Independent Evaluation Office
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

34th International GEOGRAPHICAL Congress
16-20 AUGUST,2021
GEOGRAPHY: Bridging the CONTINENTS
VIRTUAL

150th year of IGC

Geographical Approaches to Evaluating Global Environmental Programs in the Age of Sustainability

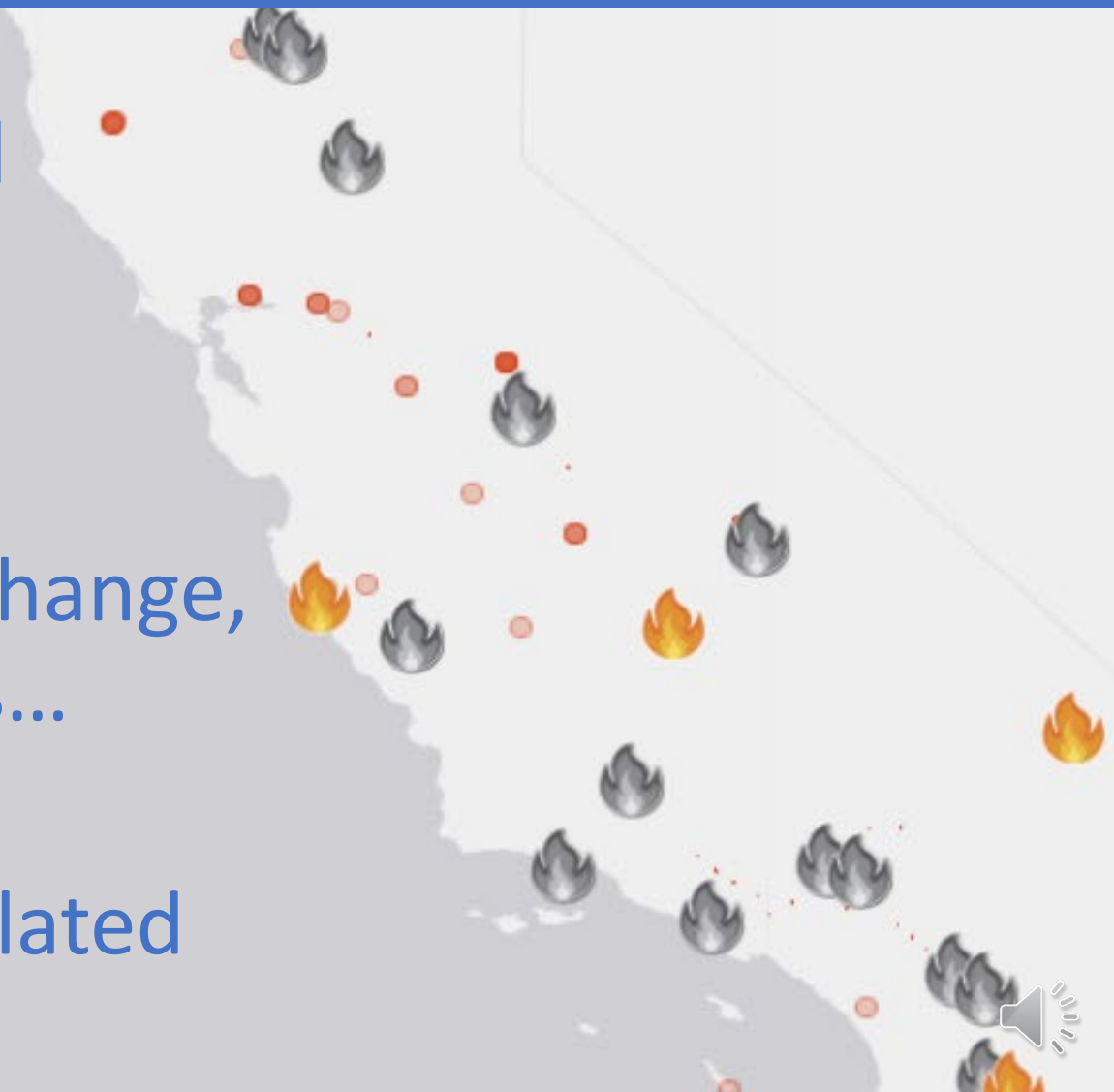
Juha I. Uitto

Introduction

Poverty remains and inequality grows

A hazardous planet: pandemic, climate change, hurricanes, wildfires…

Everything is interrelated



Introduction

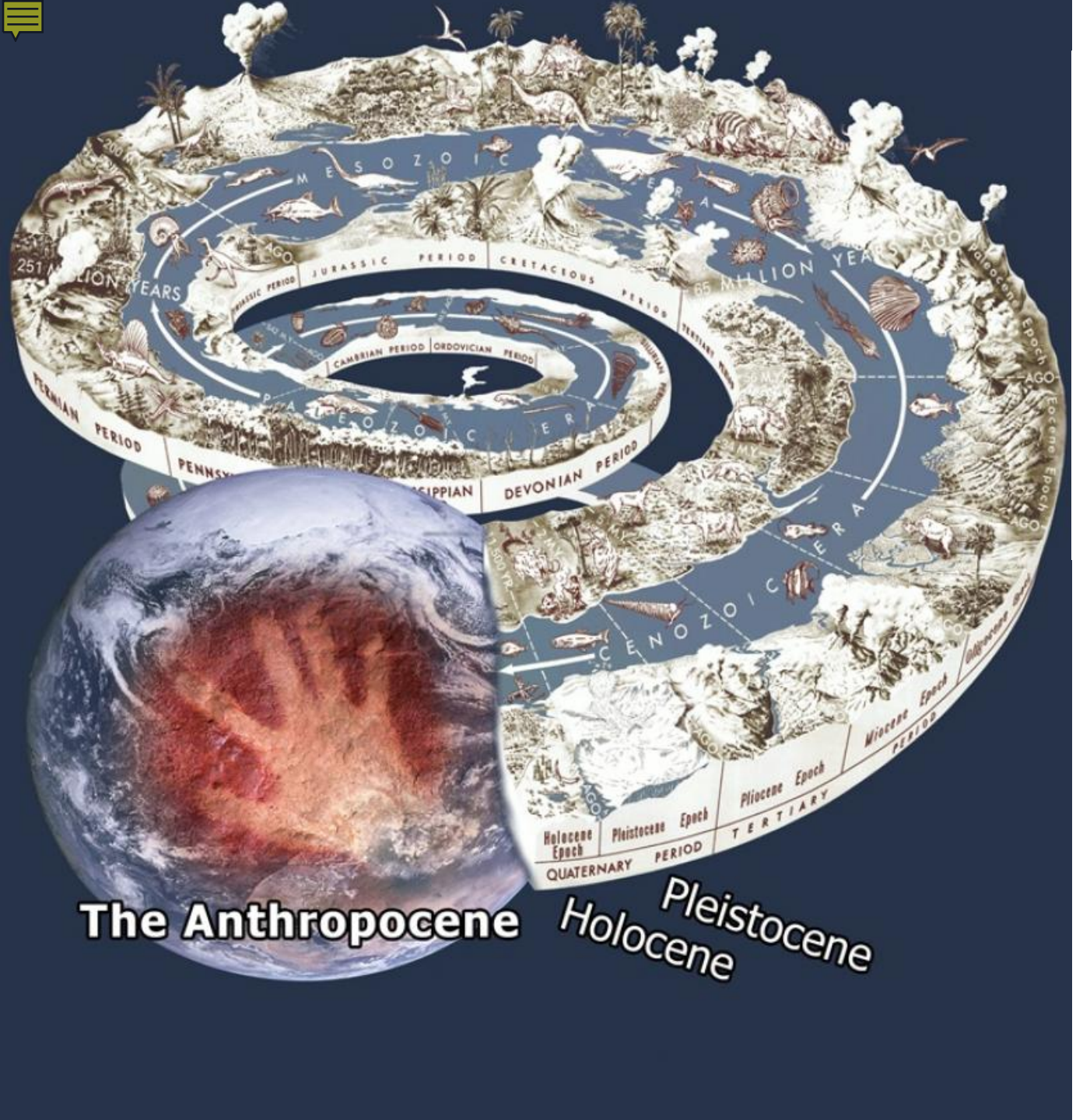
What I’m going to talk about:

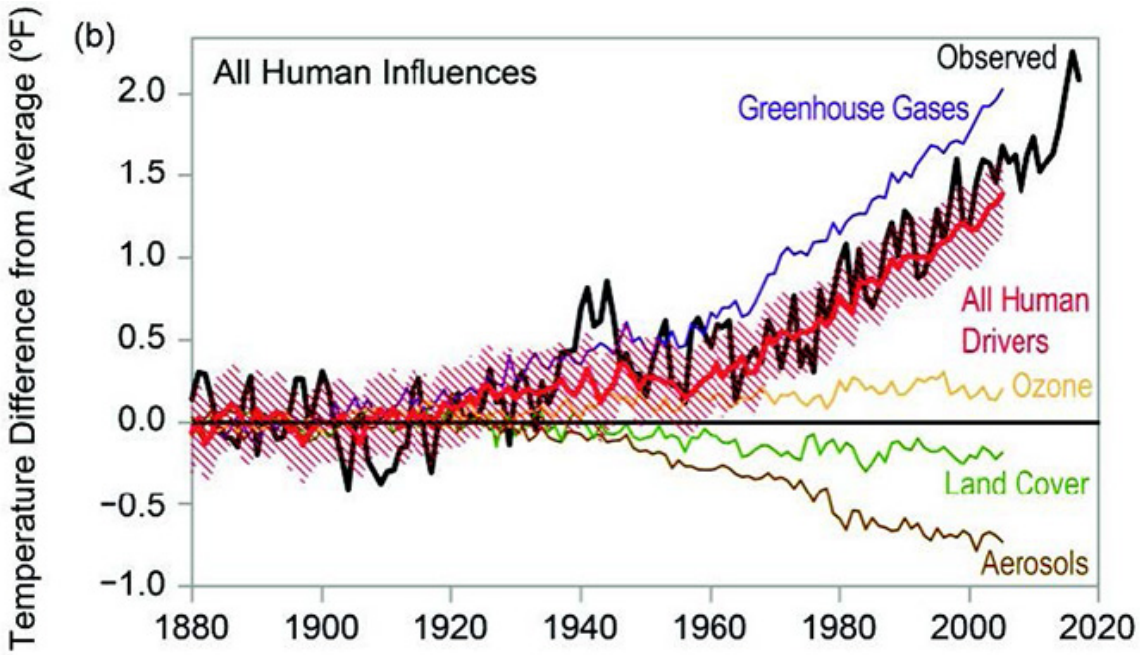
- Why we need evaluation
- The Anthropocene context
- International responses
- The Global Environment Facility
- Evaluation at the GEF
- Geographical approaches to evaluation
- Closing remarks

Evaluation

We need evaluation to know what works, for whom, why and where

Evaluation is a *systematic and impartial* assessment of an activity (program, strategy, etc.) that assesses *relevance*, *coherence*, *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *impact* and *sustainability*.



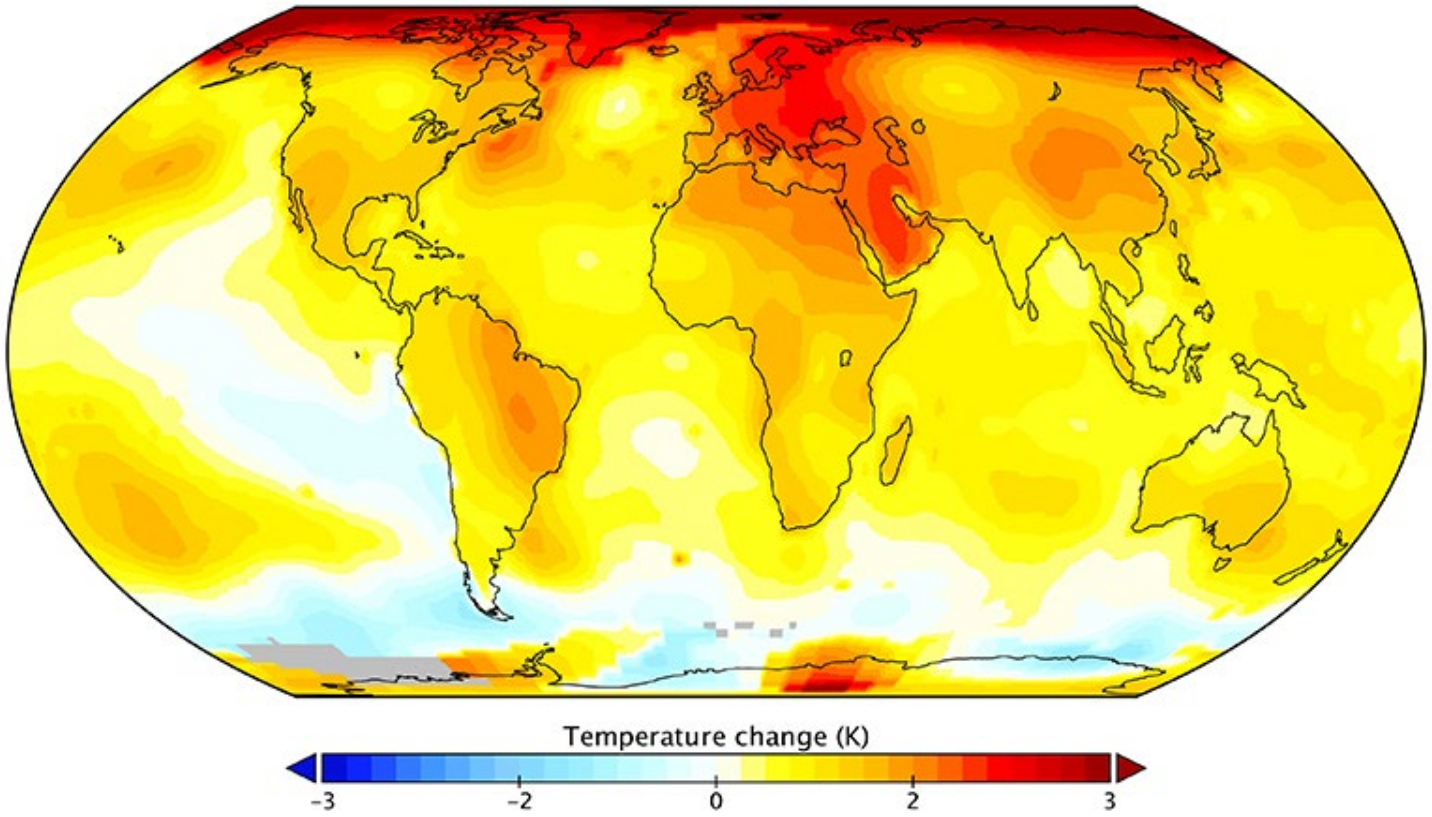


U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2018, Figure 2.1. By National Climate Assessment.

Human Origins Program, adapted from United States Geological Survey, and Visible Earth, NASA A visual representation of the breakdown of geological time.

The Anthropocene Context: Climate Change

Global surface temperature change (1979–2019)

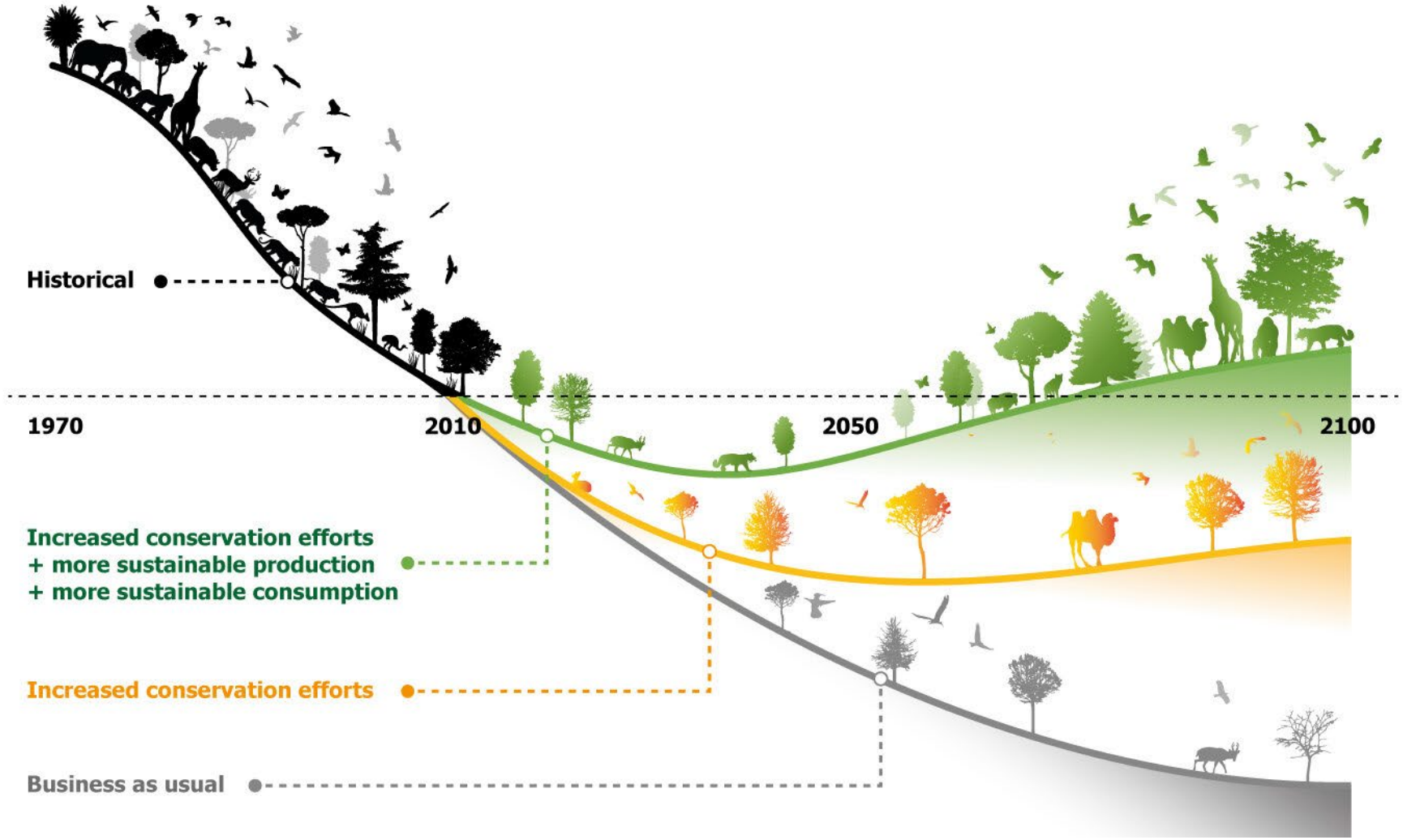


Countries have to get ready to adapt to climate change

Vulnerable people are disproportionately affected by climate change and the pandemic

Source: NASA 2020

The Anthropocene Context: Nature and Biodiversity



International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

The Anthropocene Context: Pollution and Waste

The Anthropocene Context: Root Causes

population, consumption, resource extraction, food production, deforestation, urbanization

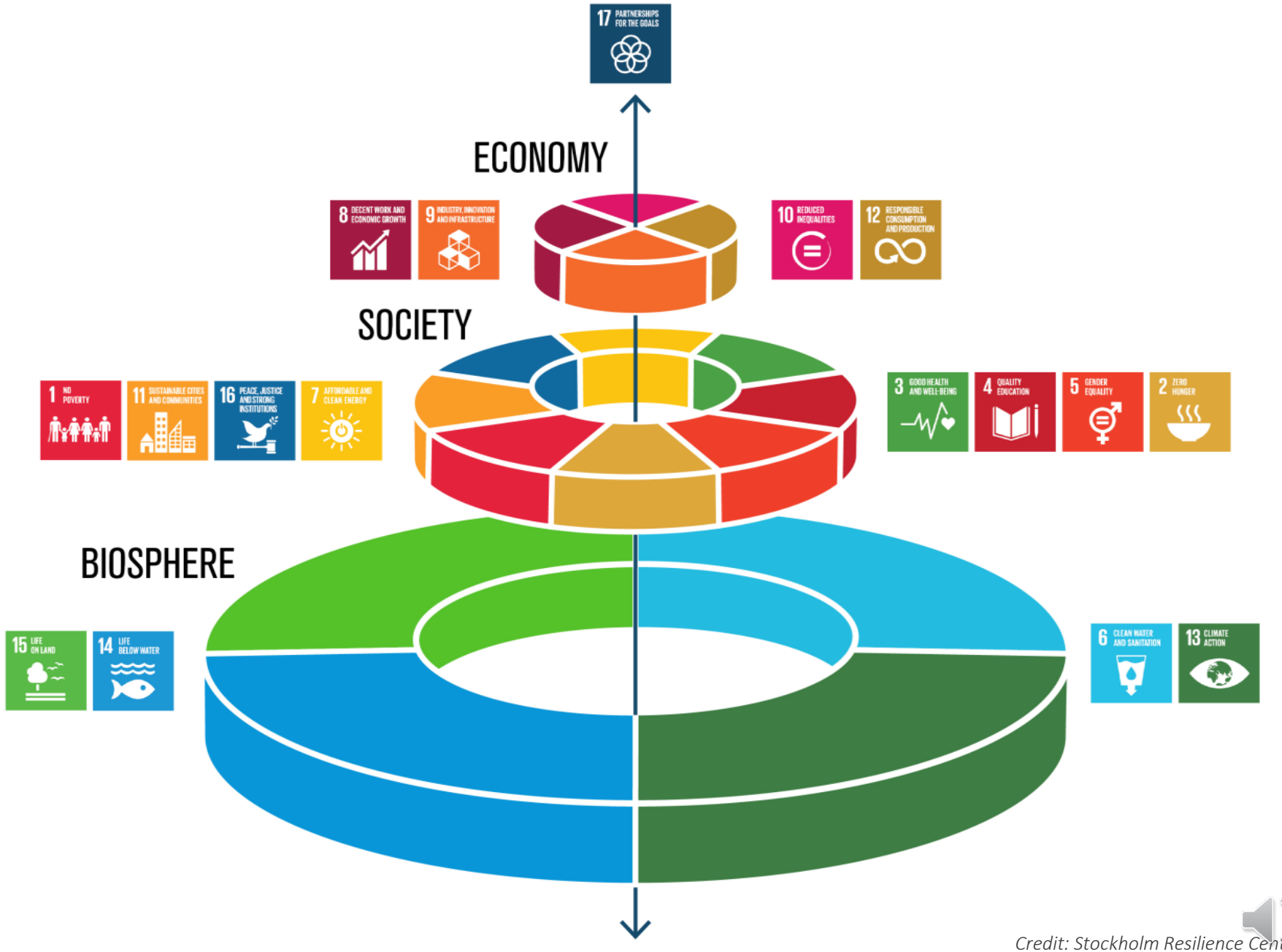
International responses

UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement

Sendai Framework on Disaster Reduction

Global Commission on Adaptation

The SDGs



Credit: Stockholm Resilience Centre

Established in 1991

US$ 21.5 billion

US$ 117 billion leverage

Innovator and catalyst

5,000 projects and programs

Unique partnership

184 member governments

18 implementing agencies

International , private sector, civil society organizations

Financial mechanism

5 major environmental conventions

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Convention on Biological Diversity

Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs)

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNEP MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY

Thematic areas

International waters

Land degradation

Biodiversity

Chemical and waste

Climate change

Thematic areas (contd.)

		Focal areas				
		Biodiversity	Climate change mitigation	Land degradation	International waters	Chemicals & waste
Impact programs	Food, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR)					
	Sustainable Cities					
	Sustainable Forest Management					

Global environmental benefits

Objectives of Independent Evaluation

- Promote accountability for the achievement of GEF objectives through the assessment of *results, effectiveness, processes*, and *performance* of the partners involved in GEF activities

- Promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the GEF and its partners as a basis for decision making on policies, strategies, program management, programs, and projects; and to improve performance

Comprehensive Evaluation of the GEF

A

Provide **evidence** for GEF replenishment

B

Assess to what extent the GEF is achieving its objectives of enhancing **global environmental benefits**

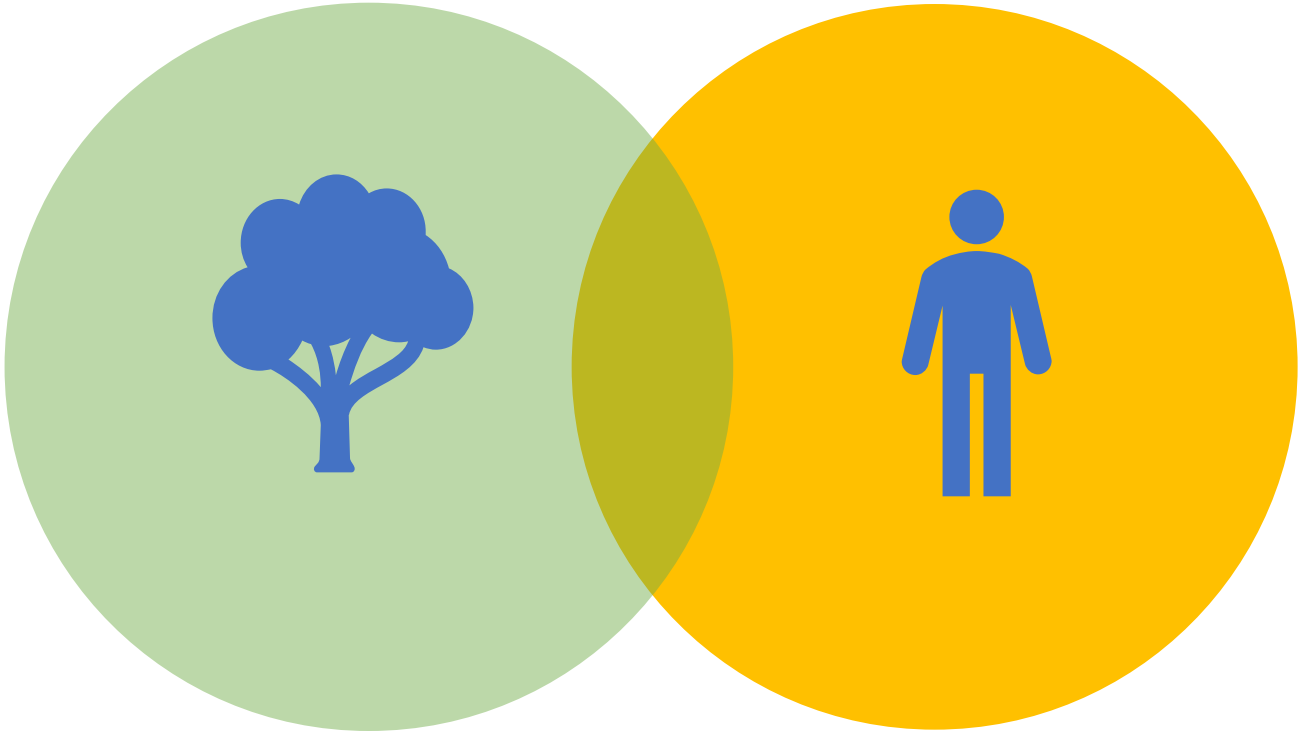
C

Identify potential areas for **improvement**

D

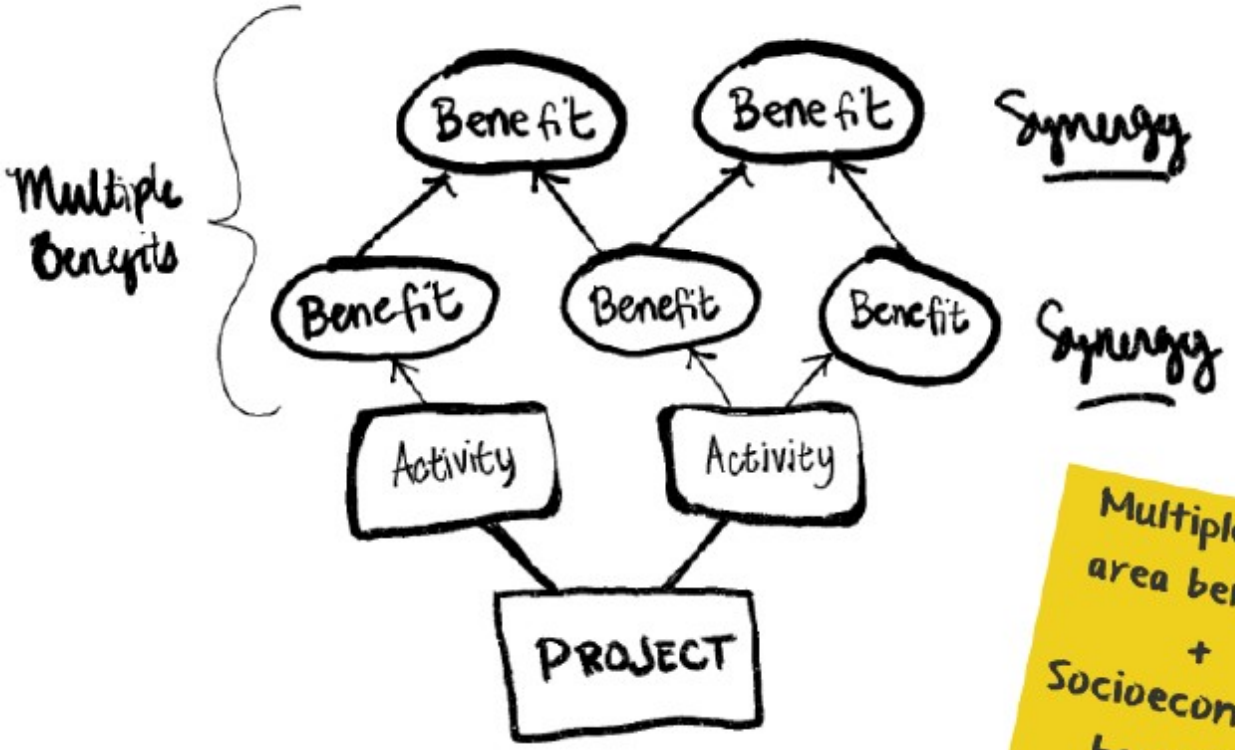
Assess the GEF's **progress** in implementation and achievement of the GEF Strategy

Geographical Approaches to evaluation:
Integrating Human and Natural Systems



Integration between natural and human systems: *environmental, social, economic*

Both synergies and trade-offs can occur within the same intervention



Multiple focal area benefits + Socioeconomic benefits

TRADE-OFF

A reduction in one benefit in the process of maximizing or increasing another benefit

Common types of trade-offs

Environmental vs Socioeconomic Objectives

Short term vs Long term

Across Focal Areas

Between Scales

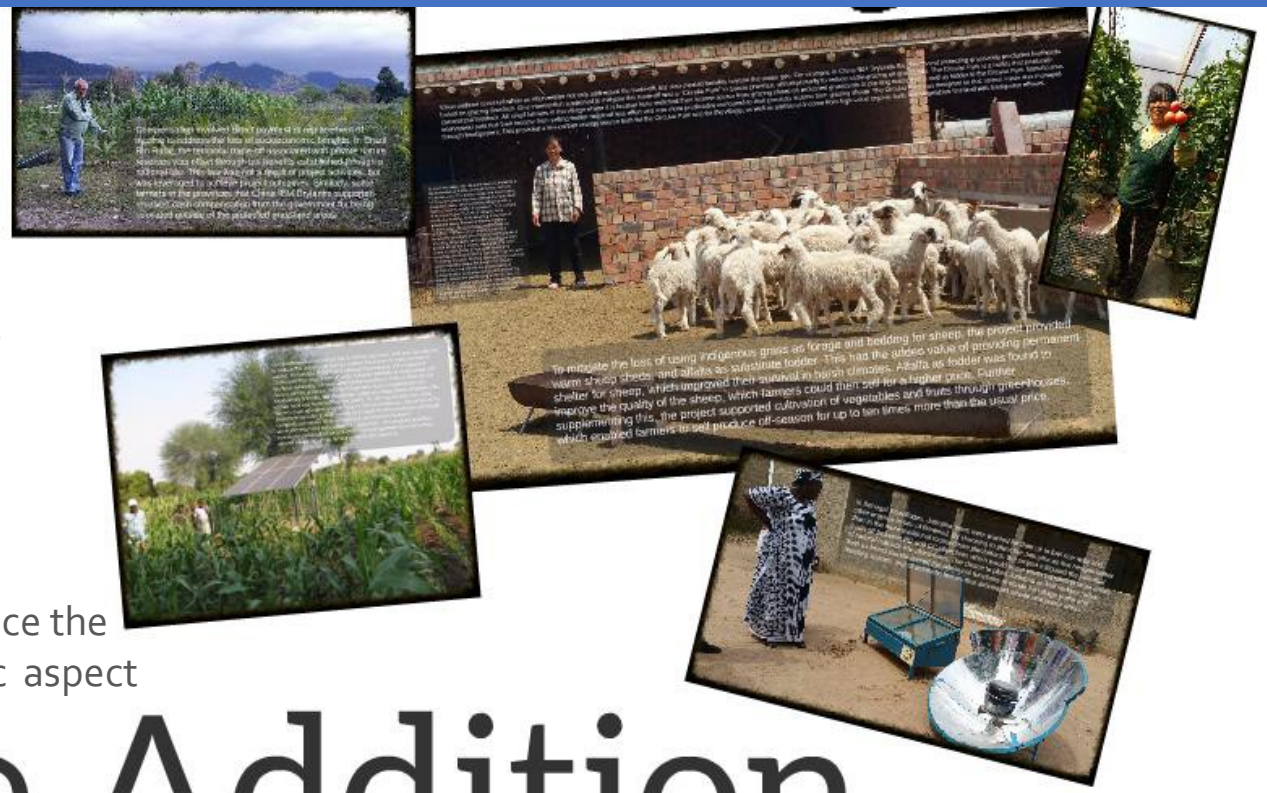
How trade-offs can be mitigated

Compensation

direct payment or replacement of income to address the loss of socioeconomic benefits

Compromise

when the benefit to one focal area is decreased to reduce the anticipated loss to another focal area or socioeconomic aspect



Value Addition

when an intervention not only addresses the trade-off, but also creates benefits beyond the status quo

TRADE-OFF

Short-term agricultural income vs
Long-term ecosystem services

Biodiversity protection in forests vs
Community access to resources

COMPENSATION

In Brazil, the temporal trade-off in converting part of farms to private nature reserves is offset through tax benefits established by national law.

COMPROMISE

In Senegal, the creation of Community Nature Reserves was a compromise between benefits to biodiversity and the local economy. These reserves increase community access to natural resources, but reduce the maximum benefits to biodiversity that could have been obtained through complete protection.

TRADE-OFF

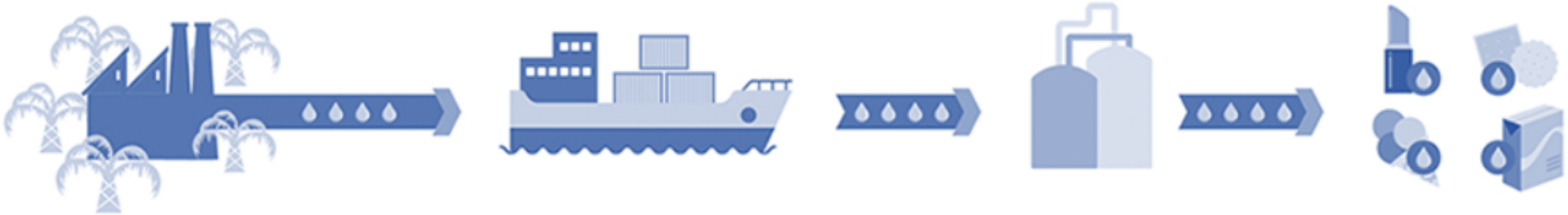
Grassland protection to reduce erosion vs Grassland as livestock fodder

VALUE ADDITION

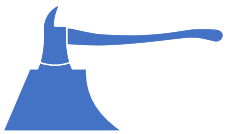
In China, to mitigate the loss of using indigenous grass as forage and bedding for sheep, the project provided warm sheep sheds and alfalfa as substitute fodder. This had the added value of providing permanent shelter for sheep, which improved their survival in harsh climates. Alfalfa as fodder was found to improve the quality of the sheep, which farmers could then sell for a higher price.

Geographical Approaches to evaluation:
Teleconnections and vertical scale

Commodity chains - from local to global



Wildlife trade – need to deal with supply and demand



Deforestation – happens locally, but causes are global

Wildlife trade is a transmission pathway to zoonotic diseases

Relevant lessons from the GEF Global Wildlife Program evaluation:

Importance of a globally coordinated approach

Species coverage needs to be strategically expanded

Appropriate focus on demand countries

Explicitly addressing political will and corruption

Attention to livelihoods security

Geographical approaches to evaluation:
Place and Context Matter

FCV, LDCs, SIDS—There are no such thing as global best practices

Fragility, Conflict, and Violence affected states

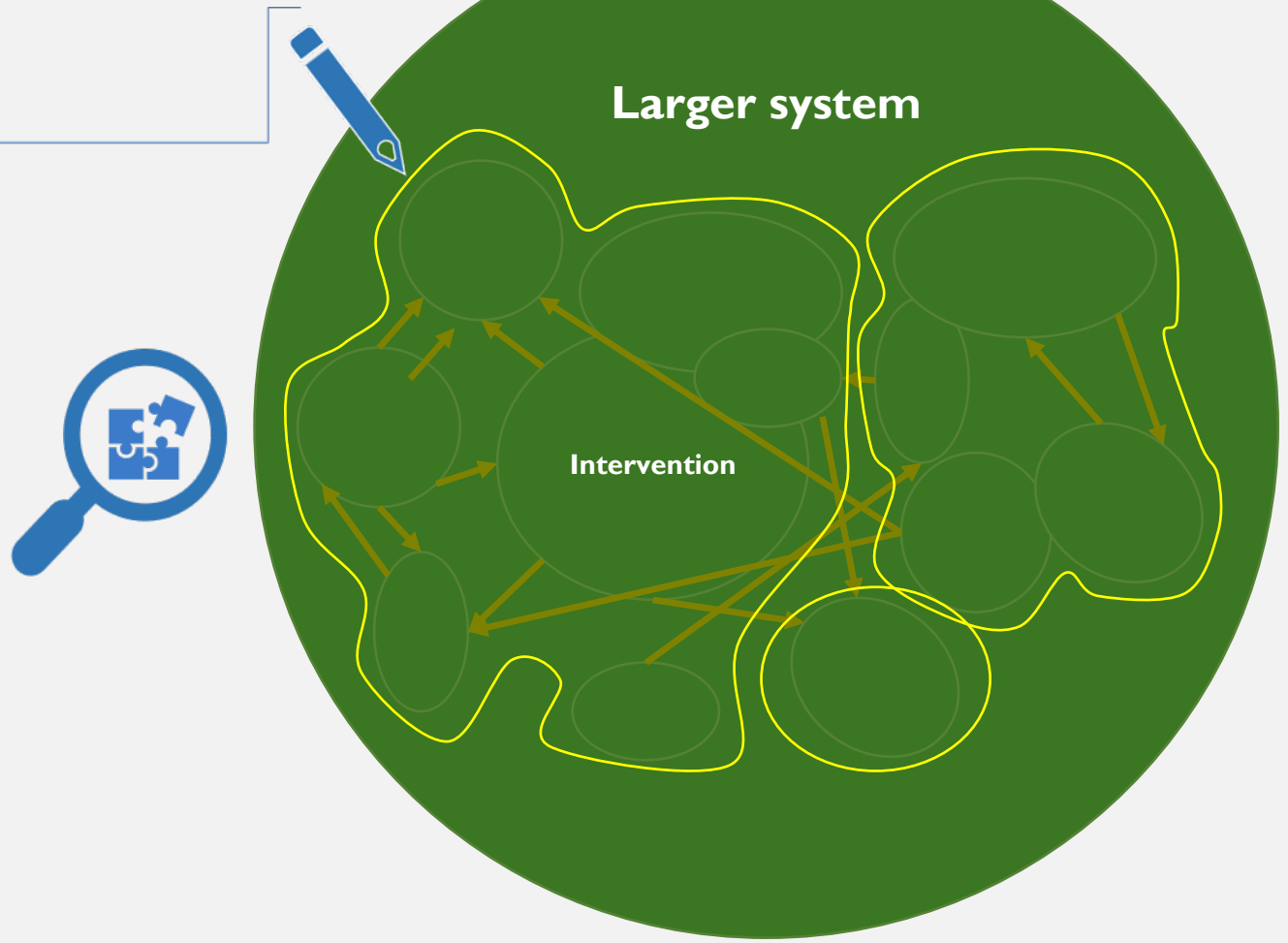
Least Developed Countries

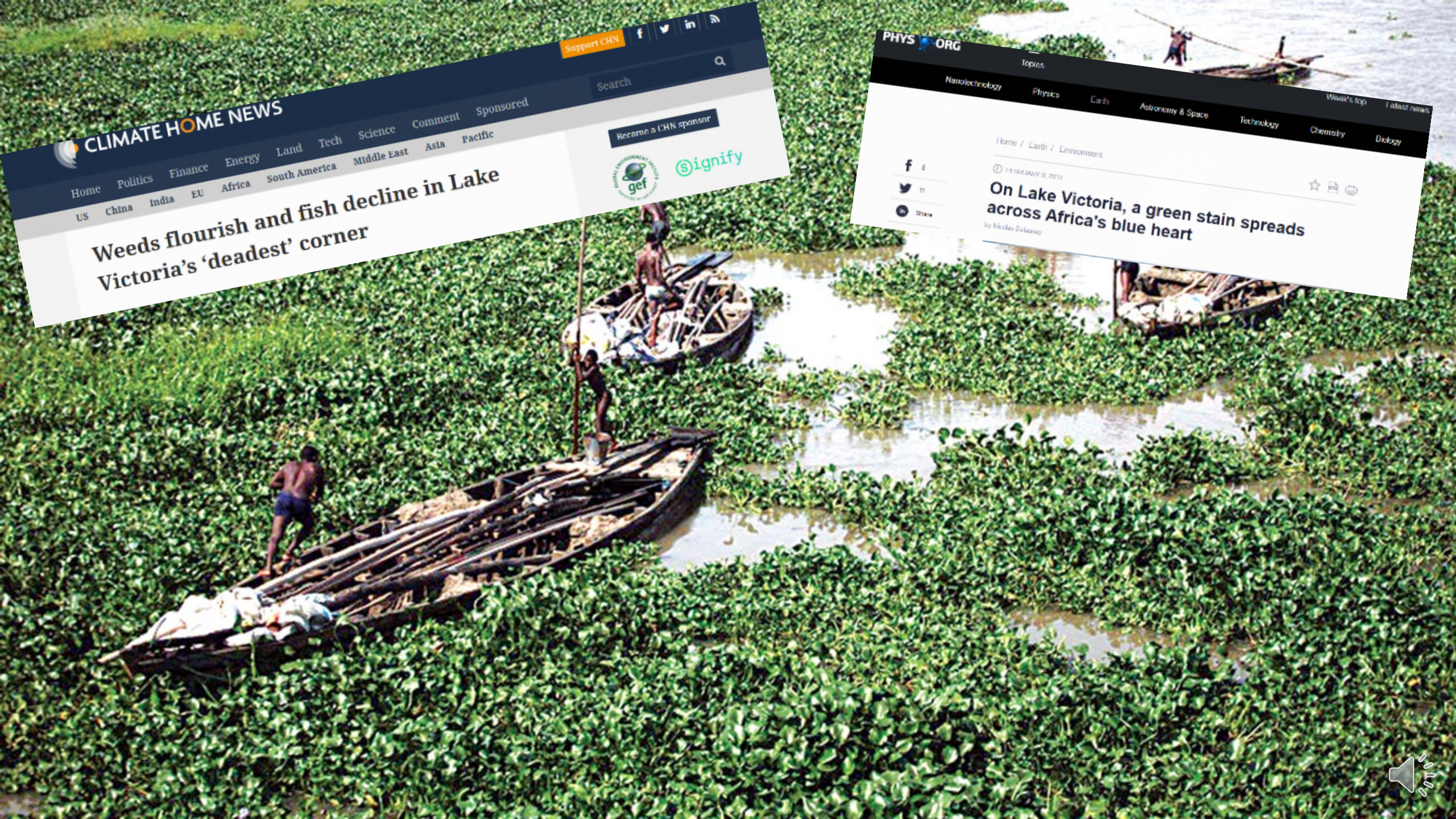
Small Islands Developing States

Geographical approaches to evaluation:
drawing geographical boundaries

Need to draw system boundaries

Can't see a project in isolation



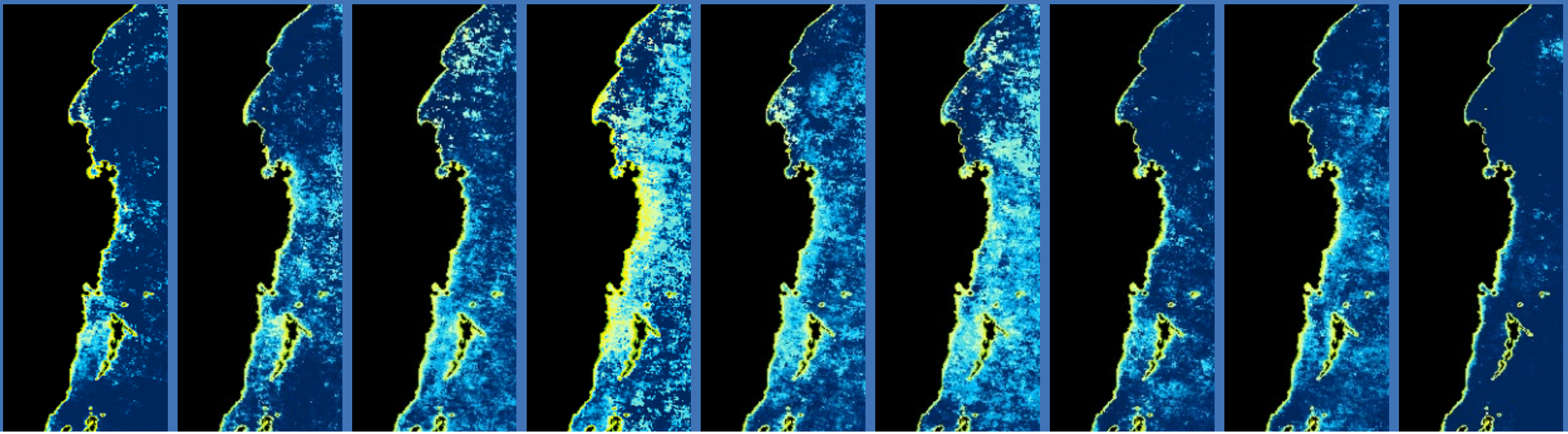

CLIMATE HOME NEWS
Support CHN
Search
Home Politics Finance Energy Land Tech Science Comment Sponsored
US China India EU Africa South America Middle East Asia Pacific
Become a CHN sponsor
gef
Signify
Weeds flourish and fish decline in Lake Victoria's 'deadest' corner
PHYS.ORG
Topics
Nanotechnology Physics Earth Astronomy & Space Technology Chemistry Biology
Home / Earth / Environment
On Lake Victoria, a green stain spreads across Africa's blue heart

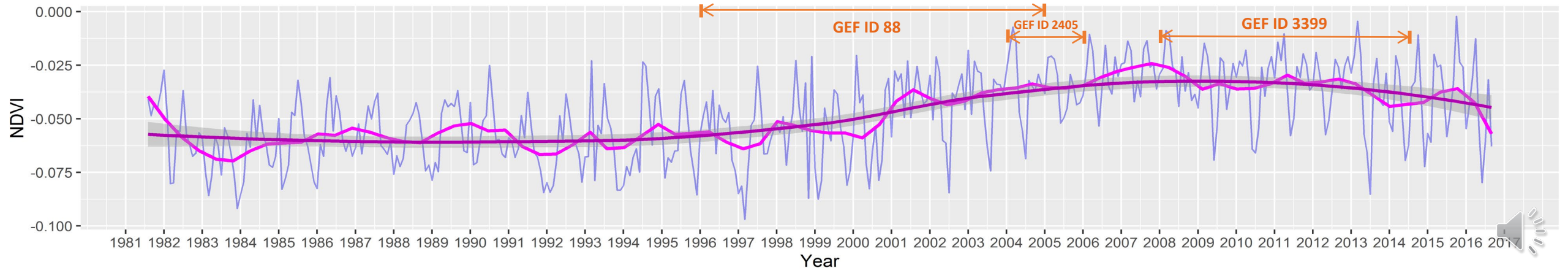
Lake Victoria: Vegetation presence

Vegetation Water

Projects became effective once they considered infestation that came from upstream waters

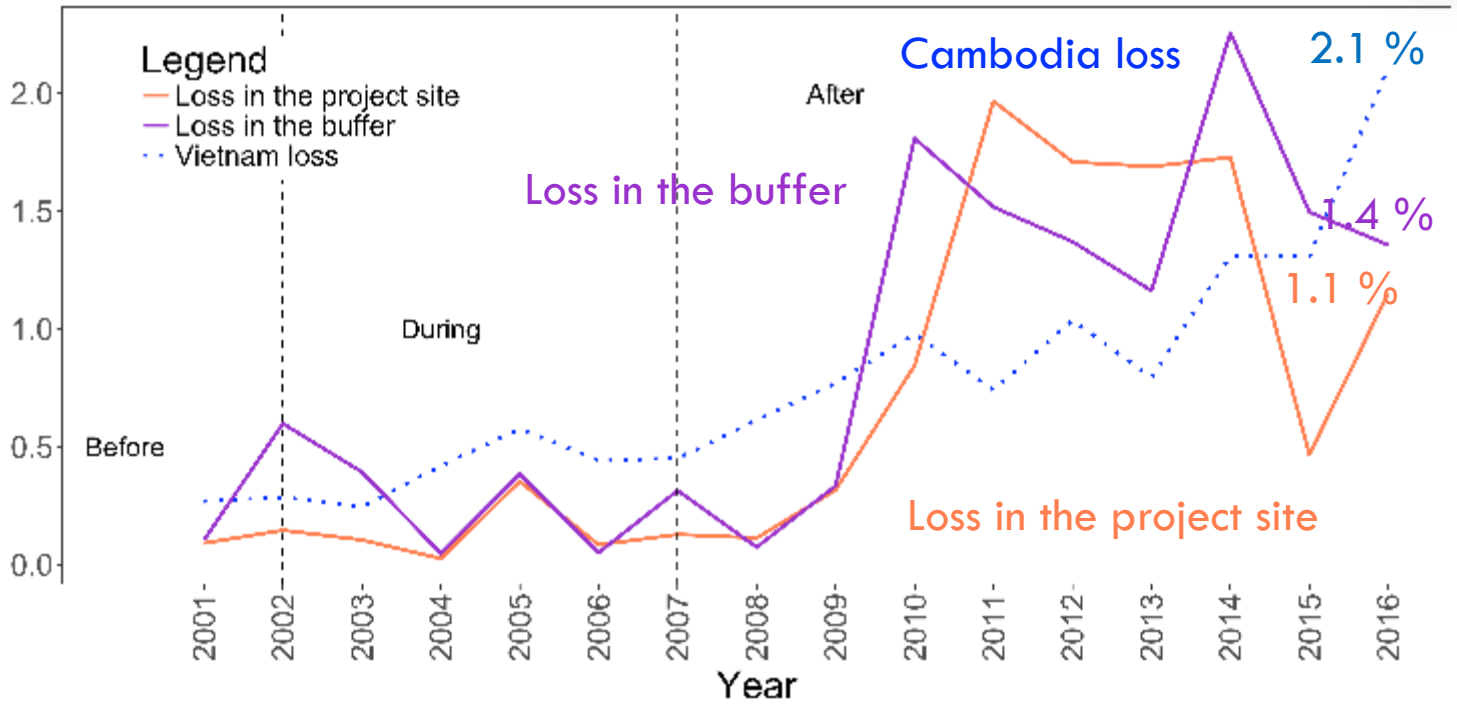
2000 2003 2005 2007 2009 2011 2013 2015 2016

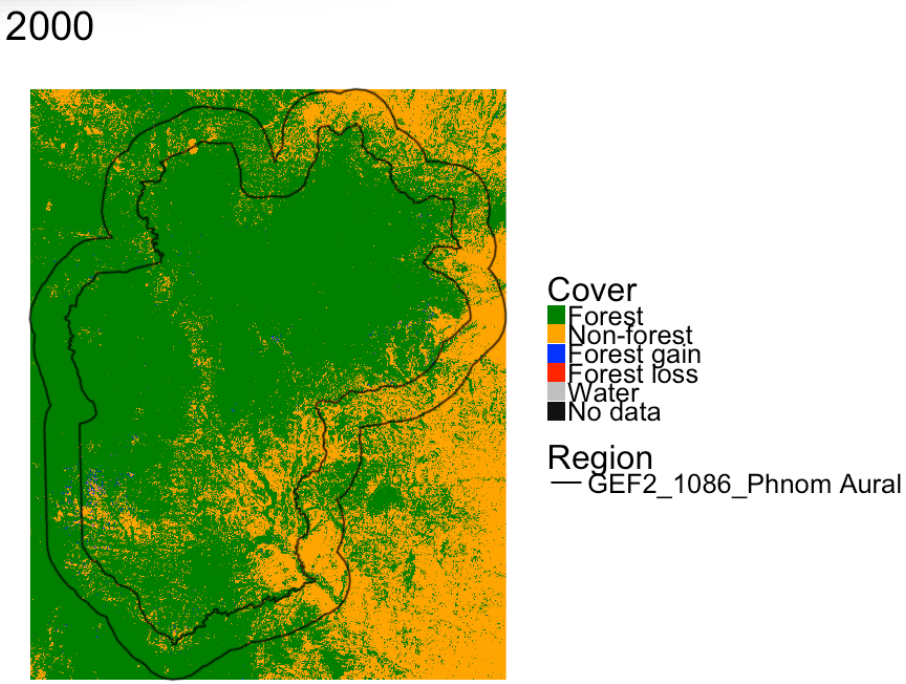




Geographical approaches to evaluation:
Using Geospatial methods

Cardamom Mountains
Integrated Protected Area System, **Cambodia**

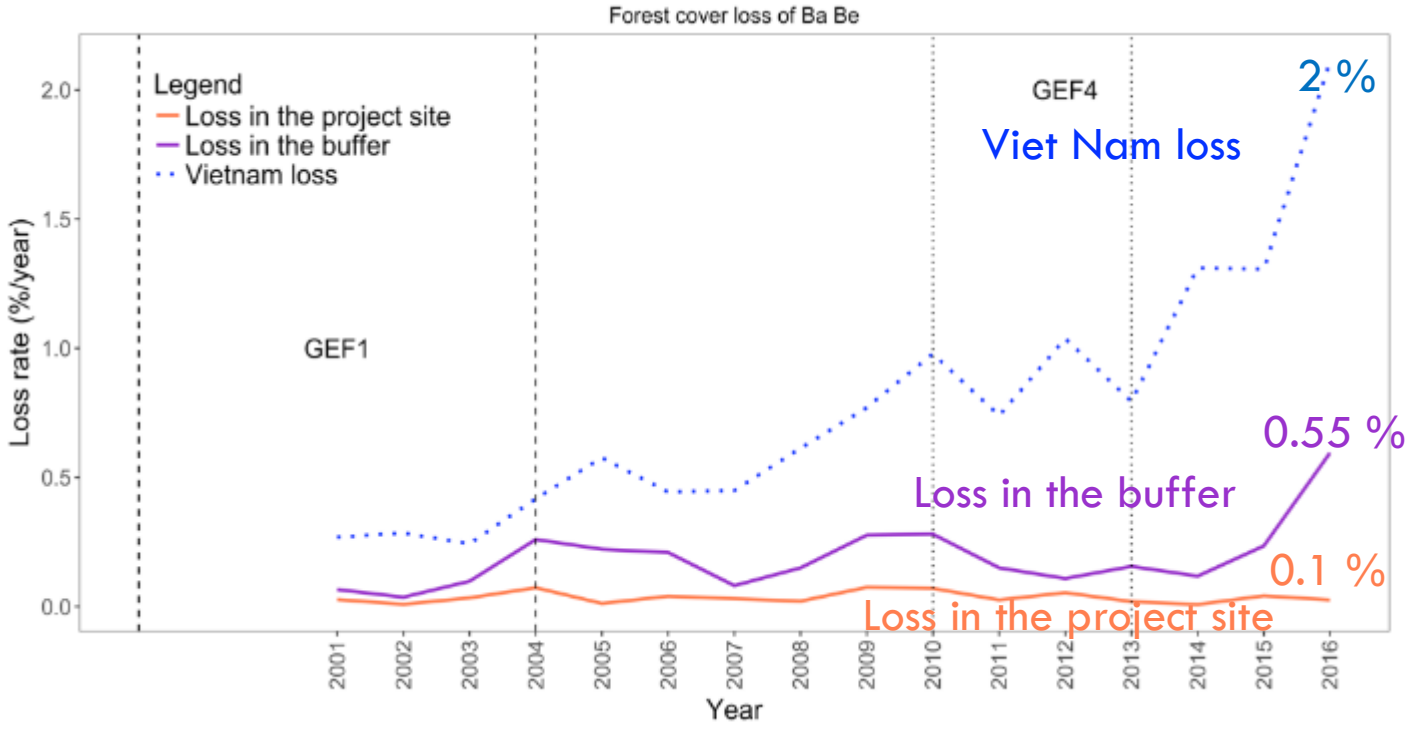


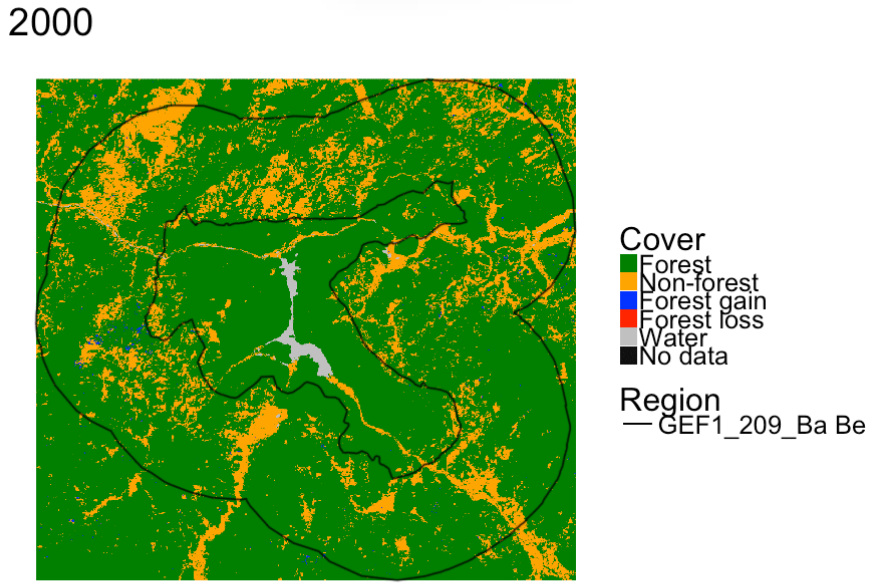


Was this intervention sustainable?

Geographical approaches to evaluation:
Using Geospatial methods

Ba Be: Sustainable Forest Management, Viet Nam





SUSTAINABLE OUTCOME

Forest loss did not increase despite unprecedented increase in the buffer and at country level

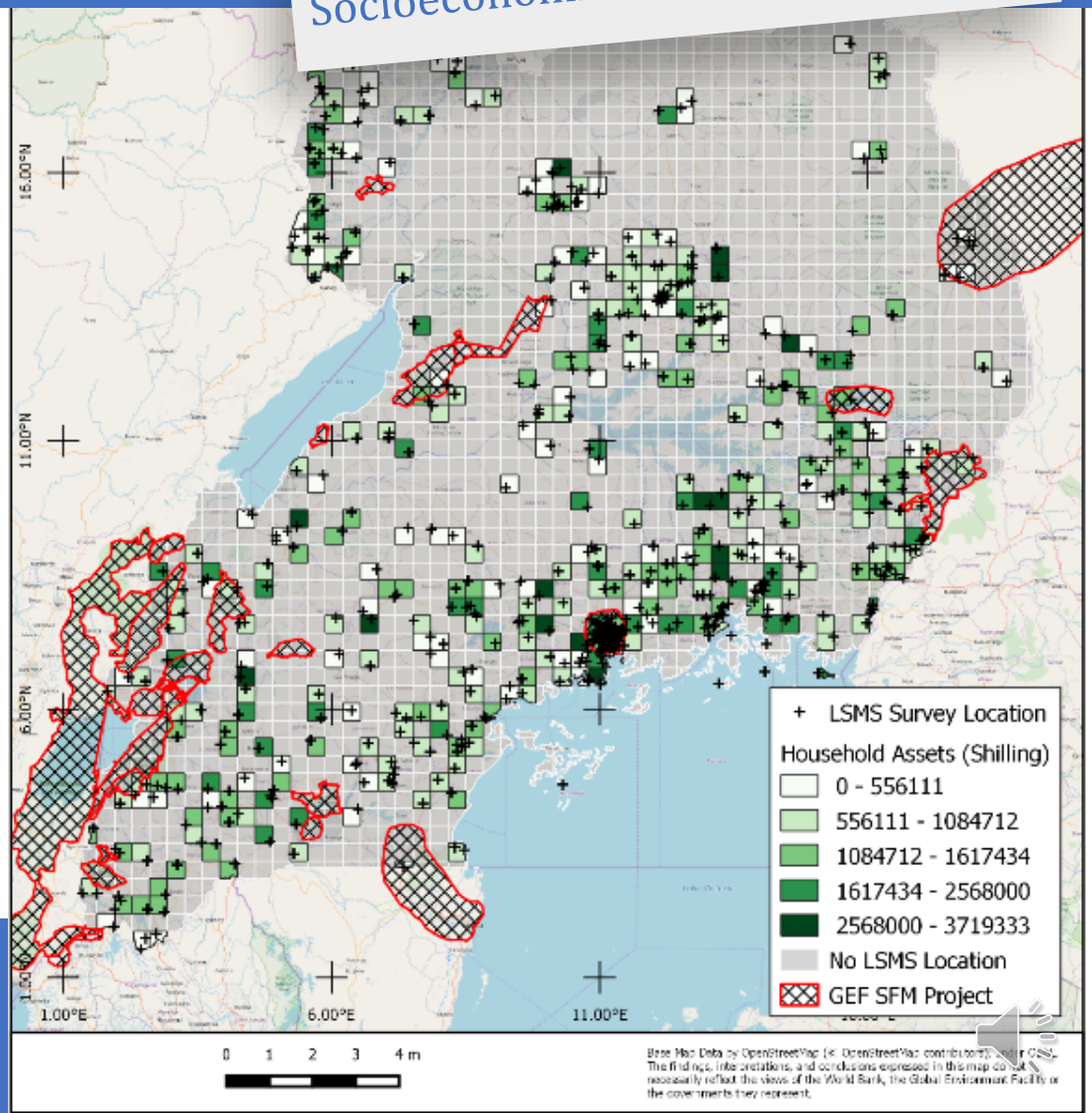
Geographical approaches to evaluation:
Using Geospatial methods

Sustainable Forest Management(SFM): VALUE FOR MONEY

Households in proximity to GEF SFM interventions have more in **Household Assets** as compared to households further away.

Positive Correlation with GEF, not causation

Socioeconomic Co-benefits(**Uganda**)



Geographical approaches to evaluation:
addressing drivers

Transformational change is deep, systemic, sustainable change with large-scale impact in an area of global environmental concern*

*Adopted from IEG. 2016. Supporting Transformational Change for Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity.

4 criteria:

- ✓ Relevance
- ✓ Depth of Change
- ✓ Scale of Change
- ✓ Sustainability

Relevance

- Climate Change
- Biodiversity
- Land Degradation
- Chemicals and Waste
- International Waters
- Sustainable Forest Management

Internal Factors

- Quality of implementation
- Quality of execution
- Pre-intervention analytical and advisory activities
- Partnerships with donors

Outcome

- Depth of change
- Scale of change

Transformational Mechanism

A mechanism to expand and sustain the impact of the intervention (through mainstreaming, demonstration, replication, or catalytic effects)

Ambition Level and Focus
(of intervention objectives)

- Depth of change (market and system focus)
- Scale of change

Contextual Conditions

- Government ownership and support
- Implementation capacity
- Policy environment
- NGO & community participation
- Private sector participation
- Economic and market conditions

Sustainability

- Financial
- Economic
- Environmental
- Social
- Political

EXAMPLES

Transformational Change

Uruguay

Wind power
2008: 0%
2016: 33%

Africa

1.3 mln – quality solar lanterns;

Private market transformed

Amazon

13.2 mln ha – strict protection
10.8 mln ha – sustainable use

China

Wind power
2005: 1.3 GW
2015: 129.3 GW

Namibia

98% PAs improved;

Doubled number of wild dogs, leopards, cheetahs, lions (2004–12)

SUCCESS FACTORS FOR

Transformational change

- ✓ Clear ambition in design
- ✓ Addressing market and system reforms through policies
- ✓ Mechanisms for financial sustainability
- ✓ Quality of implementation and execution
- ✓ May be achieved by projects of different size

Closing remarks

- Must deal with global environmental issues for people, planet and prosperity
- Interventions take place in place: natural conditions, politics, economics, culture matter
- Evaluation to ensure that limited resources are used wisely and that we learn from past experiences

Thank you!

gefieo.org