A background image of a savanna landscape. A dirt road winds through the scene, with several lions resting on it. In the distance, a lioness is walking away from the viewer. The trees are dry and sparse, typical of a savanna environment.

IPBES Assessment of Transformative Change: What to change?

Thursday 10th October, 2019

Laura Pereira

Senior researcher

Centre for Complex Systems in Transition, Stellenbosch University

Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University

Outline

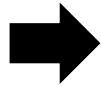
- How does systemic change happen?
- Leverage points
- Enabling transformative change
- Identifying transformative potential
- Kick-start questions



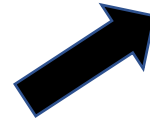
Transformative change



Medieval Europe



Industrial Revolution



?



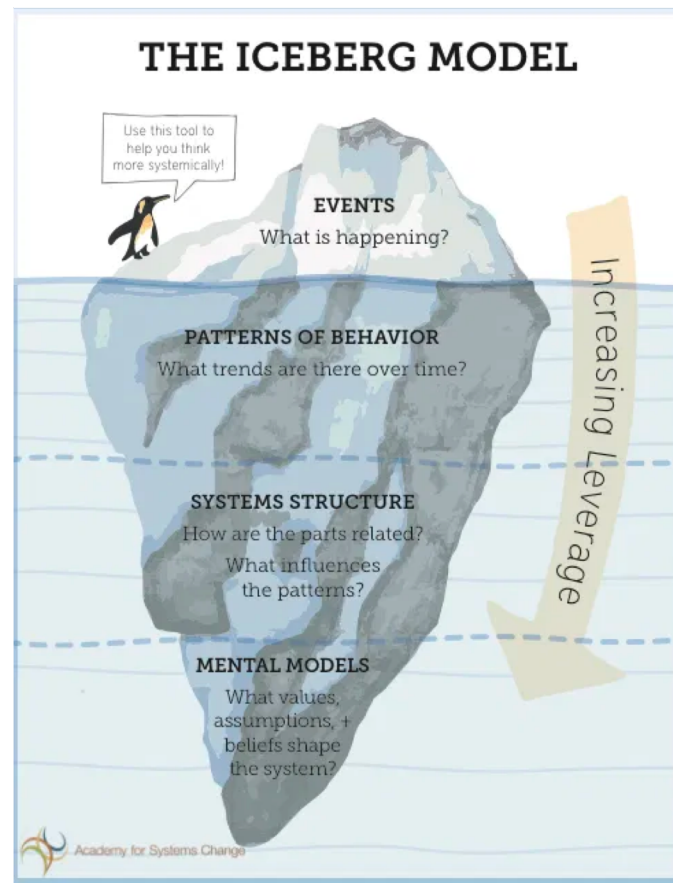
? ? ?

How do we think change happens in systems?

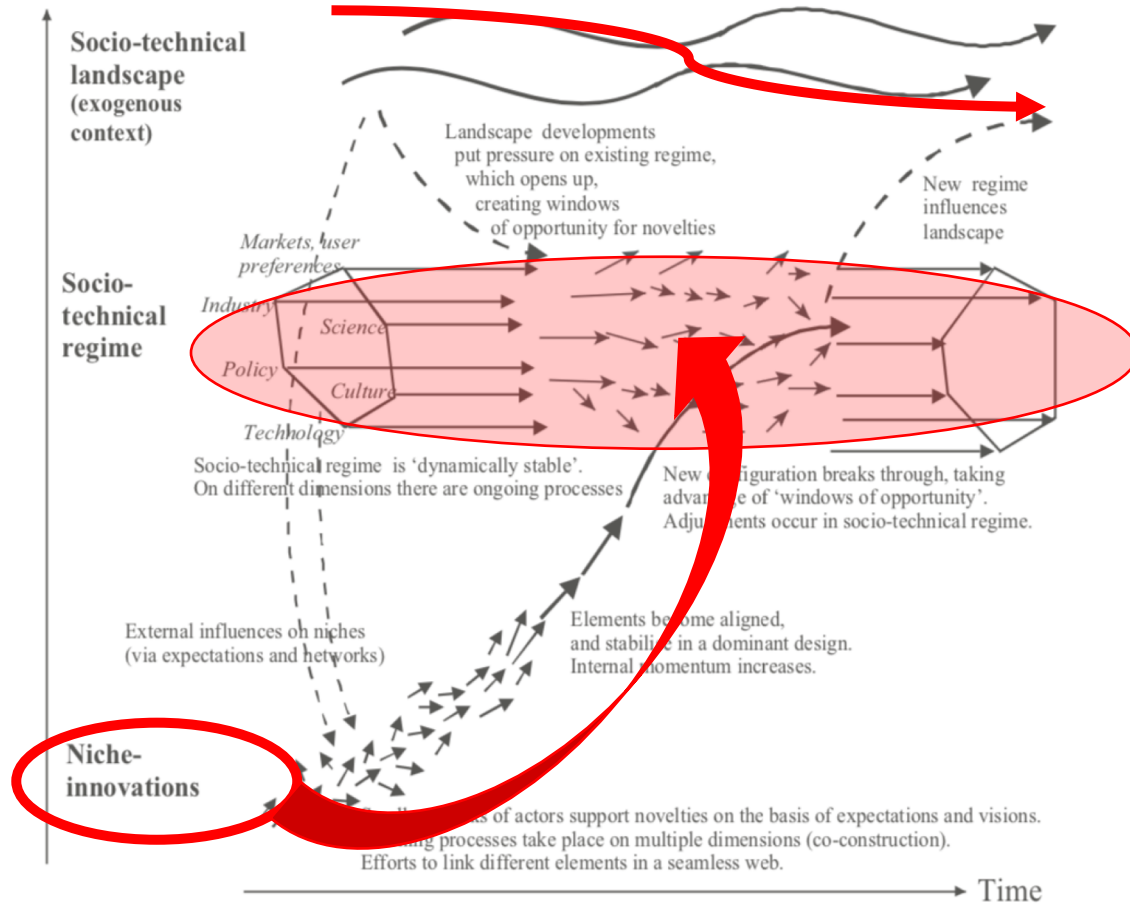
- From the top-down?
 - Montreal Protocol
- From the bottom-up?
 - Wangari Maathai's Greenbelt movement

Systems acupuncture

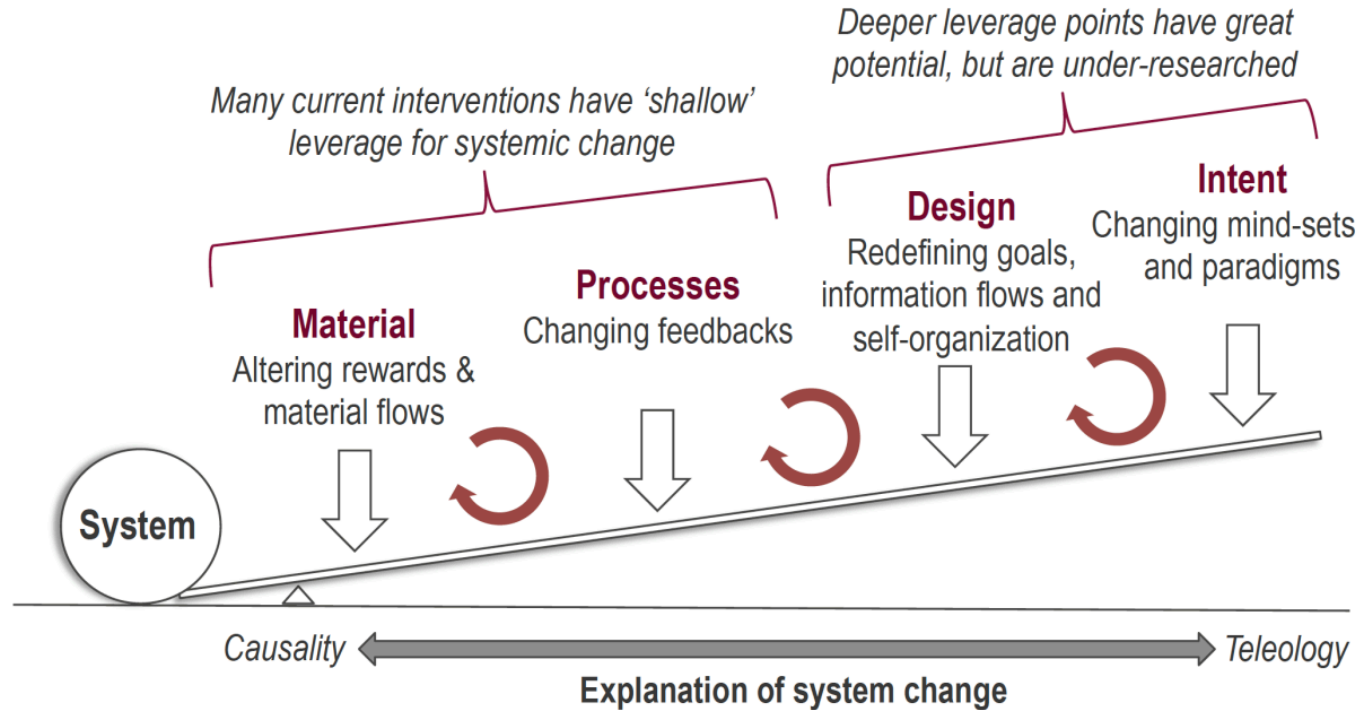
(Banny Banerjee: Stanford Change Labs)



Increasing structuration
of activities in local practices

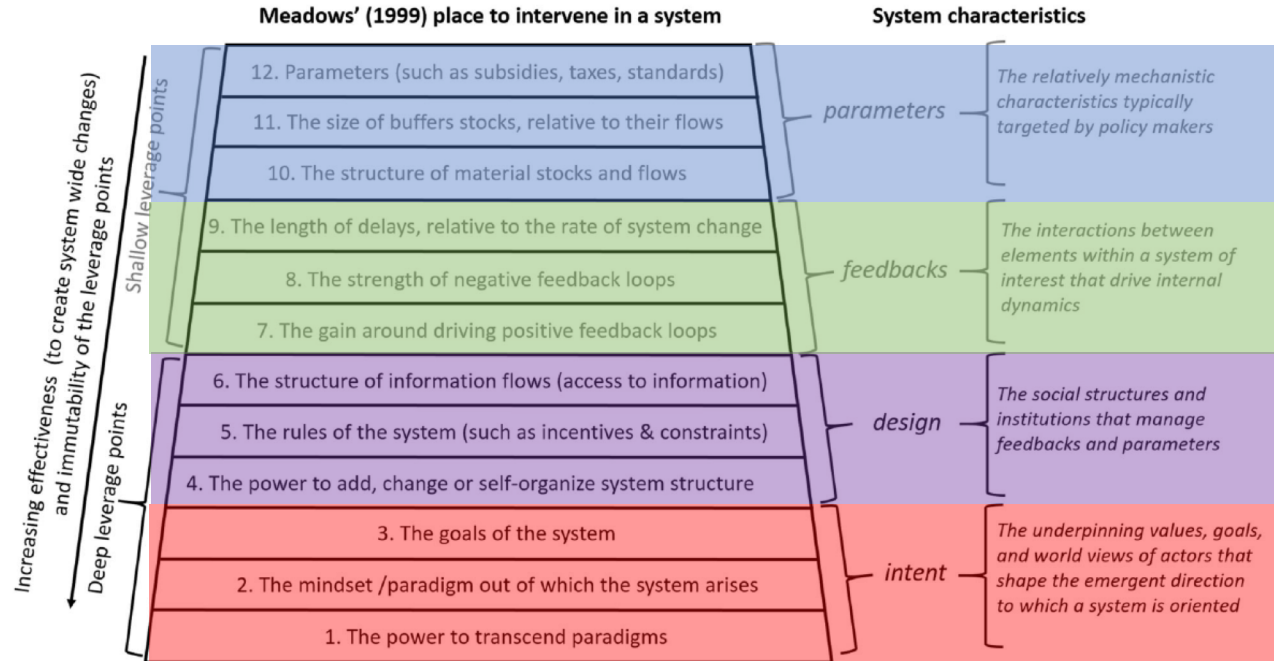


Leverage Points: How to effect change

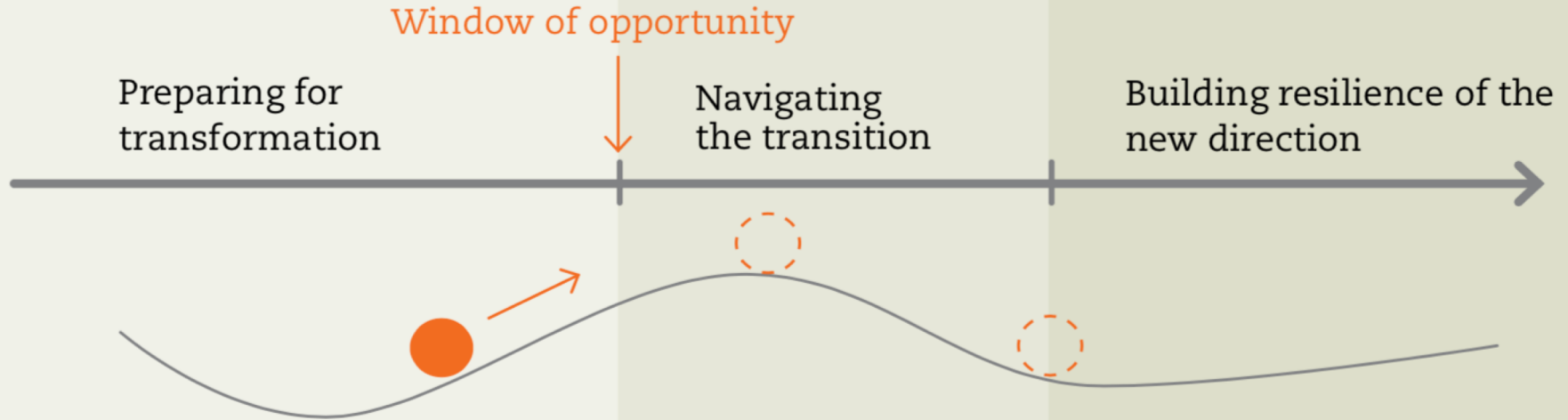


Adapted from Abson et al 2017 by Fisher and Riechers

Leverage Points: Places to intervene in a system



Enabling transformative change

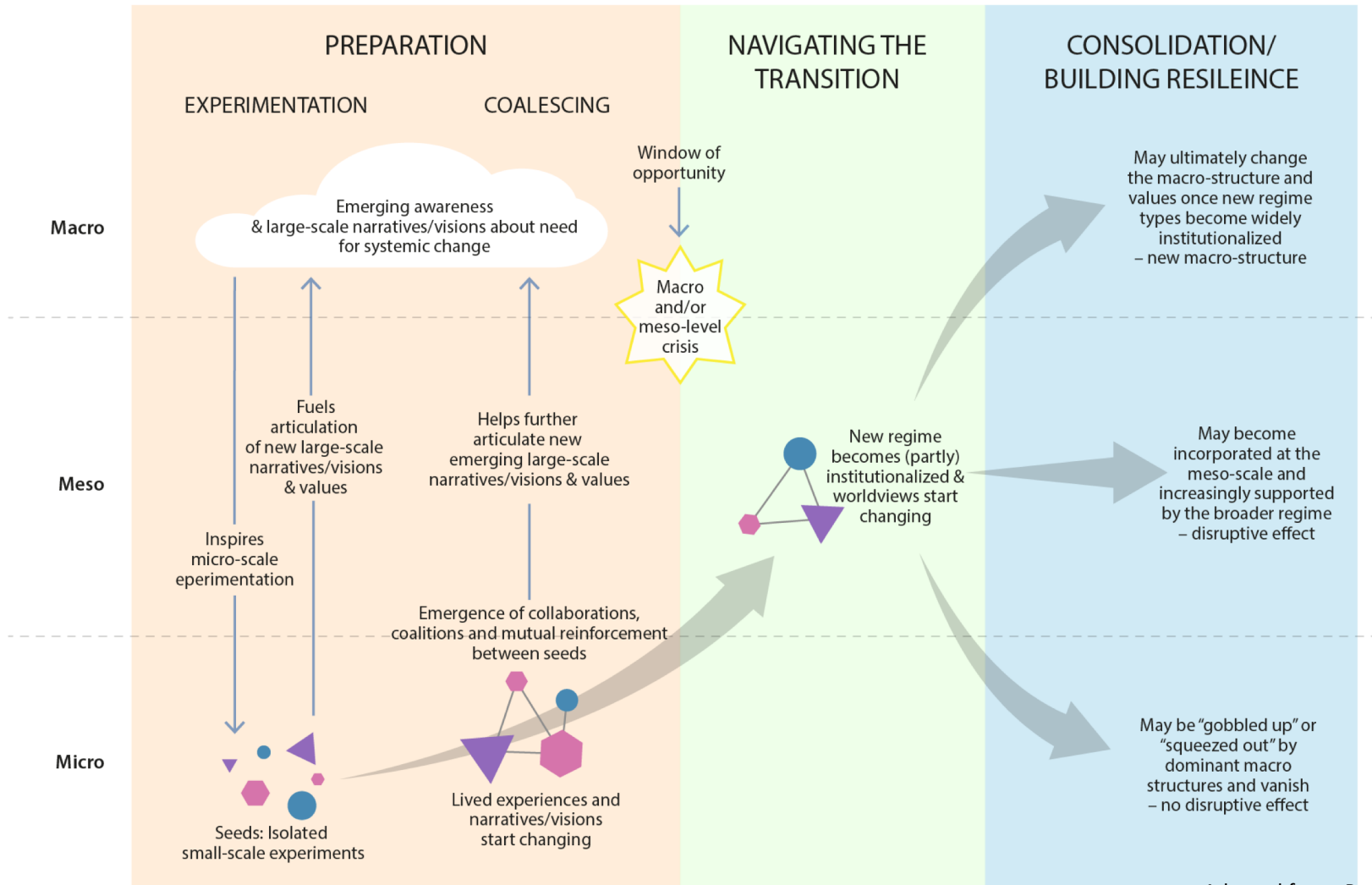


In the preparation phase, institutional entrepreneurs and their networks may work simultaneously at different scales of the social-ecological system. By intervening at broader institutional levels, they can open up new trajectories of development.

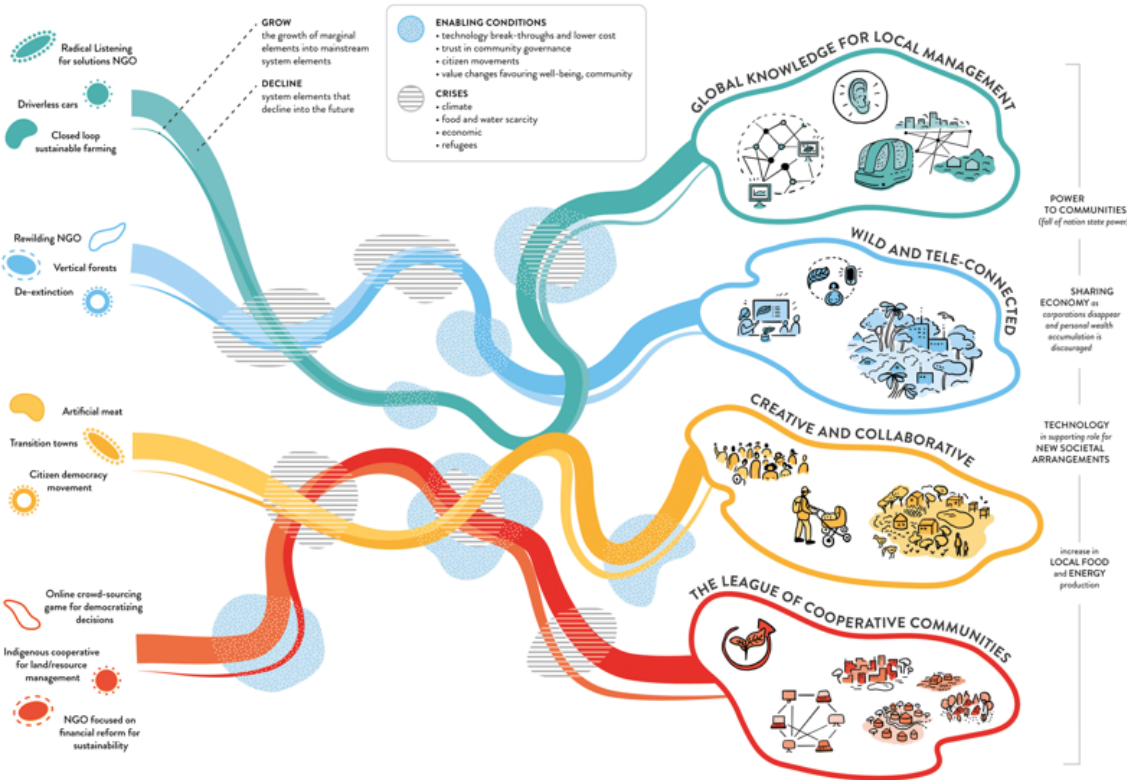
In the navigation phase, cross-scale brokers can provide bridging functions that connect different actors operating at different scales and launch new initiatives and scale up innovations.

In the building resilience phase bridging organizations can create incentives and foster values for stewardship in the new context.

Source; Olsson et al. 2004, Folke et al. 2009



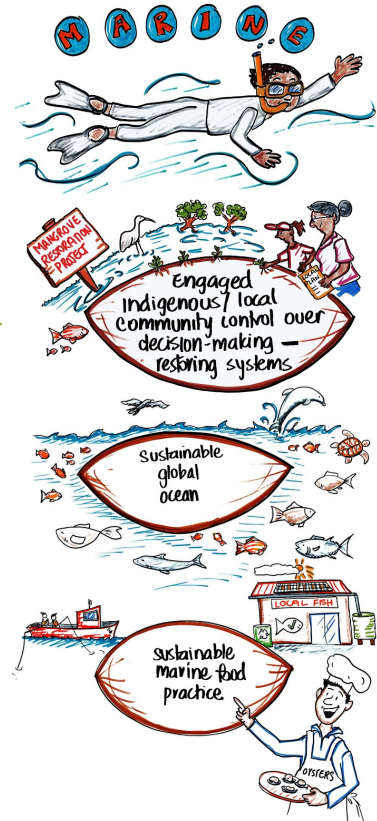
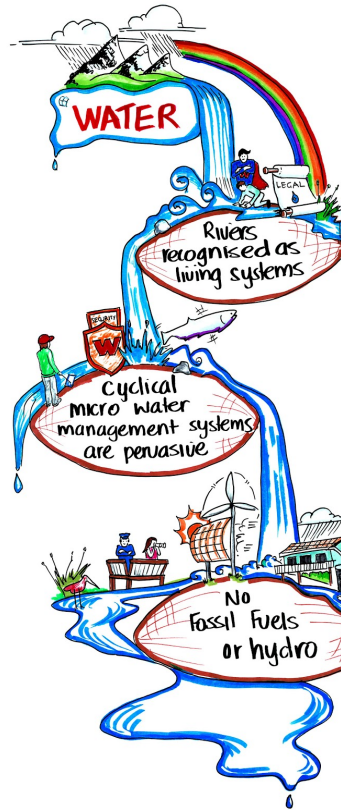
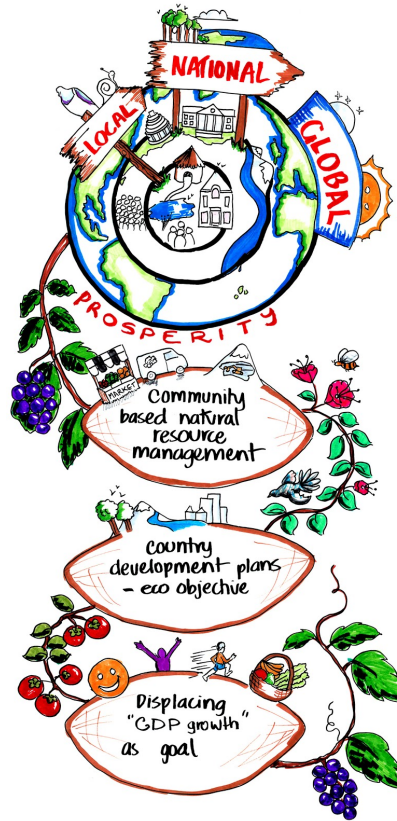
Alternative visions, pathways and narratives



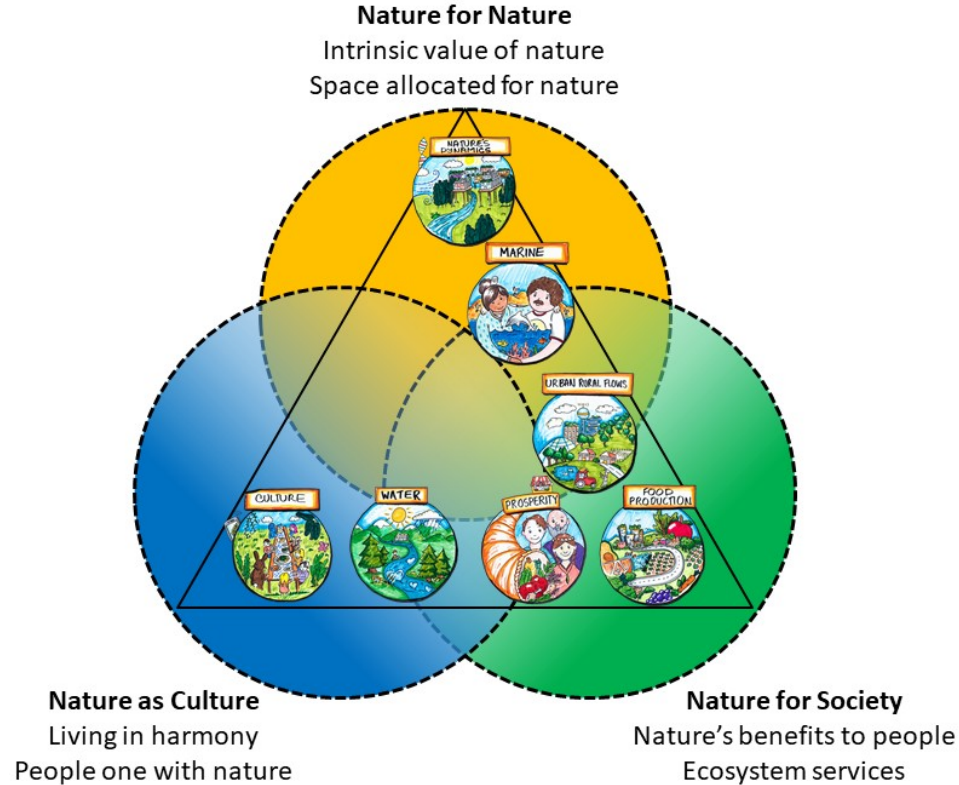
Merrie et al 2018

Multiple values

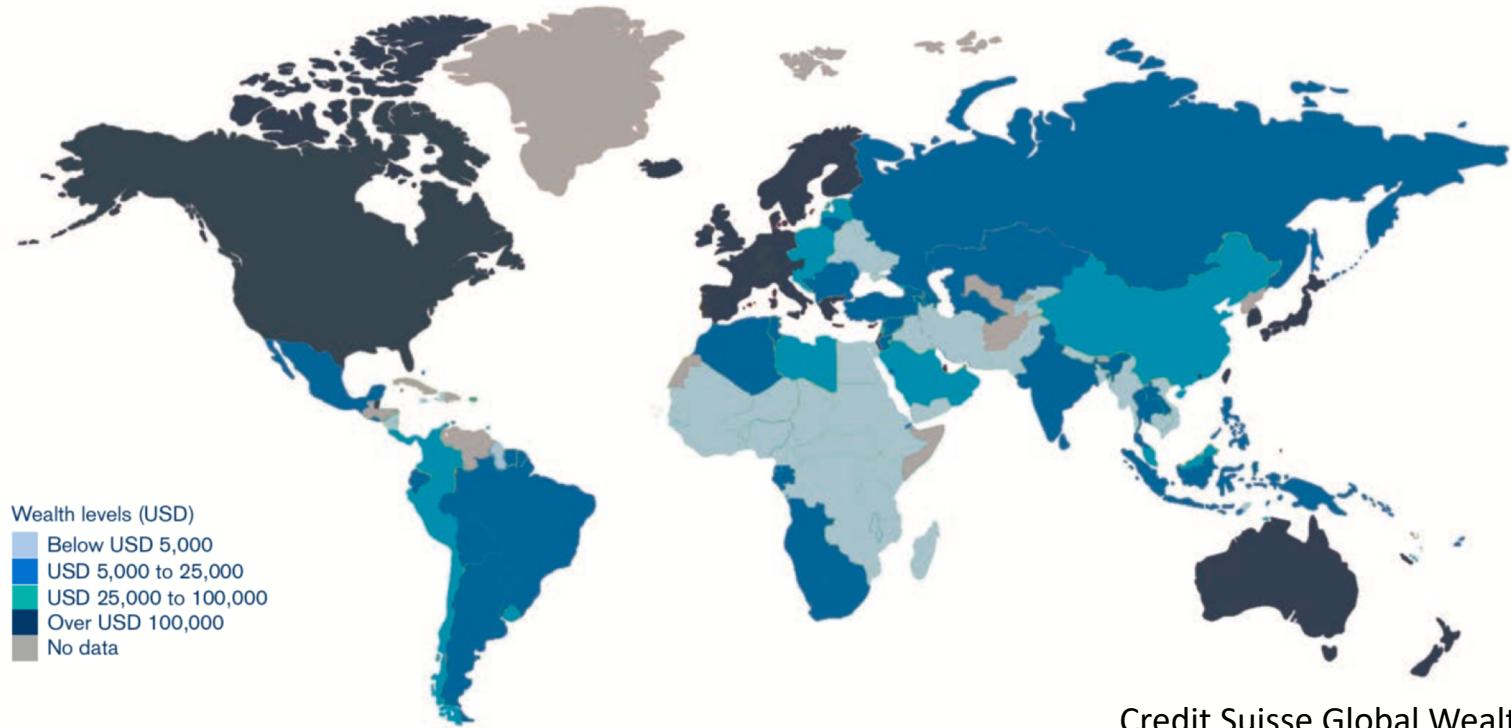
Source: Lundquist et al 2017



IPBES Nature Futures Framework



Context of Inequality

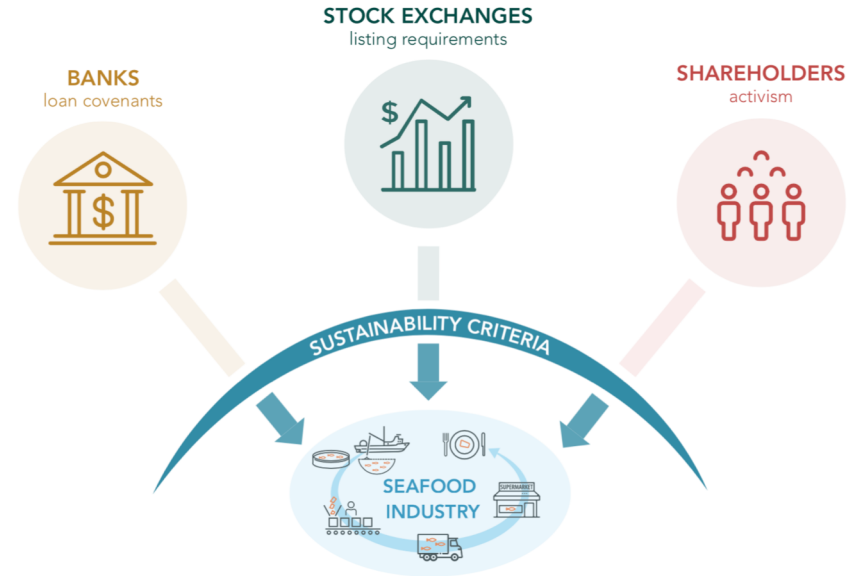


Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report 2018

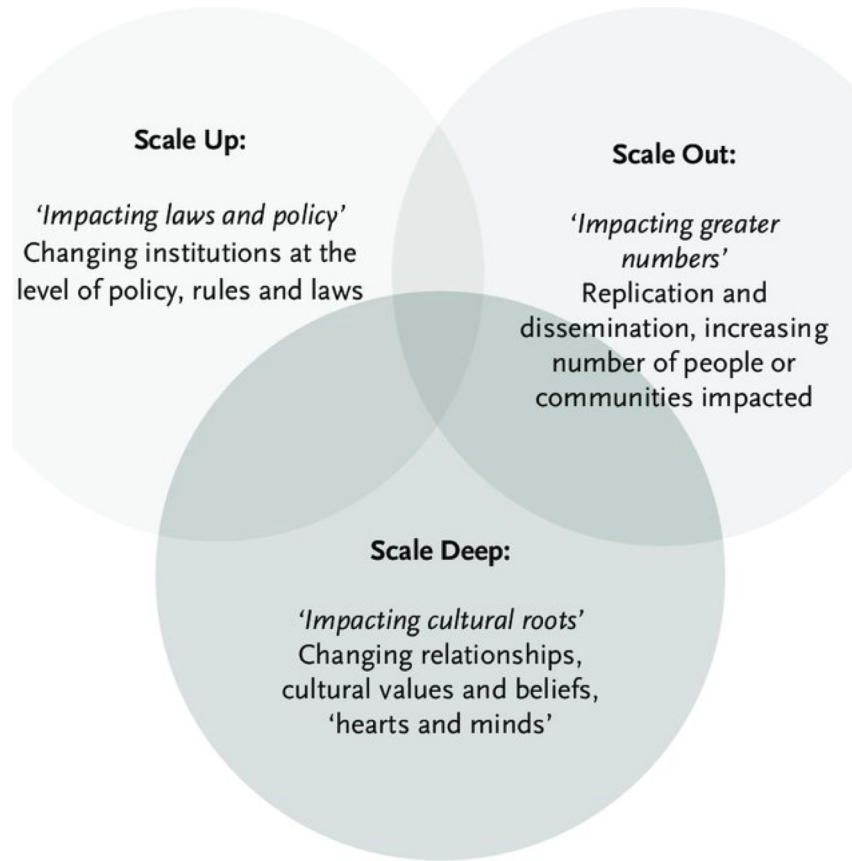
The [26 richest people on earth](#) in 2018 had the same net worth as the poorest half of the world's population, some 3.8 billion people (Oxfam 2018)

Dynamics of Agency and Power

- Identifying those with the agency to change
- Opening up space for change to happen (System entrepreneurs- Westley et al 2011)
- Empowering the marginalized to act for change
- Enabling a range of diverse actors to act for change



Impact: Scaling up, Scaling Out and Scaling Deep



Transformative Potential: learning from social innovation

“Without a historical lens, it is difficult to understand the particular attributes of those interventions that *will eventually be* transformative” (Westley 2017: 239).

1. Does the Innovation Contain a Radical Seed?
2. Is the Founder or Originator of the Idea Prepared to Make the Necessary Compromises to See the Idea Grow and Expand, Securing More Resources?
3. Are those Associated with the Innovation, Even in the Earliest Stages, Aware of the Need for Change in the Broader Institutional Structures (Values, Laws, Routines, Policies)?
4. Is there Evidence of the Possibility of Push Back, of Conflict with those who Control the Status Quo? Can that Conflict be Managed?

Reality check of current trajectory



Photograph: Rajesh Jantilal/AFP/Getty Images

Some kick-start questions

- What are (plural) desired futures for biodiversity and ecosystem services?
- Who has the agency to effect transformative change and what actions can diverse actors take to enable transformative change?
- What are existing seeds of change that have transformative potential to lead to these futures?
- What are the equity implications of transformative change?
- Where are the global ecosystem intervention hotspots without which transformative change will not be possible?
- What are the values that underpin current development trajectories and how can these be shifted to be more sustainable?