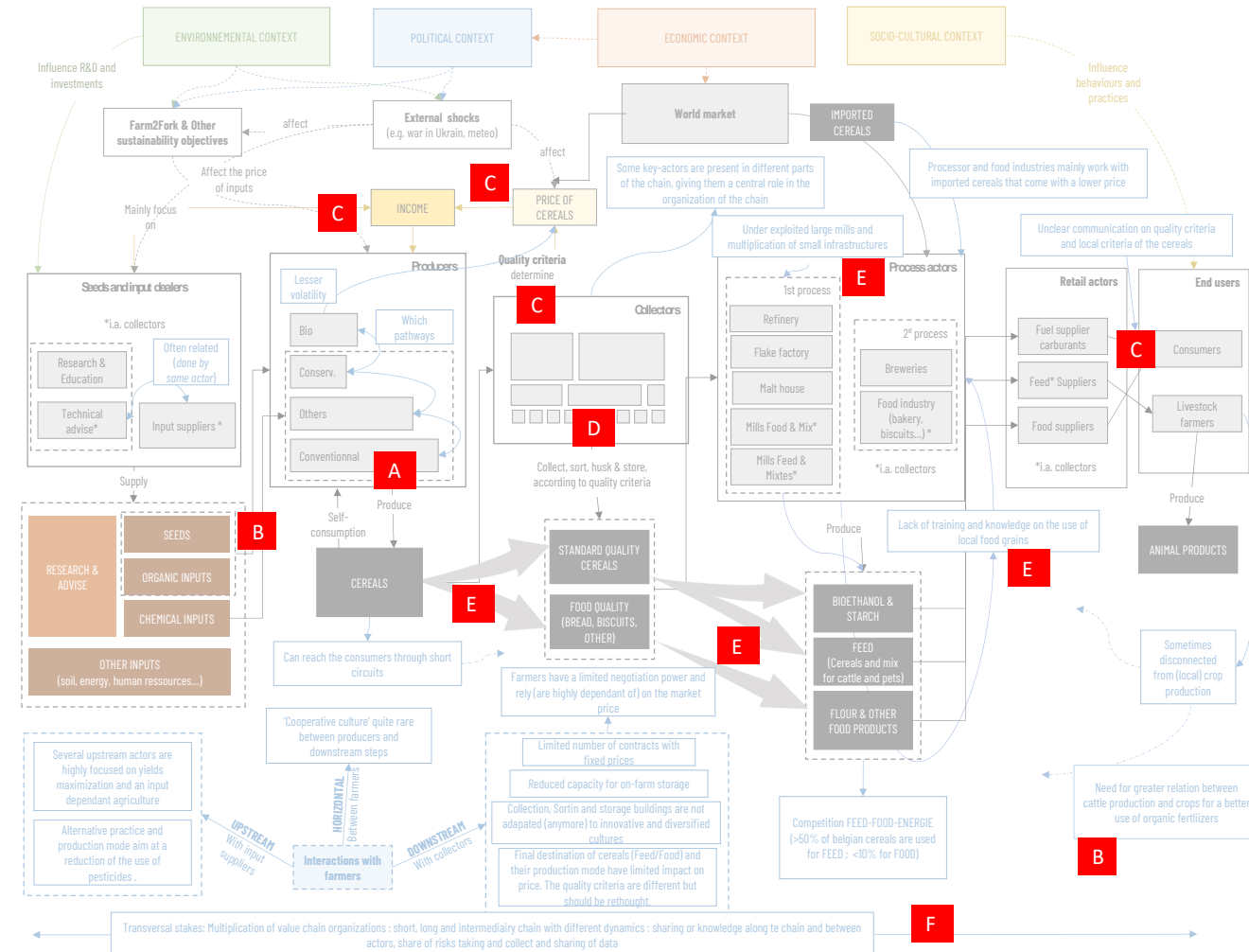
“In the near future, we will sustainably produce more cereals for human consumption in Belgium.”

Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

Six challenges to tackle

3 examples:

- A. Increase in the production of food (& beverage) cereals destined for human consumption,
- D. Availability of adapted storage facilities – desired futures from a transition perspective?
- F. Cross-cutting issue - Greater understanding between segments and between regions

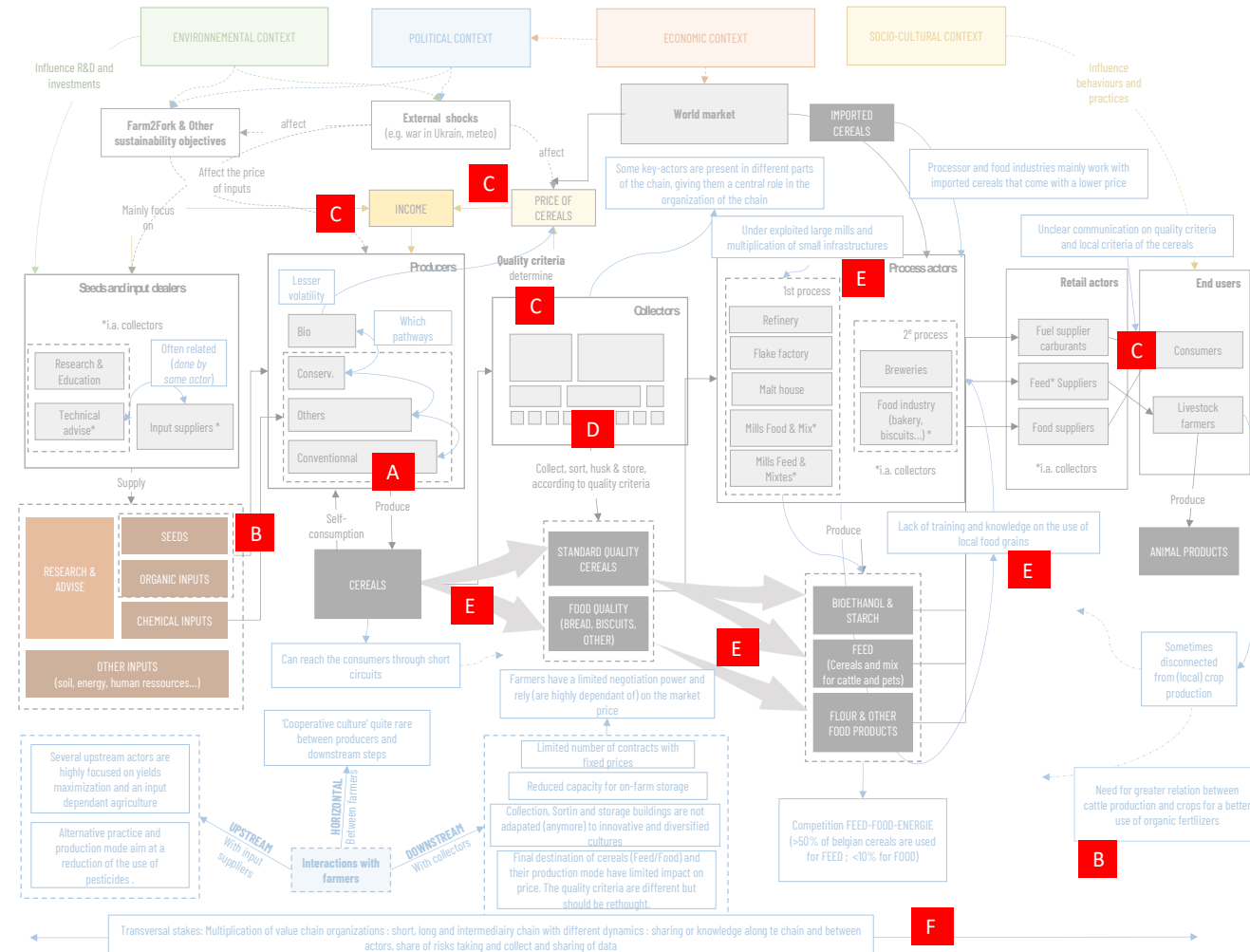


"In the near future, we will sustainably produce more cereals for human consumption in Belgium."

Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

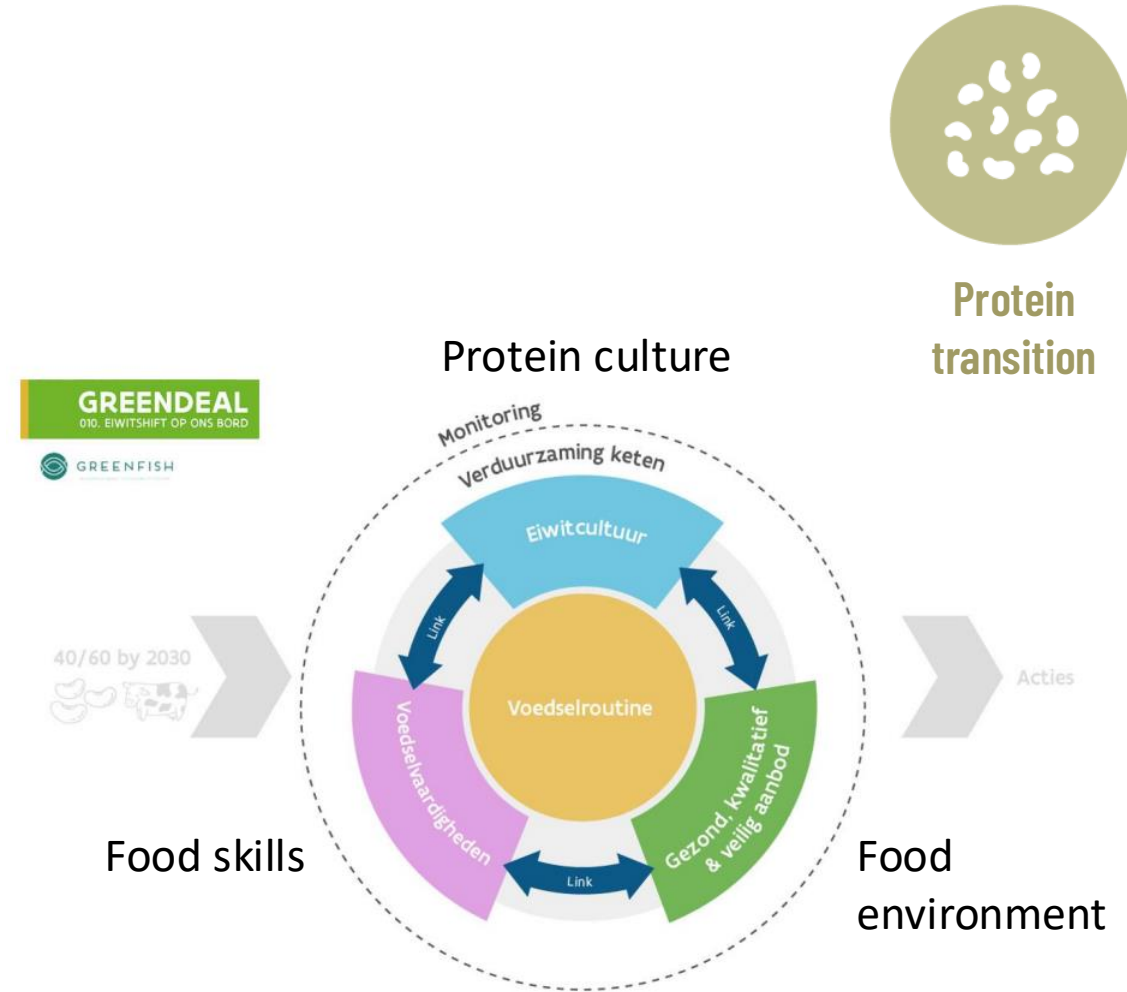
Six challenges to tackle

- A. Increase in the production of "value-added" cereals (destined for human consumption),
- B. Shift in production methods and access to tailored advice and suitable seeds
- C. Greater remuneration, enhancement of practices and distribution of value along the chain
- D. Availability of adapted storage facilities – desired futures from a transition perspective?
- E. Improvement of the intermediate and final value of food cereals: through quality criteria, what processing tools and what final value?,
- F. Cross-cutting issue - Greater understanding between segments and between regions



Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

1. Initial framework structured the work, but did not lead to action and led to fragmentation

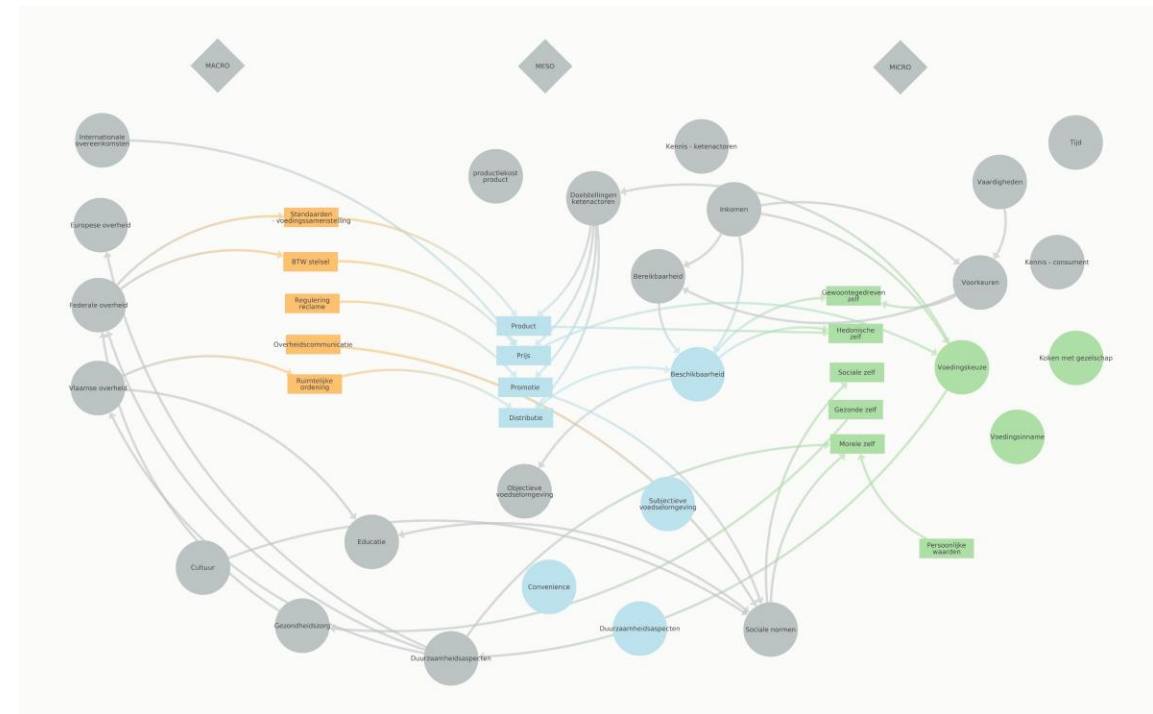


Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

1. Initial framework structured the work, but did not lead to action and led to fragmentation
2. Causal-loop diagrams helped stakeholders to think systemically, but were too complex. Stakeholders were missing an overarching theory of change



Protein transition



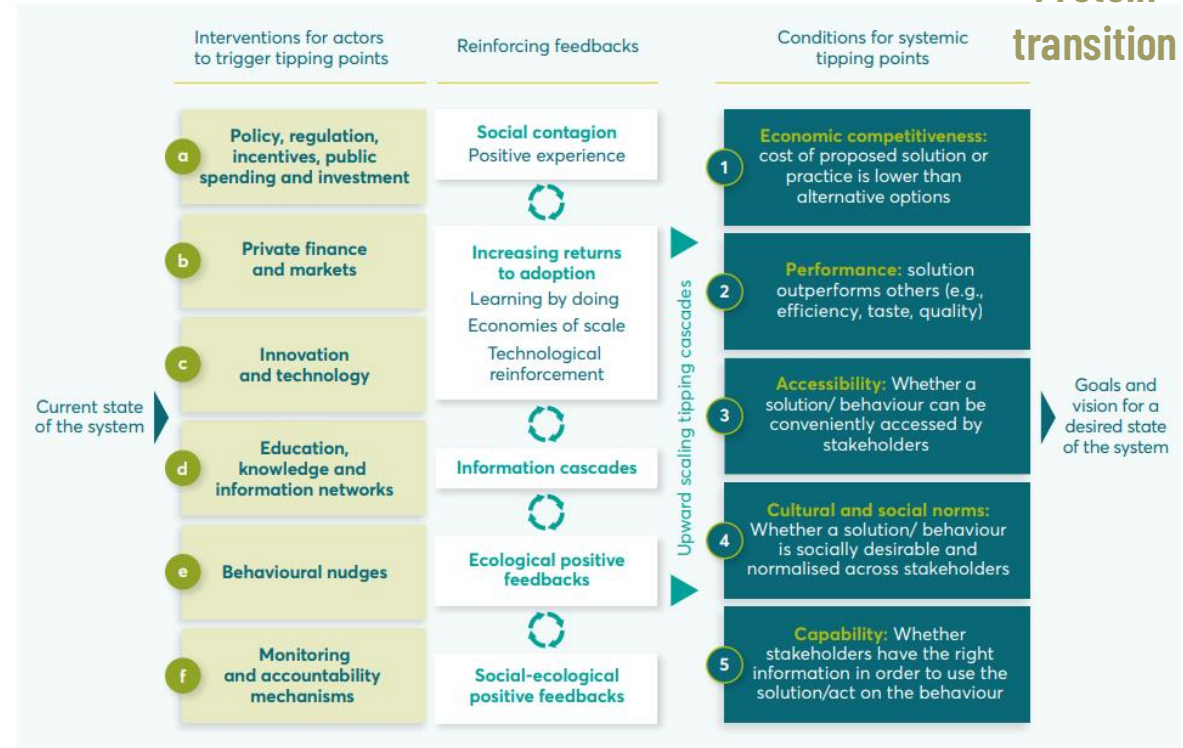
Complexity - Developing systems knowledge

1. Initial framework structured the work, but did not lead to action and led to fragmentation
2. Causal-loop diagrams helped stakeholders to think systemically, but were too complex. Stakeholders were missing an overarching theory of change
3. Theory of change framework: powerful tool mobilising steering committee, striking right balance



Protein transition

Figure 4: Framework for triggering tipping cascades



Please note: this framework does not include exogenous factors directly, but we recognise that they exist and can have fundamental impacts on the systems we are exploring here.

Futures?

Where to go? How to develop them?

Futures – Developing target knowledge



2050 ?

The change I want to see...



I have a dream....

I have a motivation toward...

*Gain a common understanding of what is ...
...To what should be*



Cereals

Futures – Developing target knowledge

From 6 futures for each obstacles => One common aspiration

An aspiration – collectively validated

“By 2030, one out of four breads, biscuits and beers consumed in Belgium are produced with Belgian grains, and one out of five is organic.

By 2050, one out of two breads, biscuits and beers consumed in Belgium are made of Belgian grains. One out of three is organic.”

Today

- 10% of winter wheat production is channeled to food production

(From Walloon perspective, CRA-W, 2014)

- In 2022, 10% represents 171 880 T of winter wheat (Tot :1 718 kT on 185 400 ha)

Futures – Developing target knowledge

Aspiration 2030

- If the 10% is correct, all actual food production could be channeled to Belgian consumption of bread (and biscuits) and align with the aspiration
- Only a big increase of organic production (*from 2 000 ha to 7 417ha*)

Reality check of the aspiration

Needed volumes (NV) (Tonnes)		4/5 conventional	1/5 organic	TOTAL (Tons)	% General	% Specialized grains
Bread - 90g	NV of breadmaking wheat grains	81 745	20 436	102 181	6%	59%
Bread - 122 g	NV of breadmaking wheat grains	133 505	33 376	166 881	10%	97%
Biscuits	NV of biscuit wheat grains	21 033	5 258	26 291	2%	-

Source: Statbel, F4F Calculus, 2024

Needed surfaces (NS)		4/5 conventional	1/5 organic	Total (Ha)	% General	% Specialized grains
Bread - 90g	NS of breadmaking wheat grains	11 198	4 541	15 739	8%	67%
Bread - 122 g	NS of breadmaking wheat grains	18 288	7 417	25 705	14%	109%
Biscuits	NS of biscuits wheat grains	2 437	956	3 393	2%	-

Source: Statbel, F4F Calculus, 2024

Futures – Developing target knowledge

Reality check of the aspiration

Aspiration 2050

- If the 10% is correct, the aspiration of 2050 will require volume and surface to be multiplied by 2
- Even bigger increase of organic production (from 2 000 ha to 17 000 ha)
- => **Need for 20% of winter wheat production channeled to food**

Needed volumes (Tonnes)		2/3	1/3	TOTAL	%	% Specialized
		convention	organic	(Tons)	General	grains
		al				
Bread - 90g	Needed volumes of breadmaking wheat grains (Belgian consumption)	136 922	67 439	204 361	12%	119%
Bread - 122 g	Needed volumes of breadmaking wheat grains (Belgian consumption)	223 621	110 142	333 763	19%	194%
Biscuits	Needed volumes of biscuits wheat grains (Belgian consumption)	35 230	17 352	52 583	3%	31%

Source: Calculus, F4F, 2024

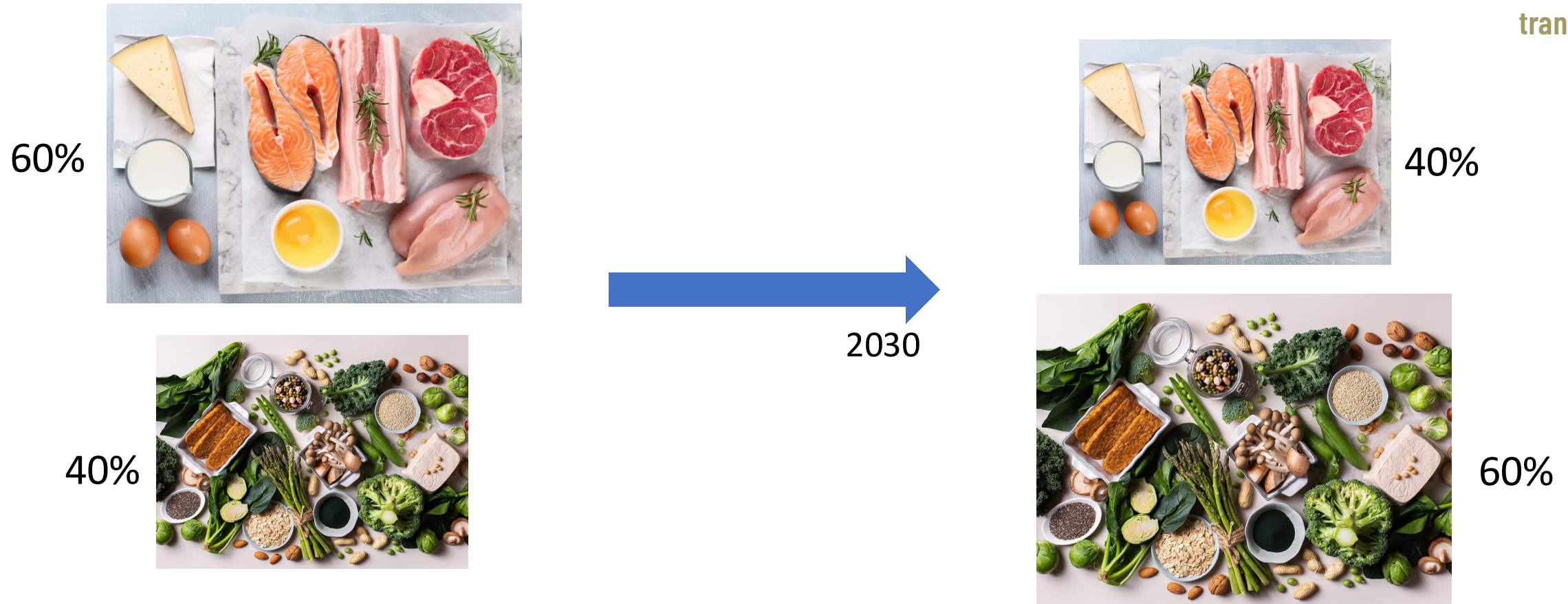
Needed surfaces		2/3	1/3	TOTAL	%	%
		conventional	organic	(Ha)	General	Specialized
						grains
Bread - 90g	Needed hectares of breadmaking wheat grains (Belgian consumption)	17 413	10 292	27 706	14%	122%
Bread- 122 g	Needed hectares of breadmaking wheat grains (Belgian consumption)	28 787	17 014	45 801	22%	202%
Biscuits	Needed hectares of wheat food grains (Belgian consumption)	4 082	3 155	7 237	4%	-

Source: Calculus, F4F, 2024

Futures – Developing target knowledge

An objective – collectively validated

1. Twofold objective – developed before launch



Protein transition

Futures – Developing target knowledge

An objective – collectively validated

1. Twofold objective
2. Ultra-processed food controversy:
Different opinions and values
(health, environment, animal welfare)

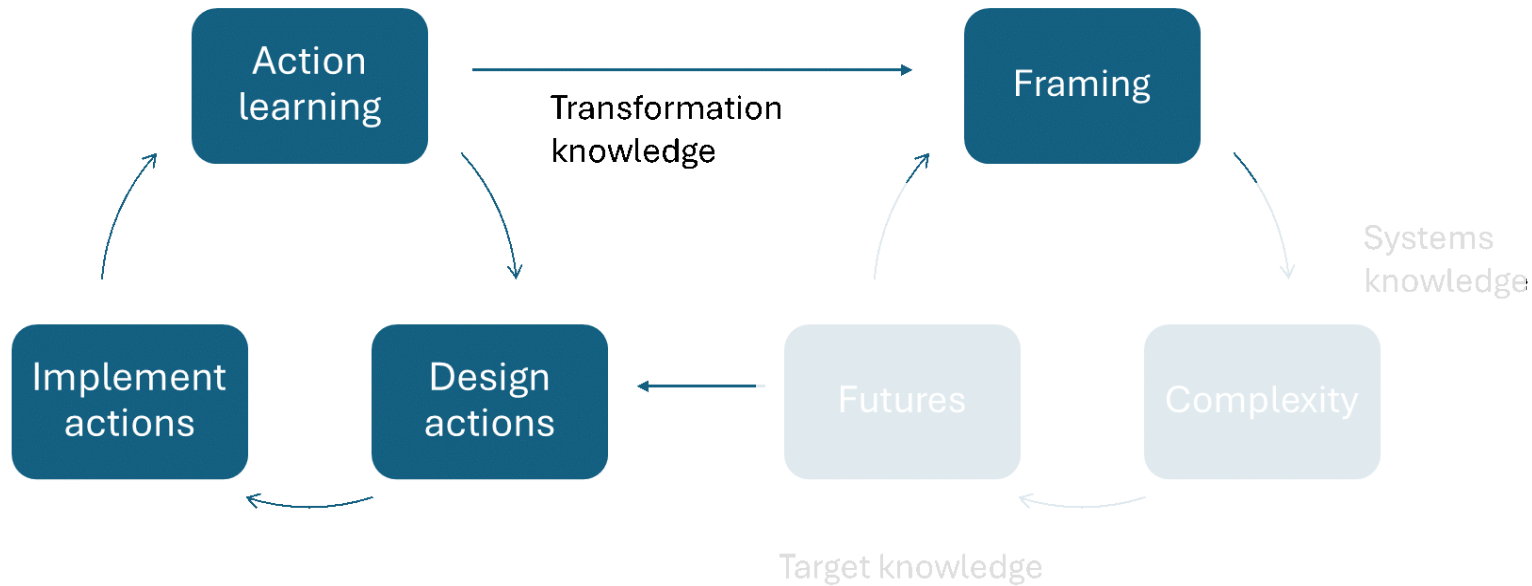


**Protein
transition**



From futures to new framing - Developing transformation knowledge

Through the "Action" loop



Define what should be...
...To possibly progress in that direction



Action design

Four (autonomous) working groups to progress toward the aspiration

- A. Multiplication of food cereal seeds in Belgium
- B. Demand for Belgian food grains
- C. Distribution of value along the chain
- D. Political and economic support for food cereals development (including the development of an interprofessional organization)

--> The action loop could lead to transformation knowledge

Working group A	What?
Development of the multiplication of food cereals seeds in Belgium	National meeting between the seeds' actors: need for greater exchanges between them
	Develop a theoretical plan for greater collaboration on the food grains development and their processing tests (Important to have the key seeds well followed in Belgium)
	Develop a research program common to both regions to develop the industrial quality test for bread and biscuit production (it will be necessary to get the private sector involved in this research again)
Working group B	What?
Demand for belgian grains	Quantify demand of households
	Quantify demand of businesses
	Quantify demand of canteens
	Develop long term project of canteen supply with Belgian cereals
	Workshop: Canteen supply in Brussels Region: what regulatory framework?
Working group C	What?
Distribution of value along the chain	Define the cost of each actor along the chain
	Make models of tripartite contracts available. (Organize them with production, process, and purchase)
	Respect the cost of each actor of the chain
	Get a better understanding on the price consumers are willing to pay for different products
	Development of cooperatives: important to group actors and follow their dynamic
	Need of strong political decisions: VAT rate, fiscal advantages for companies that use Belgian cereals
Working group D	What?
Political and economic support	National meeting with the sector actors to check the interest and need for the development of an interprofessional body

Action design

Half-half narrative

--> Action learning: sharing good practices

--> Framing



Protein
transition



Looking forward on the two cases



- **Existing national dynamic** equipped with common understanding of the sector, common aspiration and new data and support for action
- **Multiple public and private initiatives** have emerged

Still in need and searching for :

- Political support on the follow-up of such national dynamics (FOD/SPF Economy?) on sector organization
- National research projects to coordinate research efforts (EU level only)



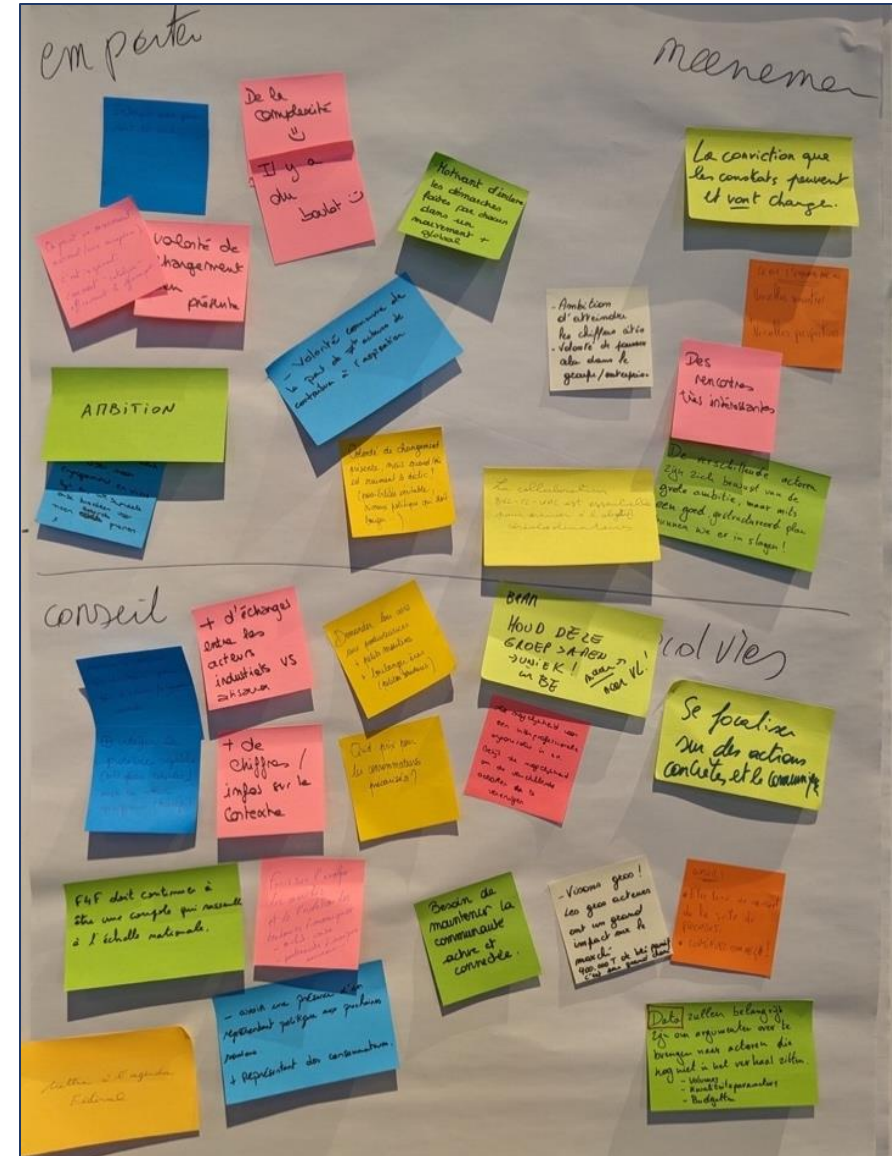
In the process of requesting approval for a **second Green Deal** Protein Shift on our plate, by the steering committee of the current Green Deal

Stronger interest today from Wallonia and Brussels

Lessons learned



- "The collaboration between the three regions is crucial to progress towards the objective"
- "Motivating to include each participant's effort in a more global movement"
- "Keep this group alive: crucial to have a national dynamic"
- "Let's continue !"



Lessons learnt – Process wise

The need for...

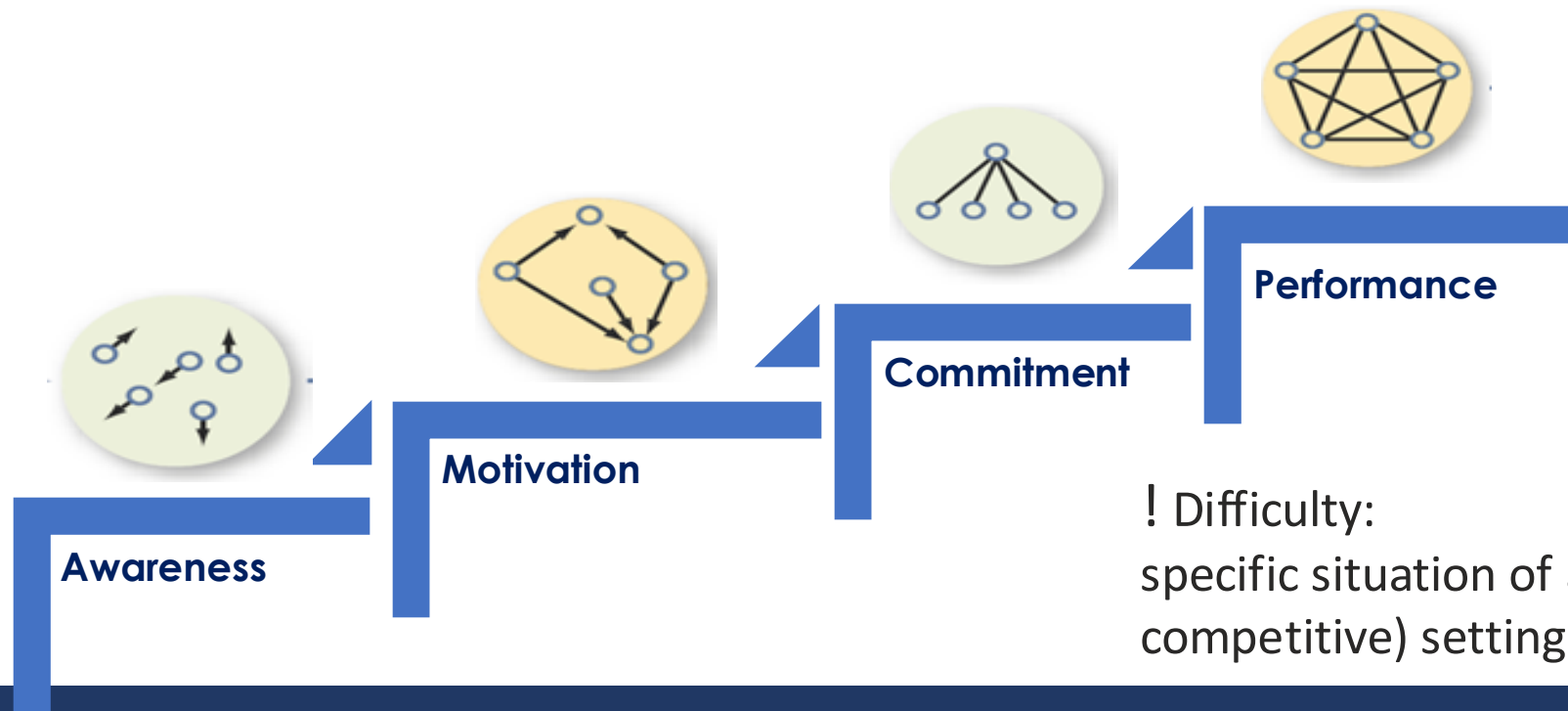
- Value-centered facilitation
- Building on common emotions and
- Building on individual move from awareness to performance
- Keep in mind the sequence and be in capacity of iterative approach to that sequence



Cereals



Protein transition



Lessons learnt – Process wise

The need for...

- ... open-minded inclusive initiation and framing
- ... systems knowledge to capture complexity of the issue
 - => balancing comprehensiveness
- ... clear target which is collectively validated
- ... action learning to obtain transformation knowledge
- ... investing in trust and relationship building, hearing all voices, avoiding top-down only

! Different relations to the three types of knowledge according to the setting:

- If actors take the system as granted (Green Deal), less willingness to open a discussion on systems knowledge, preference for target and transformation knowledge



Cereals



**Protein
transition**

Lessons learnt – Data wise

The need for...

- Better and continuous collect of data
- Data for the cereal case are dating from 2014 – Need of administration and political support to capture data down the chain
 - % of local cereals
 - % of organic cereals
 - Price construction



Cereals



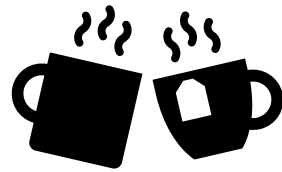
**Protein
transition**

How can policy makers and food system stakeholders further accelerate transitions?

- As a convenor:
 - By making a choice of strong inclusivity for both cases in the invitation and follow-up of the participating actors (niche-regime)
 - By facilitating motivation, commitment and performance of the actors (awareness is not sufficient)
e.g. in the last year of the project to further engage and take on responsibilities for action and for making progress on the commonly set agenda
- As a sponsor:
 - By creating national (or appropriate scaled) dialogue between policy makers and other actors

Q&A

Break



How can policy makers and food system stakeholders accelerate transitions?

by Erik Mathijs

Background

- Role of public authorities has shifted under the influence of globalization and decentralization towards a less authoritarian role
- Several socio-technical transitions, like food systems, are governed in a decentralized, networking mode.
- In such horizontal structures, the precise role of policymakers in transition processes remains fuzzy, yet important
- While the nature of interactions between policy- and socio-technical systems might have changed, their role in shaping transitions remains crucial.
- This underscores the need to develop profound understanding of mutual interactions between both these systems, to facilitate a more conscious governing of transitions.

The need for new modes of governance

- **Participatory governance:** including citizens and CSOs at local level for deliberative development of solutions
- **Collaborative governance:** multiple stakeholders co-innovate and co-create in shared responsibility with government
- **Multilevel governance:** interactions between different levels of government
- **Smart governance:** participation and collaboration of stakeholders using ICT
- **Network governance:** decentralized and pluricentric coordination between the various actors

Source: Massuga et al., 2024

Collaborative governance

- **Actors:** Multiple stakeholders— public power and nonstate actors (companies, academics, community)
- **Power relations:** Consensus-oriented decision-making with collective policy-making. Co-innovation and co-creation. Shared management and cooperation between public agencies and interested groups. Stakeholders hold substantial influence, two-way communication, and shared responsibility
- **Institutional level:** local
- **Tools/mechanisms:** Public–private partnerships, meetings, opinion surveys, theme forums, public hearings, workshops, discussion tables, interaction platforms, constructive dialog
- **Contribution to transition management:** Collective interests come to be considered, as well as the sharing of knowledge and mobilization of resources for transition initiatives.

Source: Massuga et al., 2024

Multi-level governance

- **Actors:** Different levels of government (local, regional, federal, EU)
- **Power relations:** Interactions between supranational, national, and subnational political arenas to achieve common goals in solving complex problems.
- **Institutional level:** International, national, regional, and local.
- **Tools/mechanisms:** Decentralization of power , sharing ideas and experiences between various levels, partnerships between cities, funding initiatives, broader regulation and pressure by the central government
- **Contribution to transition management:** Greater political dialog, overcoming budgetary restrictions for transition initiatives, more efficient policies through broader discussions in local realities and consideration of these in government actions. Increased incentives and assistance between levels, which can contribute to the greater effectiveness of actions

Source: Massuga et al., 2024

Network governance

- **Actors:** Government, business organizations, CSOs, universities, and other interested groups
- **Power relations:** Decentralized and horizontal relationship with pluricentric coordination between the various actors. There is cooperation between the parts based on dialog and negotiations. It seeks consensus and collective decisions to obtain results
- **Institutional level:** International, national, regional, and local, in a separate or joint manner
- **Tools/mechanisms:** Formal and informal interactions and partnerships between public and private actors
- **Contribution to transition management:** Contributes to the collective search for alternatives to social problems, social experimentation, niche innovations, and learning. Facilitates access to resources and credit to accelerate the transition process

Source: Massuga et al., 2024

Futures4Food as experiments in network governance: recommendations

- Great interest for **national** dynamic
 → Important to fund national spaces for exchanges between actors of key sectors

- Great interest for **systemic** approach : “Motivating to include each participant’s effort in a more global movement ; New perspectives and the knowledge of new actors”
 → Important to mobilize different types knowledge to engage actors and to further develop the involvement of stakeholders and policy actors

- Important to monitor that all **types of knowledge** are developed - target, systemic, transformation →
 Important to document and adapt the way "transition" is being discussed and analyzed

- Difficulty to apply standardized methods to **action research**: importance of flexibility
 → Important to enrich the preparation of any new national transition projects with the lessons learned of both F4F case studies and F4F’s methodology application and improvement

Futures4Food as experiments in network governance: recommendations

- Interesting to work with an **assessment framework** from the beginning of the process to better adjust, follow, evaluate and take stock of what is happening during the process – good help for better piloting of the process.
- Networks as **feedback mechanisms** for government
- **Who convenes?** Convener of the network should have legitimacy
 - Either government itself
 - Or a neutral party, legitimized by government

**A case in
the making:
carbon
farming, soil
health and
blended
finance**



Brussels, 19.2.2025
COM(2025) 75 final

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**A Vision for Agriculture and Food
Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations**

- New way of working: Building trust and dialogue
 - Get away from polarisation – use inclusive approaches
 - EBAF: fostering a new culture of dialogue
- Knowledge, research & innovation as catalysts of change
 - Testing regulatory initiatives ... in sandboxes

A case in the making: carbon farming, soil health and blended finance

Innovative financing tools, including private and blended public-private financing for nature can, in addition to public support, reward farmers who maintain or transition to nature-positive practices and bring them together with companies and investors with a business interest in such practices.

Carbon farming is already emerging as an additional source of income. The Carbon Removals and Carbon Farming Regulation (CRCF)¹⁹ has created the first EU-wide voluntary framework for certifying carbon removals, carbon farming and carbon storage in products across Europe, and certification methodologies are currently being developed to reliably monitor, report, and verify carbon removals, soil emission reduction, and biodiversity benefits. These methodologies will build where possible on existing schemes, that already successfully provide farmers with additional income. Once fully developed, effective ways of matching offer and demand of these voluntary credits should be stimulated to optimise their additional income opportunities for farmers.

Going forward, the Commission will complement this with developing opportunities for **nature credits**, units of nature-positive actions, representing quantified and certified high-quality nature-positive outcomes. A number of existing schemes developed by commercial operators and ongoing pilot projects, both at EU and international level, show the important potential for such projects, on which further work can build.

A case in the making: carbon farming, soil health and blended finance

- **Framing:** scope of carbon farming, nature credits and blended finance
- **Complexity:**
 - measurability of impacts, data needs
 - additionality, leakage, permanence, fairness
 - blended finance as new concept – combining technical assistance, derisking and finance to attract sufficient private capital
- **Futures**
 - what is possible for the various stakeholders?
 - what does this mean for the next CAP?
- **Multi-level governance:**
 - similar problems in the regions
 - federal competences needed: price, competition, banks, fiscal, etc.

CONCLUSION: need for an interregional, collaborative, network governance initiative to generate target, systems and transformation knowledge

Next steps

- **Dedicated workshop for civil servants** at all levels: federal, regional, local – 24 April 2025
- Set of **publications** documenting and analyzing each case study
- **Guidebook** "Learning for transitioning towards sustainable futures. A transdisciplinary framework to address wicked problems" edited by Anne-Mieke Vandamme, Elena Mihailescu and Simona Pesaresi
- **Final report** delivered at the end of the project (15 June 2025)

Panel

**How can policy makers, civil servants and food system stakeholders
further accelerate these two transitions?**

moderated by Sien Luyten

Jens Warrie

As initial interest and national point of view

Evelien Decuypere

Flemish Agency of Agriculture and Fisheries

Erik Mathijs & Philippe Baret

KU Leuven & UCLouvain

Reaction and discussion on the panel
by Sien Luyten

Thank you!

Networking



References

Futures4Food project:

rega.kuleuven.be/if/projects/f4f

Green Deal Protein Shift on our plate:

omgeving.vlaanderen.be/nl/010-eiwitshift-op-ons-bord
gezondleven.be/halfhalf

Pictures:

spreadwealth.com/whealth-blog/favorite-proteins

onceuponafarmorganics.com/blogs/upon-a-blog/plant-based-protein-sources-snacks

www.supermarketperimeter.com/articles/10973-consumers-concerned-about-processed-plant-based-foods

www.lentils.org/recipe/lentil-umami-bowl/