"I think the overall theme will be the role of theories/notions of practice in innovation models/strategies." Hans

A few notes in response from Elizabeth

TRANSITIONS IN PRACTICE

climate change and everyday life

Elizabeth Shove, Lancaster University
ESRC climate change leadership fellowship

E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Transitions and end-user practices

"In this presentation I argue that social theories of practice are useful and important because they deflect attention away from the actions and responses of end-users and consumers. By taking practices as the central unit of analysis, new and different questions emerge that are relevant for understanding social change and sustainability." Elizabeth

"In this session we will reflect upon the KSI research results aimed at investigating a better, context specific fit between greening strategies and consumer practices. In general, people underscore values of a more sustainable development. However, in practice, it proves to be rather difficult to change consumer behaviour. What is the problem here?

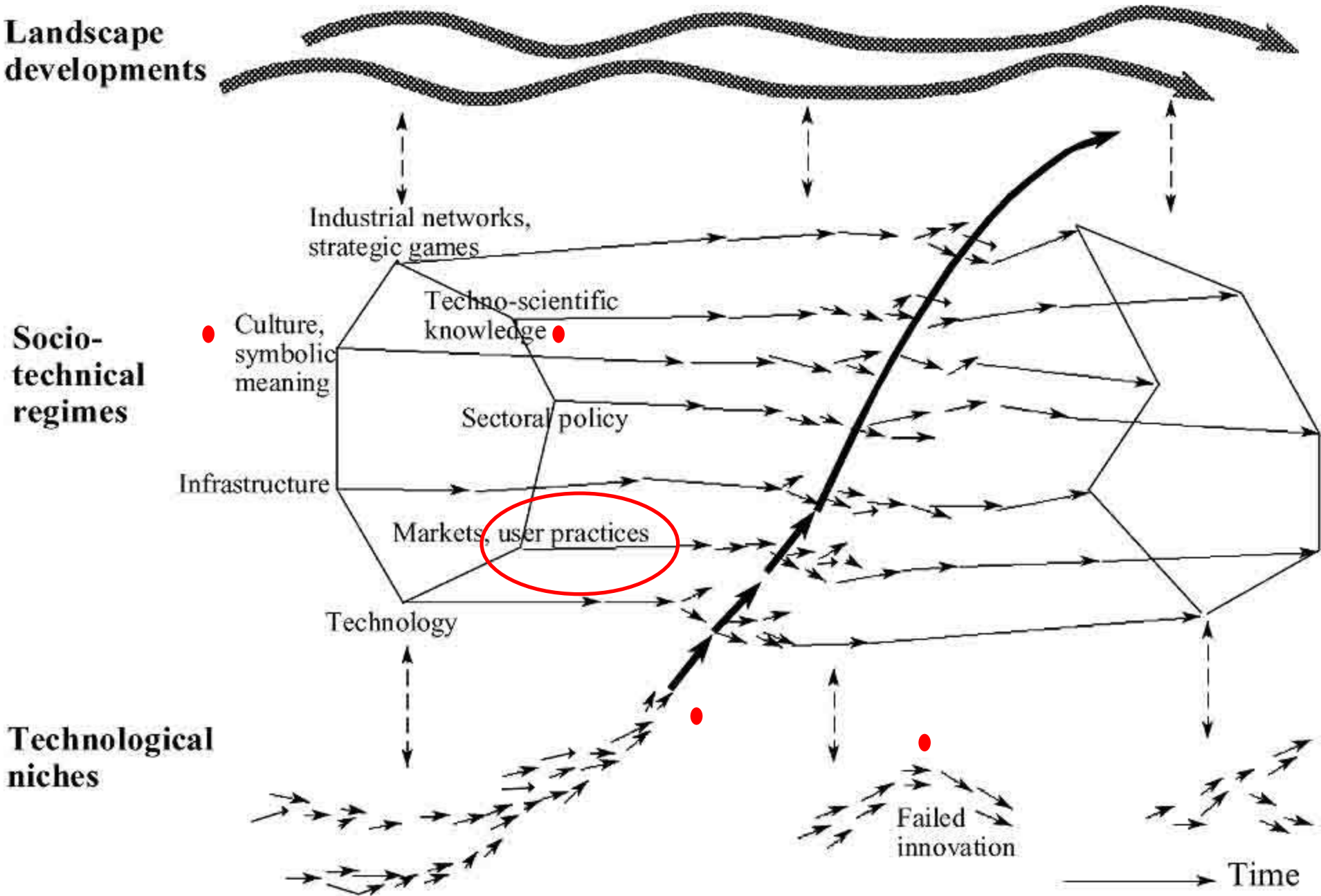
How to give citizen-consumers a stronger role as change agents in multi-level transition processes? Involving end-users in transition processes will prove itself to be more of a socio-cultural than of a purely technological and/or economic nature." Hans

Investigating a better, context specific fit between consumers and greening strategies (Hans)

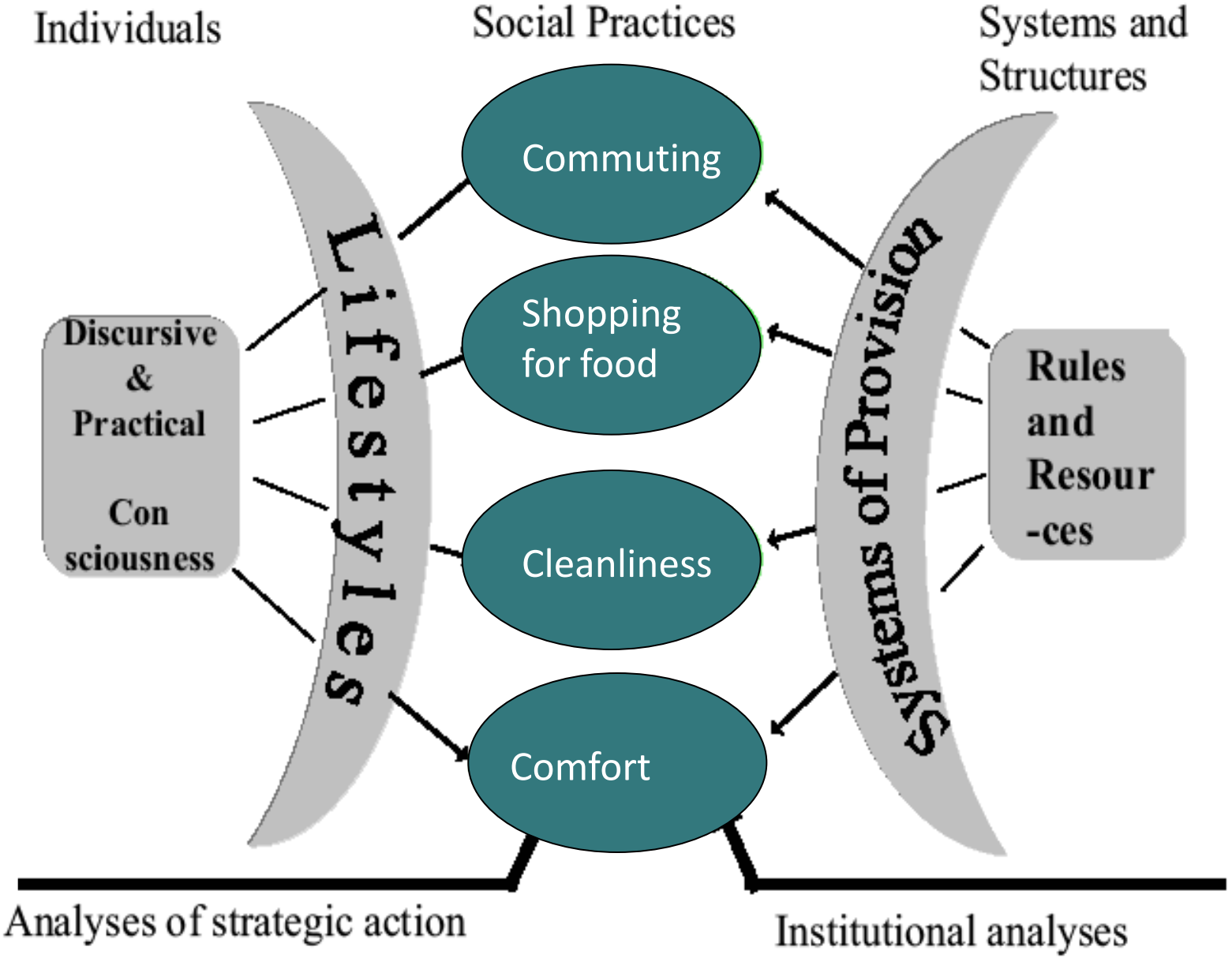
it proves to be rather difficult to change consumer behavior.

How to give citizen-consumers a stronger role as change agents in multi-level transition processes?

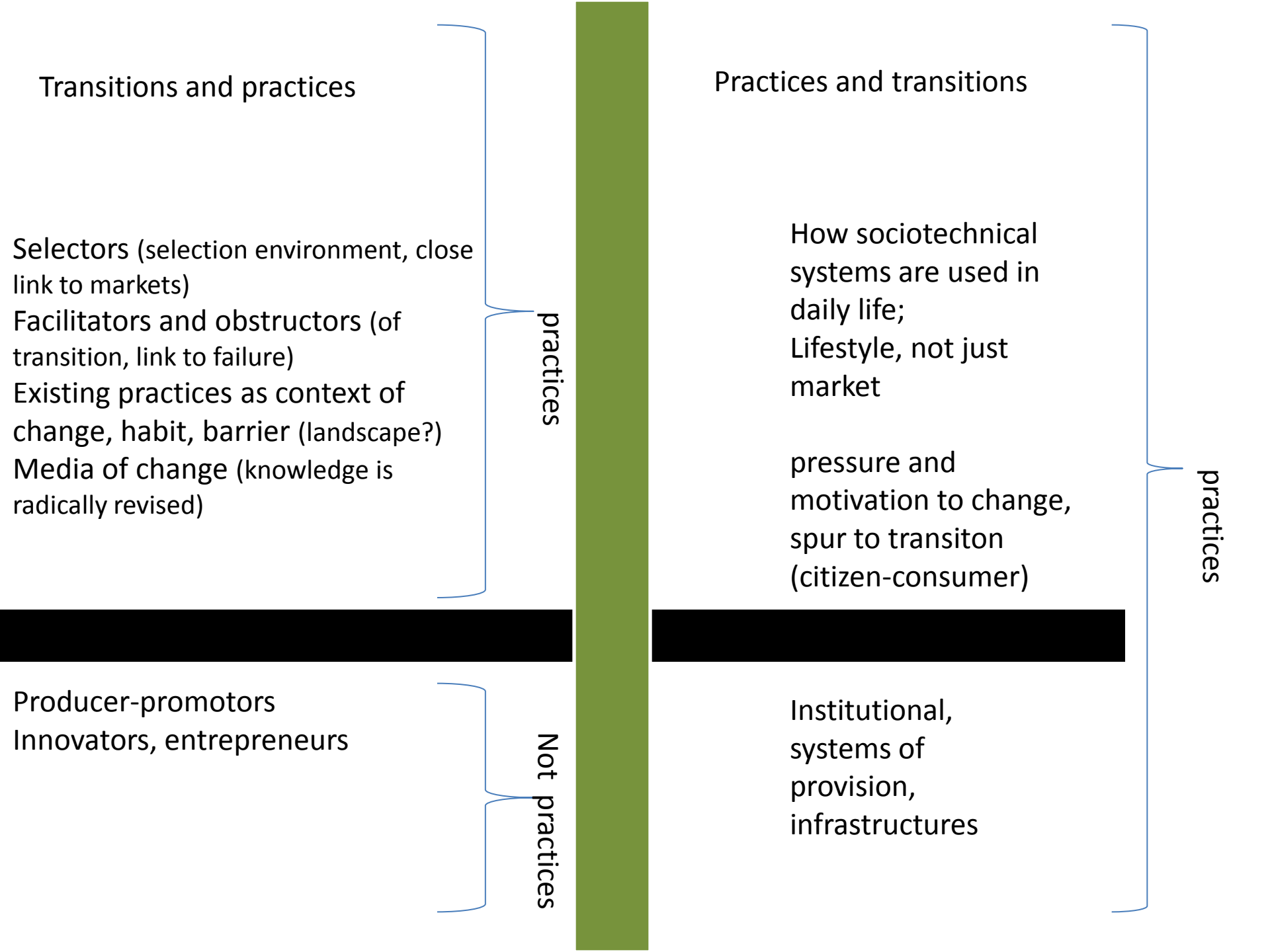
Transitions and practices



Practices and transitions



A version of "Spaargaren's ears" : practices as outcomes; domains of behaviour; lifestyle choices not selection environments


Transitions and practices
Selectors (selection environment, close link to markets)
Facilitators and obstructors (of transition, link to failure)
Existing practices as context of change, habit, barrier (landscape?)
Media of change (knowledge is radically revised)
practices
Practices and transitions
How sociotechnical systems are used in daily life;
Lifestyle, not just market
pressure and motivation to change, spur to transiton (citizen-consumer)
practices
Producer-promotors
Innovators, entrepreneurs
Not practices
Institutional, systems of provision, infrastructures

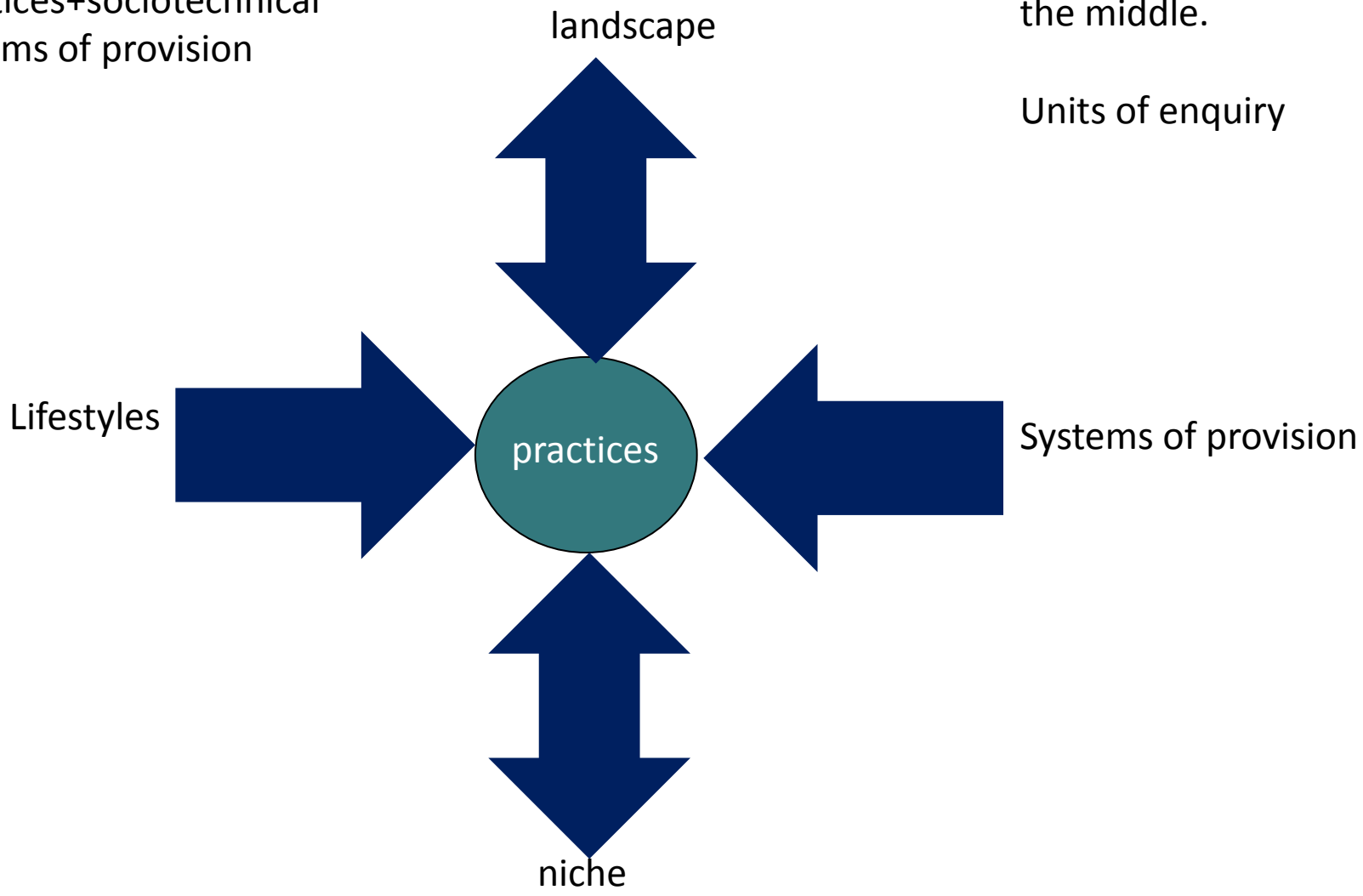
Implicitly agree:

Step change in the configuration of practices+sociotechnical systems of provision

Implicitly disagree:

Origins of change up, down, left or right, but not the middle.

Units of enquiry



Re-integrating resources from social theory

practice (Giddens)

+

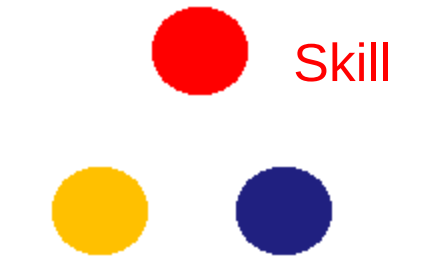
Social sciences study “Neither the experience of the individual actor nor the existence of any form of social totality but **practices ordered across space and time**”

practice (Schatzki)

=

Practice as ‘embodied, materially mediated arrays, shared meanings’ **(i.e. materials, images, skills)**

a material (integrative) theory of practice



Practice is a *process* of integration resulting in a structured arrangement - i.e. resulting in *a practice* that exists (for a time) as a recognisable *entity.*

Elements that are integrated consist of material, image and skill

Generates slightly - but significantly - new questions

- How do practices emerge, exist and die?
- How do practices recruit constituent elements and activating practitioners?
- How do systems of practice form, exist and break down?
- How are elements of practice generated, renewed and reproduced?

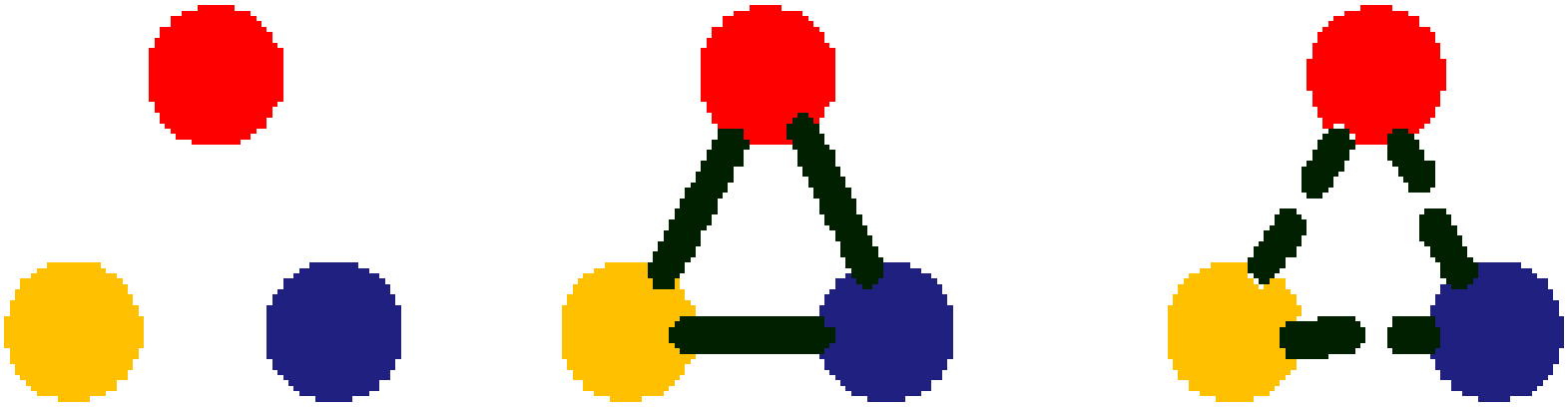
How do practices emerge, exist and die?

Making and breaking links between elements

proto-practices
(pre-formation)

practices
(re-formation)

ex-practices
(de-formation)



Attend to the trajectories of image and competence as well as material

Desires/lifestyles and systems of provision are outcomes of practice

How do practices recruit constituent elements and activating practitioners?

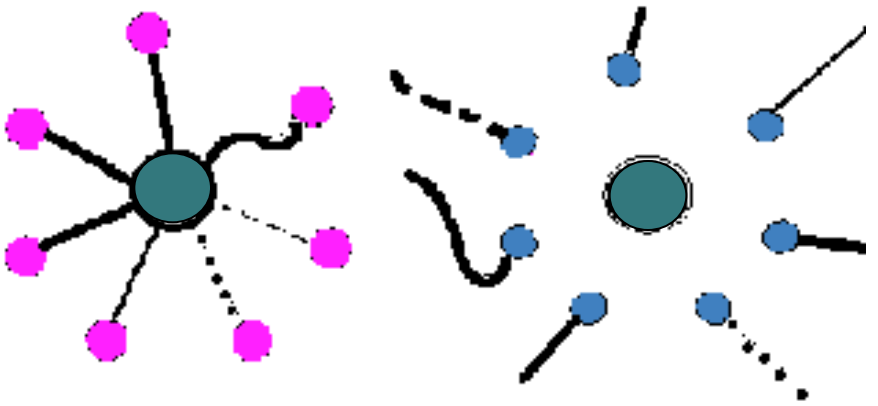
Recruitment and reproduction

Capture practitioners

Careers of carriers

Path and project

Careers of practice

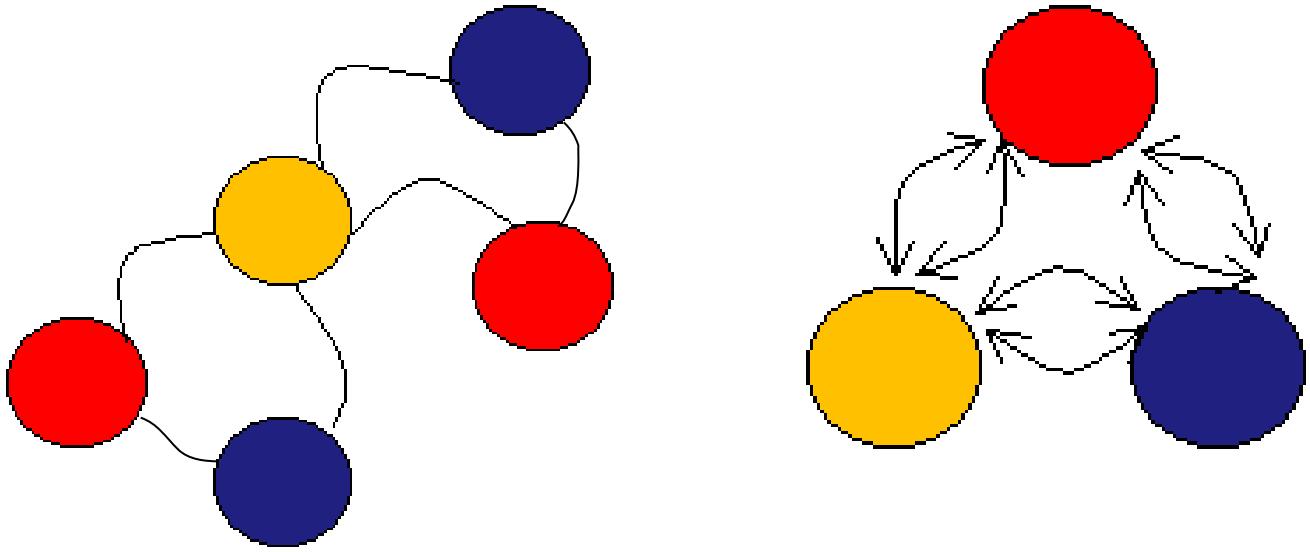


link between career of practice and anti-programme, recruitment, selection and fossilisation

Transitions in relations between practices (which win, which lose), not between technologies alone.

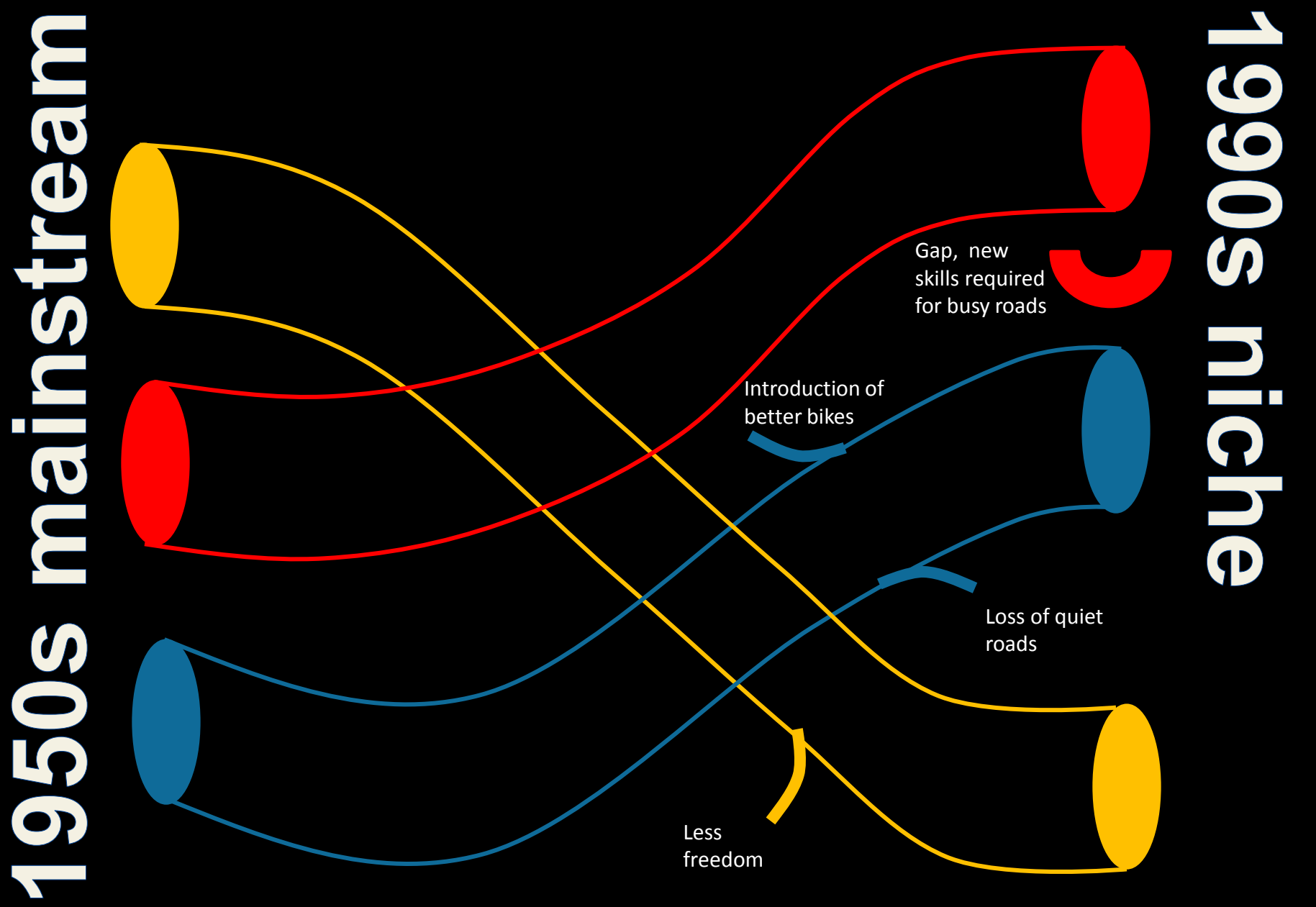
How are elements of practice generated, renewed and reproduced?

Elements are partly autonomous because they are created through multiple integrations (practices)



how different elements (stuff, image, skill) circulate; how different elements constitute each other

Elements on the move: how cycling went from mainstream to niche



In this presentation I argue that social theories of practice are useful and important because they deflect attention away from the actions and responses of end-users and consumers. By taking practices as the central unit of analysis, new and different questions emerge that are relevant for understanding social change and sustainability.

For example:

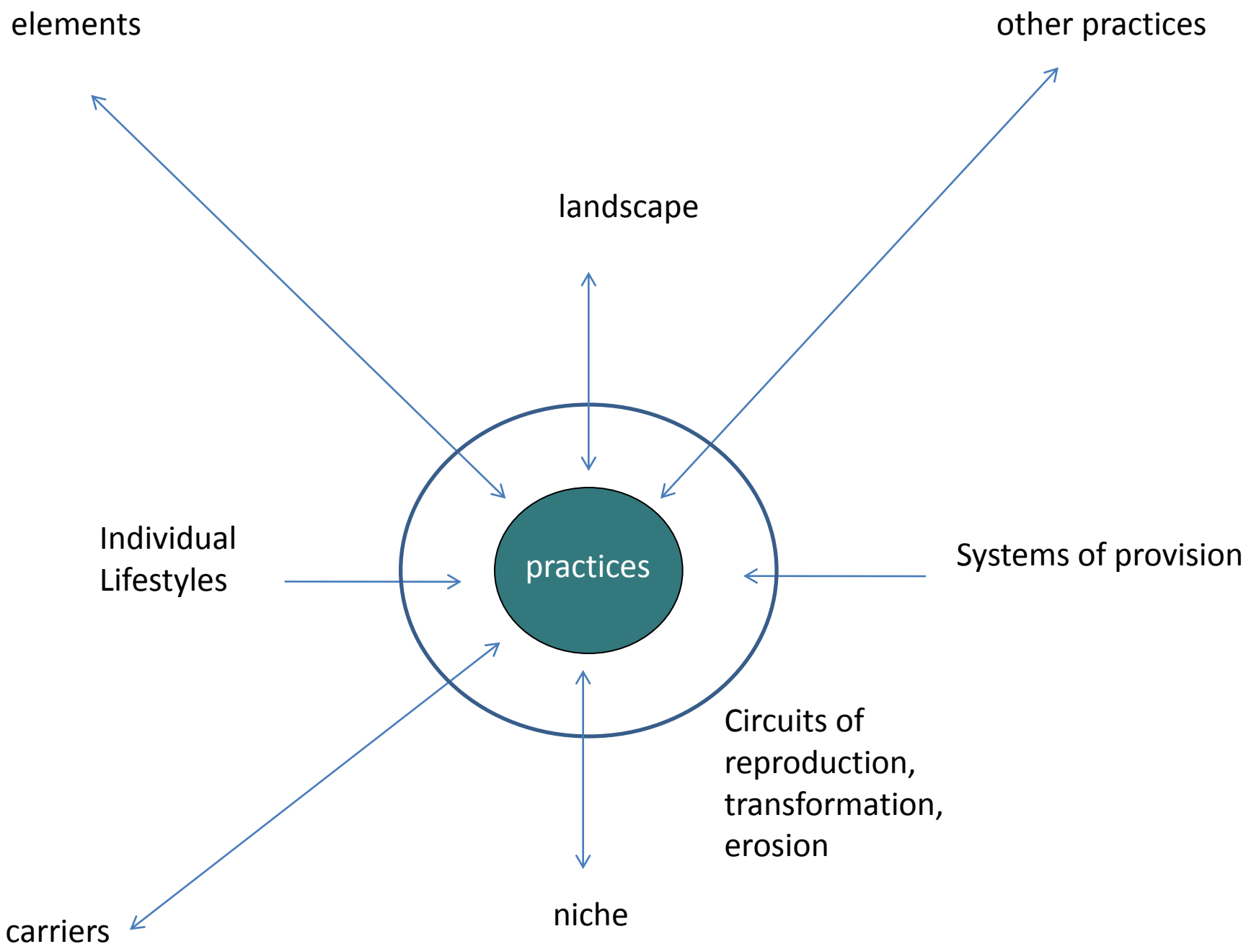
- Commuting by car
- Regularly eating meat
- Daily showering
- Expecting 22 degrees C indoors

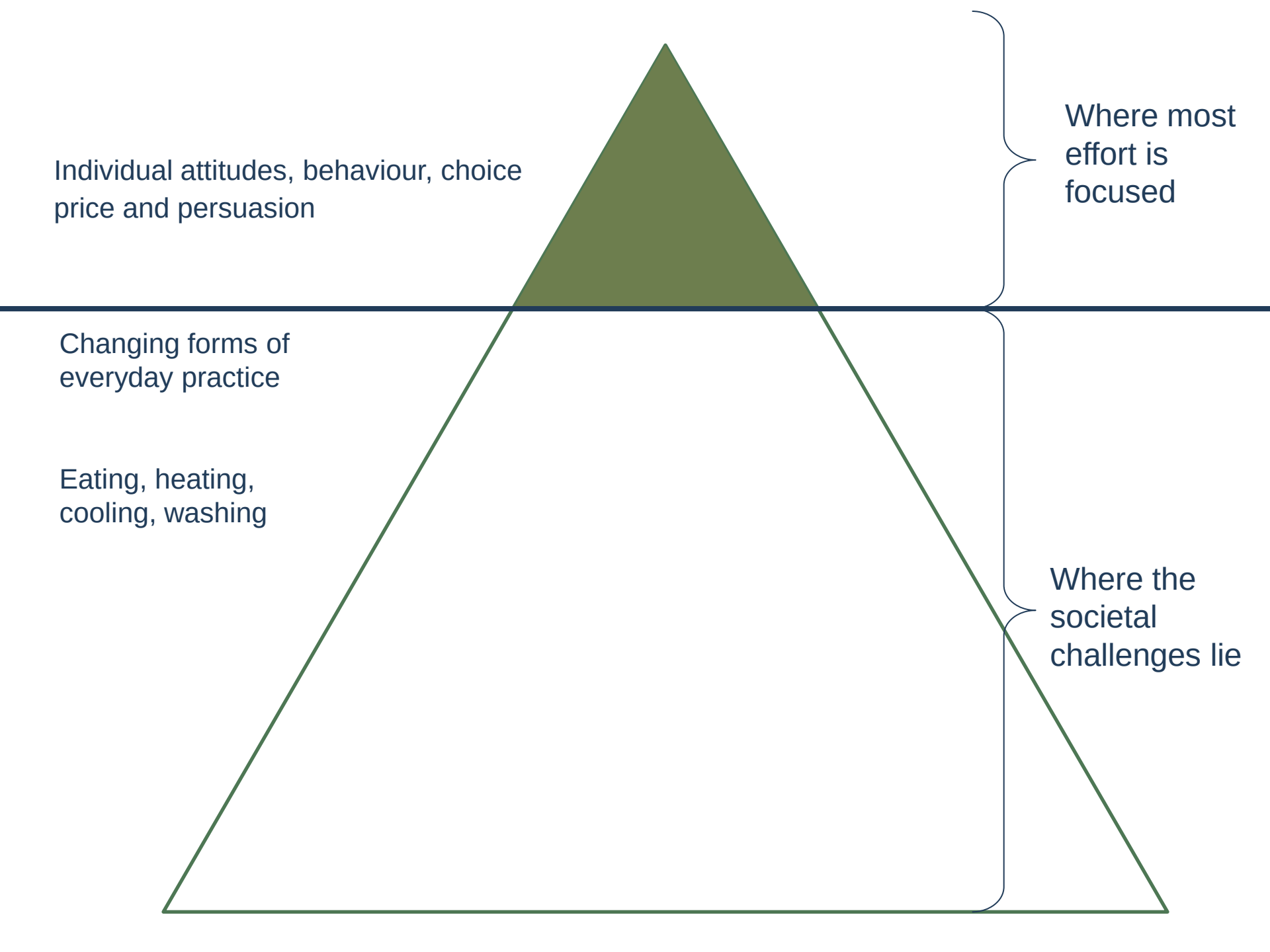
•Shared by many
•Significant and relatively recent change
•Resource intensive

Can be understood in terms of: changing and new configurations of materials, images, skills; processes of recruitment and defection, relation between practices (time).

Deliberate interventions: focus on elements, with consumers-users conceptualised as carriers of practice – not as primary agents of change, not as selecting the fate of technology.

Social practices consist of technologies (along with skills and materials) and are not external to them.


elements
other practices
landscape
Individual
Lifestyles
practices
Systems of provision
Circuits of
reproduction,
transformation,
erosion
carriers
niche


Individual attitudes, behaviour, choice price and persuasion
Where most effort is focused
Changing forms of everyday practice
Eating, heating, cooling, washing
Where the societal challenges lie