

When is mainstreaming premature?

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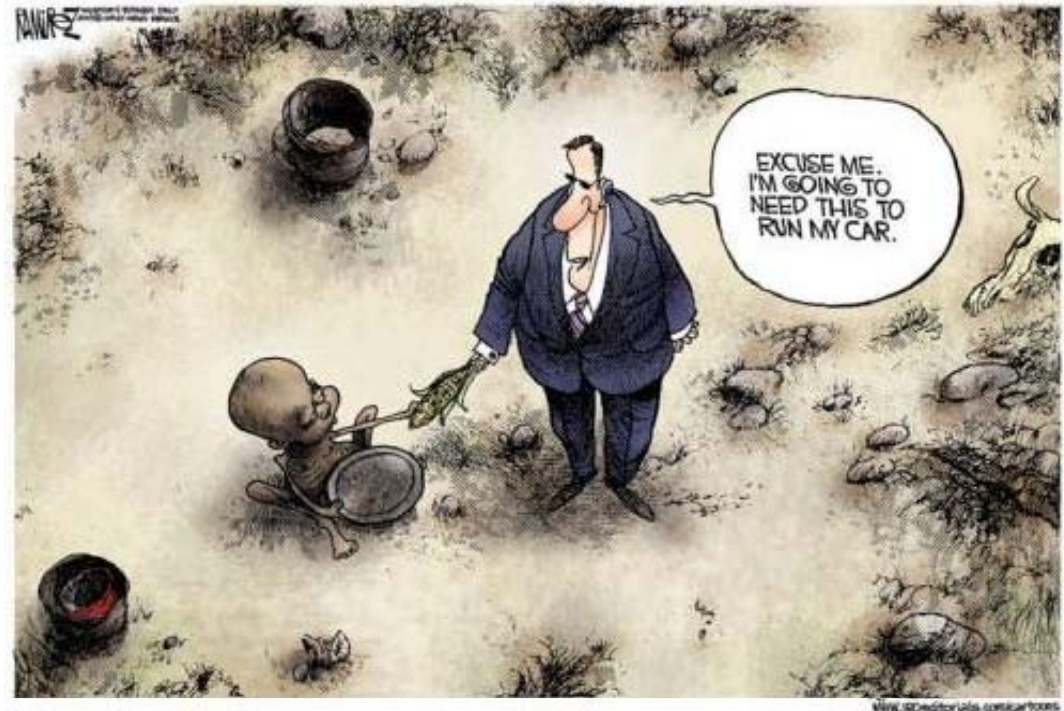
Cape Town Colloquium, 25th November 2013

Mainstreaming widely assumed to be a good goal

- Huq et al IIED (2004)
 - LDCs...carry out...NAPAs...ensuring that...adaptation to climate change is effectively mainstreamed into national and sectoral development.”
- Adger et al in IPCC WGII (2007)
 - “By implementing mainstreaming initiatives, it is argued that adaptation to climate change will become part of or will be consistent with other well established programmes, *particularly sustainable development planning*”
- OECD (2006)
 - “Climate change adaptation needs to be brought into the mainstream of economic policies, development projects, and international aid efforts.”
- CARE international (Mainstreaming Handbook 2009)
 - “Mainstreaming climate change adaptation is ...a question of social justice ...necessary for ensuring equitable and sustainable human development.”
- Dovers & Hezri (2010)
 - “...focus on enabling cross-sectoral policy integration (‘mainstreaming’)...”
“*It may not be enough, in the long run, but it would be an accelerated start.*”
- So - can it be premature??

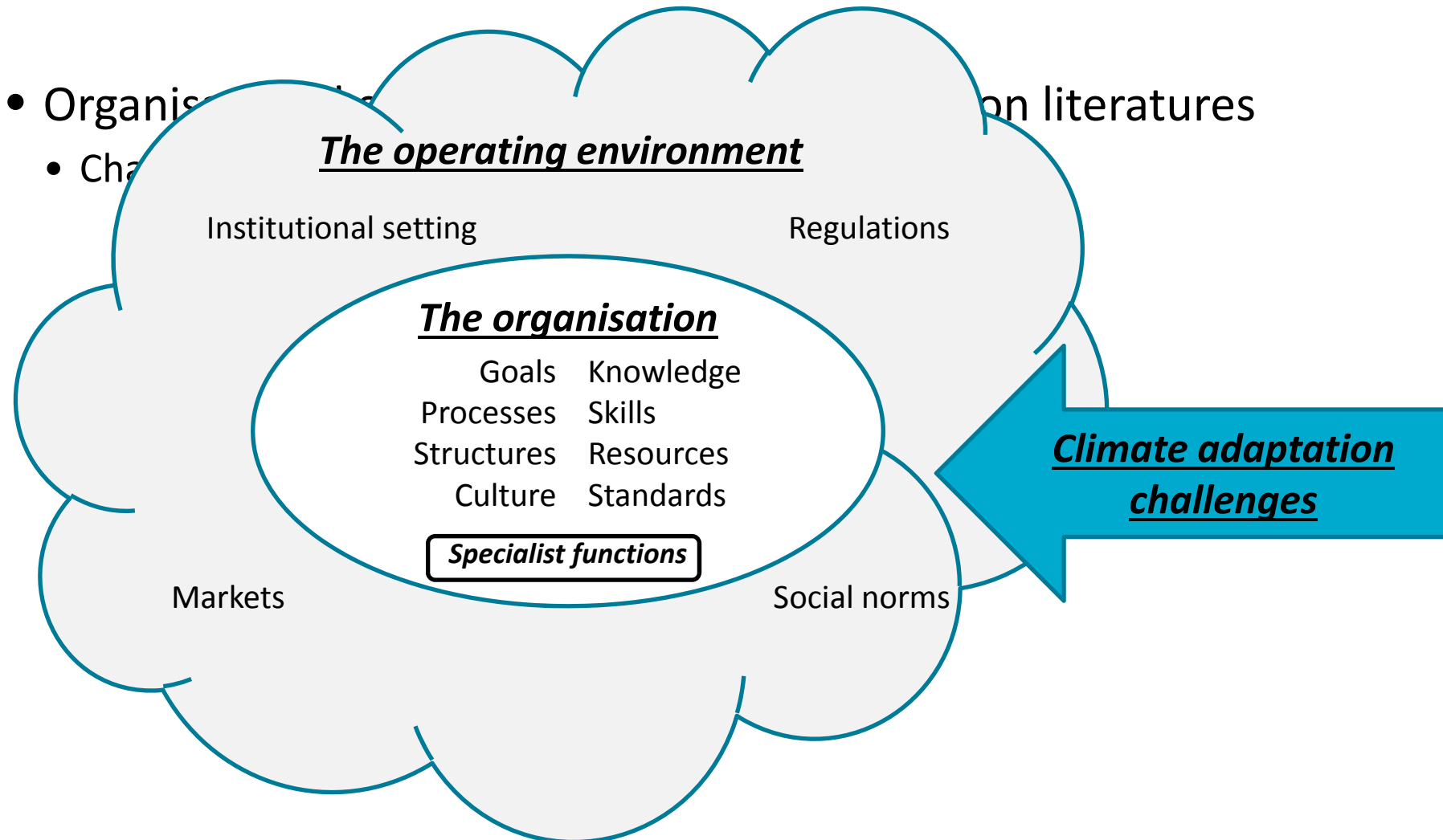
Sustainable development parallel

- Mainstreamed since the 1980s
 - Incremental change has been quite successful
 - Triple bottom line reports in board rooms
 - National ESD plans
 - But we have failed to address transformative needs
 - Consumption
 - Equity
 - ...
- Productivity Commission report in 1999...
 - “Overall, progress on ESD implementation has been variable...”
 - Failure in processes
 - Failure in content

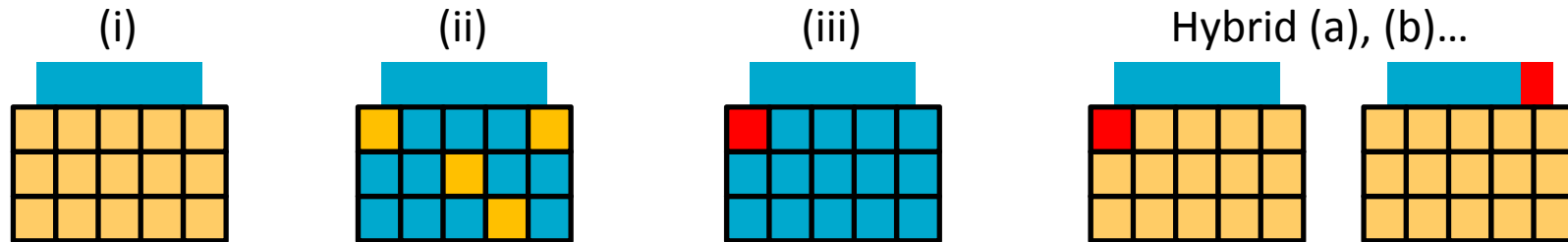


So what might make mainstreaming fail?

- Organisational literatures
- Change literatures



Structural arrangements



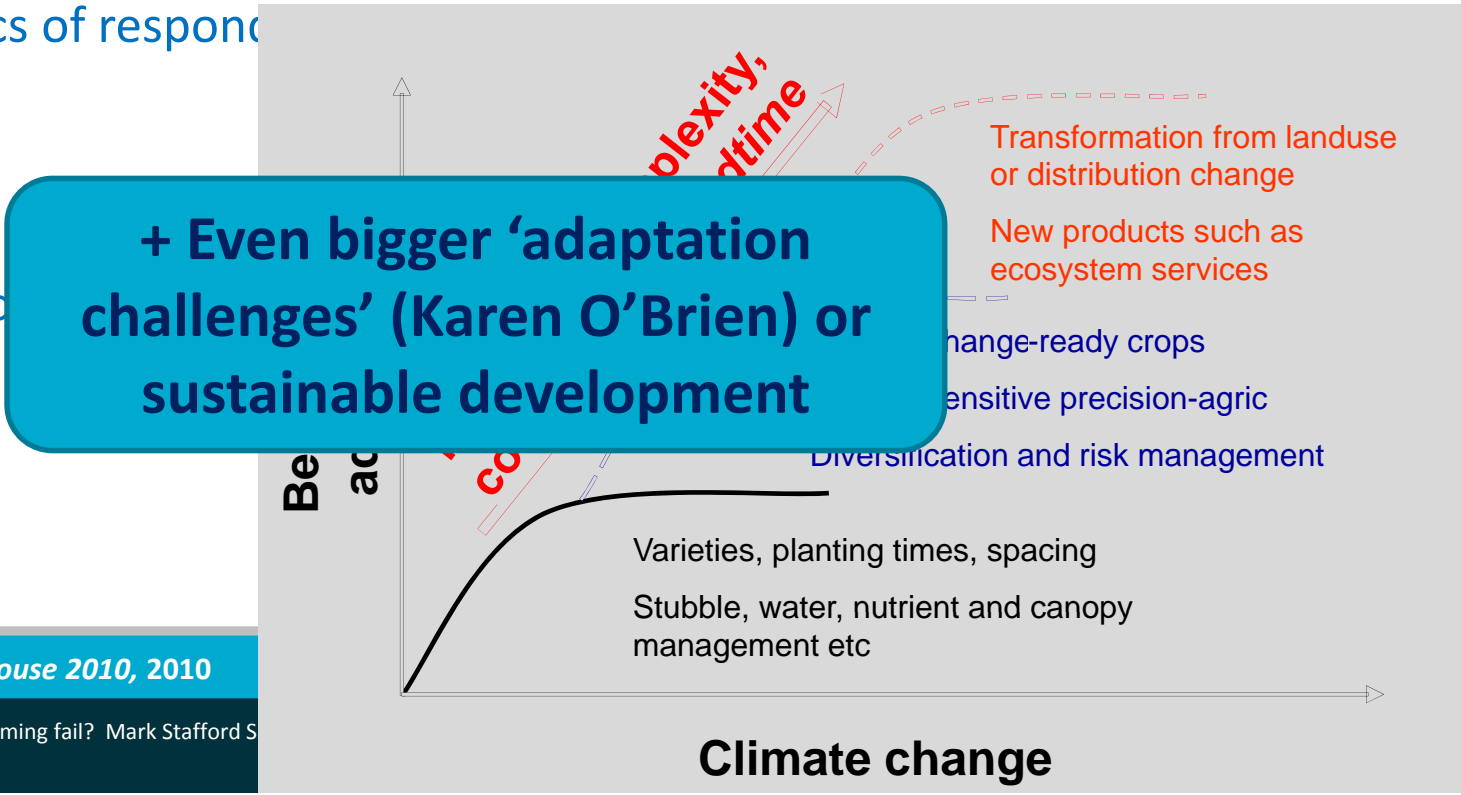
“Government ...should support the integration of climate risk management into ministries for economic development, finance and relevant sectors, and they should consider appointing a dedicated central agency to *coordinate all adaptation efforts*”
World Resource Inst 2011

- What should be the relative roles of central and distributed sub-units??

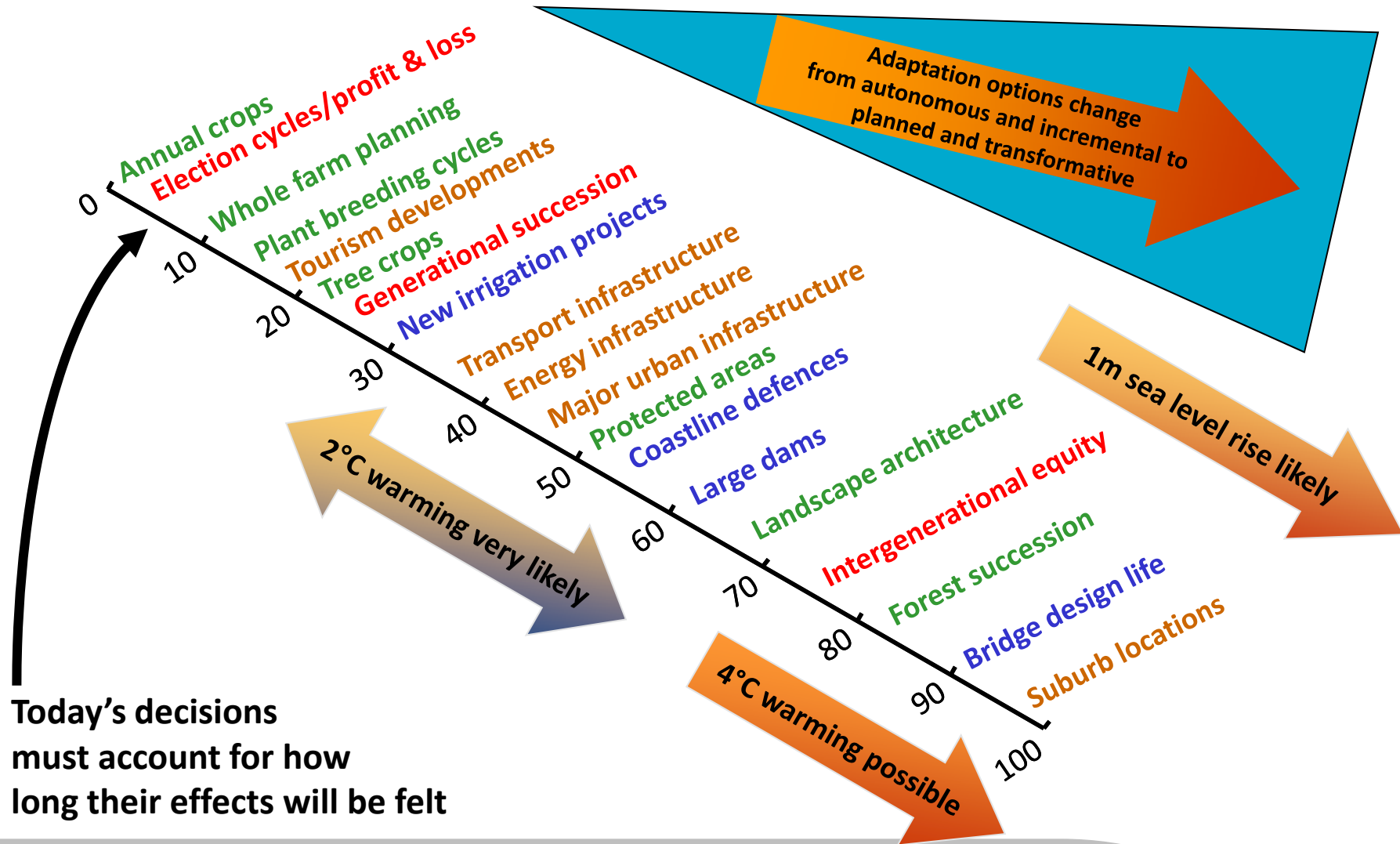
So what might make mainstreaming fail?

- Organisational change and innovation adoption literatures
 - Characteristics of challenges
 - Dovers (2009), Dovers & Hezri (2010): Types I, II and III,
 - Moser & Ekstrom (2010): coping <-> transformation
 - Howden *et al.* (2010): incremental, systemic, transformative
 - Characteristics of response

- Characteristics



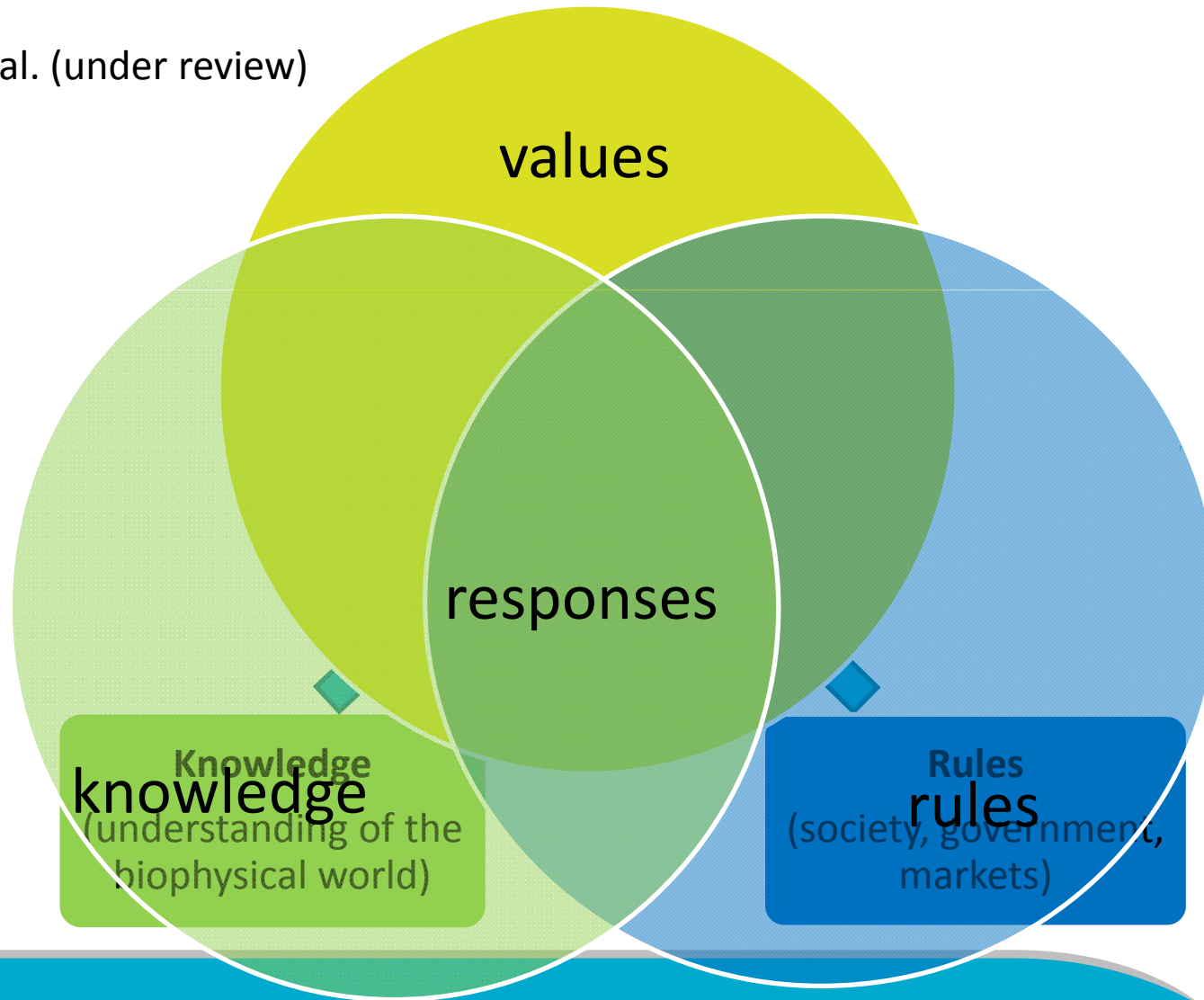
Adaptation timing and priorities



Stafford Smith et al, *PhilTransRoySoc* 2011 (after Jones & McInnes 2004)

Limiting factors: 'KVR' analysis

Gorddard et al. (under review)



Methods vs. limiting factors

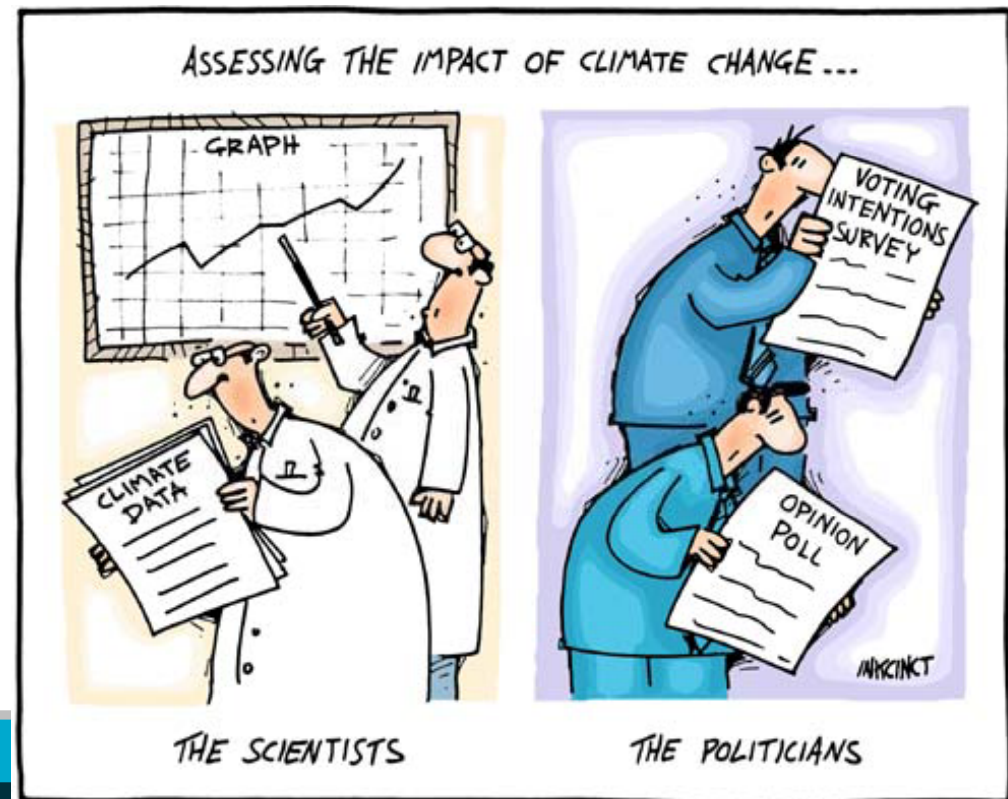
1. Clear values and future risk profiles
 - Simple cost:benefits analyses, can be top-down study
2. Clear values but risk profiles uncertain
 - Real options with possible value of delay; can be fairly top-down
3. Values and risk profiles uncertain
 - Economic analysis flawed, need adaptive management/governance approaches, possibly MCAs; engagement processes essential
4. Values and risks uncertain, and institutions in contention
 - Analysis not yet possible, engagement and conflict resolution needed first

So what might make mainstreaming fail?

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 - Characteristics of responders
 - Tendency for more adaptation planning in organisations with normal longer-term planning horizons for other issues [Gardner *et al.* 2010, 2012]
 - Other aspects of business-as-usual (BaU) operations
 - Characteristics of operating environments
 - Policies, regulations and incentives
 - Peer actions
 - Contested values and institutions

Testing in the real world

- Semi-structured interviews against key hypotheses
 - Organisations that are or say they are doing lots
 - Characterise their environment, organisation and challenges
 - Explore challenges that they **are** managing to act on vs. those they are **not**
- Key informants from various types of organisations
 - Local government
 - State and national government agencies (Australia and UK)
 - Water, energy and infrastructure utilities



Results – 3 areas of hypotheses

1. External operating environment?

- Important for all: policy environment, trigger events externally, supply chains (business or external capability in e.g. state governments or consultants)
- Often important: seed funding

2. Organisational structure?

- Mostly needed some specialist function at some stage
- More effective if under executive mandate/located in the executive (elsewhere action was *despite* rather than *because of* the structure)
- Key role for motivated individual(s)
- Mainstreaming in organisation *strategy* did not mean mainstreaming in *action*, which needs another cycle of activation, leadership, etc

3. Activation barriers?

- Easier when easily embedded in existing business-as-usual (BaU) practices
- Often needed trigger event(s), internal and/or external

Mainstreaming in local government

1. Strategic decision level

- Establishing a Council strategy incorporating climate change as one of many risks to manage, with signoff from Council and executive support

2. Implementation

- Key divisions with different business-as-usual practices
 - Planning & development approvals
 - Thresholds for risk assessments, specific standards
 - Engineering, assets, infrastructure and services delivery
 - Risk standards and component tolerances, in new & R&M
 - Social services and health
 - From meals on wheels to community networks, heatwave preparedness, etc
 - Environmental services, NRM
 - Bushfires, plantings, some conservation, etc
- *Actual options: e.g. see Sano et al 2012*

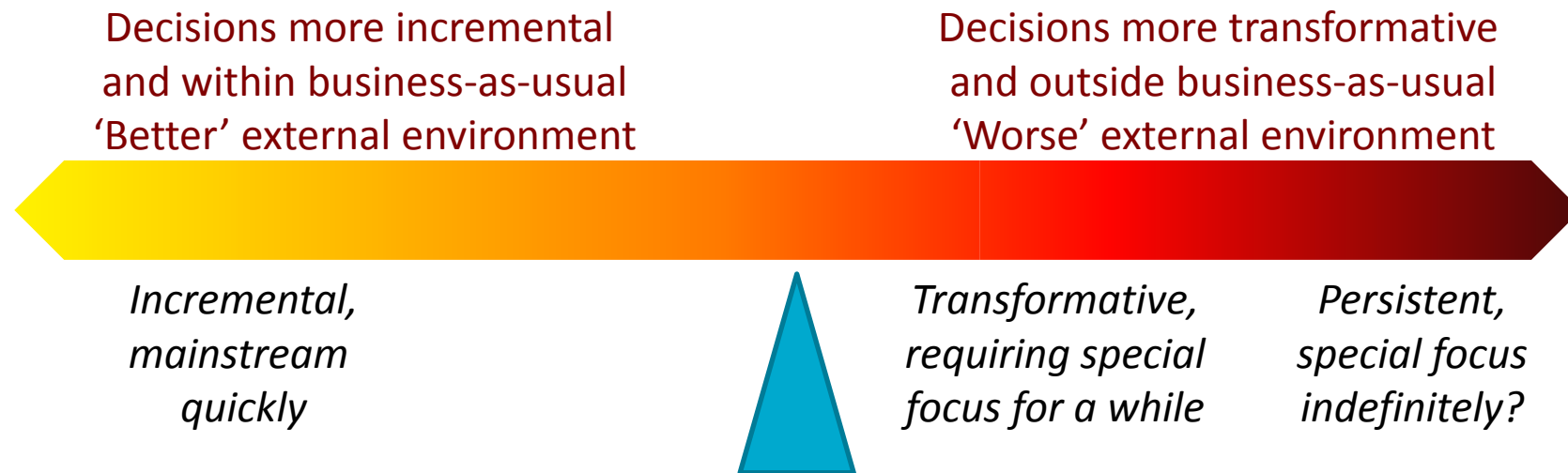
Coastal Hazard Adaption Options: A Compendium for Queensland Coastal Councils

- Federally-funded Queensland study - **Sano et al. (2012)**
 - Catalogued a set of specific adaptation options for ‘defend, accommodate and retreat’ strategies , from international and national level experience, and input from academic, industry and government experts
- For each option:
 - A technical description + potential synergies or conflicts between options
 - Legal, administrative and planning framework for its implementation (in Queensland)
 - Maintenance requirements, risks of failure and estimated costs
- The adaptation options are divided into:
 - **Regenerative options**
 - Beaches, dunes, riparian vegetation and wetlands restoration
 - **Coastal engineering options**
 - A range of structures for erosion and flood control
 - **Human settlement design options**
 - Building and infrastructure retrofitting and design, and the raising of land levels
 - **Planning options**
 - Development setbacks, buy-back schemes, land swap and land-use change

http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/council/projects/Documents/Coastal%20Hazard%20Adaptation%20Strategy/Coastal_Hazard_Adaptation_Options.pdf

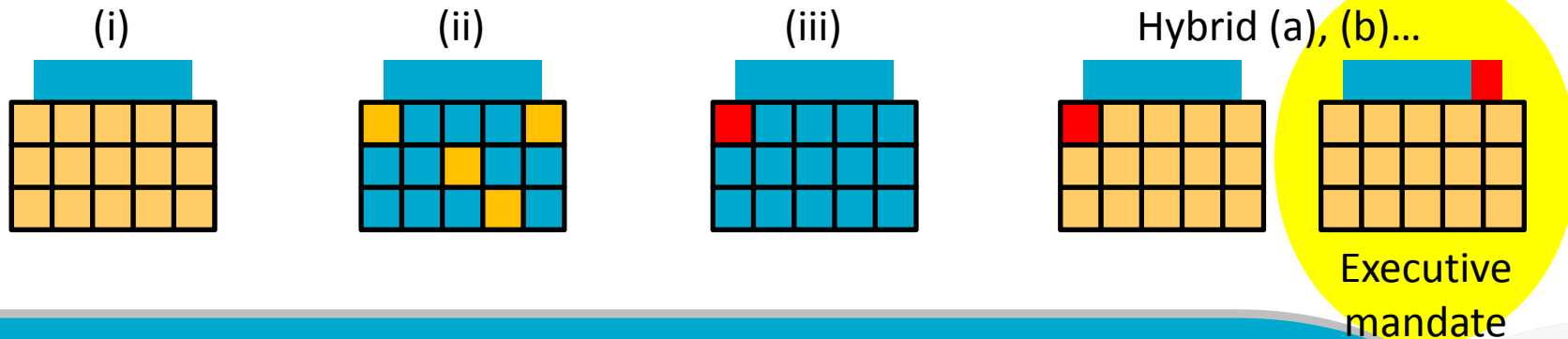
Where is mainstreaming working?

- **Mainstreaming works when easily embedded in existing business-as-usual**
 - e.g. a new/additional line on the map for existing planning trigger
 - Even this requires the right external environment
- **Failing where “beyond 3 year horizon”, “new tools needed”, etc**
 - Interviewees morphing adaptation actions to *look* like BAU – ie. distance from BAU may be large, but *perceived* distance from BAU is smaller.



Conclusions

- Mainstreaming assumed to be a good goal
 - But may not always be desirable to do it too soon
 - $>2^{\circ}\text{C}$ makes the adaptation challenge more transformational
- **Premature mainstreaming likely to fail in defined circumstances**
 - Longer-term, more value-laden, more transformational decisions
 - by entities with shorter habitual planning horizons
 - often exacerbated by their operating environment
- These remain the role of a specialised function/agency, preferably with an executive leadership mandate (as well as monitoring mainstreaming, horizon scanning, etc)



A satellite-style map of Australia, showing the continent's terrain in shades of brown, tan, and green, set against a dark blue background of the surrounding oceans. The map is centered on the continent, with the text overlaid on the left side.

Thank you

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