



Capitalisation of research results  
on the multifunctionality of agriculture and rural areas

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# Multifunctionality: a concept for problem solving ?

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## From spreading to clarification ?

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### ***Need for mapping the meanings and making MF a useful concept***

- Emergence and spreading of MF in different contexts
- ... resulting in different meanings
- Few explicitation and difficult use in academic and policy making contexts

# Emergence and spreading

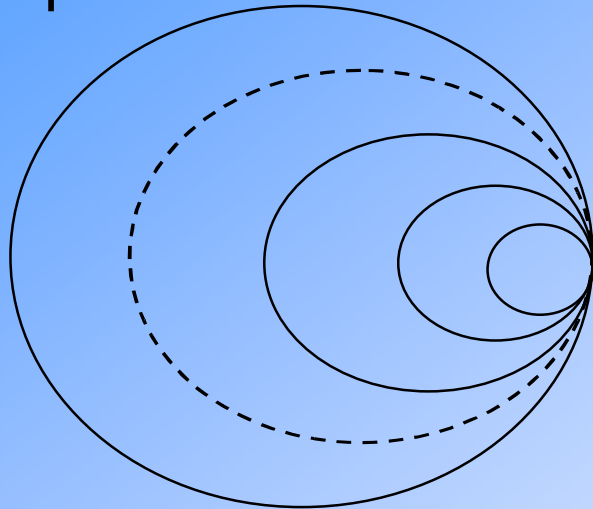
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- Emergence : late 80's = not only food production
- Spreading
  - International institutions :
    - looking at sustainability (Rio summit ; FAO)
    - Looking at international trade negotiations (WTO, OECD)
  - EU : looking at the CAP reform
  - National contexts : Austria, Swiss Constitution, French LOA, ...
- Economics in response to political issues & then other disciplines

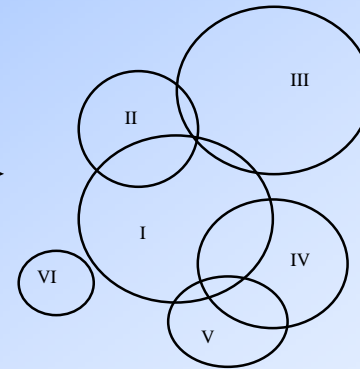
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# A framework for comparative analysis : co-evolution of political and scientific agenda's

From local to global  
political arenas



Epistemic  
Communities

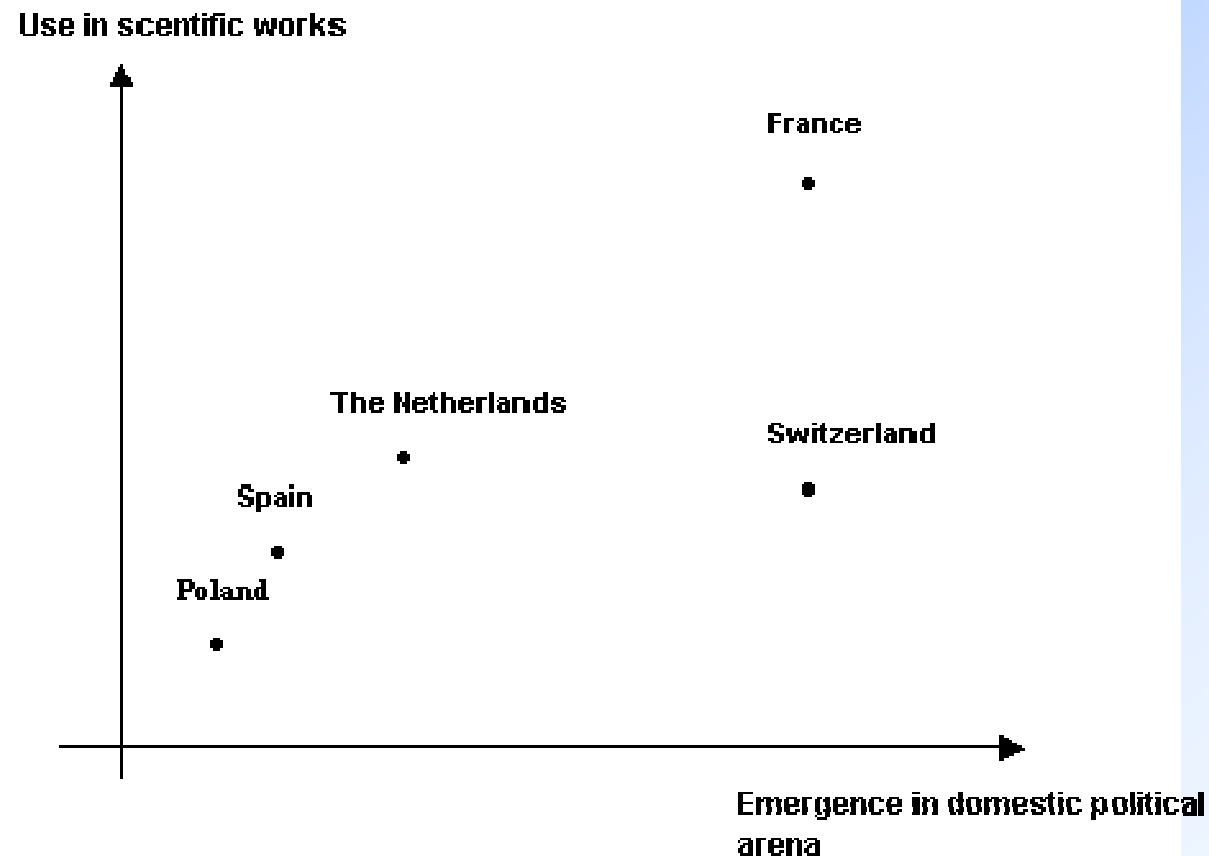


Policies & legislations

Theories, knowledge  
and expertise

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# Case studies : diversity in the intensity of the use of the word MF



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# Concept Oriented Research Clusters

## CORC : why ?

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- A need for clarifying
- by organizing the available literature

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# Concept Oriented Research Clusters

## CORC : what is it?

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- A way to understand how research communities work on MF
- Based on homogeneity in research questions and research practices (concepts, disciplines, stream of thought, epistemic community)

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# Concept Oriented Research Clusters

## CORC : what it is not

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- It is not :
  - A definition or concept
  - An operational tool
  - A way of classifying countries
- Refers to a set of research and knowledge production practices
- Possibility to articulate specific, partial and overlapping knowledge

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“The multifunctional sheep that gives birth to lambs, feeds them, produces wool and ends up as low grade meat also provides a mobile landscape feature, a grass nurturing and manuring machine, an icon of local identity and a contact point with non-human nature to those humans wandering through the rural landscape.” (Henry Buller)



How research deals with such a reality ?

Which questions? Which practices?

# Ex : CORC 1: A joint production of commodities and public goods

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Based on OECD definition (2001)

- Efficiency and acceptability of public policies for private production of joint goods (landscape, meat, wool, etc)



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# CORC 4 : Farmers strategies and practices : MF, technical change, livelihood systems

- To what extent does the policy recognition of MF lead to changes in farmers' practices (N animals/ha, breed selection) ?



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- **Joint production of commodities and public goods**
  - **Multiple impacts and contributions from agriculture to rural areas**
  - **A complementary and conflicting connection between commodities and identity goods**
  - **Farmers strategies and practices: multifunctionality, technical change, livelihood systems**
  - **Multiple use of rural space & regional planning**
  - **A way toward sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) regulation**
  - **A social demand towards agriculture**
  - **Governance, policy and multifunctionality)**



For each CORC

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- **Disciplines**
- **Research questions and controversies**
- **Use in policy making**
- **List of related functions**
- **Weaknesses or limits**
- **Other concepts used instead**
- **Related concepts**

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# Strengths and weaknesses

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- Strengths:
  - Re-embedding agriculture within society (demands, services, public good, etc)
  - Opportunity to formulate and address new questions
  - A « connecting » concept

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# Strengths and weaknesses

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- Weaknesses
  - looseness and diversity (what MF refers to? what is the best level to address MF ? Etc)
  - Ambivalence and fuzziness : political goal or analytical framework
  - Controversies because of use in WTO negotiations
- Reinforces the interest of CORC

# MF and SARD

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## Multifunctionality

Demand oriented  
Activity & jointness oriented  
Analytical  
Static

## Sustainability

Need oriented  
Capital oriented  
Normative paradigm  
Dynamic

Source : Multagri research group

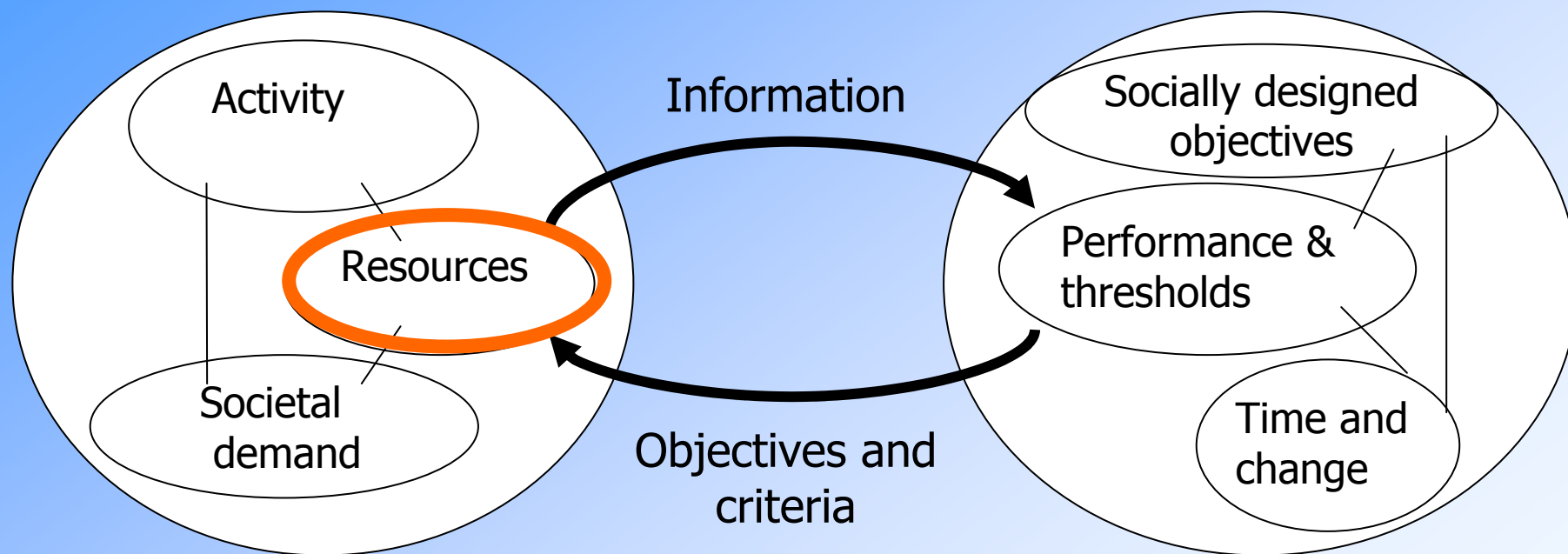
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# MF and SARD

## Multifunctionality

## Sustainability



Source : Multagri research group

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# Conclusion

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- The possibility to better characterize and articulate diverse knowledge production
- Refocusing a spreading concept for looking at sustainability
- A goal oriented framework to be tested

***“Once we understand more about multifunctionality, it will be possible to address sustainable development and to design adequate policies”***