

BEYOND INSTITUTIONAL BRICOLAGE

A 'chaotic relational approach' to understanding the transition towards agroecology in Peru

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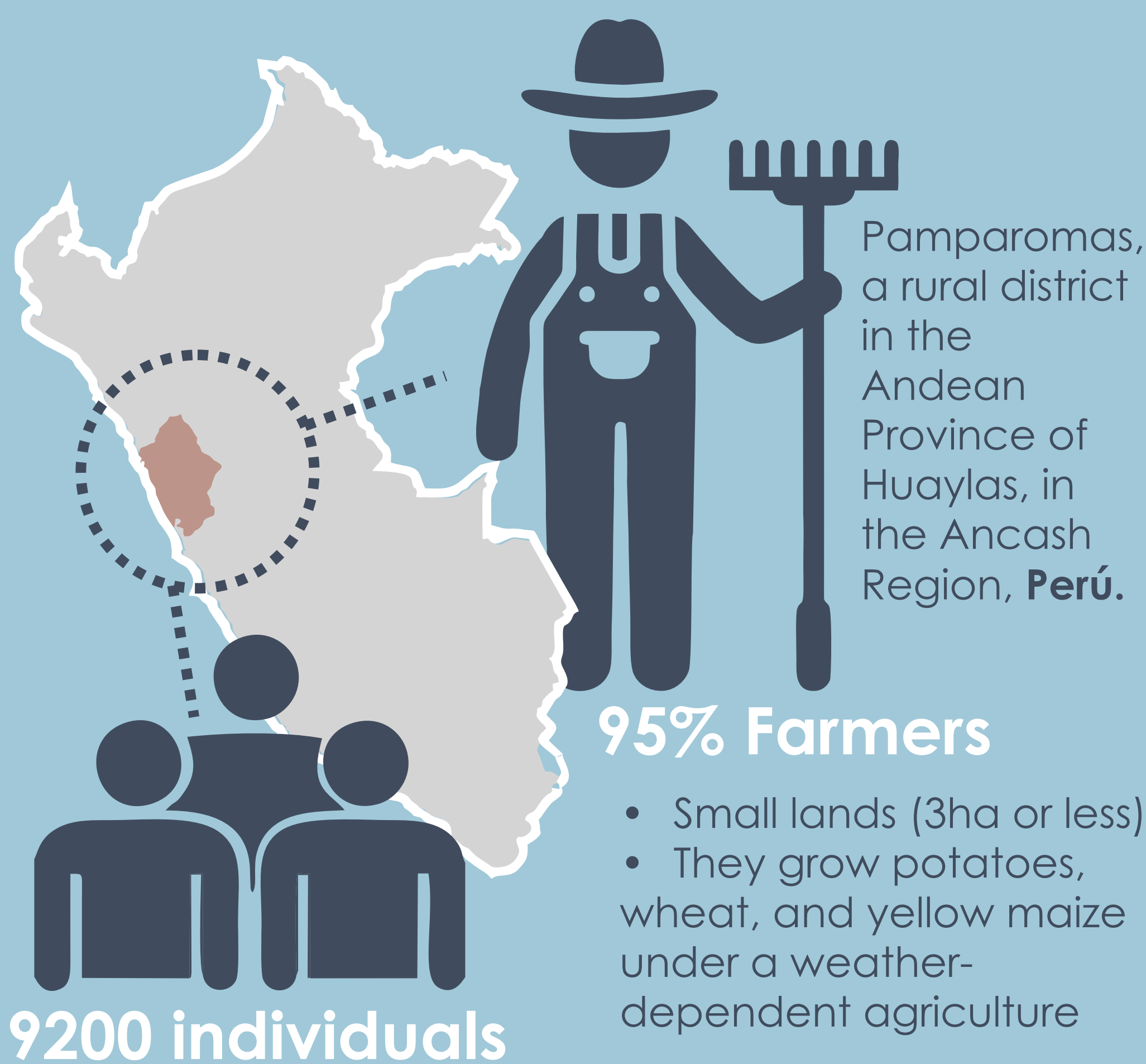
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INTRODUCTION

There are potential obstacles towards the wider uptake of agroecology:

- Labor and knowledge intensive to smallholder farmers' management capacity;
- Farmers' have different rationalities and therefore implement 'agroecology' in different ways and;
- Agroecology has an impact upon power relations and can introduce

Institutional Complexity.



RESEARCH Qs

- How Institutional theory can better understand farmers' transition to agroecology?
- How transition to agroecology can be shaped by power dynamics?

METHOD

• **Participants**
32 participants from 9 Agroecological Committees within 5 villages in Pamparomas District, Peru. Field research June – August 18.

• **Procedure**
Recreation of the **Institutional evolution** of agroecology in Pamparomas (1990-present)
Exploration of the farmers' **Institutional logics** through in-depth interviews and participant observation in daily activities

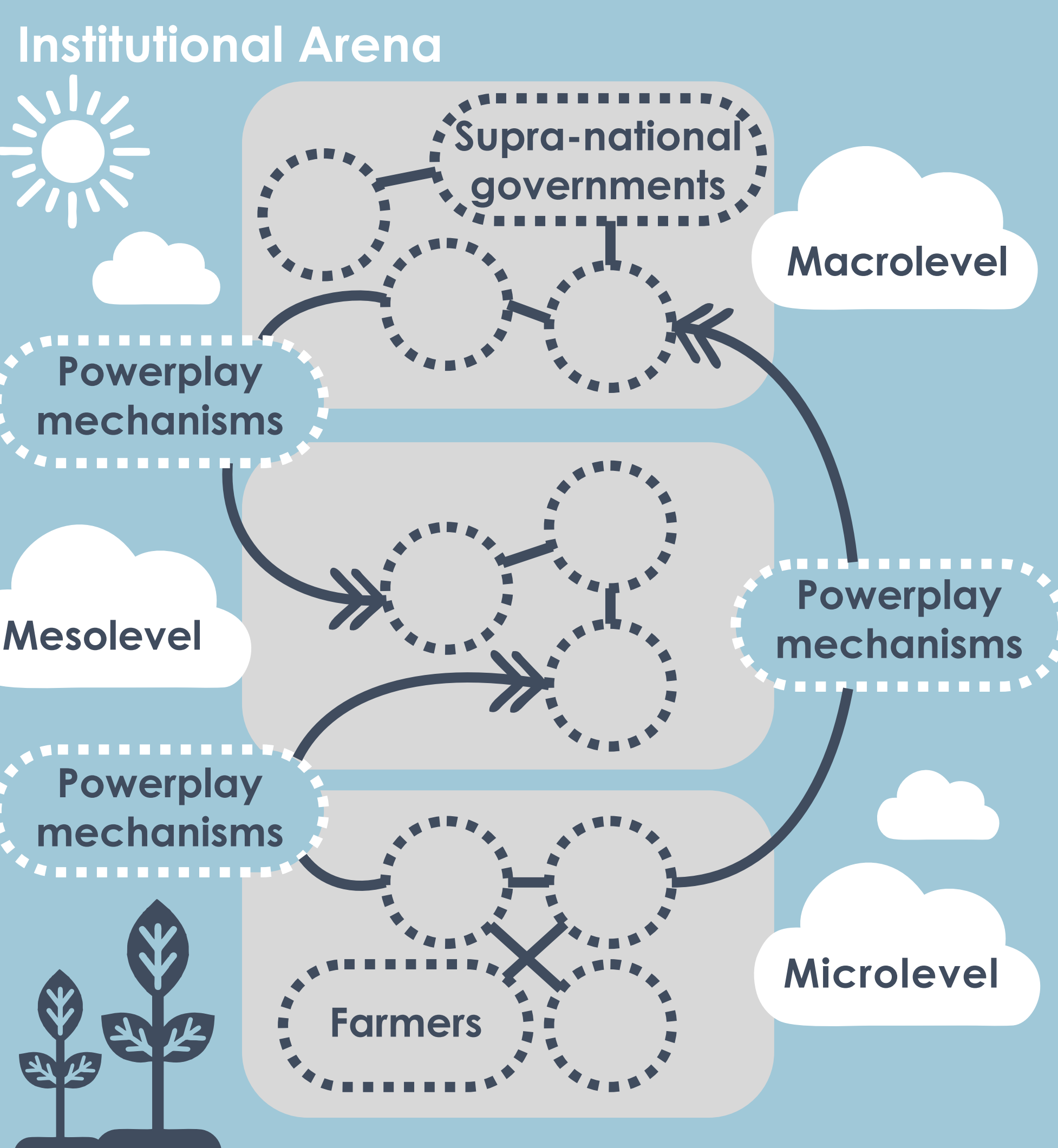
RESULTS

SCENE 1: Newly Introduced Agroecology Partnership

- TSS proposed vertical & structured agroecology partnership.
- Brought conflicts within agroecology committees.

SCENE 2: Molding Agroecology Partnership

- Tensions between the traditional collective culture of the Pamparomas and the individualism of the committees.
- Farmers' adoption of the partnerships was grounded on **Chaotic Relational Patterns.**



SCENE 3: Novel mechanisms of powerplay

Manageability of the Risks

• **Non-valorized eco-products**
"Market does not take interest (...) what we got from agroecology sales is almost less we invested"
(Familias Vencedoras, woman, 35)

• **Network accessibility**
"TSS opened political opportunities to be part in the national agroecology structure"
(ADG, woman, 29)

Learning & Copying

• **Mitigate costs of transitioning**
"The investment costs of agroecology are too high (...) some of us can't take a lot of risks"
(Familias Vencedoras, woman, 35)

• **Monitor other farmers success**
"I wait to visualize others' results (...) because what is good for others, it might be good for me"
(Michqui Allpa, man, 53)

BROADER IMPACTS



Our data indicate that agroecology transition might...

...Require new forms of organizations:

"Agroecology's requirements force us to be organized to receive its benefits"
(Familias Vencedoras, man, 51)

"[We] had problems managing the charges who is responsible for assuming the representativeness"
(Shunac, woman, 32)

... Impact community relationship:

"There's too much envy, I see how they are treating [Silvana]. They are leaving her out of the distribution"
(Participant observation, woman, 30)

"If farmers do not sow what the committee agreed, we cannot say anything to them (...) people do not want to work together, they only see their interest"
(Familias Unidas, man, 43)

... Bring up new power dynamics:

Problems started to flourish, it is basically over the funds' control and demonstrations of power
(ADG, man, 45)

CONCLUSIONS

• For some farmers TSS was an opportunity to tap into larger markets, while for others as an offering to enhance agricultural surpluses.

• Interactions between actors and the power mechanisms are key elements of the institutionalized transition towards agroecology.

• Power isn't about 'winner and losers' but a battleship or legitimacy (constantly arranged).

THEORY IMPLICATIONS

• Institutional formation stimulates the formation of more complex mechanisms better understood through the '**Chaotic Relational Model**'

• 'Chaotic relational model' helps shift attention towards broader socio-institutional challenges posed by external interventions