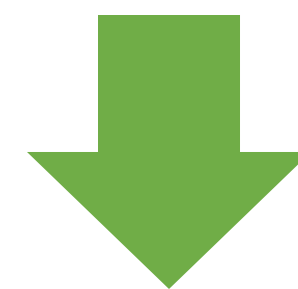


Unlocking Transformative Potential in Agroecology

A Workshop on Pathways, Networks, and What We Can Do To Foster Change



WELCOME !!



As a starting activity, go to the Miro and place yourself in the landscape!



Myriam Dumortier, Lisa Norton, Zsófia Kollányi, Robin Dianoux

Agenda

Welcome & Check-in

- **Candid Conversation on Agroecology:** Myriam Dumortier & Lisa Norton will share real-world wins and challenges, and explore what's holding us back.
- **Reflection & Sharing** on Motivations and Frustrations
- **Presentation** on the Transformative Potential of Networks by Robin Dianoux
- **Breakout Groups** for discussing what's working in your networks and areas for improvement.
- **Plenary** share of key insights and uncovering of common challenges.

=== Break! ===

- **Breakout Groups** for sharing experiences and identification of patterns and potential actions
- **Plenary** Sharing & Discussion of key takeaways and action ideas.
- **Final Harvest** with final thoughts, next steps, and feedback!





Bio Knowledge Agora: Developing the Science Service for European
Research and Biodiversity Policymaking (2022-2027)

Networks in Motion: Pathways to Drive Agroecological Change

Robin Dianoux – February 21, 2025

Workshop Unlocking Transformative Potential in Agroecology



Funded by
the European Union

Birds

This article is more than 1 year old

Intensive farming is biggest cause of bird decline in Europe, study says

Use of pesticides and fertilisers identified as most significant factor behind loss of 550 million birds from skies



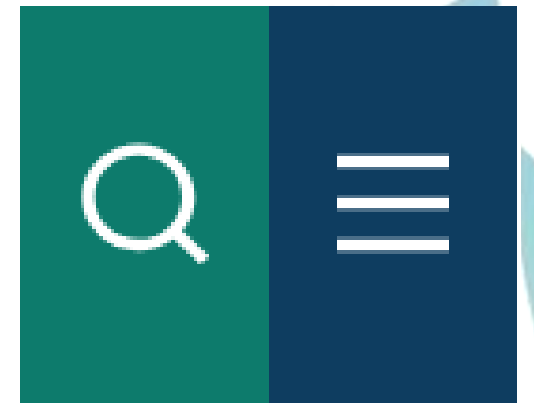
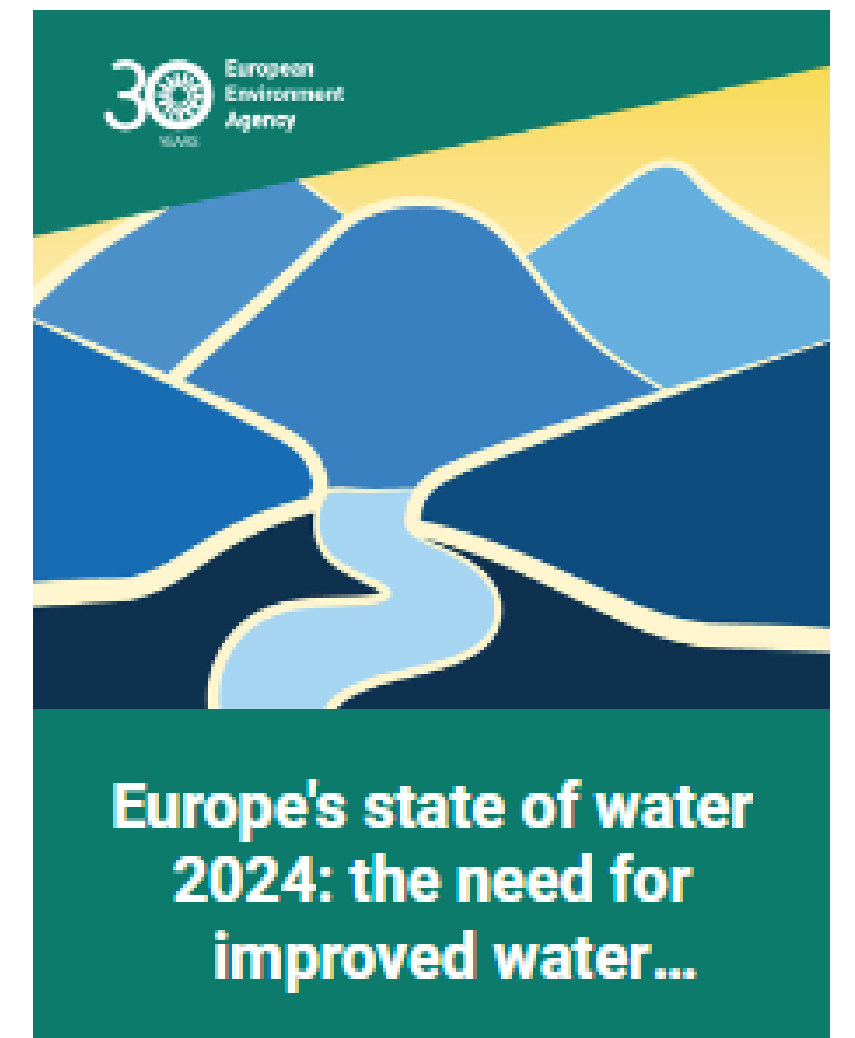
Swifts in flight over Monmouthshire, Wales. Birds that rely on invertebrates for food were found to be the hardest hit. Photograph: Nature Picture Library/Alamy



European Environment Agency

Agriculture is the most significant pressure impacting both surface and groundwaters, according to the EEA report 'Europe's state of water 2024: the need for improved water resilience'. This results from water use and pollution from the intensive use of nutrients and pesticides, according to Member States' own monitoring. Agriculture is by far the highest net water consumer in Europe and, without changes in practices, demand from irrigated agriculture is likely to increase with climate change.

The EEA's report shows that, despite some progress, Europe's waters and aquatic ecosystems are still severely impacted by chemicals, predominantly by air pollution from coal-powered energy generation and diffuse pollution by nutrients and pesticides from agriculture. Habitat degradation is also widespread. Adding to the challenge to protect aquatic ecosystems is climate change, which is disrupting weather patterns and further increasing pressures on water resources and management.



Are mega-basins a solution to water scarcity?



Sainte Soline,
France



(Some) farmers against regulations.. ..and 'science'



Devant la préfecture de l'Hérault, à Montpellier, le 18 novembre 2024, lors d'une manifestation des Jeunes Agriculteurs et de la FDSEA. SYLVAIN THOMAS/AFP



Antonin Albert, le jeudi 28 novembre 2024



© DR - Tôt ce matin, plus d'une centaine d'agriculteurs ont érigé un mur devant l'institut Inrae à Paris, bloquant symboliquement son entrée.

The Crossroads of Agroecology

Le Monde



Consulter
le journal

Actualités ▾ Économie ▾ Vidéos ▾ Débats ▾ Culture ▾ Le Goût du Monde ▾

ÉCONOMIE • AGRICULTURE & ALIMENTATION

Projet de loi agricole : les sénateurs renforcent l'orientation productiviste et gomment les références à la transition

Le Sénat devrait voter, mardi 18 février, un projet de loi d'orientation agricole sensiblement réécrit par rapport à la version des députés. Le gouvernement souhaite promulguer la loi avant le Salon de l'agriculture qui ouvre samedi.

FRANCE February 2025

Agriculture bill: senators reinforce the productivist orientation and erase references to transition

“The original intention of this bill was to respond to the issue of generational renewal and the challenge of the climate crisis. Over the course of 2024, however, it was transformed into the main response to agricultural protest by incorporating several so-called ‘simplification’ provisions, most of which reverted environmental protection measures by erasing most references to global warming, biodiversity and agro-ecological transition.

It introduces a principle of ‘non-regression of food sovereignty’, which the senators wish to put on the same level as the principle of non-regression in environmental protection.”



Challenges to Agroecological Transition

- ◆ **Policy setbacks:** Organic farming support is stagnating or declining.
 - ◆ **Corporate influence:** Large agribusinesses shape policies that maintain the status quo.
- ◆ **Public perception & demand:** Agroecology is still niche, and food prices drive consumer choices.
 - ◆ **Network fragmentation:** Many initiatives work in silos, limiting their collective impact.





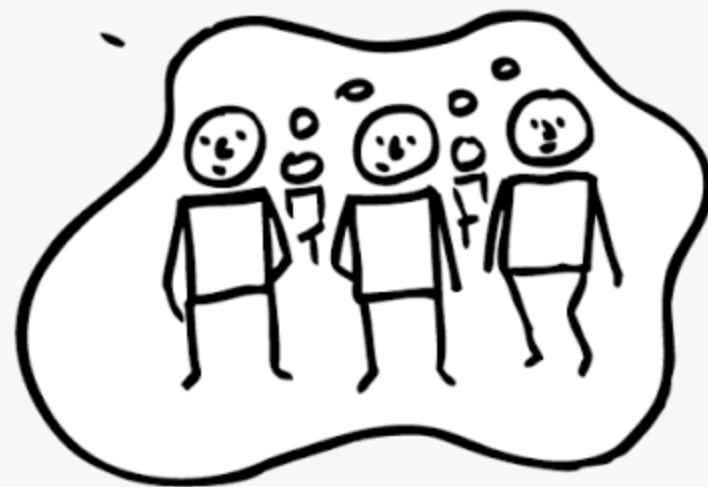
So, considering these contradictory forces...

...How can we navigate and drive meaningful transformation?

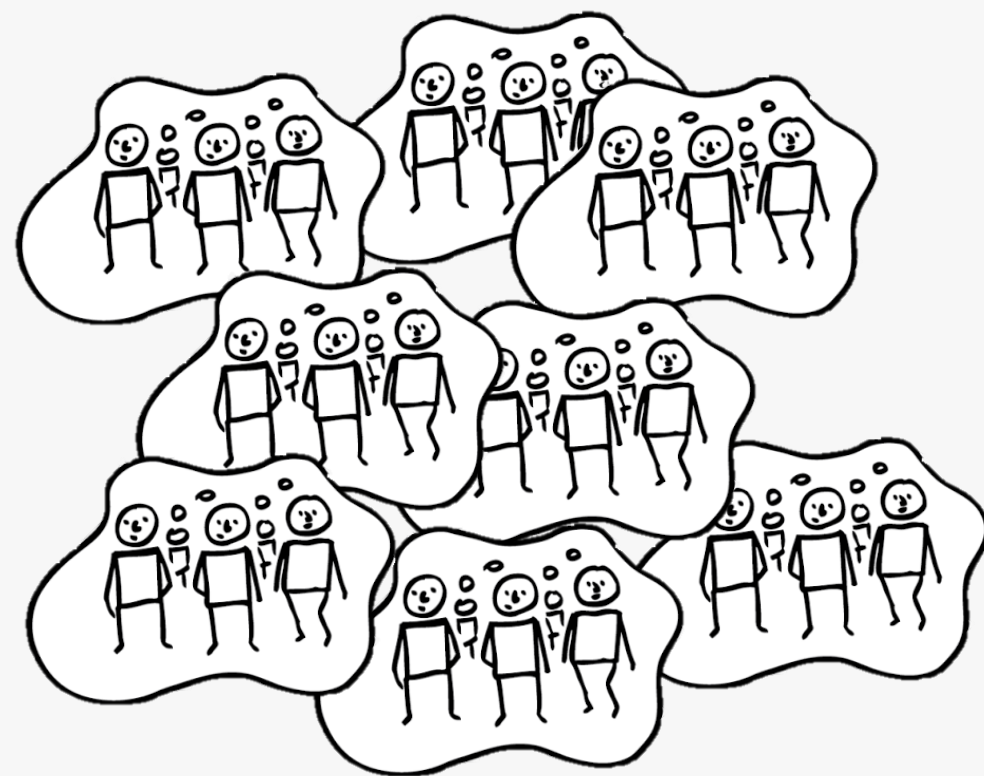




me



the group



society

Social networks!

Networks are formed by actors connected through **formal** or **informal** ties: groups, institutions, formal networks, communities of practice, parties, associations.....

Individual → Collective

Networks of Actors + Networks of Networks

Networks can include similar people/ networks, or **cross-boundary** (e.g. sectors of society)

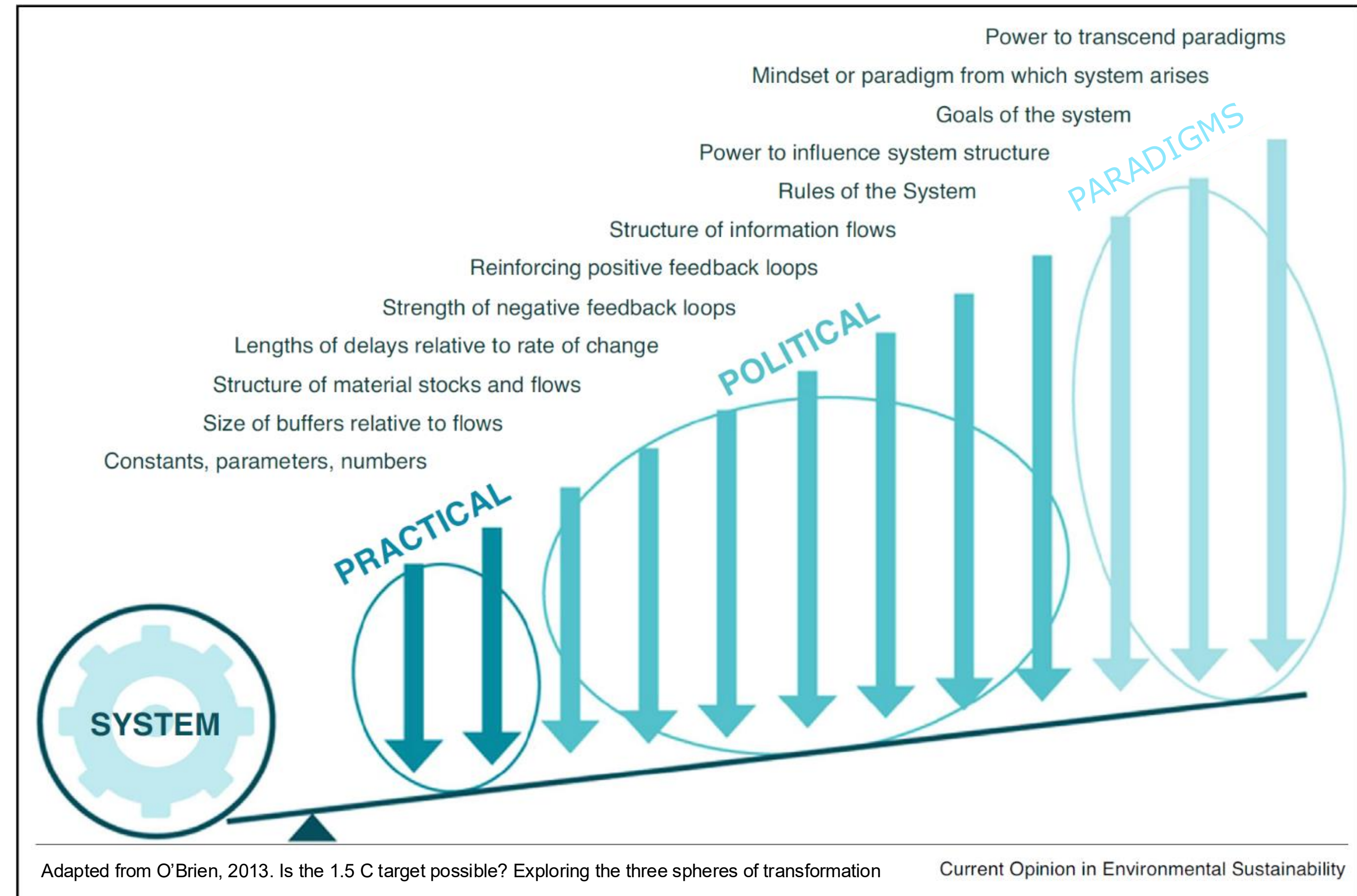
Transformative potential of networks entails:

◆ 1) Contributing to transformative change

- ◆ Addressing not only direct drivers, but also indirect drivers of biodiversity loss (root causes)
- ◆ Leverage points

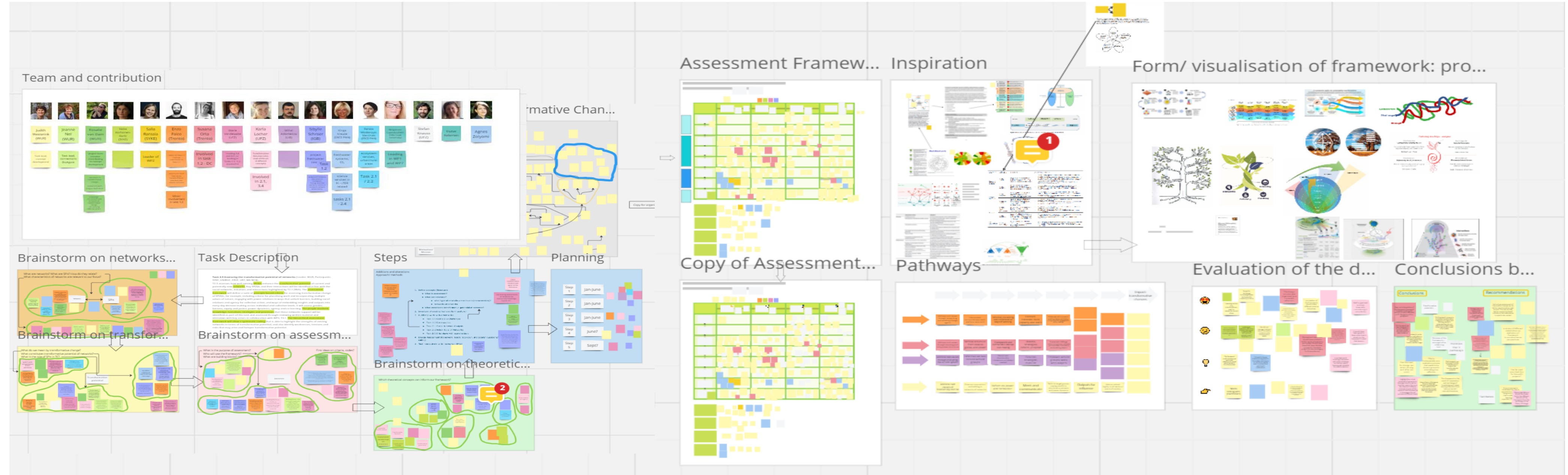
◆ 2) Working in transformative ways

- ◆ Pluralizing
- ◆ Empowering
- ◆ Politicizing
- ◆ Embedding

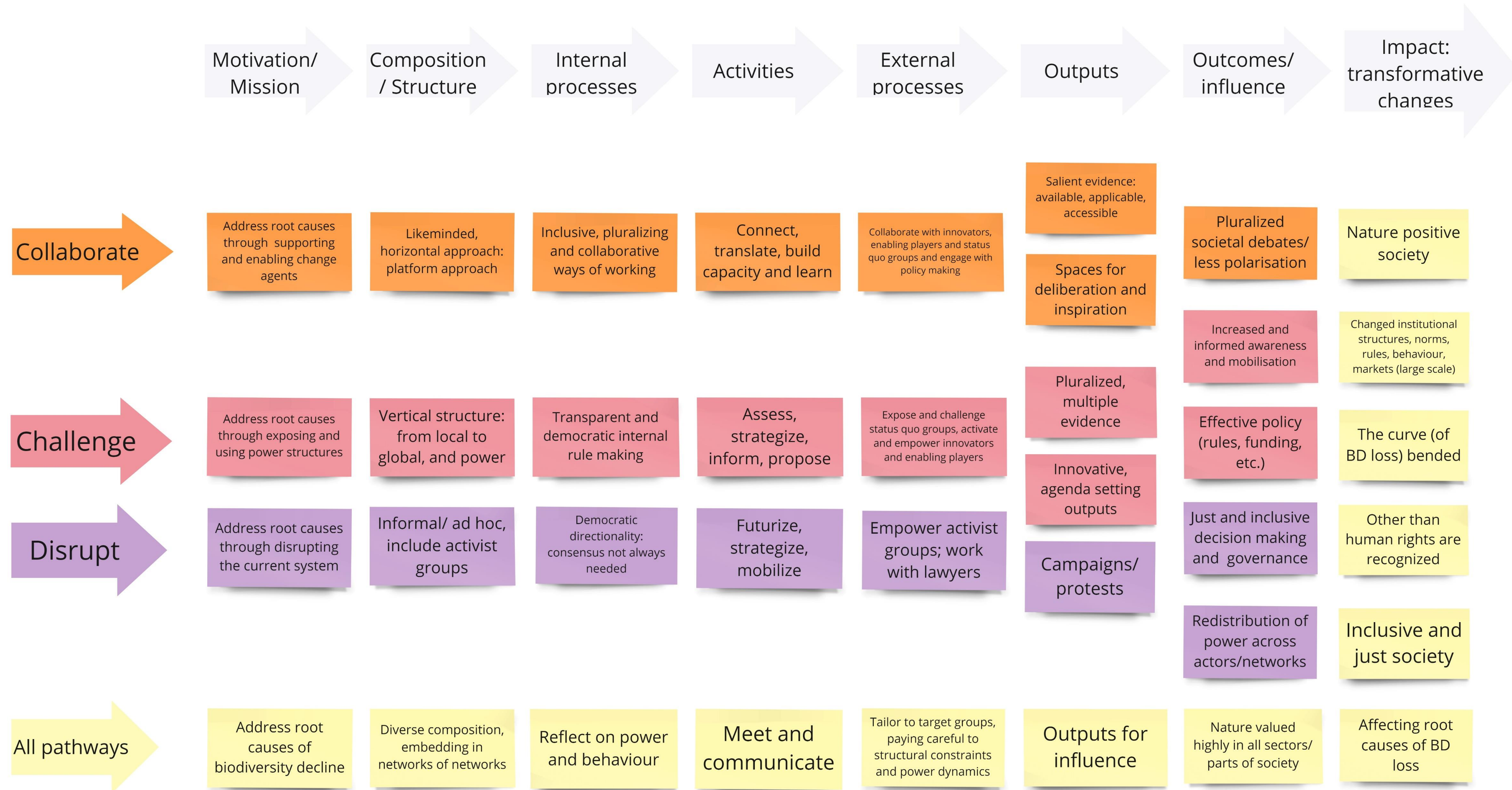


Co-producing an assessment framework for the transformative potential of networks in BioAgora

- ◆ Eight online workshops
- ◆ Testing with real-life networks



Collaborate, challenge and/or disrupt



Collaborate

- ◆ Within existing systems
- ◆ Coalitions of the willing
- ◆ With enabling players, biodiversity initiatives, innovators
- ◆ Constructive, inclusive, consensus-seeking
- ◆ Co-production of knowledge



Examples:

- ◆ developing principles and standards for business
- ◆ public–private partnerships
- ◆ community-based natural resource management
- ◆ capacity building programmes



Challenge

- ◆ Constructive but critical of status quo
- ◆ Expose causes and root causes of biodiversity loss
- ◆ Point at responsibility of powerful status quo actors and policy makers
- ◆ Empower biodiversity innovators and activate enabling players
- ◆ ‘Speaking truth to power’



Examples:

- ◆ assessments that trace the flows of winners and losers
- ◆ biodiversity impact chains that track back to root causes and actors responsible for this
- ◆ actions to centre and engage marginalized groups within science-policy



Disrupt

- ◆ Break down or phase out harmful parts of the system
- ◆ Reconfigure systems
- ◆ Rights of nature
- ◆ Activism, or support to activism



Examples:

- ◆ providing science support to social movements
- ◆ science activism
- ◆ court cases



Examples of Pathways in Action

For Civil Society-Oriented Networks

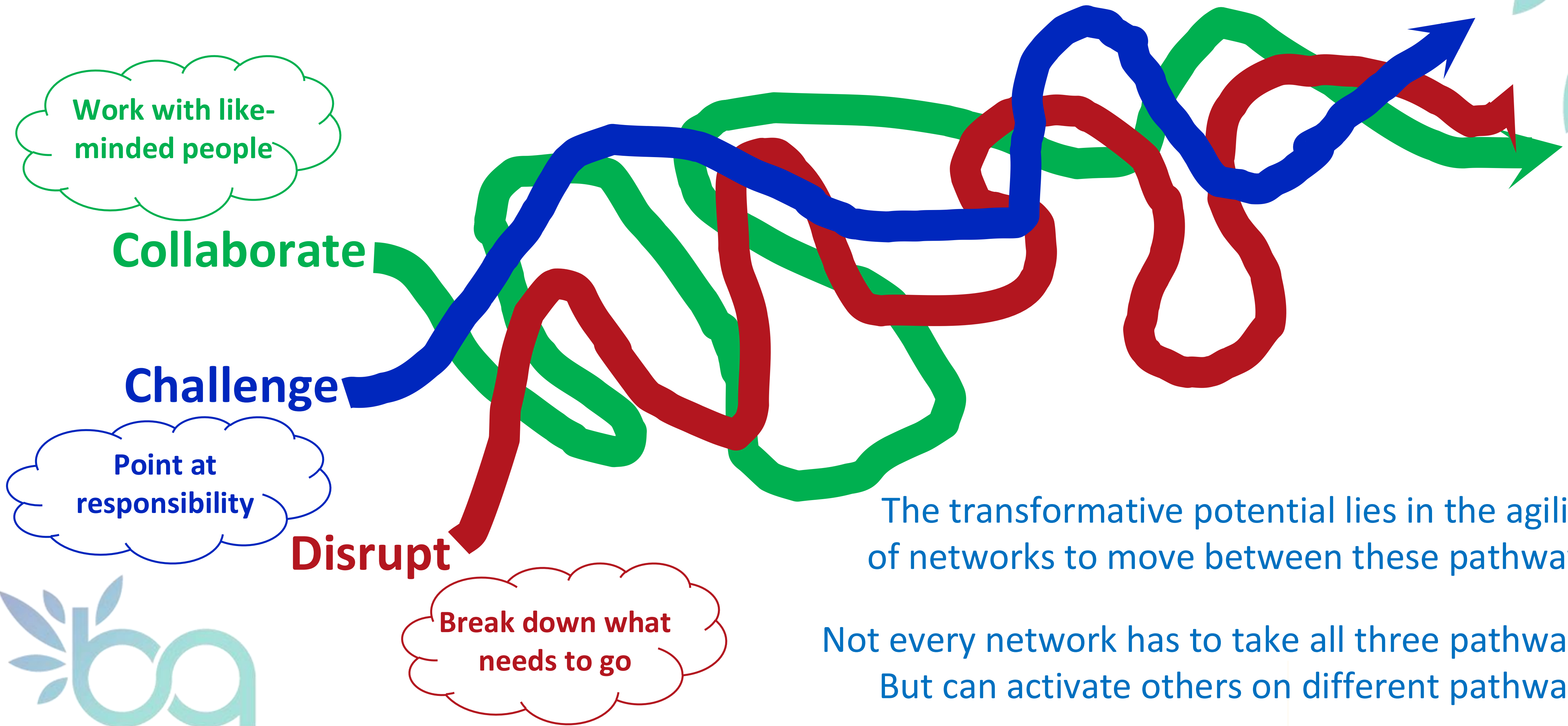
- ✦ **Collaborate:** Some farmer cooperatives reach out to policymakers to integrate agroecology into CAP subsidies.
- ✦ **Challenge:** Advocacy groups expose greenwashing in corporate sustainability claims.
- ✦ **Disrupt:** Radical food sovereignty movements establish alternative markets and local food networks.

For Science-Oriented Networks

- ✦ **Collaborate:** Research institutions work with policymakers to integrate agroecology into CAP subsidies and national agricultural frameworks.
- ✦ **Challenge:** Scientific networks publish assessments that expose gaps in sustainability claims and push for stricter biodiversity policies.
- ✦ **Disrupt:** Scientists provide evidence for legal action against harmful practices, investigate the logics of capitalist-driven conservation.



Weaving three pathways in a network of networks



Work with like-minded people

Collaborate

Challenge

Point at responsibility

Disrupt

Break down what needs to go

The transformative potential lies in the agility of networks to move between these pathways

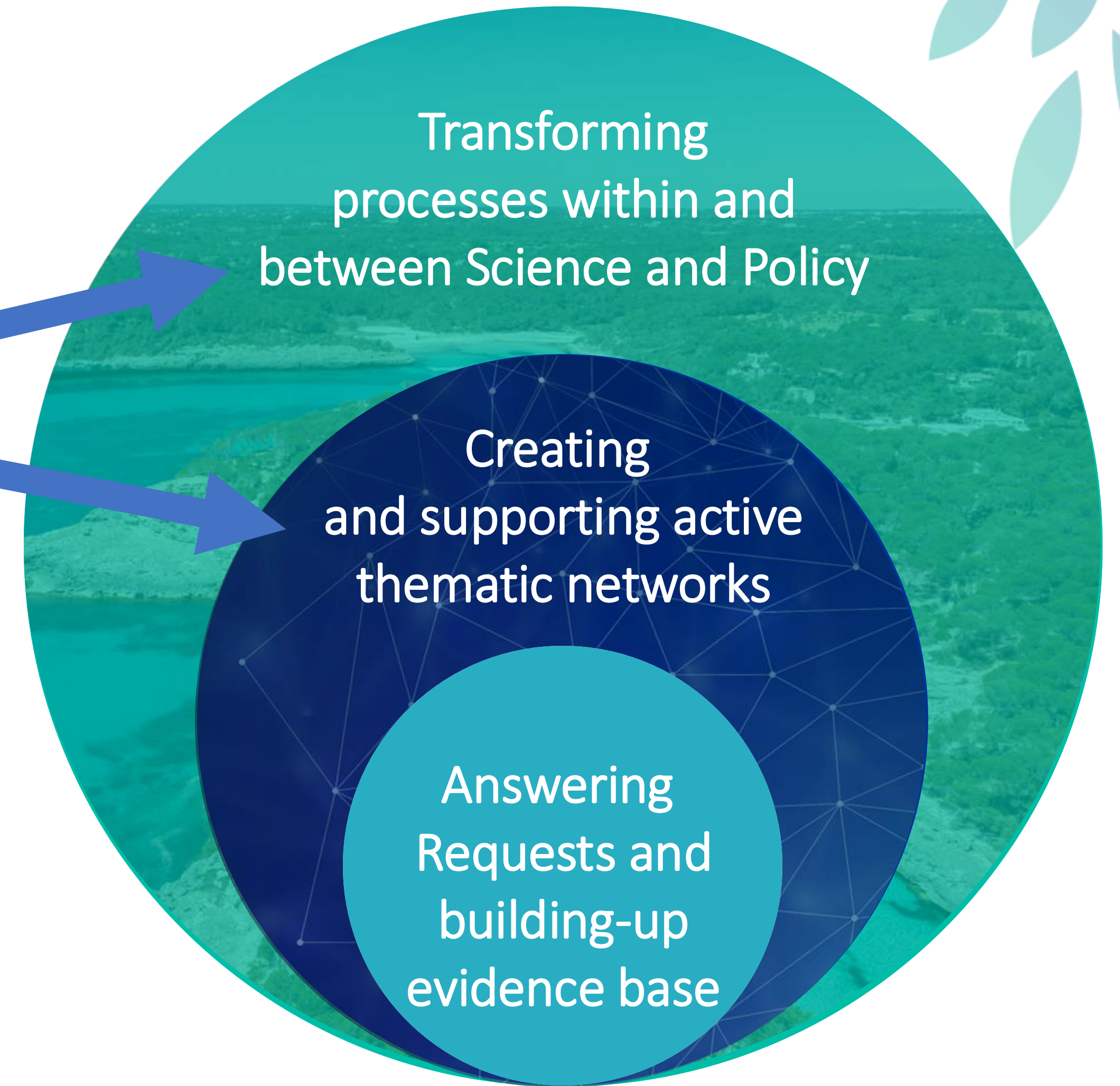
Not every network has to take all three pathways
But can activate others on different pathways



BioAgora Project 2022-2027

- ◆ BioAgora is building a **Science Service for Biodiversity**, aiming to **strengthen science-policy-society connections**.
- ◆ One of our goals: **Support networks in reaching their transformative potential**.
- ◆ This workshop is part of testing and developing **BioAgora's functions**, especially how to:
 - ◆ Help networks **assess their strategies** (Collaborate, Challenge, Disrupt).
 - ◆ Identify **leverage points** for transformation.
 - ◆ Improve **connections across different actors and networks**.

BioAgora Framework of functions



Our Collective Inquiry

- ✦ **What strategies actors and networks use to influence the food system toward agroecology?**
- ✦ **What pathways have been most effective in your experience?**
- ✦ **Where do you think we need to collaborate more, challenge harder, or disrupt more radically?**

