



PhD research

The role of meso-level in
implementing EU policy objectives
on biodiversity protection

18 March 2024

Seminar on Meso approaches to agro-ecological
transition

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Agenda

1. Why did you incorporate the meso level into your research?
2. What is your research topic, and which field are you applying the concepts of micro-meso-macro?
3. What distinguishes the meso level from micro and macro in your research?
4. How does the meso level interact with micro and macro levels in your research?

1. Why the meso level?

To answer this question, we need to take a step back...

... to the **First Version** of my PhD proposal*

*(today we are at Version 46,578)

The background matters

As **agricultural economist** that have been developing (some) experience in **public policy process** and European dynamics

I started my **PhD aiming to target** the effectiveness of environmental policy integration in agricultural policy (**macro**) to answer farming system realities (**micro**)

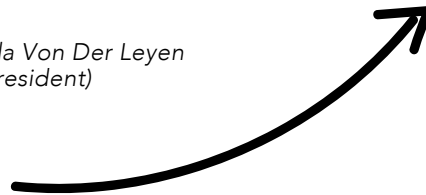
I then choose the **CAP policy framework**, and more specifically **AECMs under II pillar**

In other words...

How the **work she is held responsible** for (i.e. preserving public good)



**Ursula Von Der Leyen
(EC President)*



Can be **translated into actions in the context** where he works



**Mathieu Courgeau
(dairy farmer,
representant of
European
Coordination Via
Campesina)*

Achieving the most efficient use of public resources (e.g. taxes)?

The meso level as a turning point

While **interviewing stakeholders** from various public administration, organizations, NGOs, Unions, etc. in Hauts-de-France for one of my case studies I **realised that something was missing** between macro and micro*

INDUCTIVE



→ the stakeholders unveil a **complex reality** linking policies to farming systems

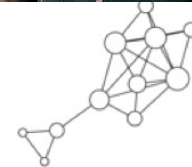
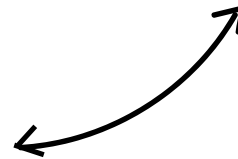
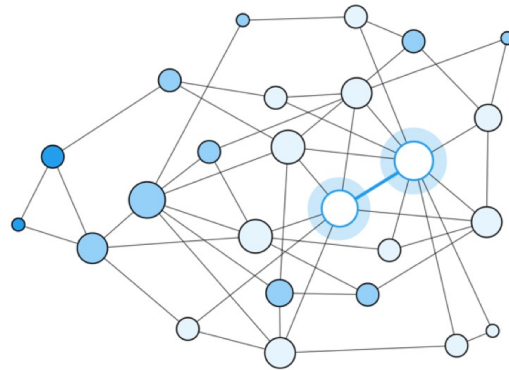
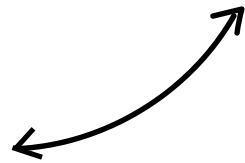
DEDUCTIVE



→(Some) literature underlines **intermediate decision-making process** separating farmers from policy makers

*(aka first PhD crisis = PhD version 134)

When adding the meso level to the picture



2. Meso-level and research topic (1/2)

The research topic focusses on Agri-environmental and Climatic Measures (AECMs):

- It is one of the main policy instrument of the **II pillar Common Agricultural Policy**
- It answers to both **biodiversity and climatic objectives** of the last four financial programming period (introduced with the MacSharry reform in 1992)
- It is a **voluntary subsidies scheme** available for farmers for introducing landscape features or (change) farming practices



2. Meso-level and research topic (2/2)

To study AECMs a **strategic entry point is the meso-level**, and its interfaces with macro and micro:

- Their **policy design and calibration** (Grohmann and Feidnt, 2023) **relies** mainly on **meso-level actors**
- Their represent both a policy instrument (**macro-meso interface**) and a set of requirements at farm level (**meso-micro interface**)

My research question is set around the role of the **meso level processes to transform AECMs from policy to farming practices**

3. Meso is neither Micro neither Macro

NB: our entry point is decision-making process in EU public policy!

Macro level

Mostly at EU level

A restrained set of stakeholders **define policy and legislative frameworks** to achieve the objectives that answer to societal needs

Meso level

Mostly at MS and regional level

A broader set of stakeholders **define the implementation of policy mixes** and related policy instruments under the policy and legislative frameworks

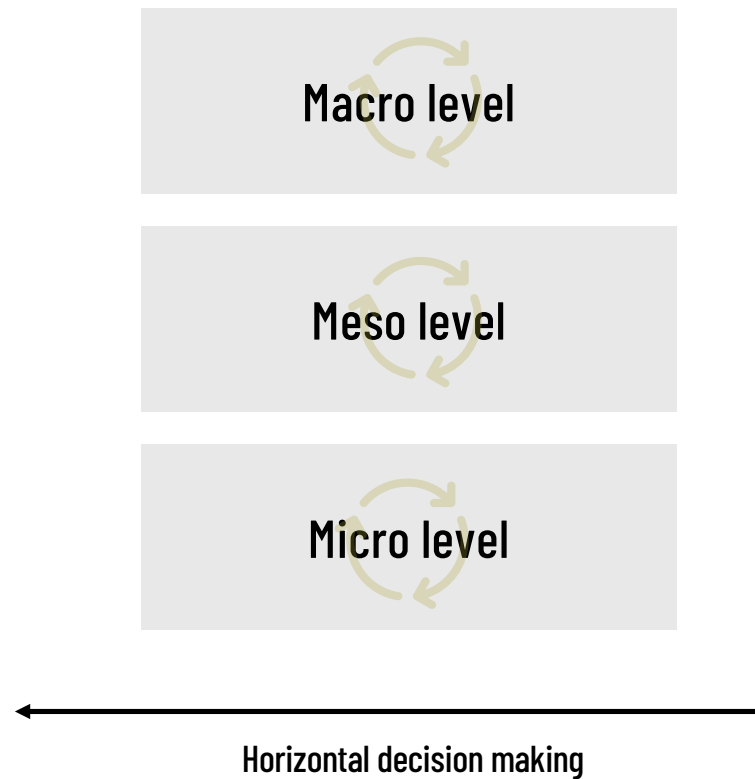
Micro level

Mostly at individual level

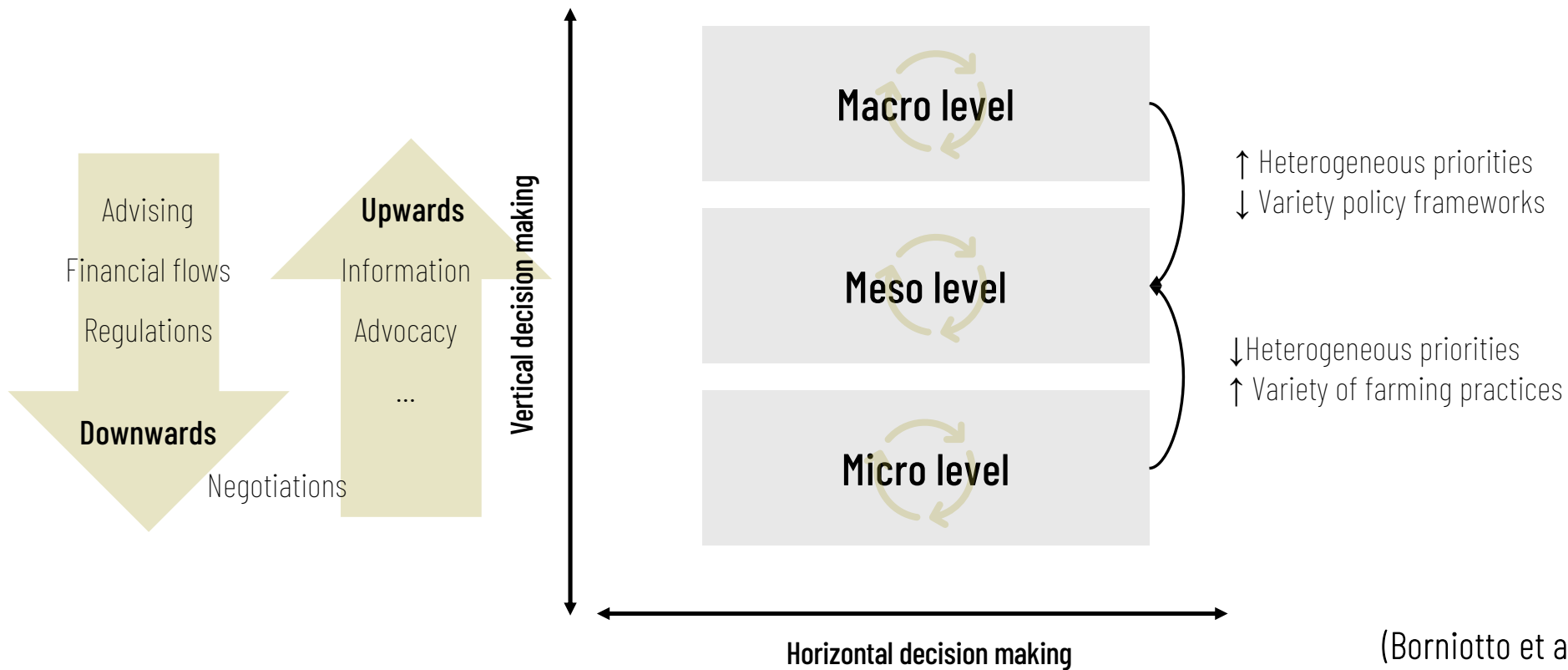
All eligible stakeholders **translate policy mixes** and related policy instrument **into actions**

3. Meso is neither Micro neither Macro

NB: each level has its own governing mechanisms and emergent properties!



3. Meso is neither Micro neither Macro



Some conclusions (or starting points version 46,579)

- Shifting to meso level as entry point to study AECMs allowed to unveil processes that transform policy frameworks in changes in farming practices
- Understanding meso-level processes could allow to go beyond de facto black boxes often used to explain tensions across macro & micro (e.g. like of political willing, bureaucratic issues)
- Effectiveness of AECMS (and perhaps other policy instruments?) depends also on meso-level processes and outputs (e.g. policy calibration)
- A meso level's conceptual framework relies – for now – to scattered scientific literatures (especially for agri-food system transition literature)

Thanks for your attention

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