

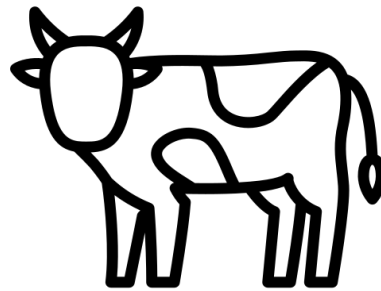
STRONGER TOGETHER, BUT HOW?

LESSONS FROM THE WALLOON DAIRY HISTORY ON
THE STRATEGIC RELEVANCE OF COOPERATIVE
MODELS

Véronique De Herde



Challenges of sustainability in agri-food value chains

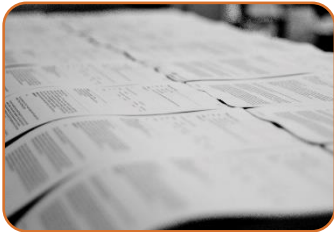


Support to differentiated farm practices?



Value chain organisation and practices

Agri-food cooperatives can act upon these sustainability challenges



Institutional support

- Coordination – communication on agro-environmental schemes
- Administrative support to participants



Differentiated payment for particular practices

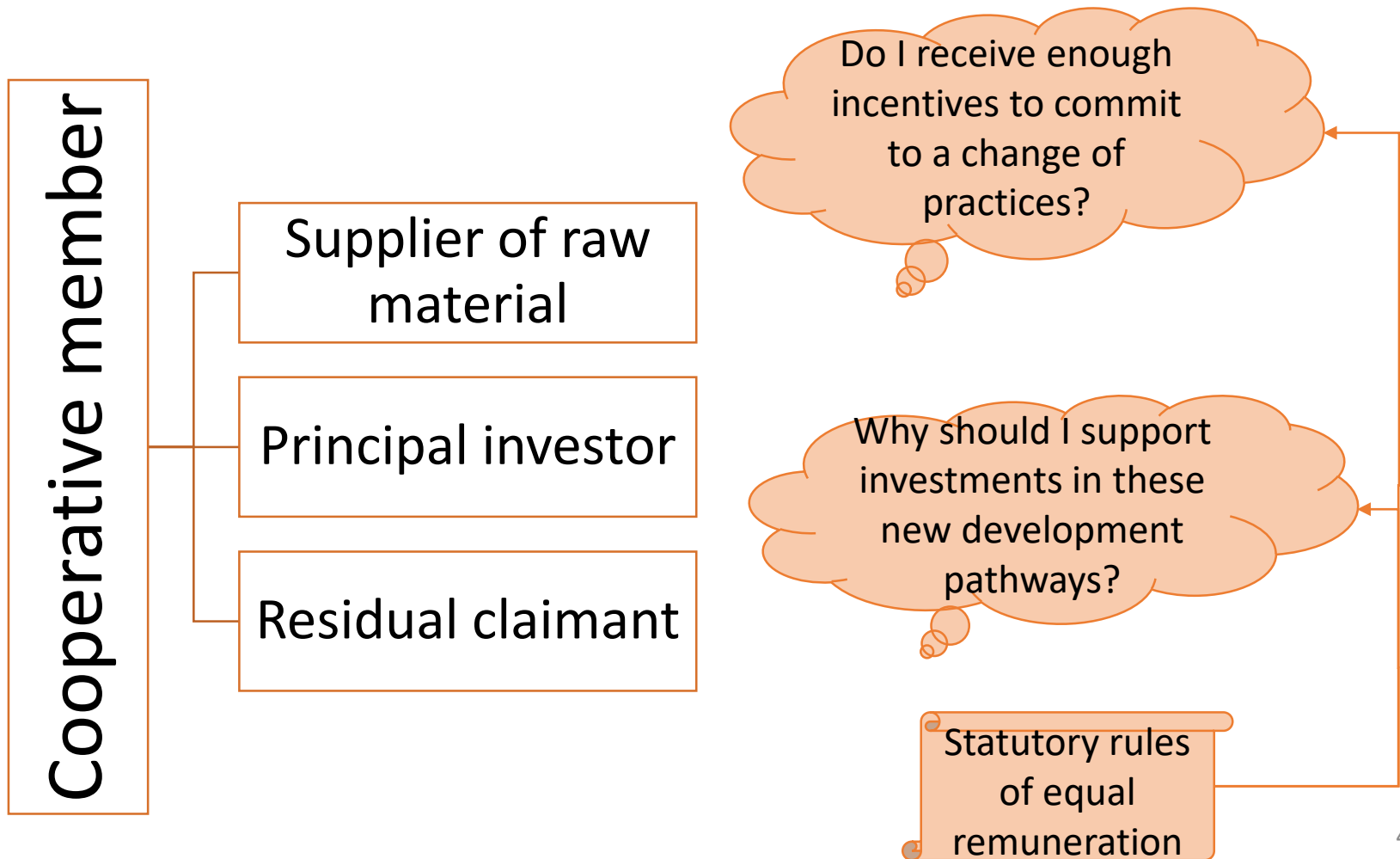
- Collective and inter-organisational agreements
- Premiums on top of standard prices



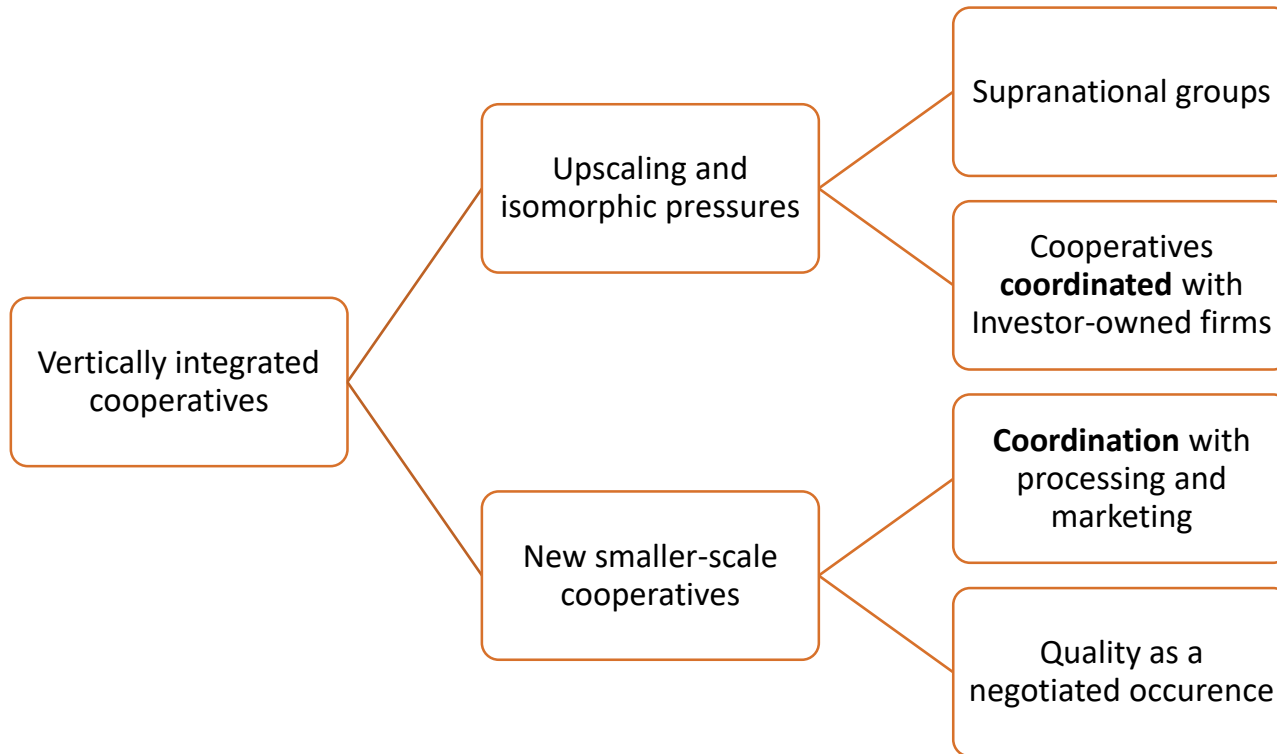
Exploration of higher added value market pathways

- Differentiated quality
- Product identity

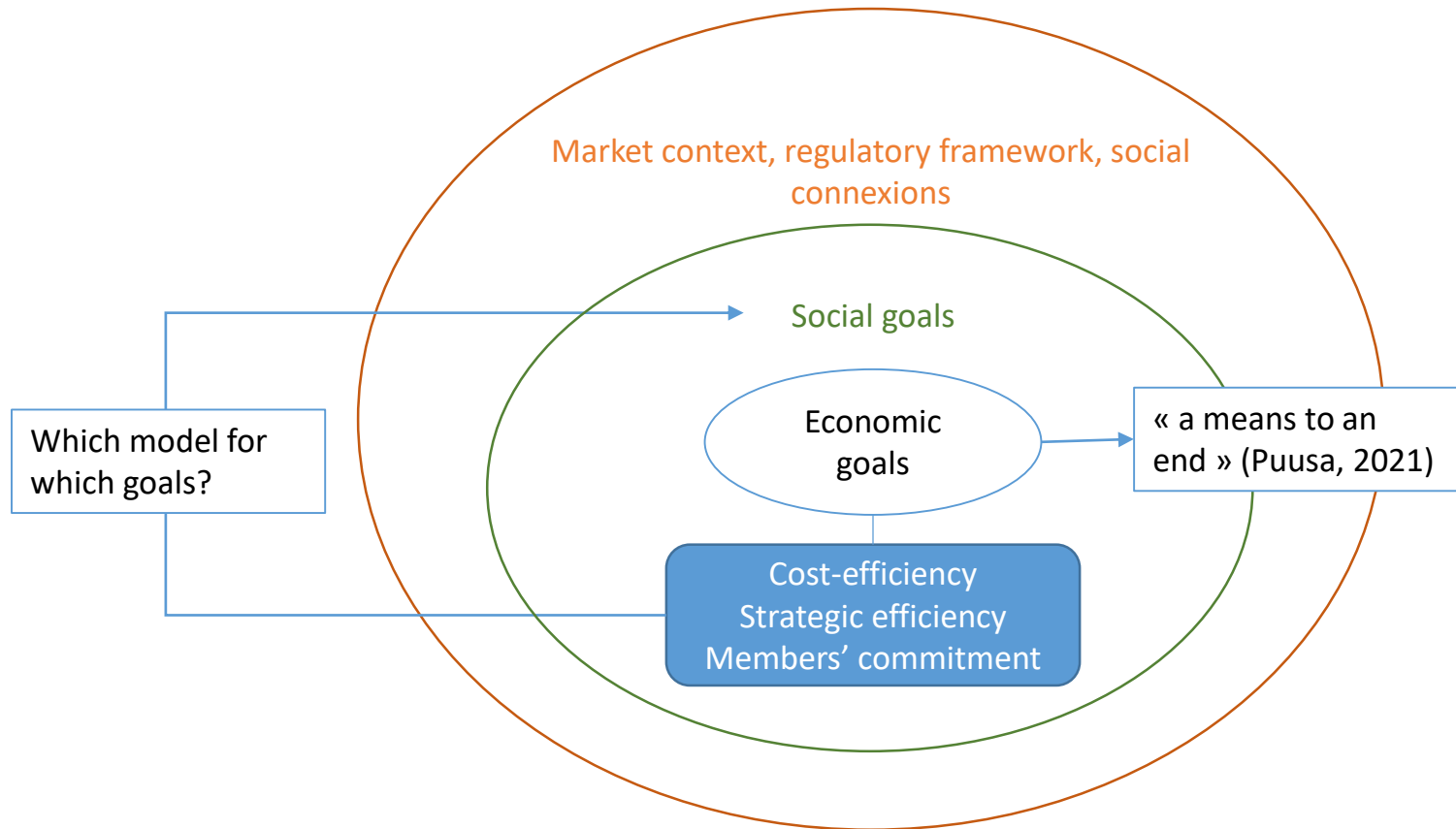
Challenges of governance in the exploration of sustainability pathways



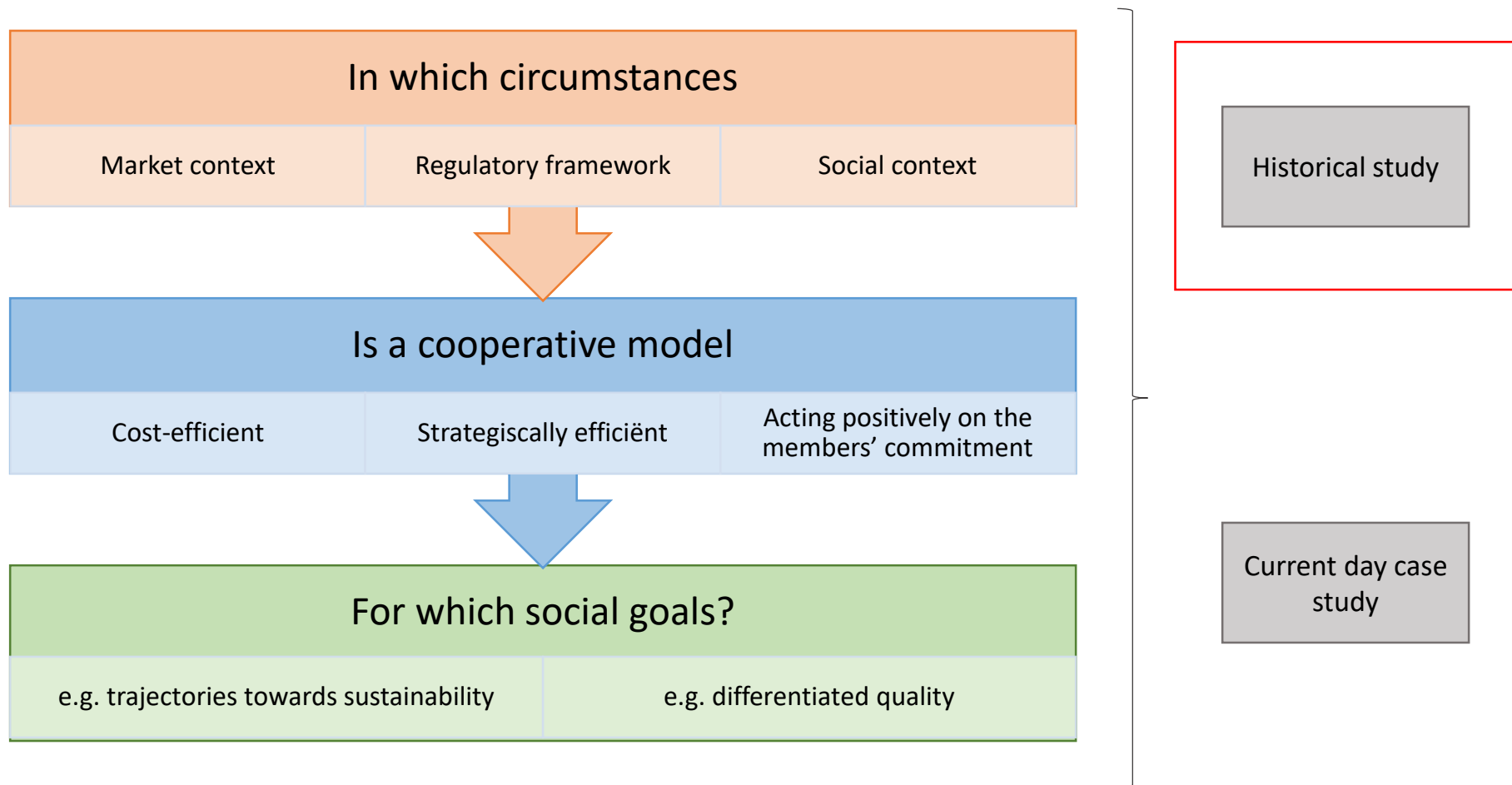
From vertically integrated cooperatives to a variety of models



Is the relevance of cooperative model dependent upon context?



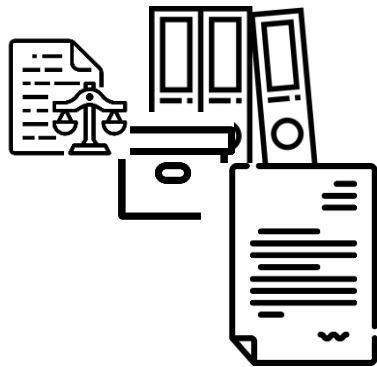
Is the relevance of cooperative model dependent upon context?



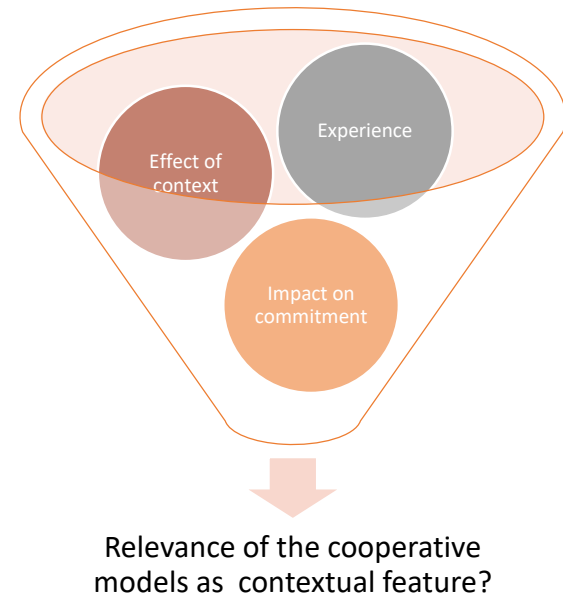
A historical study of cooperative models

Walloon dairy cooperatives – evolution from the 1960s to the 1990s

Written sources

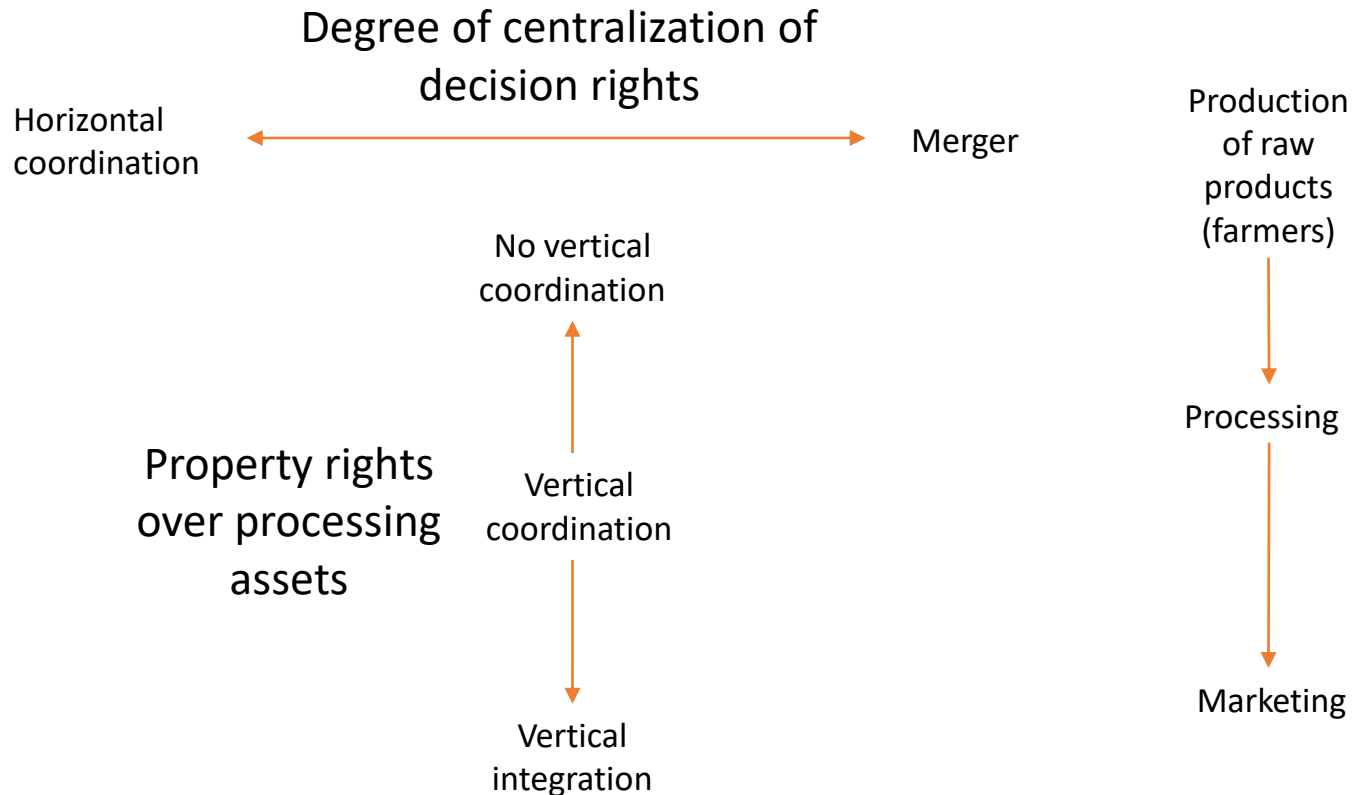


Oral sources



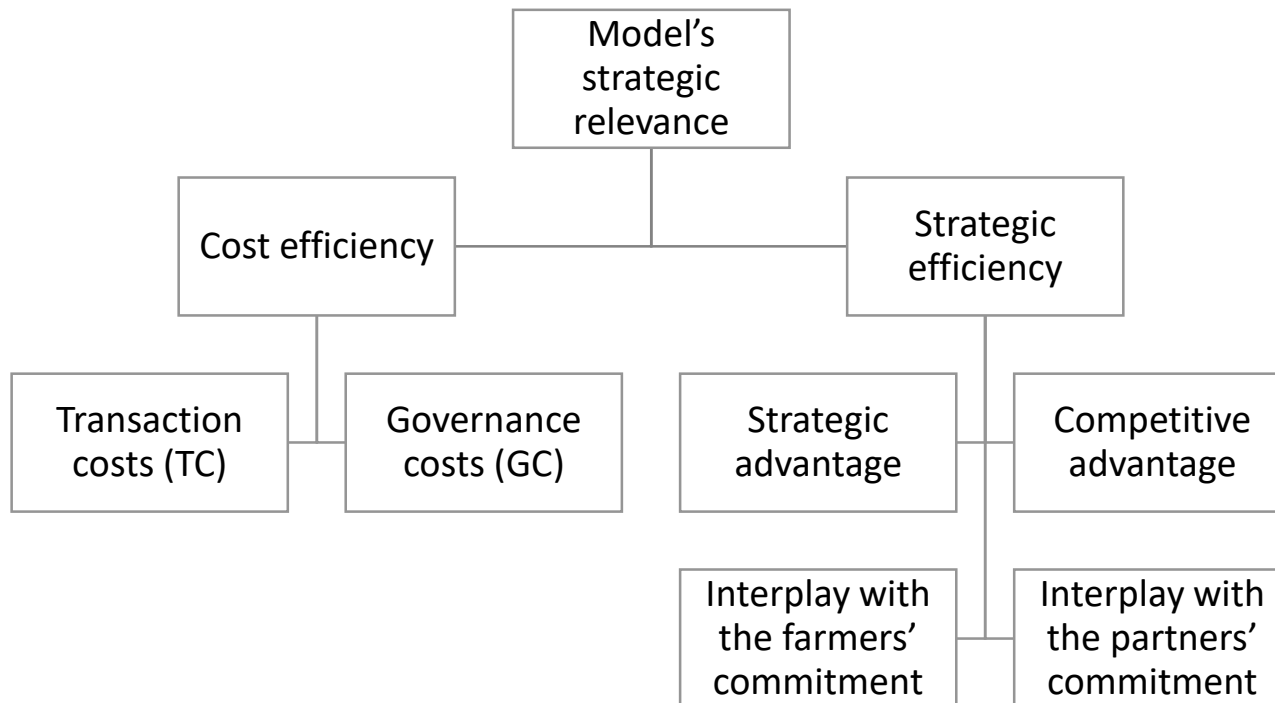
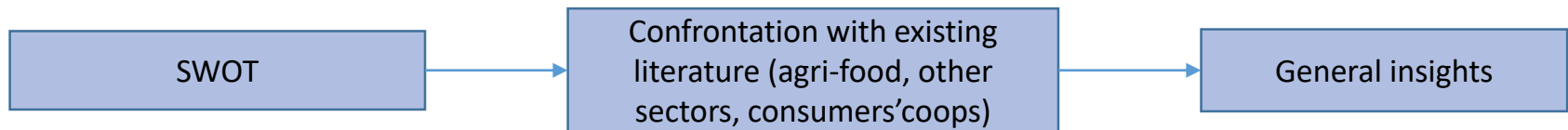
A study in two steps

1. Classification of the models enacted

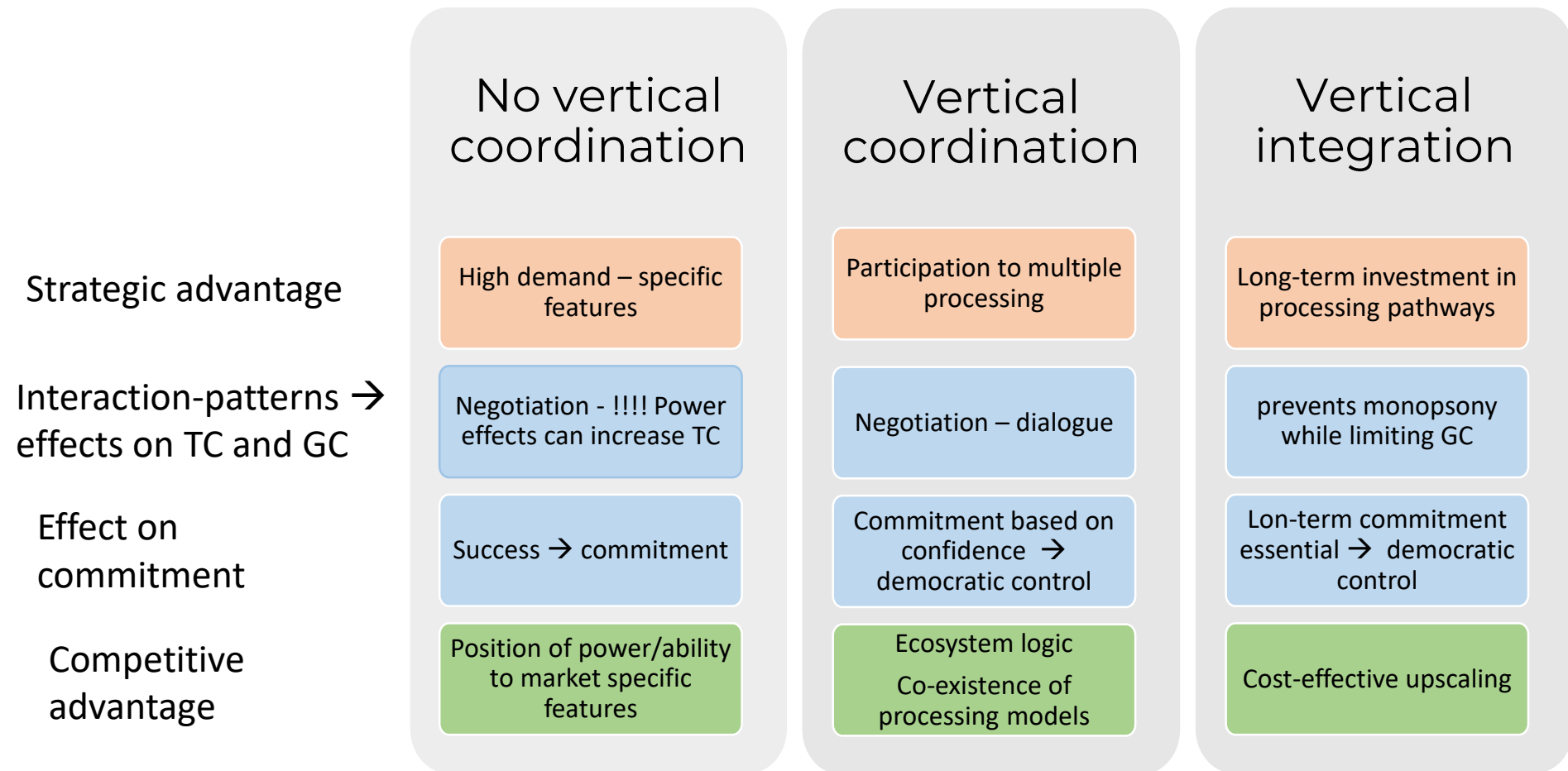


A study in two steps

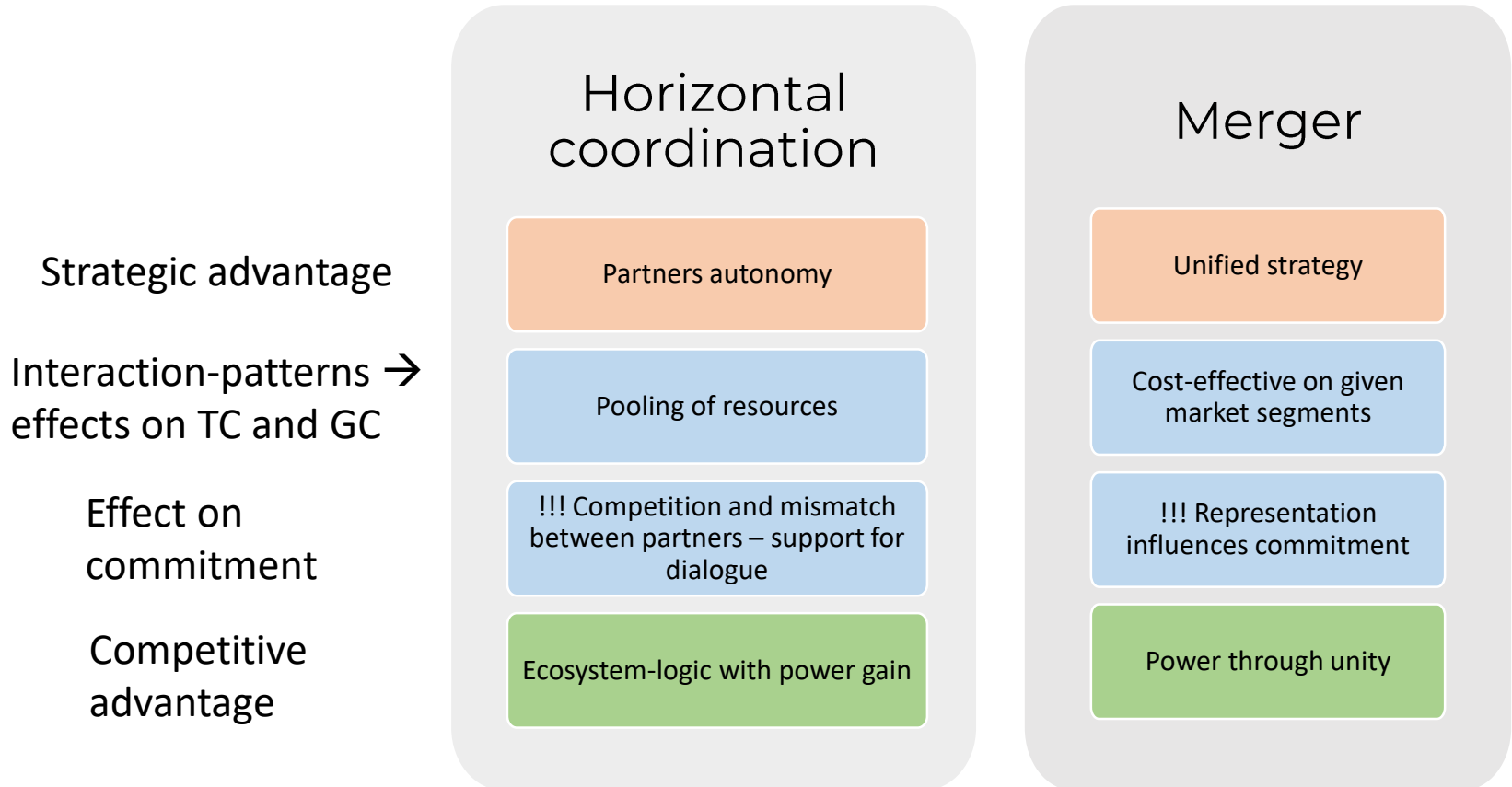
2. Analysis of the models' features



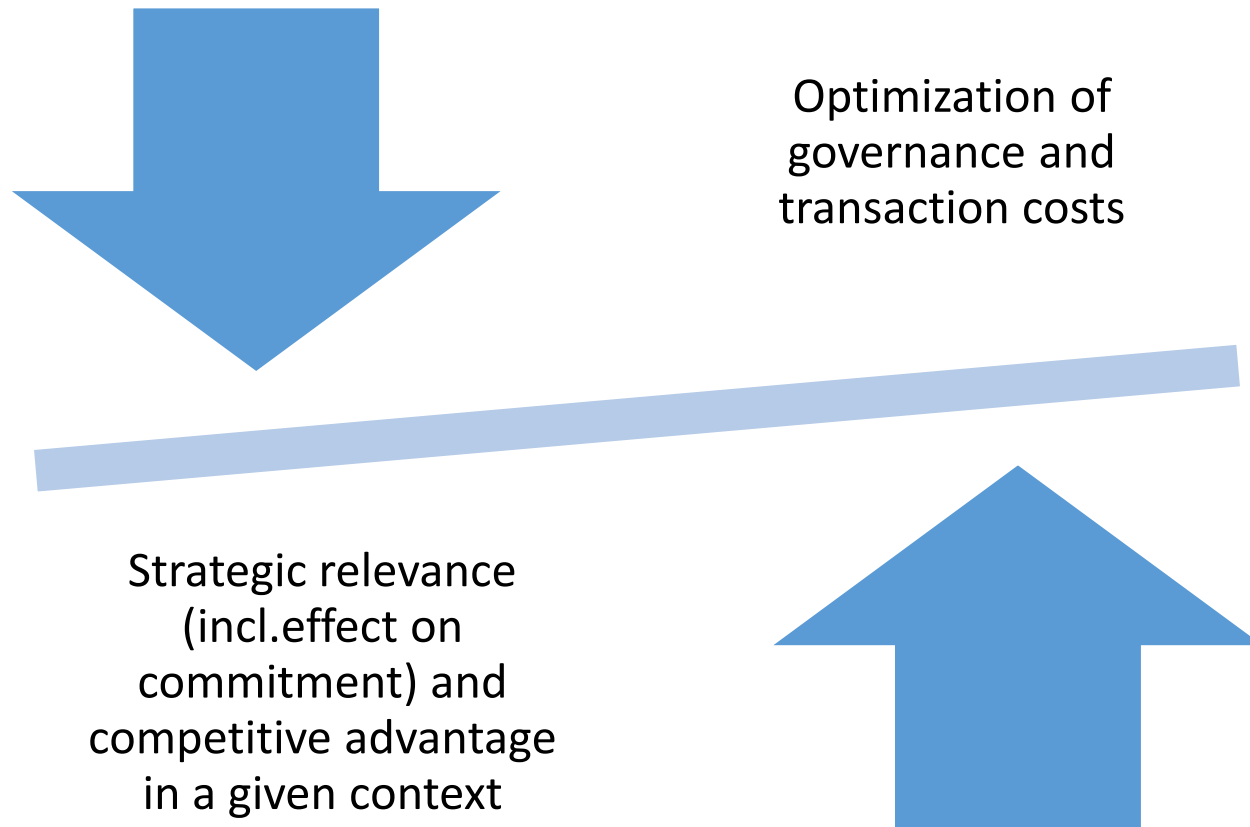
Main results – vertical organisation



Main results – horizontal organisation



From cost-optimization to strategic relevance



Cost-efficiency and strategic efficiency as relative concepts



Main conclusions

- There is no absolute “best choice” of cooperative model
- A model that is unadapted to a given context may see:
 - ↑ costs (transaction and/or governance)
 - ↓ commitment
- Dialogue and democratic control as key features of strategic relevance accross models
- Positive feedback effects may emerge from adequate coordination