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The Regulation Theory of the agricultural and food sector

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**How Regulation School has addressed the issue of
« agriculture and food » ?**

What are the perspectives for future research ?

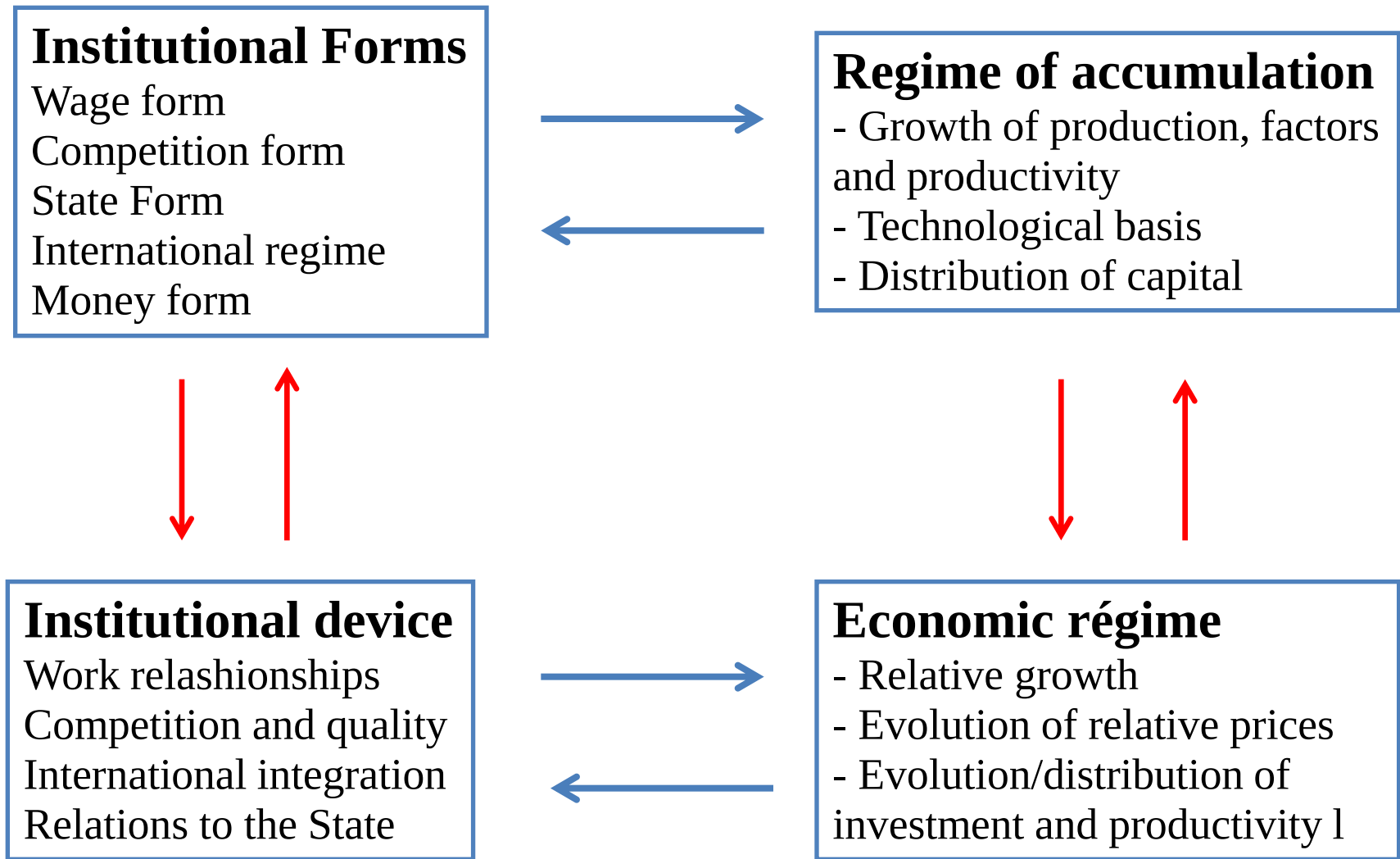
1. During the 90s, Agriculture (and food) has generated fruitful research referred to Regulation School
2. These works have spread in different lines of research, combined with - or captured by - other research programs
3. The new international context of agriculture and food calls for a new wave of research referred to Regulation School

- 1. During the 90s, Agriculture (and food) has generated fruitfull research refered to Regulation School**

From the « agriculture of the fordist era »... to contribution to the analysis of sectoral regulation

- **Growth and crisis of agriculture in fordist economies**
Historical exploration in France and US, focusing on macro economic evolution and institutions, modernization and work relations
(Nefussi, 1987 ; Allaire, 1988 ; Debailleul, 1990 ; Laurent 1990)
- **Main contribution to the analysis of sectoral regulation**
Specific regulations in the wine sector (Bartoli, Boulet, 1990)
Generic notions and method for sectoral analysis (Boyer, 1990)
- **Great transformation of Agriculture** (Allaire, Boyer, 1995)
 - great effort and synthesis to gather regulationist and institutionalist research on agriculture
 - Analysis of agricultural structural crisis
 - Agenda for further research

Macro-economic (national) System



Sectoral dynamic

(Adapted from Boyer 1990)

Focus on different dimensions of the great transformation

- **Labor organization**
“Social forms of work”, “system of activities” (Mollard 1993 ; Laurent 1995)
- **Quality and Markets**
Quality regimes, differentiated markets (Boulet 1995 ; Allaire Sylvander 1998)
- **Agricultural policy**
National compromise (Lacombe et al. 2000), regional policy (Berriet 1999)
- **Regional/territorial**
Local coordination, territory (Touzard, 1995; Pecqueur, 2001, Nieddu 2000)
- **Environment**
New institutions & regimes (Lipietz, 1996 ; Lacroix, Mollard, 1997)
- **Several cases in other countries** (Brazil, Argentina, Spain, USA...)

Empirical material, exploration of emerging regulations

but no global synthesis, no comparative analysis....

Partial synthesis through RST group (Du Tertre, Laurent, 2008)

2. These research have spread in different lines of research, combined with -or captured by- other research programs

Confrontation to, or captured by, other research programs

- **Products quality and food regimes**
Economics of conventions, economic sociology (Touzard 2008 ; Allaire et al. 2010)
- **Rural development and European Policy**
Political science & assessment (Berriet, Trouve, Laurent, Labarthe , Schmit)
- **Agriculture and territorial anchorage**
SYAL/Local Agrifood System, geography, economy of proximity (Pecqueur, 2006)
- **Agriculture and Sustainable development**
Environmental economics, ethics & economy (Zuindeau, 2007)
- **Innovations in agrifood sectors**
Evolutionary economics, theory of transition (Nieddu 2012 ; Labarthe 2012)
- **Control of biological resources, GMO and property right**
Law and sociology (Tordjman, 2012)
- **International food regimes**
History and political sciences (Allaire, Daviron, 2008 ; Friedman 2006)

Food Systems: criterias of differentiation

A. Technology, location and economic structure

- ☐ Location and forms of food consumption (at home, at work, on the street...)
- ☐ Technical operations and technology (importance of transformation, services)
- ☐ Number of intermédiaires (short vs long chains)
- ☐ Geographical proximity (local vs far)
- ☐ atomicity vs concentration of units

B. Flows and relations

- ☐ Volumes and value flows
- ☐ information flows
- ☐ Interindividuals and interorganisational networks among the system

C. Institutionnal and political structure

- ☐ organisation of work
- ☐ Form of competition, coordination of exchanges
- ☐ role and forms of public action, State
- ☐ Ways of international integration
- ☐ Governance, normalisation (control of decisions and information)

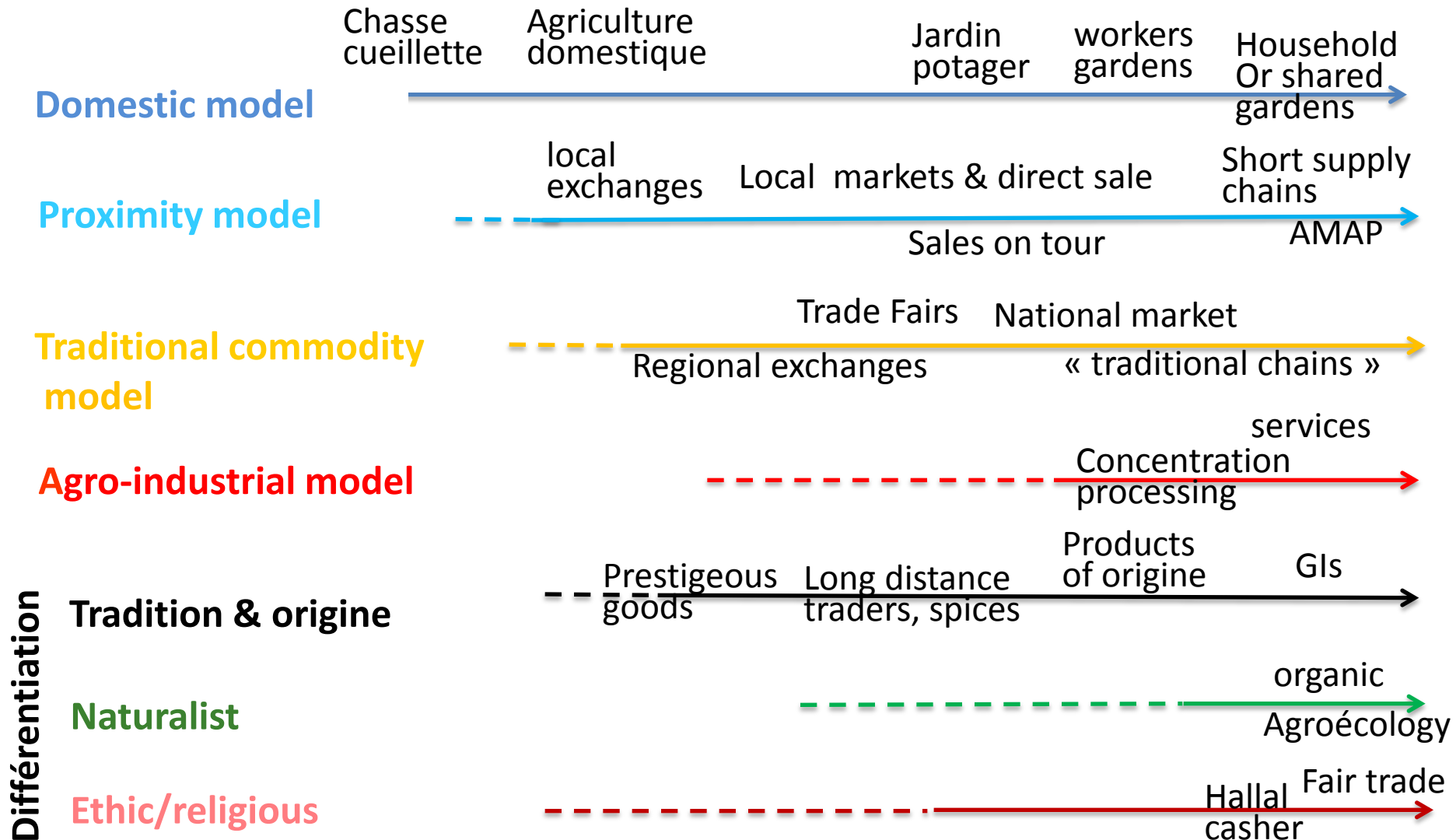
D. Cognitive criteria (representations / conventions)

- ☐ Product quality (definition, attributes, guarantee)
- ☐ Relation to geographical space (origine?)
- ☐ Role and legitimacy of technologies
- ☐ Acknowledgement of individuals, ethics, condition of work
- ☐ Relationships to nature and animals
- ☐ Knowledge on cooking

Generic Food Systems (models)

		<i>Main criteria</i>	<i>Food convention & logic</i>
Differentiation	Domestic model	Self supply, household or community	Pure Domestic convention Mainly familial relationships
	Proximity model	0 ou 1 intermediary and/or geographical proximity	Domestic, Market (& Civic) Linking producers-consumers
	Traditional commodity model	Basic product intermédiated Medium distances, Low investment	Market, (Domestic & Fame) Supply securisation, network
	Agro-industrial (service based)	Mass production processed products long chains, concentration	Industrial & Market Decomposition/recomposition Regularity, réduction cost/price
	Tradition & origine		Fame, Market, Inspiration Tradition linked to places
	Naturalist	Diferenciated products (quality, price) With or without labels	Civic (nature), Market pratics respecting nature
	ethical/religious		Civic (justice), Market (Fame) solidarity to community, individuals

Historical evolution of food models



Why such a dilution of Regulation works on agriculture ?

- Focusing on specific and local processes, on emerging regulations calls for more adapted analytical/theoretical framework : lack of micro analytical tools of regulation school
- Difficulty to organize an international comparative study on (national) agricultures and food regimes
- Institutional constraints : difficulty to hire new researchers and to get resources in institutional economics (INRA), dispersion and low number of researchers, multiple solicitations for applied studies...
- The “life cycle” of regulation theory is ending, difficulty to overlap the national framework, to be predictive, etc... ?
- Integration in a wider political economics where different institutionalist approaches may be combined ?
- Just a lack of opportunity and/or willingness ?

3. The new international context of agriculture and food calls for a new wave of research referred to Regulation School

New context challenging agriculture and food systems

Climate change, biodiversity and environmental issues, food security, energy crisis, biotechnology, animal ethics, employment...

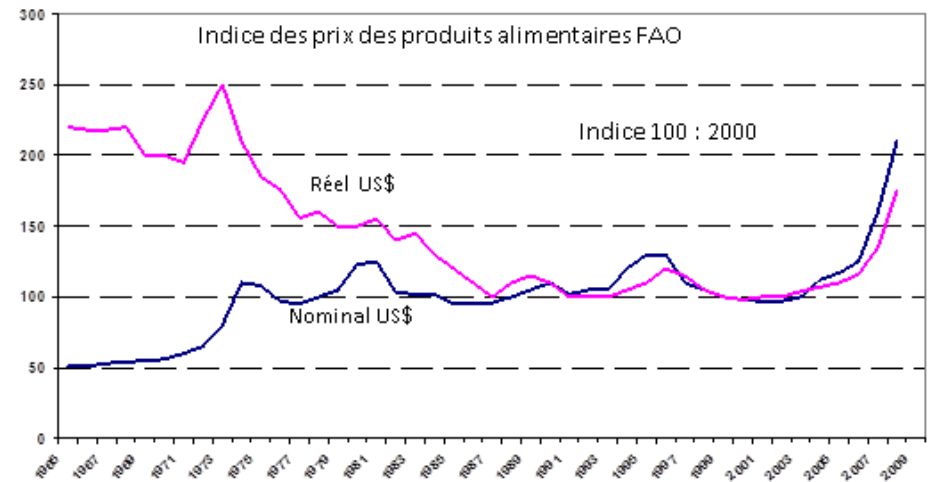
Agriculture and food are on the top of political agenda, firm strategies, public debates !

- Crisis of the intensive agro-industrial model of agriculture and food, but high capacity of resilience by integration, hybridation...
- New frontier for the deployment of a new alliance between science and capitalism ?
- New opportunities for alternative way of production/life ?

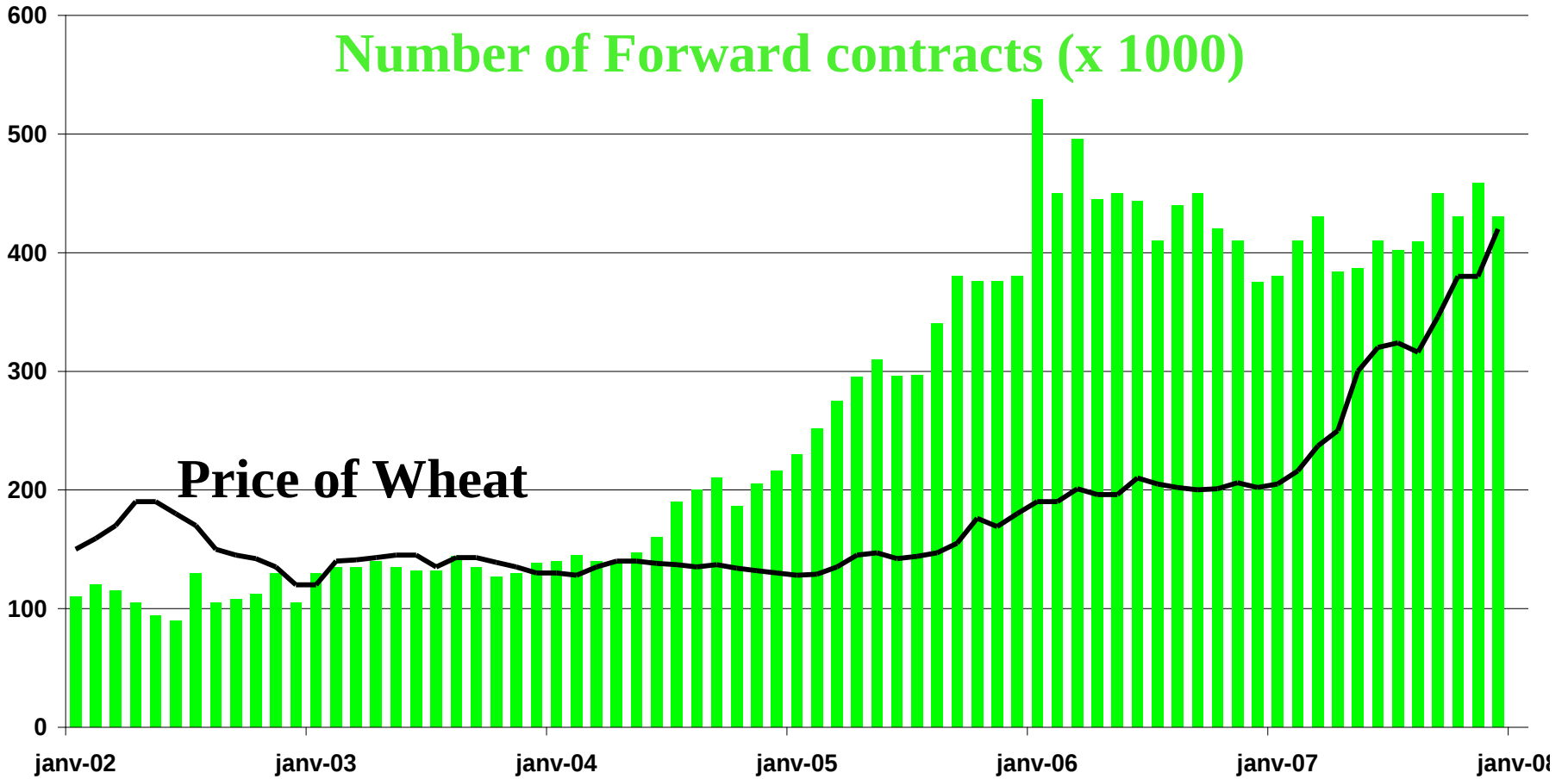
Need for institutional change and global regulation, confronting State regulations, firm strategies, social and consumers movements, scientists : **a gift for regulationist approach on agriculture!**

International Food crisis of 2007-08... (and repetitions ?)

- Sharp **rise of food prices**
- **Food riots** in southern cities
- Nutritional, economic, political impacts



- **Factors of the 1973 food crisis are not yet relevant (33%)**
climatic choc, fuel crisis, monetary crisis, growing demand
- **Radical change at the demand level**
biofuel, locally decoupled food patterns, animal calories in diets
- **New conditions of production**
decreasing productivity gains, number of farmers, land /water limitations
decrease of public and private investments during the previous 20 years
- **New conditions of exchanges**
Hedge funds, decreasing stocks of commodity, liberalization of regulation



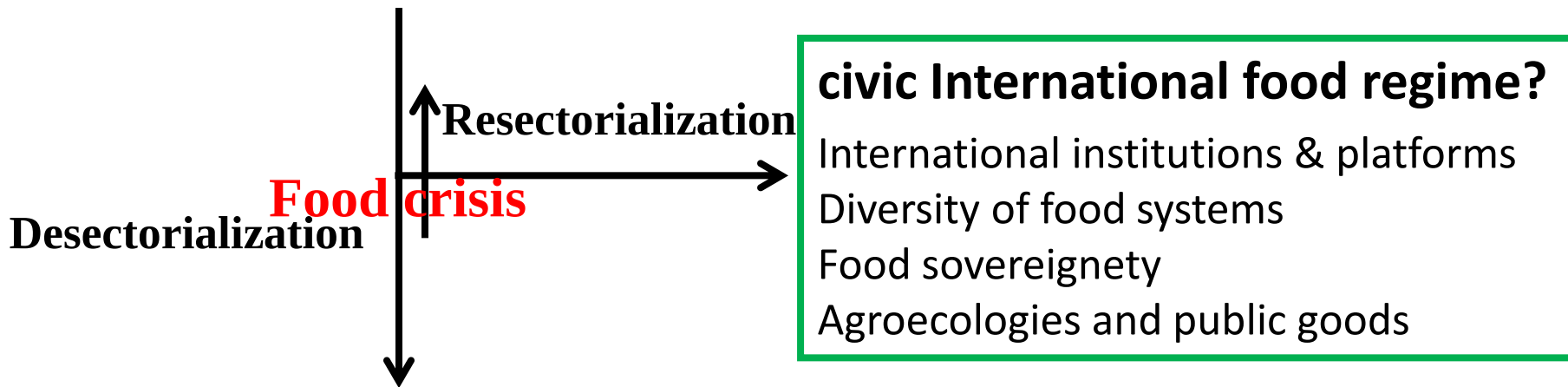
World Bank datas

At the crossroad of several international food regimes ?

Int. food regime of fordist period

Food Market (regime) driven by states
Intensive agriculture (green revolution)
Urbanization and mass consumption

From discussions with
Allaire, Daviron, Friedman...



Neoliberal & mediatique Int. food regime

States disengagement, financialisation,
commodity & policy of standards for quality
Lowest public investment
NTIC, biotechnologies

Conclusions

After fruitful research of Regulation School on agriculture in the 90s... and their dilutions in the 2000s... two ways

- To continue the temperate & pragmatic use of regulation school combined with other research programs (institutional/political economics) ?
- To take the leadership of a new wave of research on the international great transformation of agriculture and food systems ?

Launching of an international project ? Who ? How ?

2014 INRA workshop ?

2015 Regulation conference ?

Horizon 2020, ANR and Glofood projects ?