

Investigating how power dynamics shape UK meat and livestock reduction

Rebeca Lait

TUKFS 2026 Annual Conference | Monday 23rd March 2026



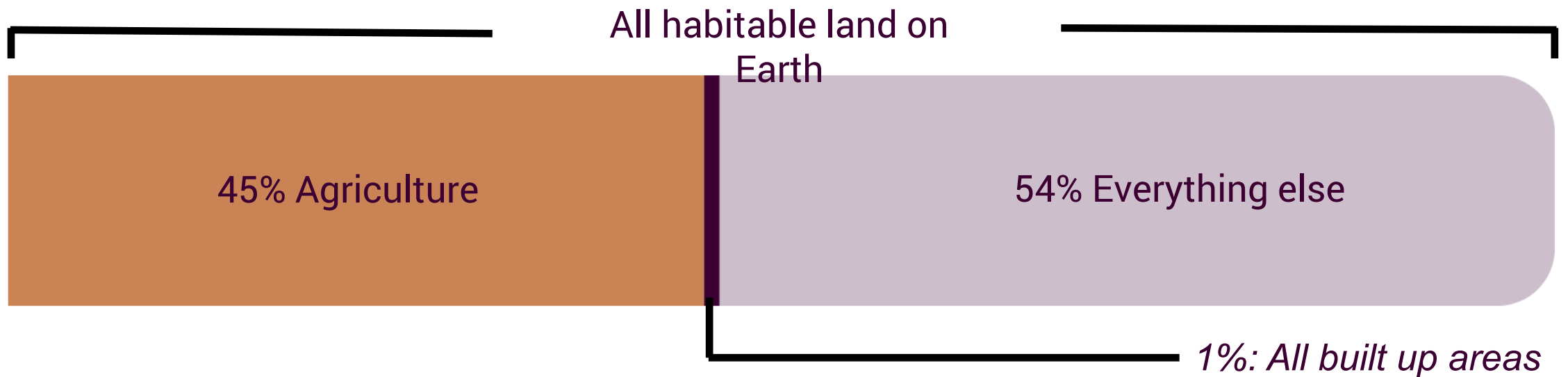
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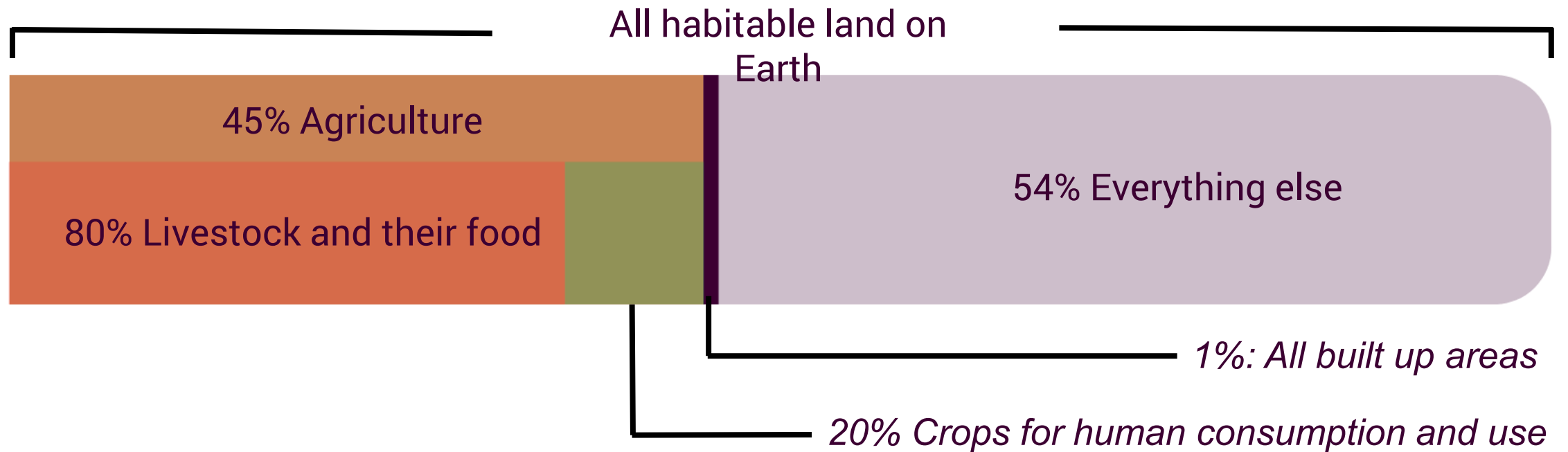
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Land use: Globally

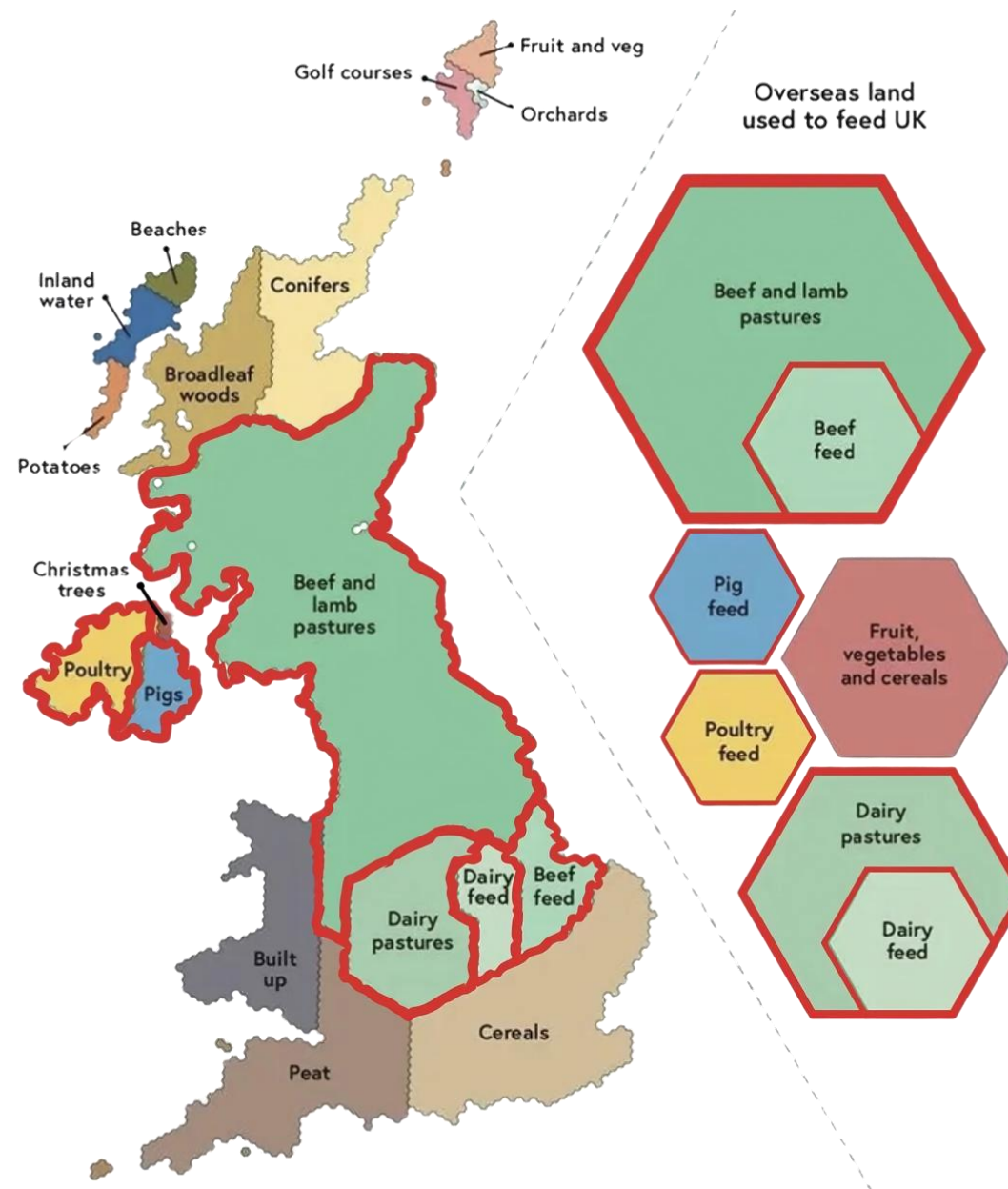


Land use: Globally

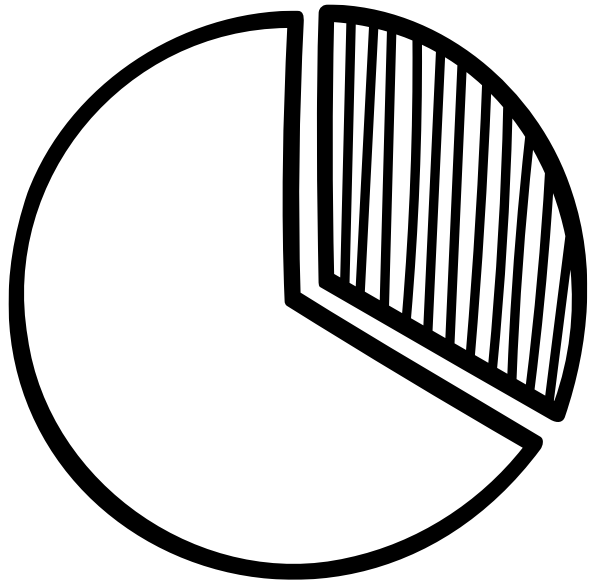


Land use: UK

+ overseas land used for UK consumption



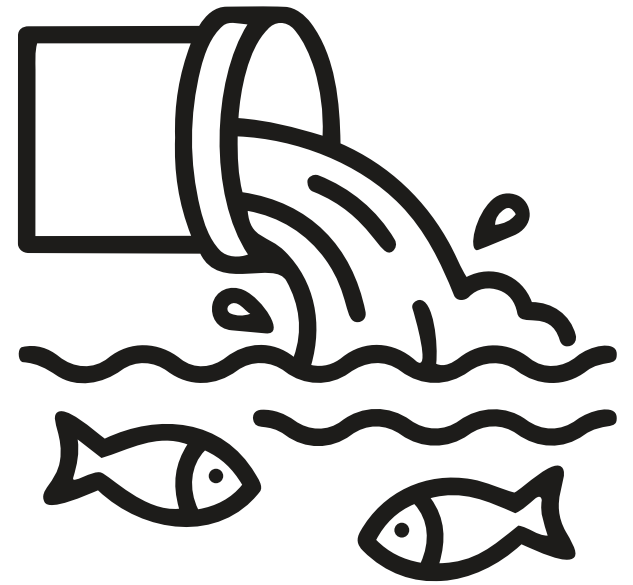
Wider environmental impacts



**Greenhouse
gases**

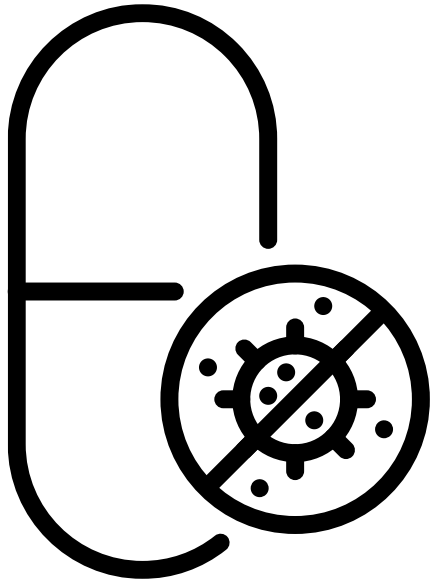


Pesticide use

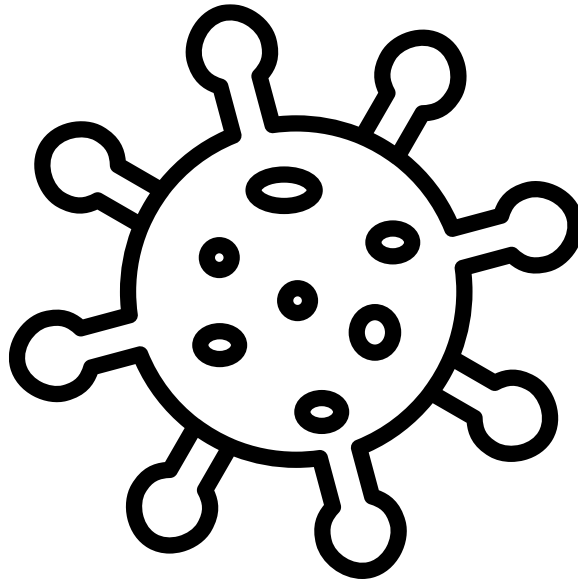


River pollution

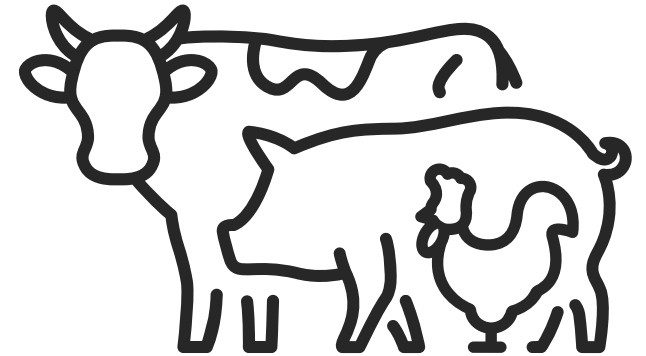
Social and health impacts



**Antibiotic
resistance**



**Zoonotic
disease**



**Animal
suffering**

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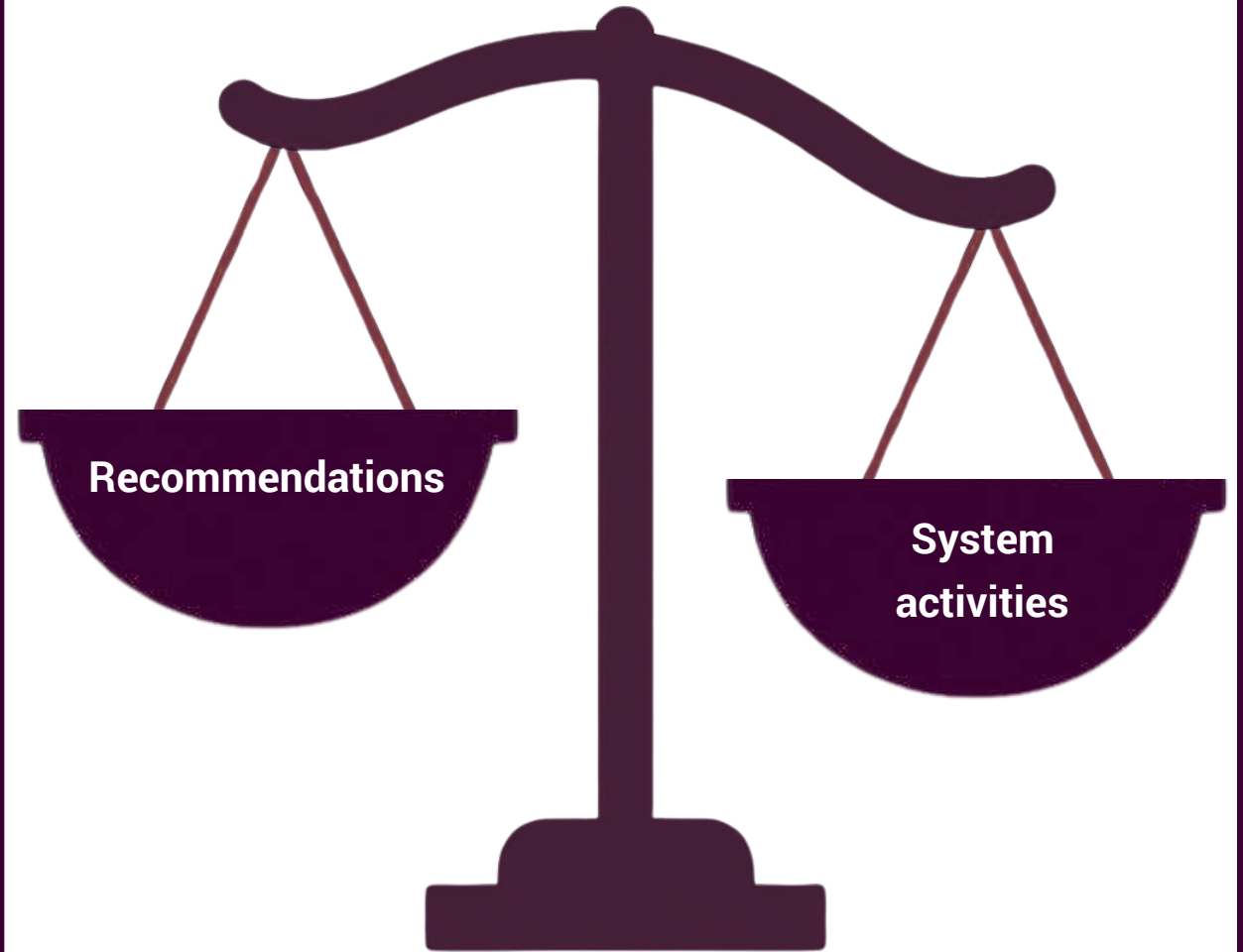
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Why research power explicitly?

Power dynamics can...

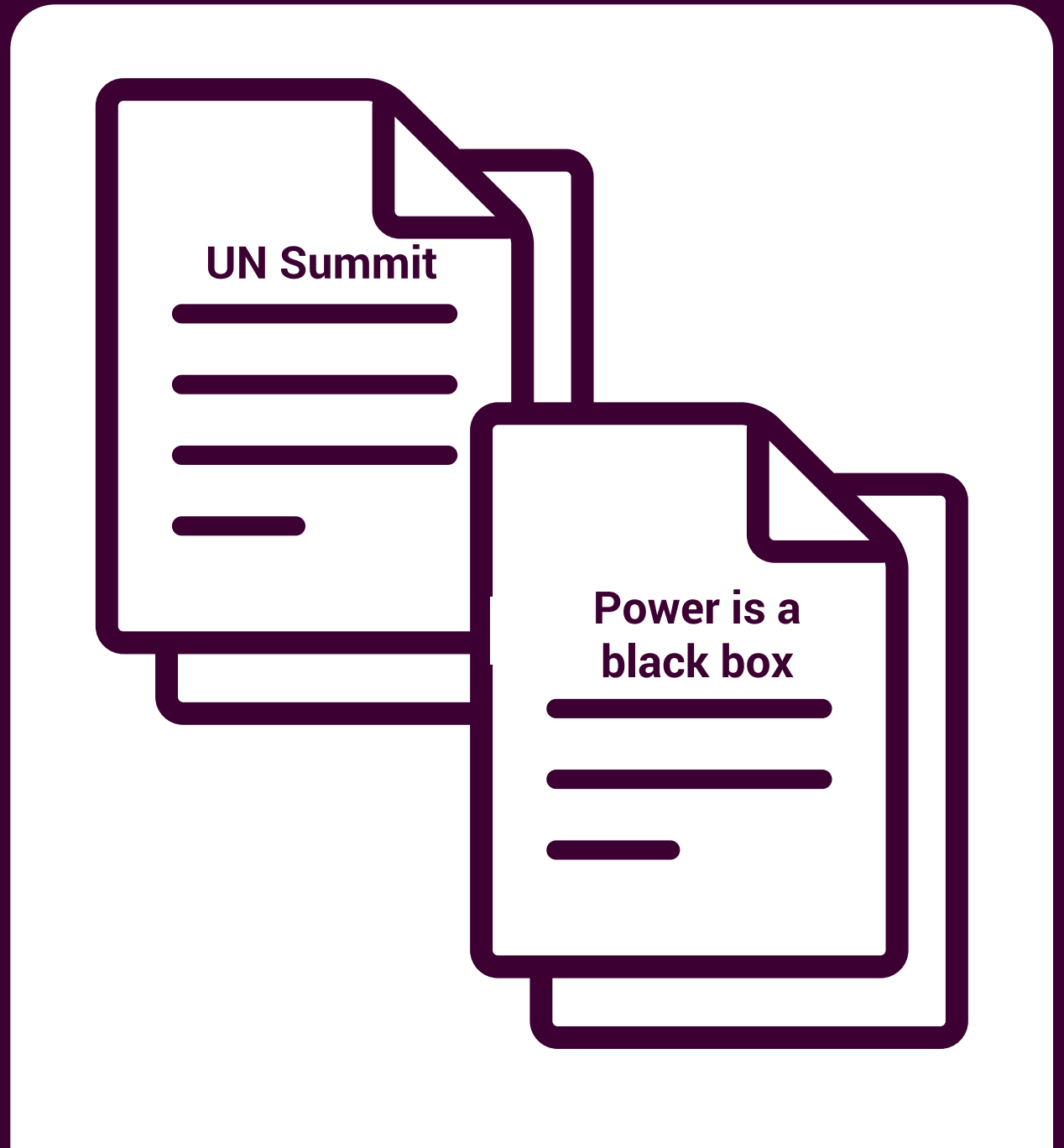
... contribute to the persistent misalignment between scientific recommendations and system activities



Why research power explicitly?

Power dynamics can...

... undermine effective
transformation



Definitions of power

Many definitions exist, such as

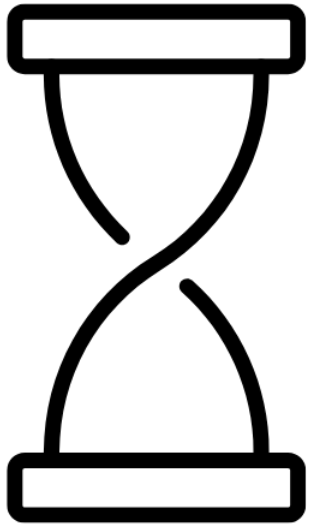


The **capacity of persons or collectives to get things done** effectively, in particular when their goals are obstructed by some kind of human resistance or opposition
(Parsons 1963)

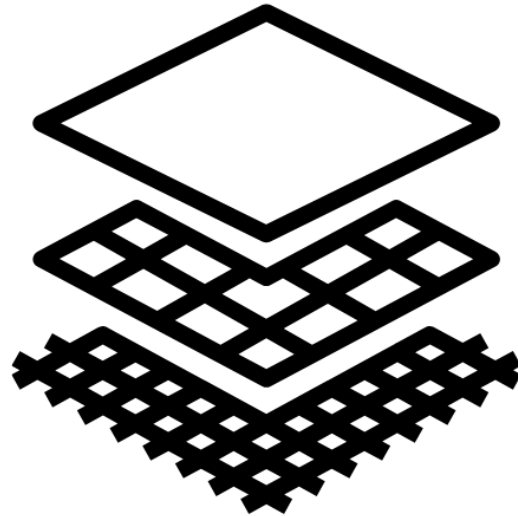


Power's definition needs to be context-specific

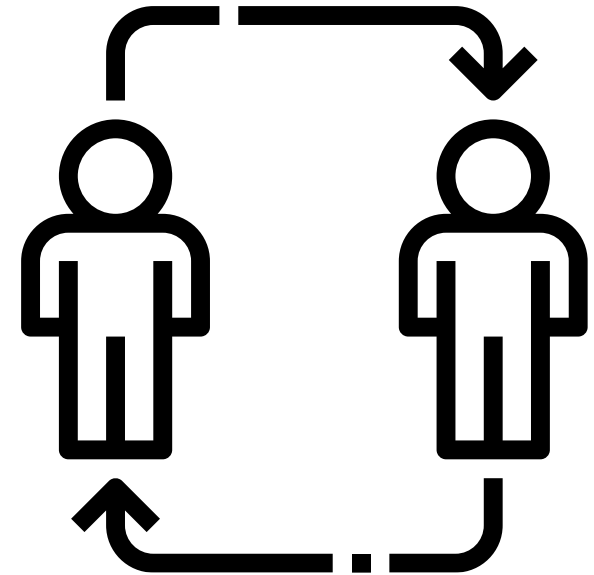
Theories of power



**Agency vs
structural power**



**The 3 faces
of power**



**Dependency
theory**

Power in the meat and livestock system



Power in the meat and livestock system



Research questions

1

Who are the key stakeholders in the UK meat and livestock system and how should its boundaries be defined?

2

How can the system be conceptualised through the lens of power?

3

Through which mechanisms do power dynamics shape meat and livestock reduction?

Data collection and analysis

Round
1

Round
2



**17 online focus groups and interviews with 24
researchers and consultants**

Data collection and analysis

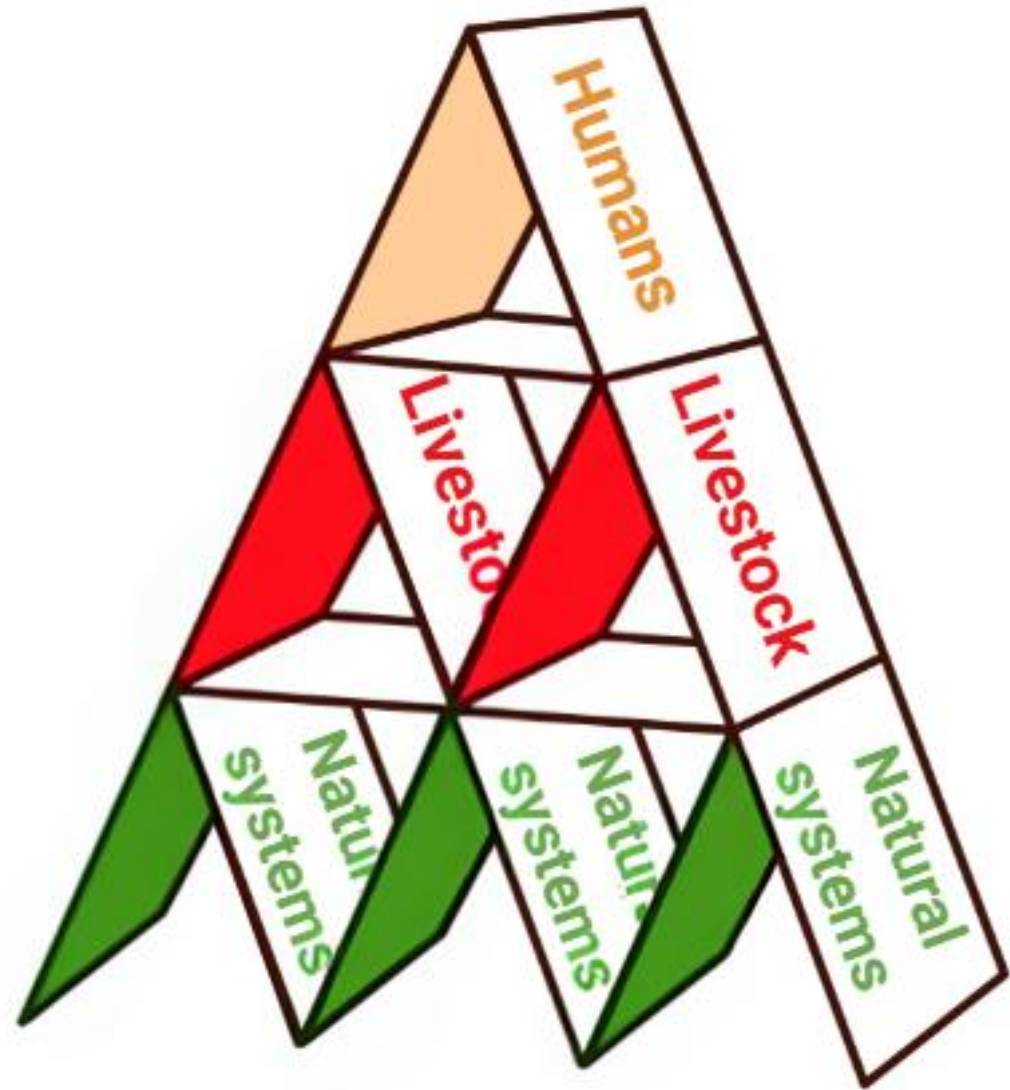
Round
1



Round
2

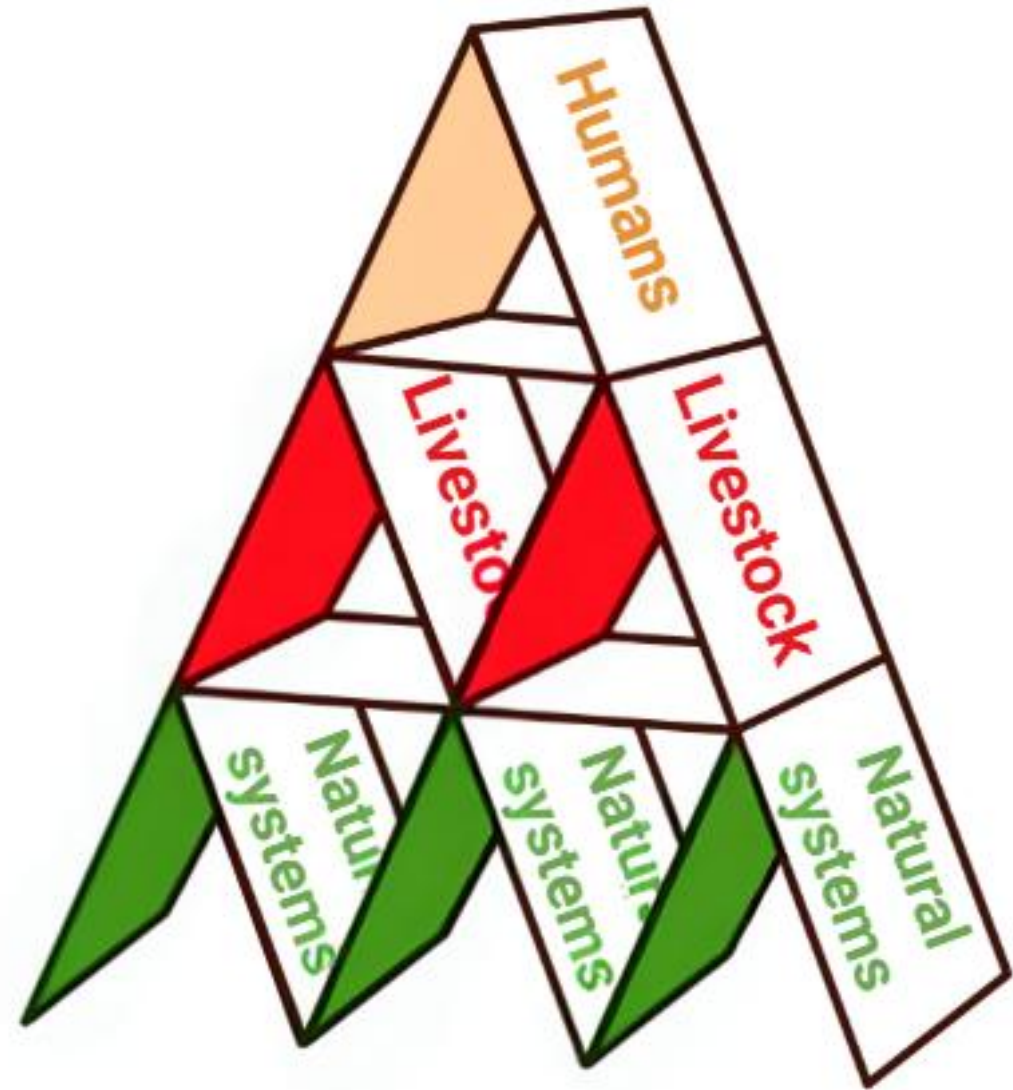
35 interviews with meat and livestock system practice-based stakeholders
inc. farmers, retailers, policy advisors, slaughterhouse workers, farming
unions, NGOs, lawyers.

Findings: The House of Cards Framework

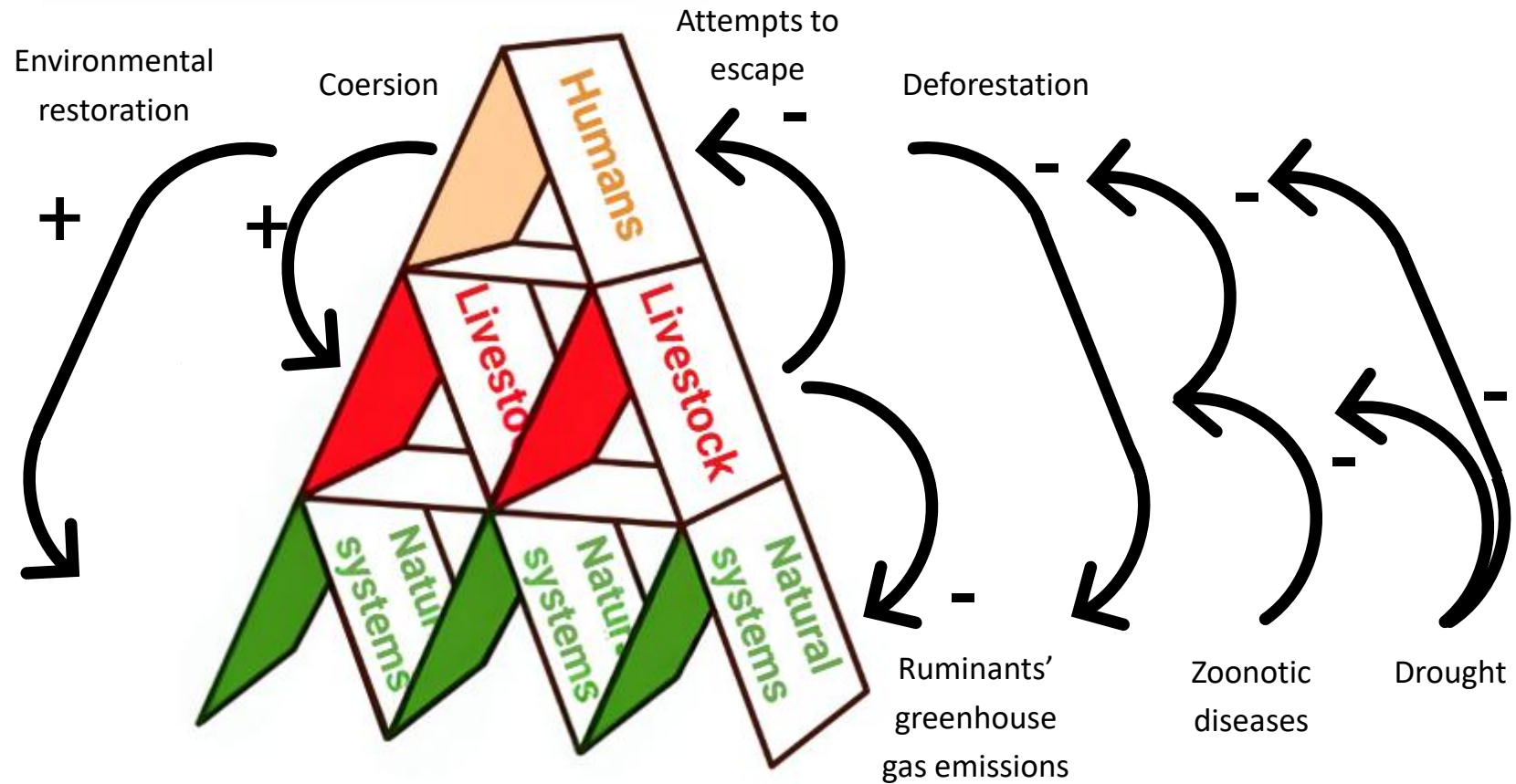


Findings: The House of Cards Framework

- 3 overarching stakeholder types (levels)
- Each level's stability depends on stability of layers below
- Layers interact with other layers, impacting their stability



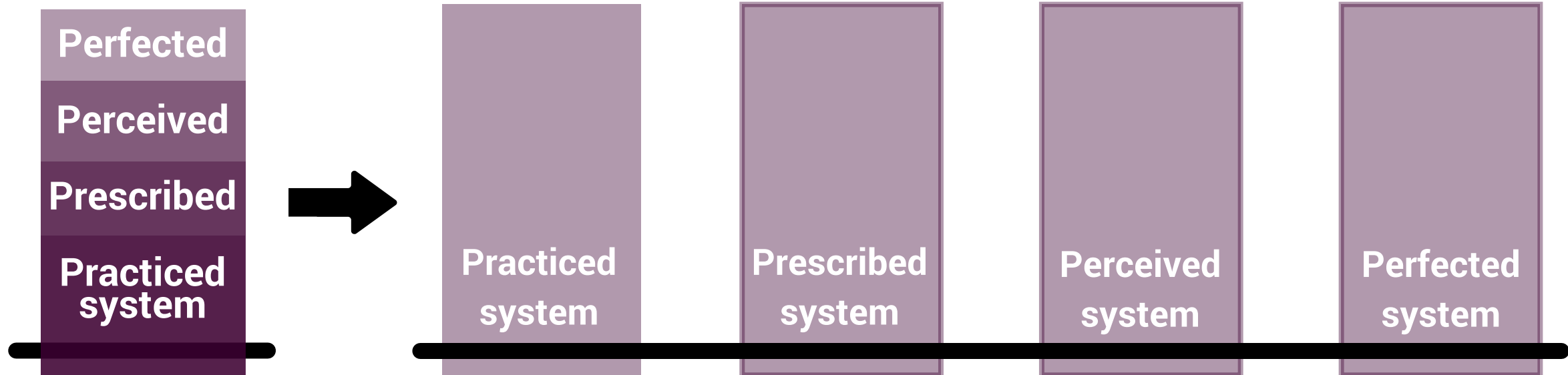
The House of Cards Framework



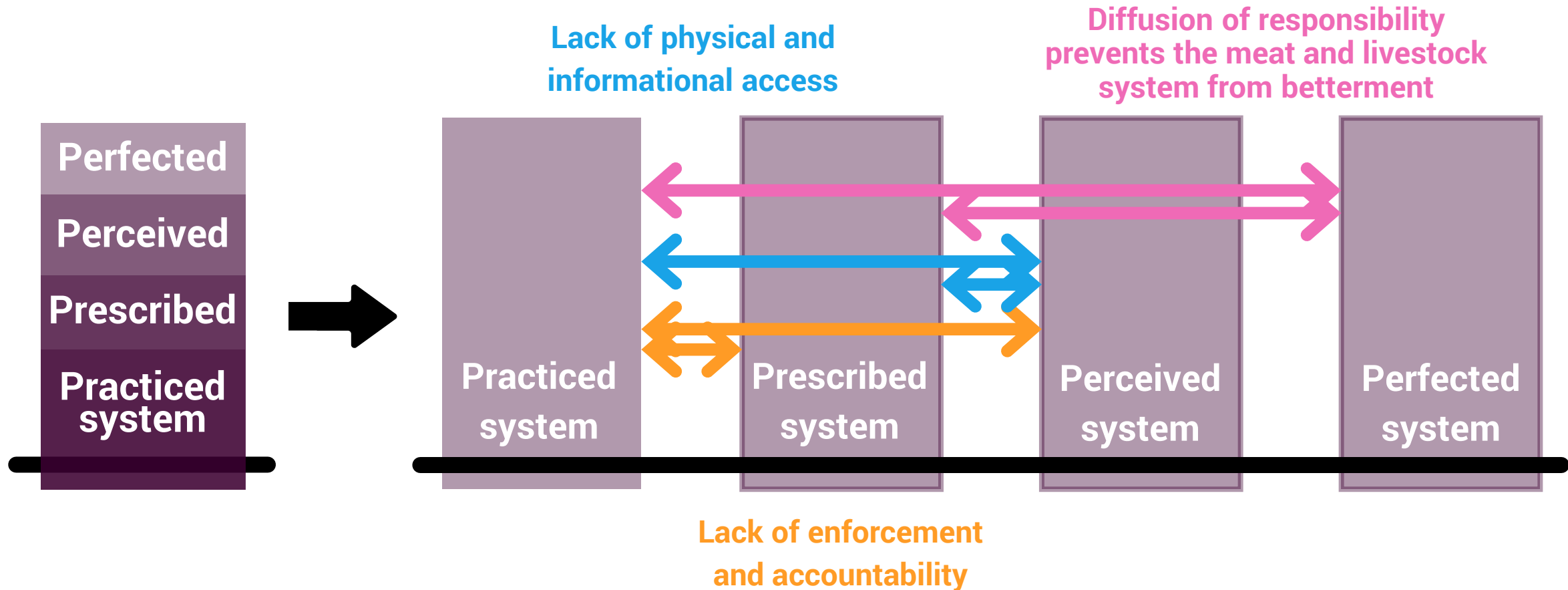
Findings: The Four P Systems Framework



The Four P Systems Framework



The Four P Systems Framework



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References

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