

Cycles and Chains

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Some definitions:

□ Chains

- Sequence of events or processes
- Food supply or value chain

□ Cycles

- Processes that are repeated at intervals

The “Food Chain”

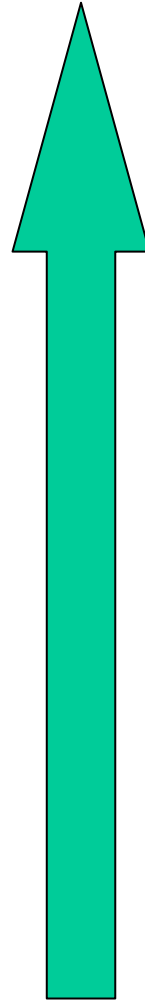
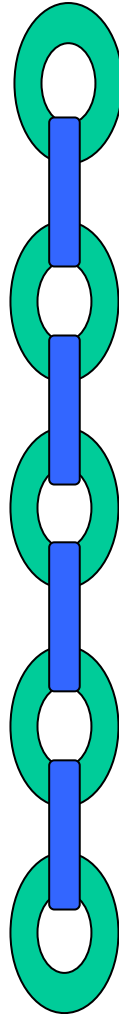
Consumer

Customer

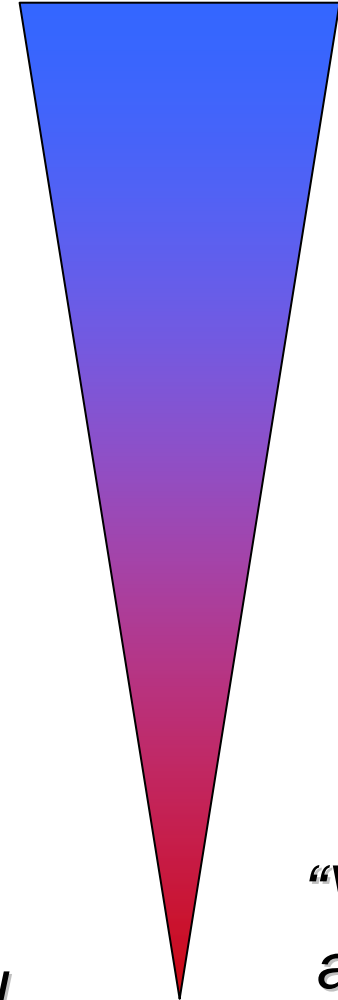
Retailer/
Food services

Processor

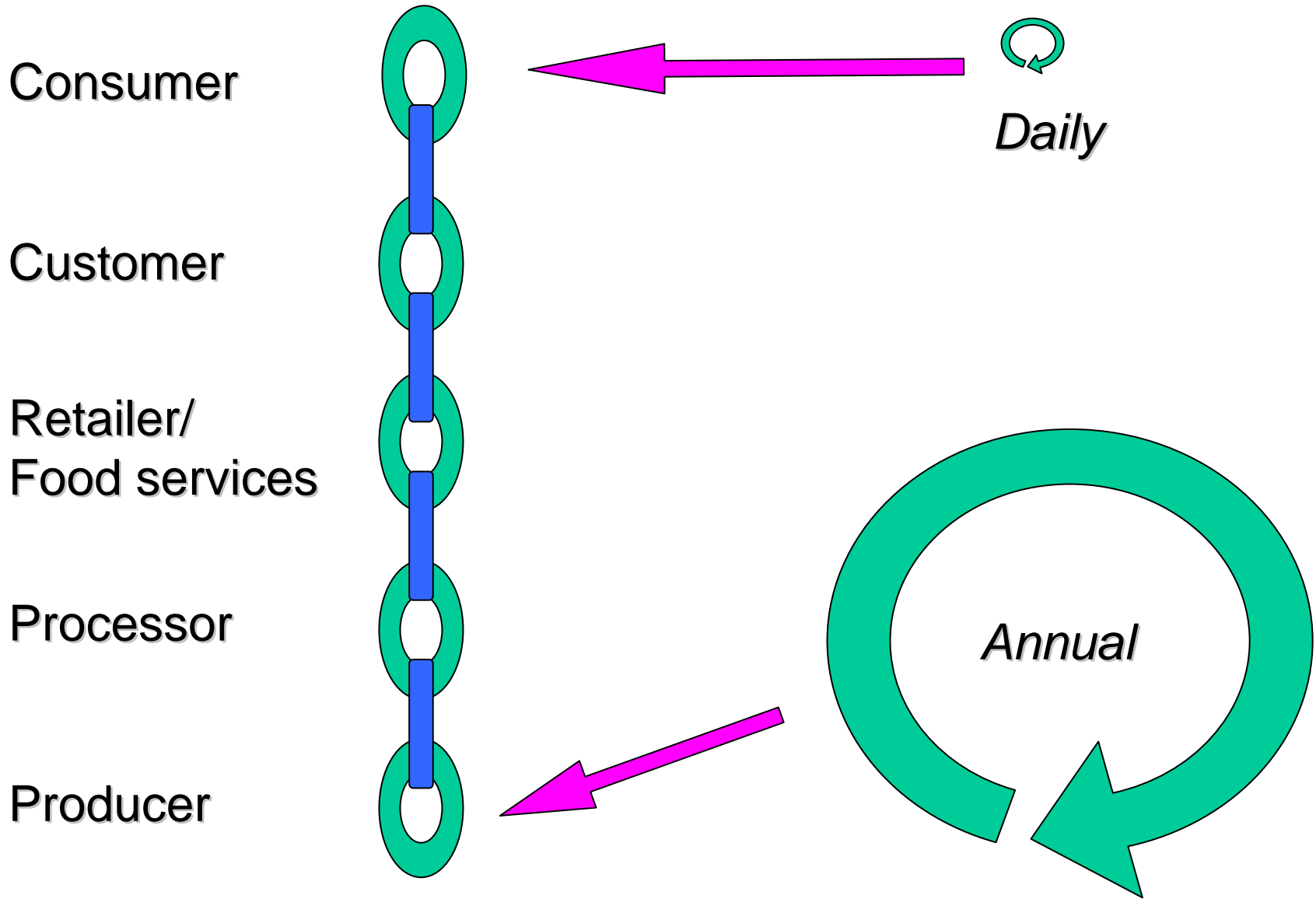
Producer



*One
directional*



*“Value”
added*



Industrial-scale production



Individual perfection



WARWICK

Convert a fresh product from the field ...



... via a factory





High quality and continuity of supply



Washed and ready to eat ...

... and fast food



WARWICK

Foliage

Aphid pests of lettuce



Myzus persicae



*Macrosiphum
euphorbiae*



*Nasonovia
ribisnigri*

Roots



Pemphigus bursarius

Examples of cycles 1:

Decades

- Environmental (soil, nitrogen, carbon, etc)
- CAP reforms

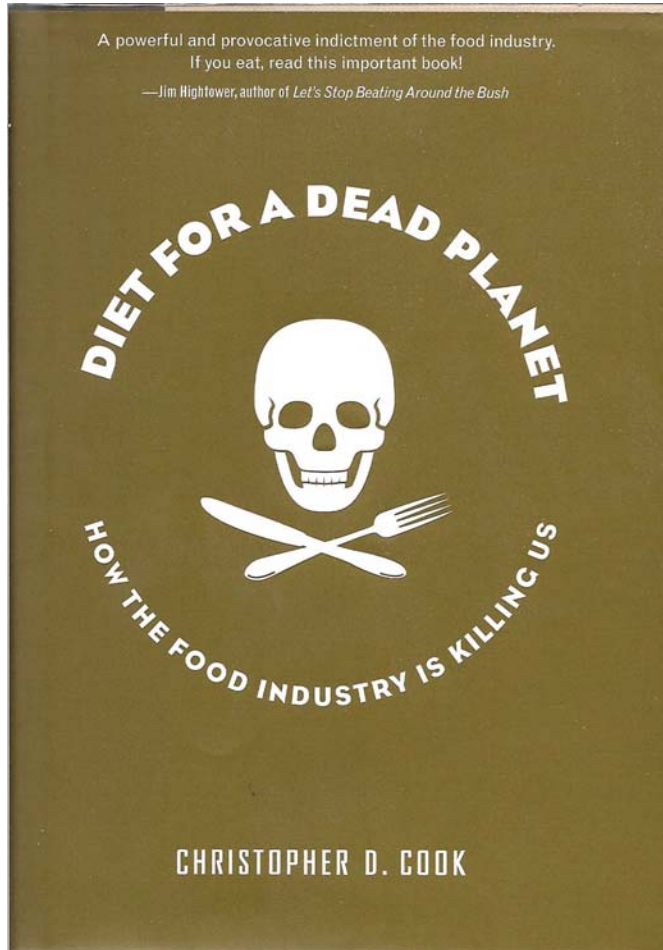
Several years

- WTO negotiations
- Food and farming policy
- Biodiversity

Annual

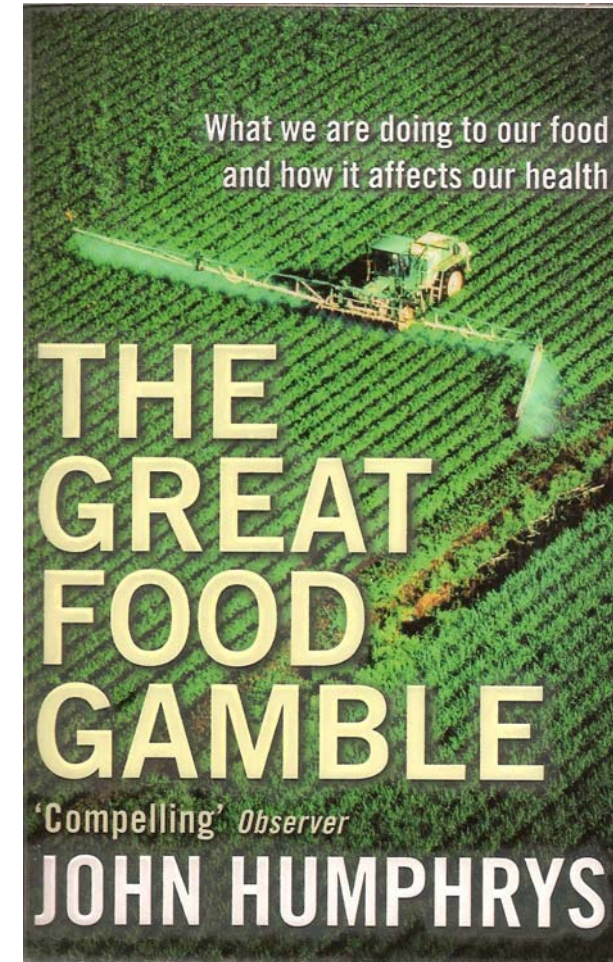
- Agricultural production
- Ecosystem services
- Supply contracts to processors/retailers

Examples of cycles 2:



Months

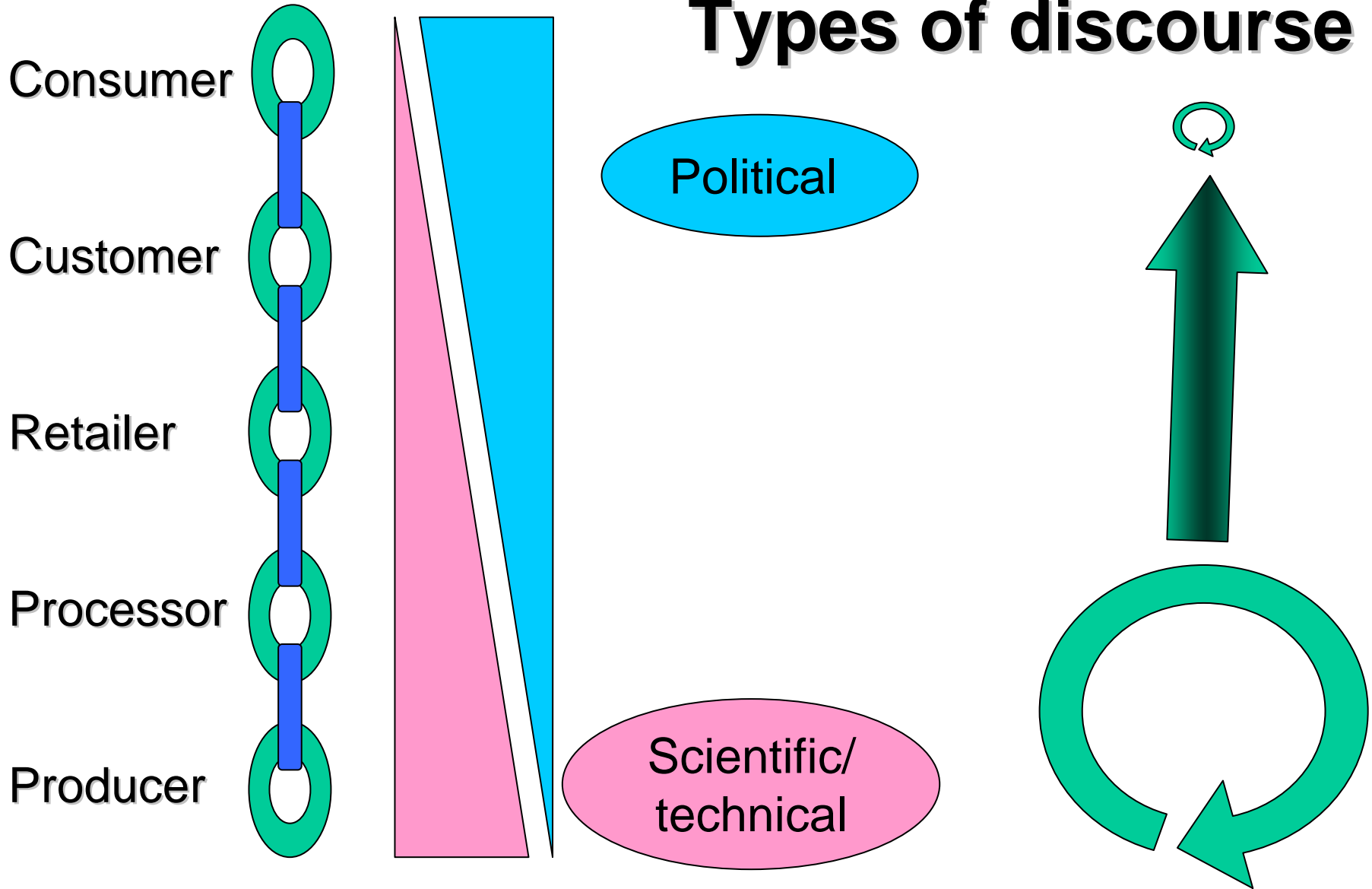
Issue attention
and media
involvement



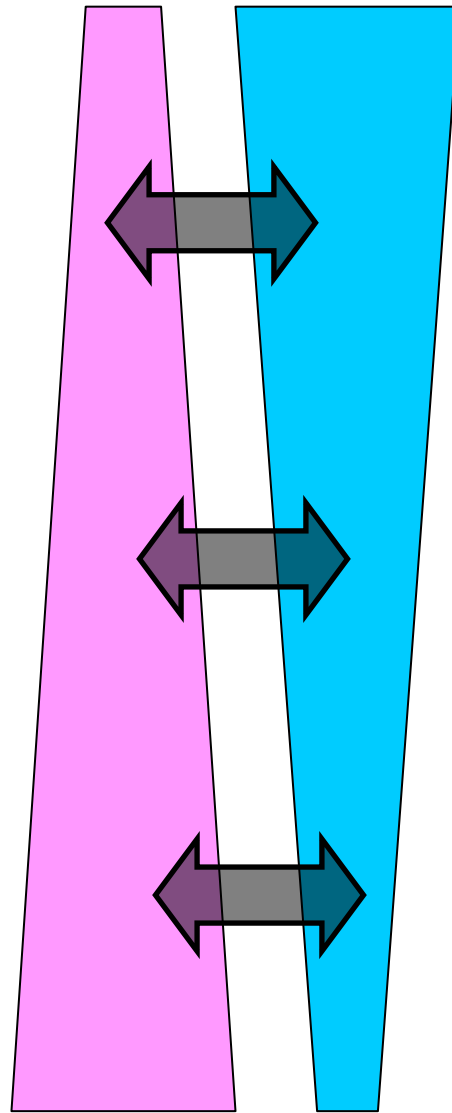
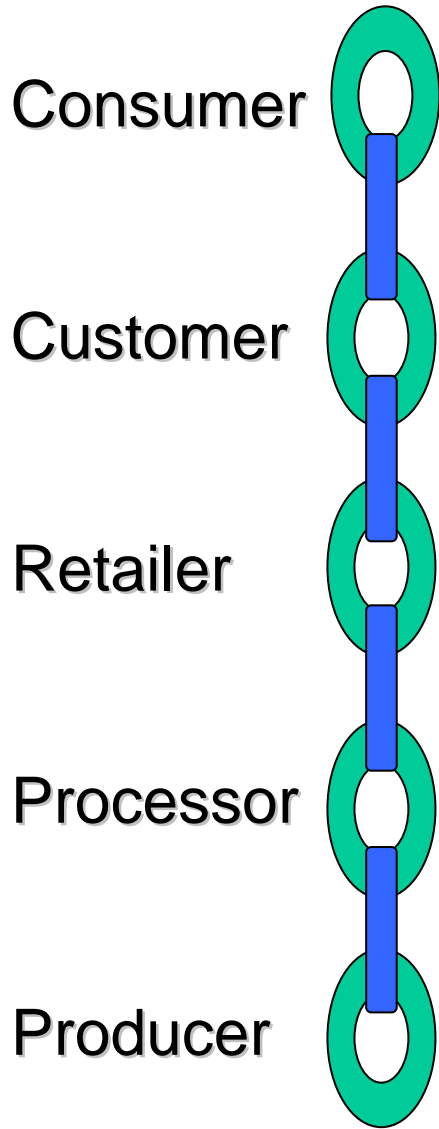
Examples of cycles 2:

- Months
 - Issue attention
- Weeks
 - Customer purchases
- Days
 - Consumption

Types of discourse



Communication



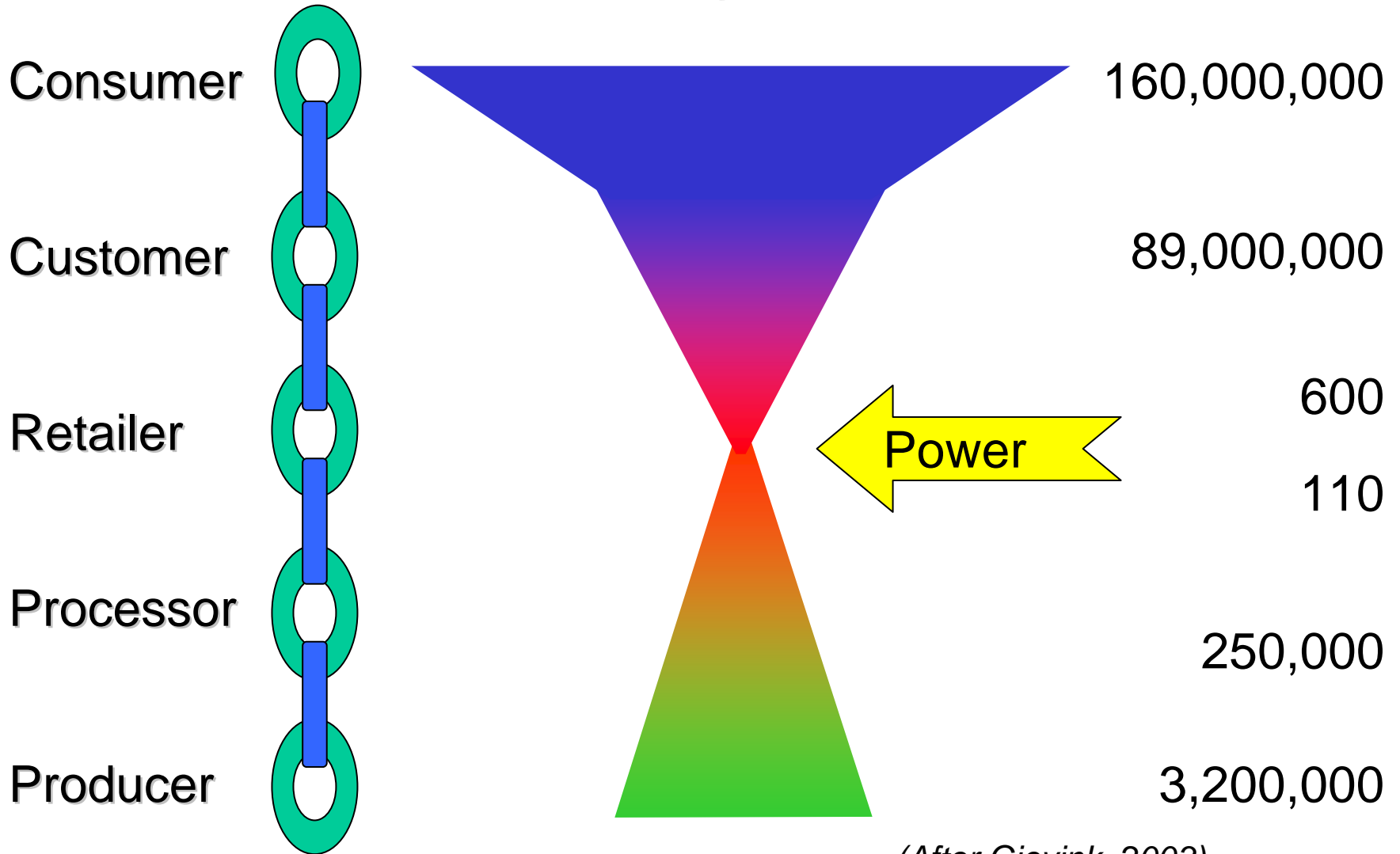
Political

Shift in discourse

Policy shift resulting in a market- rather than production-based agricultural economy

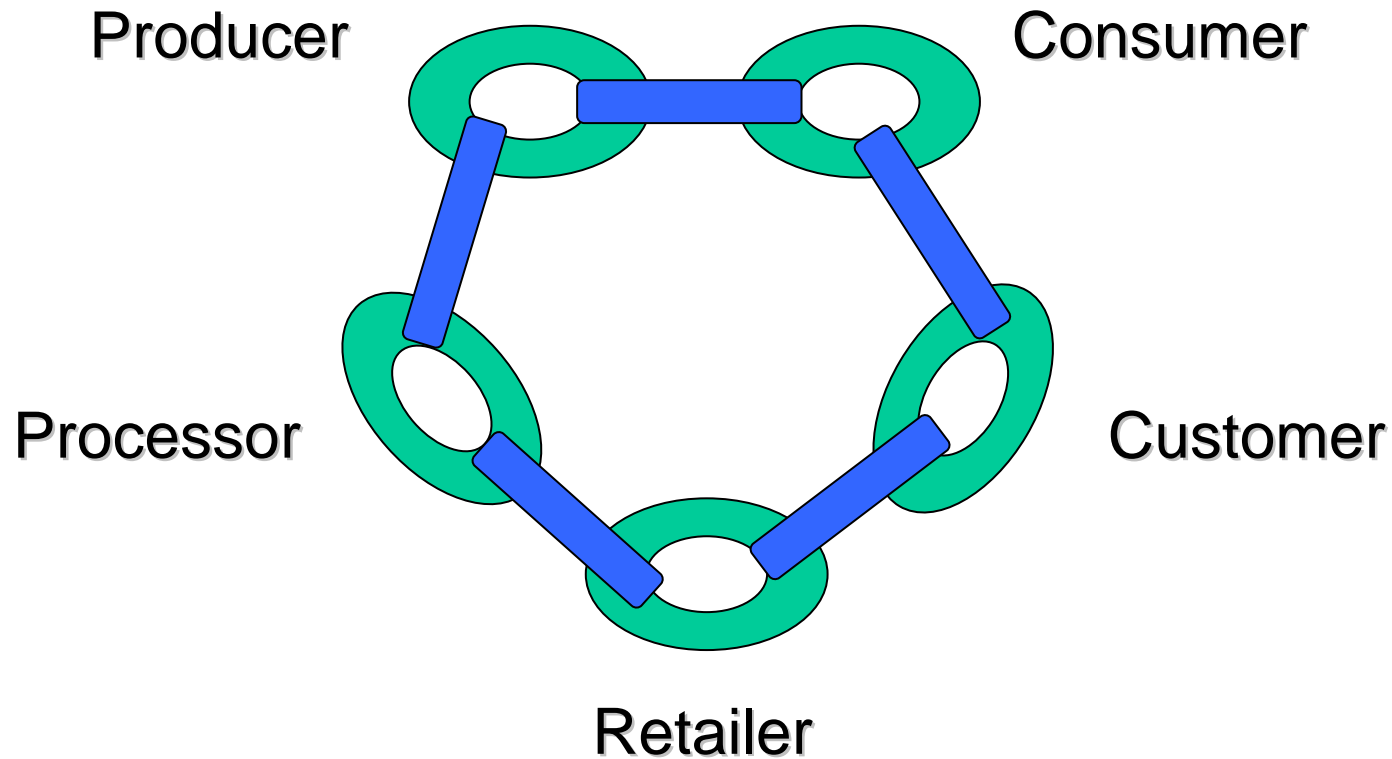
Scientific/
technical

Supply chain funnel



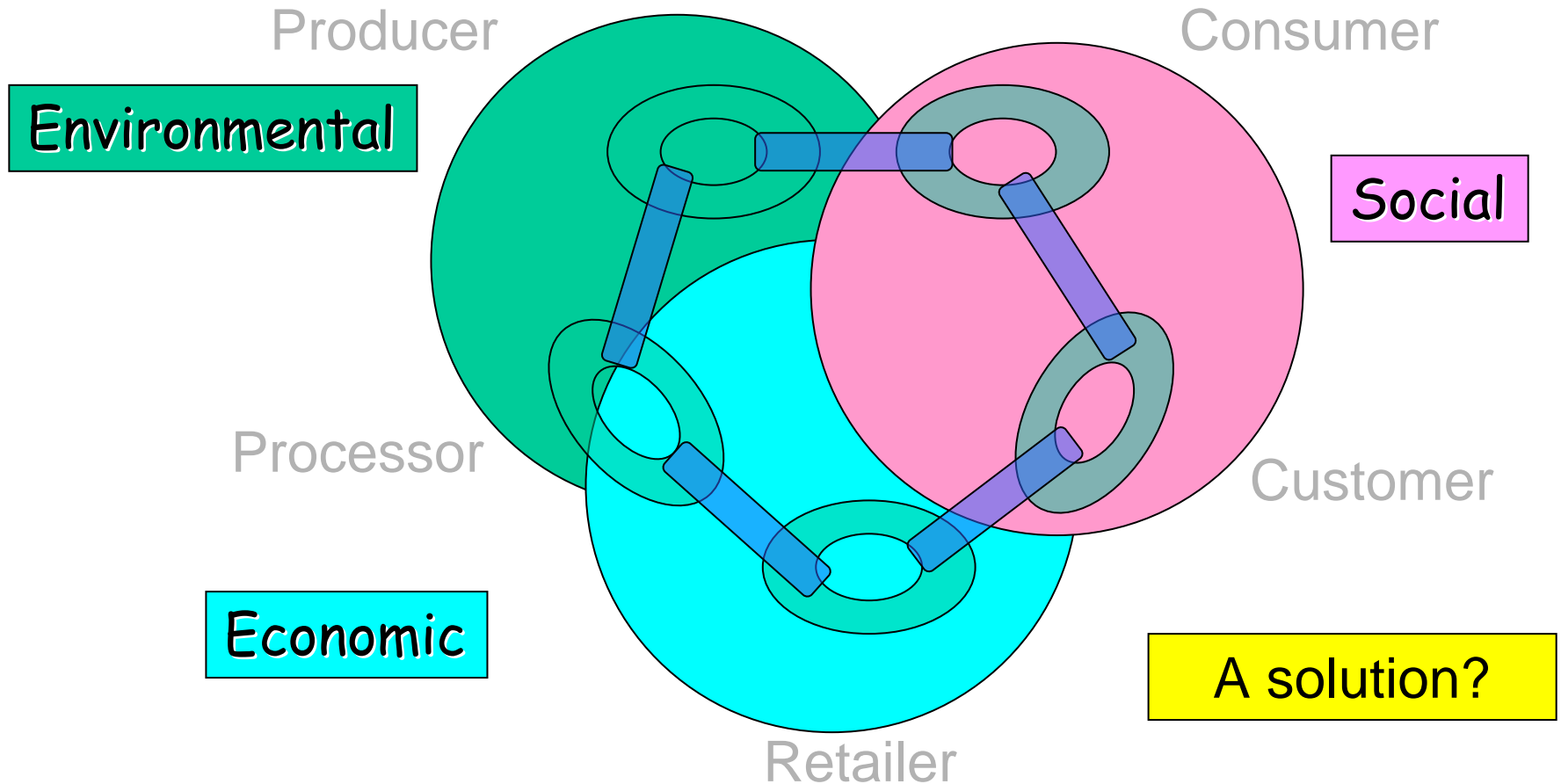
(After Gievink, 2003)

The “Circular Agri-food Chain”



The Circular Agri-food Chain

... in a sustainability context.



Summary

- The food supply chain is influenced by a diversity of cycles of different durations.
- The cycles and discourse of production were primarily scientific and technical, but of consumption were primarily social and political. These differences are being eroded.
- Better cross disciplinary communication and understanding of links and cycles along the agri-food chain are required to achieve credibility and sustainability.