

A Multi-Perspectival Framework to Enhance Trans-Disciplinary Communication in Cropbase



10th December 2012

Patrick O'Reilly

The Problem



Complex agricultural research programmes bring together actors, whose ideas about the objects being researched are shaped by different perspectives and understandings.

The Paradox of Multi-Functionality



If Complex Research Programmes Are to Function Effectively:

- **Different knowledge communities must focus on elements of the programme to which they are relevant**
- **Programmes require the insights of different knowledge communities combined in delivering programme outcomes**

Problems With Existing Approaches to Interdisciplinary Work



One outcome is to create new forms of “expertise,” concerning the planning and organisation of projects involving interdisciplinary teams



**The Programme
Manager**



Problems With Existing Approaches to Interdisciplinary Work



Another is that one discipline achieves a hegemonic position



**The Financial
Controller**



Problems With Existing Approaches to Interdisciplinary Work



Dilution: EG Researchers People pulled out of their specialities

Distortion: Skew towards certain disciplines

Dissipation: Energies go into maintaining disciplinary boundaries

A polyocular perspective

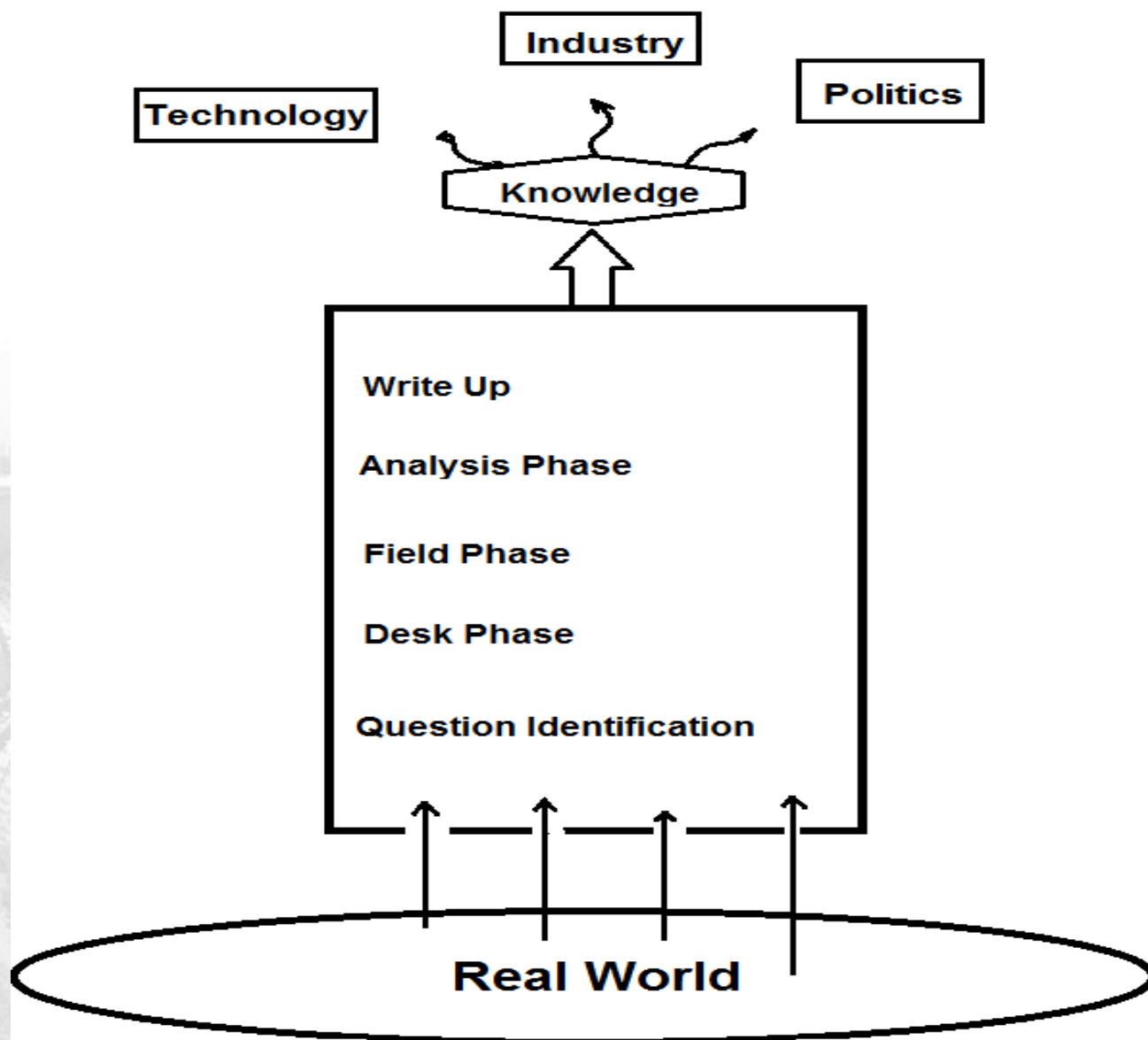


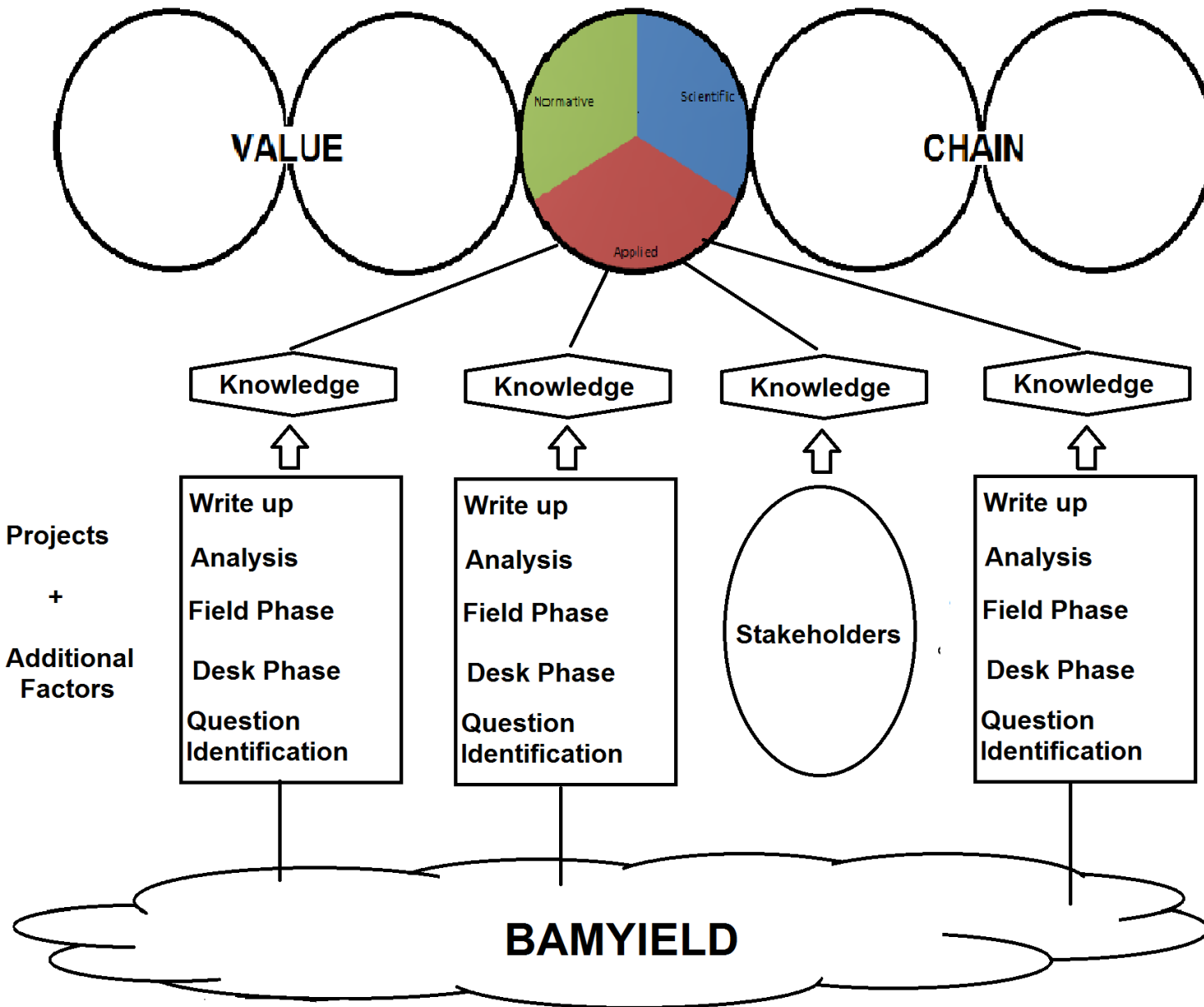
Literally looking at a problem from many perspectives

Takes as its starting point the idea that it is impossible to integrate opposing perspectives

Attempts to bring to bear these different views in forms of second order analysis

Alroe and Noe (2006)





Projects
+
Additional
Factors

A polyocular perspective



Whereas disciplinary communication is about providing consistent, efficient and precise knowledge in the context of a sharply delimited research world, polyocular communication is about extending a multidimensional space of understanding.

Alroe and Noe (2006)

A polyocular perspective



This project is intended to operationalise some of the ideas outlined in the polyocular literature.

Alroe and Noe (2006)

Research Phase 1

- **Ethnographic observation with a view to building up an understanding way different disciplines define the object.**
- **Understanding the way that these disciplines employ systems of (formal and informal) signifiers to represent this object**
- **Identify key interdisciplinary bottlenecks in transdisciplinary communications**

Research Phase 2

- **Devising and implementing framework to enhance transdisciplinary communication**
- **Describing key cognitive path of different disciplines**
- **Q –Methodology?**