

Identifying farm typologies in an abandonment risk area in the Pyrenees (Spain)

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Introduction

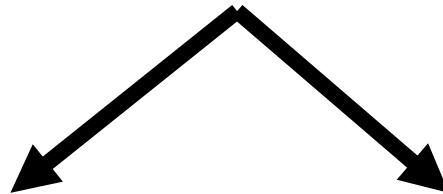
Since the second half of the 20th century the agricultural sector, and the rural areas as a whole, is going through very important transformations in Europe.



This process is particularly severe in mountain areas, where the farms are in a long-term process of reorganisation to accommodate changes, such as: new demands on the rural space, integration of local economies into globalised market ...



It seems that at present most of the mountain farms (small, family-run and extensively-managed operations) are not viable in the present conditions.

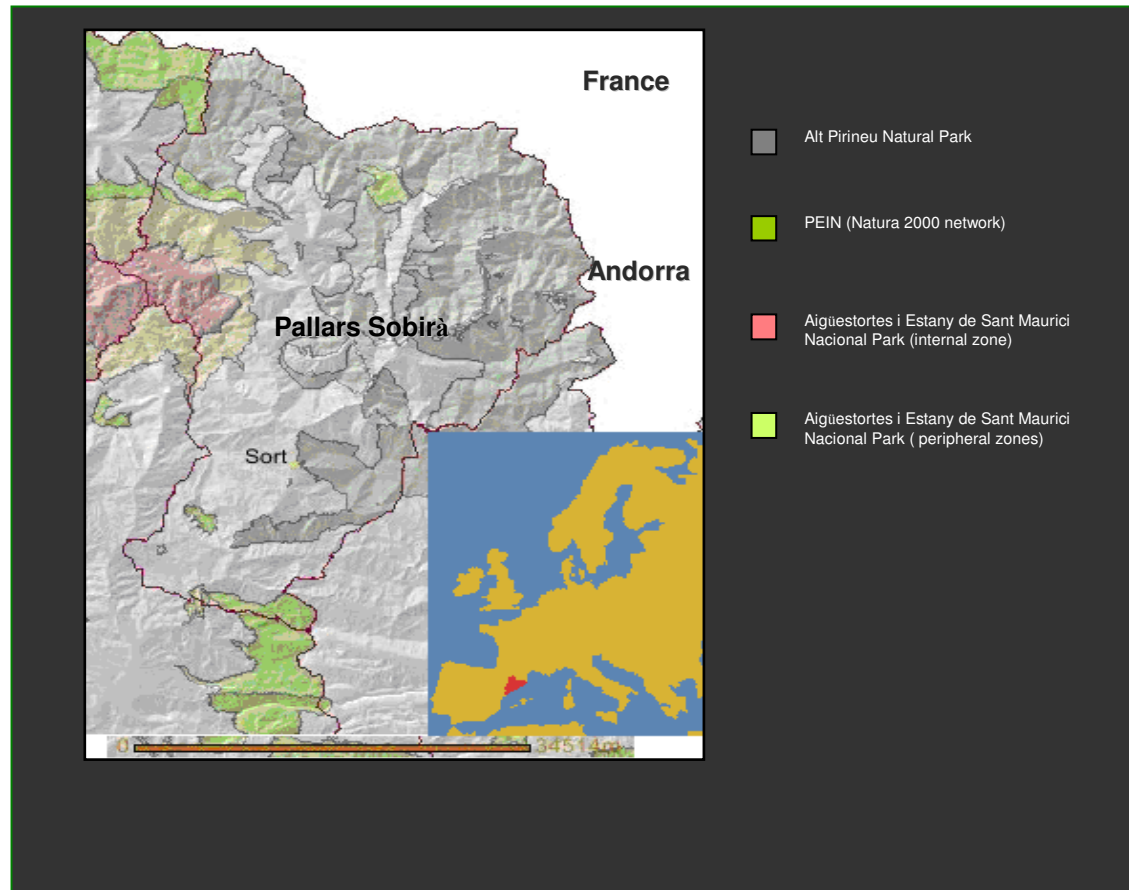


e.g. the number of farms in the Catalan Pyrenees decreased from 15,296 to 5,354 between 1972 and 1999.

Farm adjustment strategies

Farm diversification options, which are specific farm adjustment strategies that imply the supply of new products and services.

Study area



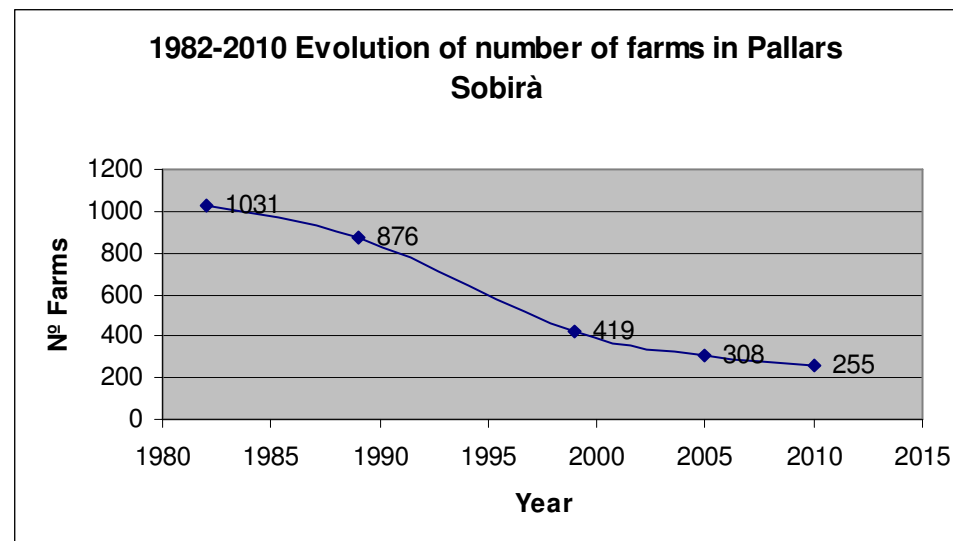
Study area

- ❑ The region covers an area of 1,378 km².
- ❑ Vast diversity of landscapes, from alpine sceneries around 3,000-metre mountain peaks to hay meadows of the valley floor.
- ❑ Natural protected areas cover more than 80% of its surface.
- ❑ 7,446 inhabitants.
- ❑ 134 villages and 15 municipalities.
- ❑ Most of the villages have a population of less than 30 inhabitants.
- ❑ Population density is 5.4 persons per km².



Study area

- ❑ Nine tens of the territory is steeper than 20%.
- ❑ Traditional livestock raising is characterised by an extensive management of the herd between the alpine grassland in summer and the hay meadows of the lowlands in winter.



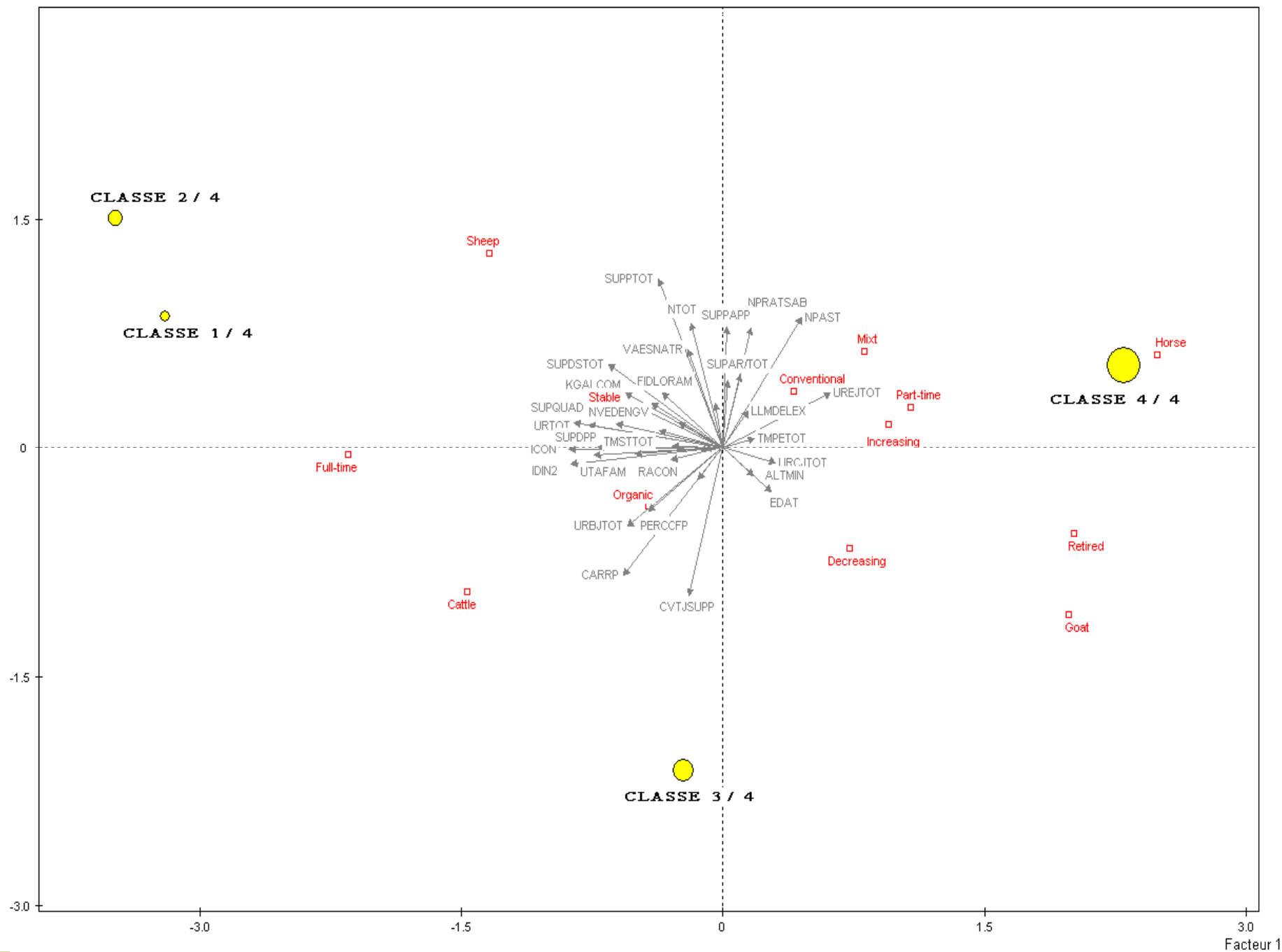
Objectives

- ▣ To characterise the different kinds of livestock farms
- ▣ To detect patterns of relationships between the farm typologies identified and different forms of farm adjustment strategies, particularly as regards farm diversification options

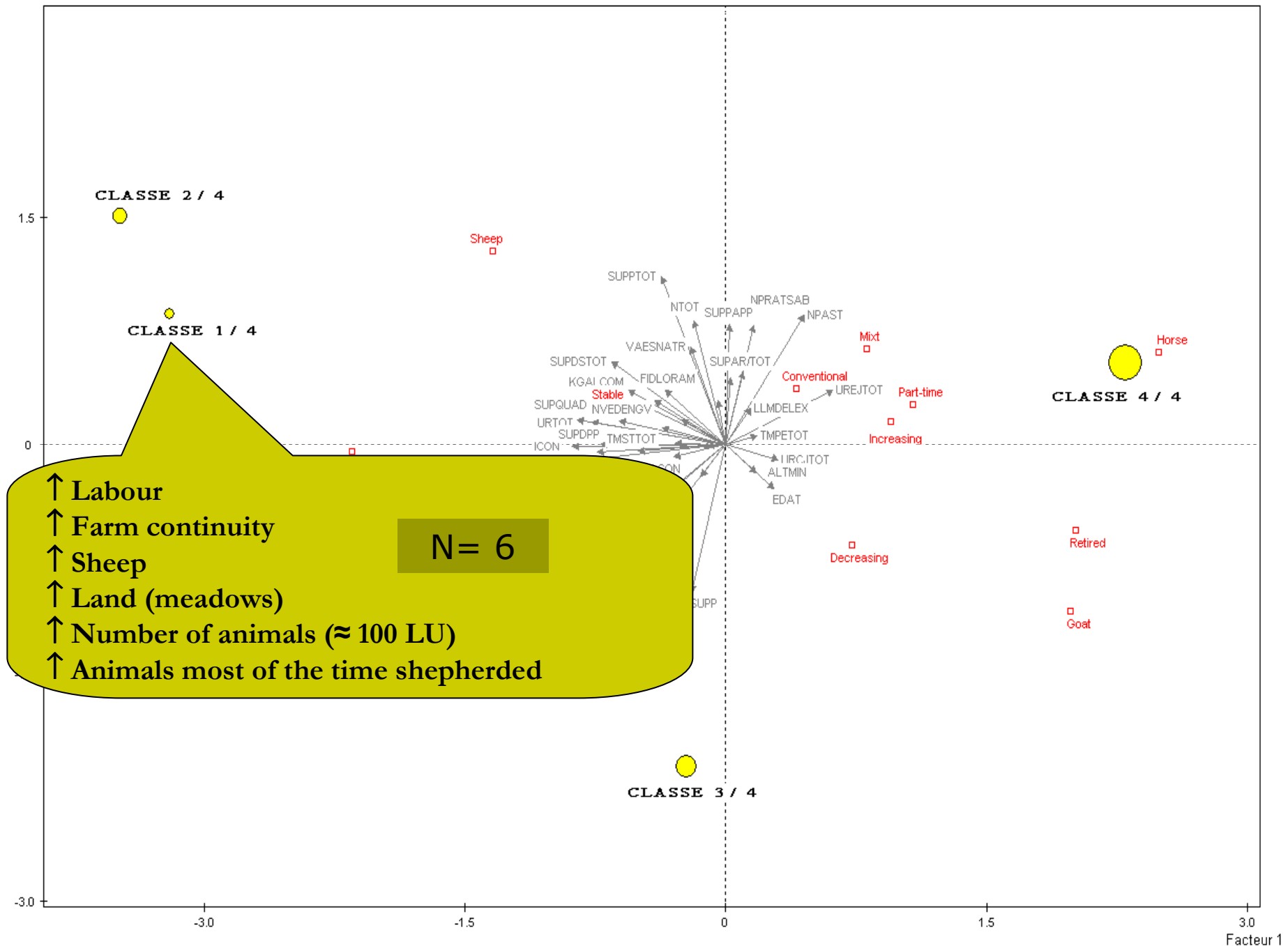
Methodology

- ❑ 57 structured interviews to farmers conducted in 2007 (20%)
 - Each interview lasted between one and two hours
 - The interview was divided into several sections
 - ❑ Livestock census
 - ❑ Land
 - ❑ Feedstuff
 - ❑ Production
 - ❑ Labour and mechanisation
- ❑ Principal Components Analysis and Cluster Analysis were applied to unveil the farm typologies

Facteur 2



Facteur 2



Facteur 1

Facteur 2

- ↑ Calf fattening
- ↑ Farm continuity
- ↑ Farm dynamisation
- ↑ Consumption of external feedstuff
- ↑ Index of dependence
- ↑ Land (meadows)

N = 10

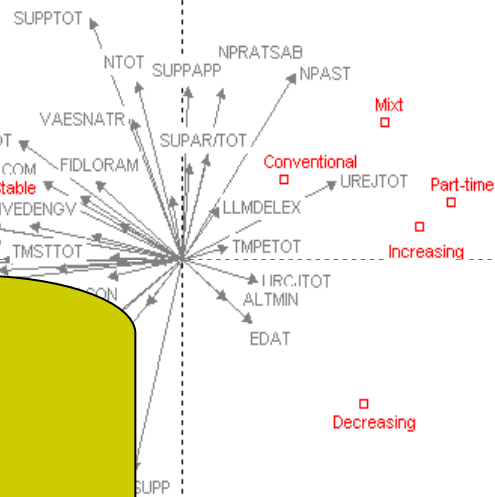
CLA

1.5

CLASSE 1 / 4

- ↑ Labour
- ↑ Farm continuity
- ↑ Sheep
- ↑ Land (meadows)
- ↑ Number of animals (≈ 100 LU)
- ↑ Animals most of the time shepherded

N = 6



Mixt

Horse

CLASSE 4 / 4

Conventional

Increasing

Decreasing

Retired

Goat

CLASSE 3 / 4

-3.0

-3.0

-1.5

0

1.5

Facteur 1

Facteur 2

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- ↑ Farm continuity
- ↑ Farm dinamisation
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N= 10

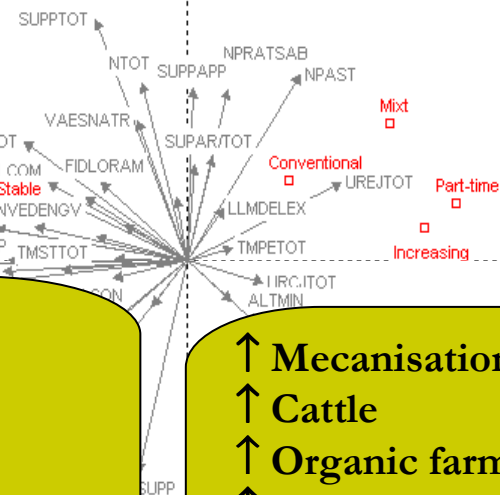
CLA

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CLASSE 1 / 4

- ↑ Labour
- ↑ Farm continuity
- ↑ Sheep
- ↑ Land (meadows)
- ↑ Number of animals (≈ 100 LU)
- ↑ Animals most of the time shepherded

N= 6



CLASSE 4 / 4

- ↑ Mecanisation
- ↑ Cattle
- ↑ Organic farming
- ↑ Farm tourism businesses
- ↓ Land (meadows)
- ↓ Grazing

N= 16

CLASSE 3 / 4

-3.0

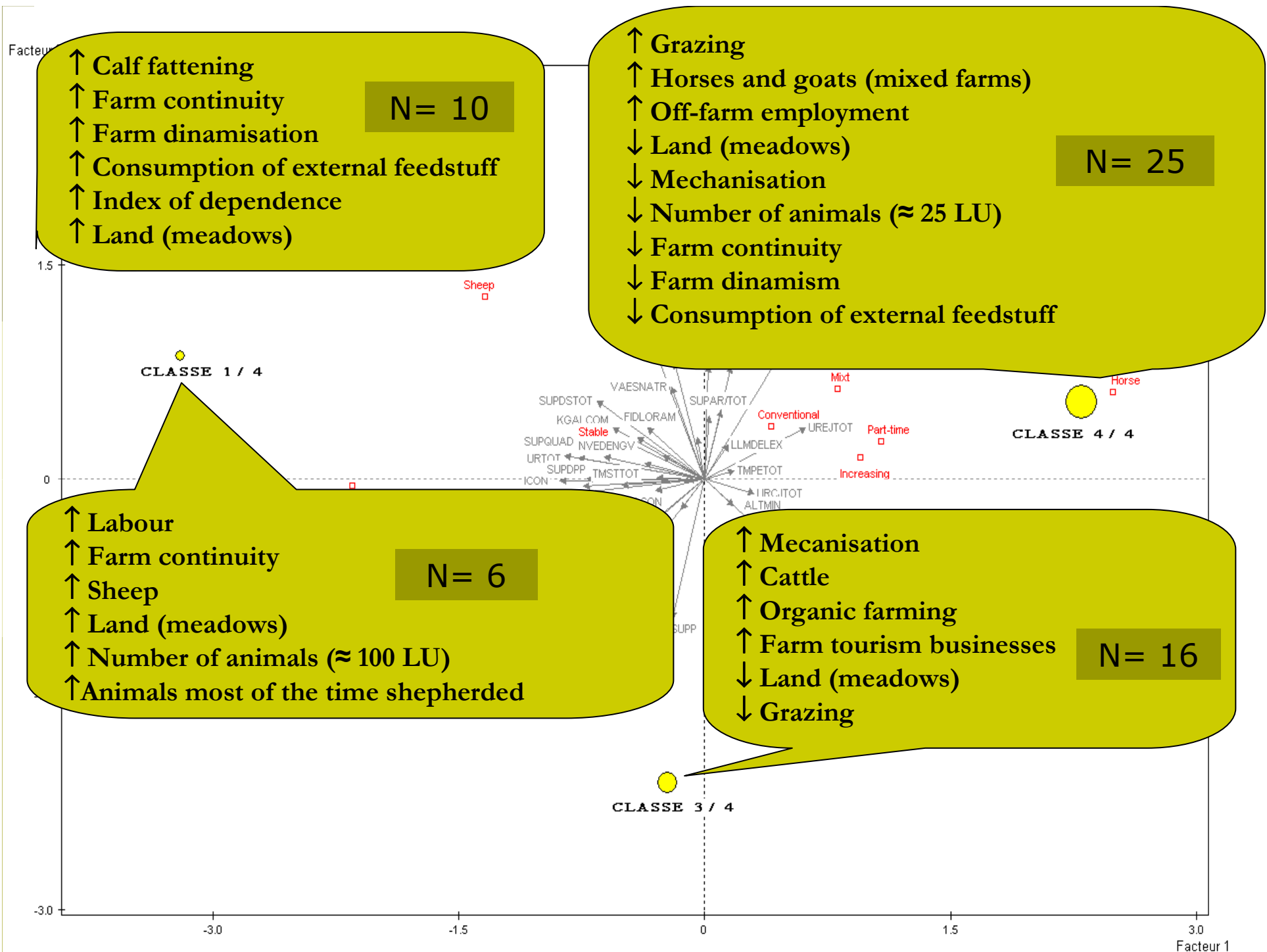
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-1.5

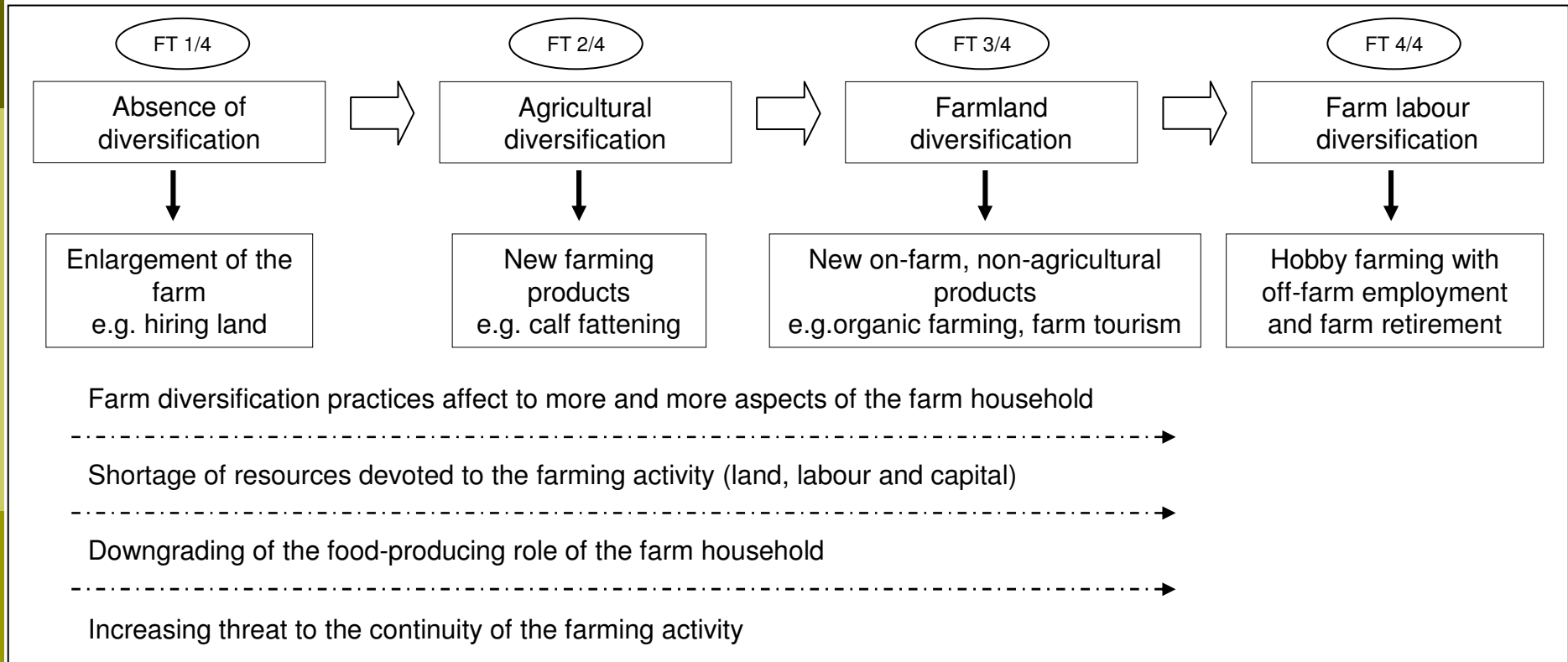
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1.5

Facteur 1



Discussion



Conclusions

- ❑ The farm households that devote fewer resources to agriculture are also the ones implementing broader farm diversification options.
- ❑ The process of gradual broadening of farm diversification goes with a growing threat of abandoning the farming activity.
- ❑ Policy measures encouraging farm diversification in mountain areas should be carefully examined, if safeguarding the farming activity is an aim.
- ❑ If we want to guarantee the continuity of farming in mountain areas, the promotion of agricultural diversification options is more appropriate. Whereas the endorsement of activities such as farm tourism, organic farming - if it is passively adopted - and, particularly, off-farm employment, should be considered cautiously.

Gràcies!



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