

# BUILDING SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE IN THAILAND

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Risk & Vulnerability of national development sectors and Climate change  
14 August 2012, Bangkok

# Resilient development?

- Loss of resilience
  - Building cities on low-lying coasts and in floodplains
  - Increasing water demand (in all sectors)
  - Loss of ecosystem services from degradation of natural ecosystems and poor management of agricultural lands
  - High and rising social inequality
  - Adaptation deficits – struggling under current climate
- Gains in resilience
  - Policy and Research networks
  - Knowledge, technical capacities and resources
  - Multi-level, multi-centre, governance that creates opportunities for more appropriate action by local governments, non-state actors and communities

# Governance of adaptation

- how society is steered, which ultimately comes down to how power is shared or how decisions are made, expertise is used and accountability
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- Adaptation is a political process so how it is governed matters greatly for distribution of burdens and benefits.
  - Local governments and communities both have important roles in adaptation; but often more collaboration is needed.
  - Governance systems themselves will need to become more inclusive, deliberative and adaptive

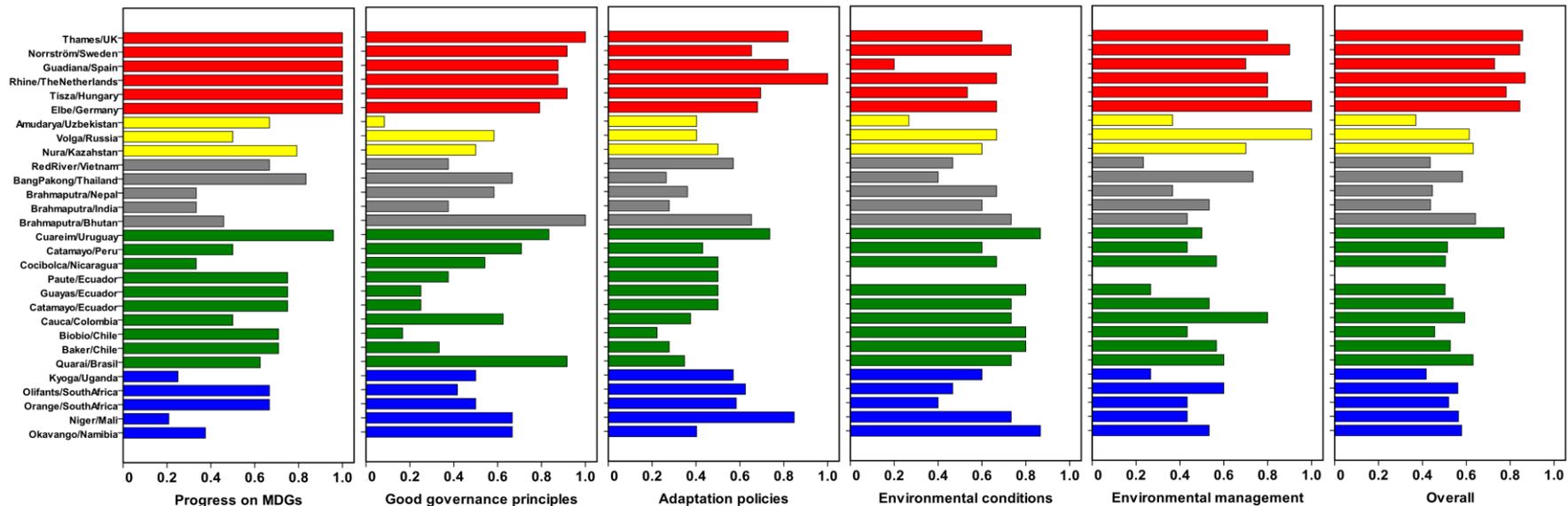
# Addressing knowledge-action gaps

Initiative type	Common challenges
<b>Run information campaigns</b>	Most vulnerable groups don't receive or understand the message
<b>Create information and communication systems</b>	Nobody uses the system Credibility of information is inadequate Incentive to share knowledge through system is low
<b>Conduct trainings</b>	Participants learn but never get to apply what they learn because topics do not fit day-to-day responsibilities
<b>Convene dialogues</b>	No agreement or consensus reached on next steps reached; without actionable knowledge influence is low
<b>Conduct reviews and assessments</b>	Assessment or review process is not well linked to a decision or action
<b>Fund research programs</b>	Researchers do what they like rather than what would have been useful Research problems are too hard – expectations of decision-makers too high
<b>Establish coordination offices</b>	Offices become self-serving or no-longer accountable to both knowledge producers and users Incentive to share knowledge through office is low

# Local government and communities

- local governments have sometimes not been very effective at serving the development needs making adaptation to climate change more difficult.
- local governments differ in capabilities, functions and accountability relations.
- places are ecologically and socially distinct creating challenges for scaling-up
- local communities are heterogeneous with result that low-income groups are easily neglected

# Adaptive water governance



- Twin2Go project compared water governance regimes of 29 basins from around the world
- analysis explained various performance measures by regime features taking into account context.

# Strategies to cope with uncertainty

- No-regret – yield benefits even in absence of change
- Reversible and flexible – reduce costs of being wrong
- Safety margin – reduce vulnerabilities at low cost
- Soft – institutional or financial tools rather than technologies and infrastructure
- Reduce decision-making time horizons – avoid long-term commitment (upgradeable)
- Learn from experience; expect surprises (scenario planning)

# Two styles of governance

## **Conventional**

- Centralized
  - Expert-driven
  - Compartmentalized
  - Change-averse
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- exclusive, persuasive, prescriptive

## **Alternative**

- Multi-centred
  - Learning-oriented
  - Integrative
  - Change-ready
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- inclusive, deliberative, adaptive

# Recommendations 1

National and sectoral strategies should acknowledge that:

1. Adaptation is a political process so how it is governed matters greatly for distribution of burdens and benefits.
2. Science and policy are not linked by a pipeline; the interactions are and need to be multiple and diverse.
3. Local governments and communities both have important roles in adaptation; but often more collaboration is needed.
4. Governance systems themselves will need to become more inclusive, deliberative and adaptive

# Recommendations 2

5. Risk management is essential because complete elimination of impacts is not possible (or too costly)
6. Building resilience and adaptive capacities is needed even more than “specific reactive responses”
7. Ecosystems are important source of resilience and their contributions to equitable adaptation should be recognized.

# Further reading

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