



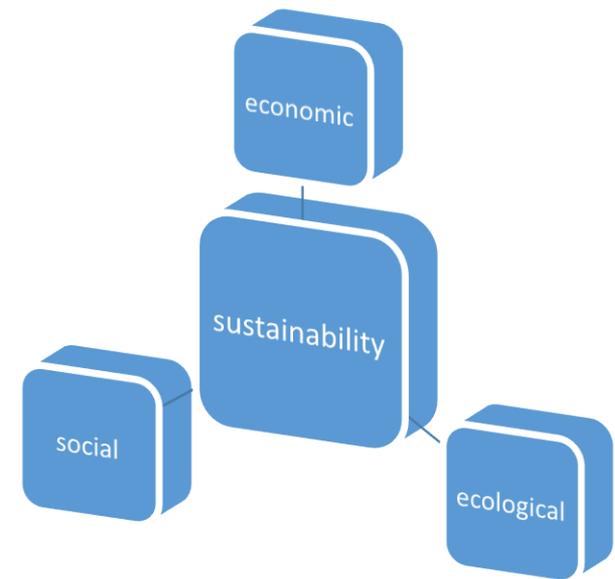
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# Spatial and regional development as a component of sustainable cooperative business models

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# Introduction

- “classic” business models ≠ cooperative business models
- Cooperatives
  1. alter the social structures within which members are situated
  2. enhance the capacity and ability of members to take action
  3. unfold transformative potential (for members, non-members and the region)



# Structure

1. Cooperative spatial and regional development
2. Cooperative investments into networks
3. Sustainable business models
4. Cooperative business models as sustainable business models
5. Cooperative regional responsibility
6. Conclusion
7. References

# 1. Cooperative Spatial and Regional Development

- „Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.“ (ICA 7th Principle)
- Guidance Notes on the 7th Principle:
  - „‘The sustainable development of their communities’: [...] It refers to communities to which the co-operative belongs and which belong to it; in other words, communities in which its business operates. Its inclusion in this phrase shows that the primary emphasis of concern is for the **local communities** within which a co-operative carries on its business operations.“

(ICA 2015: 87)

# 1. Cooperative Spatial and Regional Development

## Relational Framework based on

### 1. Relational Sociology (Emirbayer 1997)

- Using network analysis and theory
- Society as complex whole of relations among individual and collective actors
- Relational economic geography (Bathelt/Glückler 2000; 2002; 2018)
  - Regions as networks
  - Network analysis combined with
  - Qualitative (subjective) perception by regional actors

# 2. Cooperative Investments into Networks

## Four Prerequisites (Bachinger/Pechlaner 2011: 19-21)

1. Relationship specific investments
2. Development of shared learning routines
3. Exchange of complementary resources
4. Development of appropriate network governance

# 3. Sustainable business models

- **Sustainability:** „development that meets the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environmental Development 1987)
- **Three Dimensions:**
  - Ecological Dimension
  - Economic Dimension
  - Social Dimension
- „Stakeholder-Interaction approach“ (Comin et al. 2019)
- Understanding of **sustainable business models:** Sustainable business model should be understood as a representation of the core logic of a company that takes into account not only economic but also social and ecological aspects (Following Ahrend 2016)

## 4. Cooperative business models as sustainable business models I

- Selected relevant indicators with regard to **cooperative business models as sustainable business models**:
  - Ownership
  - Long-term Design
  - Members as most important reference group
  - Regionality
- Cooperative business models pursue a **stakeholder approach** (Leroux 2016)

# 4. Cooperative business models as sustainable business models II

- Cooperative business models as sustainable business models:
  - **Economic perspective** (Ringle 2010; Blome-Drees and Schmale 2019; Schmale 2020)
    - Long-term, cross-generational promotion of members
    - Market success in relation to means-to-purpose ratio for member promotion
    - Operates predominantly in the regional economy
    - Regional network building

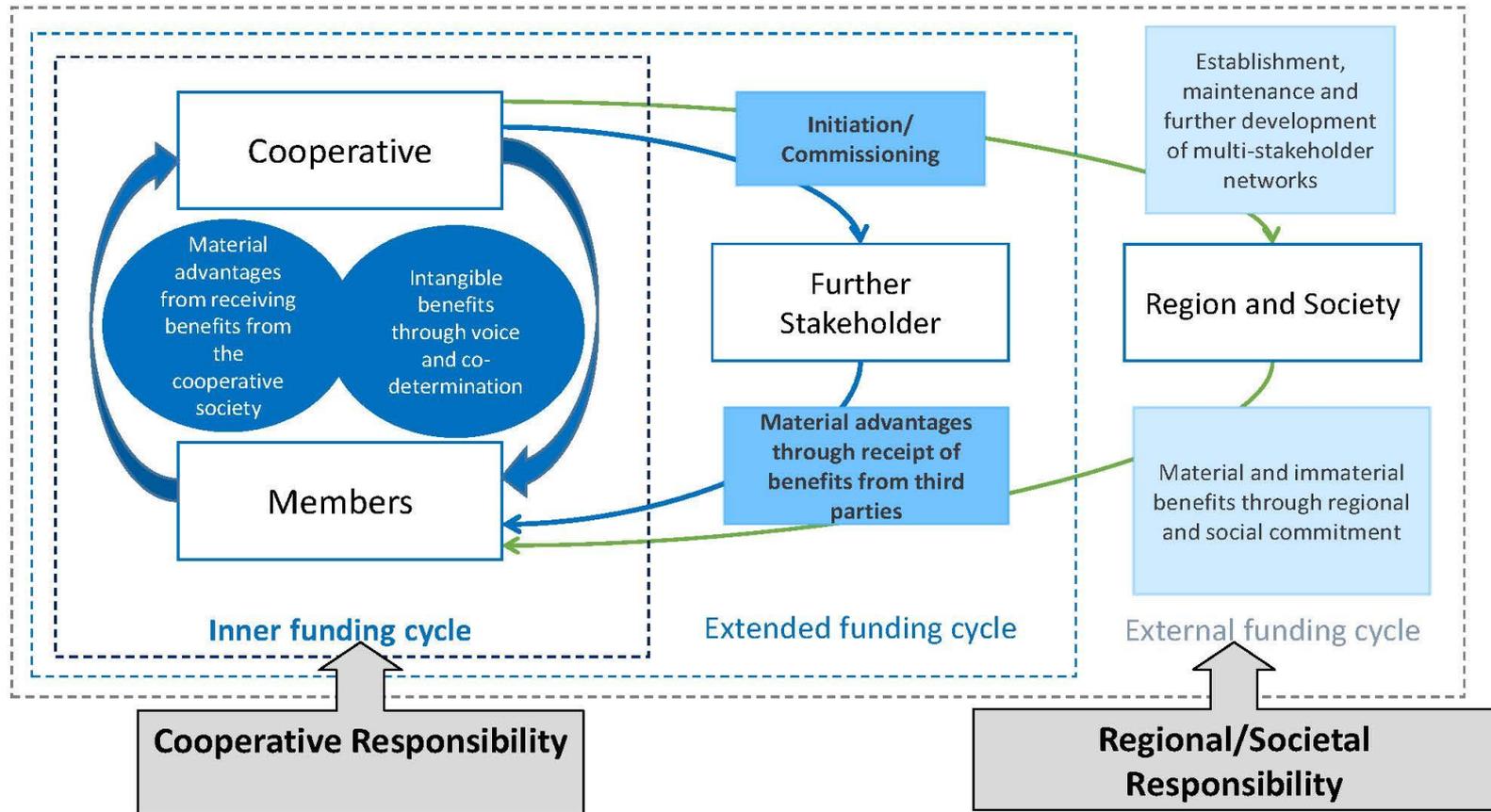
# 4. Cooperative business models as sustainable business models III

- Cooperative business models as sustainable business models:
  - **Ecological perspective** (ICA 2015)
    - International statues of the cooperative movement
    - Instruments of economization
    - Offer the opportunity to take up and realise ecological concerns
      - Examples: energy cooperatives, agricultural cooperatives

# 4. Cooperative business models as sustainable business models IV

- Cooperative business models as sustainable business models:
  - **Social Dimension** (Engelhardt 1985, Schulz-Nieswandt 2018a, 2018b)
    - Bottom-up social policy actor
    - Cooperatives as regional concept of embedded network formation  
Social cooperatives

# 5. Cooperative regional responsibility



Source: Following Blome-Drees and Schmale 2019.

# 6. Conclusion



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# Thank you for your attention!

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