

A SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES (SSH) APPROACH TOWARD THE FUTURE OF AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

START HUB meeting: Future Agrifood Systems

Unfolding the future

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A social science and humanities (SSH) approach

In general what we can offer



A temporal perspective



Tales From the Field

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Benefitting people and society

Making Distant Futures Actionable

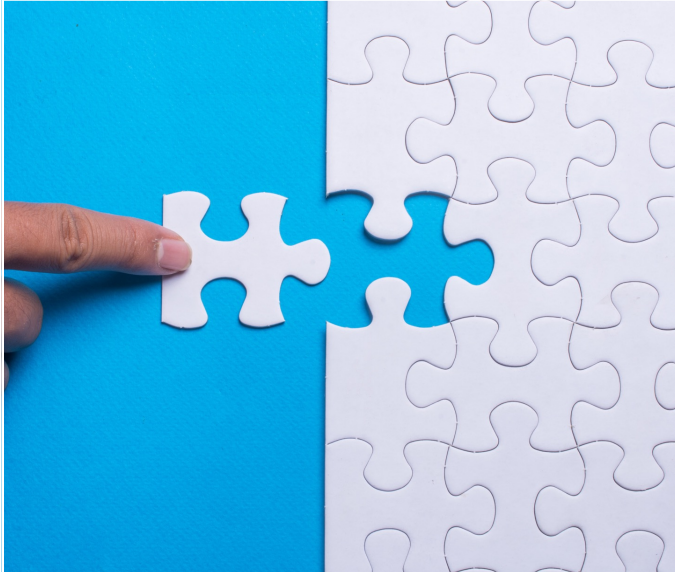




“HOW CAN WE MAXIMISE THE ‘AMOUNT’ OF PRODUCTS FROM A GIVEN PIECE OF LAND, TO PROMOTE A SHIFT FROM A FOSSIL-BASED SOCIETY TOWARDS SOCIETY USING CASCADING TECHNOLOGIES.”

— START HUB: FUTURE AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

Observed Two General Approaches to SSH and STEM Interaction



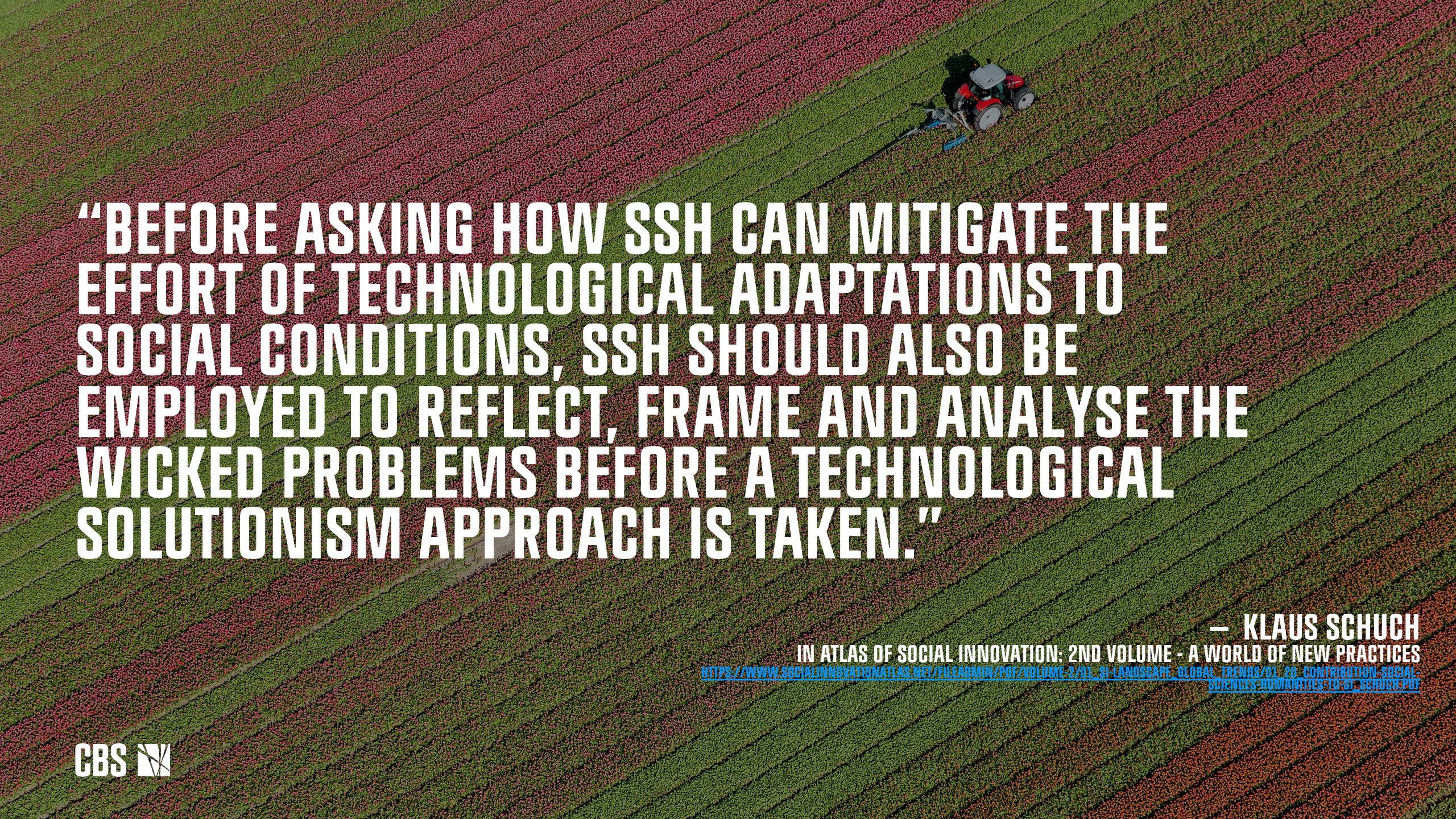
Solution oriented

How to better design solutions? How to make solutions being adopted?



Opening the Black Box

What is going on here? What problems to tackle? What questions to ask?

An aerial photograph of a tractor with a blue implement, likely a planter or seeder, moving through a field of vibrant, multi-colored flowers. The flowers are arranged in neat, parallel rows, creating a strong sense of perspective and rhythm. The colors range from deep reds and purples to bright yellows and oranges. The tractor is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the frame, moving towards the lower left.

“BEFORE ASKING HOW SSH CAN MITIGATE THE EFFORT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADAPTATIONS TO SOCIAL CONDITIONS, SSH SHOULD ALSO BE EMPLOYED TO REFLECT, FRAME AND ANALYSE THE WICKED PROBLEMS BEFORE A TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONISM APPROACH IS TAKEN.”

— KLAUS SCHUCH

IN ATLAS OF SOCIAL INNOVATION: 2ND VOLUME - A WORLD OF NEW PRACTICES

https://www.socialinnovationatlas.net/fulladmin/pdf/volume-2/01_si-landscape_global_trends/01_20_contribution-social-sciences-humanities-to-si_schuch.pdf

Opening the black box of future

Insights from the past and ongoing present

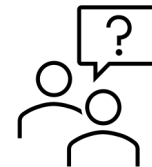
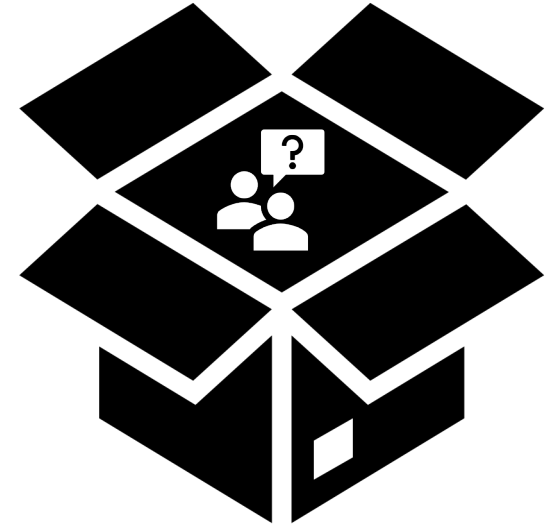
- How have things become? How are things unfolding?
- How did actors act? How are actors acting?
- How are things changing?
- How changes take place?

Projecting into the future

- How can things become?
- How would actors act?

Future making

- How things should be?
- How can we change for desirable futures?

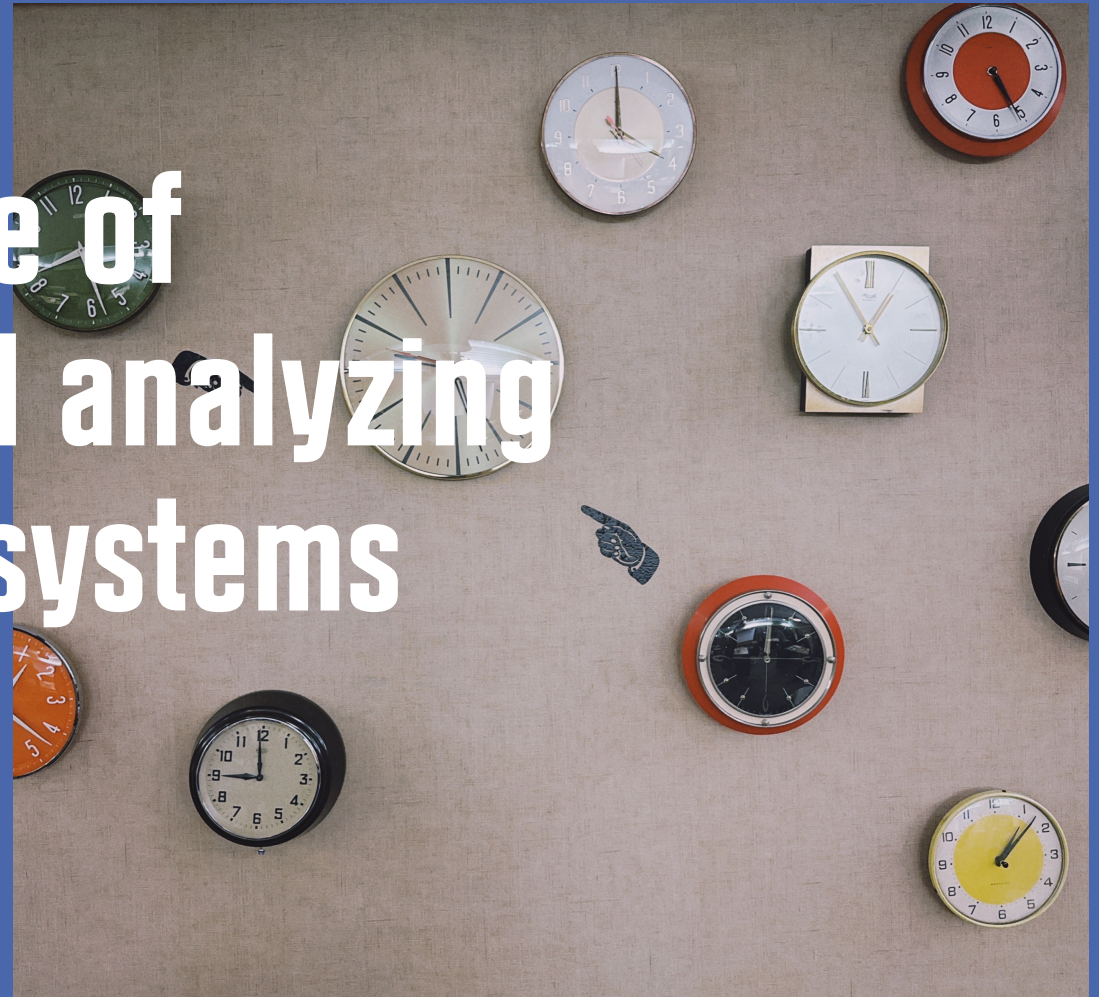


OR



A Temporal Perspective of reflecting, framing and analyzing the future of agrifood systems

- Short-term and long-term
- Nature's time and sociological time



Short-term and Long-term

Balancing between the short-term and the long-term through trade-offs

Risk: One becomes dominating, e.g., "short-termism"

Separating the short-term and the long-term for different purposes

Risk: Dysfunctional disconnections, e.g., R&D vs. Finance

Bridging the short-term and the long-term through ambidexterity

Risk: Development toward "middle-ground"

Sustaining the interplay between the short-term and long-term

How does the long-term make the short-term and, simultaneously, how does the short-term make the long-term?

Nature's time and sociological time

Social-ecological systems (Holling, 2001; Howard-Grenville & Lahneman, 2021)

- Interaction between the social and ecological systems
- How the ecological systems influence the social systems
- how the social systems adapt to the ecological systems

Nature's time

- e.g., seasons, lifecycle

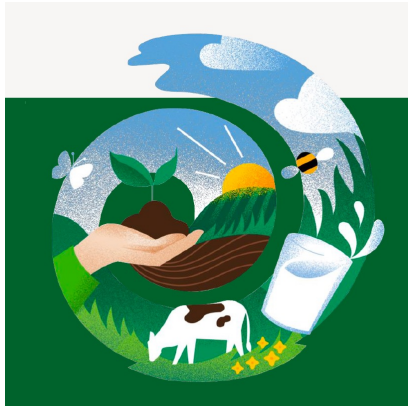
Sociological time

- e.g., annual reporting, production routines, consumption routines

Interplay between nature's time and sociological time

- Manipulating nature's time to fit sociological time
- Reconnecting sociological time with nature's time

Tales from the field



Many short-term goals and needs and one long-term goal with lots of unknowns

Solution oriented

- What are the technical solutions to fulfill the long-term and/or short-term goals?
- What are the technical solutions to deal with the changing natural environment?



Opening the black box

- How can technical solutions be designed to enable actors to sustain the interplay between the many short-term goals and needs and one long-term goal?
- How can technical solutions be designed to allow the agri-food systems to reconnect with the rhythm of ecological systems?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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