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Open-up the (co)design process of farming systems: a reflexive analysis

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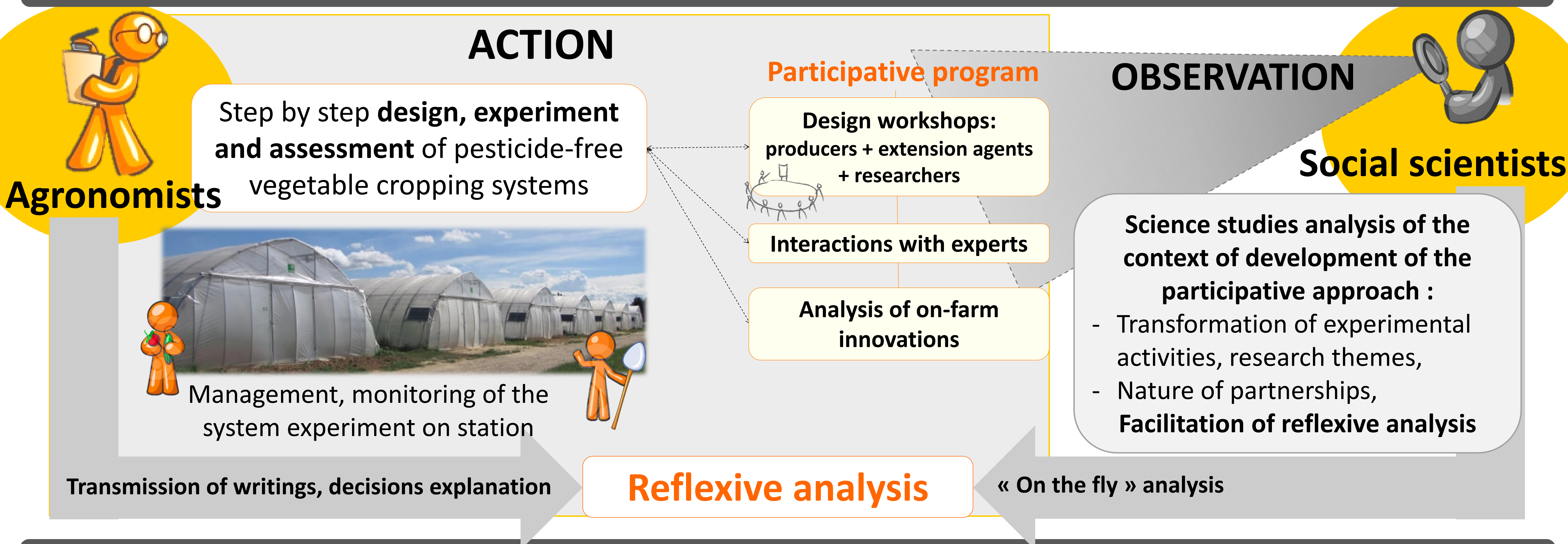
Open-up the (co)design process of farming systems: a reflexive analysis

Context

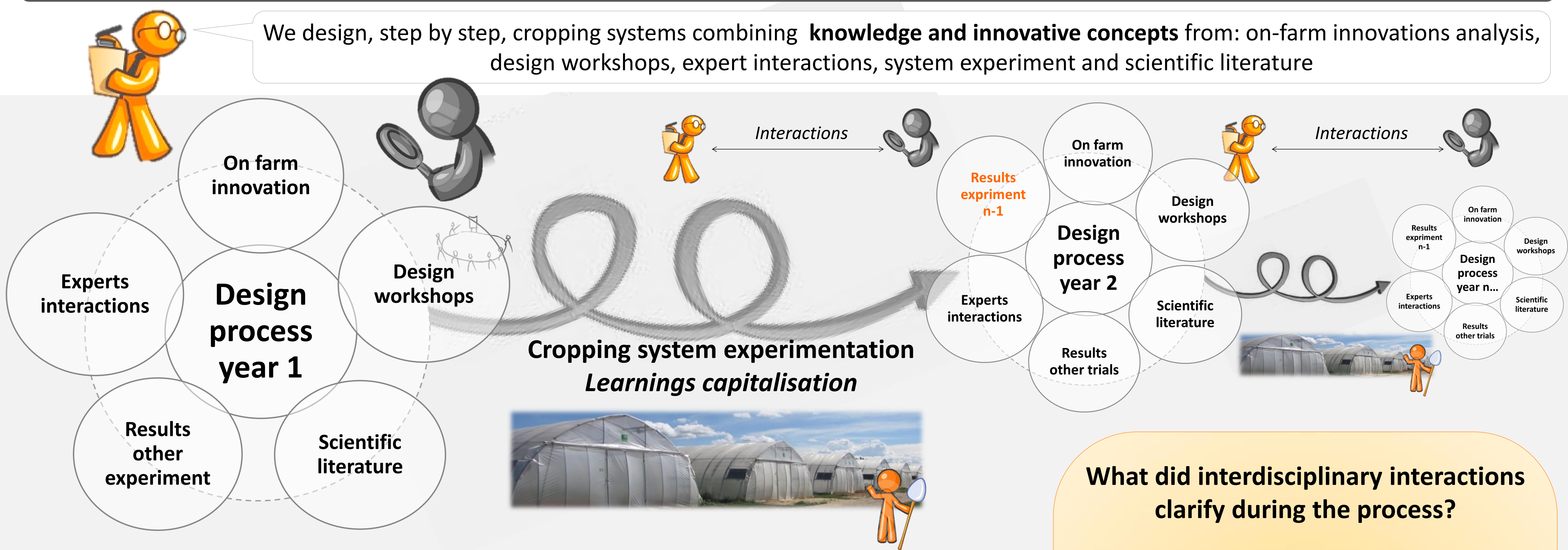
For several years, participatory methods are increasingly used in agricultural research to design and assess innovative farming systems. However, the **objectives** of the participatory methodologies as well as their **conditions of implementations** are not always extremely clear.

Objective – carrying out a **REFLEXIVE ANALYSIS** on a **participatory research program** driven by social scientists and agronomists working on a system experiment project

Material & methods



First results of the interdisciplinary analysis...



What did interdisciplinary interactions clarify during the process?

The nature of knowledge produced-exchanged: “experiential & scientific”

Participatory design process appeared to be a **dynamic learning process** requiring modifications as work progresses: *animation tools, scientific-non-scientific interactions, group composition...*

The importance of having an “**intermediary object**” (ei. system experiment) helping to maintain interactions between partners

Why do agronomists use participatory research methods?

1- Thanks to participatory methods agronomists **consider the multiple dimensions of food systems** in the design process

2- They go over concepts and face it to farmer’s reality (*normative recommendations, logistic or economic constraints, technical uncertainty...*)

What challenges do agronomists face ?

1 - Designing innovative cropping systems **dealing with different kind of knowledge** : « scientific and experiential »

2 - Building and maintaining a program where **scientific and unscientific interests meet**

3 – **To develop a step by step design methodology**, synonymous of uncertainty, but appearing as a condition to deal with new knowledge and concepts

Working with partners allowed the agronomists to bring their **work closer to farmer’s realities**. Interactions between agronomists and social scientists generated a **dynamic learning process** which contributed to the evolution of the program. This interdisciplinary analysis outlines the characteristics of a dynamic participative design method opening the door to an “**experiential science**”, a possible future of the knowledge production on research experimental station.