

Entry Points for Environmental Sustainability:

Using the
OECD DAC Criteria and
Key Evaluation Questions

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Footprint Evaluation Initiative

May 2022



Before we begin

The Footprint Evaluation team acknowledges and pays respect to the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which we are all living, learning, and working from today.

This session will be recorded, with video of the presentation and a summary of the discussion shared afterwards.

Please post questions or comments in the chat.



**Jane
Davidson**



Patricia Rogers

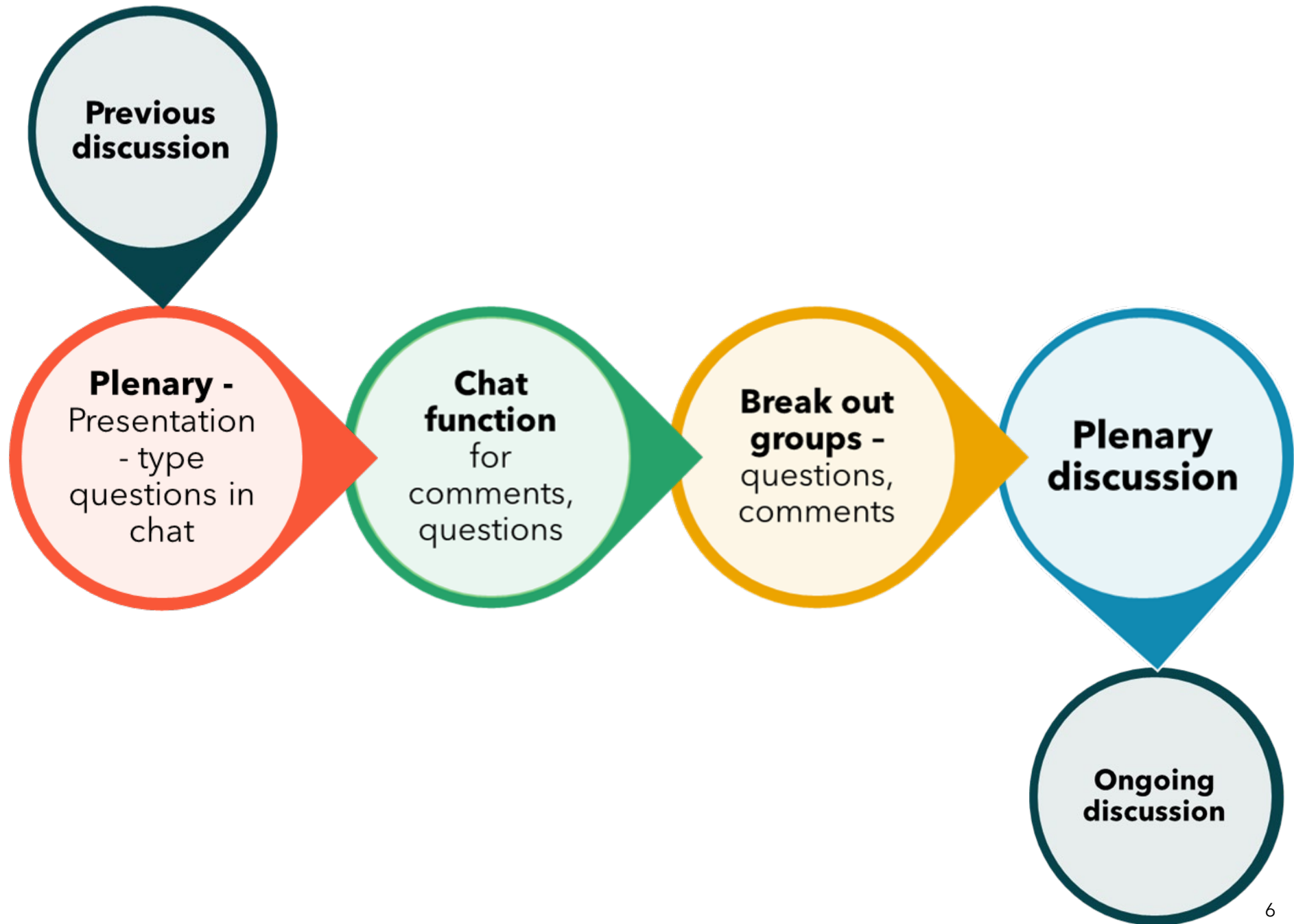


Strategies for evaluators and those who commission evaluations

Are you:

- 1. An evaluator (or someone who does evaluation)**
- 2. An evaluation commissioner**
- 3. Both**
- 4. Neither**

Agenda



Why Footprint Evaluation is needed

● This article is more than 2 years old

We have 12 years to limit climate change catastrophe, warns UN

Urgent changes needed to cut risk of extreme heat, drought, floods and poverty, says IPCC

● **Overwhelmed by climate change? Here's what you can do**



▲ A firefighter battles a fire in California. The world is currently 1C warmer than preindustrial levels. Photograph: Ringo HW Chiu/AP

The world's leading climate scientists have warned there is only a dozen years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5C, beyond which even half a degree will significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people.

**NEGATIVE IMPACT OF
OTHER PROGRAMS & POLICIES**



**POSITIVE IMPACT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS & POLICIES**

Banks lent \$2.6tn linked to ecosystem and wildlife destruction in 2019 - report

Lack of policies regulating impact on natural world means finance industry effectively bankrolling biodiversity loss, analysis finds

● **The world's banks must start to value nature and stop paying for its destruction**



▲ A view of land cleared of peatland forest for palm oil plantation in South Aceh, Indonesia. The peat swamp area is the habitat of the Sumatran orangutan, now on the verge of extinction. Photograph: Ulet Ifansasti/Getty Images

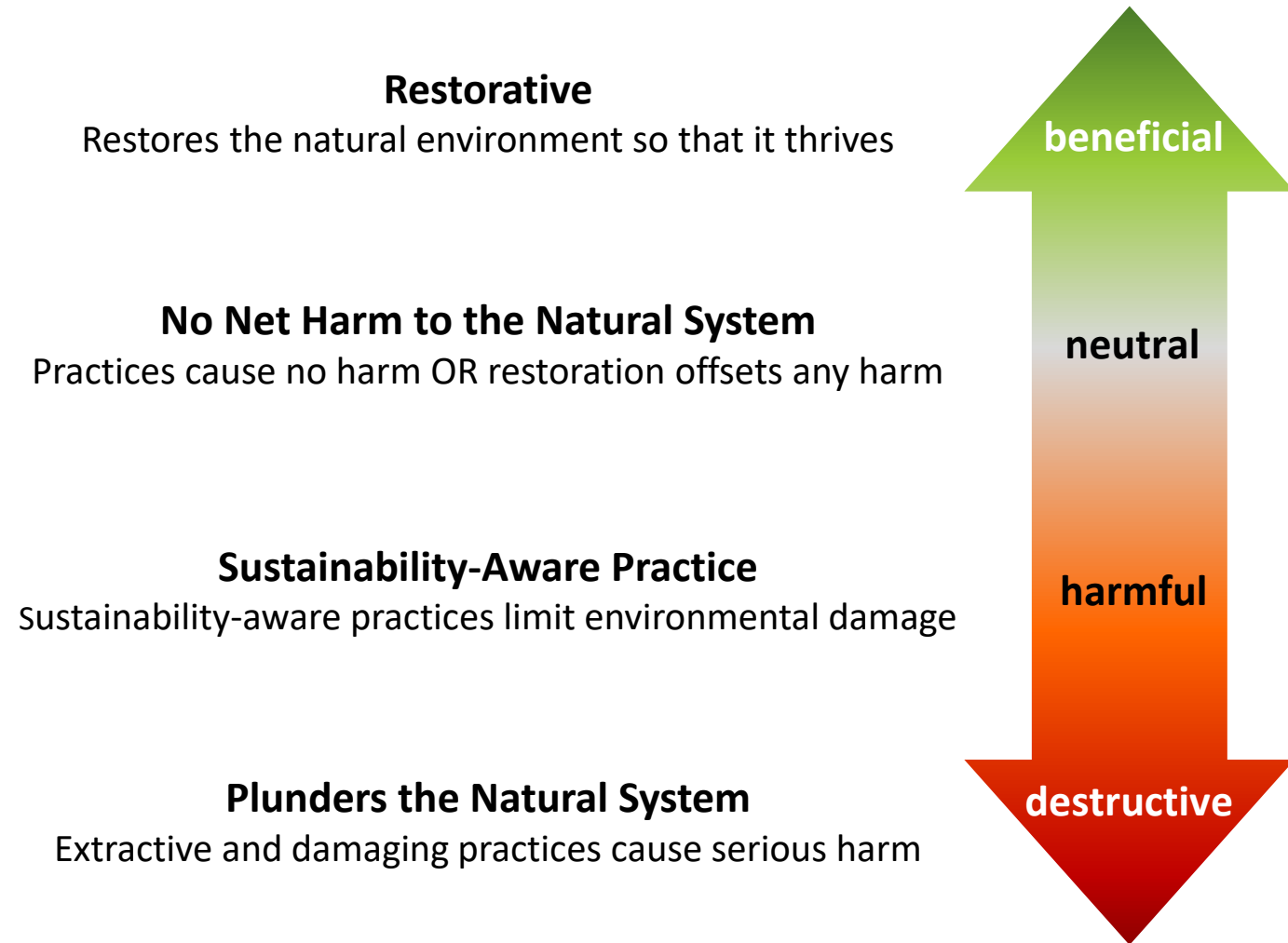
The world's largest investment banks provided more than \$2.6tn (£1.9tn) of financing linked to the destruction of ecosystems and wildlife last year, according to a new report.

What do we mean by sustainability?

'Sustainable' development means development that meets the needs of the present **without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**

IPCC (2018) defines sustainability as a dynamic process that guarantees the **persistence of natural and human systems** in an equitable manner.

In other words, **sustainability is about pursuing goals for the human system** (such as equity, food security) **while preserving** (or restoring degraded) **natural systems.**



How do we get sustainability on the evaluation agenda?



How can an evaluation commissioner or manager include environmental sustainability in the scope of an evaluation?

How can an evaluator convince an evaluation commissioner that including environmental sustainability is in or should be in scope?

Entry Points for Environmental Sustainability



1. Existing evaluative criteria – for example, OECD DAC criteria
2. Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs)
3. Organisational or country policies and commitments
4. Compelling argument for significance and urgency
5. Others?

Option 1: Use existing evaluative criteria

RELEVANCE
is the intervention
doing the right things?

EFFECTIVENESS
is the intervention
achieving its objectives?

IMPACT
what difference does
the intervention make?



COHERENCE
how well does
the intervention fit?

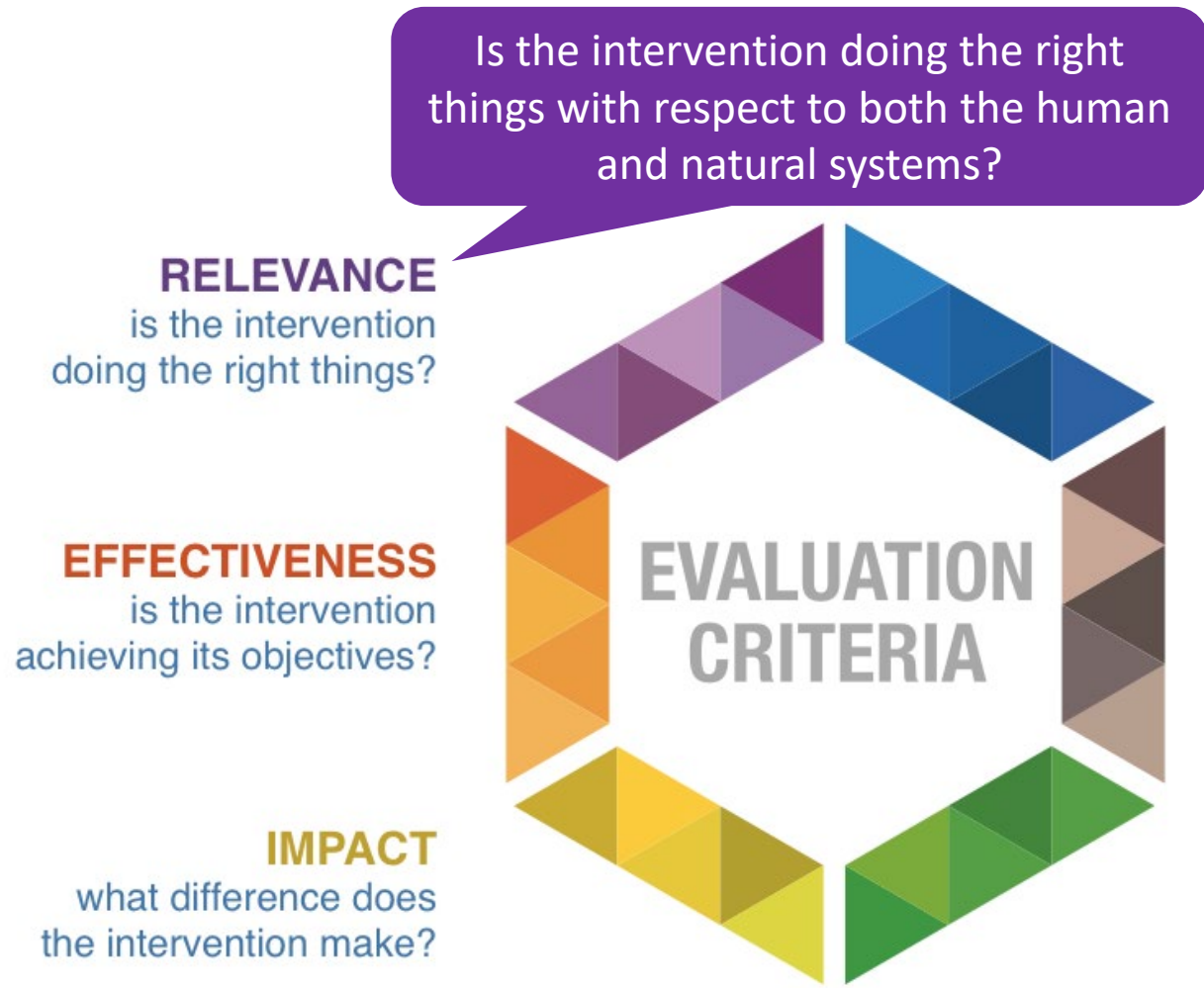
EFFICIENCY
how well are resources
being used?

SUSTAINABILITY
will the benefits last?

OECD DAC criteria: Relevance

"Doing the right things" includes:

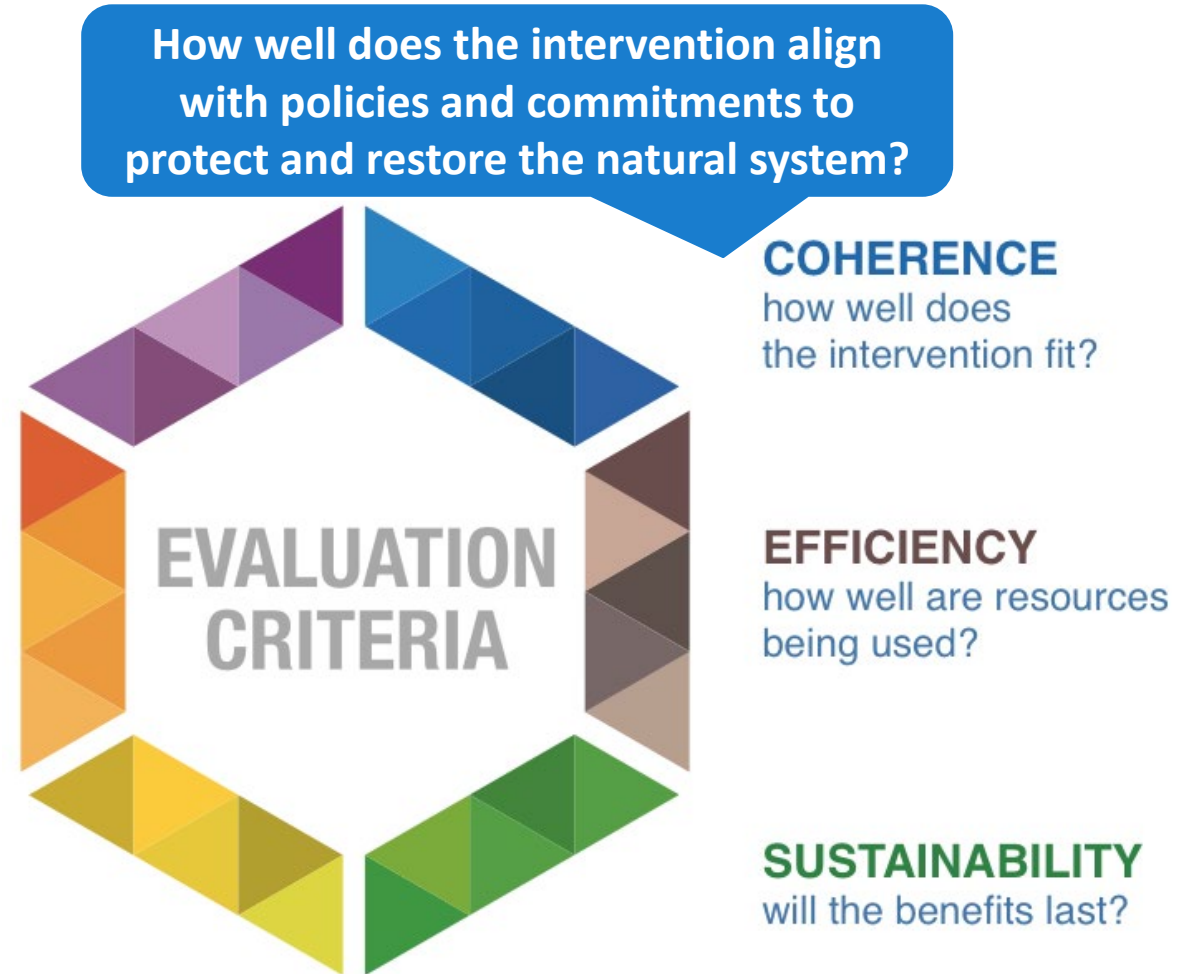
- **Equitably addresses the issues** in the human and natural systems.
- Recognises that the accumulated harm we have done to the natural system threatens all life and that **restoration of natural system function is a global responsibility.**
- **Addresses any systemic or structural issues** that have been causing environmental damage, especially in areas where human wellbeing is impacted and where natural functions are severely threatened.



OECD DAC criteria: Coherence

Point to natural system-relevant policies or commitments that the initiative should logically be aligned with:

- International environmental commitments or treaties
- Local or national government policies, agreements and treaties
- Organisational strategy, policy and/or value statements



For example, here are the European Union's international agreements



THE WORLD FACTBOOK

Countries Maps References

Environment - international agreements

party to: Air Pollution, Air Pollution-Heavy Metals, Air Pollution-Multi-effect Protocol, Air Pollution-Nitrogen Oxides, Air Pollution-Persistent Organic Pollutants, Air Pollution-Sulphur 94, Antarctic-Marine Living Resources, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Climate Change-Paris Agreement, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 2006

signed, but not ratified: Air Pollution-Volatile Organic Compounds

OECD DAC criteria: Impact

The OECD DAC criteria guidance identifies two ways we should incorporate natural system impacts:

*“Evaluators should pay particular attention to negative impacts, particularly those that are likely to be significant including – but not limited to – **environmental impacts***

*“Transformational change can be thought of as addressing **root causes, or systemic drivers of ... environmental damage.**”*

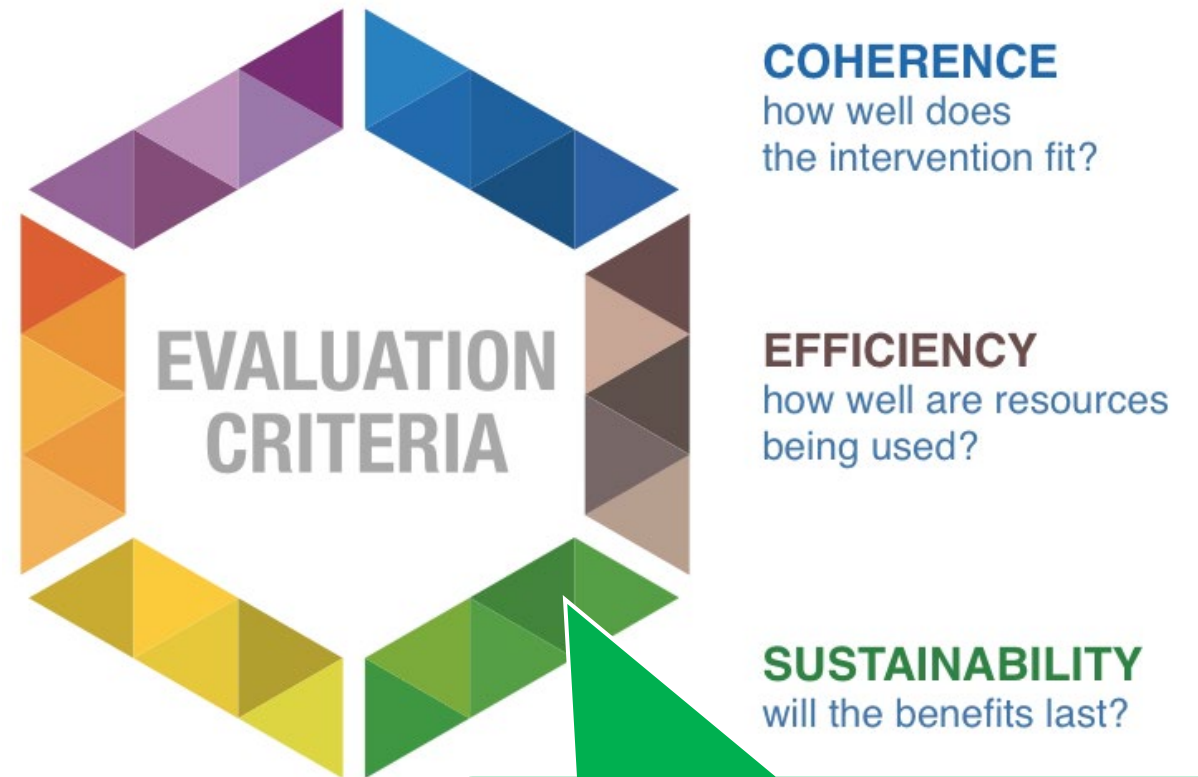


What difference does the intervention make to both human and natural systems?

OECD DAC criteria: Sustainability

Worthwhile solutions are durable and their impacts are sustained over time.

To maximize durability and lasting impact, strategies need to be in place to make it likely that positive impacts are resilient and sustained, especially in the face of emerging environmental change.

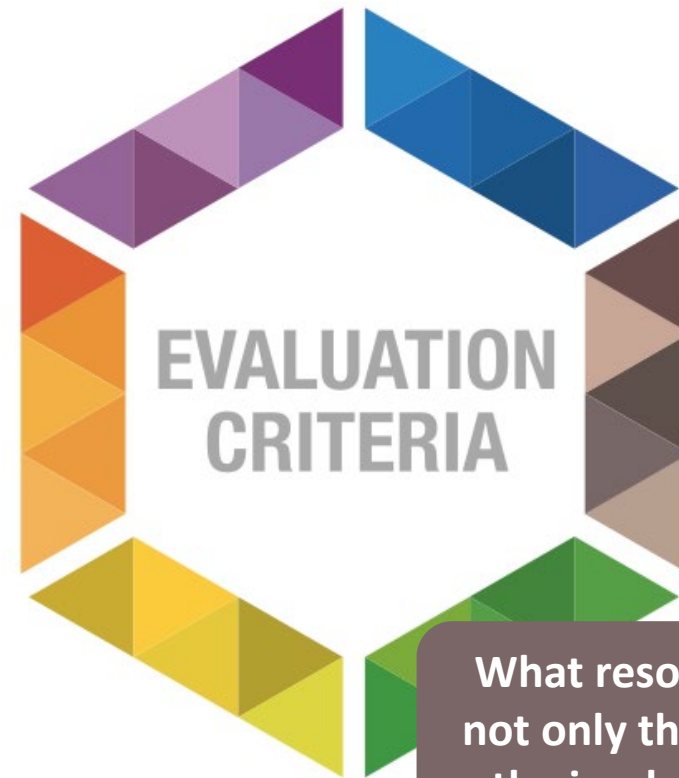


How resilient and well sustained are the benefits in the face of emerging environmental changes?

OECD DAC criteria: Efficiency

Efficiency needs to consider the resources being used – not only those being paid for directly by the implementing organisation

For example, destruction or reduction of ecosystem services such as water filtration or carbon sequestration.

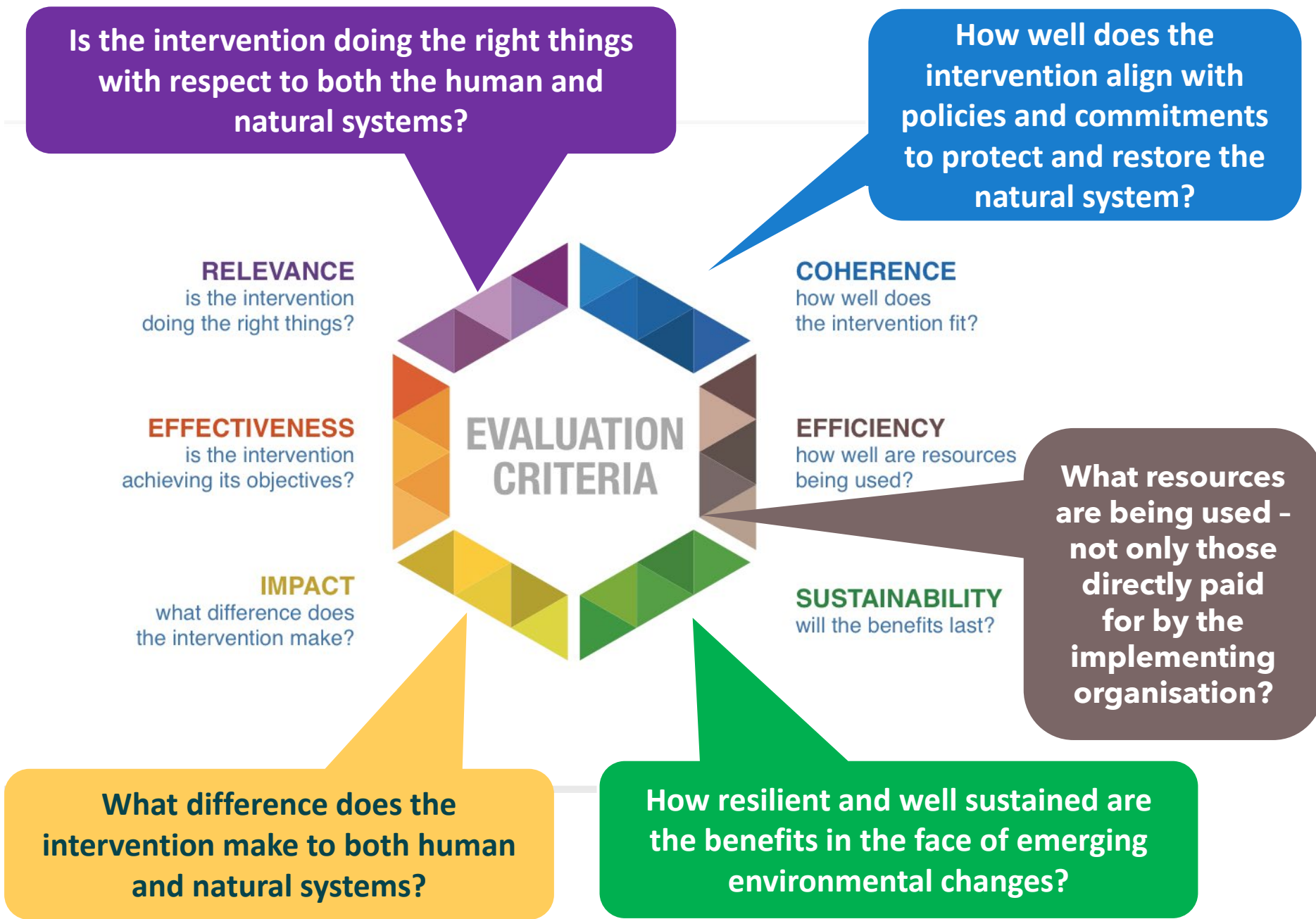


COHERENCE
how well does
the intervention fit?

EFFICIENCY
how well are resources
being used?

What resources are being used –
not only those directly paid for by
the implementing organisation

Use existing evaluative criteria



Option 2:
Ensure that the KEQs include consideration of environmental issues

Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) to guide Footprint Evaluations

The key evaluation questions (KEQs) are designed to support the inclusion of environmental sustainability by embedding consideration of the environment in each evaluation question rather than adding environmental considerations as a standalone question.

[View Resource](#) →

Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) to guide Footprint Evaluations

Jane Davidson and Andy Rowe
DRAFT v2 – April 29, 2021

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Key Evaluation Questions

1. Relevance & coherence	How relevant is the evaluand to the issues facing the population/sector and the natural environment - and how well does it complement other related efforts in the context?
2. Design & adaptation	How well does the design address the strengths, needs, and aspirations of both human and natural systems - in ways that are equitable, restorative, and enable both to thrive?
3. Implementation	How well has the evaluand been implemented so that the right people and natural system elements receive what is most needed at the right times and places and in the right ways?
4. Outcomes & impacts	How good, valuable, and important are the outcomes and impacts on both human and natural systems, particularly where equity and/or previous harm needed to be addressed?
5. Patterns, outliers & links	How did the evaluand influence change - and then how did that change continue to unfold - in the relevant coupled human and natural systems? Where, when, for whom, and under what conditions did we see the most and least valuable outcomes? Why?
6. Durability	How resilient and durable are the changes that the evaluand has contributed to, and how well are they likely to last in the face of emerging environmental and other changes?
7. Overall value	How good, valuable, or worthwhile is the evaluand overall, given its relevance and coherence, design and implementation, the value of its outcomes and impacts, their durability, and what it cost to achieve them?

KEQ 4:

How good, valuable, and important are the outcomes and impacts on both human and natural systems, particularly where equity and/or previous harm needed to be addressed?

Quick explainer of what's included under outcomes and impacts:

Outcomes and impacts include **changes contributed to or prevented by the evaluand** across their relevant temporal scales – and their shelf life (sustainment).

This **includes effects on** the human system as well as **the natural environment** – all affected subgroups, communities, organisations, society, the economy, and the natural systems within which they exist – both intended and unintended, for both the target population/ environment and anyone or anything else substantially impacted.

Sub-questions to consider under this KEQ :

How substantially did the evaluand contribute to (or adversely impact) the most important strengths, needs, and aspirations of both human and natural systems – particularly of the most critical and/or threatened parts of the natural system and those who had been most marginalized, oppressed, and/or least well served in the human system?

How appropriately does the evaluand **value, privilege, protect, or exploit different parts of the relevant human and natural systems** (e.g., different groups of people, different parts of the ecosystem)?

How well did the evaluand contribute to or achieve the **needed systemic and structural changes**, including processes and capacities, so that **root causes are addressed (not just symptoms) and results sustained**?

Break out session

5-minute
discussion
in small groups
for reflection
on practice



**What questions
or comments do you
have about the
strategies proposed?**

**Do they seem
feasible in your
situation?**

**Do you have
other strategies
to suggest or
experiences to
share?**



Keep the conversation going:

- Join the Footprint Evaluation discussion group
- Sign up for the Footprint Evaluation newsletter
- Share resources, examples and advice

Thank you

www.betterevaluation.org/footprint_evaluation

