

Global Biodiversity Data:
vital part of
global biodiversity
policy and
management?...



or
The Emperors
New Clothes?

Or, Putting the
Minister's finger on the button.



Peter Bridgewater June 11 , 2014



Back to the future...

Go back 30 years...

Why, it's 1984..... 😊

Within DHAE sits ABRS, and

Within ABRS sits ABIS.....

Hitch-Hikers guide to Australia's biota...

Today with AL A and smartphone with OS of choice;
That's exactly what you have..

So, job done?

Err no....

First, an anecdote about bureaucratic enthusiasms, technical innocence, and political realities..

Note: No whiteboards were used in preparing this presentation.



So, **how** can we deal with data, its discovery and management and transformation to inform policy and subsequent management, so as to provide for better futures for people and nature...???



Going Global..

Such a system potentially exists already under the GEO program – GEO BON

Just again endorsed at the Tenth gathering of GEO...



Going Global..

Goals of GEO BON:

- Provide -
 - a global, scientifically-robust framework for observations that can detect biodiversity change;
 - access to observations, models, assessments and forecast information;
 - *a set of innovative and relevant products based on the integration of datasets.*
- help build a global system of systems based on the integration of *in situ* and remote observation systems;
- coordinate aspects of data gathering and the delivery of biodiversity change information; ensure long-term continuity of data supply - linked to GBIF.



But....The Emperors New Clothes....

...we do track GEO BON and are a bit worried about the profile it gets when it is no more than an empty shell.... (senior UK Conservation official, Jan. 2014)


My complaint with colleagues engaged in the GEO BON is that we need more concrete deliverables!

(Braulio Dias, CBD Exec. Secretary, Jan. 2014)

A sustainable future for biodiversity data?

- ✦ In a world dominated by climate change talk, how do we make sure everyone understands the need for biodiversity data and supports what we do, and wants to help us deliver our programme ?





IPCC, MA says Approximately 20-30% of plant and animal species assessed so far are likely to be at increased risk of extinction..

- The **risk** is that by focusing on this aspect too much is that it is seen as counting and checking the disappearing, and not part of solving a key global environmental problem...
- The **opportunity** is to work across the biodiversity hierarchy and status to show how critical our work is in helping the world adapt to and mitigate against global change...



Science - Opportunities

- ✓ Solving the conundrum of developing integrated biodiversity science;
- ✓ Ensuring input to the development of NBSAPs;
- ✓ Putting a biodiversity backbone into international environmental governance through working with IPBES, Future Earth and Conventions as a key integrator -
 - Replacing the biodiversity tower of Babel with a Babel fish*....

* with apologies to Douglas Adams..

.....Through

- **Partnerships:**

- ✓ *With the national and international environmental policy and governance agenda;*
- ✓ With the science community at all levels;
- ✓ **With funders - giving them what they expect;**
- ✓ **With indigenous knowledge holders, understanding their world views.**
- ✓ With civil society, through citizen-science.



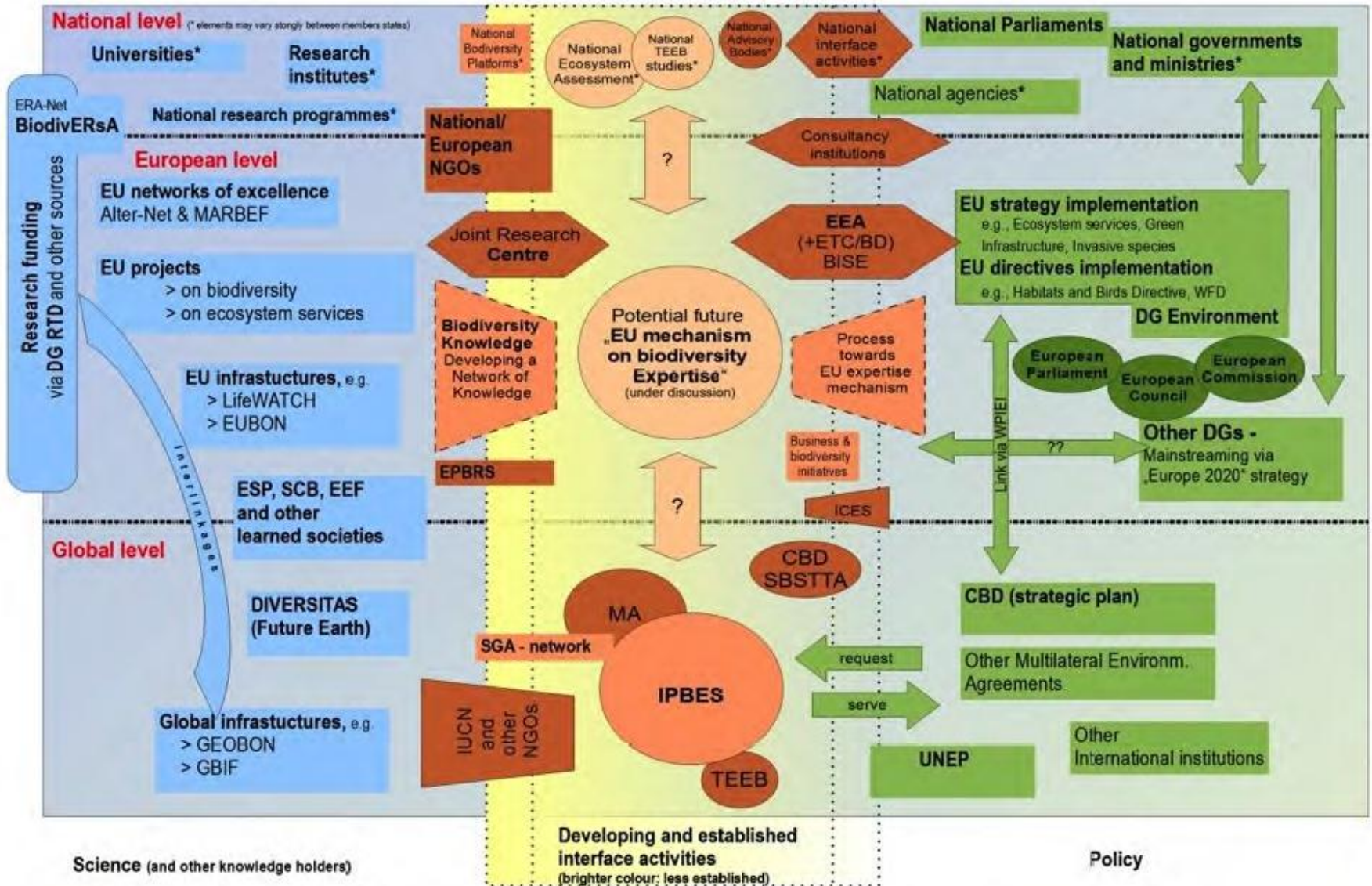


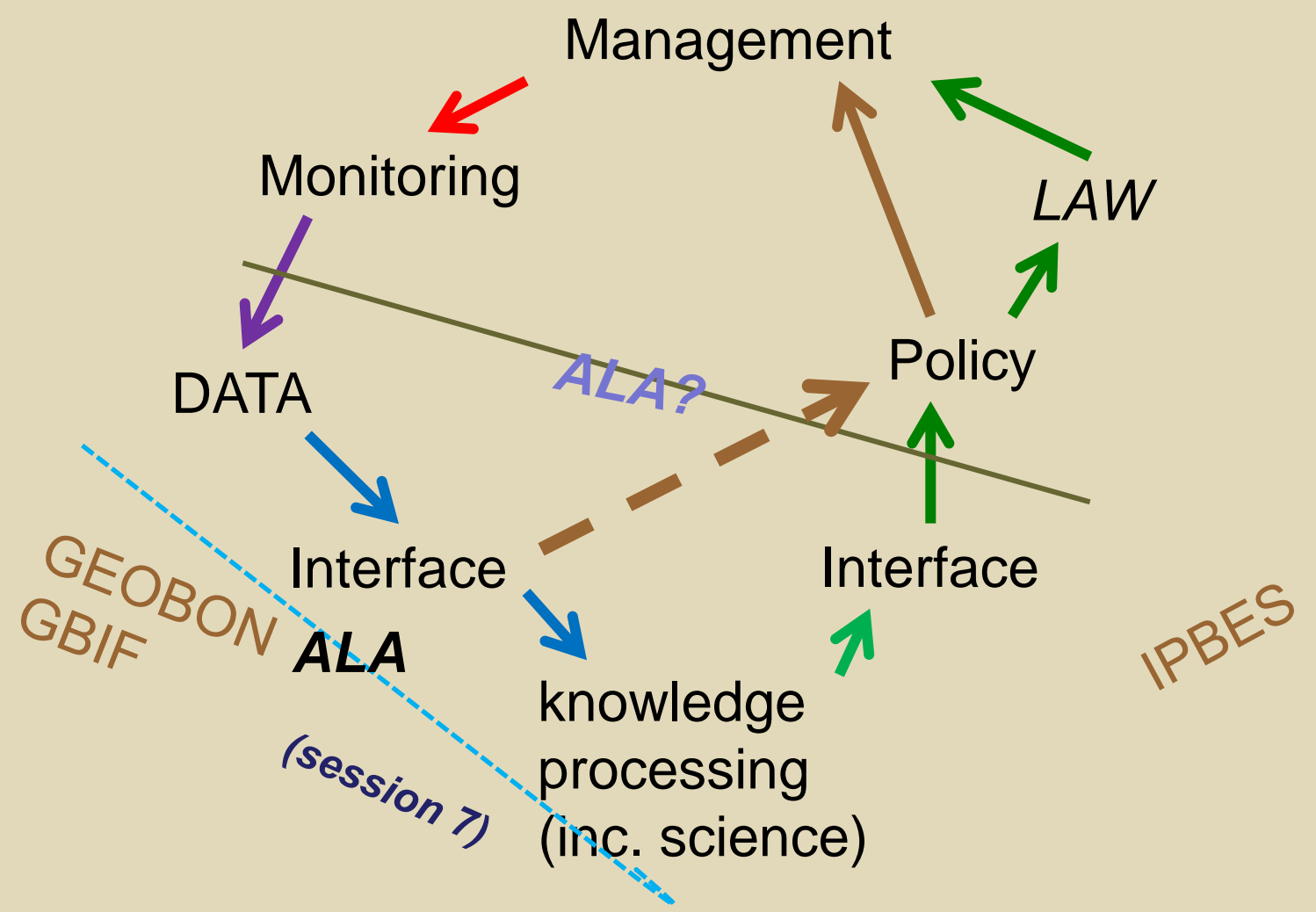
And be flexible..

...the ability to join the dots of how our planet functions and how resources can or cannot be used is fundamental for re-imagining future economies, and it is important we are not being paralyzed by the inability to have perfect information before acting....

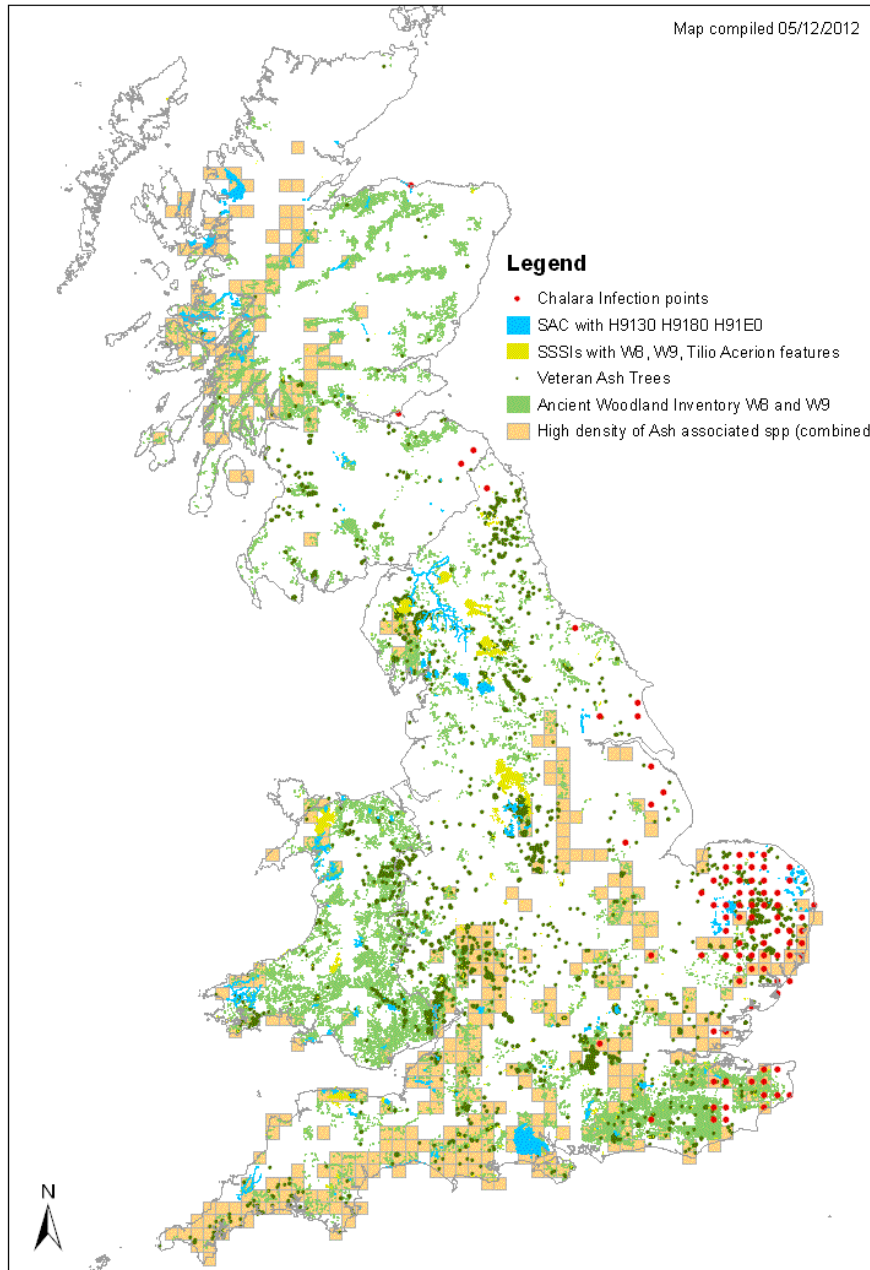
(Ex. Director UNEP, GEO-X, Jan. 2014)


Science-policy Interfaces





Map compiled 05/12/2012



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- Important ash occurs in **pockets of woodland**, as part of major landscape areas such as the Forest of Dean, and as trees in the landscape, across much of GB. The **density of locations is quite high**.
 - There are **no strategic gaps** in the distribution of important ash locations that suggest they **can be isolated at a regional scale**. There appears to be **greater distance between important ash locations in some of Scotland** when compared to the distribution across the rest of GB.
 - A **local picture of important ash woodlands** would provide useful information to aid the application of any management approach to *Chalara*, **particularly where the management is designed to optimise retaining ecological functioning and value**, once a location is infected.



Session 7 of the Symposium:

What will the future of the Atlas look like?

What are the blockers in using on-line data?

How can we improve the quality of on-line data?

Can we integrate the Atlas infrastructure into standard workflows for scientific research?

How do we build a closer relationship between the Atlas and the biological collection and taxonomist community?

Is there value in creating shared workspaces for researchers?

What is the role of citizen science and crowdsourcing in the future of research?

So; where does policy,
management, monitoring fit??

And in the end?

- By 2020 ALA's key result should be that it is the



Guide to the earth's (Australian division) living creatures, and making sure (with others) that they remain living!!

Eichornia crassipes, but taken in its natural habitat!



Our special responsibility

In the end, the question is - can we do better now than the dinosaurs did in their time?
Food for thought, as *T. rex* said to the tortoise....

