



# Lecture 8: Agents of Transformation

## Episode 2: Change Agents

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Episode 1: Values, Knowledge and Action

**Episode 2: Change Agents**

Episode 3: Interview



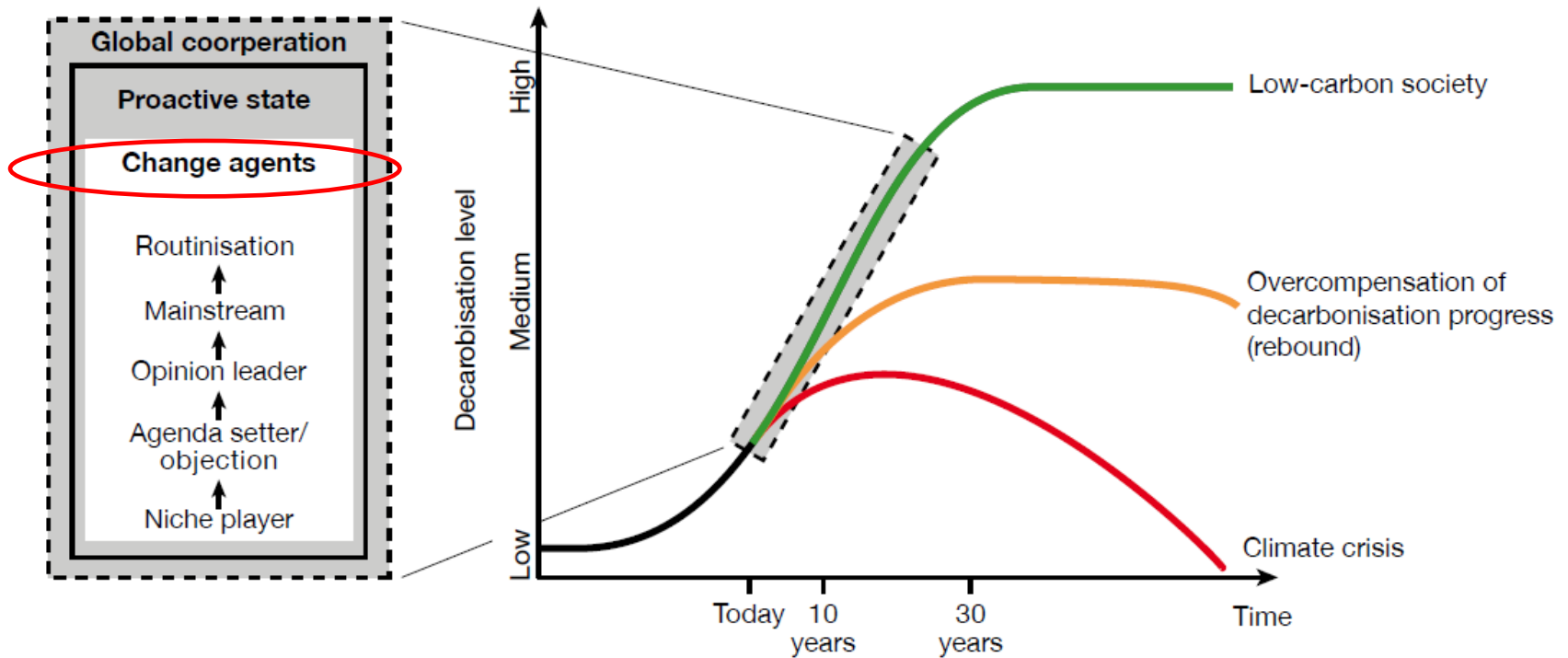
1. You have an understanding of the role of human agency in social change.
2. You are familiar with the concept of change agents.
3. You have an understanding of different phases of social diffusion.
4. You are able to distinguish between different types and roles of change agents.
5. You know various change agents for a low-carbon transformation.



- **The Role of Agency (within Innovation- and Transformation processes)**
  - Temporal Dynamics and Action Levels
  - Dynamics of Innovation and Diffusion on the Micro-, Meso- and Macrolevel
- The Concept of Change Agents
  - WBGU Definition
  - Phases of Social Diffusion
- Change Agents for a Low-Carbon Transformation
  - Typology
  - Cases Studies



# The Transformation's Temporal Dynamics and Action Levels



Source: WBGU, 2011

## Innovation Dynamics and Diffusion on Three Levels

Social Level	Business as Usual	Innovation	Analysis Level
Micro	Veto Players	Change Agents	Interests
Meso	Loss Aversion	Pioneer Spirit	Emotions, Dispositions
Macro	Cultural Barriers	Innovation Cultures	Symbolic Level, Framework

Source: WBGU, 2011



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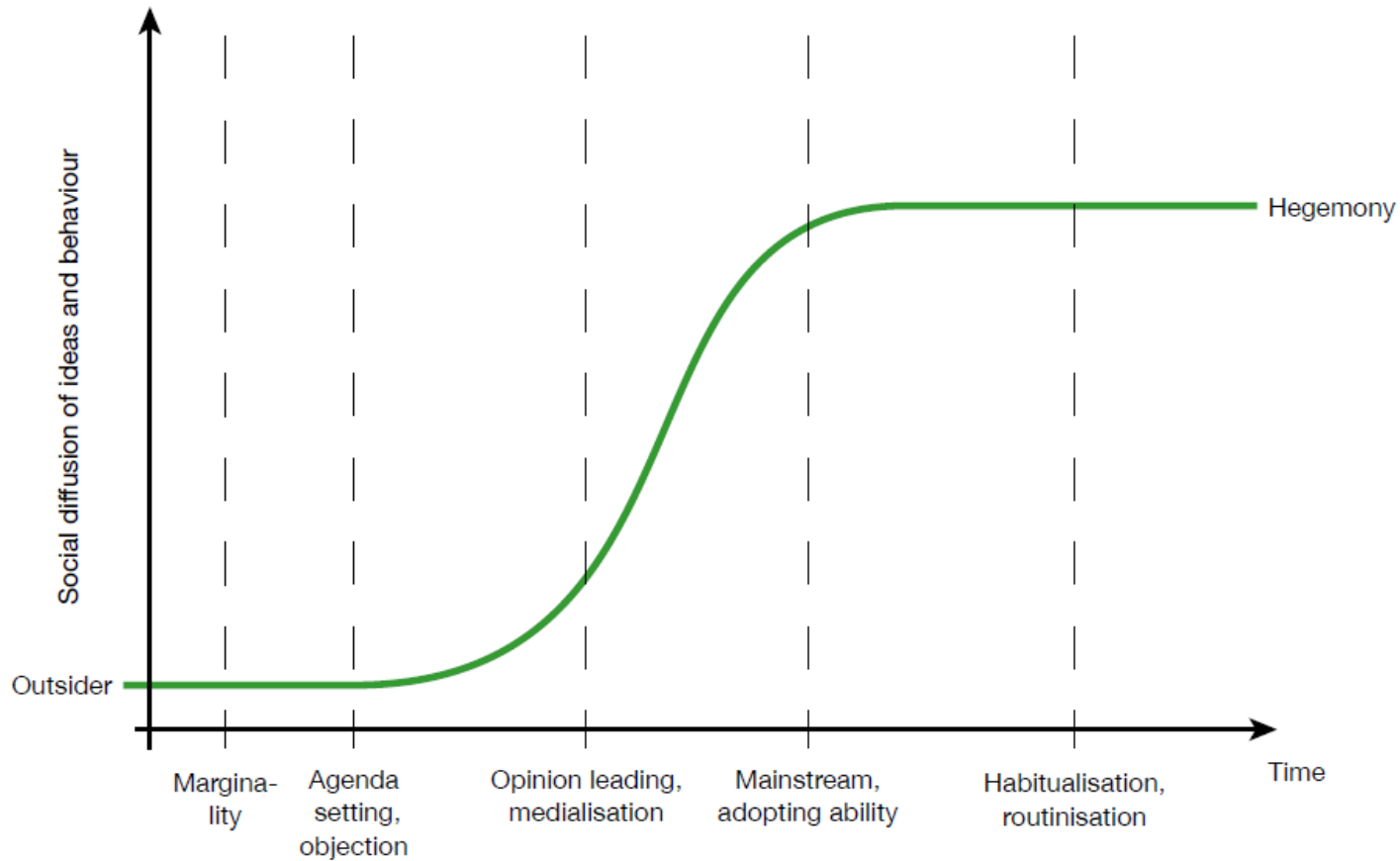
## WBGU Definition

*“Strategic actors who are (sometimes unconscious) pioneers of social change, spreading an awareness of the chances it offers” (WBGU, 2011).*





## Phases of Social Diffusion



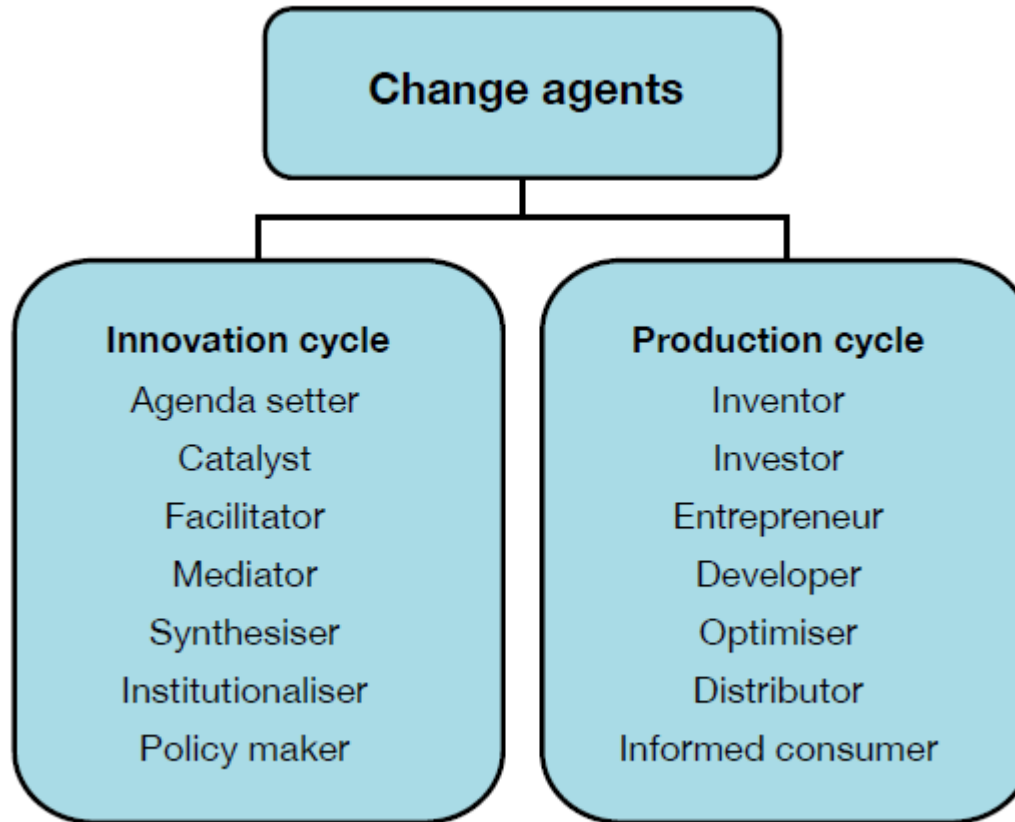
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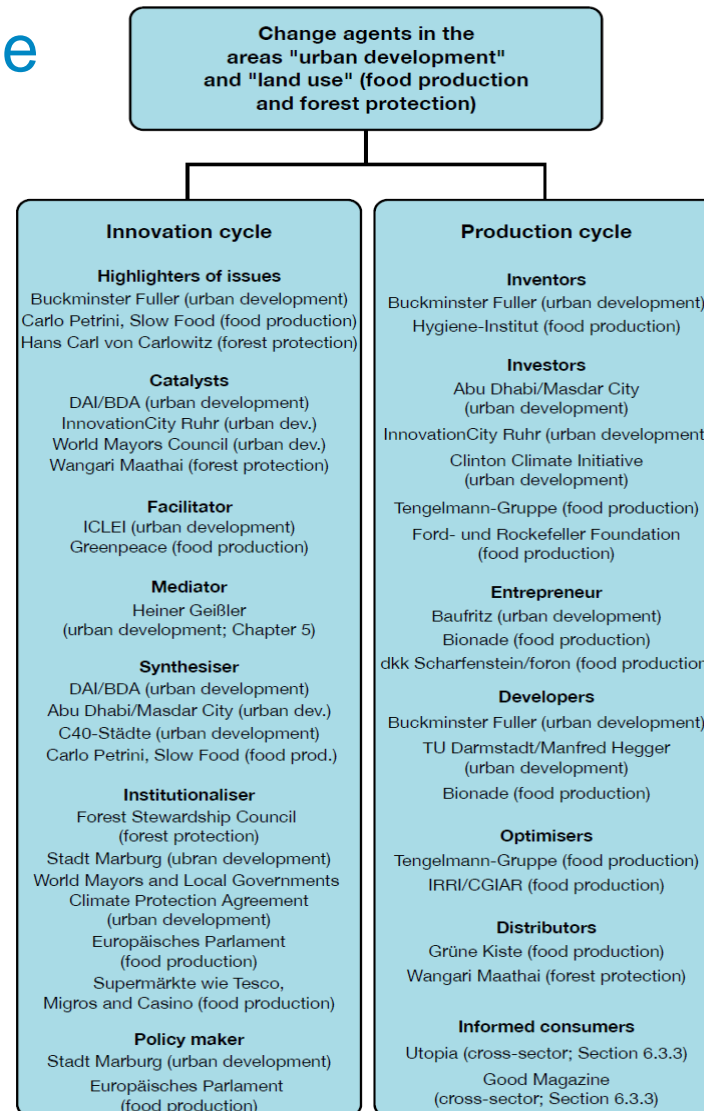
## Typology of Change Agents



Source: WBGU, 2011



## Synopsis of Case Studies



Source: WBGU, 2011

# Promote and Multiply Change Agents to Achieve a Rapid Transformation

- Frequently, social innovation processes are triggered less by existing cognitive knowledge, and more by change motivated by the immediate environment, communicated and/or implemented exploratively and experimentally.
- Change agents support certain changes, actively driving them ahead. Initially, change agents are single individuals and small groups. They propagate innovations by questioning 'business as usual' policies and creating alternative practices.
- The speed of a transformation (or whether it can succeed at all) depends largely on the involved actors availing themselves of the existing opportunity structures.



- What are change agents and why are they important?
- Please describe different phases of social diffusion.
- What are typical roles/functions of change agents within the innovation and production cycle?



### Basic reading:

- WBGU (2011): World in Transition: A Social Contract for Sustainability, chapter 6. Berlin.  
[www.wbgu.de](http://www.wbgu.de)

### Further reading:

- Rogers, E. M. (2003): Diffusion of Innovations. New York: Free Press.
- Grin, J., Rotmans, J. and Schot, J. (2010): Transitions to Sustainable Development. New Directions in the Study of Long Term Transformative Change. London: Routledge.
- Leggewie, C. and Welzer, H. (2009): Das Ende der Welt, wie wir sie kannten. Klima, Zukunft und die Chancen der Demokratie. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer.
- Gladwell, Malcom (2001): Tipping Point. How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference. New York/Boston: Back Bay Books
- Kristof, K. (2010): Wege zum Wandel. Wie wir gesellschaftliche Veränderungen erfolgreich gestalten können. Munich: oekom.



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