



Transformative change for a just and sustainable world

Copenhagen

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Prof. Dr. Esther Turnhout

Section of Knowledge, Transformation, and Society (KiTeS)

University of Twente

About me....

- Science-policy-society relations
- The politics of knowledge
- Biodiversity and nature conservation
- Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

KNOWLEDGE, TRANSFORMATION & SOCIETY

The KiTeS group is dedicated to analysing and improving the contribution of Knowledge to Transformations in Society to address intersecting societal and environmental challenges, including growing disparities and inequities, climate change, and biodiversity loss. These transformations will involve deep changes in political, economic, and cultural institutions and structures and the paradigms, values, and knowledge systems that underpin them.

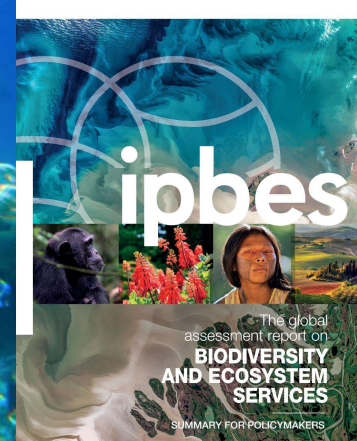
Knowledge practices, including science, education, technology, and design, can play an important role in supporting these needed transformations. Nevertheless, we see that dominant knowledge practices can often support the status quo and can even block change. For example, when innovation systems serve vested economic interests, when education trains students to be effective in unsustainable societies, or when science excludes alternative paradigms and ways of knowing. Therefore, understanding and supporting societal transformations, requires critical examination and transformation of these knowledge practices.

The KiTeS group works across diverse disciplines and scholarly fields and draws on critical, historical, participatory, design-oriented, and arts-based methods and approaches. We work in different domains such as science and innovation policy, higher education, and environmental governance and we collaborate closely with policy makers, social movements and grassroots organisations, cultural institutions, scientists and engineers, and business and financial institutions. Guided by values of justice, pluralism, sustainability, and care, our work is aimed at creating spaces for collaboration, critical analysis, reflection, and learning.

<https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/kites/#>



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- Most comprehensive assessment of its kind
 - Nature's dangerous decline 'unprecedented'
 - Species extinction rates 'accelerating'
 - 1,000,000 species threatened with extinction
 - Current global response insufficient
 - 'Transformative changes' needed to restore and protect nature
 - Will meet opposition from vested interests



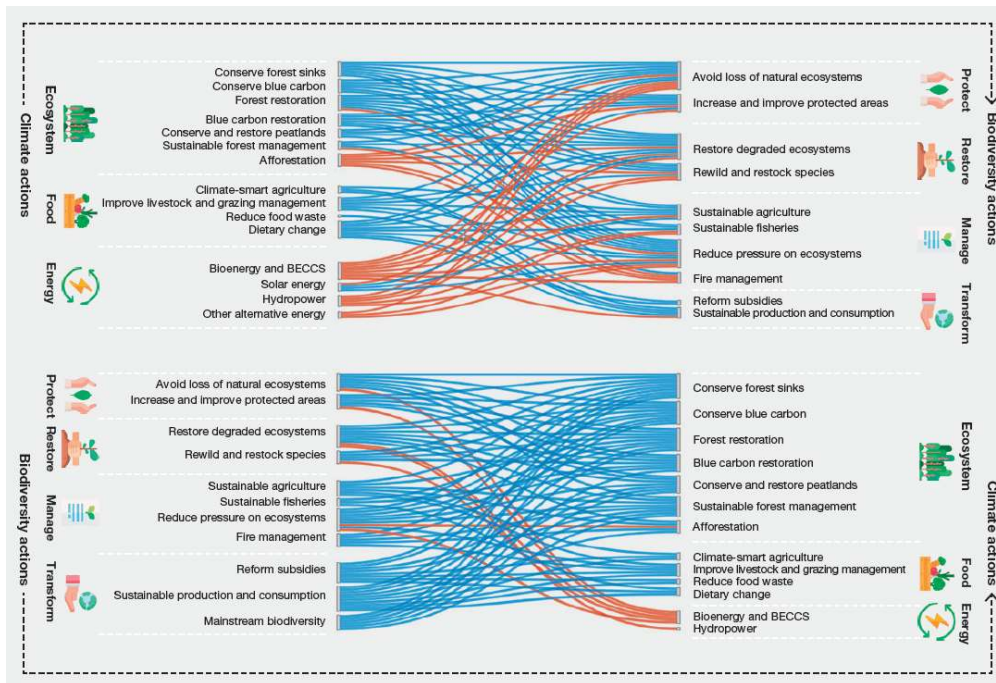
Conservation will not save nature



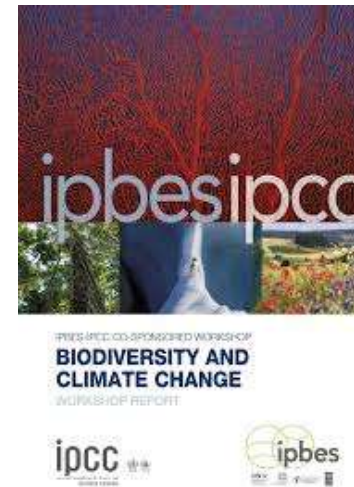
Leclère et al 2020 Nature

A proliferation of stopgap solutions that:

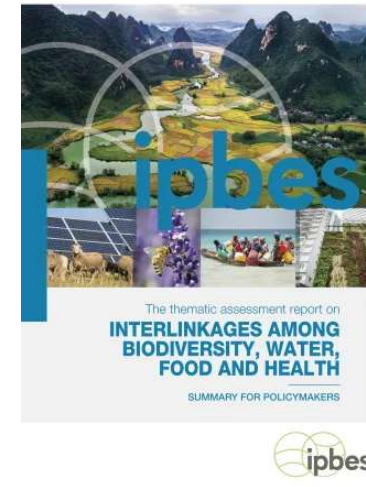
- Address symptoms, not systems
- Do not threaten the status quo and vested interests
- Result in trade-offs between biodiversity, justice, health, water, and climate



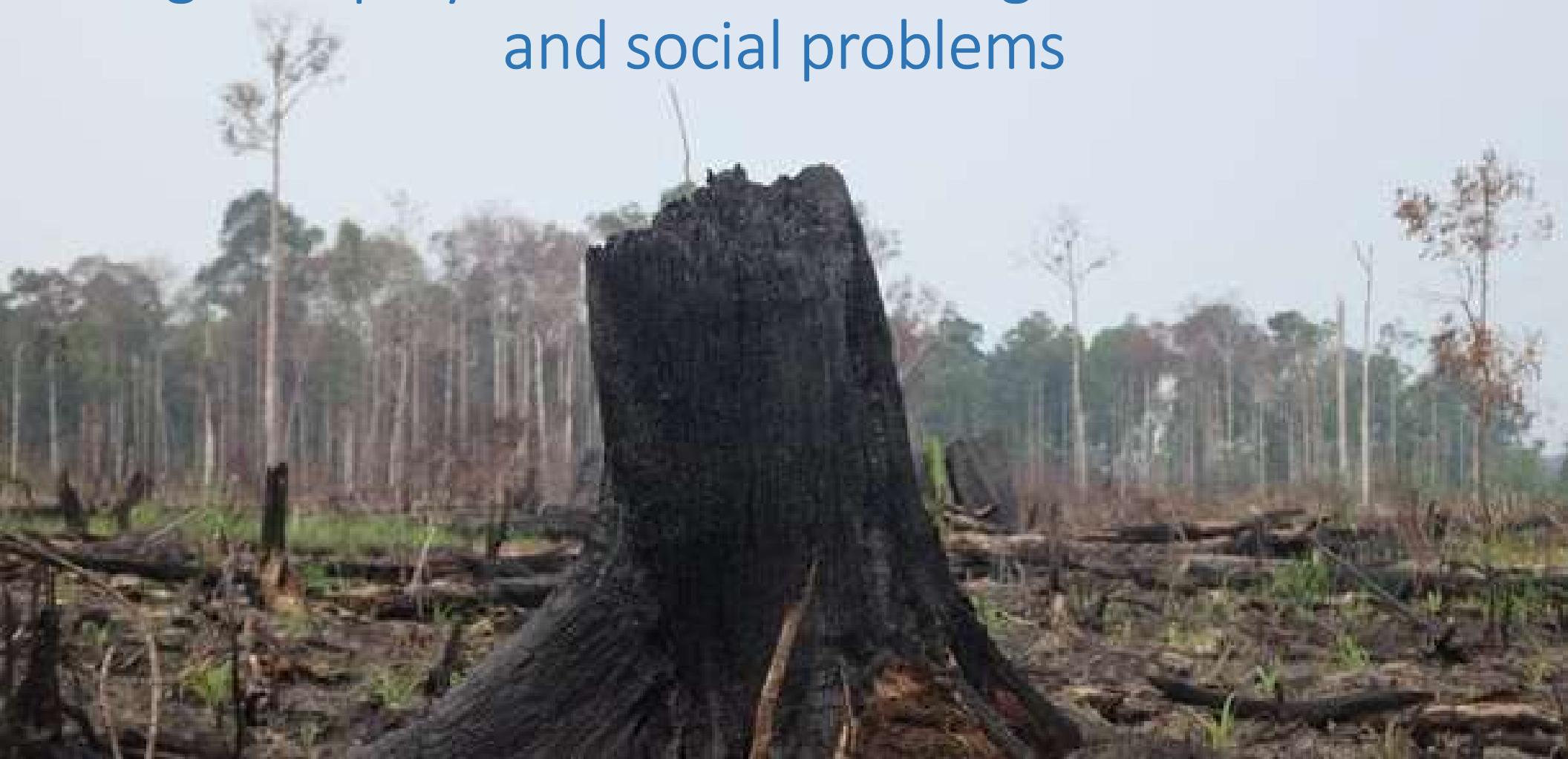
IPBES IPCC 2021
Joint Report



IPBES 2024, Nexus
Assessment



A global polycrisis of intersecting environmental and social problems

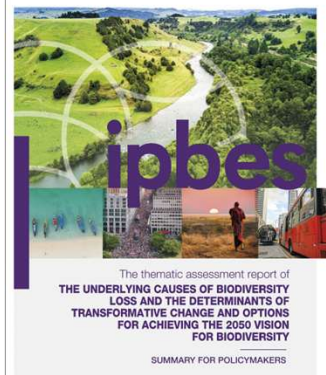


The Transformative Change Assessment:

Assessment report on the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity

A foundational assessment of the knowledge for transformative change towards a just and sustainable world

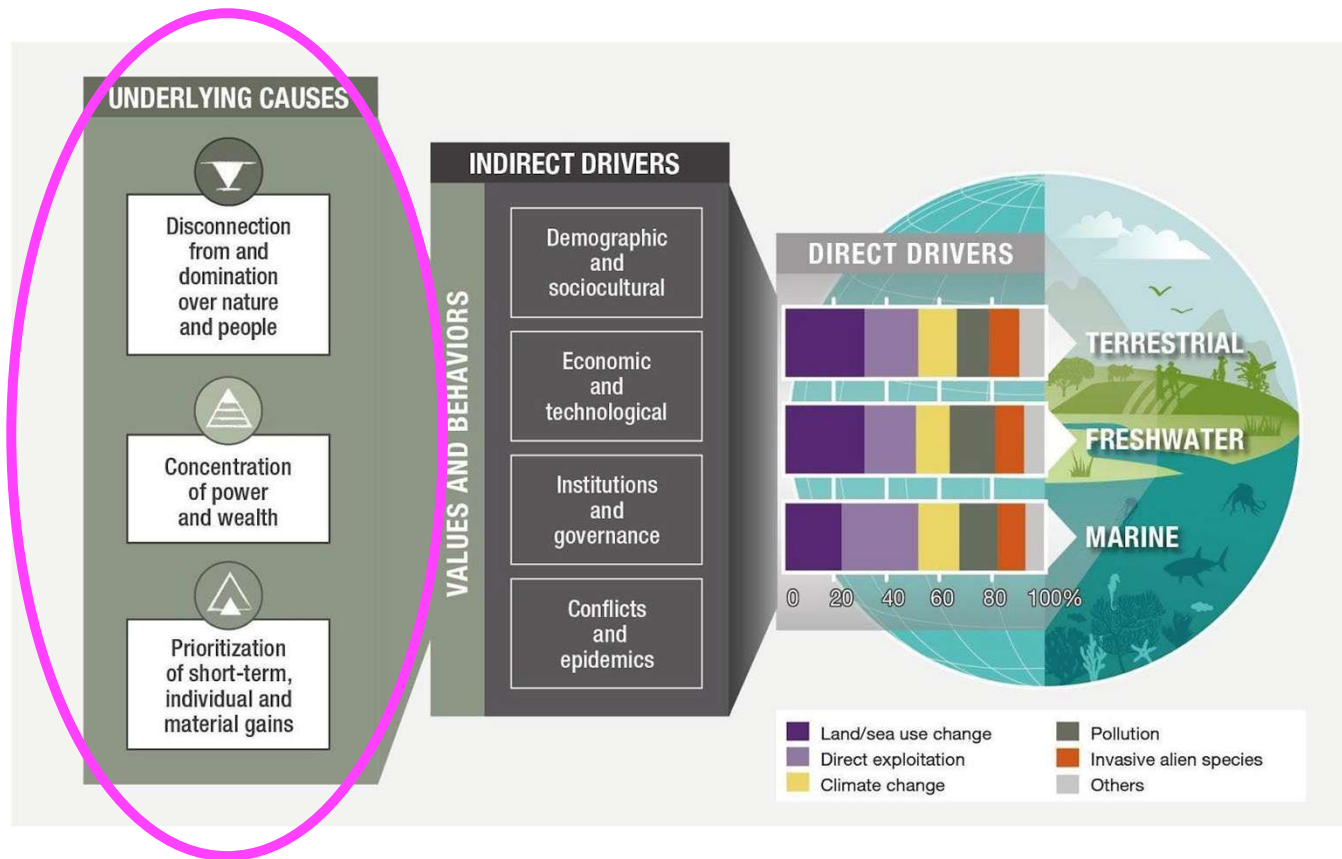
The first of its kind - conceptually and empirically, bringing together a broad range of evidence



- 3 co-chairs
- 15 coordinating lead authors
- 61 lead authors
- 10 review editors
- 12 fellows
- >200 Contributing authors
- Experts from 42 countries across all regions of the world
- Gender balance (53% women / 46% men)
- Stronger representation of social and interdisciplinary scientists
- Draws on 7,000 references
- 3 years in development, over 10,000 comments addressed



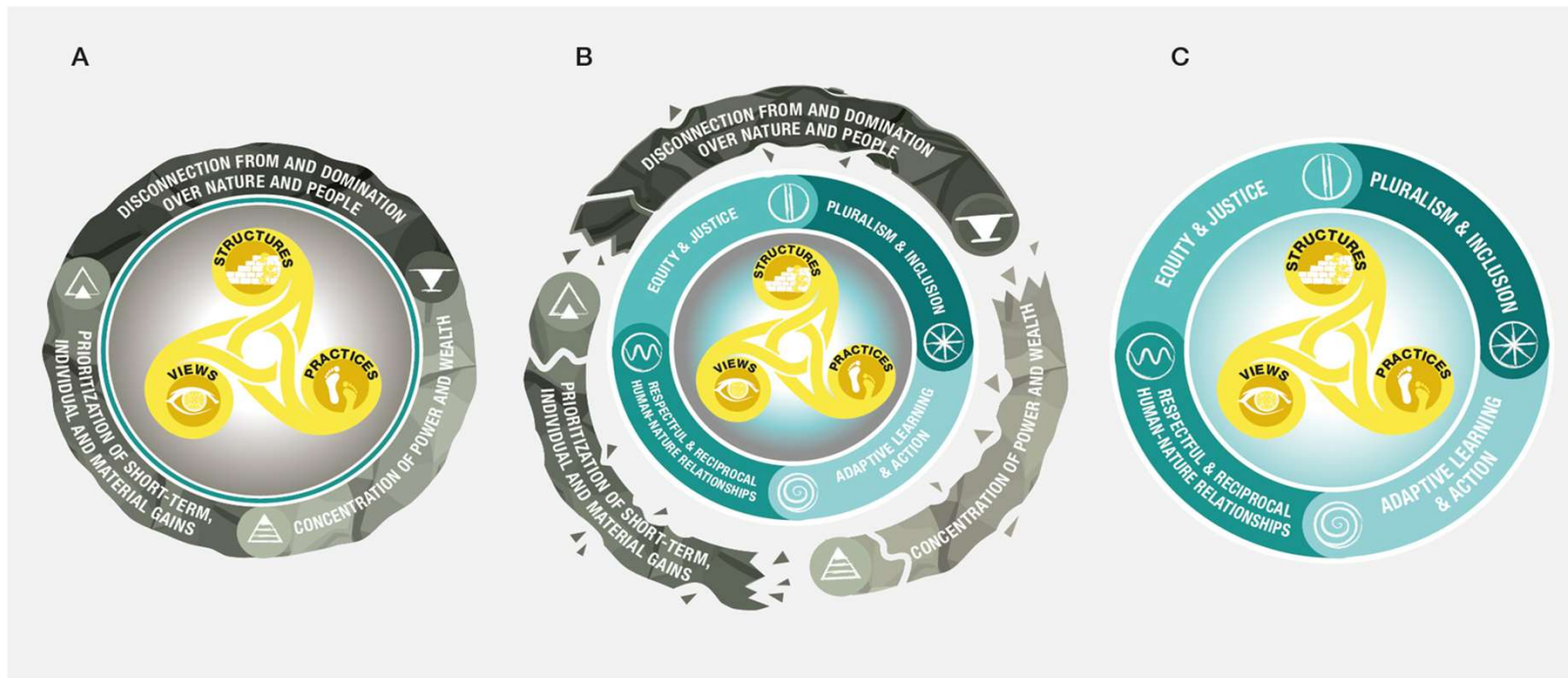
The underlying causes of the socio-ecological polycrisis



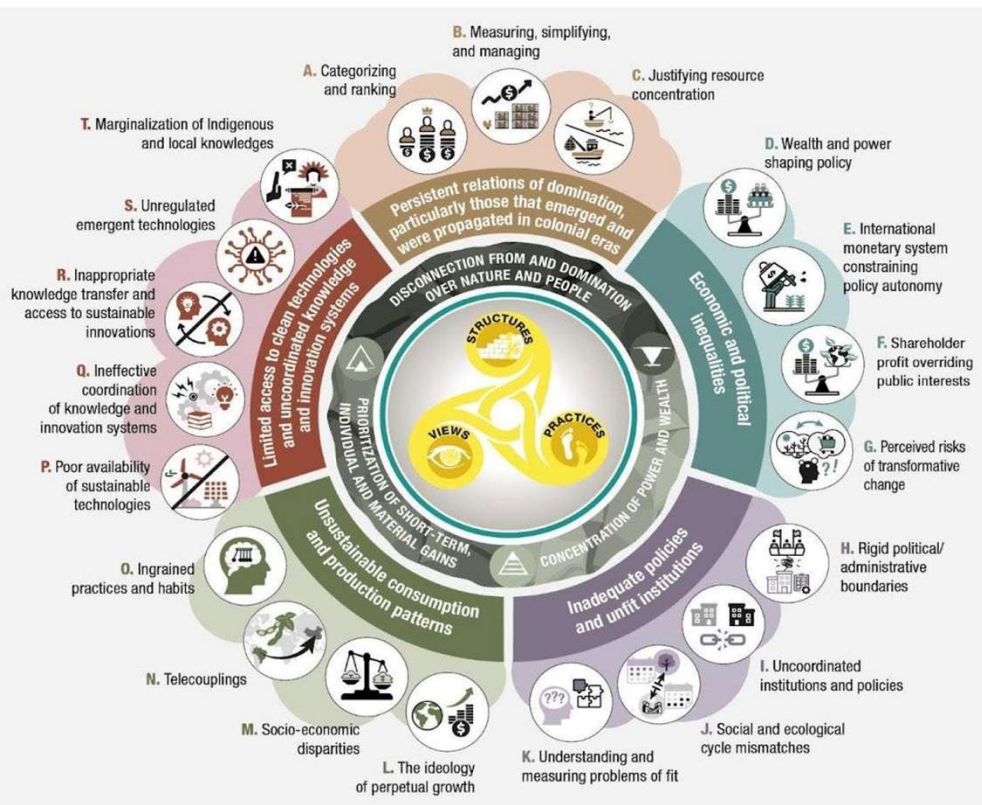
Underlying causes are deeply rooted and interconnected social and cultural patterns that shape, influence and reinforce all direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss

Defining transformative change

Fundamental shifts in **views**, **practices** and **structures** that address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss in ways that foster principles of equity and justice, inclusion and pluralism, respectful and reciprocal human relations, and adaptive learning and action

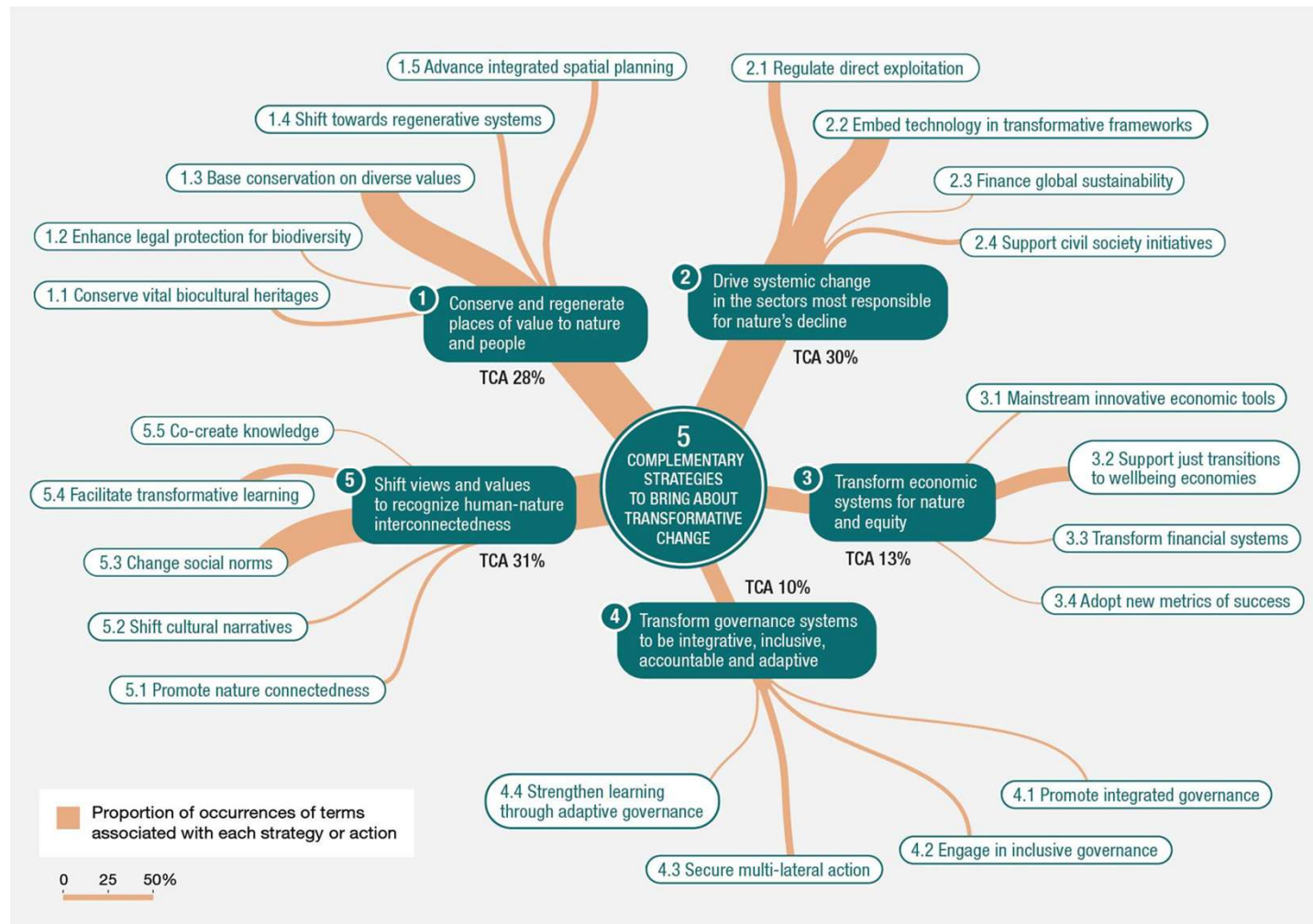


Barriers to transformative change



A	Dominant categorizations and rankings of people and biodiversity obscure alternative understandings and worldview
B	Dominant forms of measurement, simplification, and management reduce nature to a narrow set of values, limiting options for management and understanding
C	Persistent relations of domination, reinforced by systems of measurement and associated categorizations, rankings, and management, justify taking resources
D	Uneven access to and influence in processes that formulate policy and regulation limit exposure to ideas and experiences that could change the status quo
E	The dependence of countries on foreign investment creates competitive environments incentivized to minimize regulation
F	Shareholder primacy doctrines drive investment decisions toward shareholder interests and profit rather than public interest
G	The beneficiaries of the status quo are concerned with losing privileges, while the vulnerable fear potential precarity created by transformation
H	Administrative boundaries do not match the geographies of biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, reducing the efficacy of plans and policies
I	Policies across sectors may conflict with each other, such as when a climate policy does not lessen biodiversity loss
J	Time gaps between policy implementation and ecological dynamics; e.g., when measures are implemented too slowly to respond to abrupt environmental changes
K	Policy effectiveness is difficult to measure, challenging the alignment of policy and environmental need
L	The societal emphasis on economic growth reinforces consumerism, which underlies market and policy arguments for protecting current unsustainable practices
M	The socio-economic disparities that mark global production and consumption are often hidden by narratives blaming degradation on overpopulation
N	Unseen practices and structures in one social-ecological system that impact ecosystems, biodiversity and societies across great distances
O	Habitual behaviours conform and confirm social practices and structures (including values, norms and institutions), making them stable and difficult to change
P	Structural, strategic, operational, procedural and behavioral barriers to the generation, development and adoption of sustainable technologies
Q	Knowledge and innovation systems on biodiversity management are not sufficiently coordinated and integrated among different stakeholders
R	The limited and uneven attention to and investment in sustainability and biodiversity management knowledge and innovations across different sectors
S	Poor regulation and a lack of oversight on the application and potential negative impacts of emerging technologies
T	Indigenous and Local Knowledge on biodiversity-friendly actions and innovations is unrecognized, marginalized, disintegrated and not adequately supported

Strategies and actions for transformative change



Transforming biodiversity, policy, conservation, and research

Beyond:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Biodiversity as usual | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Incorporate diverse values, worldviews and knowledge systems about nature and about human-nature relations in defining biodiversity and its loss and in options for action</i> |
| Policy as usual | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Target the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and go beyond stop gap solutions</i>• <i>Promote integration across sectors to avoid tradeoffs and injustice and find synergies</i>• <i>Reconsider how to assess effectiveness and progress</i>• <i>Foster adaptive learning and practice</i> |
| Conservation as usual | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Advocate for addressing the underlying causes of loss and against obstruction (also when this threatens the interests of your donors)</i>• <i>Support justice movements that are already doing this</i>• <i>Abandon unjust colonial and imperial strategies and reconsider protected areas</i> |
| Research as usual | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Put the spotlight on the underlying causes of loss</i>• <i>Investigate the role of power concentration and vested interests, how they benefit, how they produce injustice, and how they obstruct change</i>• <i>Analyse, co-produce, support, and elevate (marginalized) transformative options and pathways</i>• <i>Undertake inclusive and pluralist monitoring and evaluation of progress and unanticipated effects of transformative change</i> |

