



Tensions in Global Agriculture

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OBJECTIVE OF THE PRESENTATION

Recognize that there is a lot of “noise” about food and that it is likely to get louder

NYT (*October 2008 - Food Fights*)

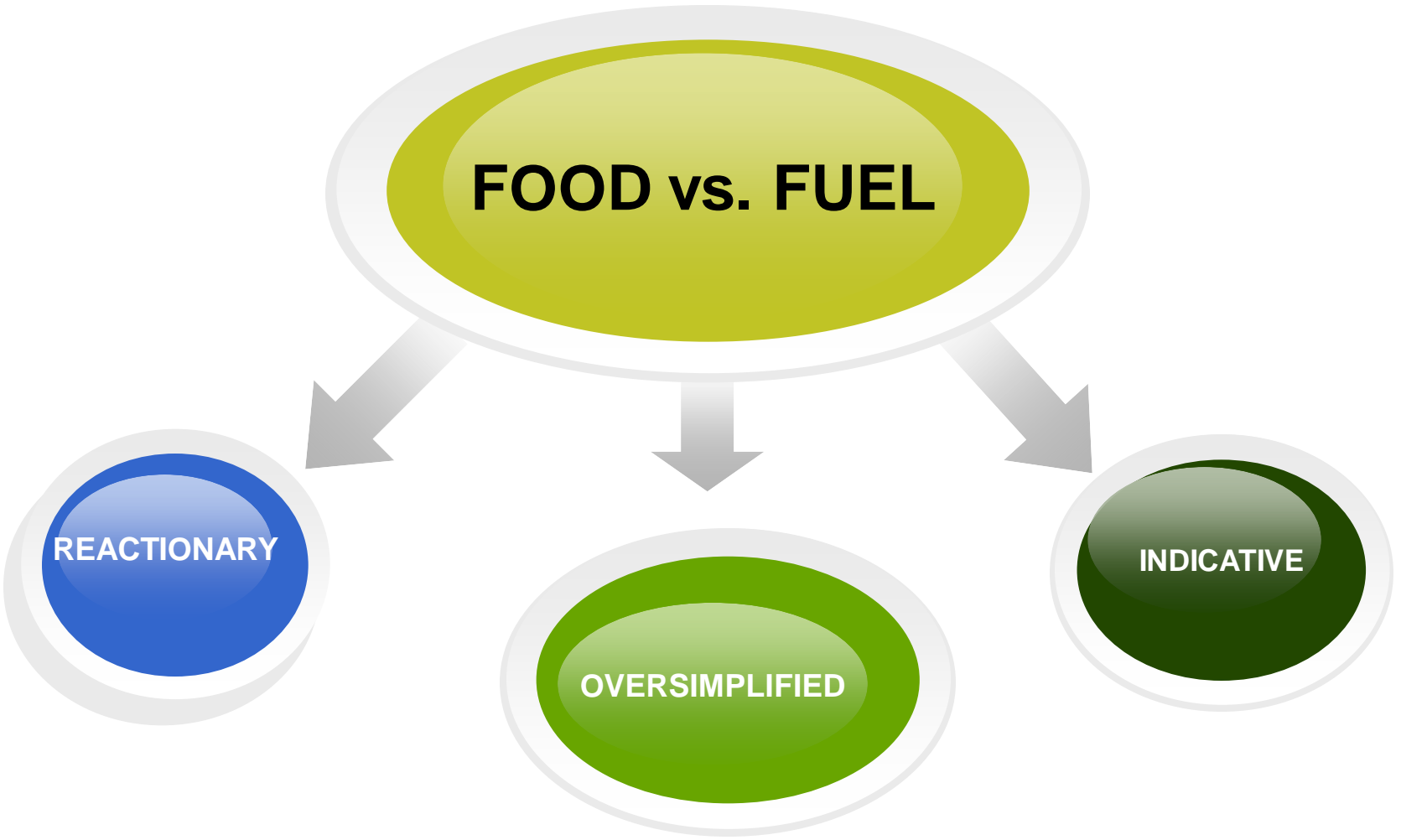
Reframe the food vs. fuel debate in the context of the larger, and arguably more important, tensions impacting our global agriculture system and food supply

Make the case for a nuanced, intelligent, and integrated debate on the range of issues (tensions) to

(1) inform the public

(2) inform the policy process

(3) create platform for consensus and reduced tension

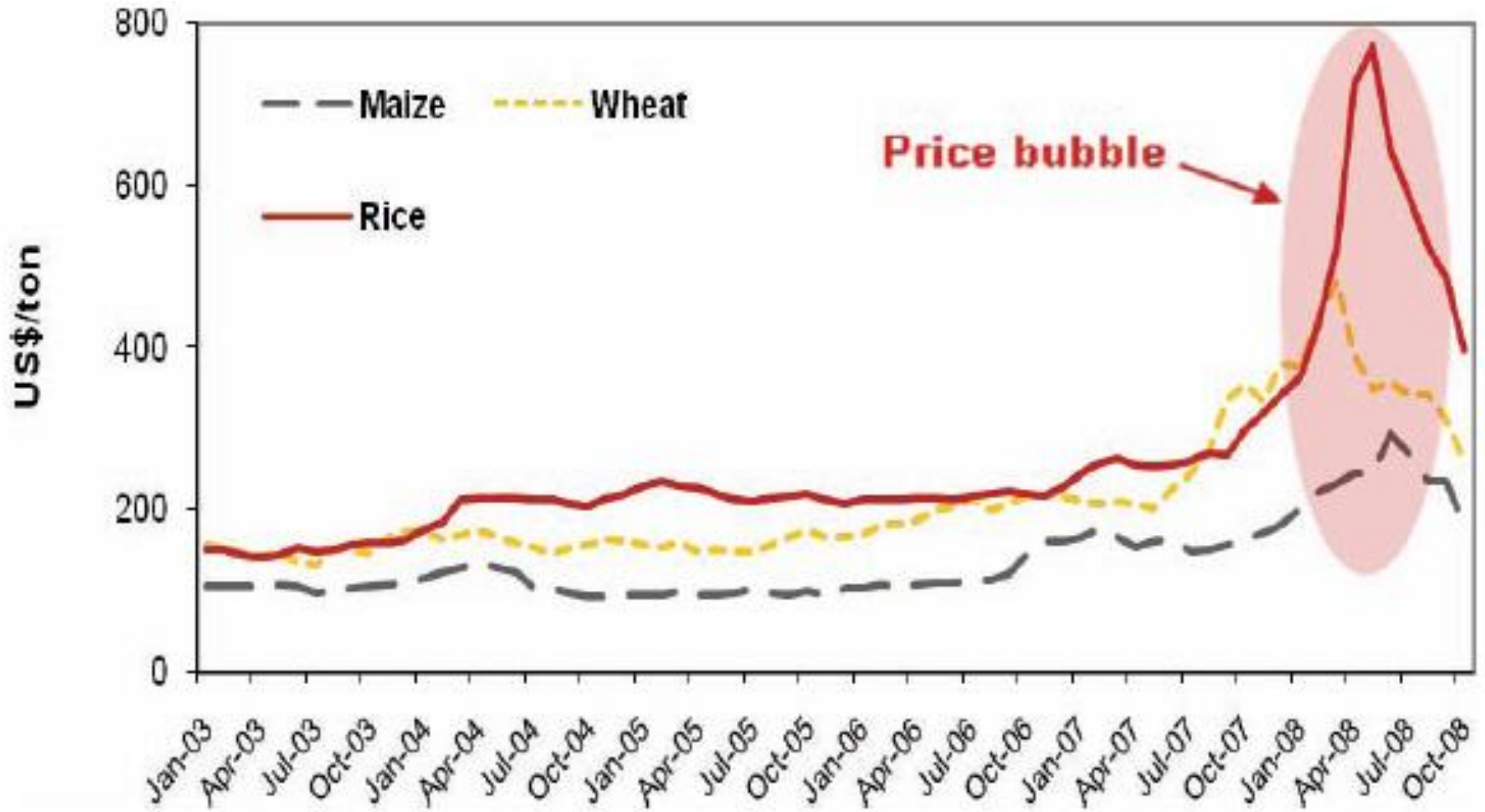




TENSION POINTS

- 1) Economic (markets, profits, trade)
- 2) Technology
- 3) Socio-political
- 4) Environment

The World Food Price Crisis



Source: IFPRI, based on FAO data.



2007-2008

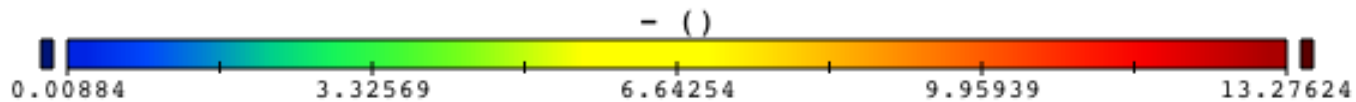
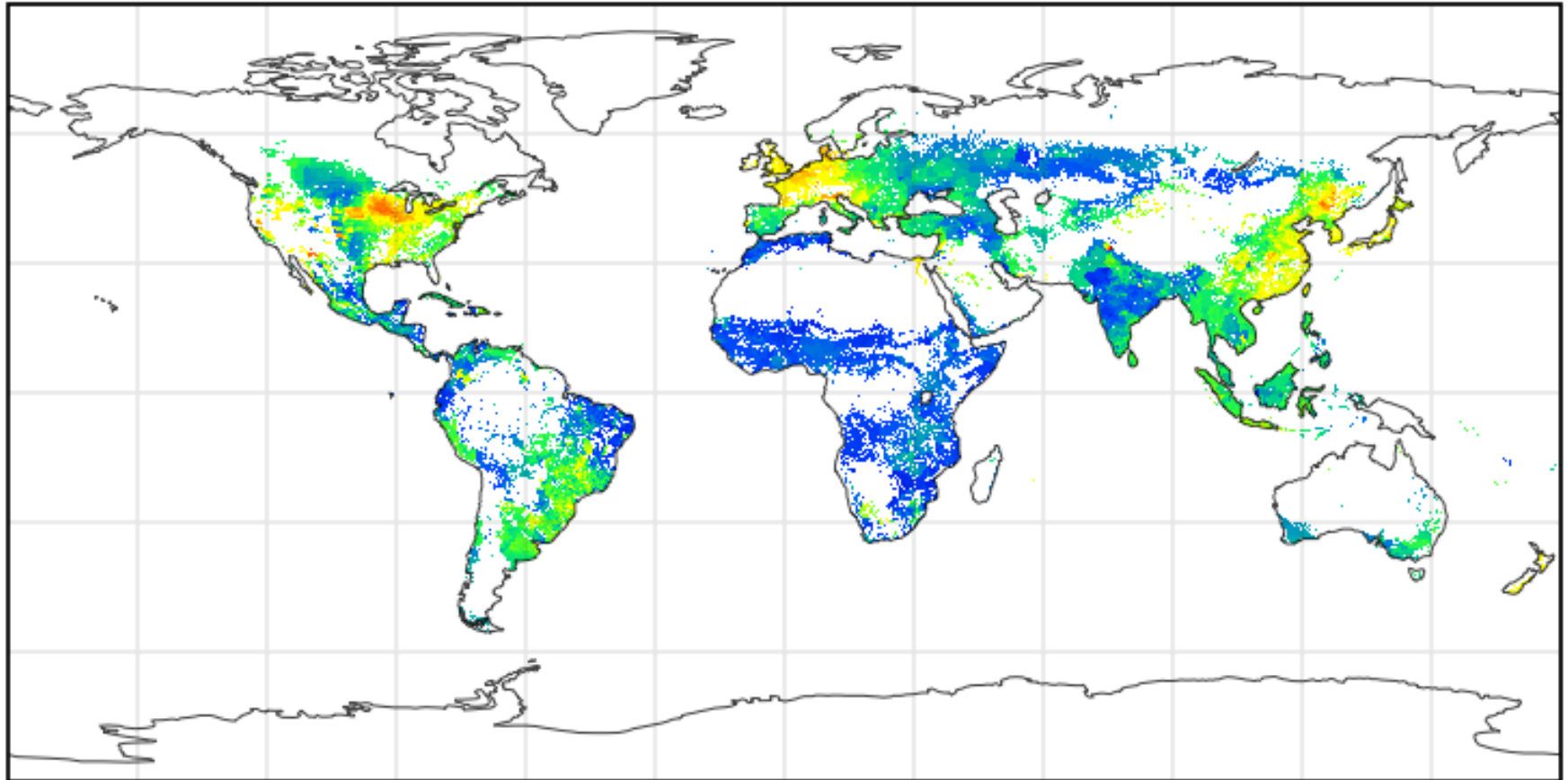
WORLD FOOD PRICE CRISIS

“a perfect storm”

for a discussion on global agriculture tensions

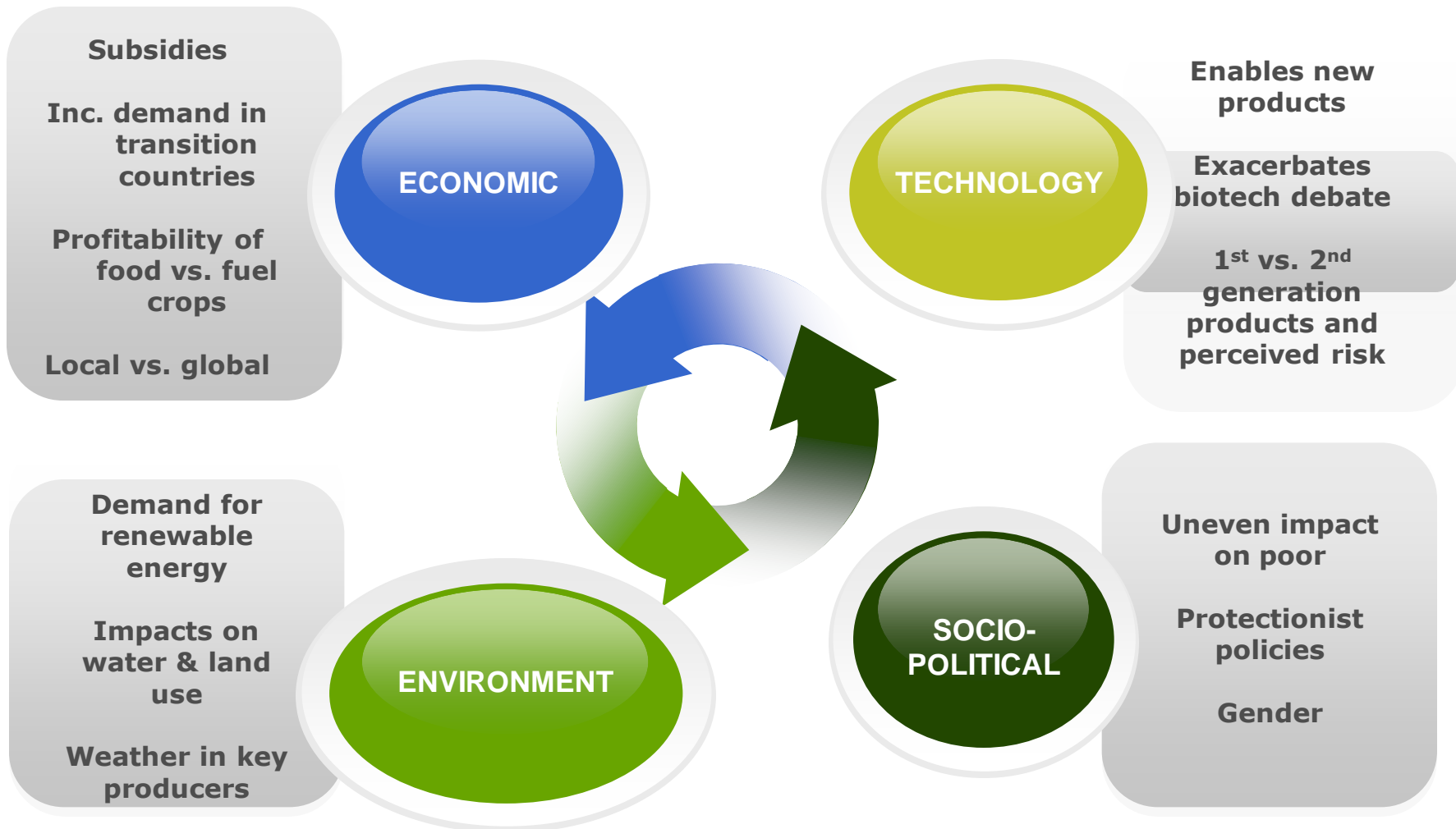
- 40% increase in commodity food prices
- Food riots in developing world (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d' Ivoire, Egypt, Haiti, Indonesia, Senegal, Somalia)
- Focused attention on food vs. fuel tensions – an easy target for food crop biofuel “detractors”
- Heightened public attention in the developed world on relationship of agriculture to energy and the environment and impact of U.S. policy
- Underscored need for more rationale and contextual discussion of the issues and “tensions”

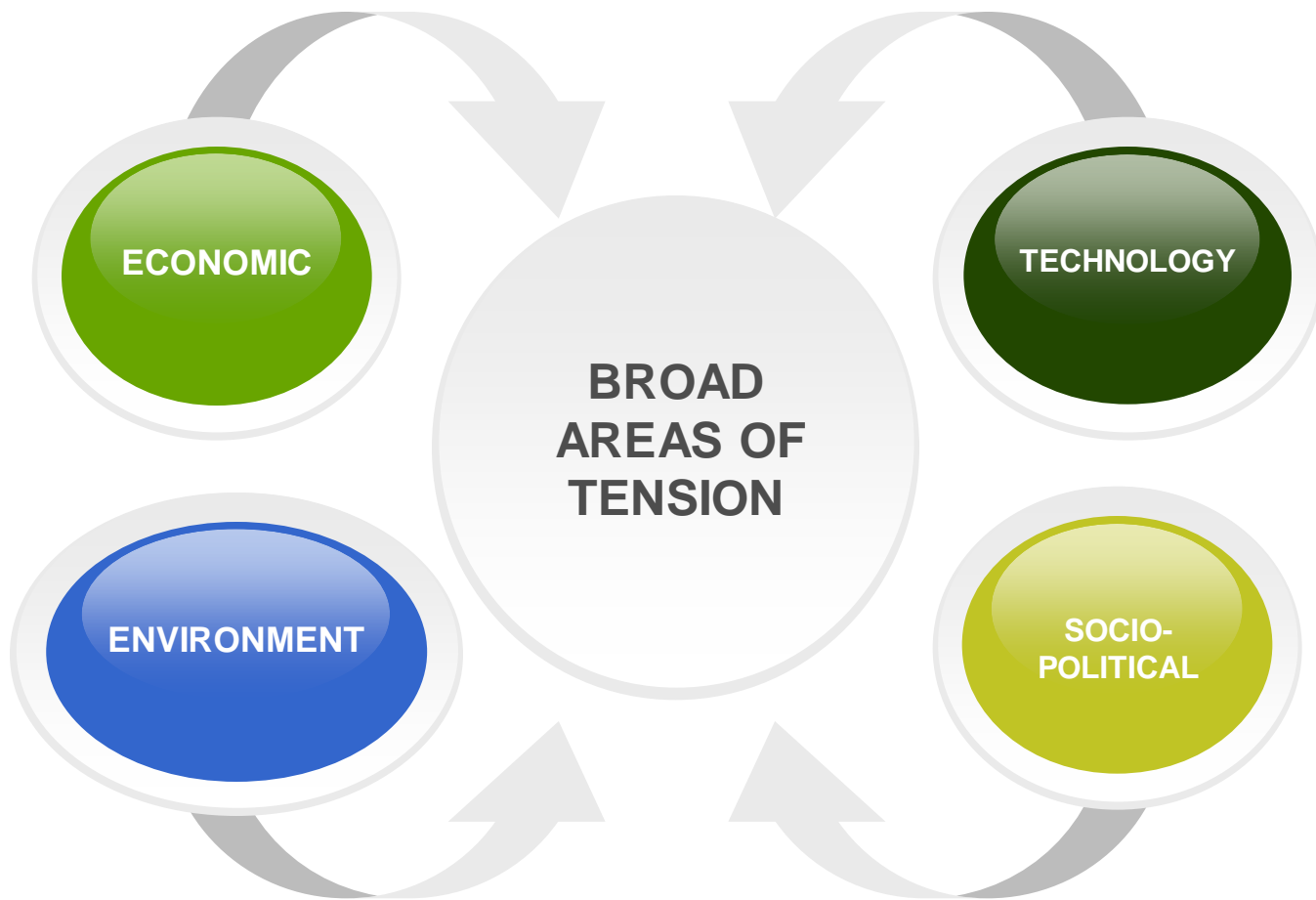
Grain Yields Around the World



Equirectangular projection centered on 0.0°E

Data Min = 0.00884, Max = 13.27624







FOOD TENSIONS BECOMING INCREASINGLY OBVIOUS

- New “food” jargon– *Franken food, locavore, superfood, flexitarian*
- Increased attention in the popular media

Fast Food Nation

Supersize Me

Stuffed and Starved

- Increased public awareness of the food production value chain
- Changing and evolving new constituencies
- Shift in global demographics – producers and consumers
- Widening gaps between “haves” and “have nots”
- Issues and tensions are often “cross populating”; need to remove the “silo” effect from our thinking about agriculture issues



Economic Tension

- Subsidies – developed vs. developing world
- Local vs. global (transported)
- Local vs. organic
- Fair trade vs. local
- Terroir (+) vs. Country of Origin (-)
- Food vs. fuel
- Food vs. feed
- Food aid vs. trade
- Big agriculture vs. “little” agriculture
- Commodities vs. specialty crops



Technology Tension

- Biotech vs. organic (animal cloning)
- Big organic vs. small organic
- Food vs. fuel
- Natural vs. organic
- Nanotech vs. everything!
- Food safety vs. irradiation
- Aquaculture vs. in situ production/conservation



Environment

- Water and land access
- Mitigating impacts of climate change – likely to be uneven with greater impacts on poor
- Balance between agriculture, development, conserved open space
- Biodiversity and ownership issues



Socio-political

- Consumer right to know vs. science based labeling
- Labor issues – immigration and racial tensions
- Changing demographics of farmers – gender/age
- Quality vs. quantity/cost and access related to income
- Low cost food vs. high costs to health
- Globalization of food vs. security (safety, terrorism)
- Co-existence of production techniques
- Regulatory harmony
- Corporate domination of food supply



What does the future look like?

- Global production landscape with increased participation of the developing world
- Policy decisions which reflect inter-disciplinary impact (agriculture as it relates to national security, environment, energy, health)
- A “food czar”?????
- Return to a more educated, engaged consumer in the developed world
- Dialogue which reflects “complexity” vs “sound bite”
- New “breed” of farmer
- Greater choice, for farmers and consumers
- An evolved industry>>>> sensitized to its greater role in society and creating positive impact on health, wealth, natural resources, energy, reduction of political strife
- **RESILIENCY!**



Thank You!