



# Foresight – future consumer scenarios

Liisa Lähteenmäki and Matthew J. Spaniol

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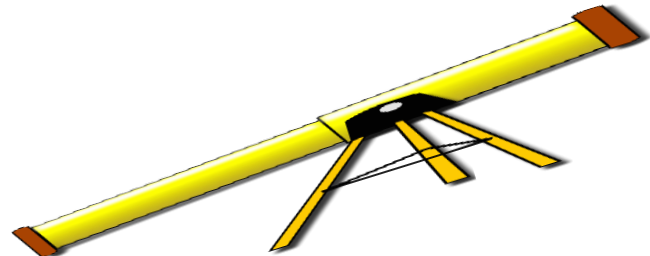


Think about the last time you tried to  
predict the future.



# What is foresight?

- We cannot predict future, but we can think about possible futures and what these futures would mean for different actors
- Foresight methods offer a rich toolbox to develop, explore and analyse the possible futures
- Foresight is mainly used as a tool in policy making and strategic planning in organisations
- Preparing for the future gives organisations a possibility to gain competitive advantages



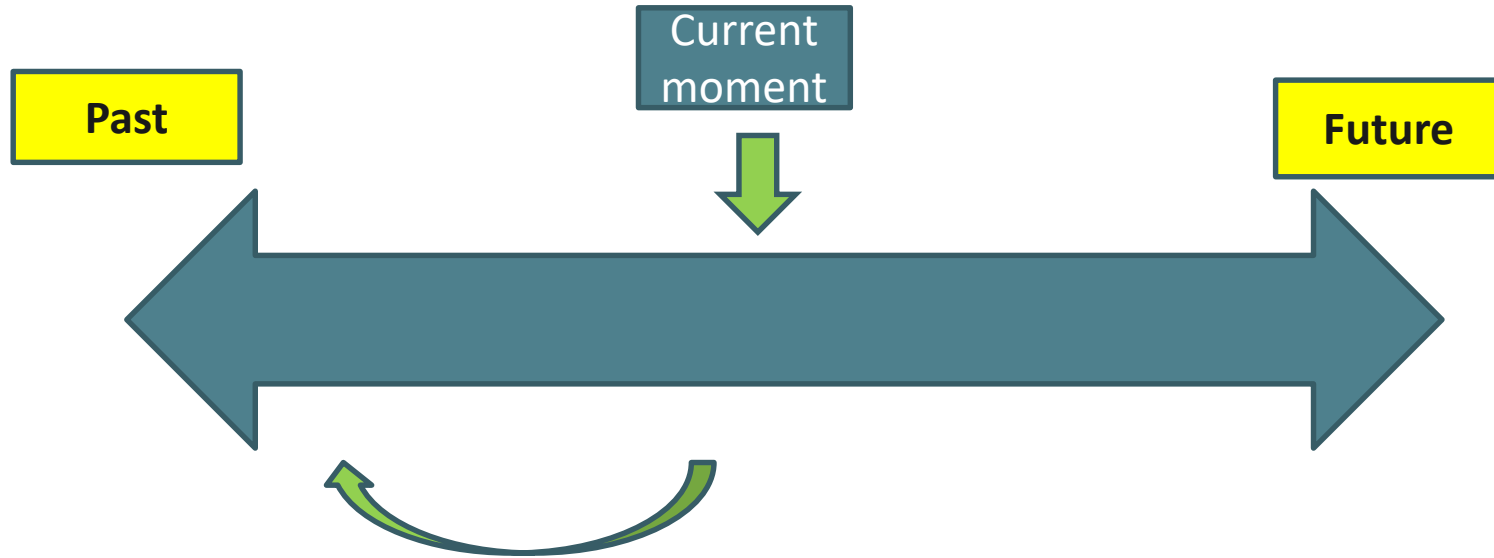


# Purpose of our foresight exercise

- At MAPP we have a number of experts studying consumer behaviour in food domain and we all have assumptions about what is important in consumers' decision making process and food-related activities, but
- What is our shared understanding of what the consumer behaviour could be in 2030 and based on our understanding: can we define strategic research needs for food consumer science?
- Presentation here introduces the method by giving an example of how we applied the foresight tools and what possible futures we explored



# Step 1) Where do we come from?



Looking back to  
2008/ 1998



# Consumer research: what were our interests?

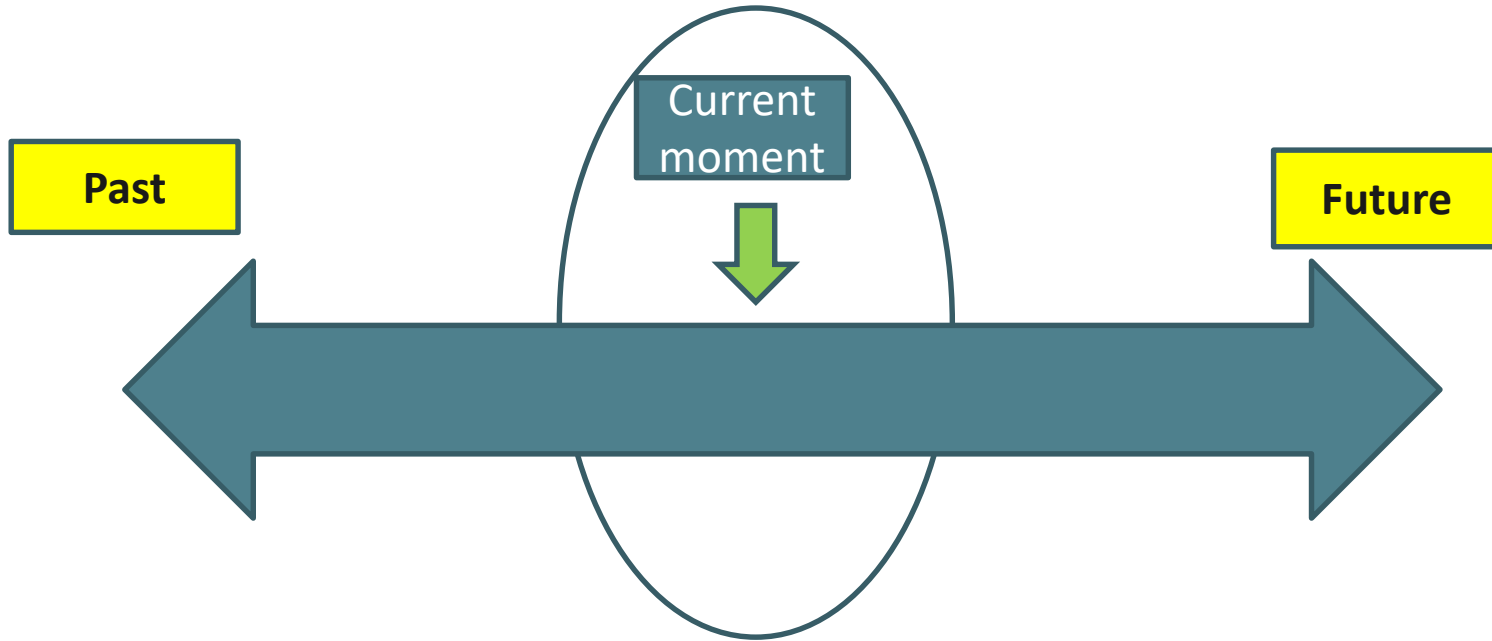
## 1998

- Convenience food (vs. Health)
- Attitudes, values, motivation, and drivers
- Interpretive research tradition
- Risk research/BSE scandal/GMOs
- Segmentation and lifestyles
- Organic starts + booms
- Market orientation: Value added vs. Bulk
- Avoiding negative consequences (fat/sugar reformation)

## 2008

- Convenience food (vs. Health)/ Food on-the go
- Family decision making
- Concerns over adolescents' / children's health
- Authenticity – Back to roots; exotic foods; paleo
- Global supply; traceability
- E-commerce
- Nudging and neuroscience; Social marketing
- Food choice in context
- Functional foods –positive health
- Food as a source of identity/ differentiation
- Labelling – Nutritional facts, products, methods

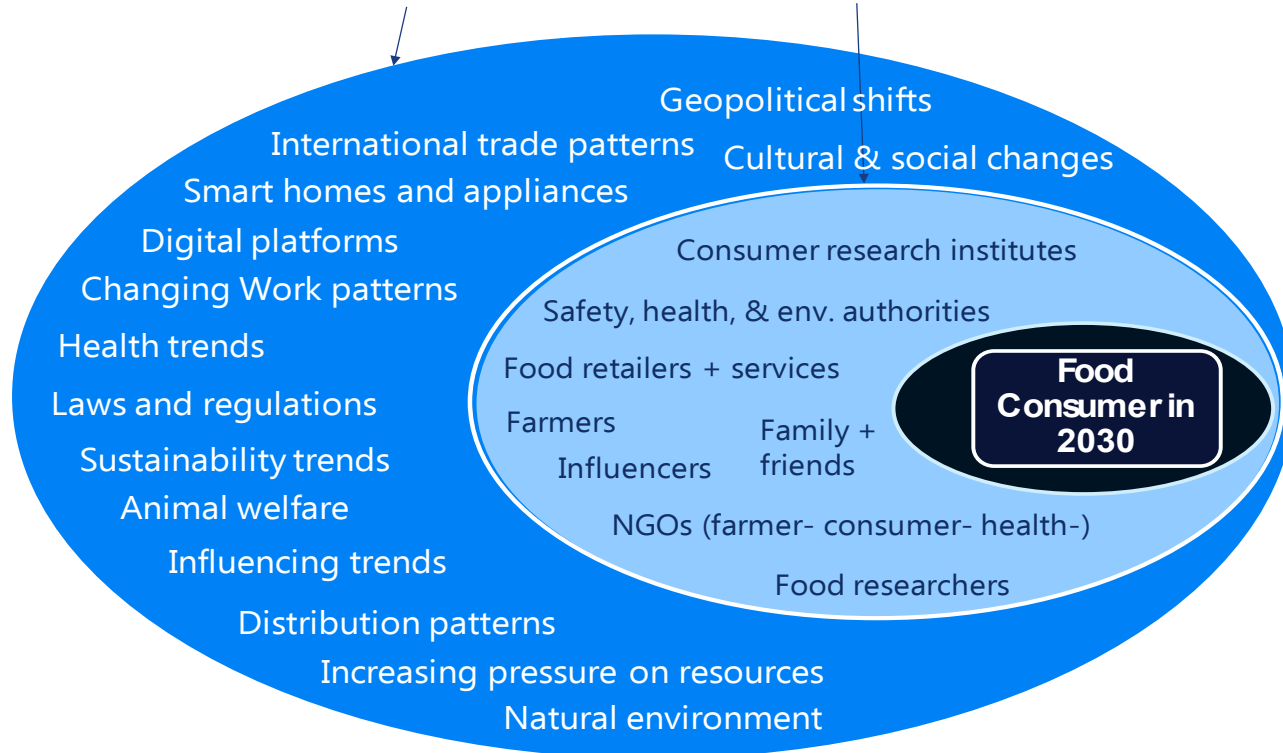
# Step 2) Where are we now?





# What is the current environment for food consumer

## Contextual and Transactional Environment





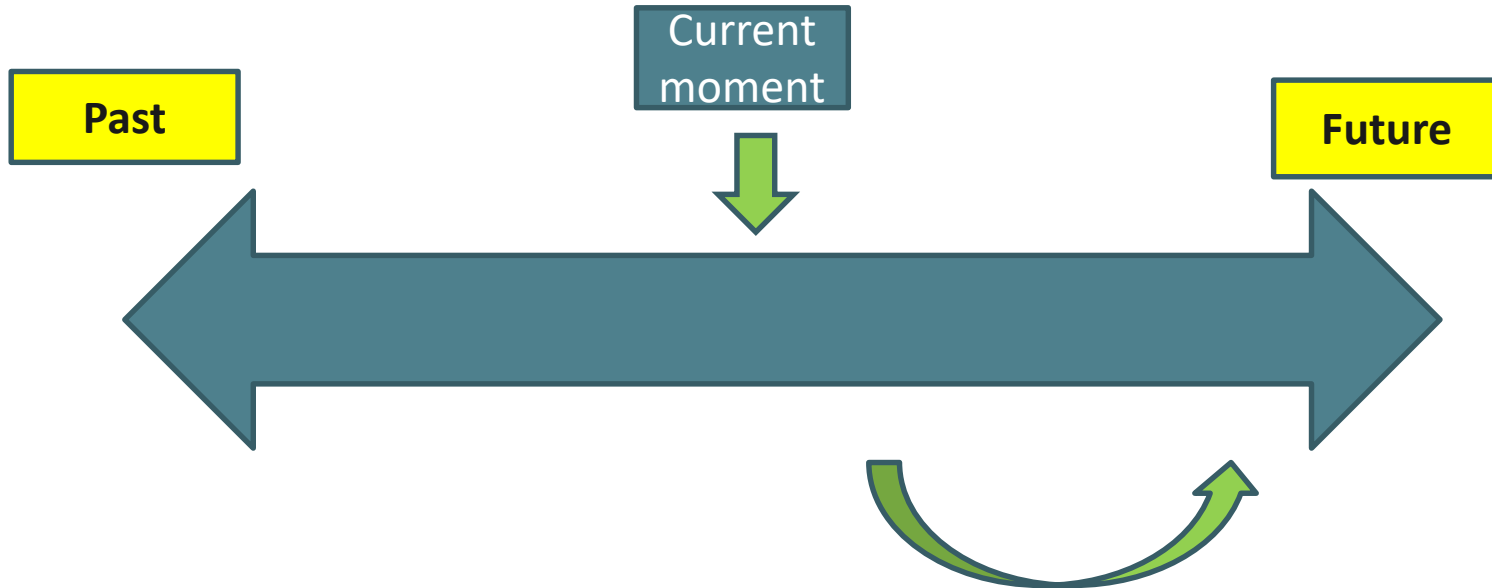


# Current trends

- High information flows from B2C, C2B and C2C
- New distribution channels
- Lack of consumer trust in food system
- Food used as identity construction
- Consumer engagement
- New products and experiences
- Monitoring of self and products
- Global economy
- New ways of doing science: citizen science, open science, big data, crowd sourcing



# Step 3) Where are we going?



Looking forward  
to 2030



# How can we think about future?

- Future is unknown – difficult to describe in direct words
- We can reflect on what different future developments would mean to us or our organisations
- In our example we used scenarios to study what are the possible implications of different developments to food consumer behaviour in 2030
- We took sustainability and health trends as main concerns and the increasing emphasis on consumers' agency in the future when thinking about the scenarios for the future food consumer



# What are scenarios?

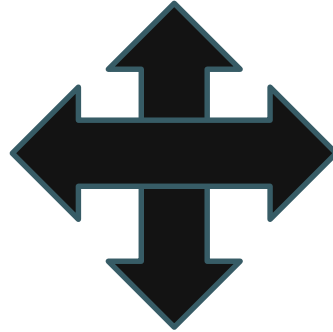
- Future oriented
- Related to external content
- Have a narrative description
- Plausibly possible
- Form clearly different settings

# Building scenarios: finding the critical dimensions for future food consumers



**2a. Policies are “simply”  
recommendations**

**1a. Consumers are  
empowered**



**1b. The active consumer  
was a “myth”**

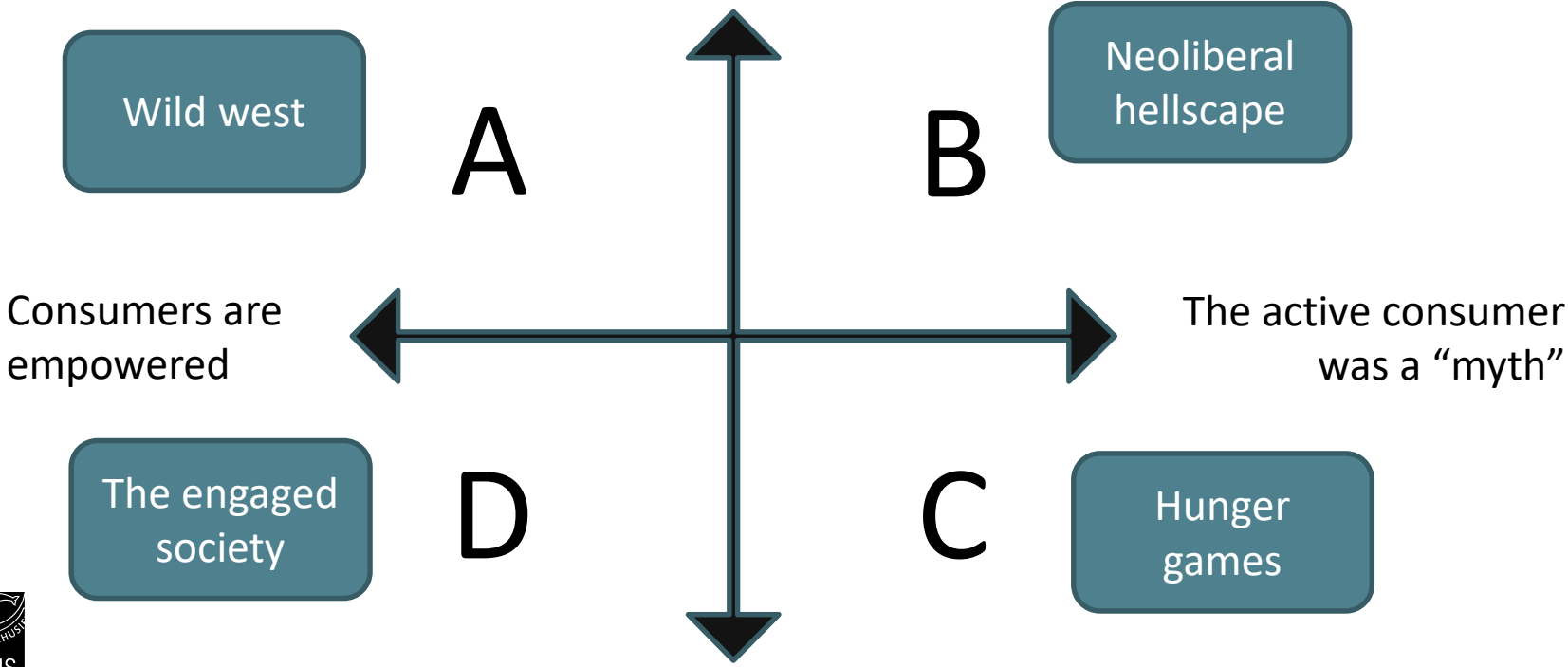
**2b. Food policies are highly  
regulated + enforced**

# Key questions on scenarios for small groups working each working on their scenario?

- *What is the state-of-play in food sector and food choice?*
- *Which regulatory policies would fit the scenario?*
- *What are some research questions we might be asking?*

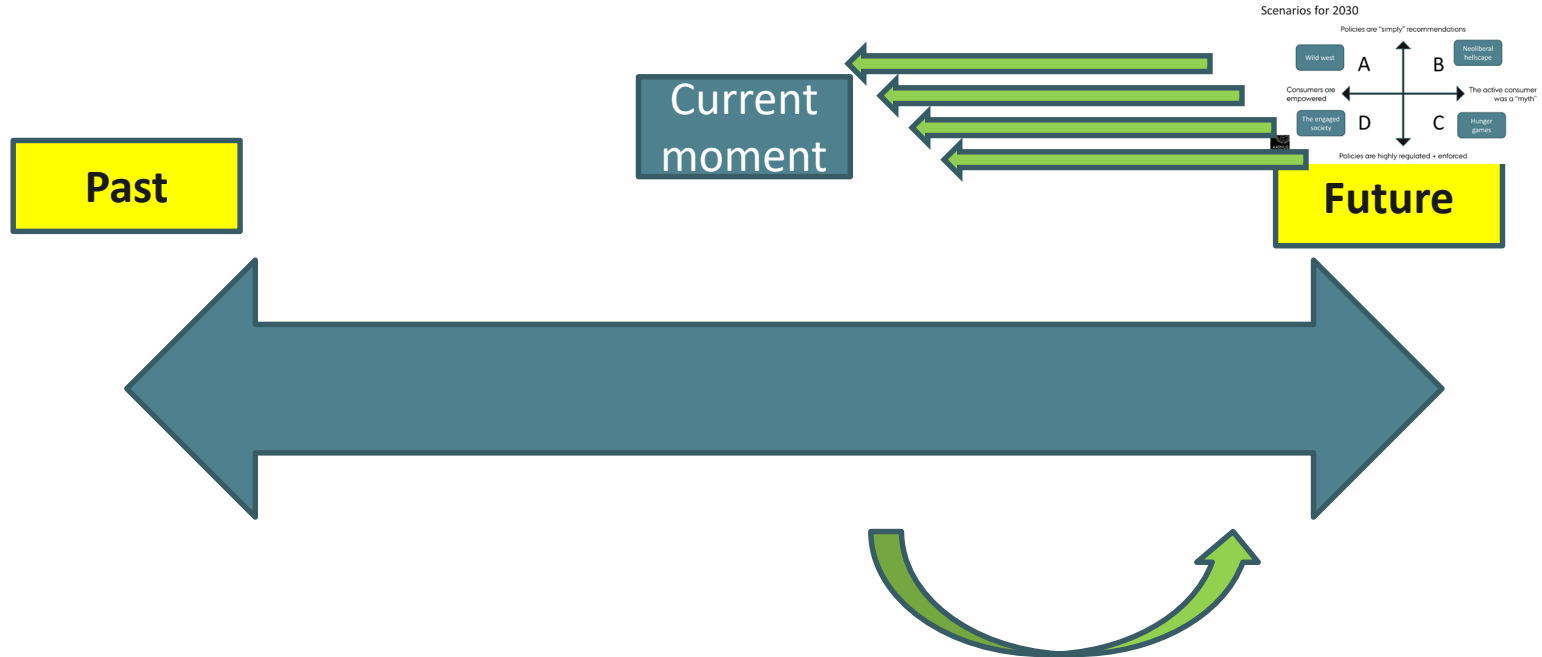
# Scenarios for 2030

Policies are “simply” recommendations





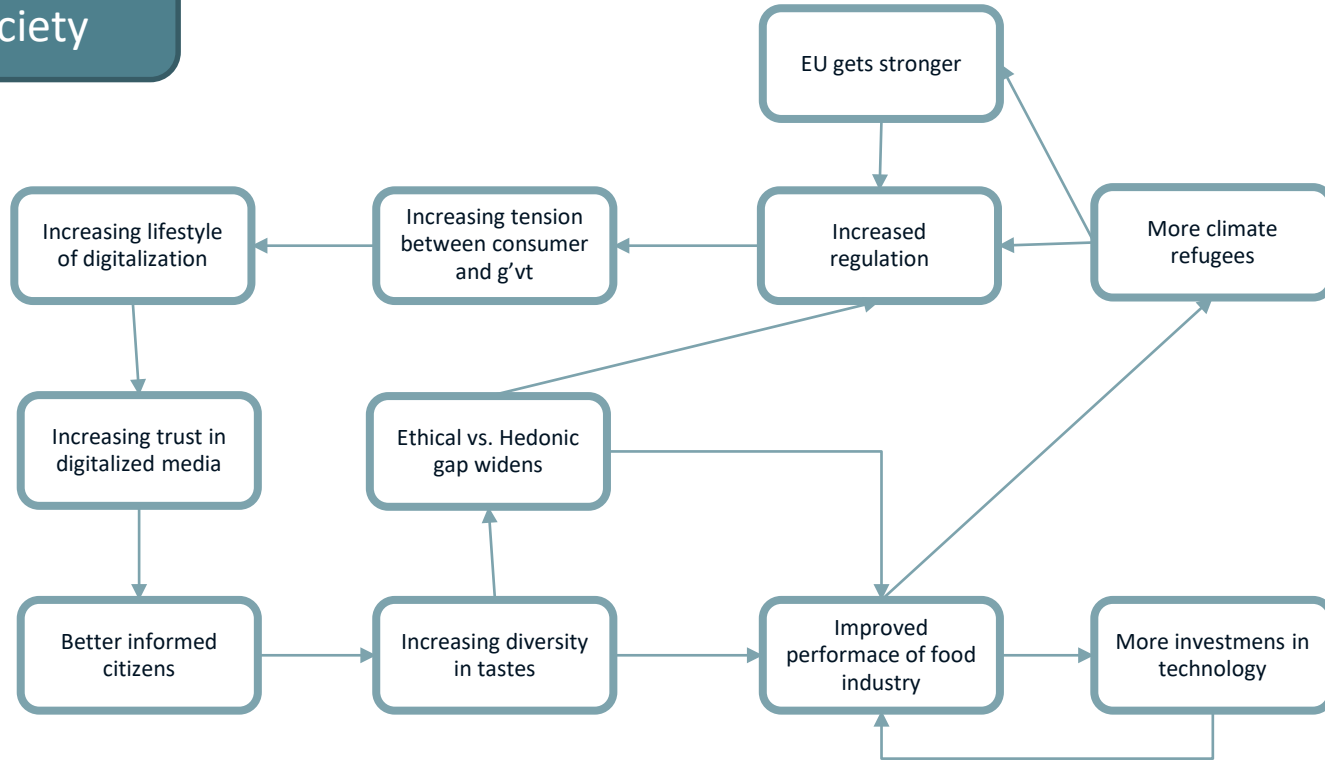
# The future is reflected against current moment



Looking forward  
to 2030

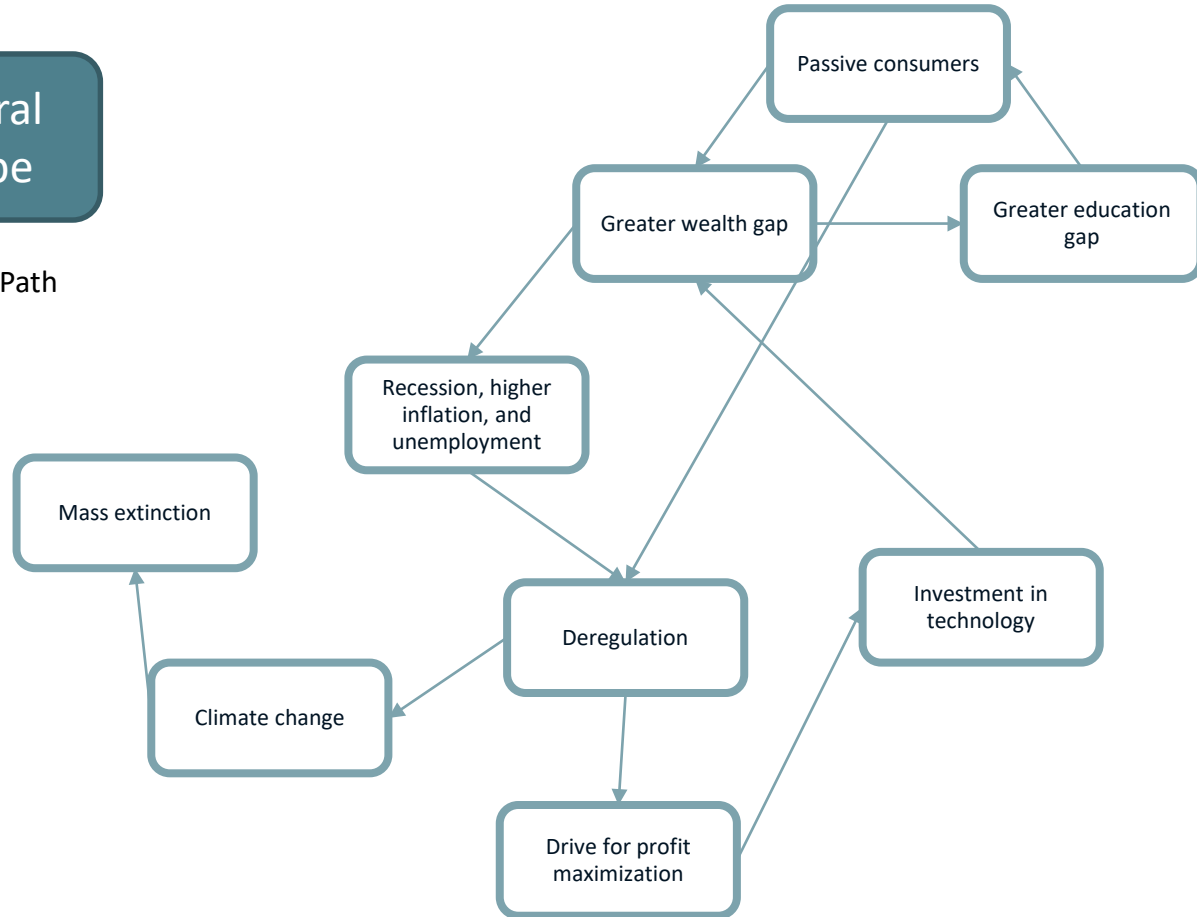


# The engaged society



# Neoliberal hellscape

Down the  
Neoliberal Path





## Step 4) Bringing the consumers alive: Personas - what would they do in a given scenario?

- **Male** (born 2005) - 25y/o, chemistry student, living in a apartment with other students,
- **Female** (born 1995) - 35, divorced, 2 small children (during the weekdays), SOSU assistant

# Short stories of food-related days in our personas lives



## Lucy Engaged Society

- Lucy wakes up and goes to have breakfast. Box of vegan, organic cereal is labelled with lots of information: fair trade, vegan, organic, and sugar free; so does her vegetable milk: She takes from the fridge a box of salad for her lunch at the job. All food products in Lucy's house are labelled in more or less the same fashion.
- At her job, besides the salad, she can choose among a range of pre-defined options: vegan; gluten-free; vegetarian; organic. In addition, they have the information and how much water and CO2 was used to produce the food items available.
- While having lunch, Lucy reads the news. There are intense debates between environmentalists and another group of consumers, who demand higher availability of meat products. After reading the news she goes to her social page to read the newsfeed on animal welfare in the main dairy company in the region. Cameras were installed there and are available online at any time.

# Short stories of food-related days in our personas lives



## Jakob, Hunger games

- Jakob wakes up at 6 am looking forward to the morning exercise that takes place in front of the student dorm. Participation is mandatory as the Government imposes. Breakfast is eaten together with his fellow students. The topic of discussion is how chemical engineering can help boost local production of tomatoes in Denmark.
- Jakob is a student however as all students nowadays he has to work, to bring his contribution to the society either by brute force or by intellectual work. Especially since the food is provided by the state. All men on deck to help the country out of recession.
- After work, Jakob has a bit of free time relaxing with fellow students enjoying some homebrewed beer since not many options are available at the local shop.



# What did we learn from our exercise

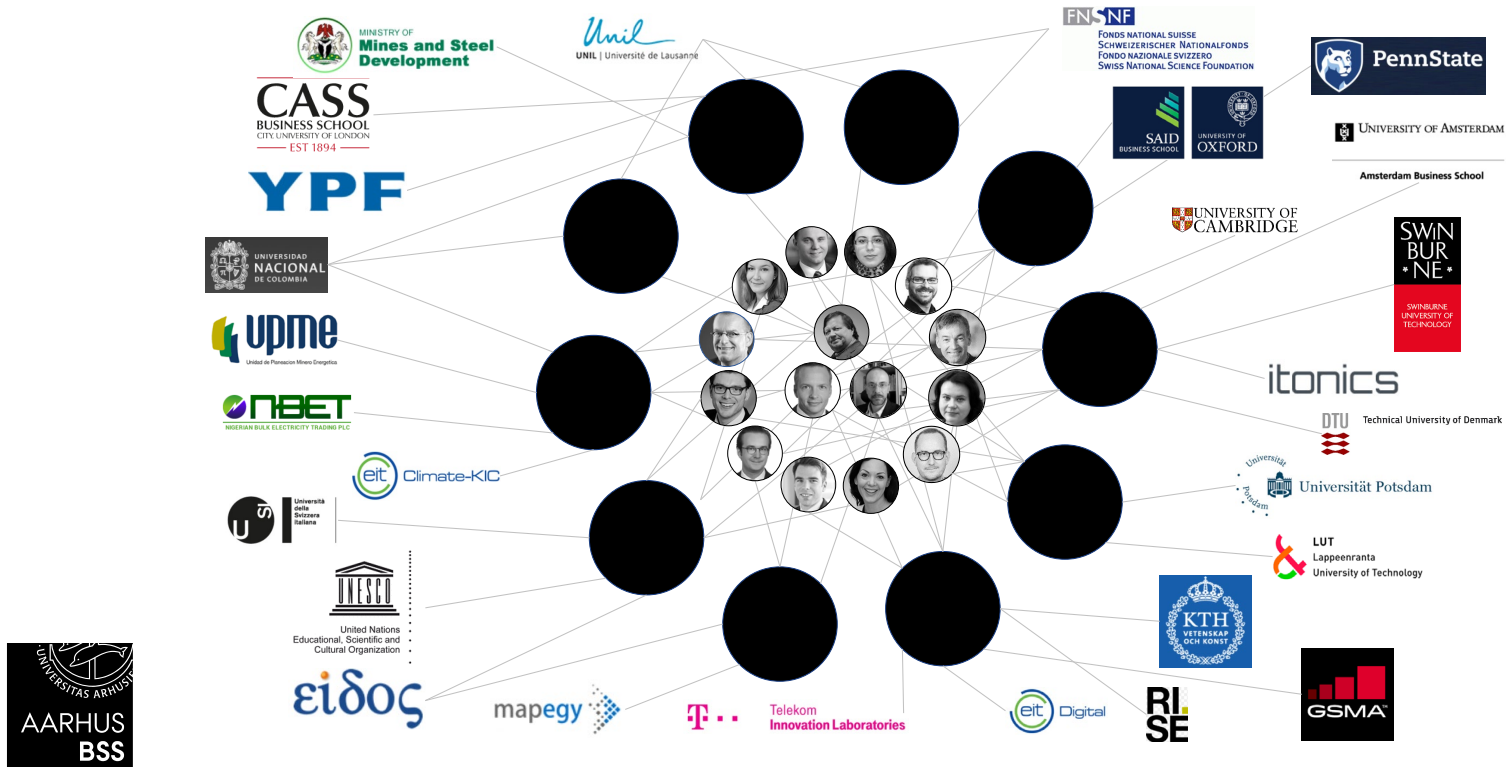
## Foresight as a tool

- gives tools to think about alternative future developments in a way that makes them actionable
- enables to consider extreme developments
- these futures can exist side-by-side
- depends on how we choose the dimensions for scenarios: flexible, but sets boundaries

## Developing research questions

- demonstrates what are likely challenges for consumers and food sector in general in different future scenarios
- coping with abundant flow of information and choice options or negotiating through highly regulated contextual environment?

# Foresight group at Aarhus BSS



# Thank you for your attention



**Fore more information, please contact**

- Liisa Lähteenmäki  
[liisal@mgmt.au.dk](mailto:liisal@mgmt.au.dk)

OR

- Matthew J. Spaniol  
[matt@mgmt.au.dk](mailto:matt@mgmt.au.dk)

