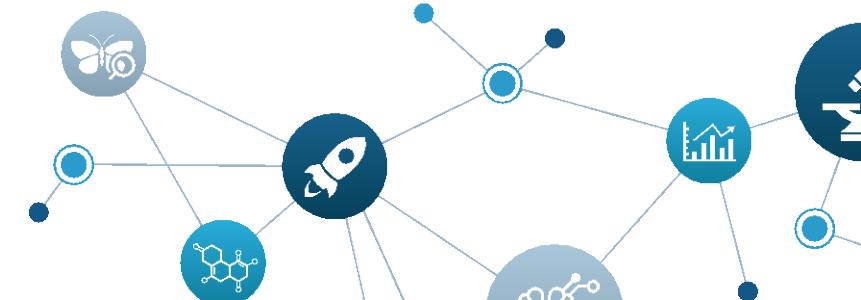




# Transformations within reach: Operationalizing a Sustainable and Equitable New Normal

Illustrations from  
The IIASA/ISC Consultative Science Platform on

*Bouncing Forward Sustainably: Pathways to a post-COVID World*



# Acknowledgements

- Members of our Advisory Board
- Initiative partners
- Theme leads and teams
- Chairs of thematic consultations
- Chairs of Break-out groups
- Moderators
- Expert participants
- Consultation facilitators
- Webinar sponsors – the Governments of Norway and South Africa

*Any flaws/controversies in the recommendations remain the responsibility of the Leadership Team of this initiative –*

*Leena Srivastava (IIASA), Flavia Schlegel (ISC) and Luis Gomez-Echeverri (IIASA)*

# Our partners:



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The IIASA-ISC Initiative on

# Bouncing Forward Sustainably: Pathways to a post-COVID World

1. A small window of opportunity to achieve transformative changes
2. Transformative potential of COVID-19
3. Resilience to systemic shocks
4. Transformative green-shoots – some valuable lessons learned to preserve
5. Recovery packages have potential to drive transformation towards a sustainable world
6. Recommendations based on trans- and inter-disciplinary expertise
7. Four key themes: Governance, Science Systems, Energy, Food.

# Process and Outputs

- Organized three intensive and representative consultations on each theme to identify and develop the transformations within reach, with participants from, broadly:
  1. Science / academia / research communities
  2. Practice communities: private sector, finance, NGOs
  3. Policy and decision-makers / influencers
- Used the Advisory Board for sounding out the directions in which the initiative was heading and the evolving messages

# Process and Outputs

- Prepared background papers and reports for each consultation
- Currently finalizing reports from each theme
- Currently sharing some early key messages arising from this initiative
- Will produce a synthesis report in the last quarter of 2020, most likely end of October, beginning of November



Key Areas for Transformations  
within Reach:  
**H.E. Mary Robinson**

Presented on behalf of the IIASA-ISC Initiative by  
Advisory Board Chair Mary Robinson

# Two alternatives for recovery



## **Reverting back to Business As Usual (BAU)**

Not an option.

It would lock-in pathways that would likely put the SDGs and Paris Agreement out of reach



## **Transformation towards a resilient, just and sustainable future**

Will require conscious design of incentives and institutional structures

# Guiding principles and key elements

-  Humanity has unleashed extreme, multiple and compounding risks upon itself which we must prepare for, including building resilience in dealing with non-linear system outcomes.
-  Systems thinking, with an emphasis on delivering multiple dividends, needed to address these risks
-  Resilience and sustainability based on equity and justice, must be essential foundations of future economic, social and environmental development as mirrored in the 2030 Agenda.
-  Collaboration, transparency, fairness and evidence-informed policy making are critical ingredients.

# 1. Governance for Sustainable Development

-  Reforming global institutions to reflect the global community and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century
-  Boosting awareness and understanding of compound and systemic risks across governance arrangements at all scales
-  Systemic resilience and sustainability should be a core collective government priority
-  Building forward rather than back by ensuring COVID-19 recovery packages integrate sustained investments into SDGs and SDG wide resilience

# 1. Smart, evidence-based, adaptive governance: Global

## Why?

Today's global challenges (COVID-19, climate change, biodiversity, poverty, etc.) characterized by interconnectedness but an international system based on “specialized agencies”, treaties and conventions with little coordination and growing competition for resources is increasingly unfit to respond to today's interconnected problems

## What?

- Shift towards more integrated and adaptive processes for cooperatively addressing global issues Strengthen science-policy-society interfaces for more evidence-based, participatory decision-making
- Build accountability and transparency provisions into more integrated, inclusive governance arrangements
- Cooperate in mission-oriented ways to drive action in multi-stakeholder communities of practice

## How?

Reform, reconfigure and repurpose global institutions to enhance outcome-oriented global governance in an ever riskier world

# 1. Smart, evidence-based, adaptive governance: National



## Why?

Addressing vulnerability and building resilience create multiple dividends; failure to invest in these reduces our collective capacity, across countries and across generations, to thrive and cope with crises



## What?

- Ensure shorter-term COVID-19 recovery packages integrate sustained investments into SDGs and SDG wide resilience and lead to longer-term transformations to build forward rather than back
- Devise science-based tracking mechanism assessing the alignment of the green fiscal recovery packages with the SDGs and systemic resilience



## How?

Make systemic resilience a core government priority by moving it to the center of government (CoG): from risk managers to resilience offices

## 2. Strengthen Science Systems

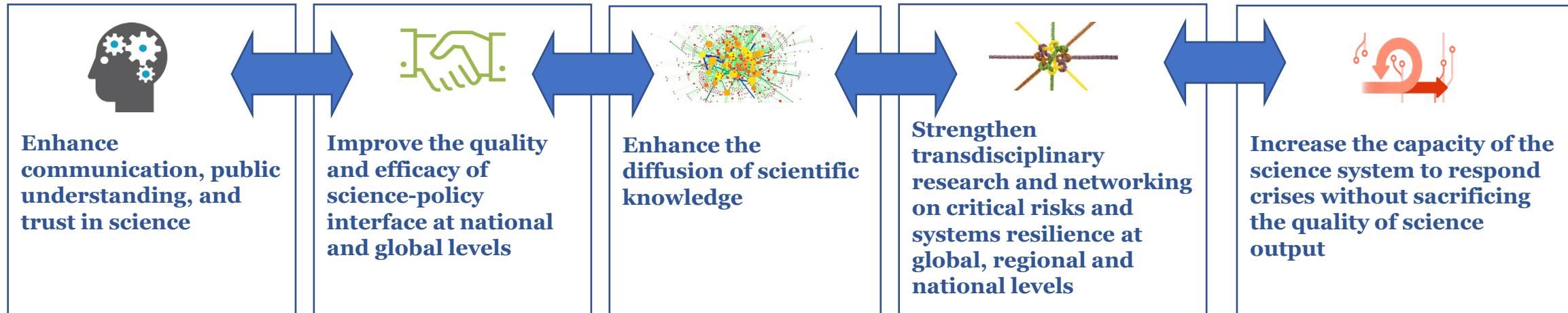


### Why?

Need to move the science system to a new frontier of agility, reliability, and policy relevance.



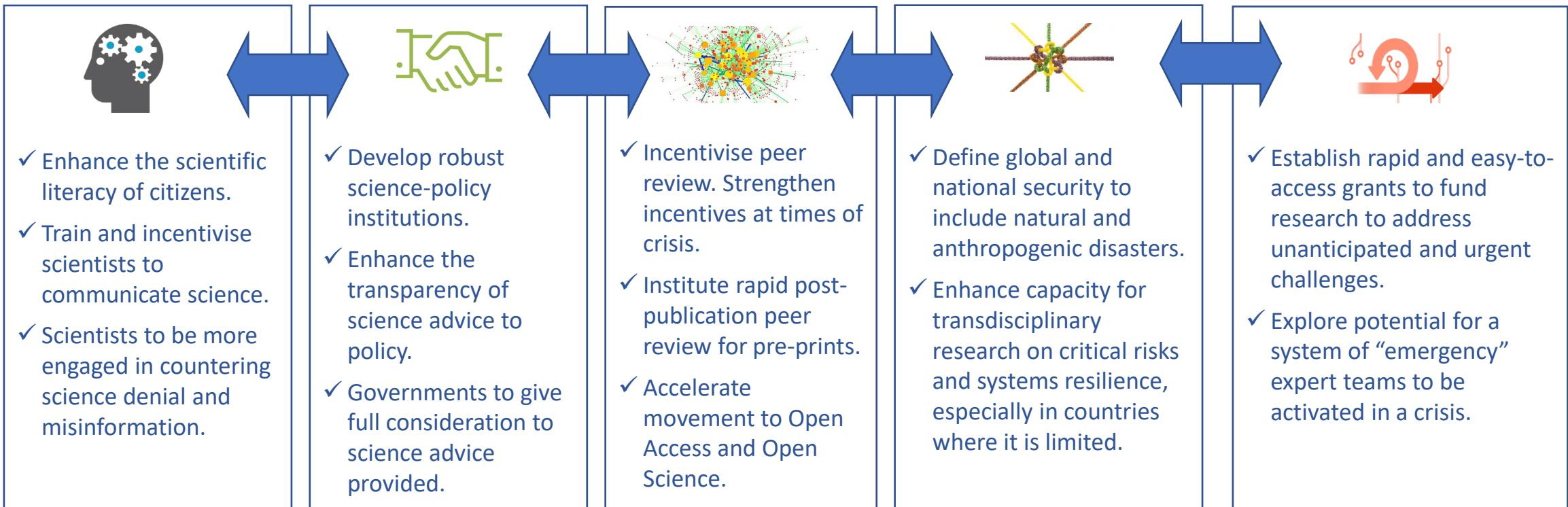
### What?



## 2. Strengthen Science Systems



How?\*



\*Selected recommendations

### 3. Sustainable energy



Solutions lie in consuming sectors: Re-invent urban spaces, infrastructure and mobility through:

- Compact urban development with reduced car dependency, through an urban design that sets conscious priorities in terms of space for transport, space for sustainability and space for innovation, economic activity, and social interaction
- Low-carbon built environment: redefine the material foundation of buildings and infrastructure to make them less resource intensive, flexible and resilient and retrofit existing ones with technologies that can transform them to close to net-zero emissions



A new consciousness is obviously pervading society: Harness the power of collective behaviour and re-direct it from excessive consumption to sufficiency



Energy resilience and contextualization are the keys: Design efficient, green, decentralized and locally-resourced energy systems

### 3. “Out-of-the-Box” Energy Solutions



#### **Why?**

COVID-19 reinforced the role of energy as an enabler



#### **What?**

Demand reductions through redesign of consumption drivers

Shift focus from energy security to energy resilience



#### **How?**

Recovery packages to drive a shared, service-based and circular economy

Empowerment of city and local governments for situating the energy economy in local contexts

# 4. Food systems

-  Re-orient food system architecture towards an emphasis on resilience and equity
-  Make human and planetary health concerns an integral component of food systems
-  Secure support innovation, technology diffusion and upscaling of sustainable practices

## 4.1. Re-orient food system architecture towards resilience and equity

### Why?

The evolution of food systems has largely been driven by efficiency concerns. The recovery process should be focused on counter-balancing efficiency concerns with an emphasis on resilience and equity to ensure the capacity of food systems to deliver food and nutritional security to the most vulnerable.

### What? How?

- **Resilient supply chains:** Re-configure supply chains and trade dependencies, based on their likely ability to absorb and adapt to socioeconomic and environmental shocks and considering also more regionalized supply chains
- **Social safety nets and employment security:** Expand the benefits, reach, and duration of social safety nets allow people employed informally a pathway to join social security structures to strengthen livelihood security and preparedness for future crisis situations

## 4.2. Make human and planetary health an integral component of food systems



### Why?

The emergence of zoonotic diseases like COVID-19 illustrate the entanglement between human and natural systems. The food system plays a critical role not only with regards to providing for basic human needs and advancing human welfare, but also in terms of protecting the Earth's life support systems. Enabling universal access to healthy and sustainable diets is critical to human health as well as to reducing the pressure on land and natural resources.



### What? How?

- **Environmental conservation:** Adopt ambitious biodiversity conservation targets informed by the precautionary principle to safeguard human and planetary health, and rapidly implement actions to achieve them at national and sub-national levels
- **Healthy Diets:** Accelerate the shift towards affordable healthy and environmentally sustainable diets, transferring costs to unhealthy and unsustainable diets
- **Basic Services:** Prioritize investments in improving water access and sanitation which contributes to food security and improved health and protection, while also providing protection for the essential agricultural and food system workforce
- **Sustainable Trade:** Integrate provisions for the environment in bi-and multilateral trade agreements, accounting for embodied climate and natural resource footprints and environmental health risks

## 4.3. Secure innovation, technology diffusion and upscaling of sustainable practices

### Why?



The global recession and reduced fiscal space of many countries threaten to undermine progress towards closing yield gaps and adopting more efficient technologies and practices. The pandemic also illustrates how digital technologies can help some supply chains to rapidly adapt to the shock of the global lockdown. In the recovery process it needs to be ensured that the technological and digital divide between countries does not widen

### What? How?



- **Clear regulations:** Provide clear goals, targets and regulatory mechanisms to channel private sector engagement
- **Diversified crops:** Strengthen biological diversity of crops, suited to diverse environmental conditions
- **Sustainable Practices:** Accelerate scale-up of technical and financial support for sustainable land and integrated water resource management practices that can readily be adopted
- **Enable innovation:** Facilitate access to digital technology across supply chains, such as precision agriculture, e-commerce, blockchains for tracing foodstuffs

# In summary:

**1** We live in a non-linear, complex world of interdependence frequent conflict between natural and human systems.

**2** This pandemic is a warning. We need to become better prepared for, and more resilient to, future systemic shocks

**3** Policy-makers can act quickly

**4** Decisive individual action leading to a new collective consciousness is possible

**5** Can lead to “Global Citizenship”, that ensures a just and equitable global society

# Way forward



The thematic and Synthesis reports will be available on IIASA's and ISC's websites in the last quarter of 2020, most likely end of October, beginning of November.



IIASA and the ISC plan to continue working towards Transformations Within Reach by:

- Deepening the analytical basis of our suggested areas for action to precipitate the required transformations
- Defining the pathways for success
- And to ensure continuous and dynamic engagement towards potential implementation plans



Fundamental requirement for success

- Act now – the compound risks we face can easily overwhelm us if left to fester
- Collective human action for a better future (multilateralism strengthened)
- Underpinned by a shared value system of global citizenship and a dignified future for all



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