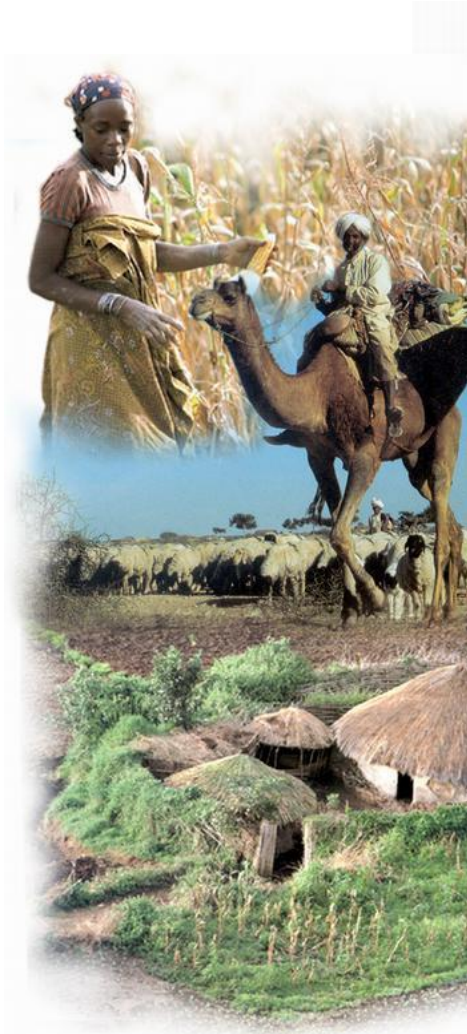


The Roles of Local Organisations in Agroecology and Food Sovereignty



Food, Agriculture, Environments and Livelihoods



Local organisations and collective structures



**The Medicinal Plant
Collective**



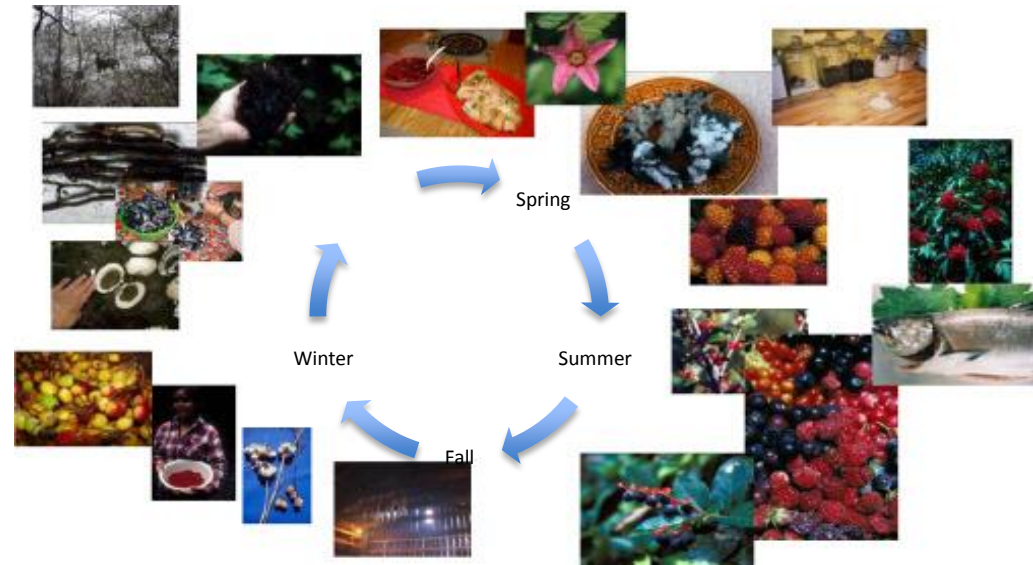
**The Video
Collective**



**The Native Potatoes
Collective**

Local adaptive management of food-producing environments

- The use of sophisticated environmental indicators to track and respond to change



Box 4.6. Environmental and cultural indicators used by farmers to determine planting times and manage crop cultivars in Burkina Faso

Plants Leaf fall of *Tamarindus indica*, *Butyrospermum paradoxum* (karite)
Flowering of *Sclerocarya birrea* (Nobga), *Lannea microcarpa* (Sagba), *Pterocarpus lucens* (Kumbrsaka)
Yellowing and leaf fall of *Lannea acida* (Sambnutuga)
Appearance of *Stylochiton hypogea* (Wule) in the river beds
Maturity and fruiting of *Lannea microcarpa* (Sagba), *Sclerocarya birrea* (Nogba), *Butyrospermum paradoxum*
Ripening, drying and souring of fruits of *Lannea microcarpa* (Sagba), *Sclerocarya birrea* (Nogba)

Birds Guinea fowls laying eggs
Some birds (Taaba) building their nests
Storks returning (migrating back) to the village
South-north migration of Silokoe and Klimba birds
Sparrowhawk crying continuously (repeatedly)

Animals Lizards shedding skin
Toads going to the bush from ponds
Toads croaking incessantly

Rituals Predictions of rainmakers
Traditional lunar calendar
Spiritual leaders, rituals at planting and harvest time

Stars and Appearance of the constellation of the six stars in the west
Change in the normal trajectory of the sun

Weather Wind blowing from the east
Temperatures warming up
First clouds appearing
Continuous thundering

Source: Sawadogo, 2001



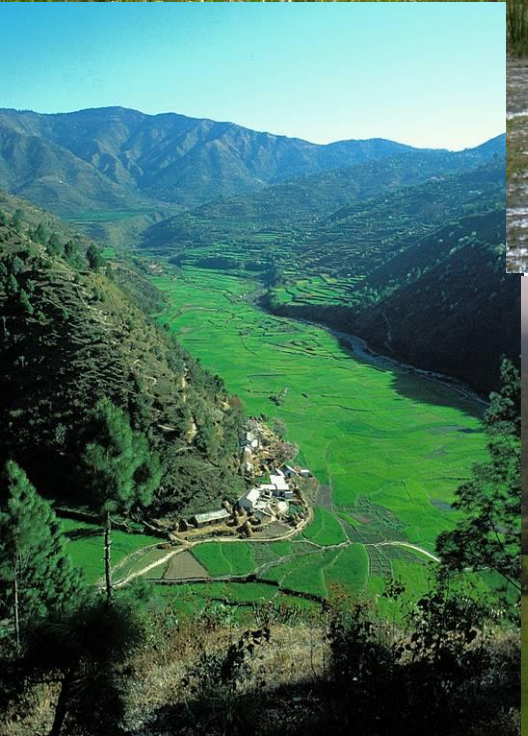
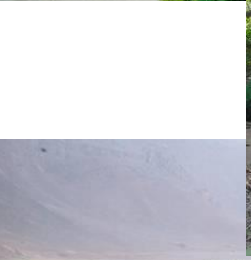
Local adaptive management of food-producing environments

- The use of diversity to reduce risks and mitigate impacts of natural disasters and long-term environmental change

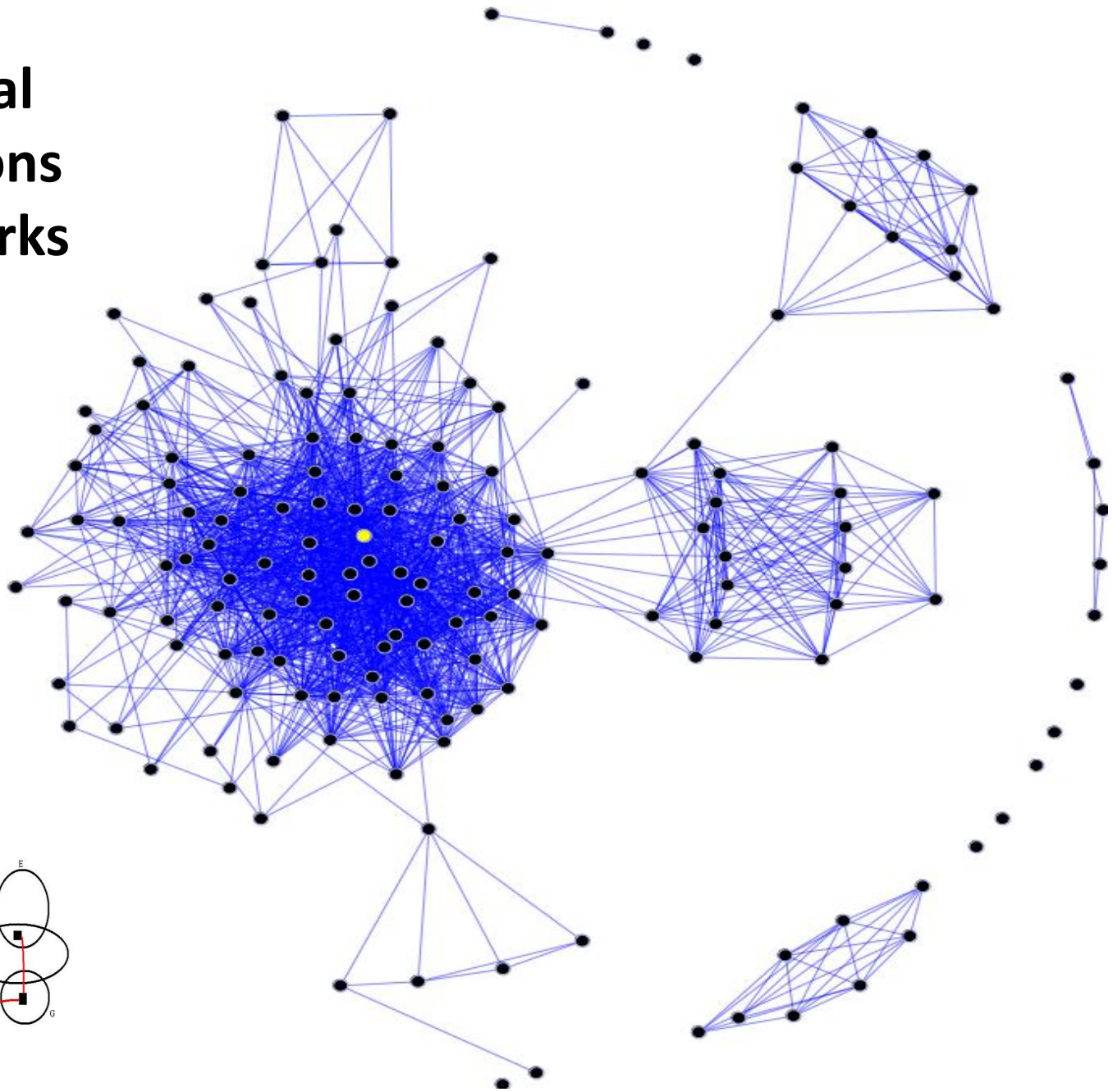
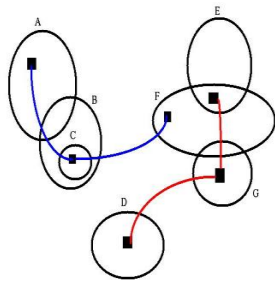


Local, diverse, agriculture, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala





Nested local organisations and networks



Soil fertility management by local organisations in Telengana region, Andhra Pradesh, India



Dryland farmers have developed cropping practices suited to the harsh climate of semi-arid regions



Keeping livestock is central to the stability of dryland agriculture



Farmers with bullocks can time their activities to get the best yields



Sheep penning: Farmers create microenvironments of high soil fertility



Farm yard manure is the preferred soil fertility enhancement practice in semi-arid regions



Vermicompost application is one of the emerging alternatives to chemical fertilisers



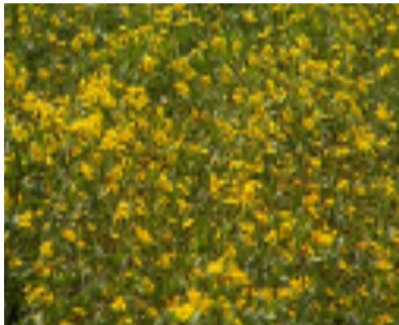
Women farmers mapping the soils in their village and the crops that grow on them



By mixing crops, the farmers ensure resilience and further enhance soil fertility



Diverse cropping and diverse fodder



An example of fertility based crop planning. Here, Niger, a dryland oil seed crop, is grown on low fertile soil



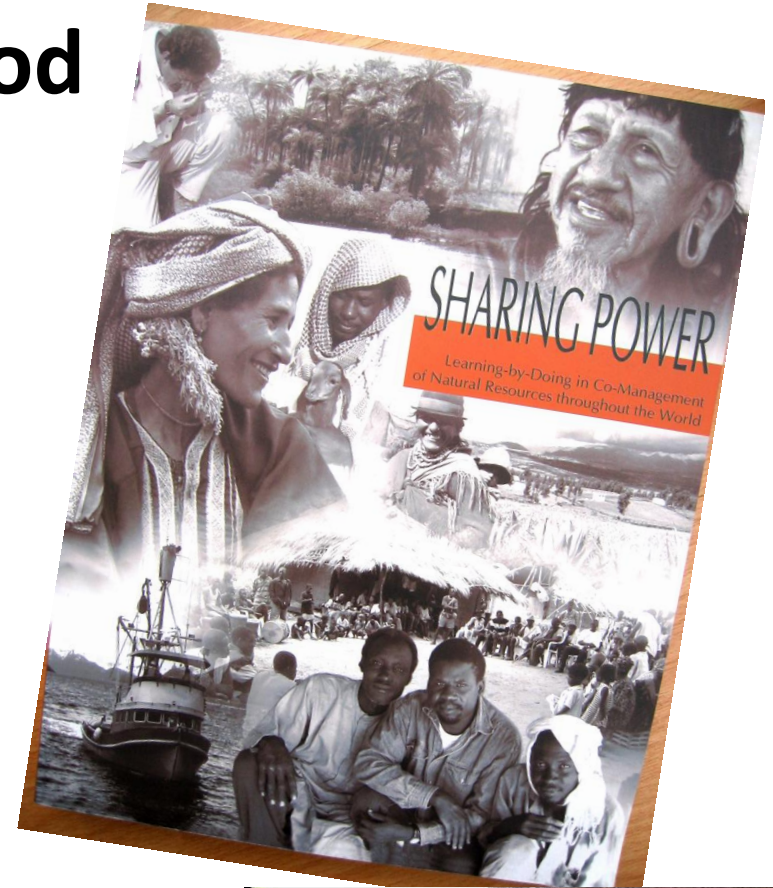
Women farmers favour a diversity of crops to optimise the use of their land and will mix crops with varying root systems to prevent competition over nutrients and moisture



There is growing consumer demand for organic food in markets

Local organisations and people's access to land and food

- Locally-developed rules for resource access and use
- Local organisations and access to land
- Local organisations regulating access to food



Local organisations and economic exchange

- Emphasis on market based solutions to meet food and other human needs - no or little thinking outside this box
- Focus on *money* based markets overlooks importance of more plural forms of economic exchange (subsistence based markets, barter, solidarity economy...)
- **Local organisations mediate economic exchanges**

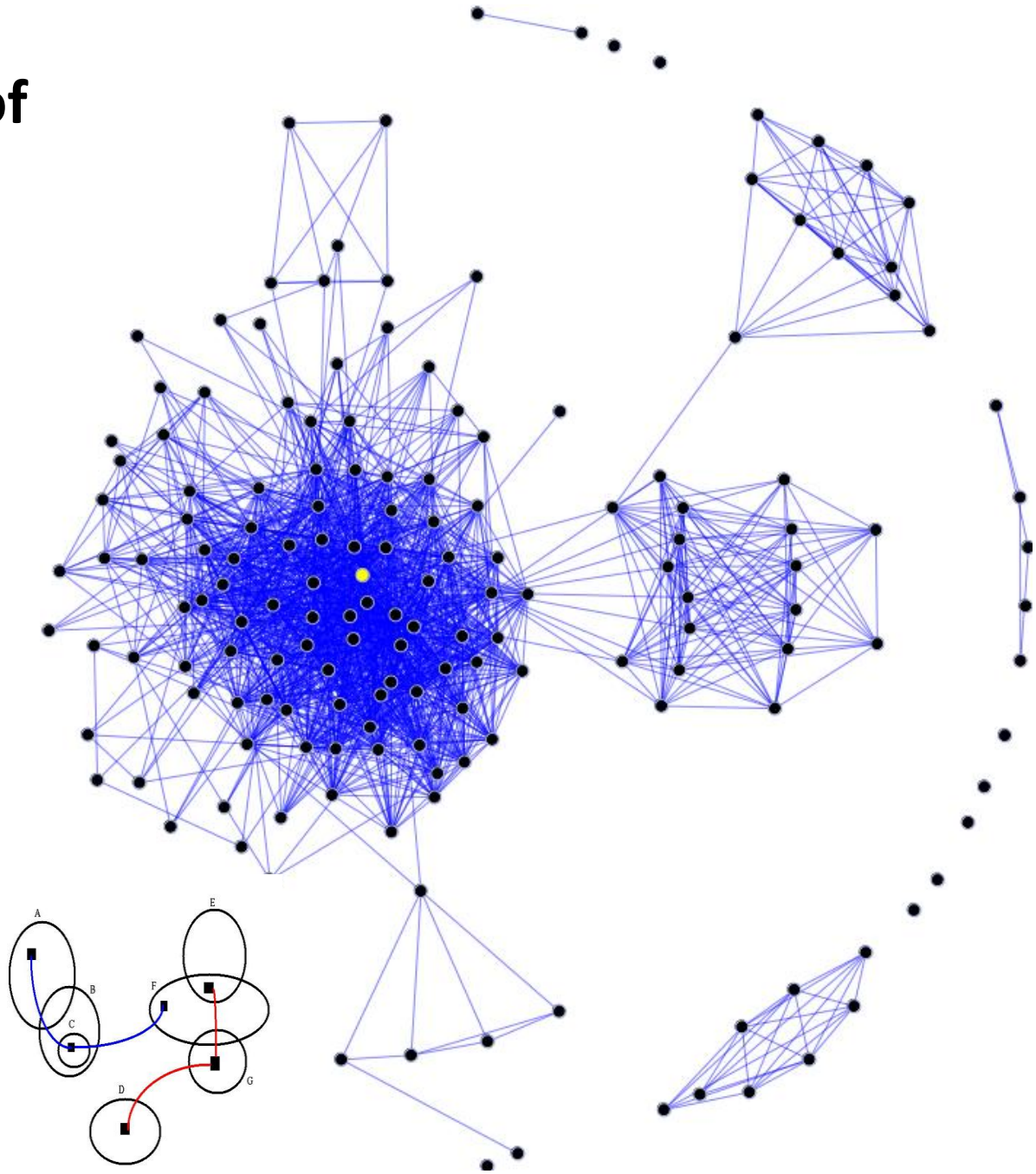


Federations, networks and organised policy influence



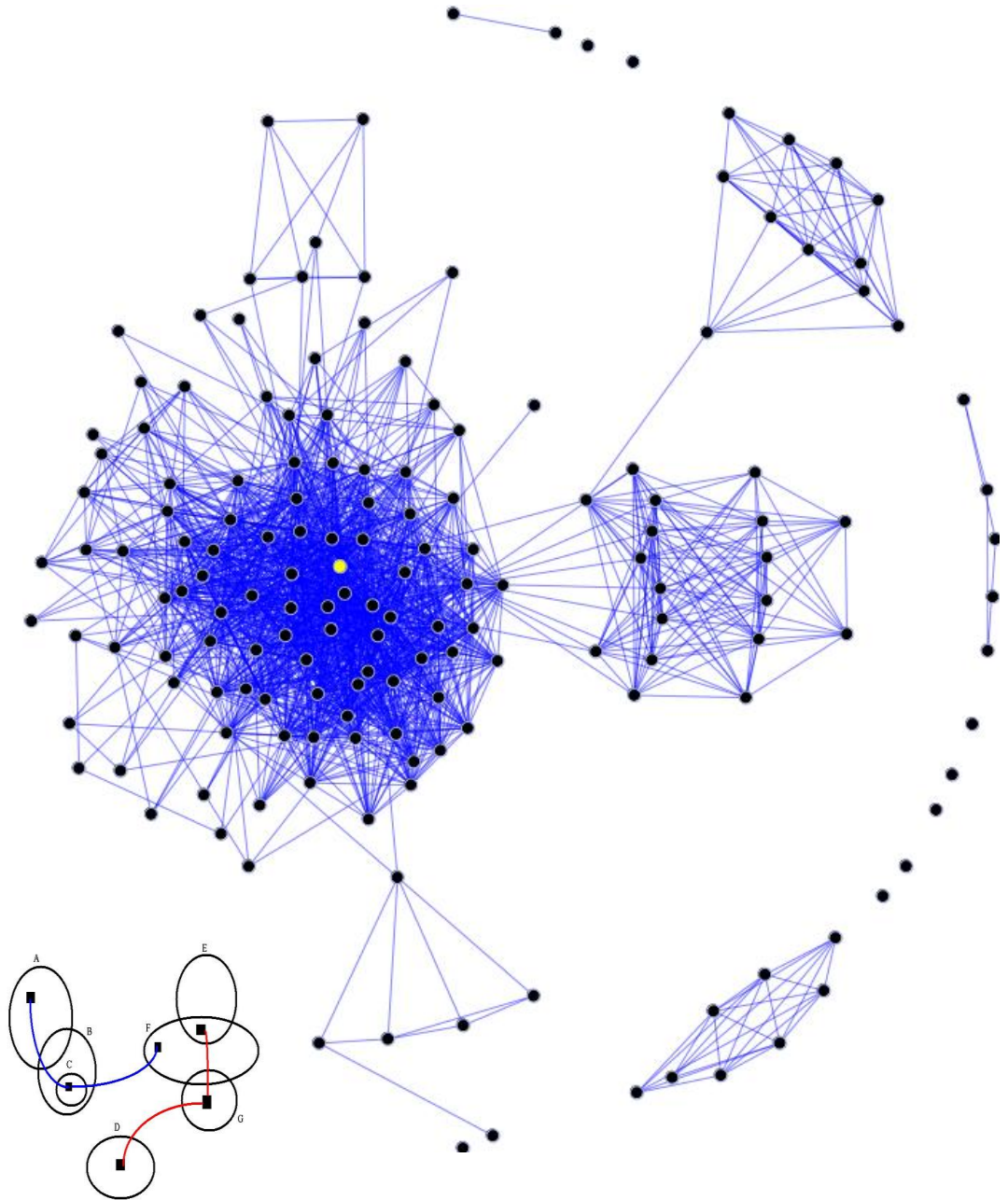
Multi-scale networks of local organisations

- Local and regional coalitions e.g. AFSA
- Producer alliances – e.g. WAMIP)
- Federations of indigenous peoples
- La Via Campesina



Shared values and visions

- Self-determination and endogenous development – many worlds possible and desirable
- Rights based approaches e.g. UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Emphasis on alternative policy framework for food and agriculture – *“Food Sovereignty”*



Federations of local organisations are well placed to promote countervailing power and more democracy. They can:

- create safe spaces and participatory processes in which expert knowledge is put under public scrutiny through appropriate methods for deliberation and inclusion (e.g. citizens' juries)
- strengthen the voices of the excluded in setting agendas and framing policies and regulatory frameworks for development and environment—at local, national and global levels
- Case study: ***Prajateerpu*** in South India

Democratizing the Governance of Food Systems

- putting peasants and other citizens at the centre of governance

Six pathways for empowering citizens in policy-making & institutional choices:

1. Learning from history to re-invent active forms of citizenship

e.g. Spanish civil war and peasant's reclaiming control over land and other resources -

http://www.diversefoodsystems.org/tfs/tfs5_anarchism.mov

2. Strengthening civil society

- Collaboration between local and external civil society actors
- Building upon synergies between the government and society
- Independent pathways from below



3. Methodologies for citizen participation in policy and institutional choices, including risk assessments



4. Towards greater information democracy

- Autonomous media
- Web based knowledge networks and multimedia



5. Nurturing citizenship

Politics are too important to be left to professionals: they must become the domain of amateurs—of ordinary citizens.

- With training and experience citizens can learn to deliberate, make decisions, and implement their choices responsibly
- These skills do not arise spontaneously; they have to be consciously nurtured and are the result of careful political education, which includes character formation, personal and social training, and civic schooling—to produce citizens with the competence to act in the public interest.

6. Strengthening local organisations to expand agroecology, food sovereignty and democracy

- Local adaptive management of environment
- People's access to land and food
- Federations, networks and organized policy influence



- facilitate the horizontal interlinking and federating of citizen spaces as a way of decentralising and democratising the governance of food systems



- support the emergence of large scale coalitions for change committed to agroecology, food sovereignty and well being ('buen vivir')



Two big challenges for local organisations



Social inclusion in local organisations

Consciously developing forms of governance and relations that are:

- i) genuinely inclusive of gender and difference
- ii) democratic, with effective safeguards against the abuse, and concentration of power



Horizontal forms of organized cooperation – why and how?

- Collective action and local adaptive management of ecosystems and natural resources over a wide area
- Organized cooperation for economic exchanges among interdependent communities
- **Forms of governance:**
State-centric?
Democratic
confederalism? Or?

