

One Health implementation and governance in Oceania: capacity building needs and policy tools

WOAH Pacific Wildlife Health webinar series, 11 June 2026

Dr. Martin Hitziger

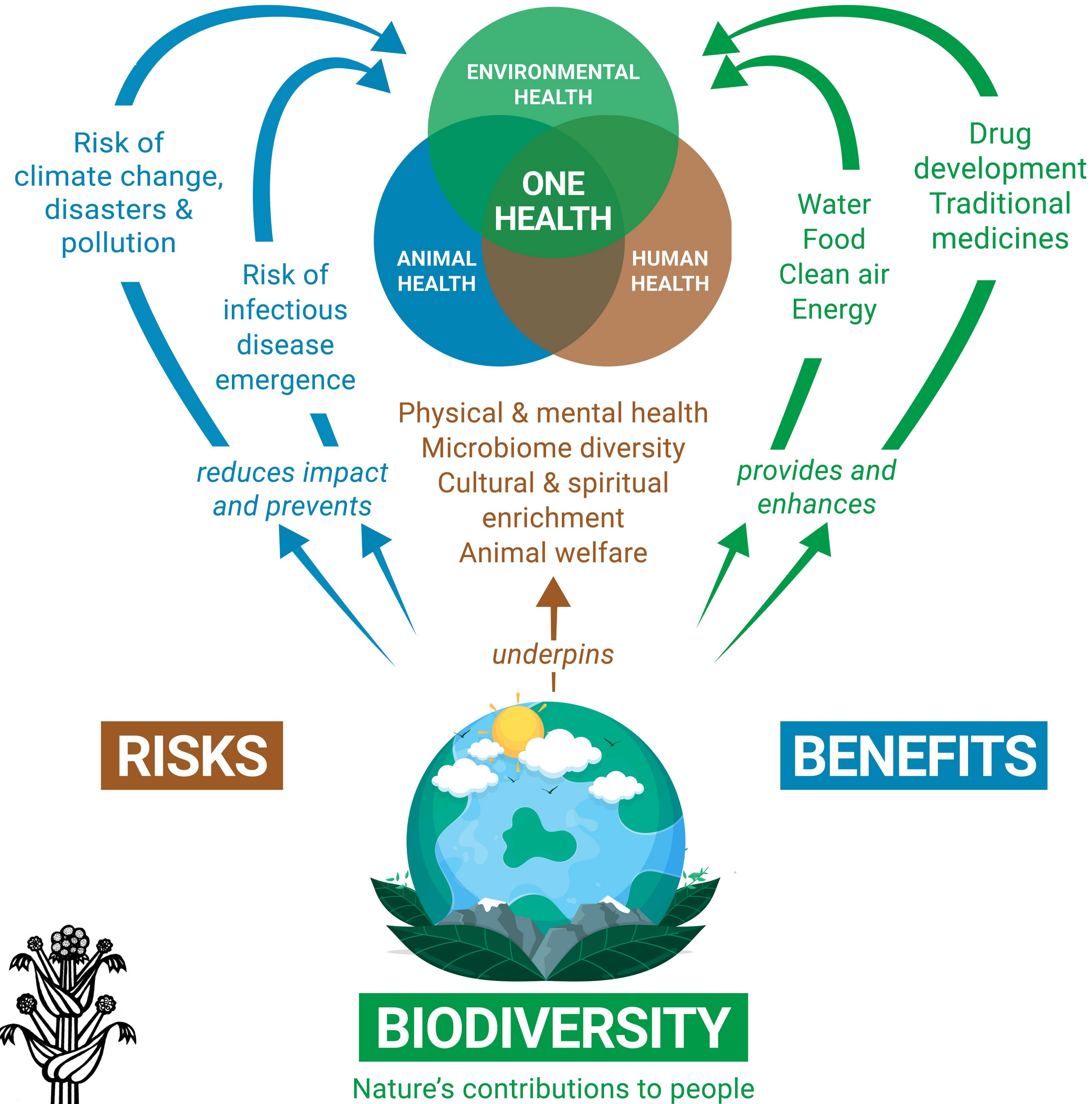
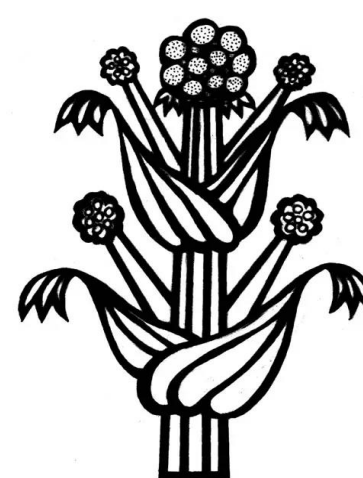
CITES-CMS Pacific Officer, SPREP

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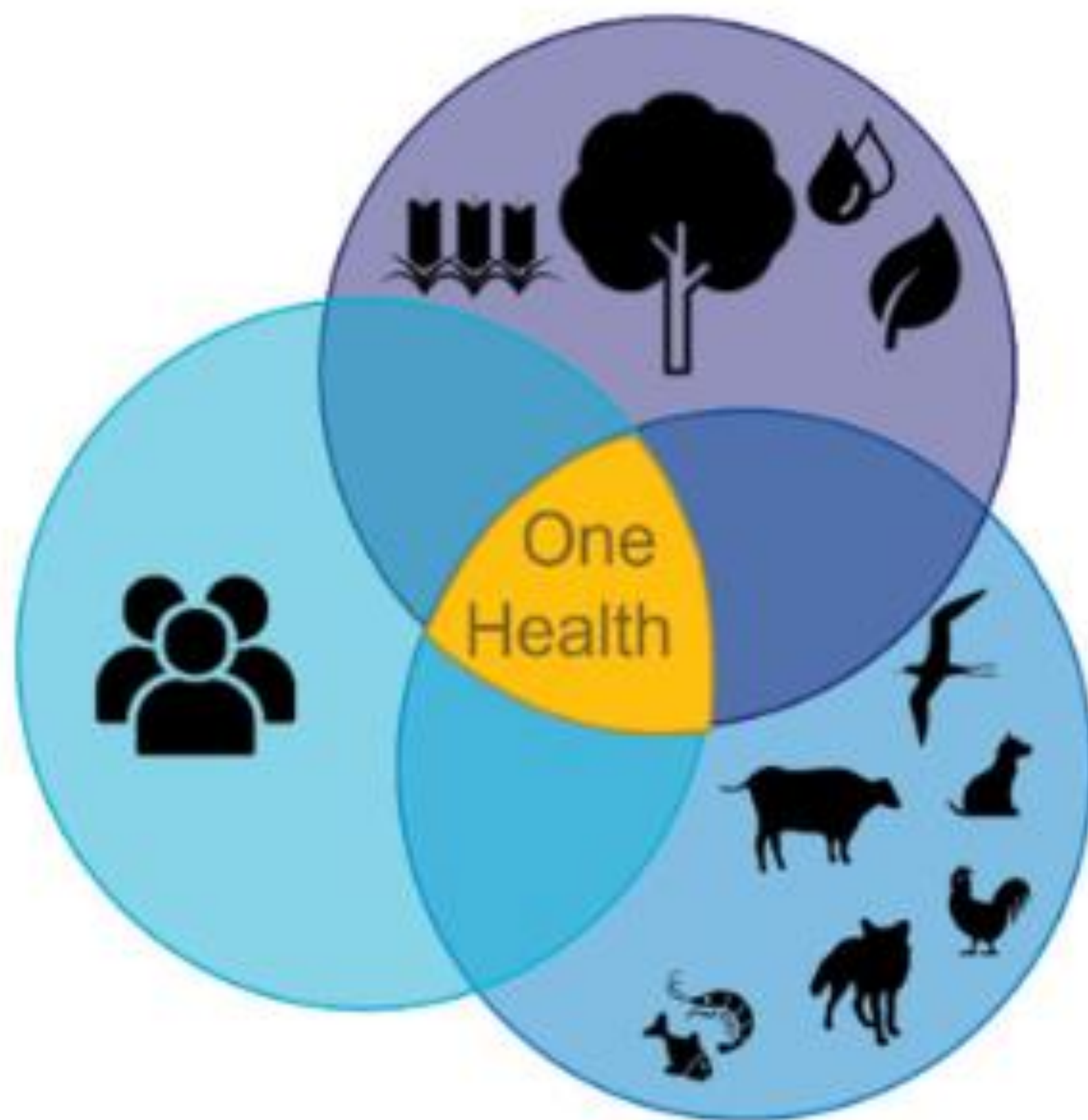
Member, Network for Ecohealth and One Health (NEOH)

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Co-Chair, IUCN Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG)



Two ways of understanding One Health



Collaboration: barriers and solutions

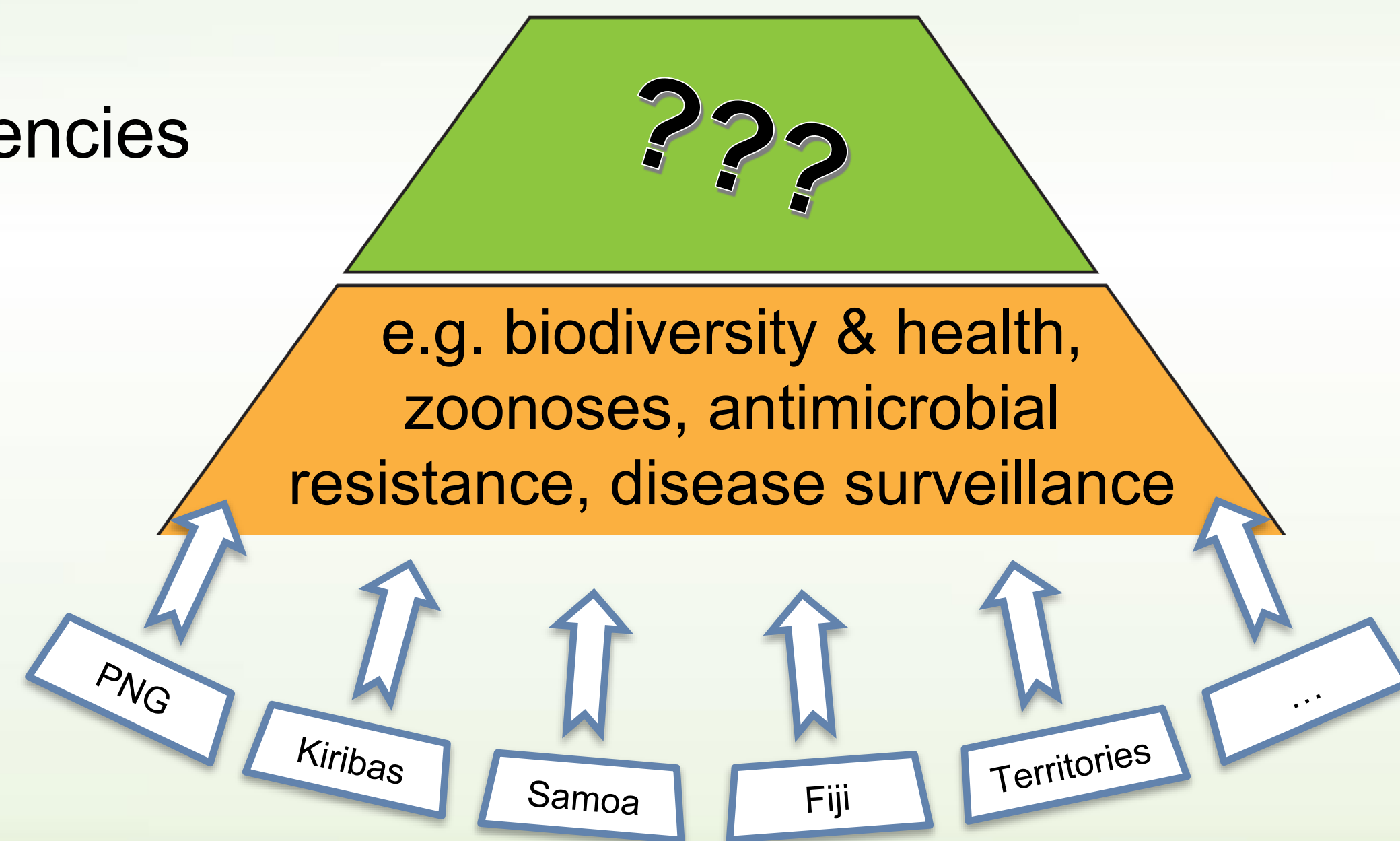
Categories	Examples	Solutions	Key value or competence
Political	Territorial sovereignty	Transboundary and multi-country projects	Transparency Leadership
Economical	Competition for funding	Cost-benefit analysis to prove the added-value of collaboration	Equity Participatory approaches
Scientific	Too distinct educational background	Joint training in One Health programs, knowledge sharing	Inclusivity Knowledge integration
Institutional	Lack of collaboration frame	Inter-institutional agreement	Engagement Transparency
Ethical	Data ownership	Clear and enforceable agreements on data sharing	Effective communication Responsibility Reflexivity
Cultural	Differing tacit knowledge, assumptions, expectations etc	Bridging perspectives	Knowledge integration

Capacity building and policy needs for One Health implementation and governance in Oceania

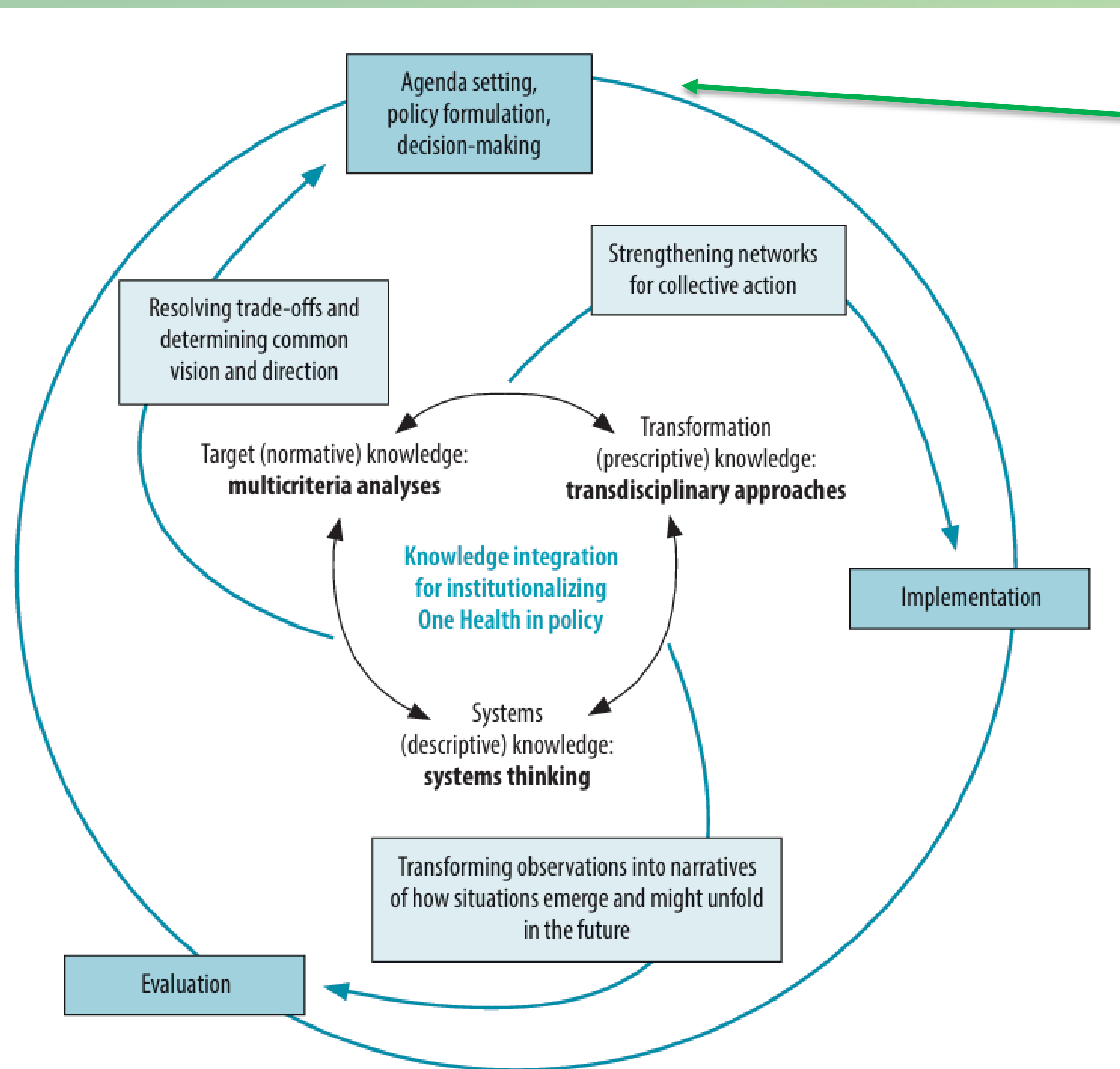
Integrative / systems-oriented policies, procedures & competencies

Disciplinary & sectoral technical capacities

Country specific needs & priorities,
societal context & infrastructures

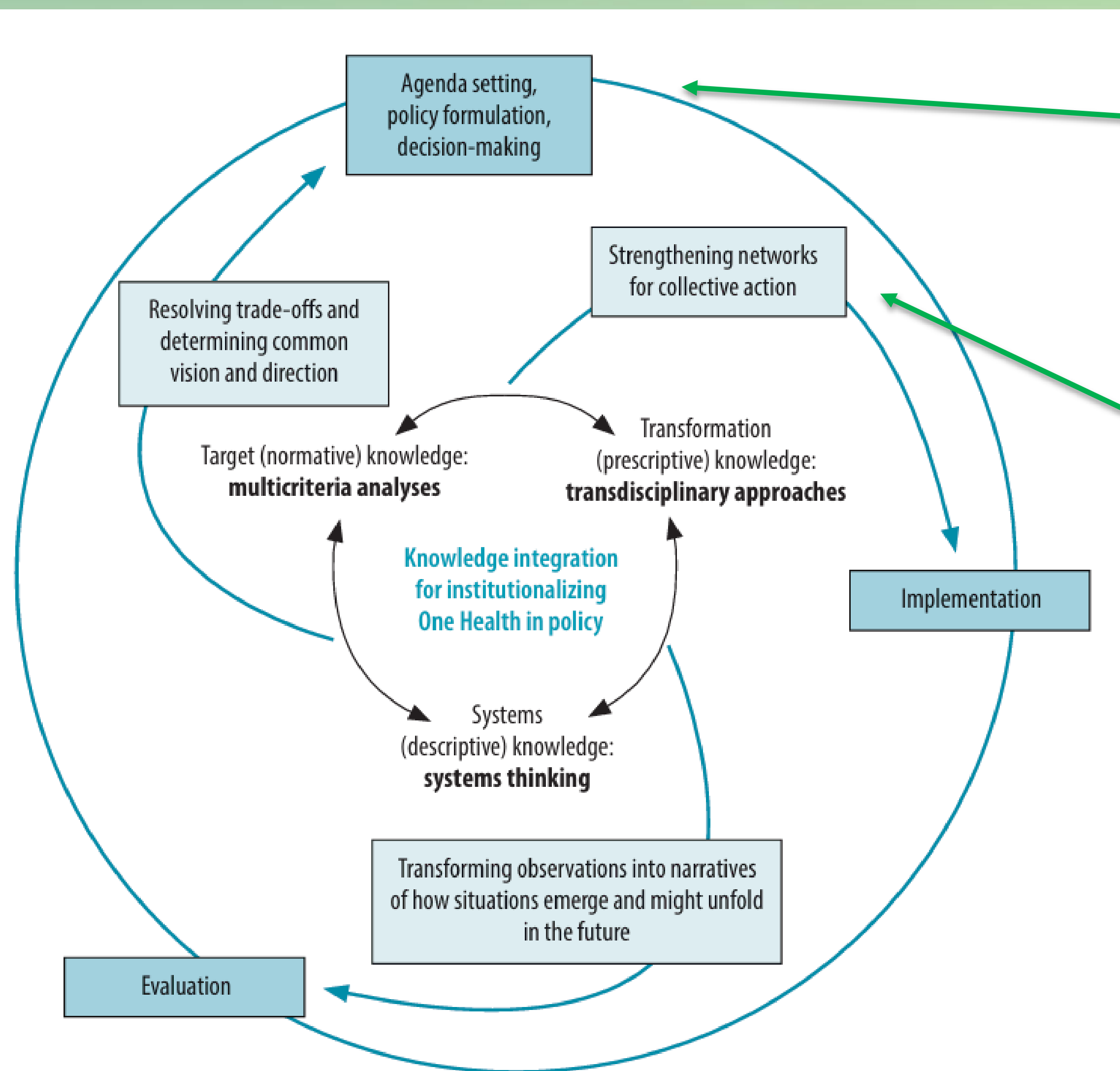


Knowledge integration in a One Health policy cycle



To operationalize a One Health
policy cycle ...

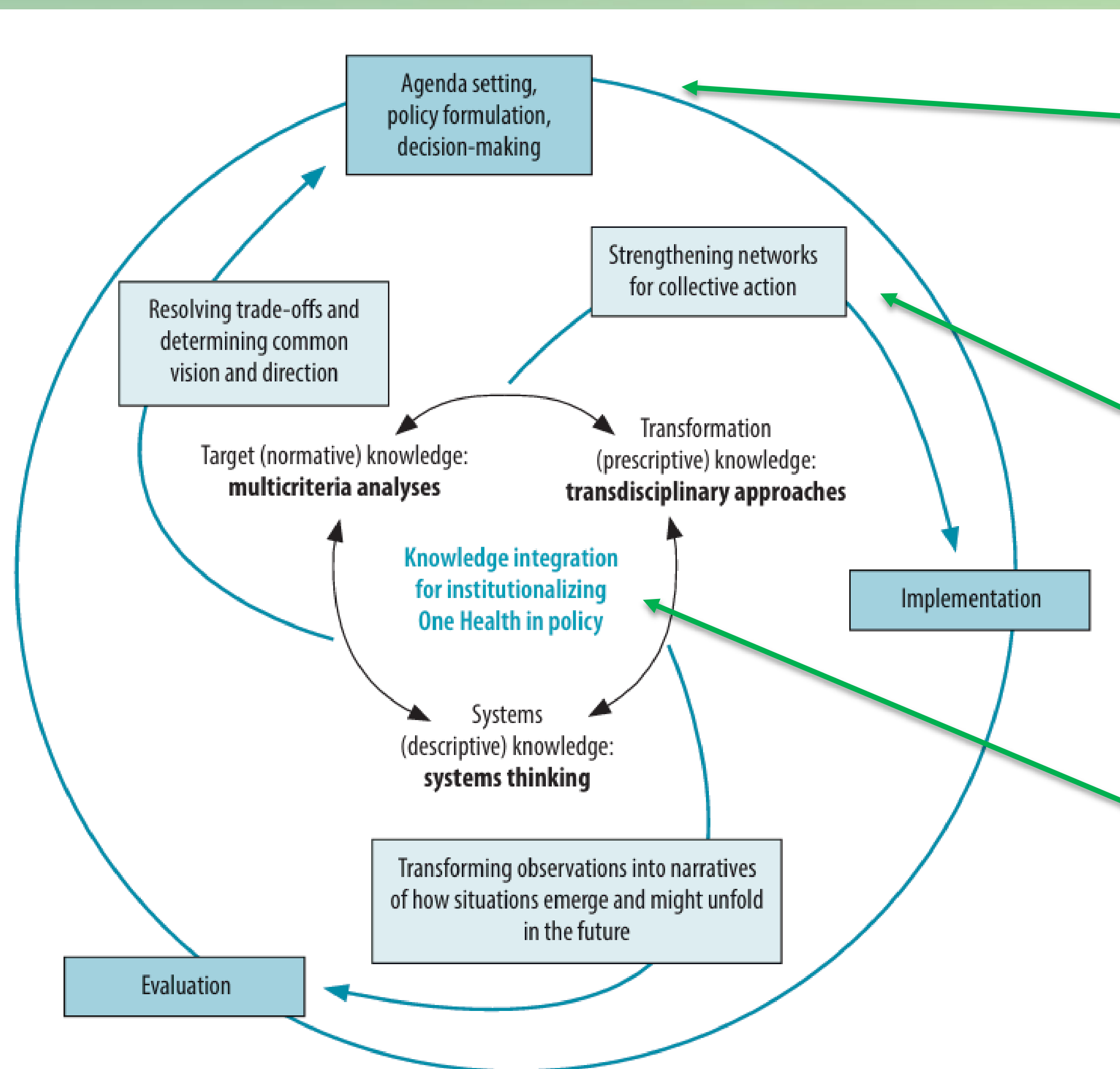
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Knowledge integration in a One Health policy cycle

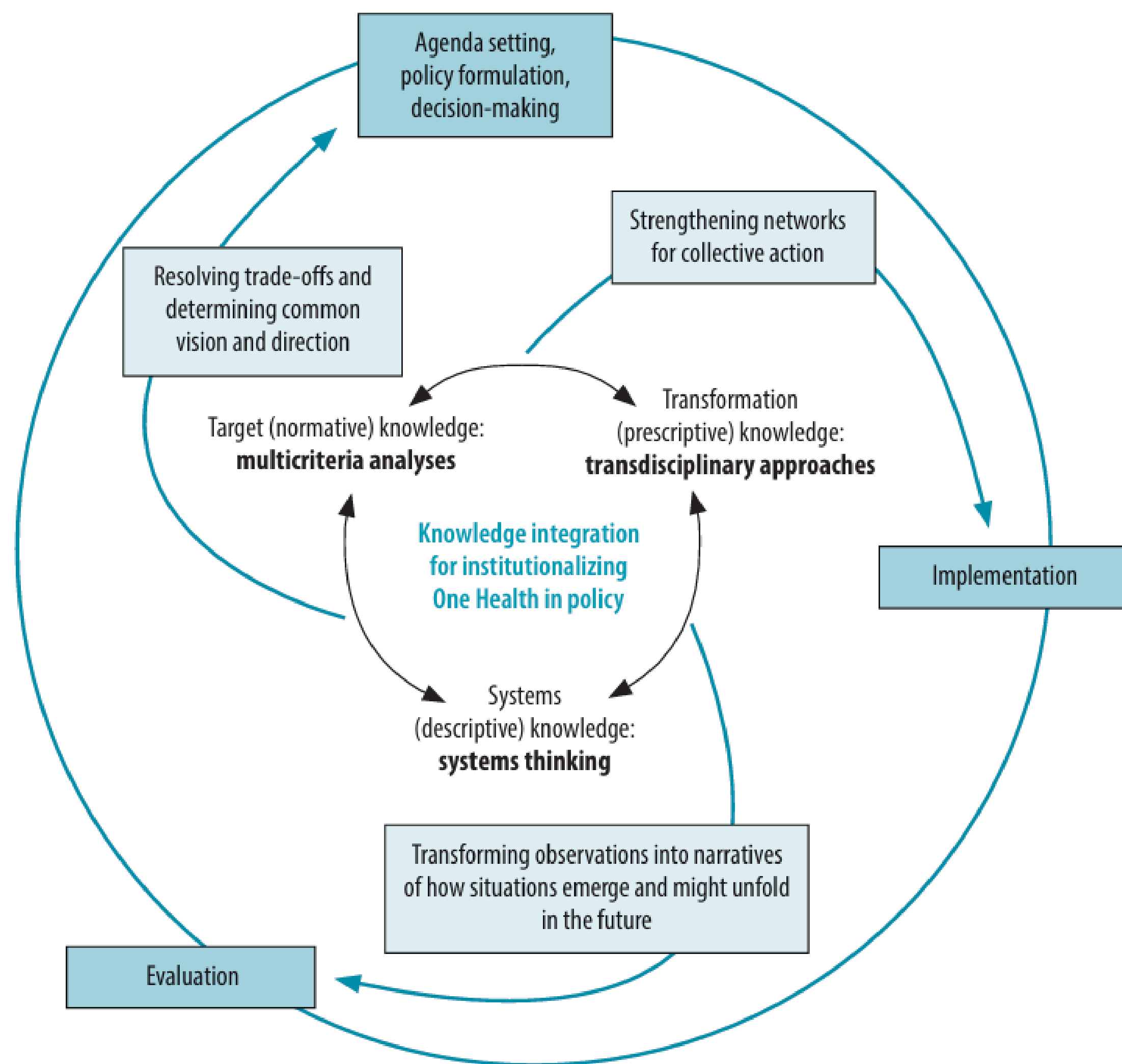


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integrate knowledge.

Knowledge integration in a One Health policy cycle



To operationalize a One Health policy cycle ...

requires specific activities, approaches and skills to ...

integrate knowledge:

- understand commonalities, differences and relationships between different perspectives
- build shared and meaningful syntheses based on recognition and explanation of differences
- weaving multiple perspectives into a common vision
- search for coherence and correspondence rather than seeking consensus

What is knowledge?

Anthropological concept of knowledge:

What a person employs to interpret and act on the world, including the knowledge that is employed to form preferences and goals – the ways of understanding that we use to make up our experienced reality

- feelings (attitudes)
- Information
- embodied skills
- verbal taxonomies
- Concepts/mental models
- Emotional judgements / cognitive inferences based on whatever criteria of truthfulness that we embrace – above all, what others whom we trust tell us they believe

What is knowledge?

Anthropological concept of knowledge (Barth, 2002):

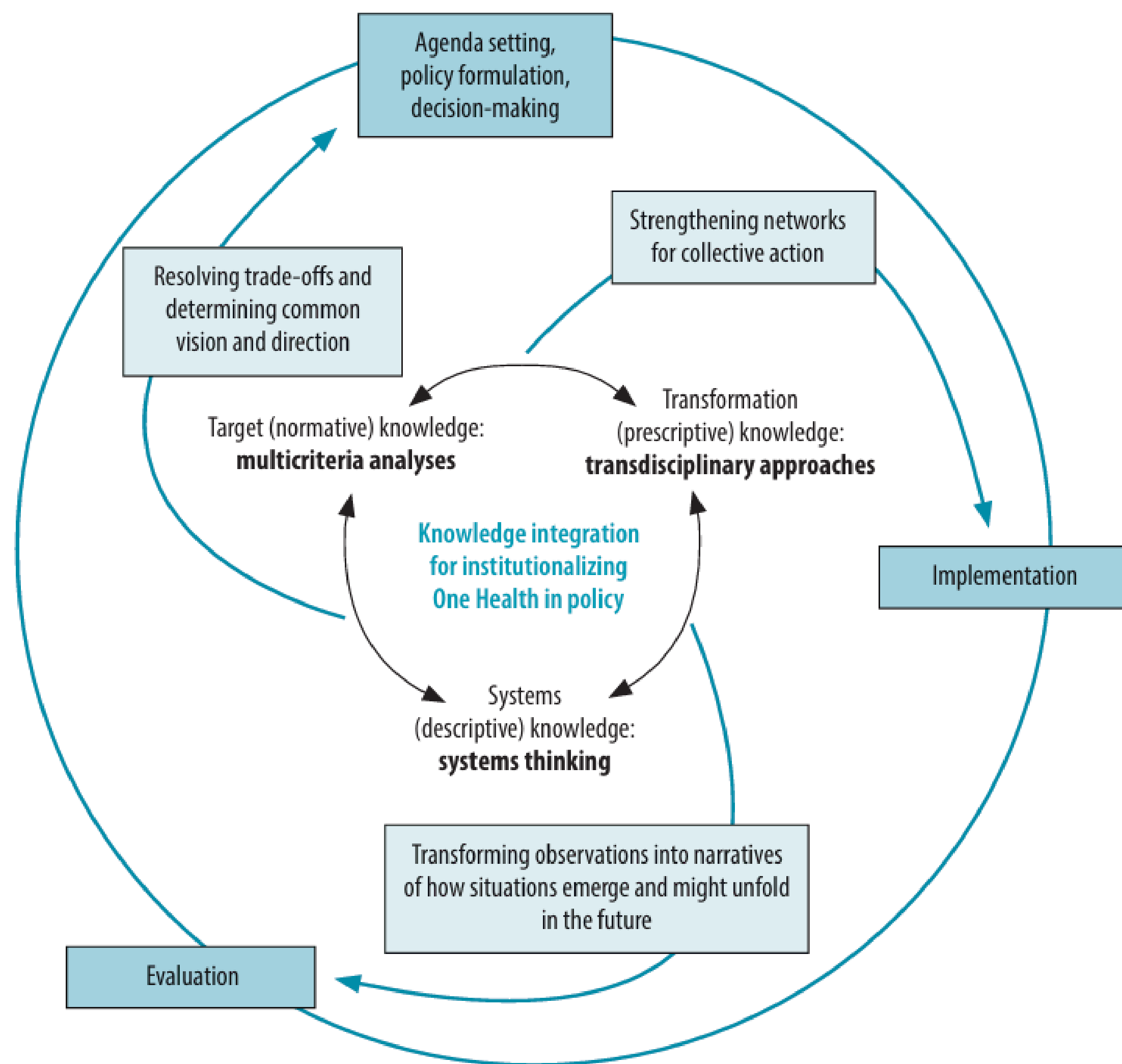
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Three forms of knowledge:

- ***systems knowledge:*** how actors perceive situations and how – in their view – situations developed in the past and might further develop in the future
- ***target knowledge:*** how their perceptions of situations influence what actors intend to achieve
- ***transformation knowledge:*** why actors hope to achieve their goals in certain ways

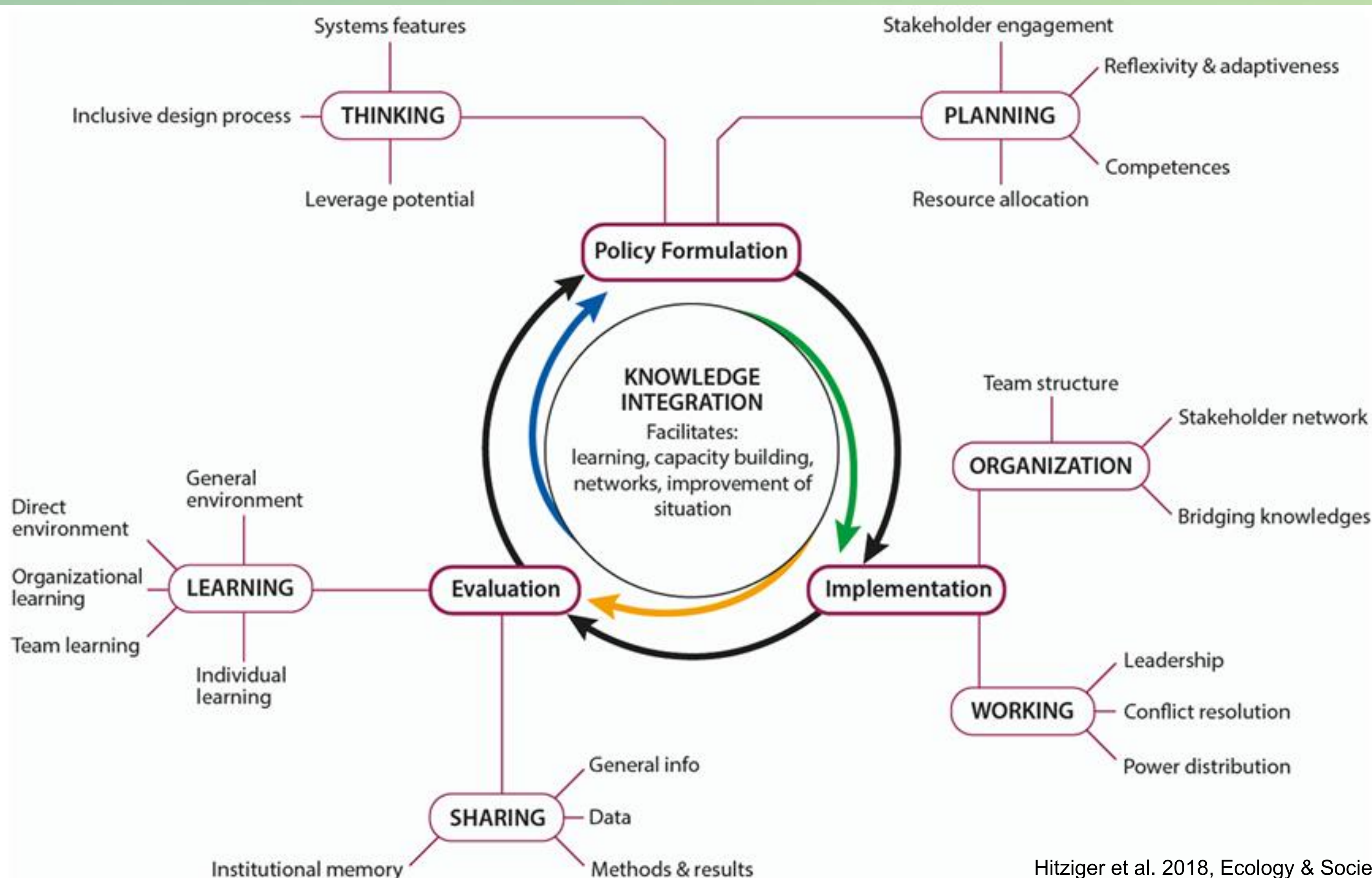
Knowledge integration in a One Health policy cycle



Hitziger et al. 2018, WHO Bulletin

General situation in Oceania	
Benefits	Challenges
Less professional silos: - Small scale administrations with proximity to the “field” - Career pathways tend to pass through multiple sectors and institutions	Limits of scale and scattered populations: - economic and institutional resources - educational and technical expertise and capacities
Cultural and linguistic cohesion in Polynesia - less disrupted by violence and conflicts	Limited linguistic, cultural and societal cohesion in Melanesia
Island geography facilitates prevention, surveillance and control	Island geography hampers direct communication, experiential exchange and mutual learning
...	...

What makes a One Health approach successful?



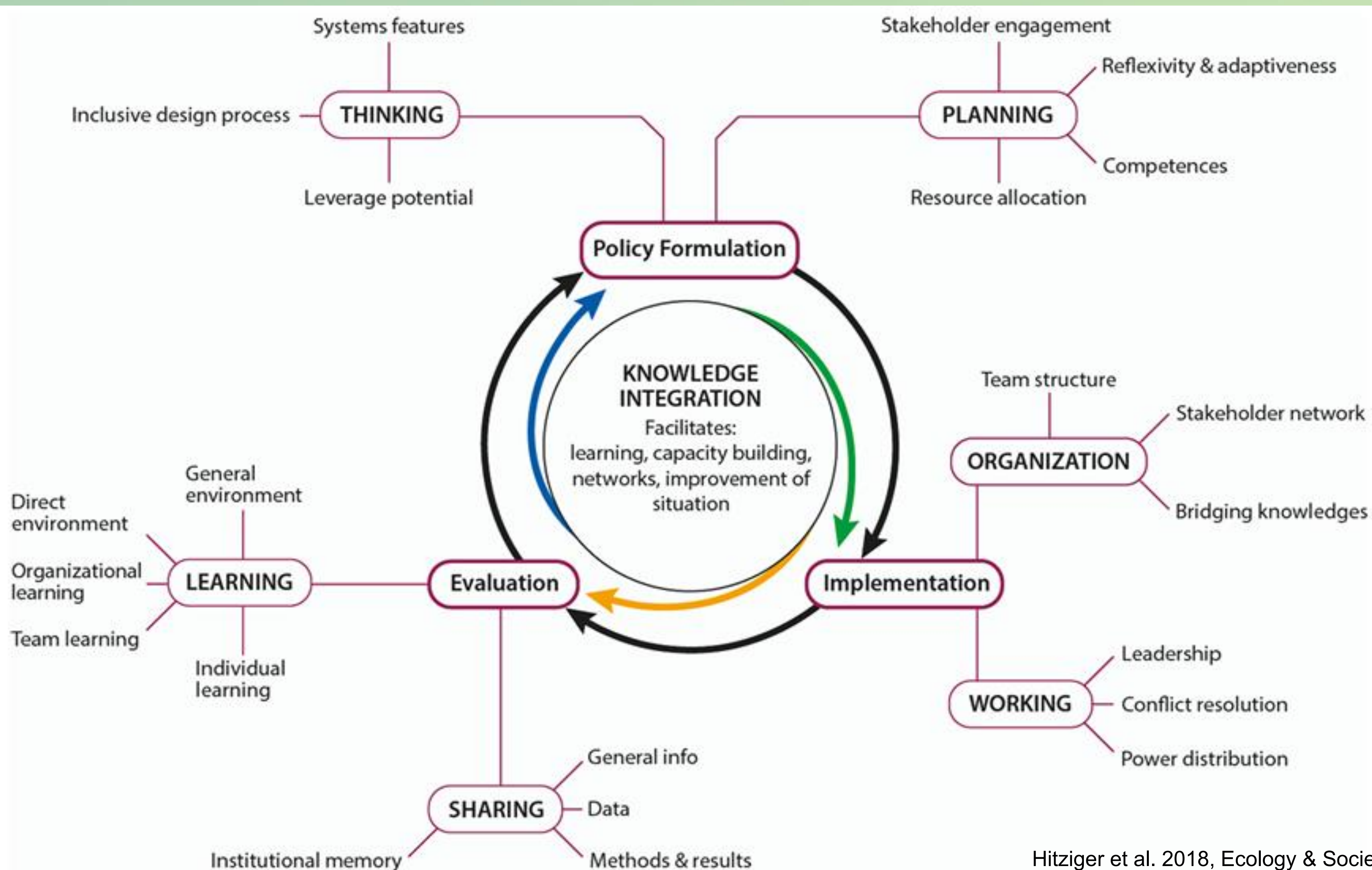
200 European experts spent six years to identify:

- 6 main themes with
- 25 specific aspects

(Rueegg et al. 2023)

systems thinking and stakeholder participation largely missing among 15 evaluated One Health initiatives on three continents (Hitziger et al. 2021)

What makes a One Health approach successful?



Aspects in which Oceania may be strong:

- Inclusive design process
- Reflexivity & adaptiveness
- Conflict resolution
- Power distribution
- Sharing general information
- Individual learning

Aspects in which Oceania may be challenged:

- Leverage potential



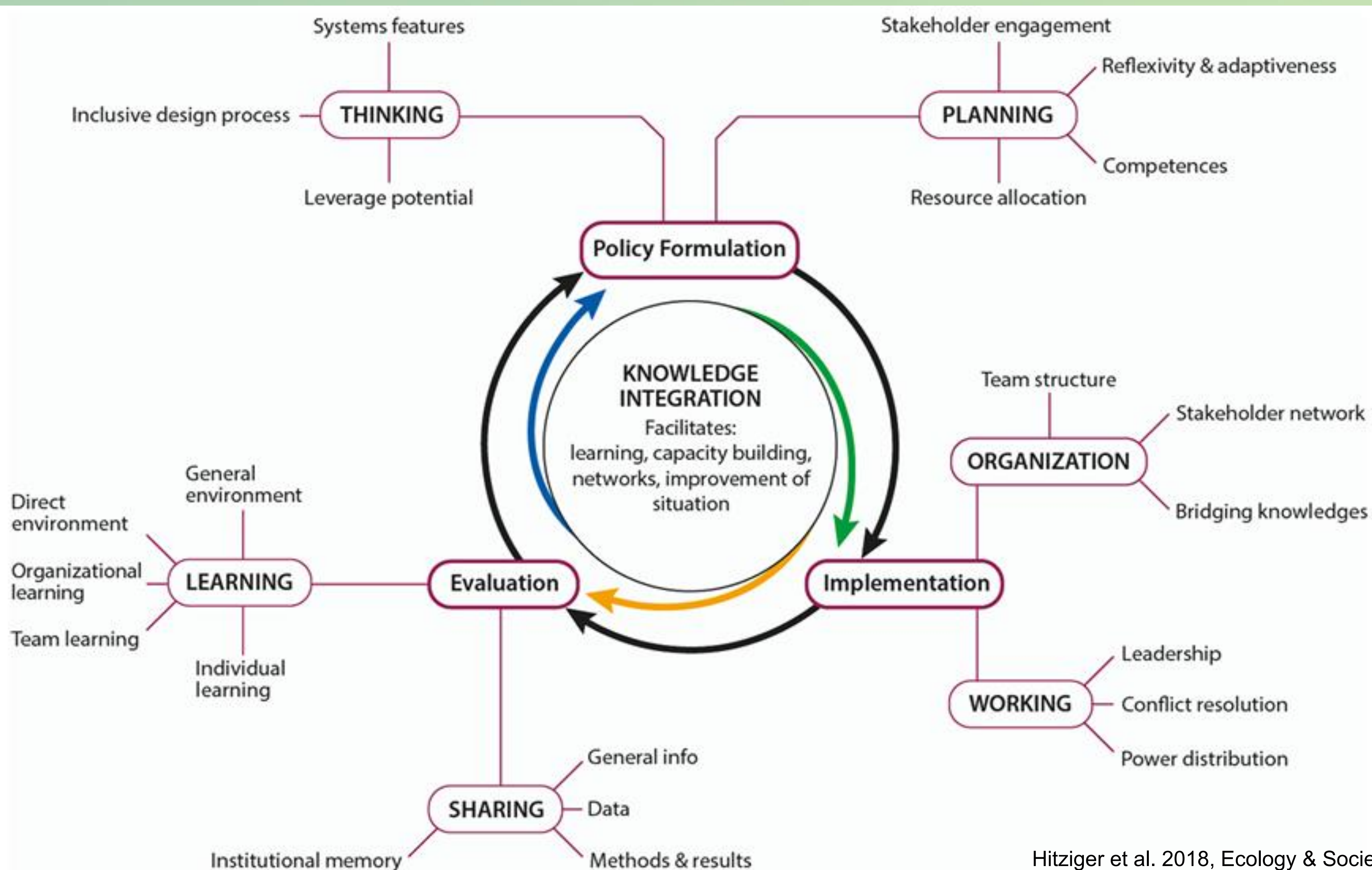
Leverage points – places to intervene effectively

Leverage potential assesses how the design of the initiative matches the problem it addresses

In increasing order of effectiveness:

1. Constants, parameters, numbers (such as subsidies, taxes, standards)
2. The sizes of buffers and other stabilizing stocks, relative to their flows
3. The structure of material stocks and flows (such as transport networks, population age structures)
4. The lengths of delays, relative to the rate of system change
5. The strength of negative feedback loops, relative to the impacts they are trying to correct against
6. The gain around driving positive feedback loops
7. The structure of information flows (who does and does not have access to information)
8. The rules of the system (such as incentives, punishments, constraints)
9. The power to add, change, evolve, or self-organize system structure
10. The goals of the system

What makes a One Health approach successful?



Aspects in which Oceania may be strong:

- Inclusive design process
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- Conflict resolution
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- Sharing general information
- Individual learning

Aspects in which Oceania may be challenged:

- Leverage potential
- Inclusive design procedures
- Social science / systems science competencies
- Resource allocation
- Bridging knowledges
- Leadership
- Sharing data
- Institutional memory
- Organizational learning

Key competencies

Rome Synthesis Major Domains (Frankson et al., 2016)

Management:

- Able to manage cross-disciplinary teams—understands roles and responsibilities of the team and its individual members—holds team accountable

Communication and informatics:

- Utilises diplomacy, able to negotiate, able to resolve conflicts—achieves collaboration

Values and ethics:

- Values honesty, possesses strong self-awareness and integrity—possesses integrity

Leadership:

- Advocates for change- fosters a changing environment—understands individual and shared leadership models—possesses an external awareness (social, political, legal and cultural)

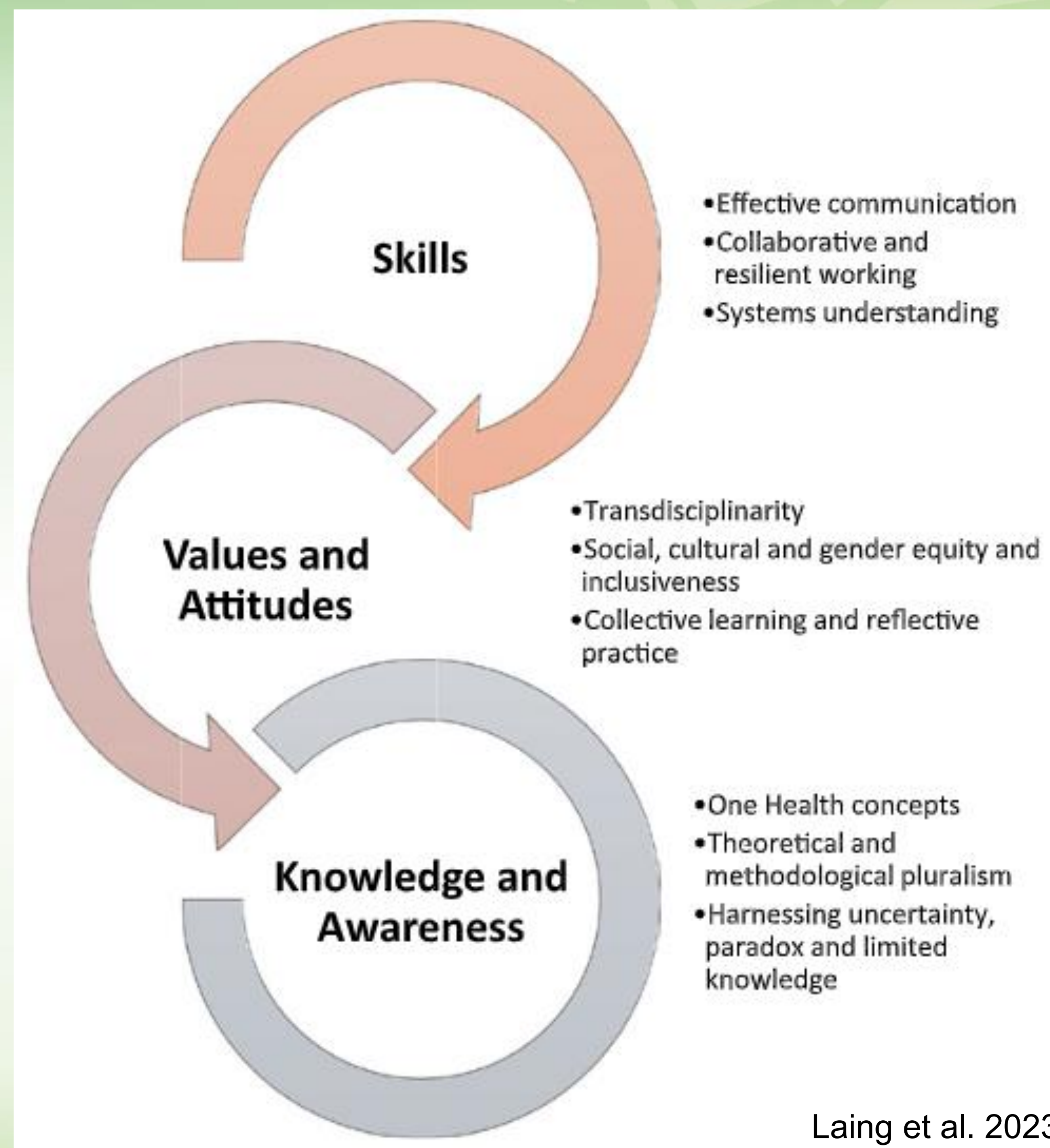
Team and collaboration:

- Identifies shared values and goals—values diversity of discipline, culture, ideas, background, and experience—establishes trust—thinks strategically

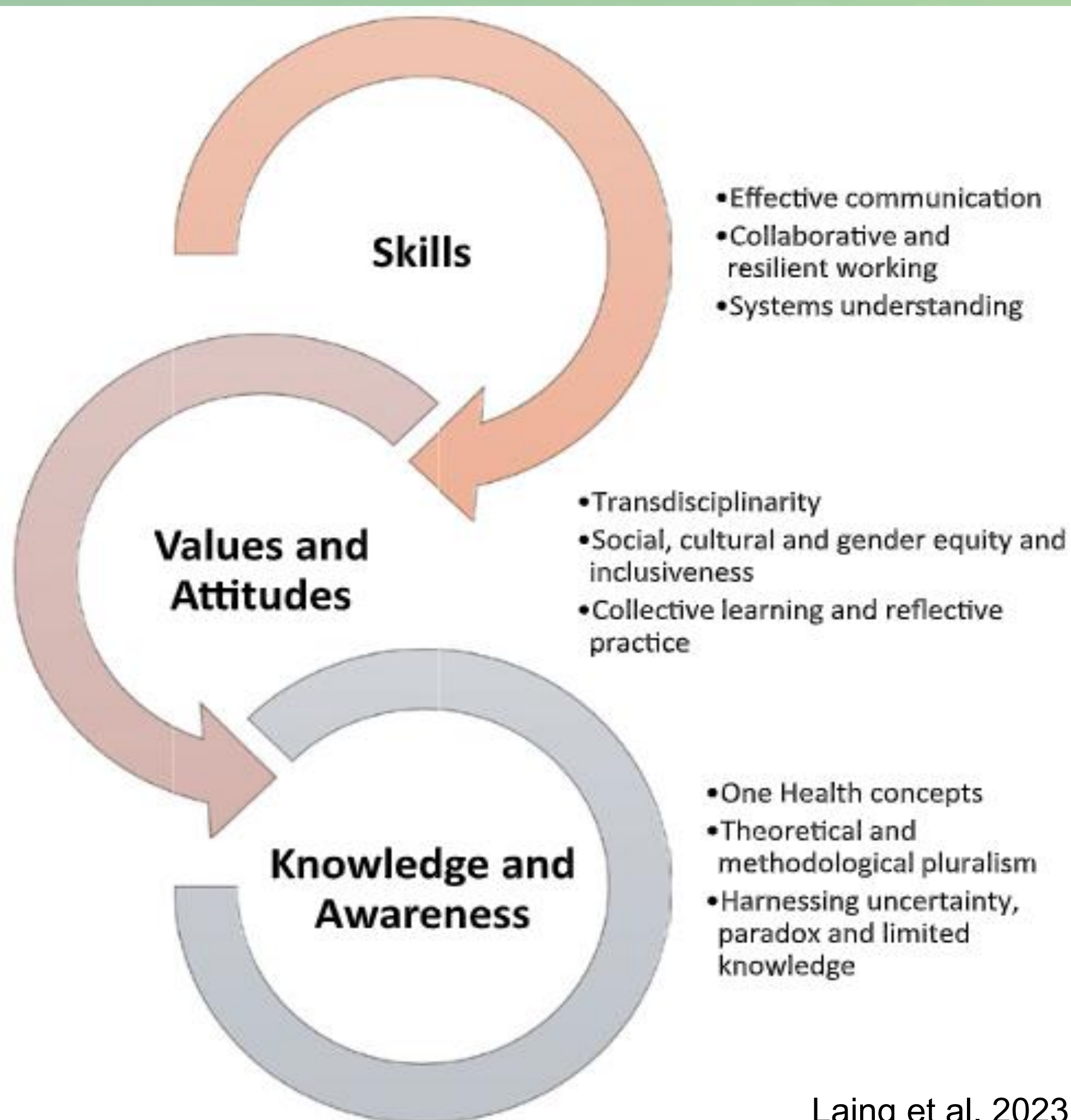
Roles and responsibilities

Systems thinking:

- Awareness of the big picture and interdependency of stakeholders—understands and embraces a One Health approach able to identify a problem and its impact on the system.



Free online expert resource – Structured around One Health competencies



Laing et al. 2023

Competency	Chapter number
1. Effective communication	6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 16
2. Collaborative and resilient working	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14
3. Systems understanding	2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15
4. Transdisciplinarity	1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15
5. Social, cultural and gender equity, and inclusiveness	1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16
6. Collective learning and reflective practice	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16
7. One Health concepts	1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 13, 16
8. Theoretical and methodological pluralism	2, 3, 4, 11
9. Harnessing uncertainty, paradox and limited knowledge	4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14



NEOH

Network for Ecohealth and One Health

Harnessing systems and transdisciplinary approaches for the health and well-being of people, animals, and their shared environment

<https://neoh.network/>

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Whether you're a researcher, policymaker, or practitioner, NEOH offers the resources, networking opportunities, and training needed to drive meaningful change in the fields of One Health and Ecohealth. Join us to be part of a growing, dynamic network that supports cutting-edge evaluation, collaboration, and innovation in health. Learn about transdisciplinary and systems approaches, gain new collaborators and support for early career individuals. Membership fees are currently so suspended so take advantage now!

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Sign up to be added to the NEOH email list and join the monthly meetings

saraidjorde@gmail.com [Switch account](#)



* Indicates required question

Email *

Your email

I want to become a NEOH member

☐ Yes

☐ No



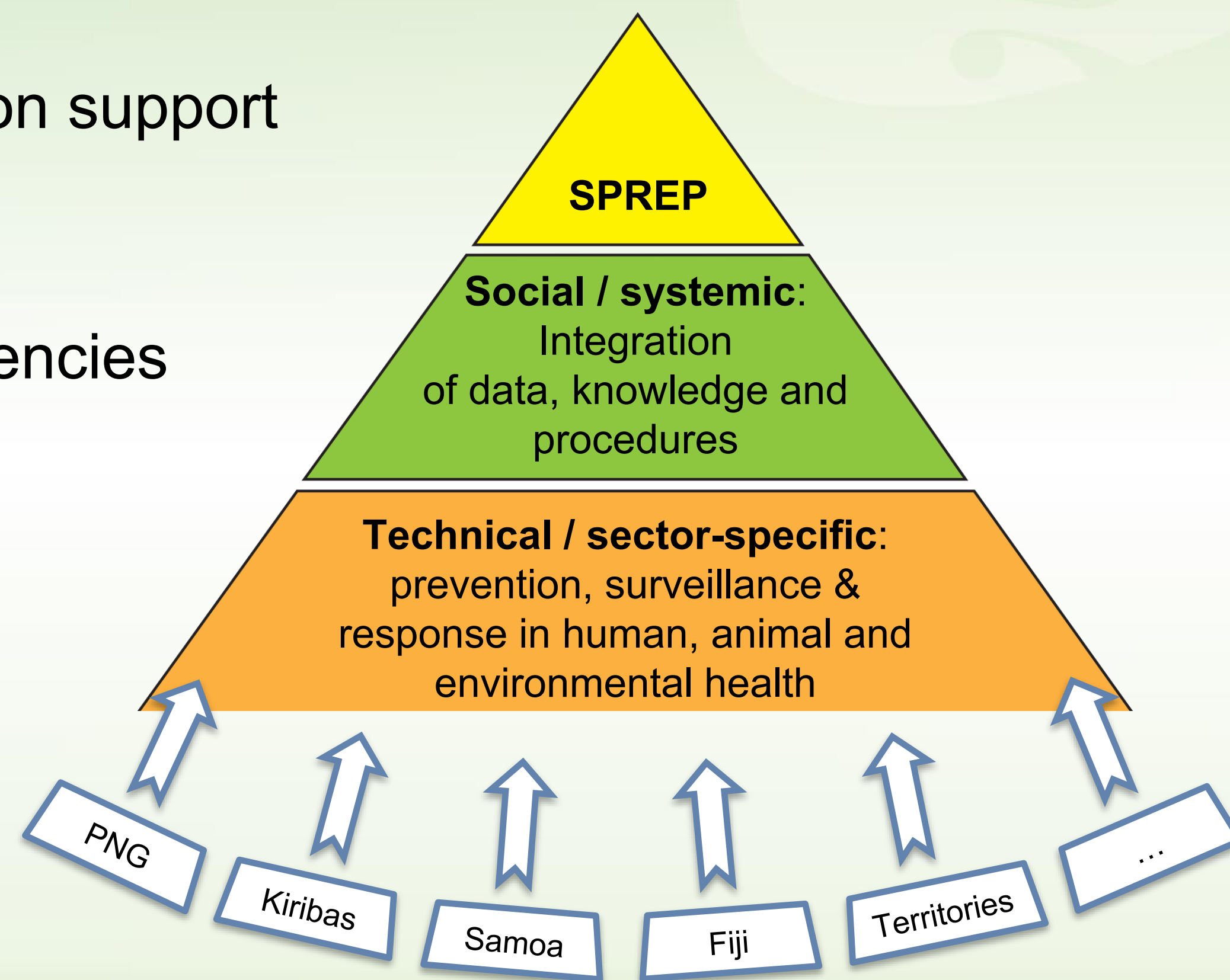
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Regional capacity building & coordination support

Integrative / systems-oriented policies, procedures & competencies

Disciplinary & sectoral technical capacities

Country specific needs & priorities,
societal context & infrastructures



Free / open online sources

[Principles of One Health for a better planet \(Haesler et al. 2025\)](#)

[Knowledge Integration in One Health: Science and Decision Support \(Hitziger et al. 2025\)](#)

[Integrated approaches to health \(Rueegg et al. 2023\)](#)

[Advancing One Health: Updated core competencies \(Laing et al. 2023\)](#)

[System thinking and citizen participation is still missing in one health initiatives—lessons from fifteen evaluations \(Hitziger et al. 2021\)](#)

[EVOlvINC: evaluating knowledge integration capacity in multistakeholder governance \(Hitziger et al. 2019\)](#)

[Knowledge integration in One Health policy formulation, implementation and evaluation \(Hitziger et al. 2018\)](#)

[Leverage points: places to intervene in a system \(Meadows, D. 1999\)](#)

[An anthropology of knowledge \(Barth, 2002\)](#)