



Presentation 1.1a

INTRODUCTION TO

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

What is an SEA



- SEA is a process of evidence-based analysis of social and environmental issues within the context of strategic planning of different sorts
- Balanced analysis to build consensus, including recognising trade-offs and linking sector goals to national development

What is an SEA



- Decision-oriented: not just about identifying problems, but also about agreeing on solutions
- Legal Status: now a legal requirement in many countries to undertake an SEA for particular types of plans

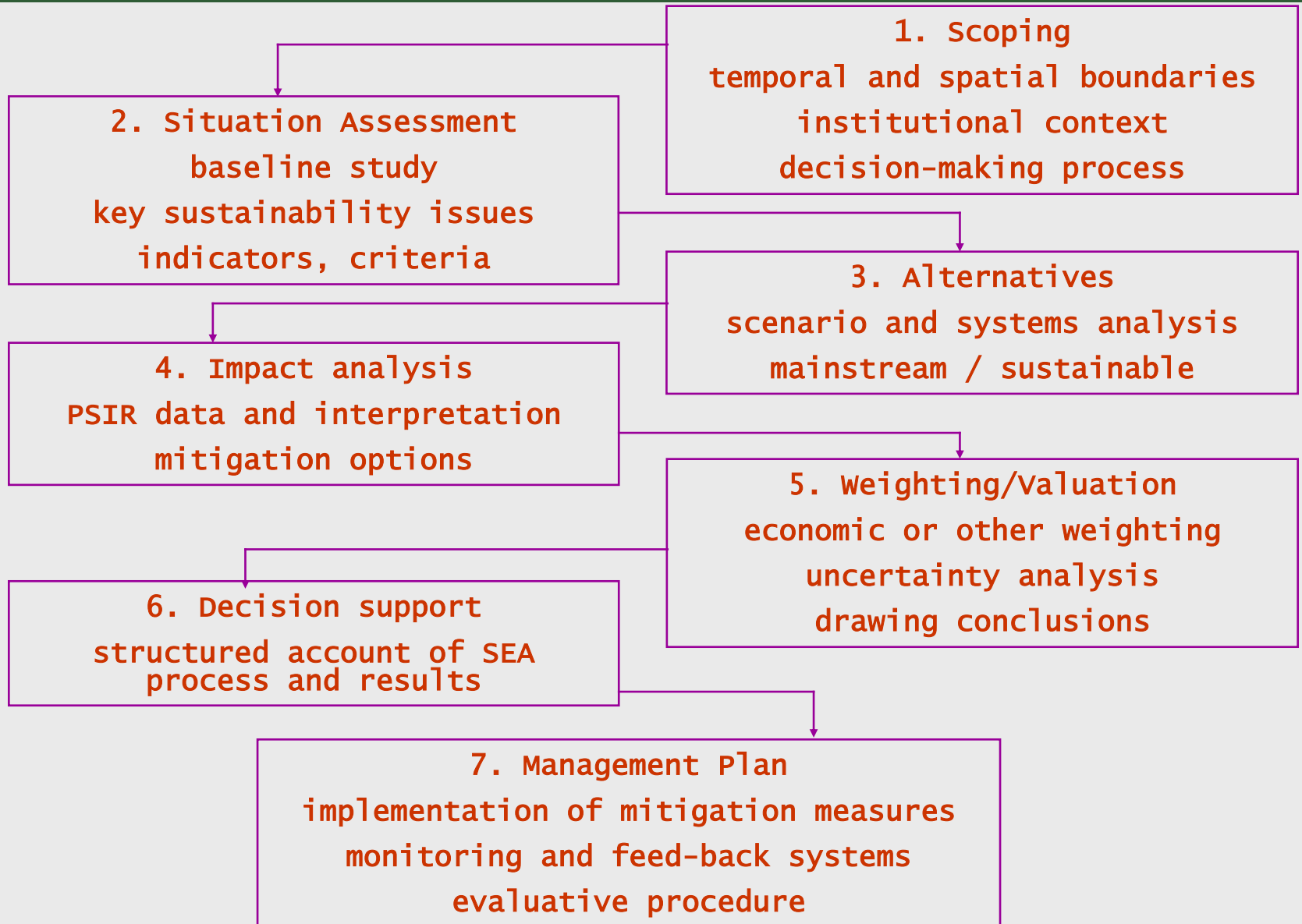
Why Undertake an SEA?



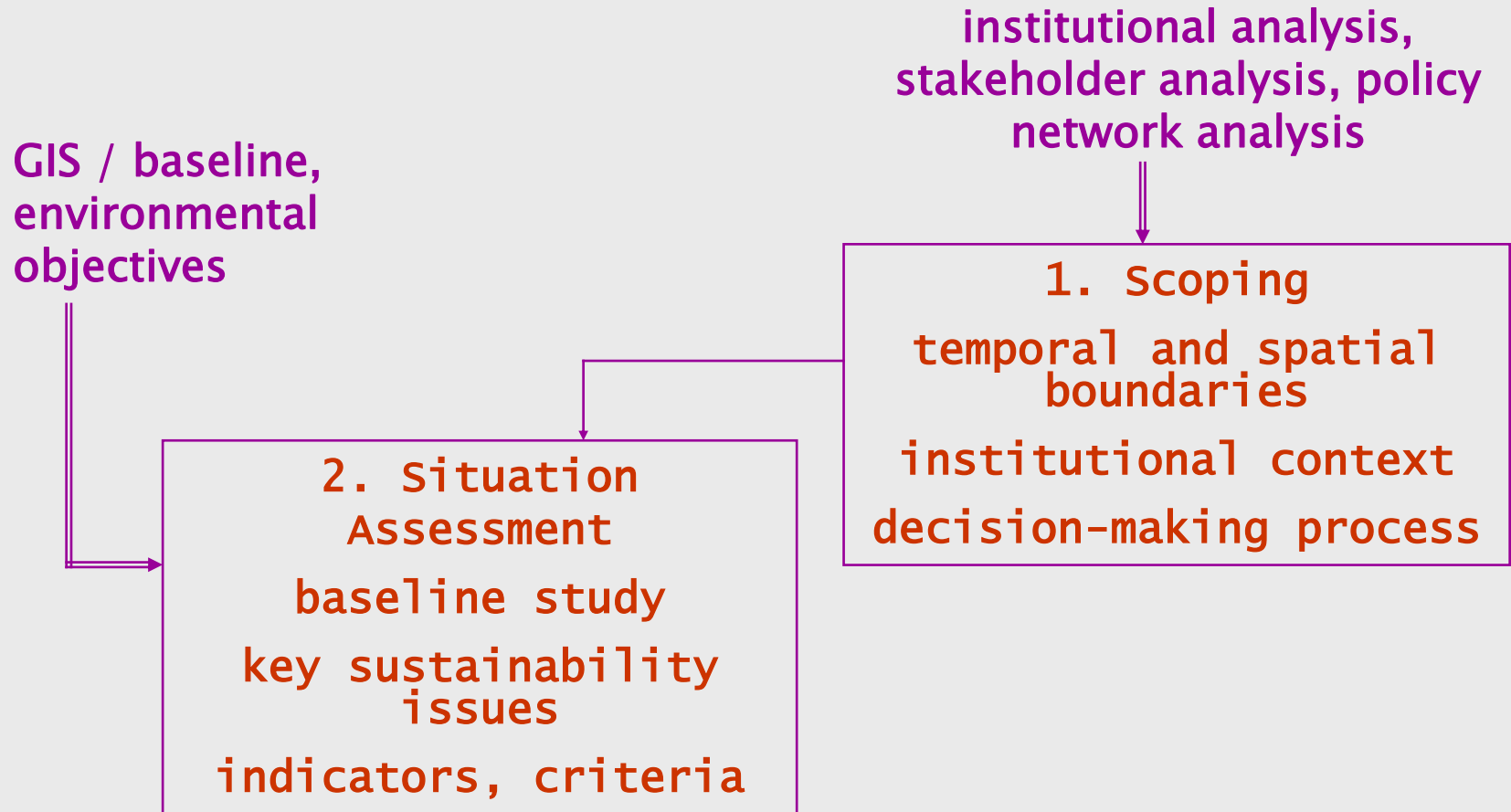
- SEAs are becoming increasingly common in the Mekong Region as a means of addressing new, more complex planning needs
- In some countries, SEAs are a legal requirement for most types of strategic planning
- SEAs can be integrated into and improve existing planning systems
- Although capacities are limited, they are improving and many international development partners are supporting SEA capacity building

- "The formalised, systematic and comprehensive process of evaluating effects of a policy, plan or programme and its alternatives, including the preparation of a written report of its findings, and using the findings in publicly accountable decision-making." (Therivel and Partidario, 1996)
- "SEA is a process directed at providing the authority responsible for policy development and the decision-maker with a holistic understanding of the environment, social and economic implications of the policy proposal, expanding the focus well beyond what were the original driving forces for new policy." (Brown and Therivel, 2000)

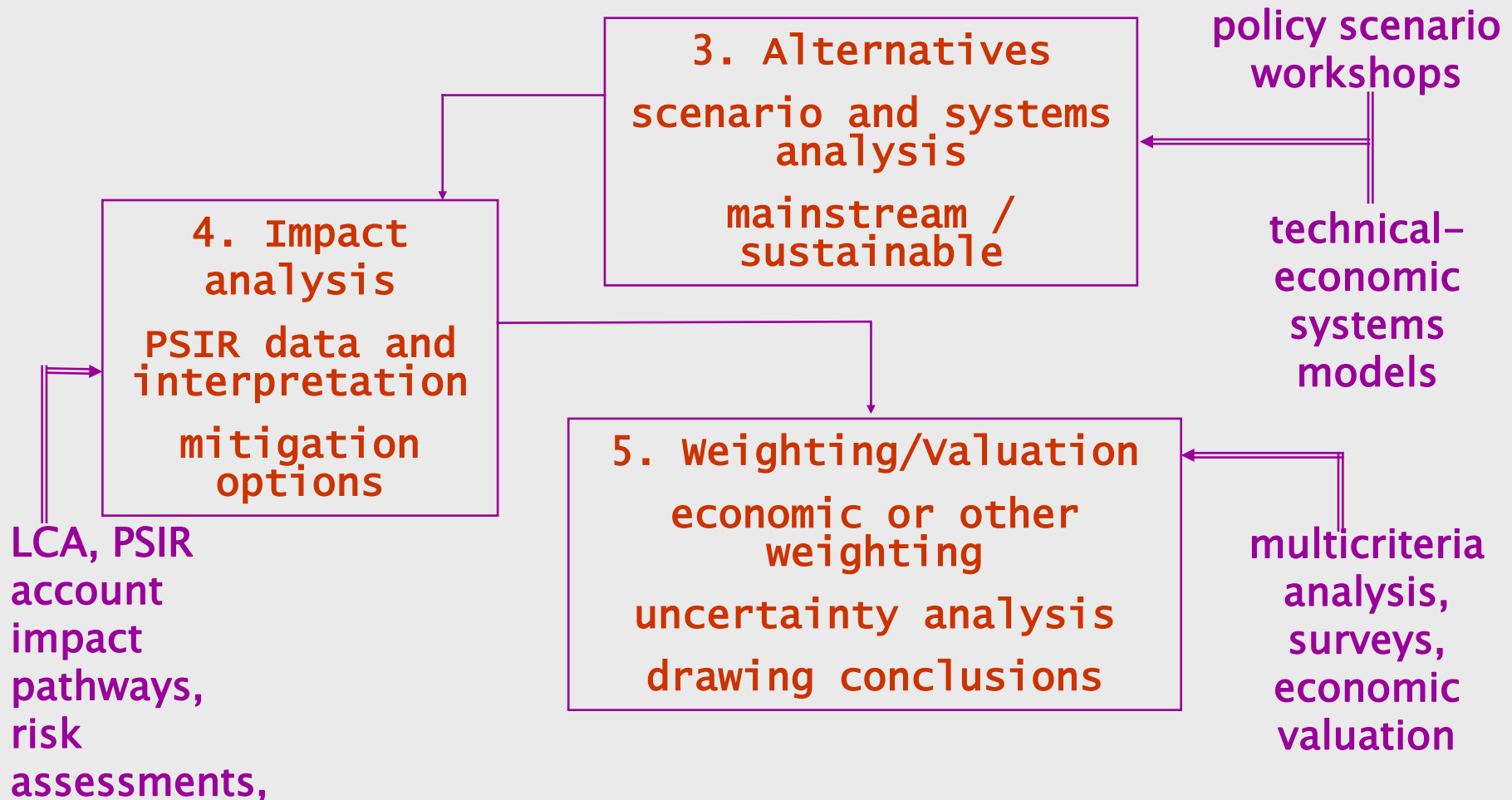
Stages in an SEA



Stages & Methods in SEA



Stages & Methods in SEA



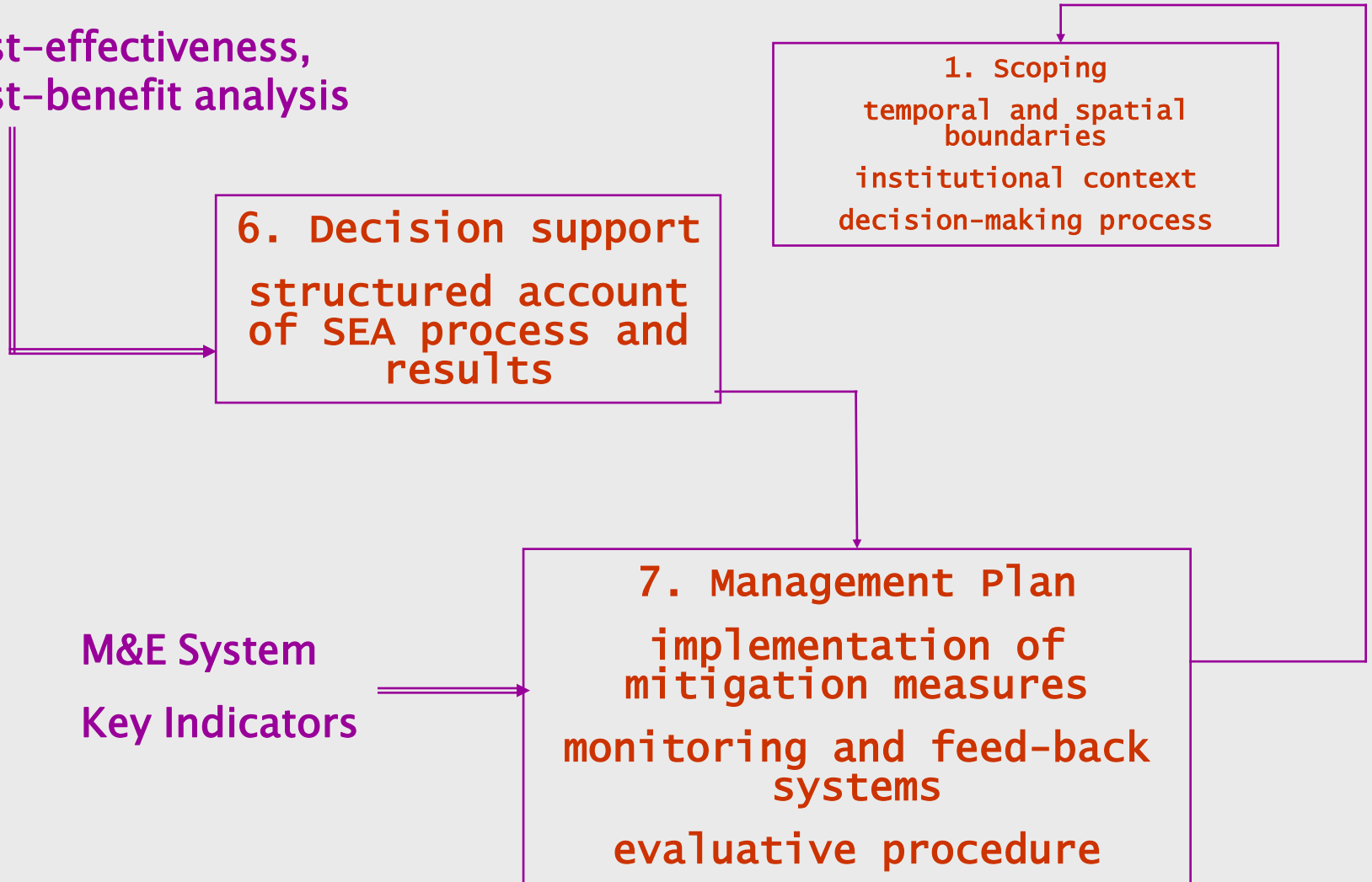
cost-effectiveness,
cost-benefit analysis

6. Decision support
structured account
of SEA process and
results

1. Scoping
temporal and spatial
boundaries
institutional context
decision-making process

M&E System
Key Indicators

7. Management Plan
implementation of
mitigation measures
monitoring and feed-back
systems
evaluative procedure



- A successful SEA can be seen as a balance between technical analysis and structured consultations
- Essential that all interested and affected stakeholders participate in all key stages of the SEA
- The professionals executing the SEA must be seen to be unbiased and objective, with no pre-conceptions over what are desirable outcomes

Integrated into Strategic Planning



- To be effective, an SEA must be integrated into the strategic planning system of your country
- Key first stages, inform & agree with stakeholders of the SEA purpose and process in order to identify the key strategic issues related to national development that the SEA will contribute to understanding

The Nature of Planning



- Experience shows us that decisions taken in isolation can often result in diseconomies, inefficiencies, unintended negative impacts
- Traditional approaches have proved ineffective with dealing with many social and environmental issues
- Also traditional approaches are too technocratic with insufficient stakeholder involvement

The Approach to the SEA 1



- The SEA undertaken in close collaboration with key stakeholders
- Replicable: no expensive collection of new data, rather use of existing data in new forms
- Sustainable: develop capacities to implement SEA as an integral part of strategic planning systems

- Evidence: as far as possible, develop quantitative analysis, with economic valuation where possible
- Strategic: assessment of potential impacts risks and of mitigation actions/costs
- Can fully integrate social and environmental factors that have traditionally been treated as externalities
- Costs internalized into overall economic assessment of the development plans

Political

- that there is **political will** to carry out and use results
- that there are **acceptable political goals** with targets and objectives
- That effective mechanisms exist to integrate different **stakeholder needs and perceptions** into the decision-making system

Institutional

- that there is **capacity** to commission and interpret the assessment
- that the process is well **organised and timed** that an **evaluative function** is established
- that there is a close **link with the decision-making process**
- that organisation **involves all relevant ministries/agencies**

Methodological

- that data **needs and tools are matched** and agreed
- that results can be **combined with economic analysis**
- that **macro and place-based** analyses are combined
- that data is made available **electronically**
- that there is **agreement on weighting**

Communications

- that results and knowledge are fed in **parallel and continuously**
- that results are presented **simple and comprehensible**
- that **comparable alternatives** are presented next to each other
- that results are presented **next to national and sectoral targets**