

Research for governance reforms in International Waters systems

Robin Mahon¹, Alexcia Cooke¹, Lucia Fanning², Patrick McConney¹

¹Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, St. Michael, Barbados, ²Marine Affairs Program, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Introduction

Transboundary waters provide some of the most complex, diverse and dynamic natural resource governance situations. They are challenging, but International Waters systems cover a huge amount of the planet's surface and affect many people globally, so the challenge must be met.

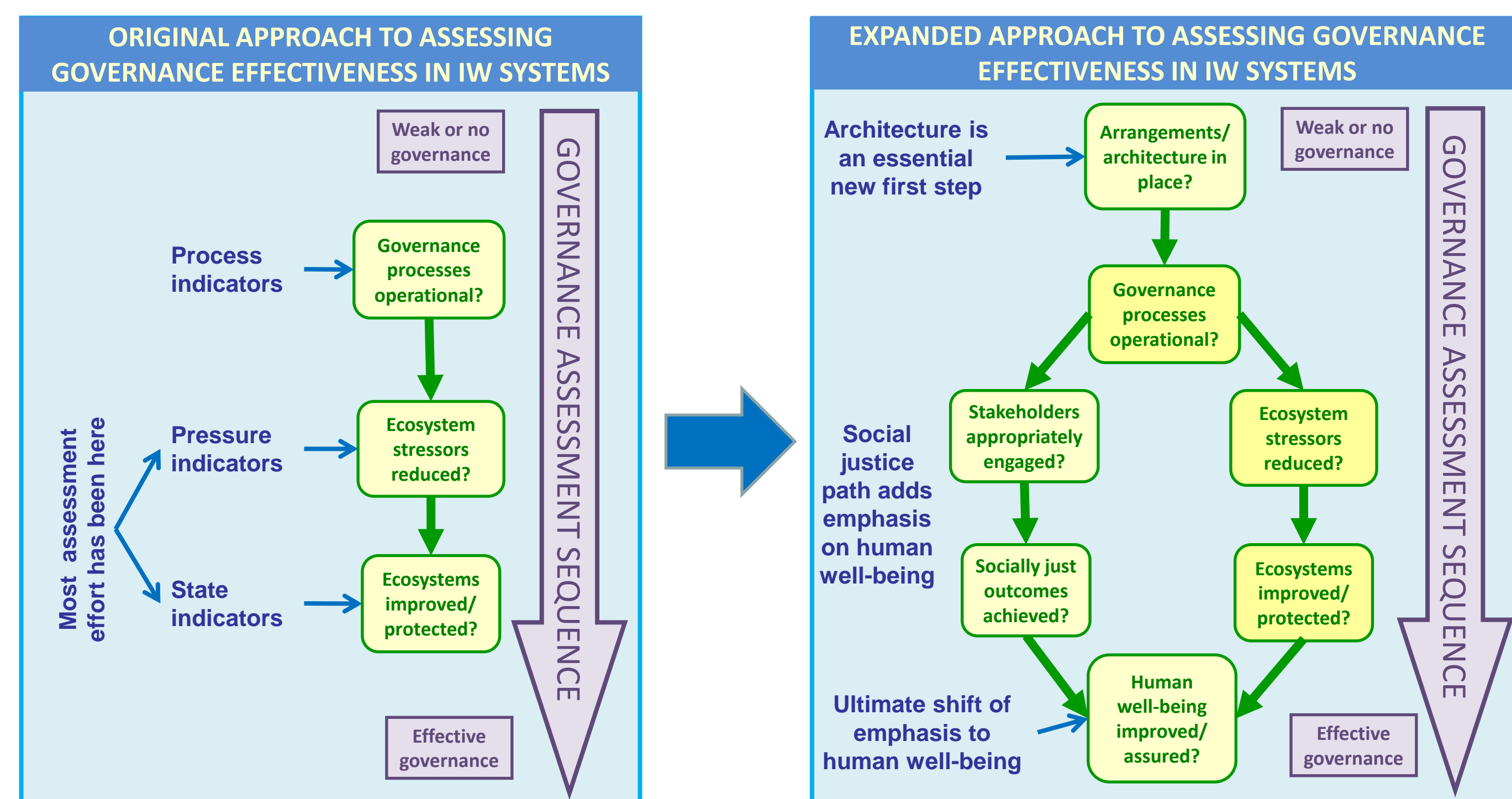
Improved governance is a major focus of the GEF International Waters (IW) Program. To achieve this there is the need to see governance as a researchable topic and to develop frameworks and programs for governance research and intervention.

Expanding the GEF IW indicator framework

To assess governance effectiveness, we must look not only at institutions and processes, but also at outcomes, so assessment of governance performance spans the full usual range of IW indicators.

Recent advances in governance thinking suggest that the three categories of indicators typically used are not enough and that an expanded set is needed for a full assessment of effectiveness.

To the original set we add governance architecture, social justice indicators and human well-being indicators, the latter being the ultimate test of whether governance has been effective.



Appropriate governance architecture is necessary for good governance

The many conceptual advances in governance in the past few decades provide a rich body of work and ideas

However they do not give us a practical framework within which to pursue actual assessment of governance effectiveness in IW systems

Some of the key issues emerging that must be incorporated into a practical framework include:

- Scale
- Nestedness
- Fit of institutions to ecosystems
- Interplay of organisations
- Regime complexes and network governance
- Subsidiarity

The proposed operational framework is made up of governance arrangements – one arrangement for each actual or potential issue (transboundary issues in the case of IW systems).

To be effective each 'governance arrangement' must have:

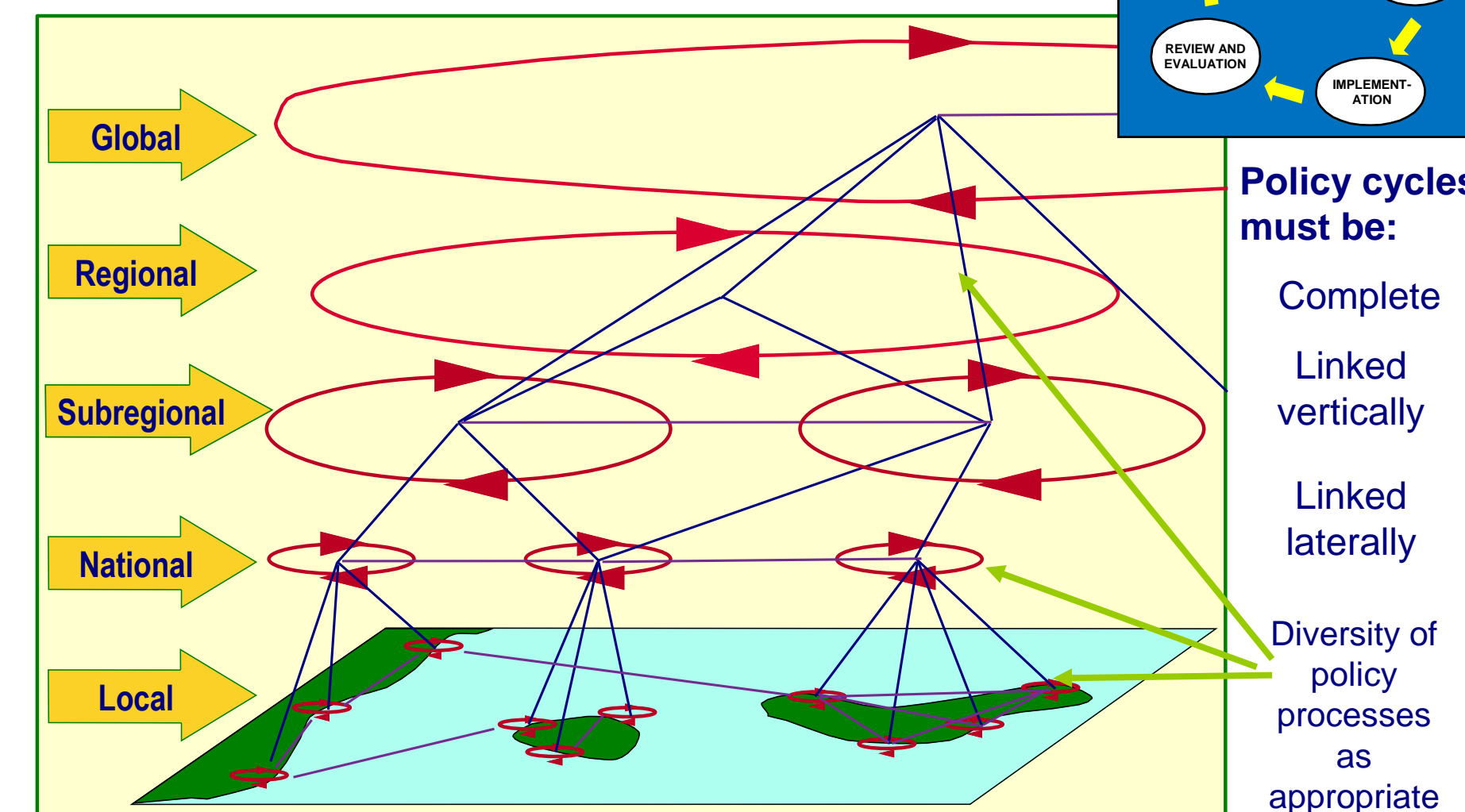
- A complete policy process that can take up data and information, generate advice, make decisions, implement and review
- Capacity for (1) Policy advice and decision-making (2) Management planning and decision-making (3) Day-to-day action.

Similar issues may be covered by similar arrangements, which may be integrated for efficiency and to achieve EBM

The entire framework, may involve multiple organizations at several geographical and institutional scale levels.



A multi-level policy-cycle based governance framework



The framework as a tool for assessment and intervention

The framework was developed for application in the CLME Project. It allows the transboundary complexity to be broken down into component parts that can be assessed. It also allows for the development of interventions that target weak parts of the framework and strengthen them, with the long term goal of a fully functional framework.

It also allows organizational actors to see their role in the framework, who they should be interacting with and what needs to be done to enhance their capacity to play that role.

Assessments conducted within the CLME Project illustrate the use of the framework. They have focused on:

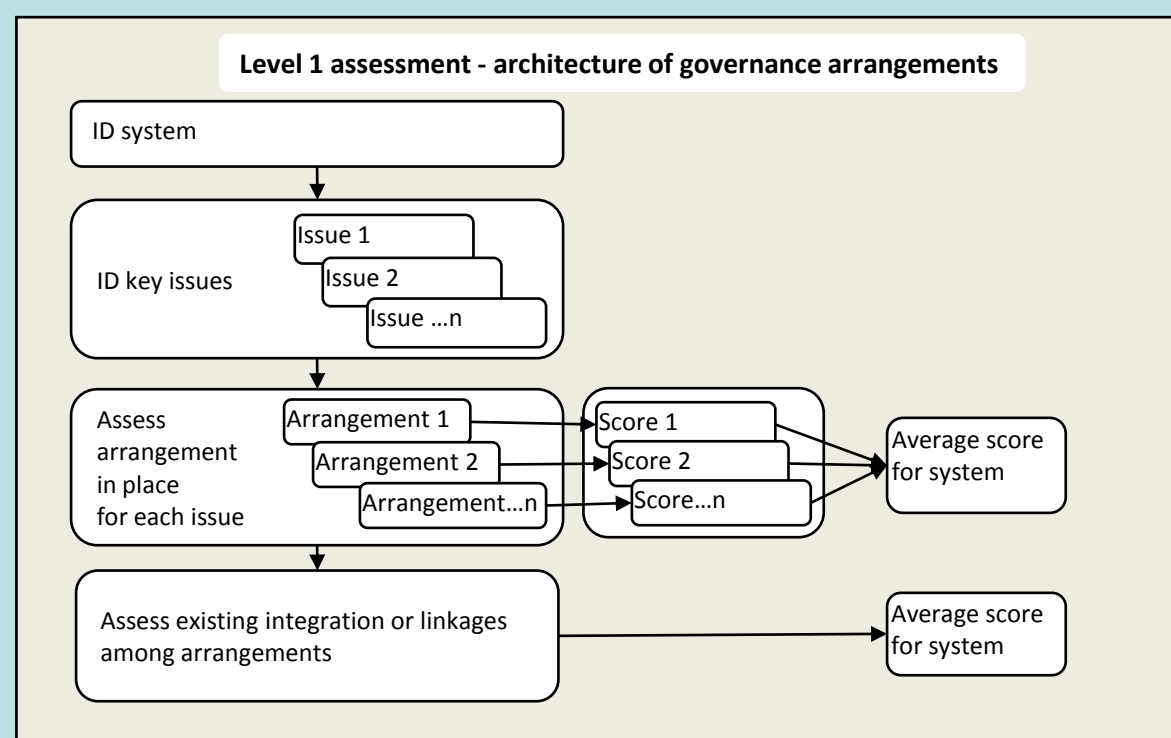
- The national-regional interface;
- The gaps, overlaps and networking among regional organizations;
- Architecture of specific arrangements and associated policy processes;
- Visioning and principles at the level of the whole system.

Is there an overarching integrative policy function?

For governance to be integrated or ecosystem-based a system must have an integrative policy-setting capacity.

This part of the framework was missing in the CLME.

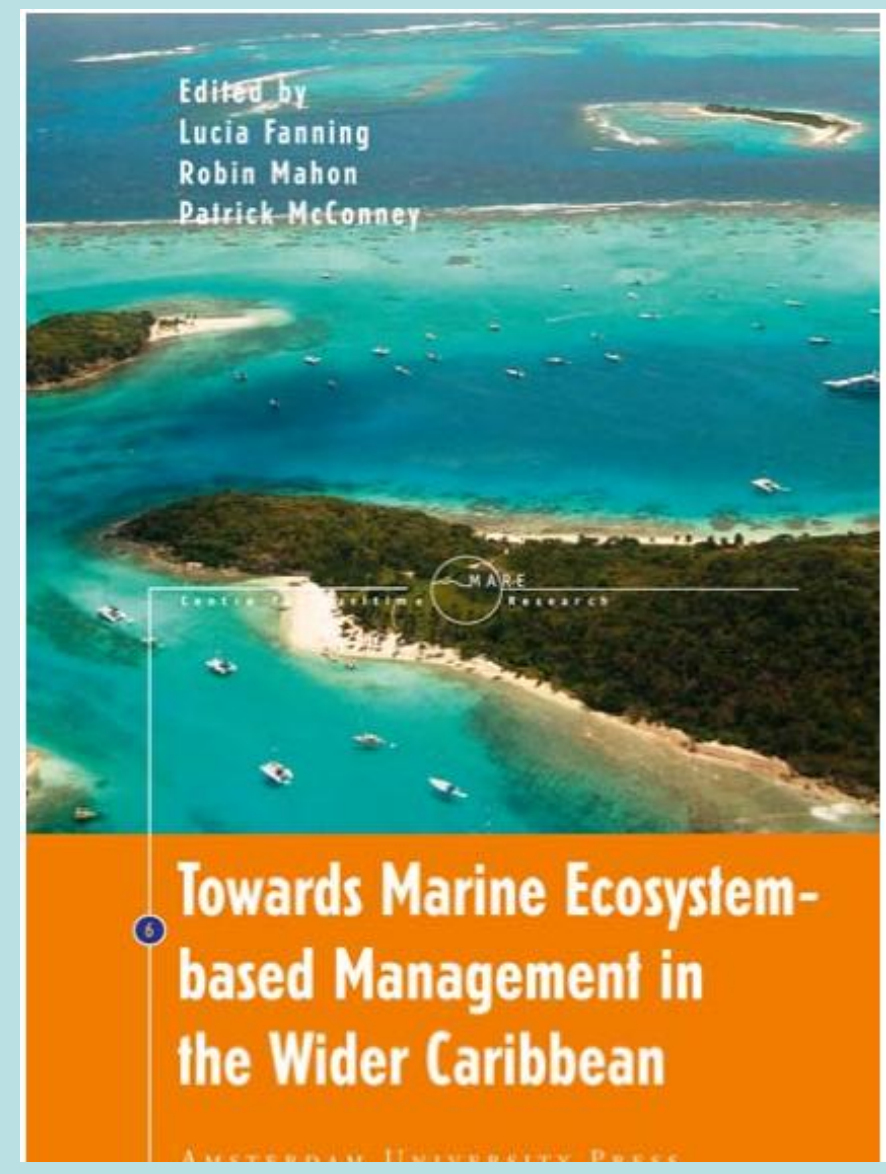
The newly formed Caribbean Sea Commission was identified as an appropriate body. Work was done to specify its role and promote its acceptance by regional organizations.



CLME fishery ecosystem governance architecture for CA Lobster Fisheries - System summary				
IW category: LME	Countries: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama	System name: Central American Lobster Fisheries Socio-Ecological System	Region: Latin America and the Caribbean	
Trans-boundary issue?	Number of countries involved	Collective importance for countries involved	Completeness of governance arrangement %	Priority for intervention to improve governance
Overfishing	6	3	61%	6
Illegal fishing	6	3	48%	6
Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS)	6	3	33%	6
Habitat degradation and biodiversity loss	6	2	33%	4
Land-based sources of marine pollution (LBS)	6	1	38%	2
Marine-based sources of pollution (MBS)	6	2	43%	4
System architecture completeness index >>			43%	

Are principles and strategies required for EBM understood and shared?

Organizational, national and individual stakeholders will engage better in the governance regime if steps are taken to build shared values and principles



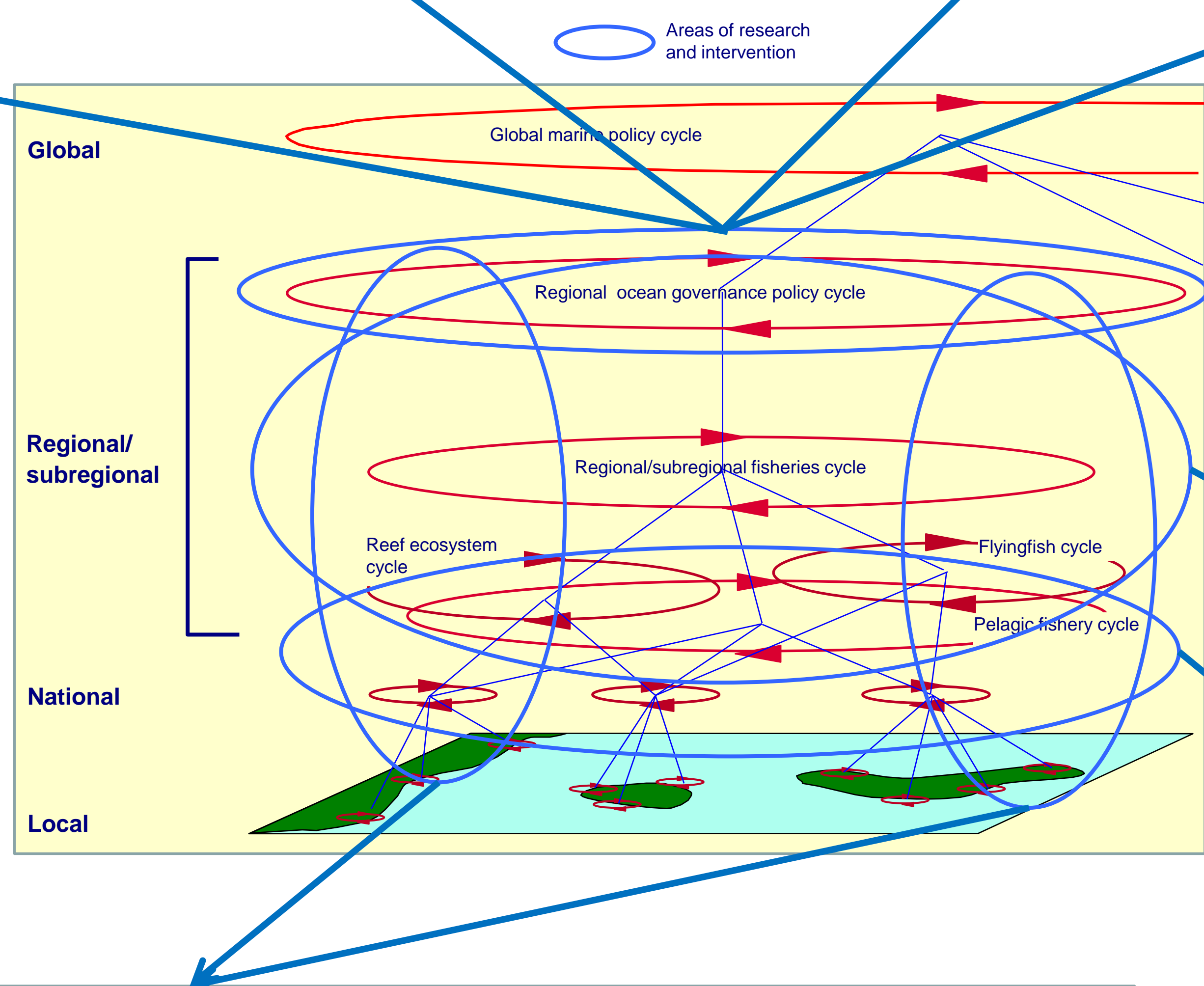
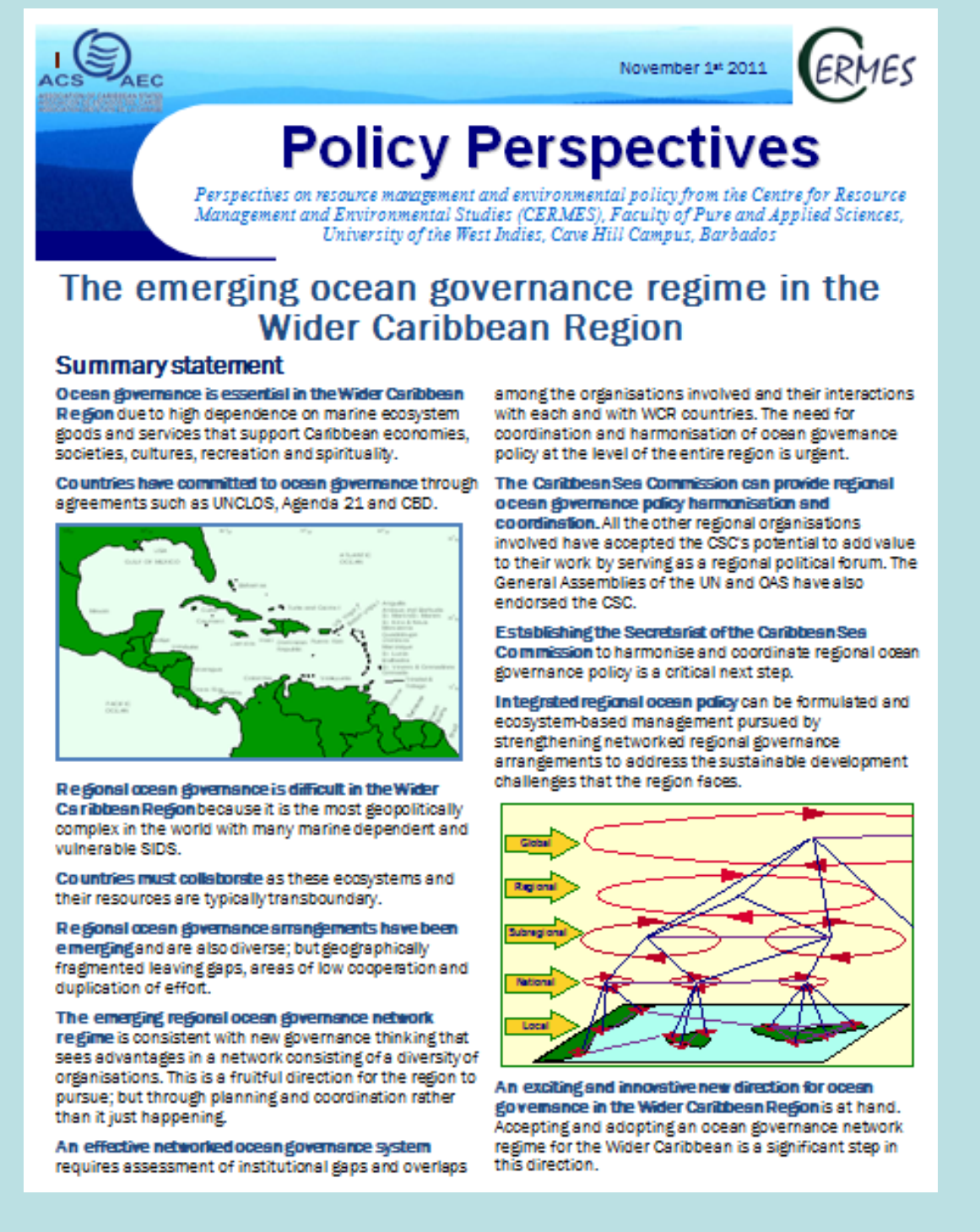
Is there an effective interface between science and policy
Uptake of information by policy-makers is often inadequate. What do policy makers want from science? What must scientists do to make information accessible to and usable by policy makers?



Perception that a governance regime exists

The framework approach allows for articulation and sharing of the concept of a network governance regime involving many actors.

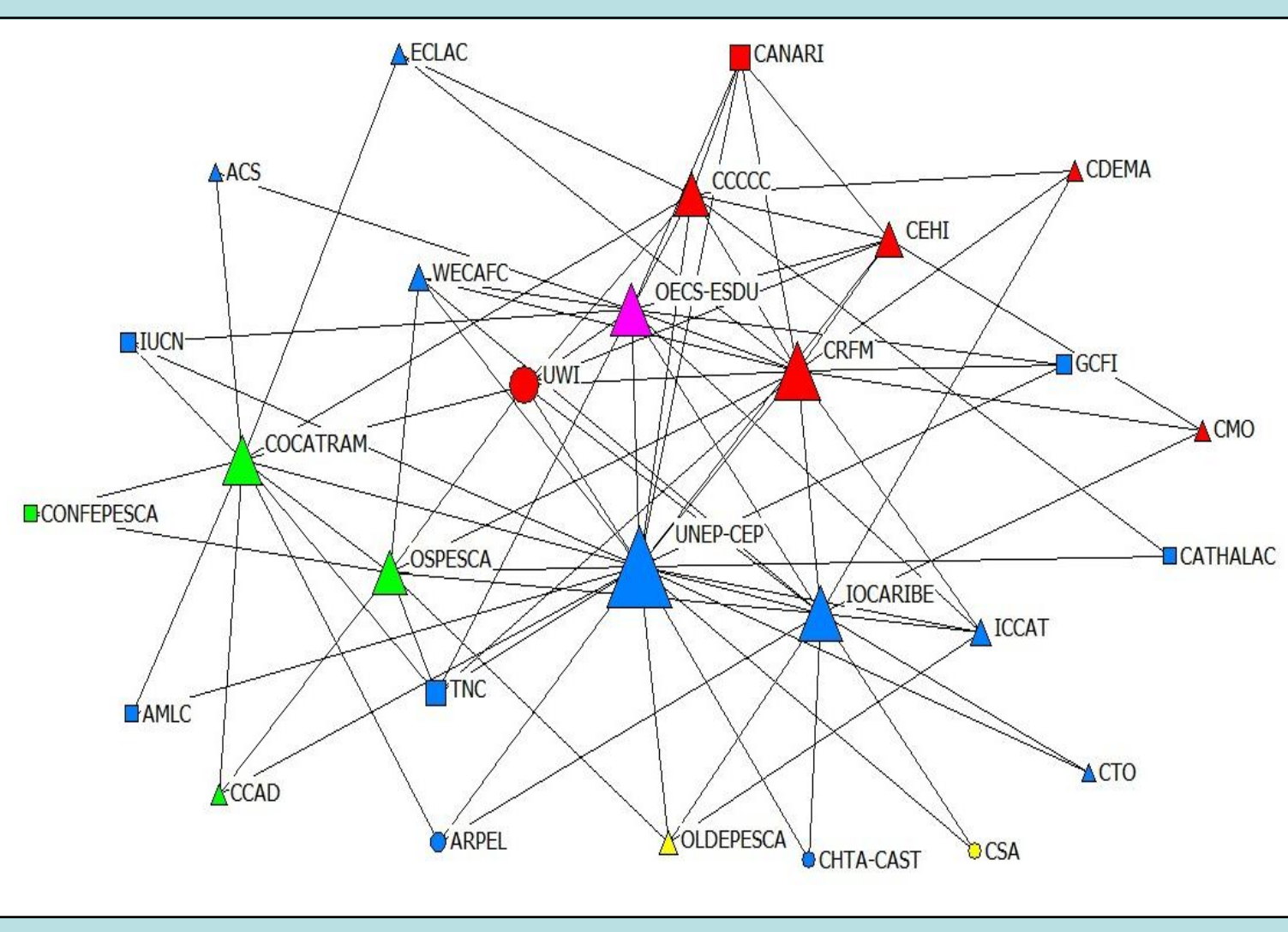
This allows actors to prepare for their roles and engage with other actors with whom interaction is important



Are roles and interactions of regional/subregional organizations known

Regional organizations are the core of transboundary governance architecture.

There are often gaps and overlaps in their roles. These can be assessed to determine how best to fully and efficiently cover issues with arrangements



Is the National-Regional interface functional

How countries participate in regional projects and activities is important.

Is engagement taking place according to best practices?

