

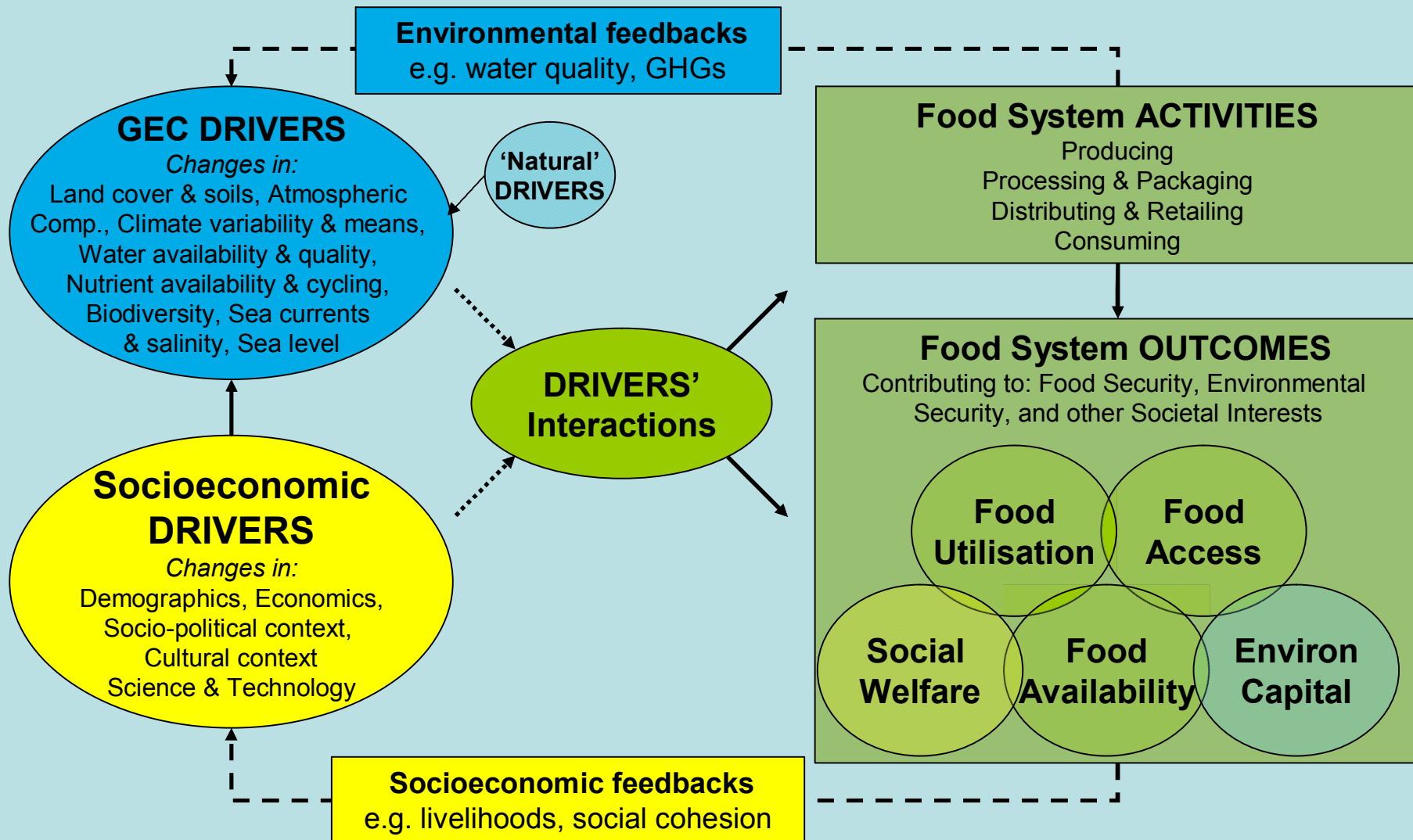
Structural barriers to adaptation in food systems

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Analysing Food Systems in context of drivers and feedbacks



Food system cross-scalar structure

- Assets: land, finance, information, energy
- Actors: farmers, consumers, corporations
- Institutions: trade rules, land tenure, cultural food preferences

- Each varies by level; but also objectives and power

Cross-scale features and food system function

- Implementation of agricultural subsidies
- Control over food chain by multi-national corporations
- Inequities in adaptation decisions
- Tradeoffs!

Adaptation

- Actors to realize adaptive capacity
- Structural change
 - E.g. trade liberalization vs. state action
- Equity
- Avoidance of negative feedbacks or “mal-adaptation”

Limits of traditional one sector or one level approach

- Not attention to environmental feedbacks
 - US monoculture
- Food insecurity crises
 - Access not availability in Niger 2005
- Competing objectives
 - Urban cheap maize favoured in Southern Africa
 - Diversification (State priority) vs grain self-sufficiency (National priority) in Punjab, India

Governance is critical for food system adaptation

- Cross-scale interactions in coupled systems
- Resolving the tensions between agency and structure
- Arguments regarding the important role of the state in food systems

Promises of an integrated approach

- Cash vouchers rather than foreign food aid
- Fair trade
- Food sovereignty movement

Towards Adaptive Food Systems

- Role of State is key to reconcile multiple objectives (governance)
- Need for careful slow analysis of the outcomes of policy or market reform