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Environmental memories in the Ferlo (Senegal)

Laura JUILLARD¹, Priscilla DUBOZ², Papa Ibnou NDIAYE^{2,3}, Oumar Hamady GUISSÉ³

¹ UMR 7204 Centre d'Ecologie et des Sciences de la Conservation MNHN

² IRL 3189 Environnement, Santé, Sociétés, CNRS/UGB/UCAD/USTTB/CNRST, Dakar, Sénégal

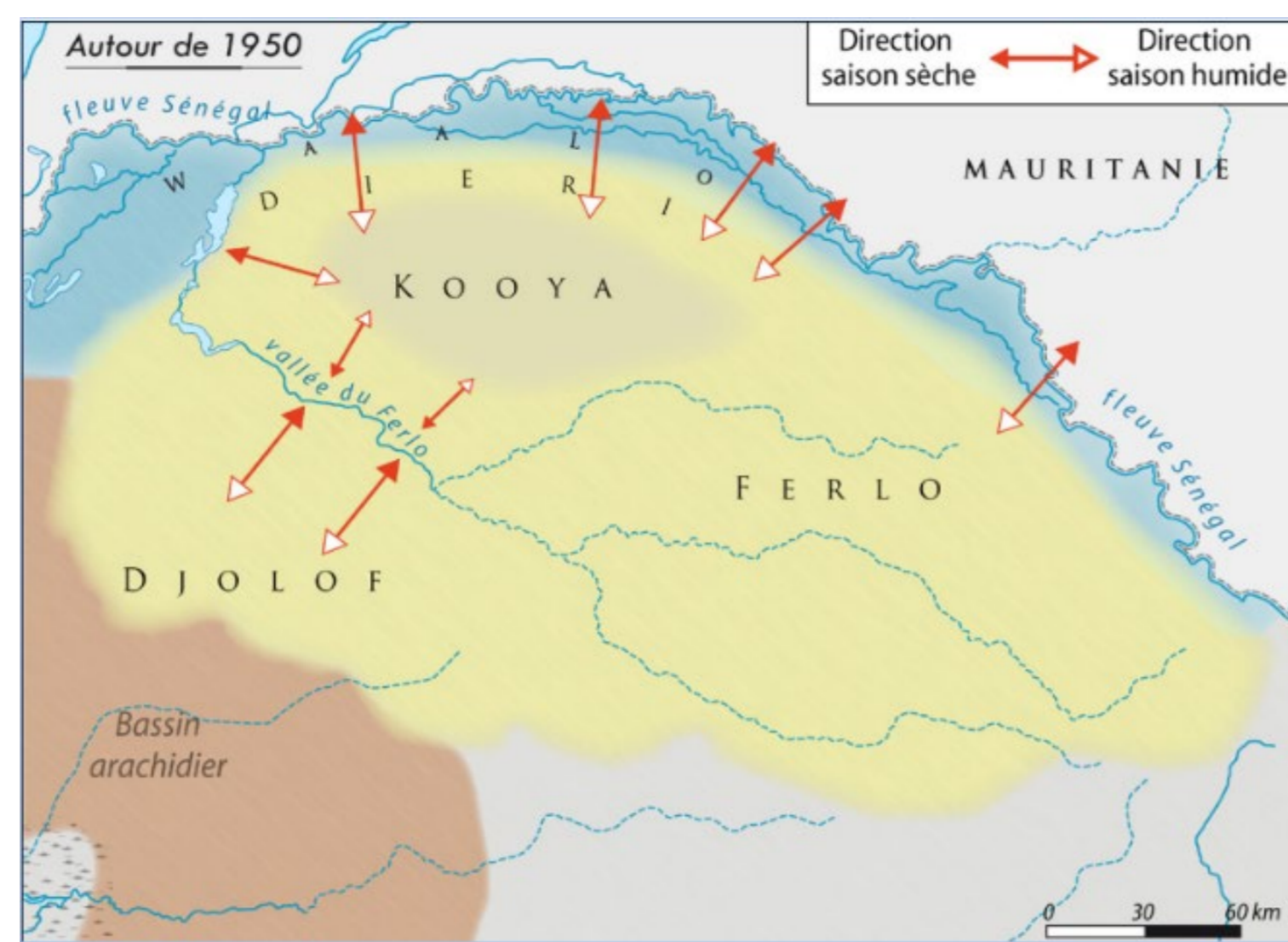
³ Département de biologie animale UCAD, Dakar, Sénégal



Introduction

The Ferlo region in Senegal

Located in the Sahelian zone of Senegal, the Ferlo has been historically exploited by the Fulani since the 19th century before they settled there in the 1950s. The particular aridity of the climate and vegetation is reinforced by current global changes, leading to transformations of the area at global and local levels.



Studying environmental memories in the Ferlo

In the context of environmental crisis of the Ferlo, this project seeks to :

- Understand the mechanisms of environmental memories
- Identify the factors that promote environmental amnesia
- Explore the impacts of environmental memories in the interest in restoration policies, in particular the **Great Green Wall**

Environmental memories and environmental amnesias

The notion of environmental memories refers to representations of the environment and its interactions with a community or an individual, during a past experience more or less close, lived or transmitted¹.



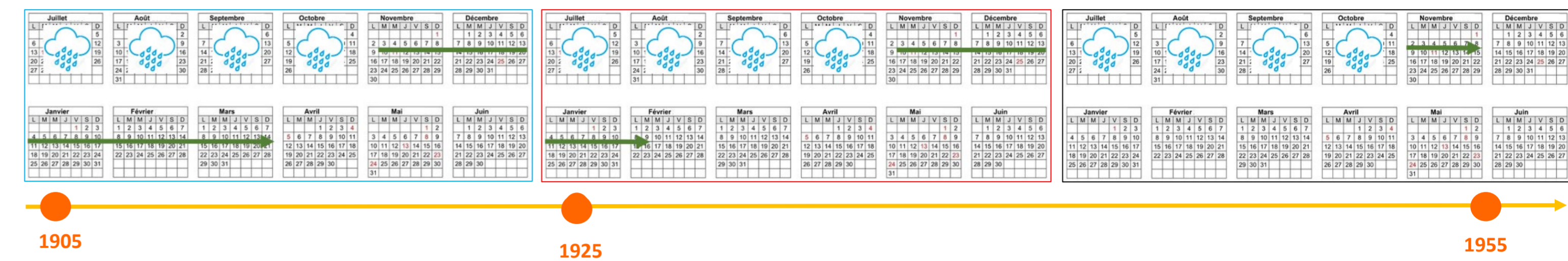
Recently, a gap in environmental memories has been highlighted². It is due to the ignorance of past environmental conditions before one's own generation. Therefore, one accepts a potentially already degraded environment by not knowing how it was before.

Hypotheses

Environmental changes in the Ferlo

Climatic conditions

From a rainfall surplus of more than 400 mm before 1969, the Ferlo has since experienced a rainfall deficit accompanied by late and unevenly distributed rainfall³. The early drying up of ponds due to the lack of rainfall modifies the watering of Fulani herds.



Vegetation

The vegetation of the Ferlo is in general decline due to drought but also to overexploitation. In agreement with scientists, the population is seeing the decline of many herbaceous (e.g. *Andropogon gayanus*) and woody (e.g. *Commiphora africana*) species.



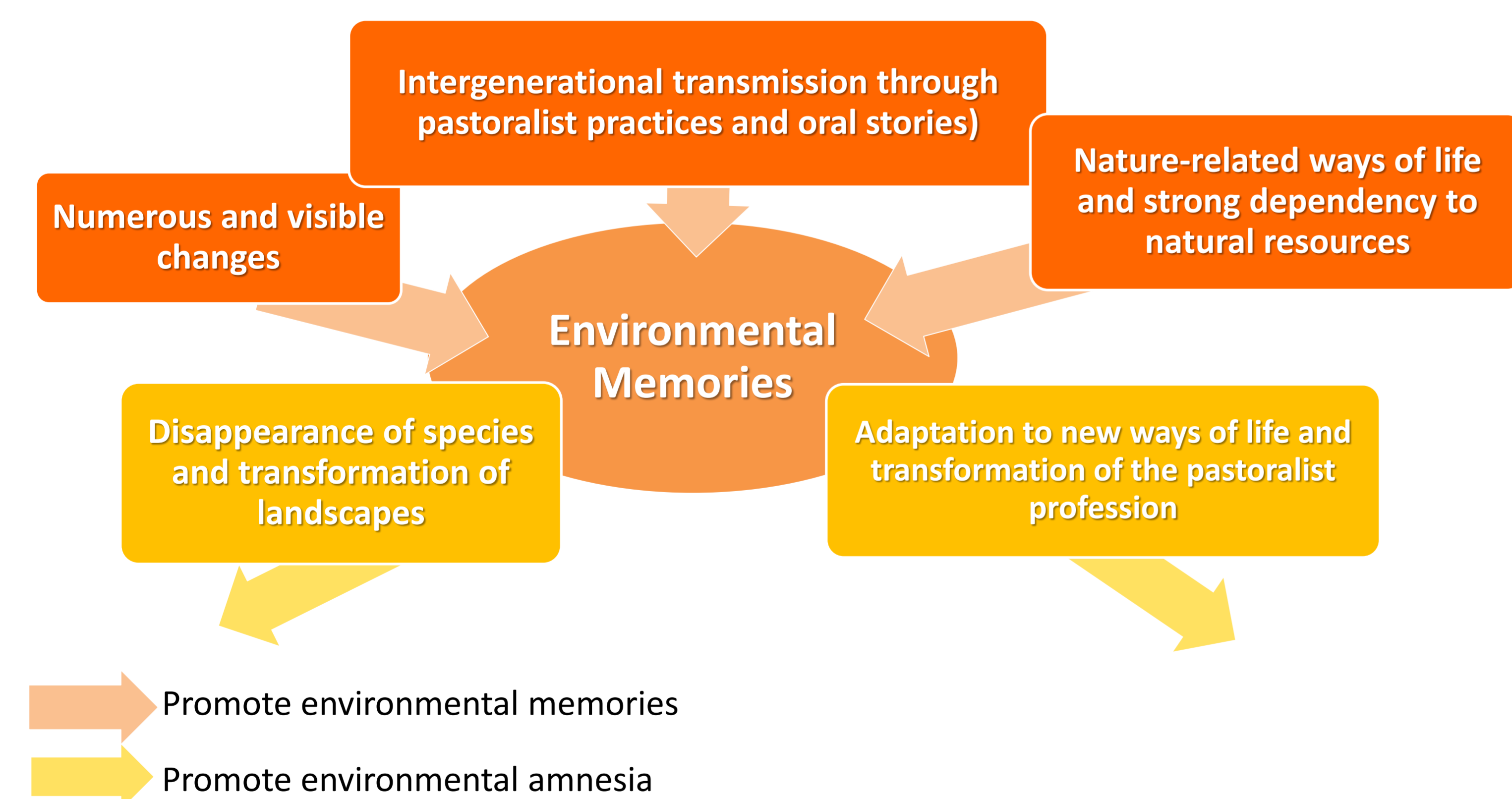
Fauna

The historically important wildlife of the Ferlo (cobe, warthog, gazelle...) represented a privileged source of food for the pastoralists. Carnivores (lion, lynx) were dangerous for the herds and humans. Many species have disappeared since 1960 due to targeted actions on carnivores, hunting campaigns and climate change which has reduced ecological niches for several species.

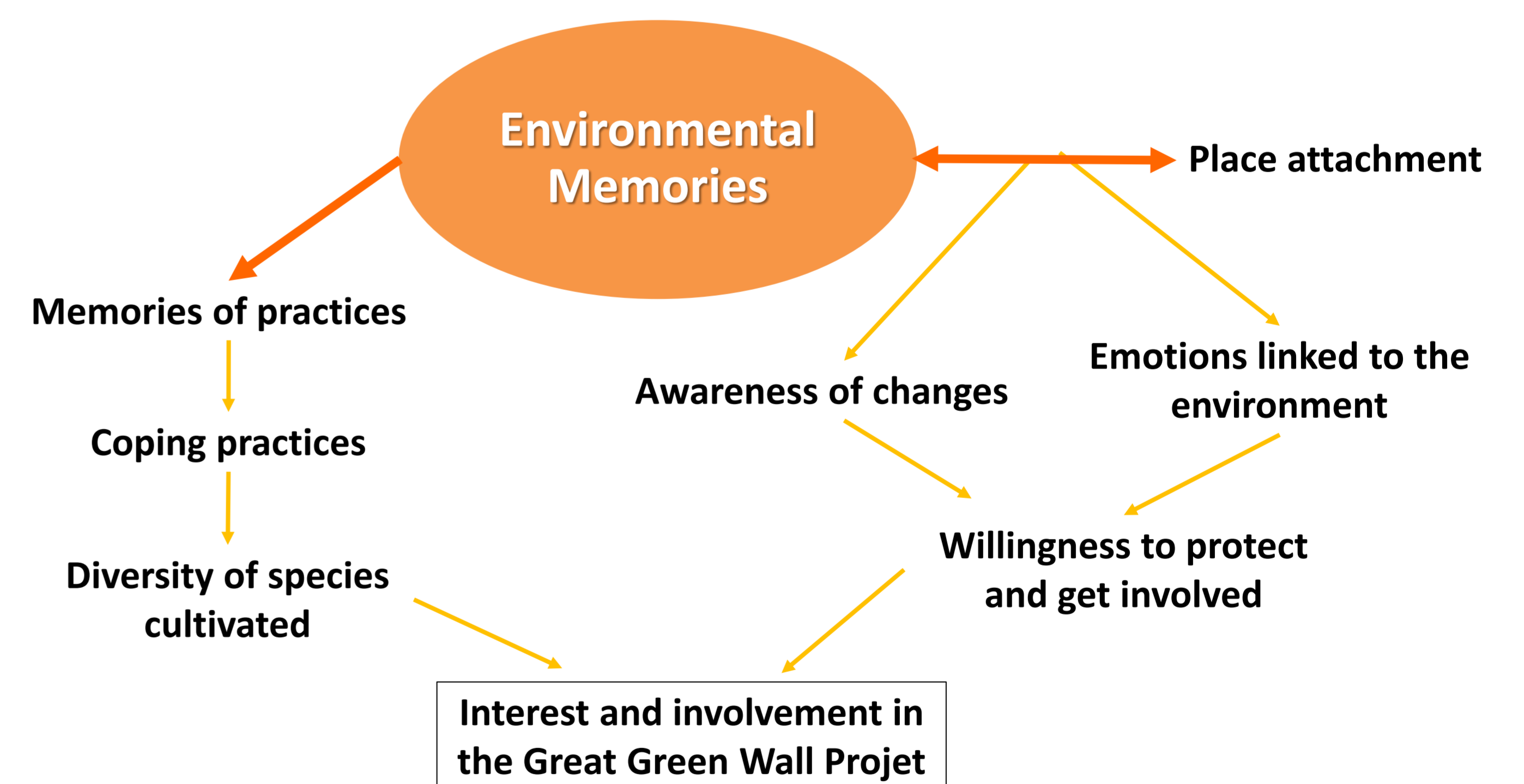


Theoretical framework applied to environmental memories in the Ferlo

Factors influencing environmental memories in the Ferlo



Role of environmental memories to promote the Great Green Wall



Conclusion

The environmental and social conditions specific to the Ferlo are likely to influence the environmental memories carried by the local population. These environmental memories can in turn play a role in the interest shown in restoration policies, and in particular the Great Green Wall. Environmental memories is an important field of research to seize the nature-related imaginaries, but still little exploited. Its study in other OHMs would allow to deepen the exploration of the mechanisms of construction of environmental memories through other social and environmental conditions.

References

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