

# International perspectives on incorporating ecosystem services into decision making: science and practice

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# The same preoccupations?



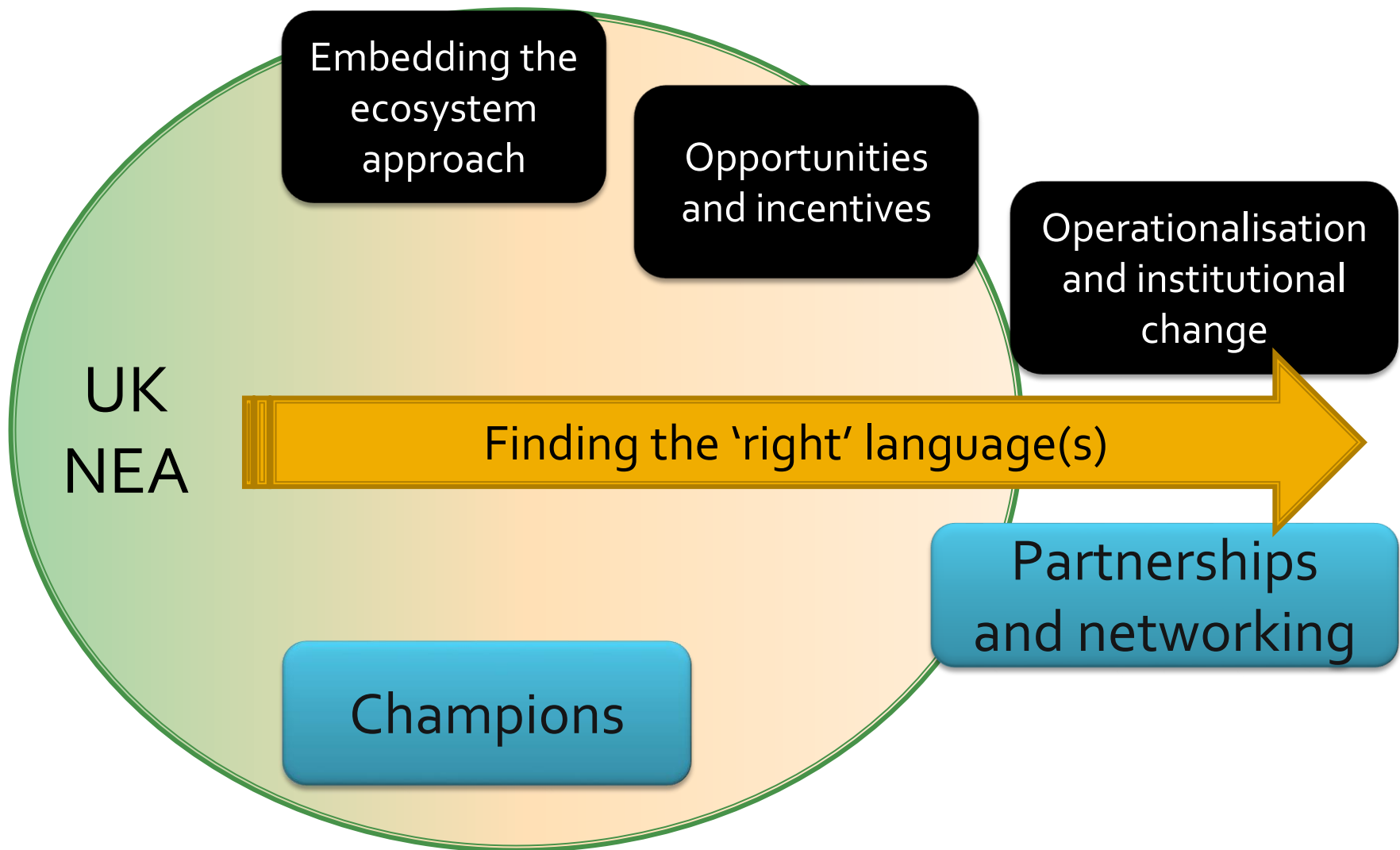
LEAD

"Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."

Changing the terms  
of environmental  
debate?

Ask not what you can do  
for nature – ask what  
nature can do for you.

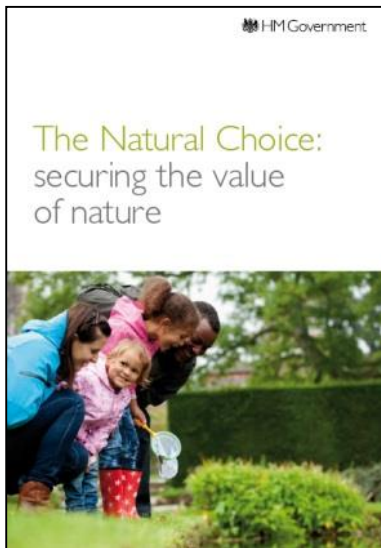
# An evolving situation...



# Impacts?

## NATIONAL

- National capital committee
- Ecosystem markets task force
- Research funding



## LOCAL

- **Local nature partnerships & nature improvement areas**
- Biodiversity offsetting pilots
- PES schemes
- Knowledge networks

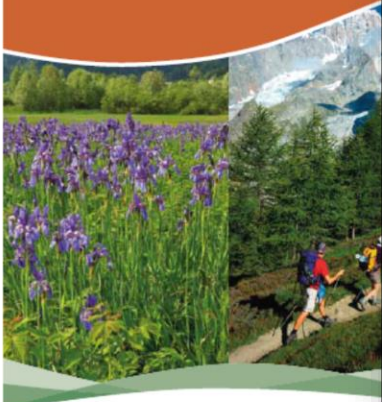
England only....Different stories in Scotland and Wales.

# Impacts?

- Local nature partnerships:
  - The ambition is that they will help their local area to manage the natural environment as a system and to **embed** its value in local decisions for the **benefit of nature, people and the economy**.
  - To do this effectively they will need to be **self-sustaining** strategic **partnerships** of a broad range of local organisations, businesses and people with the **credibility** to work with, and **influence**, other local strategic decision makers.

# Partnerships AND Operationalisation

## The EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020



### ***The 2050 vision***

*By 2050, European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides – its natural capital – are protected, valued and appropriately restored for biodiversity's intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human well-being and economic prosperity, and so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided.*

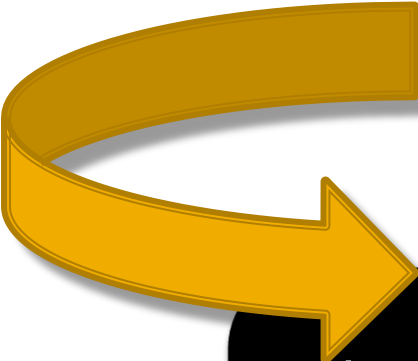
ACTIONS:  
MAES, BISE  
etc.

### ***2020 headline target***

*Halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.*

# EC Horizon 2020 Funding....

- Significant investments in projects such as:
  - OpenNESS
  - OPERASs



In both cases operationalization  
is a key aim....  
Goal is to create a 'common  
platform' (OPPLA)

Case studies,  
exemplars etc.

Broaden  
agendas, e.g.  
competitiveness,  
health

# Where is the science in all of this?

- Major goal of natural sciences is to search for generalisations
- Why is this so important?
  - Because it makes them testable
  - Because it allows us transfer our experience from one situation to another
- The study of the unique may help us build up a rich picture of the world.....BUT.....on what basis do we make decisions?
- This is especially an issue in relating to the idea of **place-based** assessments...
  - *Context matters but we must not be trapped in the study of unique instances*



# Where is the science in all of this?

- If we sign up to the idea of **operationalizing** the ES paradigm, then...
- ... we have to find ways of transferring our insights and knowledge between different problem situations.
- Whatever 'evidence-based decision making' involves it must include:
  - the appeal to 'experience';
  - judgements about what worked in particular situations and what did not; and,
  - acknowledging where limitations of current thinking were apparent.