

GLOBAL SOIL WEEK 2015

Open Space 4.2 Sustainable land use and human habitats:
the role of cities and rural development in achieving
sustainable land use

Urban-Rural Linkages & Global Sustainable Land Use

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(based on GLOBALANDS Issue Paper)

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Background and Scope

- Urbanization trends are key drivers for future land use
 - directly in terms of buildings and infrastructure footprints
 - indirectly through the demand for agricultural and forest land

What about the interlinkages between “rural” and “urban”?

How they influence land use?

The issue paper addresses two key phenomena:

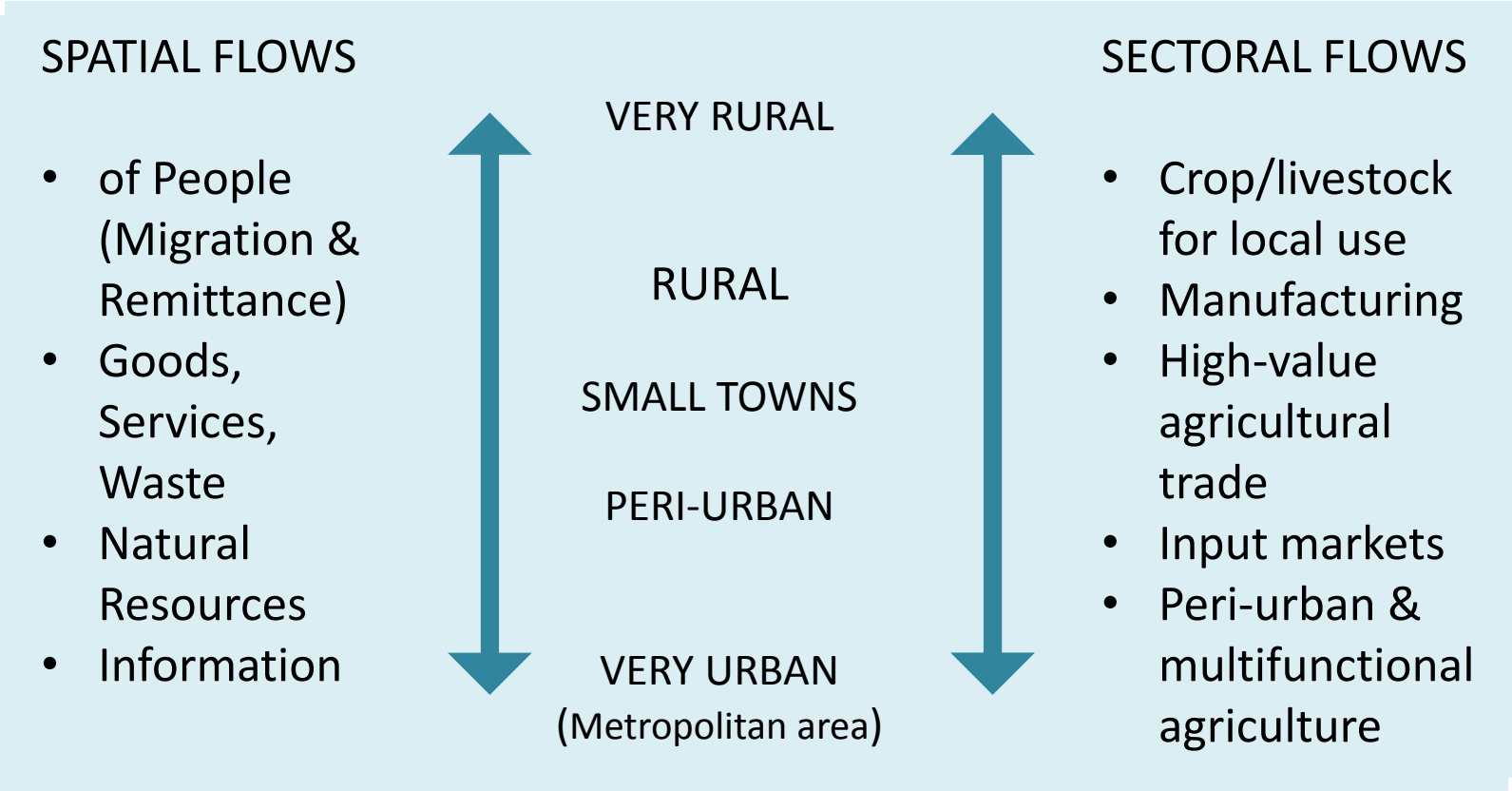
- The changing relation of larger cities to their “hinterland”
- The more and more globalized value chains of key products (e.g. food, textiles) and services (e.g. administration, tourism).

Urban – Rural Divide

- **Urbanization:** defining trend over the next several decades
- 54 % of the world's population lives in cities, the other half in rural areas (declining trend)
- Impacts on **land** conversion, use of natural **resources**, absorption of rural labor to cities
- Rural areas are **resource providers**
- Cities are center of economic development, innovation and consumption - **resource use**
- Urbanization blurs divide, creating growing **peri-urban** areas with own characteristics, problems & opportunities



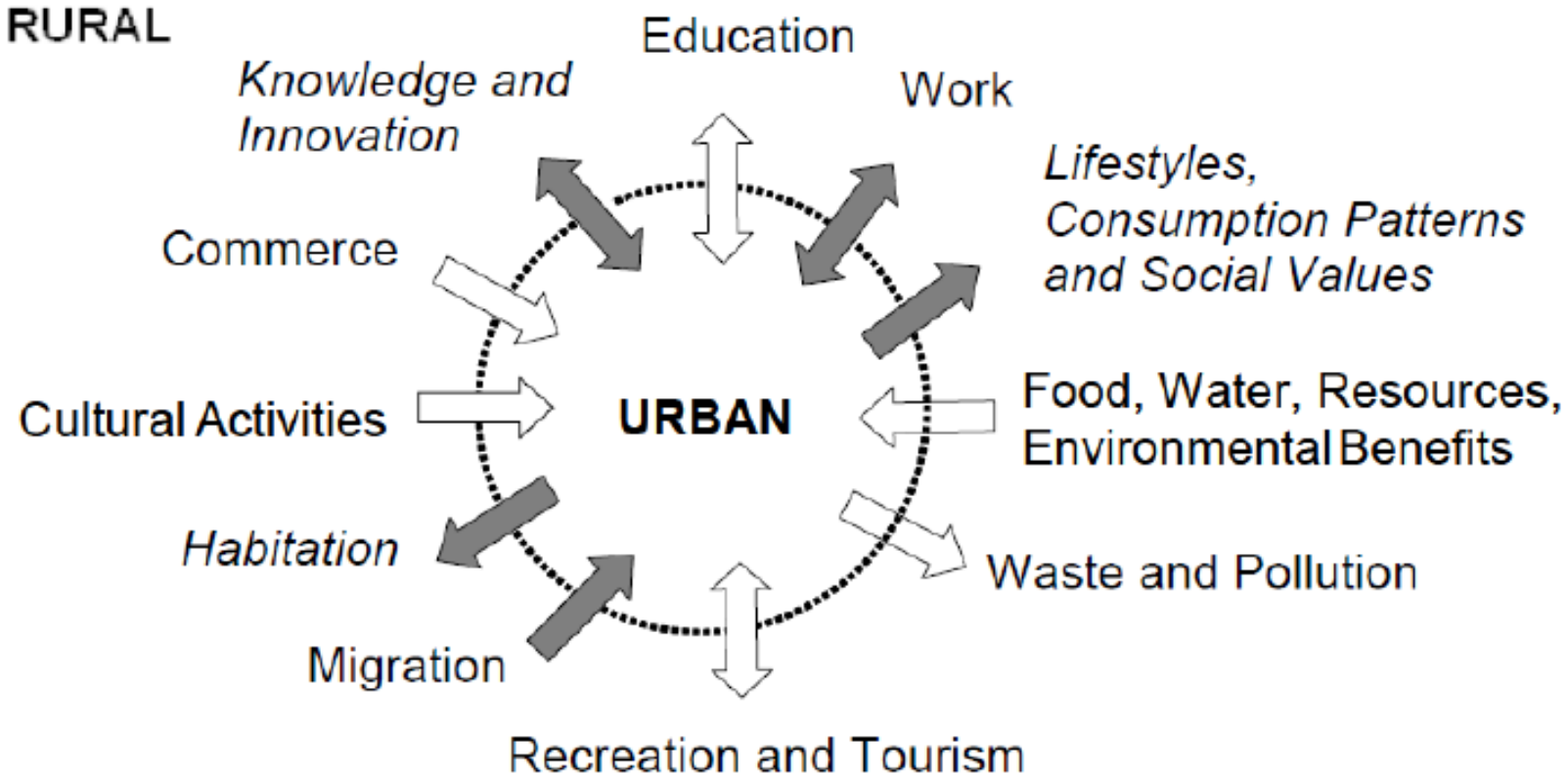
Urban – Rural Linkages



Source: Rural-Urban Linkages for Growth, Employment, and Poverty Reduction. Joachim von Braun, IFPRI 2007

Urban – Rural Linkages

- Historic divide between urban-rural is counter-productive



Source: Repp et al. 2012

Dualism of Urban – Rural Decoupling

- Changing urban-rural linkages:
from direct connection to international → **decoupling**
 - Resources from **rural** areas are more and more traded globally (energy, food, metals, textiles...), while **cities** consume more and more globally traded goods
 - ICT allows to “de-localize” former city functions (administration, education, recreation, trade...)
- But: growing **peri-urban** “interface”, role in providing some functions (food, housing) as “intermediate”, but infrastructure is critical due to low density

Perspectives

- The **functional and spatial decoupling** of cities and their hinterlands require a more **global approach**
→ international competition of cities and regions
- In **parallel**, peri-urban dynamics call for more integrated approach
→ “bottom-up” and horizontal networks
- Dynamics and changes in consumption and production patterns may further decouple rural from urban areas
- But: ICT and globalized markets create opportunities to “stabilize” rural decline through new economic opportunities
- Development of more regionalized value-chains could be further options to “re-link” urban and rural areas (e.g., food, textiles...)

More Information



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