

Country Experiences in using National Ecosystem Assessments for Evidence-Based Policymaking



A dialogue among science, policy and society stakeholders was organized as part of the Azerbaijan National Ecosystem Assessment launch. Photo by the NEA Initiative.

Webinar Agenda



Session	Speaker/Moderator
Welcome & Introduction	Pratik Tandon
Overview of national ecosystem assessments	Juanita Chaves
Country Experiences (1) Colombia (2) Grenada (3) Thailand	<p>Mario Murcia, Professor, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia; Expert on the National Ecosystem Assessment of Colombia</p> <p>Kriss Davies, Chairperson, Grenada Land Actors; Civil Society Representative in the Grenada National Ecosystem Assessment Process</p> <p>Dr. Petch Manopawitr, Project Manager, Thailand National Ecosystem Assessment; Advisor to the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand</p>
Interactive Mentimeter exercise	Pratik Tandon
Panel Discussion, including Q&A	Pratik Tandon
Closing	Juanita Chaves

HOUSEKEEPING



Recording: This webinar will be recorded and will be uploaded to our NEA Initiative website and UNEP-WCMC YouTube. If you have any issues with this, please let us know.



Microphone and Camera: Your microphone will be muted throughout the webinar.



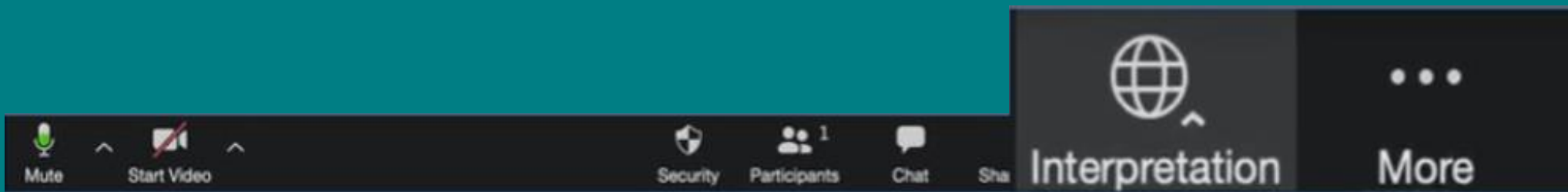
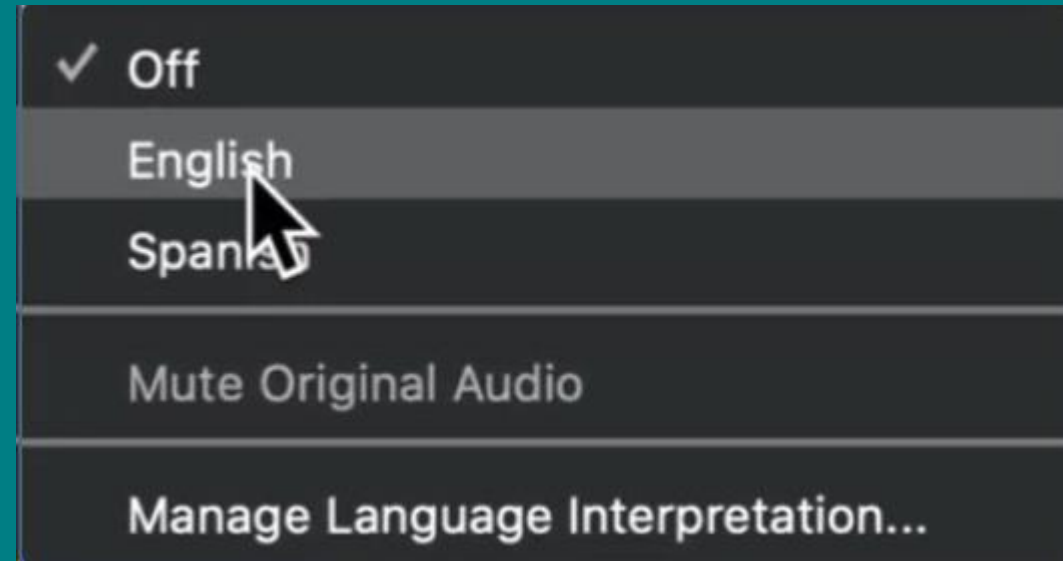
Questions: If you would like to comment or ask a question during the Q&A session, please type use the Q&A feature accessible from the bottom of your screen.



Support: If you have any technical issues, please send a direct message to [UNEP-WCMC Events] Laura Mack via the chat.

INTERPRETATION

This session has live interpretation in French and Spanish.



Overview of national ecosystem assessments

Juanita Chaves

Senior Programme Officer, UNEP-WCMC



Country Experience

Colombia



Mario Murcia

Professor, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia; Expert on the National Ecosystem Assessment of Colombia



Country Experiences in Using National Ecosystem Assessments for Evidence-Based Policymaking

The Case of Colombia Focus on Private Sector

Mario A. Murcia L
Professor at the Universidad de los Andes
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From report to decision: our shared challenge



The story of Colombia is precisely how the **National Assessment** has "infiltrated" the policies, plans, and agendas of the private sector.

"I will show you three concrete paths ENBSE followed to avoid being left on the shelf."

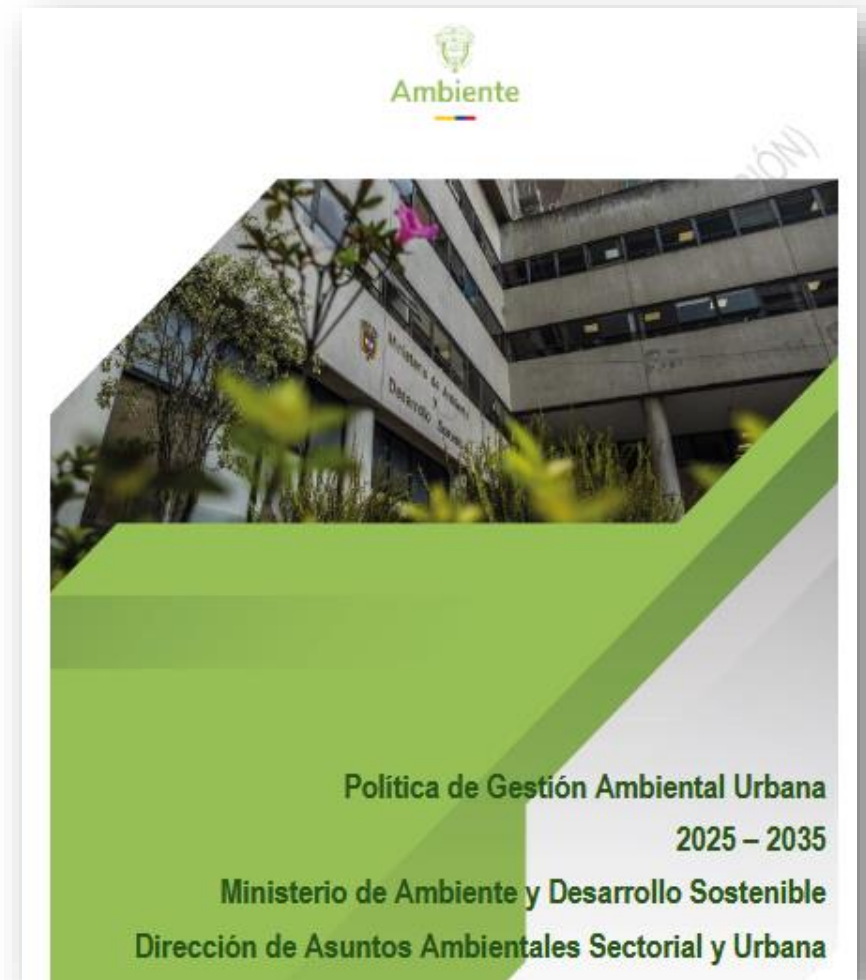


1st Pathway

“When a National Assessment becomes a mandatory reference, it begins to shape norms, plans, and decisions.”

Path 1: National Assessment as the backbone of several core policies

The Urban Environmental Management Policy 2025–2035, developed by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, incorporates biodiversity into urban planning, **based on the diagnoses of the National Assessment.**



The Medium Term Fiscal Framework (2024), which is the fiscal strategy for sustainable economic recovery, led by the Ministry of Finance, for the first time and thanks to an analysis of several national actors including UNEP-WCMC, managed to establish the high and medium high **dependence of 48% on biodiversity and ecosystem services**, promoting actions for its management from the productive and private sector of the country.





2nd Pathway

“When the National Assessment touches on productive and competitive aspects, new actions are also mobilized from the private sector.”

Path 2: Productive and competitive perspective



- Environmental Performance Assessments of Colombia by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD (2026), **explicitly cites the National Assessment** as a key source of evidence and comparison.
- This connects **biodiversity with discussions on productivity, competitiveness**, investment, fiscal sustainability, and structural reforms.
- The assessment ceases to be just an environmental issue and enters into the country's **economic and competitive conversation**.

Path 2: Productive and competitive perspective



Since 2024, the National Competitiveness Report has included a **chapter on "Green Growth,"** which contains analyses and reflections on the **role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in business management and long-term competitiveness** in a megadiverse country.



3rd Pathway

“When private sector associations begin to cite and use public-private guidelines, the language of biodiversity enters business agendas and strategies.”

Path 3: Companies speak the language of biodiversity




The document “Business and Biodiversity” (ANDI–UNDP–BIOFIN) uses the **National Assessment** and the National Biodiversity Policy to describe the relationships of impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities for businesses, and generates guidelines for their corporate management.

Path 3: Companies speak the language of biodiversity




The **Biodiversity and Business Roadmap** was developed by Colombia's largest business association (ANDI) in conjunction with the Ministry of Environment, Business for Nature, Conservation International, and with financial support from Ecopetrol (the national oil company). It is **aligned with the National Assessment and NBSAP**, providing guidelines on how **companies can incorporate the Kuming-Montreal goals and national biodiversity actions into their business management and business models.**

Path 3: The role of organizations at the science-policy interface

Red
Biodiversidad y desarrollo
Colombia en  **GBIF**

Esta comunidad busca elevar la contribución del sector empresarial al conocimiento de la biodiversidad; convocando, facilitando e integrando su participación como sector productivo.

[Ver red en GBIF.org](#)



The National Center for Water and Biodiversity (CNAB), part of the National Association of Businesspeople, **is the intermediary (broker or interface organization)** that guides and leads business actions related to biodiversity in Colombia.

- Community of Practice on Nature-Based Solutions
- Biodiversity and Development
- Open data strategy with more than 60 companies
- Bioeconomy Hub
- Water and Development

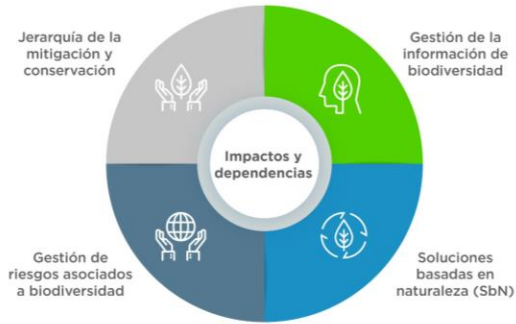


Path 3: Anchor Companies, leading major corporate goals in biodiversity

Estrategía de biodiversidad Ecopetrol

Principios orientadores

- No operar en áreas protegidas según las categorías I a IV de la UICN
- No realizar actividades en áreas Patrimonio de la Humanidad declaradas por la UNESCO
- Precaución / Prevención



Principios por adoptar

- En evaluación compromisos públicos de Deforestación Neta Cero e Impacto Neto Positivo en la biodiversidad.

Beneficios en la gestión de la biodiversidad





Opportunities for Improvement

- Political will can shift with changes in government, **affecting continuity and prioritization.**
- There are **limited resources** for tracking, monitoring, and updating the evaluation over time.
- Reaching **certain stakeholders is difficult:** small businesses, media outlets, and some key decision-makers.
- Fully **integrating Indigenous peoples and local communities into decision-making**, not just in information generation, remains a challenge.



THANK YOU



**Country Experiences in
Using National Ecosystem Assessments
for Evidence-Based Policymaking**

**The Case of Colombia
Focus on Private Sector**

Mario A. Murcia L.

Professor at the Universidad de los Andes

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Country Experience

Grenada



Kriss Davies

Chairperson, Grenada Land
Actors; Civil Society
Representative in the Grenada
National Ecosystem Assessment
Process



Background



Citizens guide was requested at our first meeting with the consultants CANARI. Members of Civil society felt that they spend a great deal of their time at policy developments but very rarely have anything which allows them more access to the work they have undertaken and which would be written in a language that they would find more accessible.

Use of NEA Findings by Civil Society



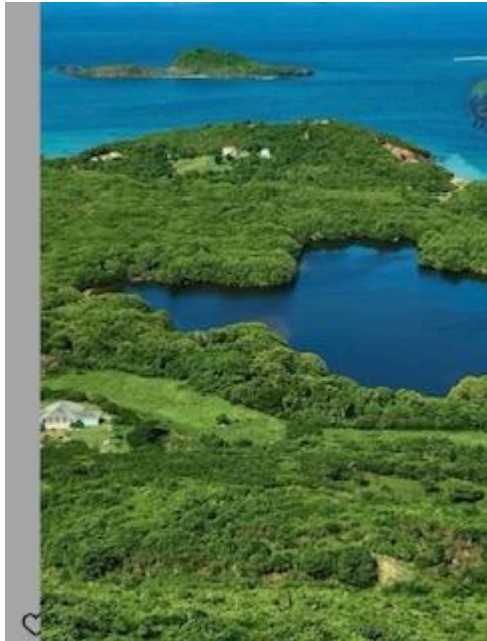
Grenada Land Actors (GLA) has used the findings to inform its campaign for sustainable land development in Grenada which has culminated in a Court challenge to the way the Planning Authority approves applications, particularly for mega resorts.

So far, there have been three of these developments on our coastline and have resulted in major clearance of our mangroves which are our first line of defence against climate change.

Use of NEA Findings by Civil Society

Two of the areas are also very sensitive areas for endangered species such as the Grenada Dove in Mt Hartman and the leatherback turtle in Levera which also houses our only Ramsar site. The third development, Six Sense in La Sagesse, has also destroyed one of our last remaining salt ponds and hampered access to a beach which was used locally by fisherfolk and for recreation on the weekends and bank holidays.

Before



After



Use of NEA Findings by Civil Society



GLA has also been asked to present on relevant courses at the tertiary college. These presentations use the information provided by the Guide as well as the Escazu agreement's influence on future developments. Other Civil Society groupings have also used it to inform their members about the state of ecosystems and biodiversity in the tri-island state.

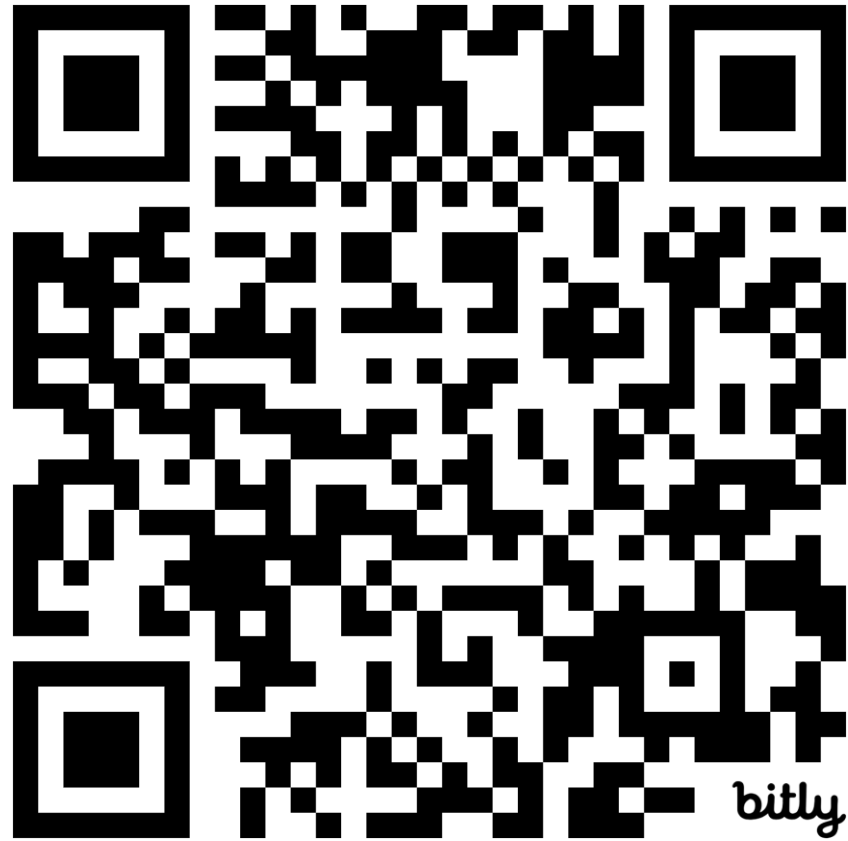
Challenges and Lessons Learned

In Grenada, we decided to focus on specific activities which would highlight the importance of the NEA. One of these activities was what we call 'debushing'. This is where teams of people are employed seasonally to cut back the grass verges on the sides of the Nation's roads. Unfortunately, for the most part they appear to be largely untrained and are overzealous in their efforts which results in roadsides being denuded to the point of creating hazards for road users. The roadsides are cut right back to the bare earth, when rain comes, this can cause major landslides and rock falls. The workers have also more recently been kitted out with trimmers or as we call them here, 'weed whackers'. This gives the workers more access higher up the road sides which increases the hazard creation.

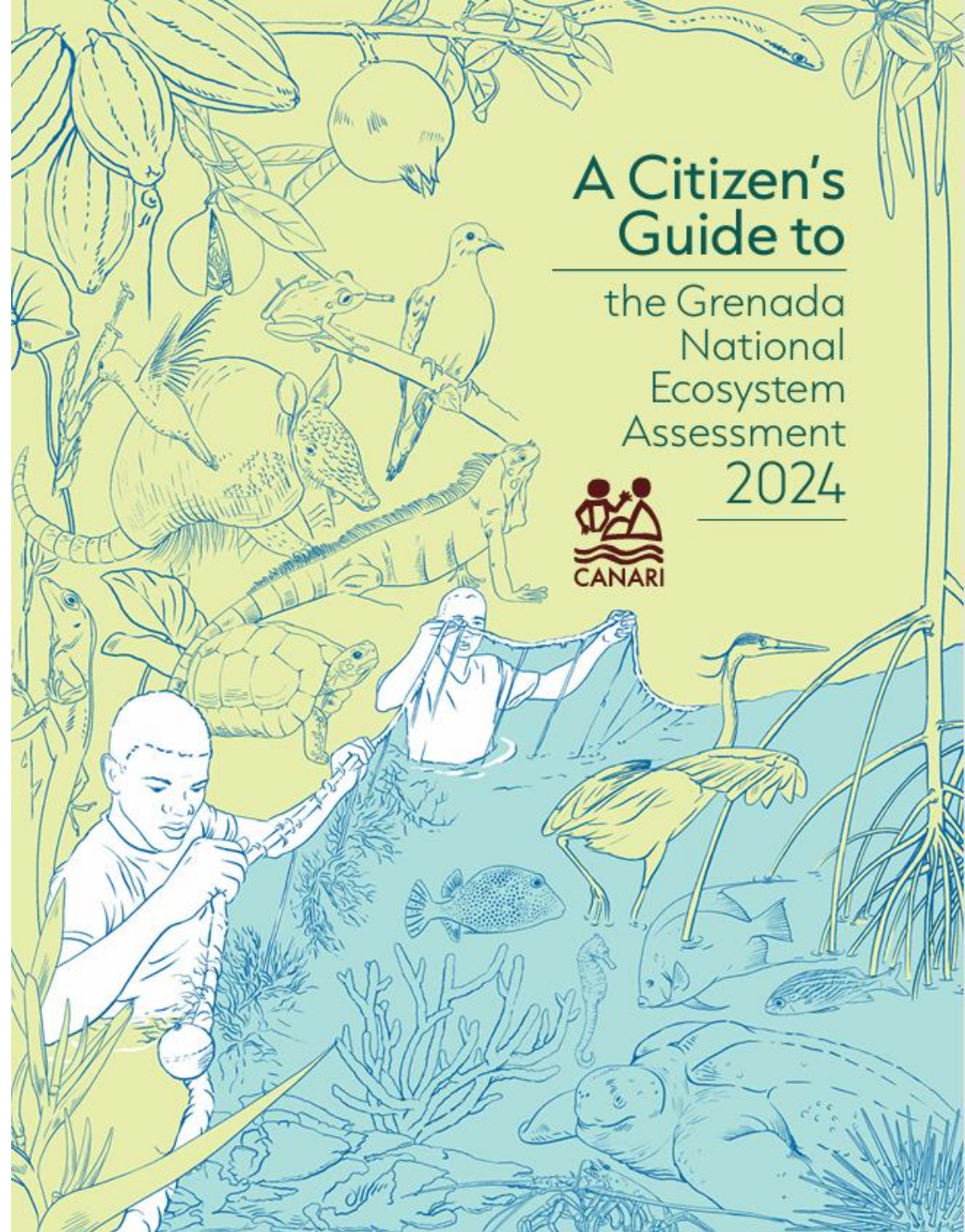
To this end, pressure was brought on the relevant government departments who are now looking at training the teams to work in a way which would preserve and protect the ecosystems found on the road sided without compromising too much on the work requirements.



Scan the QR Code to Download the Guide



Thank You!



Country Experience

Thailand 



Dr. Petch Manopawitr

Project Manager, Thailand
National Ecosystem Assessment;
Advisor to the Department of
Marine and Coastal Resources,
Thailand

From Assessment to Action: Enabling Evidence-Based Policymaking

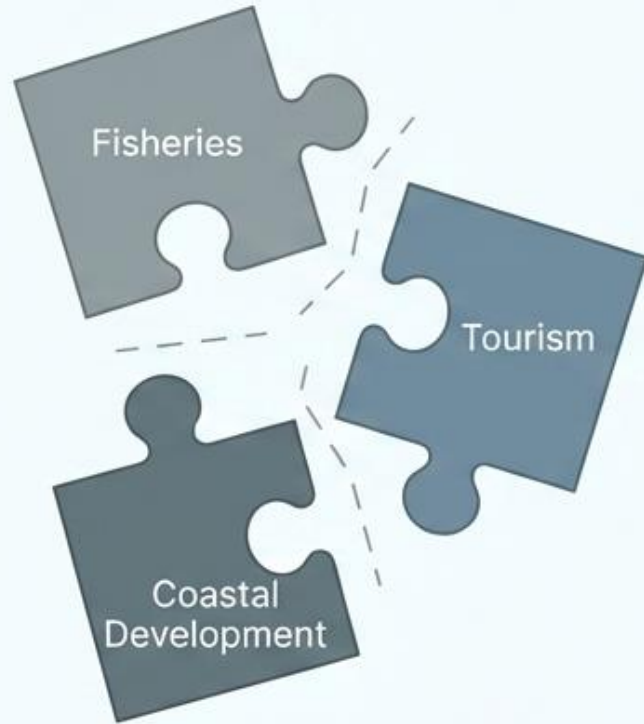
**The Thailand National Ecosystem
Assessment (NEA) Experience**



NATIONAL
ECOSYSTEM
ASSESSMENT
THAILAND

Reframing Ecosystems

The Problem



Persistent fragmentation

Policies are often made sector by sector, failing to account for cumulative impacts on coastal ecosystems.

The Solution



National Natural Capital

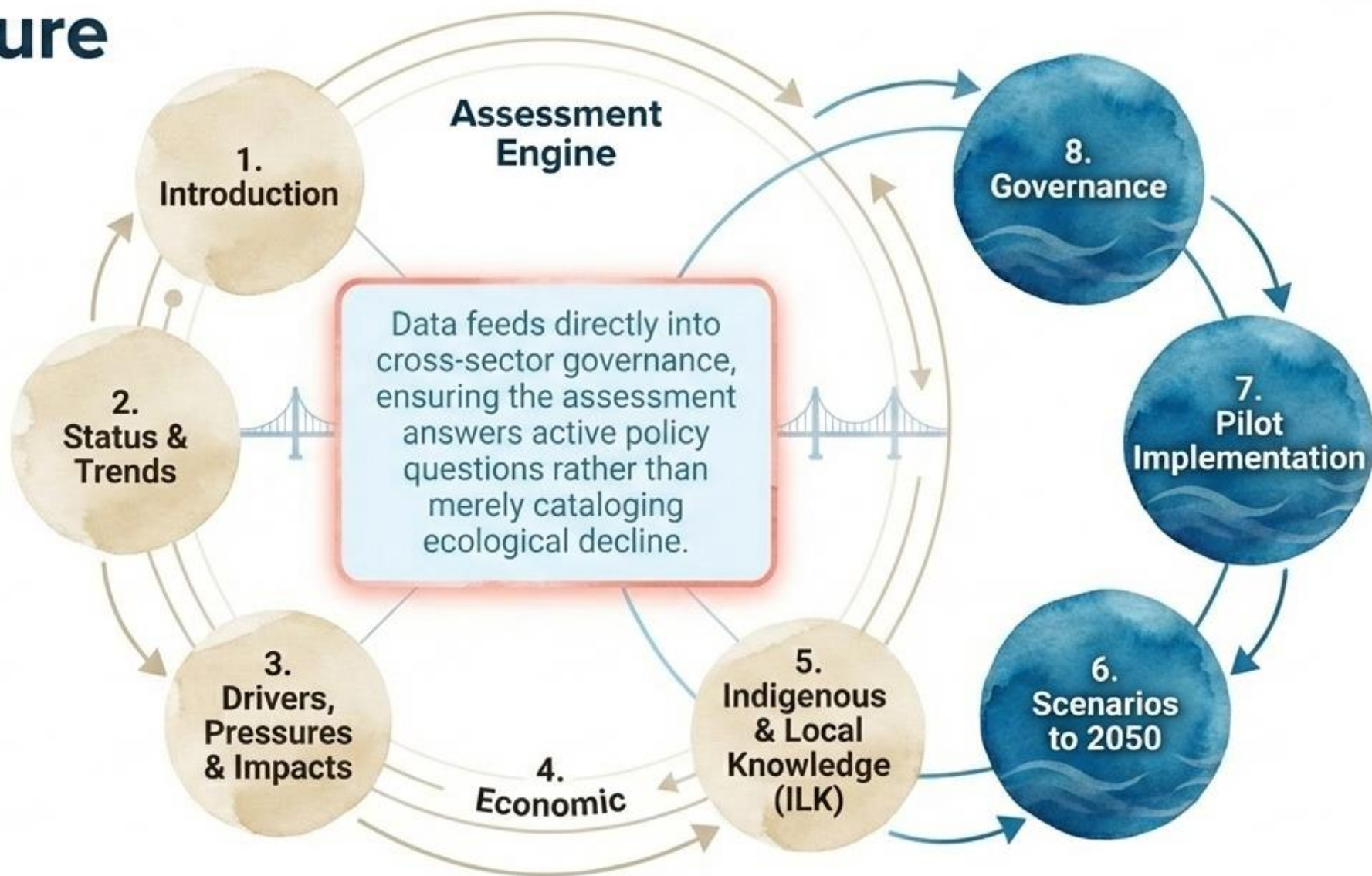
Shifting the conversation to view marine and coastal systems as foundational assets underpinning biodiversity, climate resilience, and long-term economic planning.

The Paradigm Shift

“The value of the NEA lies not only in the evidence it produces, but in how it creates the conditions for that evidence to be used.”

	Traditional Report	NEA Platform Approach
Output	Static scientific document	Participatory decision-support process
Focus	Measuring ecosystem decline	Linking Status → Drivers → Policy Responses
Knowledge	Purely scientific data	Integration of Science + Indigenous/Local Knowledge (ILK)
Timeframe	Backward-looking (historic trends)	Forward-looking (Scenarios as a strategic bridge) >>>

The Assessment Architecture



Strategic Levers for Policy Influence

Elevating the Lens

Making ecosystem value visible in national economic and investment planning. Supporting the transition to a regenerative blue economy.

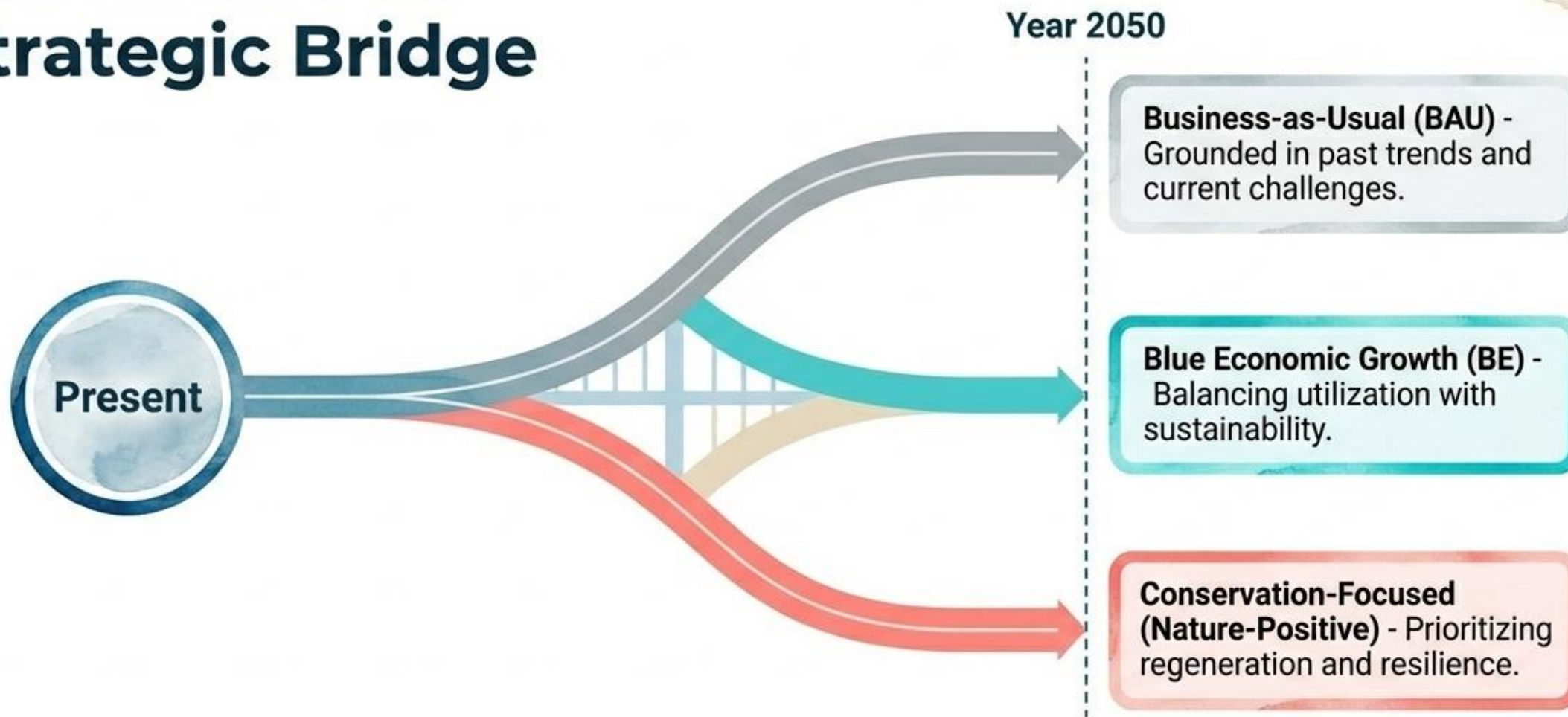
Moving Upstream

Identifying systemic drivers and pressures—not just environmental symptoms—to enable fundamental policy reform across adjacent sectors.

Long-Term Planning

Guiding choices toward 2050 using scenario analysis to navigate uncertainty and clarify trade-offs.

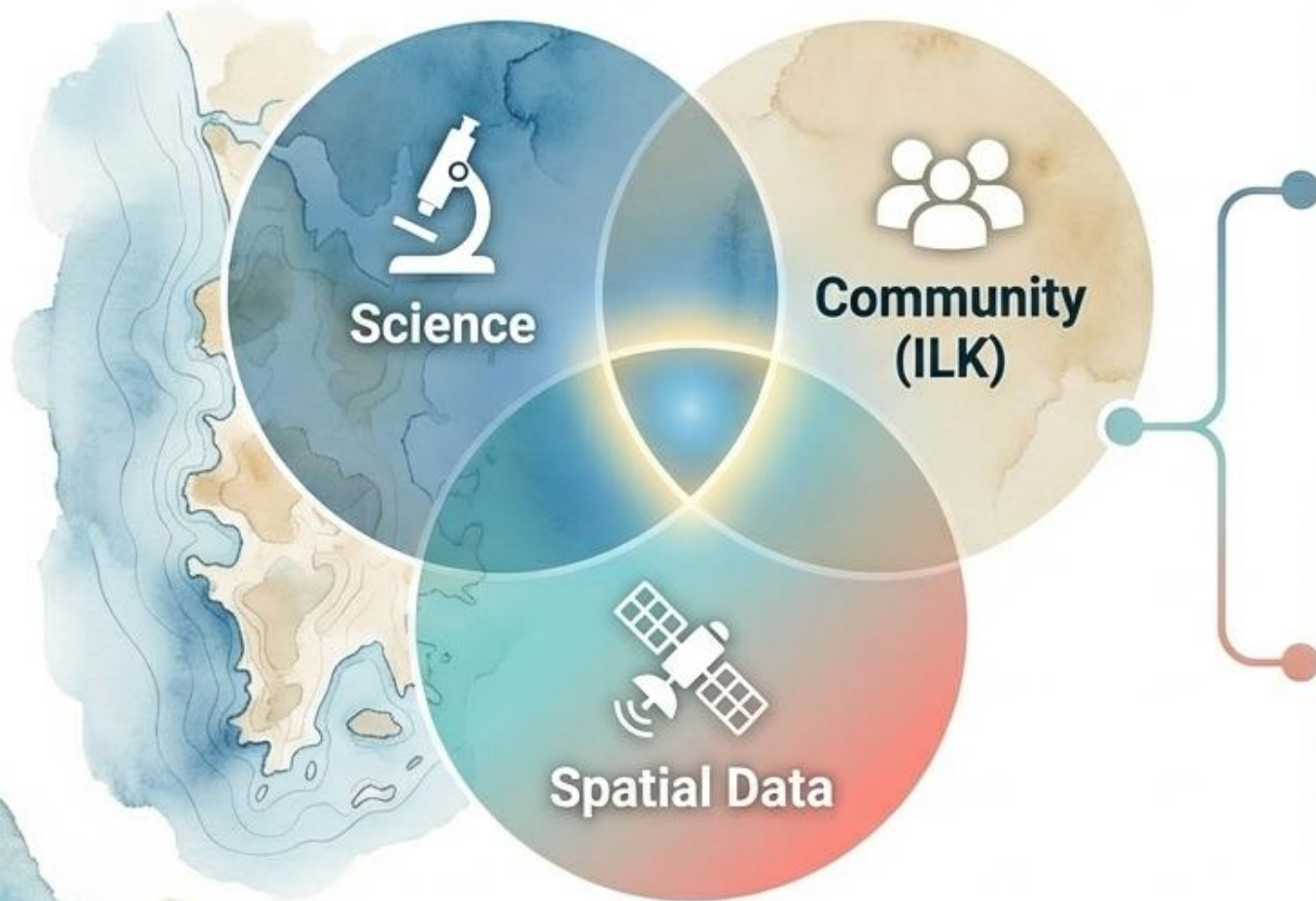
Scenarios as a Strategic Bridge



Key Takeaway: Scenarios test the robustness of investments and align choices with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the BCG model, and the SDGs.

Integrating Knowledge Systems

The Ao Kung / Phuket Pilot



Collaboration with GISTDA

Combining foundational scientific data with Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) via the Marine GI Portal.

Impact

Enabled participatory, digital marine resource mapping, directly engaging 25+ local participants to capture real-world coastal dynamics.

The Co-Production Ecosystem

Scenario Workshops

(May & Aug 2025). Co-developing futures with 120+ participants prioritizing drivers and impacts.

Fieldwork (Ao Kung)

Grounding the assessment in local realities.

National Trialogue

(Nov 2025). A massive 4-day interface gathering 90 participants across science, policy, and practice to validate findings, share perspectives, and shape policy integration.

Empowering the Next Generation



Engaging 45 early-career scientists and young researchers at the Bi-Annual National Marine Science Symposium in Trang.

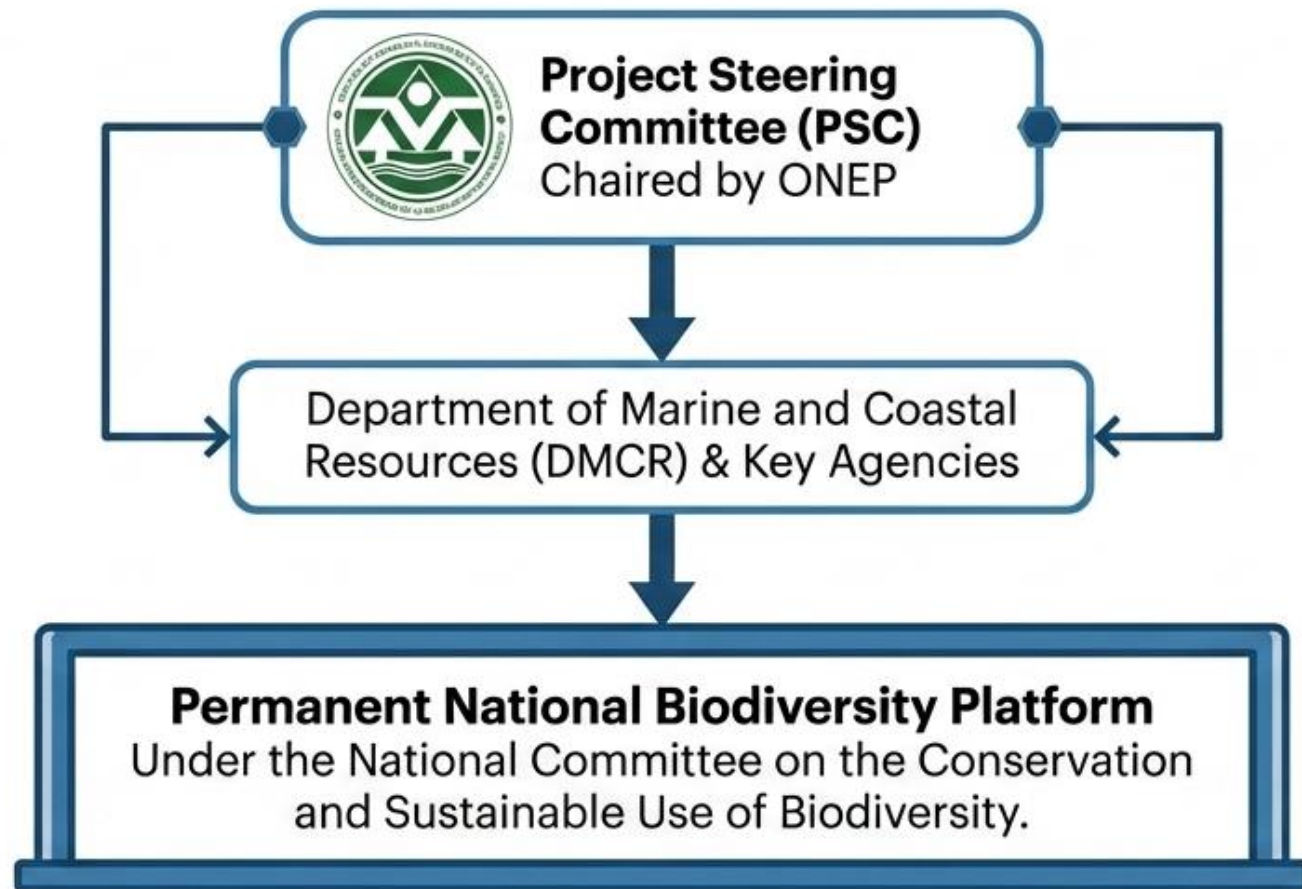


Integrating NEA themes into academic discussions through collaboration with major marine science universities (Chulalongkorn, Kasetsart, Prince Songkla, Ramkhamhaeng).

Building the next generation of biodiversity practitioners capable of supporting ecosystem-based management.

Governance as a Strategic Lever

Governance is strategic, not just administrative. Early ownership is critical to policy uptake.



Target Policy Entry Points



Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)

Cross-sector integration to resolve conflicting uses of coastal zones.



Fisheries

Ecosystem-based management supporting long-term food security.



Tourism & Coastal Development

Managing cumulative impacts and balancing economic growth with resilience.

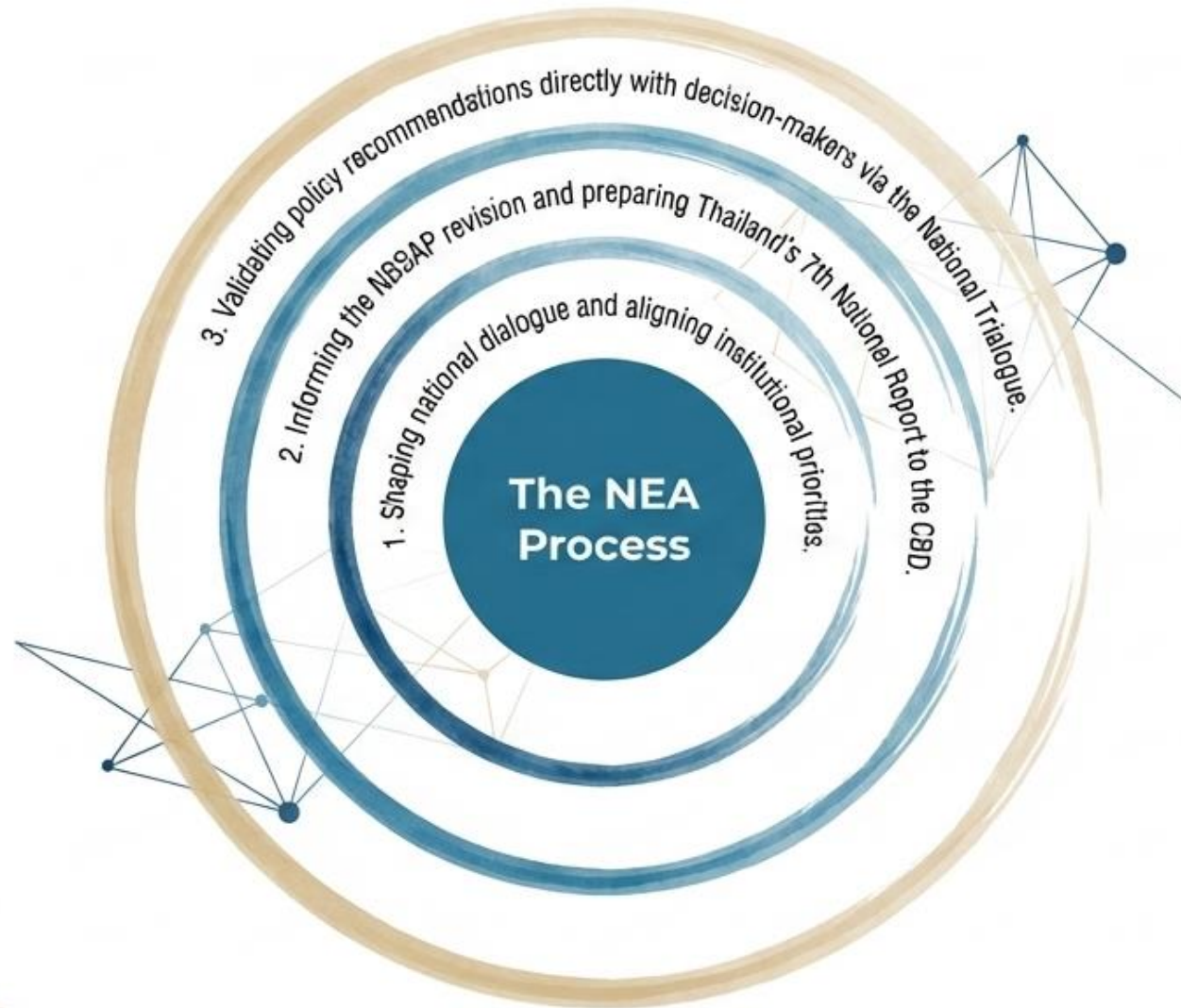


National Planning

Direct inputs into the NBSAP (2023-2030), SDGs, and the national regenerative Blue Economy strategy.

Evidence in Action: 'Soft Uptake'

Influence begins before the final draft is published.





The Road Ahead (2025-2026)



1. Finalization

Approving the Technical Assessment and the Summary for Policymakers (SPM).

2. Dissemination

Translating findings into policy briefs, launching national workshops, and deploying mobile exhibitions to coastal areas.

3. Implementation

Mobilizing resources and partnering with UNDP / BES-Net for the next phase of structural support and policy execution.

Synthesis: Key Lessons for Evidence-Based Policy

Evidence-Based Policy

1. Engage policymakers continuously from day one to build ownership.

2. Structure the assessment around active policy-relevant questions, not just scientific curiosity.

3. Use scenarios to support forward-looking choices under uncertainty.

4. Anchor the project institutionally (e.g., via ONEP) to guarantee a receptive audience.

5. Treat stakeholder engagement as co-production to build widespread legitimacy.

Partners & Acknowledgments



Supported by:



based on a decision of the German Bundestag



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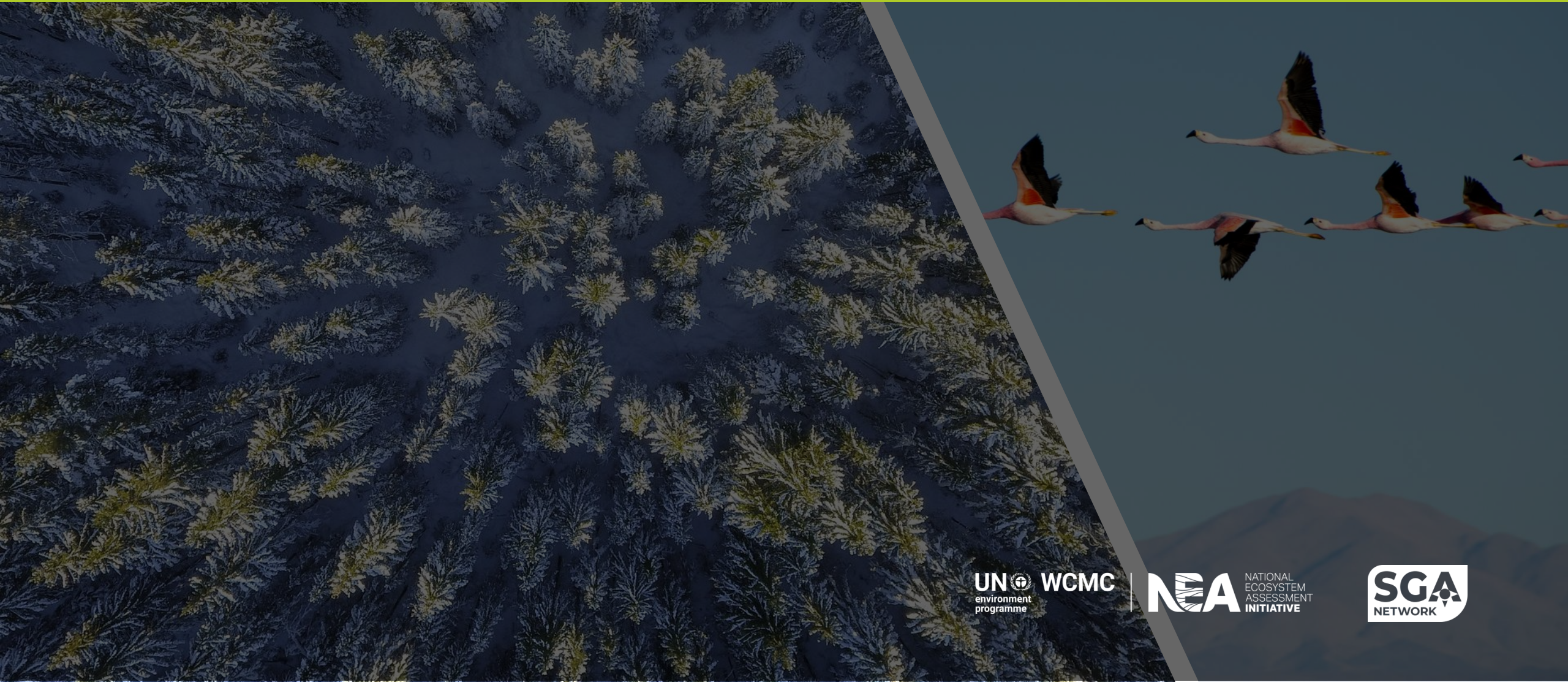
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Question & Answer Session



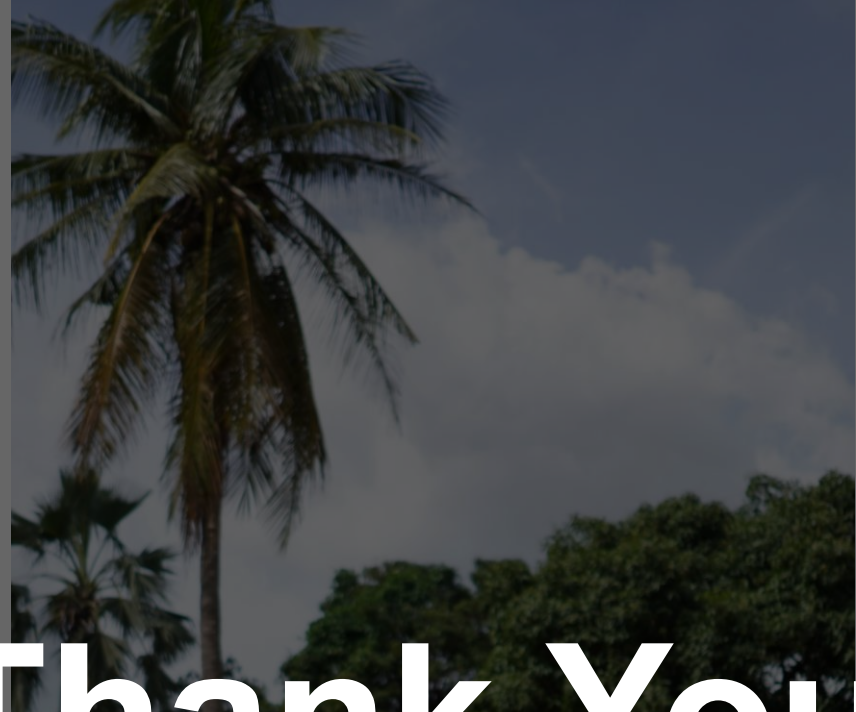


The Sub-Global Assessment Network

Scan the QR Code to join the network and stay up to date with latest news and upcoming events!



A community of practice that connects and supports individuals and organisations involved in sub-global ecosystem assessments.



Thank You!

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