A 4'I's framework to analyse the political economy of REDD+:

Institutions, Interests, Ideas, and Information

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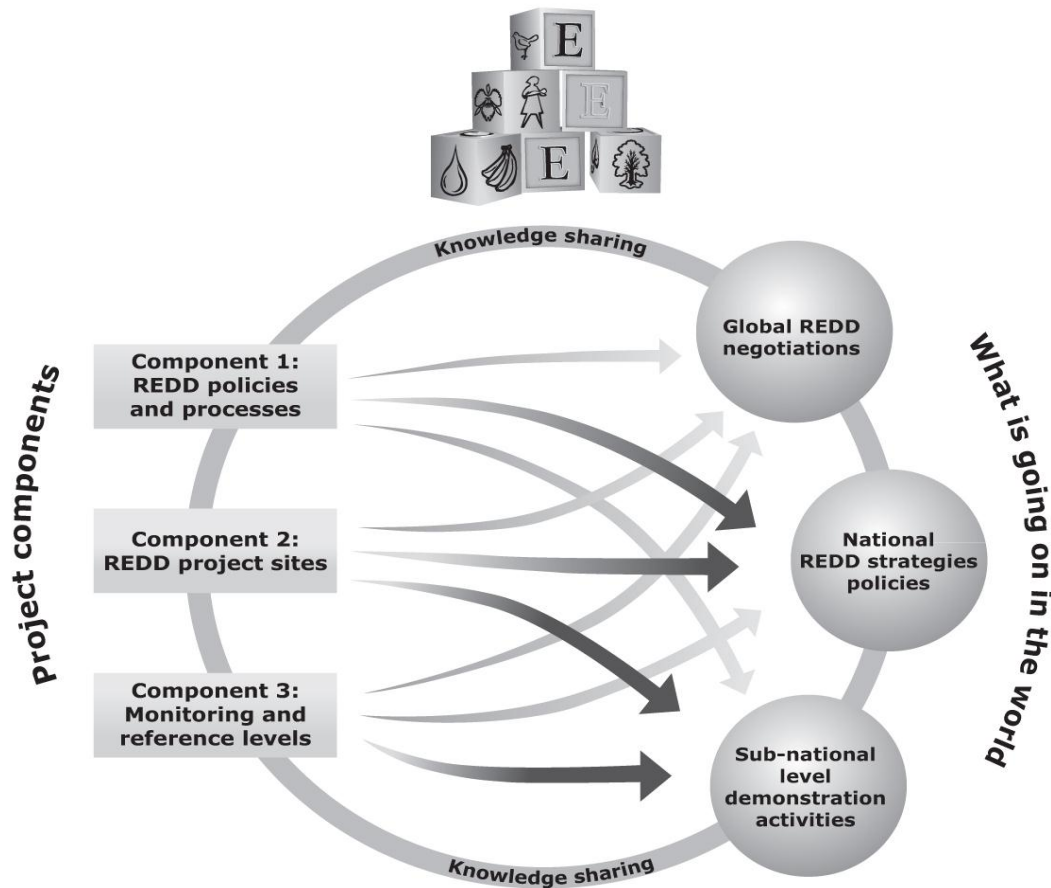THINKING beyond the canopy

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CIFOR's Global Comparative Study (GCS-REDD+)

- To support REDD+ policy arenas and practitioner communities with
  - information
  - analysis
  - tools

- so as to ensure 3E+ outcomes:
  - effectiveness
  - efficiency
  - equity and co-benefits

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Structure

- REDD policies and processes (C1)
- REDD project sites (C2)
- Monitoring and reference level (C3)
- Knowledge sharing (C4)

EC-project: Opportunities and challenges to developing REDD+ benefit sharing mechanisms in developing countries
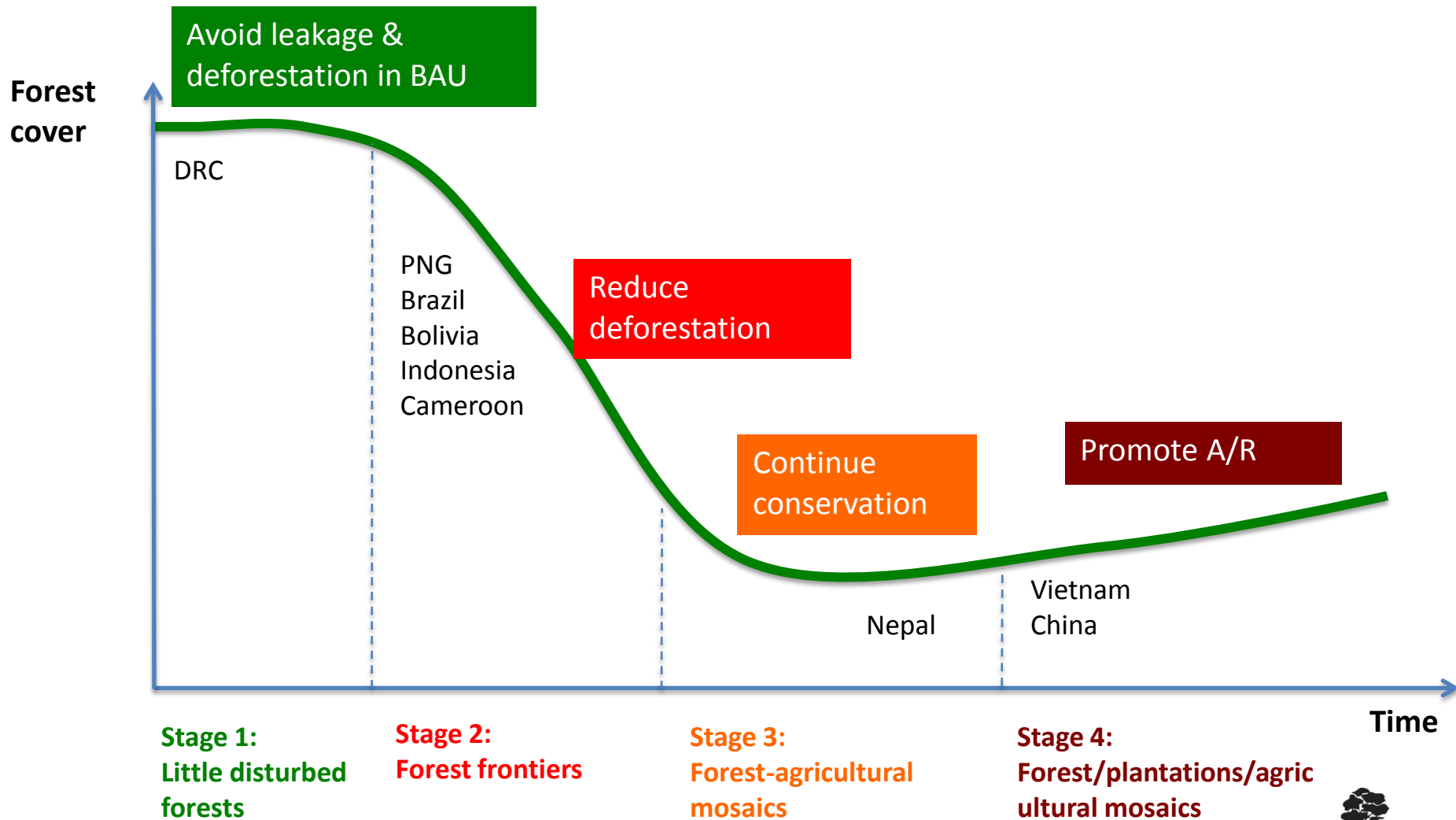
- To provide REDD+ policymakers and practitioners with policy options and guidance to improve the design, development and implementation of REDD+ benefit sharing mechanisms.

    - Review of existing performance-based distribution and benefit-sharing mechanisms

    - Estimating the costs and benefits of REDD+ Policies and Measures, and of REDD+ projects

    - Understanding multi-level forest governance as the context for REDD+ and assessing rights to REDD+ benefits

    - Comparative options assessments to guide the development of REDD+ benefit sharing mechanisms

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Background and challenges in national REDD+ since 2005

Among others …

- **Coordination** across sectors and administrative levels (in decentralized systems)

- **Tenure**, **financing** systems, **benefit** sharing and **participation**

- **MRV** systems and capacity

- **Scope, scale, permanence, leakage**

- **Sovereignty and ownership** over process and reform(s)

- **Capacity and political will** to address the drivers of forest carbon change (driven oftentimes by interests of powerful elites) and identifying an effective policy mix

→ **how to realize policy change in and beyond the forestry sector?**

Different national circumstances: Forest Transition and Policy Responses

Forest cover

Avoid leakage & deforestation in BAU

DRC

PNG
Brazil
Bolivia
Indonesia
Cameroon

Reduce deforestation

Continue conservation

Promote A/R

Nepal

Vietnam
China

Time

Stage 1:
Little disturbed forests

Stage 2:
Forest frontiers

Stage 3:
Forest-agricultural mosaics

Stage 4:
Forest/plantations/agricultural mosaics

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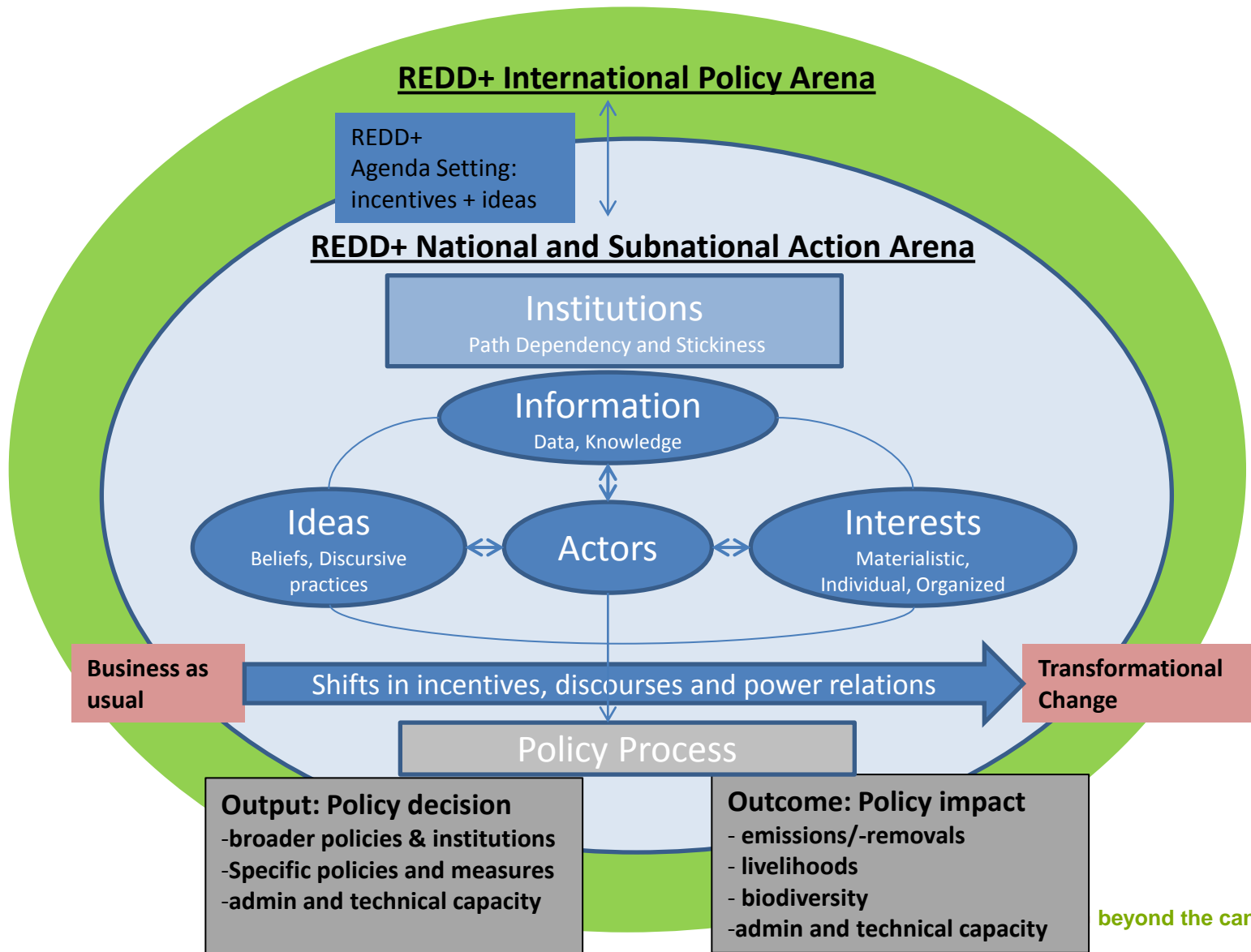# Transformational change: Definition and policy outcomes

- *a shift in discourse, attitudes, power relations, and deliberate policy and protest action that leads policy formulation and implementation away from business as usual policy approaches that directly or indirectly support deforestation and degradation*

Examples of transformational change

In the context of REDD+, transformational outcomes can be

i) changes in economic, regulatory and governance frameworks, including the devolution of rights to local users;

ii) removals of perverse incentives, such as subsidies and concessions that serve selective economic interests and stimulate deforestation and forest degradation; and

iii) reforms of forest industry policies and regulations that effectively reduce unsustainable extraction

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Seeing REDD+ through 4 'I's

REDD+ International Policy Arena

REDD+
Agenda Setting:
incentives + ideas

REDD+ National and Subnational Action Arena

Institutions
Path Dependency and Stickiness

Information
Data, Knowledge

Ideas
Beliefs, Discursive practices

Actors

Interests
Materialistic, Individual, Organized

Business as usual

Shifts in incentives, discourses and power relations

Transformational Change

Policy Process

Output: Policy decision
- broader policies & institutions
- Specific policies and measures
- admin and technical capacity

Outcome: Policy impact
- emissions/-removals
- livelihoods
- biodiversity
- admin and technical capacity

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How do the 4 Is hinder or enable change (1)

- **Institutions**: Formal power typically rests with the 'stickiest' organisations – those with enough influence to resist change – while new institutions and actors are ignored or remain isolated (e.g. colonial rules, Ministries responsible for natural resources)

- **Interests**: State's interest in social and economic welfare can fall short if lack of autonomy from interests that drive deforestation and degradation (e.g. rent seeking, fraud, collusion and corruption practices inside the bureaucratic system)

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How do the 4 Is hinder or enable change (2)

- **Ideas**: discourse affects policy making, since they frame the problem and present a limited set of choices of what is 'reasonable' or what is put forward as 'the possible' (e.g. REDD+ benefits for those who contribute to efficiency and effectiveness, versus benefits for those who have moral rights based on equity considerations)

- **Information**: Facts, rather than speaking for themselves, are selected, interpreted, and put in context in ways that reflect the interests of the information provider (e.g. reference level setting)

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How to achieve transformational change? (1)

- **Changing economic incentives**
  - evidence suggests that the prospect of significant REDD+ financing has already been a game changer in some countries
  - **but:** who loses out completely, who receives less compensation than the cost incurred, who will gain in net terms, and how to deal with uncertainty about the actual future payments
  - trust and predictability is needed in how much REDD+ countries will be paid for the changes they make

How to achieve transformational change? (2)

- **New ideas and information**
  - evidence suggests that new discourse emerge on the value of standing forests and their role in sequestering and storing carbon
  - turning tables between north and south
  - new discourse coalitions that include national and local actors put forward concerns about rights, forest conservation and inequalities in forest exploitation

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How to achieve transformational change? (3)

- **New actors and coalitions**
    - changing economic incentives and new ideas and discourses can lead to shifts in power relations among key actors
    - new actors have entered the REDD+ arena and use their agency to change the political representation of specific interests
    - but actors with different agendas and ideologies are also conflicting under REDD+ canopy, risk of too diversified and less focussed REDD+ agenda

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In the end,
'cash is king', and 'discourse is queen'

- Transformational change beyond the forestry sector is required to fully realise the mitigation potential of REDD+, but economic interests and power structures pose challenges for such change.

- REDD+ can serve – and already does to some extent – as a game changer. New economic incentives, new information, growing public concern about climate change, and new actors and coalitions all have the potential to generate transformational change.

- But "chicken and egg" problem as ultimate barrier if changing ideas and incentives are not convincing and reliable.

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