



Applying Natural Capital Accounting in Government Decision-Making: *Principles, Processes ... Just Do It?*

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Policy as ends & means: Charting a course for ship of state

Where are we?

Are we on course?

Where do we want to be?

What's the best way there?

Accounts as new generation instruments of navigation to :

- Measure position
- Help chart course to destination
- Measure progress



Accounts Design Principles

Decisions

Analysis

Information

Data

Policy
Analysis
(Qualitative
and
Quantitative)
Numerical Analysis
(eg Indicators &
Indicator Suites)

Information Frameworks &
Systems

(eg Pressure-State-
Response, SEEA)

Information Models
(eg Stress-Response, Stocks & Flows)

Environmental Data Optimisation
(Data is arranged by reference to standards &
protocols to maximise usefulness and availability)

Raw Environmental Data
(Gathered through scientific observations, measurements)

Consider the function of
accounts as a bridge ...



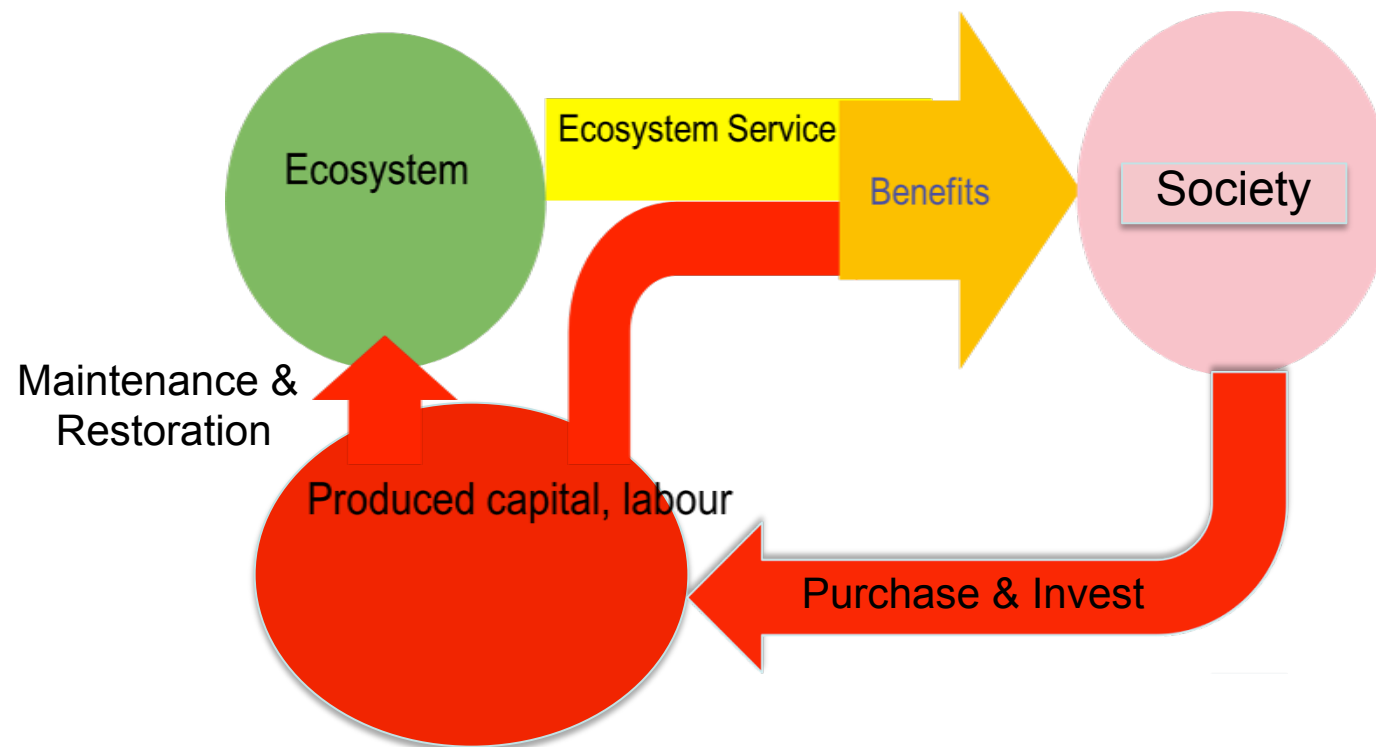
... between data
and analysis.

Environmental Information Pyramid



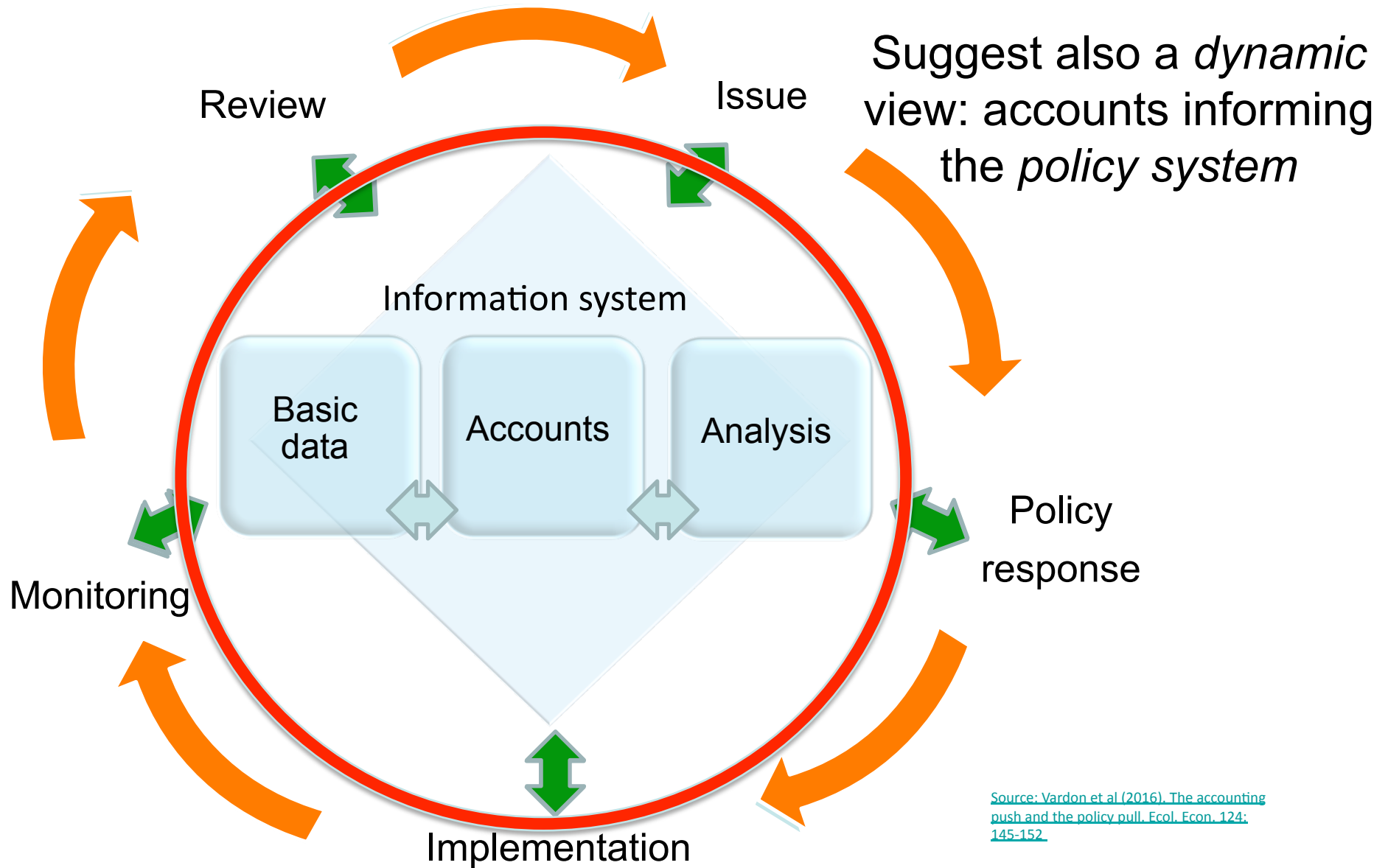
Accounts Design Principles

SEEA takes a *systemic* view ...stocks and flows





Accounts Design Principles



Source: Vardon et al (2016). *The accounting push and the policy pull*. *Ecol. Econ.* 124: 145-152.



Accounts Design Principles

For Sustainable Development



... and sideways from
experience (national &
business accounting).

Work from different angles:

Backwards from
policy goals

... forward-cast for
policy development



(and back-cast)





Accounts Design Principles

... not to forget up and down (scalability).



But most importantly ...

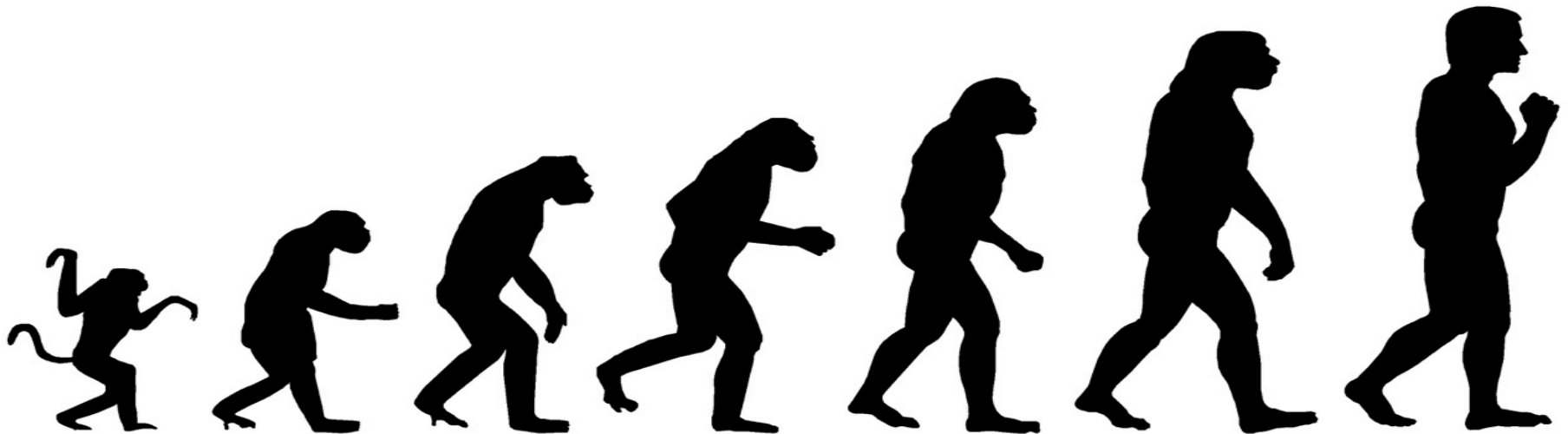
- *Accounting* a collaboration between users and experts



- New ground, so process will be experimental, iterative and involve risk: boldness needed



Can't skip steps of learning process ...



... but can speed up the evolution of knowledge!

In every field of knowledge the accepted explanations depend less on the marshalling of evidence and of preconceptions of what serves as a logical framework for the evidence. The framework dominates the evidence, because it dictates what evidence should be sought or ignored.

(From *The Causes of War*, by Geoffrey Blainey)