

Who Shapes Sustainability Insurance?

31st East Asian Insurance Congress Tokyo

Panel Discussion - Climate, Nature, and Insurance: Driving Sustainability in Asia

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United Nations University
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Study of Sustainability
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Education:

2014 LL.M. in Comparative Law (Nagoya University)

2017 PhD in Comparative Law (Nagoya University)

Affiliation:

2018-2021 JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow (Institute of Social Science, The
University of Tokyo; Transnational Law Institute, King's College London)

2021-2025 Policy Researcher, Adaptation and Water Unit, Institute for
Global Environmental Strategies

2025- Programme Officer, UNU-IAS

Research interests:

International Climate Change Law

Climate Change Adaptation

Loss and Damage

Climate Security

Other activities:

Delegation of Japan for Climate Change Negotiation (adaptation
agendas) (2022-2025)

My contribution to the panel

- I research and teach **international climate law**, and am currently designing a graduate-level educational program, “**Specialization on the Paris Agreement**,” at UNU-IAS. Unfortunately, I’m a non-professional in the insurance world.
- In between the general introduction to the planetary crisis and specific discussions on how the insurance industry contributes to the sustainability agenda, I will discuss **sustainability governance broadly** to contextualize the **political stakes of “greening insurance”**
- My key message: **We need more sustainability-minded people in the insurance industry** to accelerate the sustainability agenda in the polycentric world

History: where are we now?



East Asian Insurance Congress
Since 1962



Rio Earth Summit
UNFCCC



Principle for Sustainable Insurance



Agenda 2030
SDGs
Paris Agreement



‘Decade of Action’



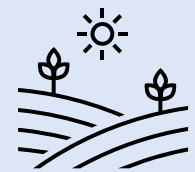
Aims of the Paris Agreement (Art. 2.1)

Mitigation



Holding the increase in the global average temperature to **well below 2°C** above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change

Adaptation



Increasing the **ability to adapt** to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production

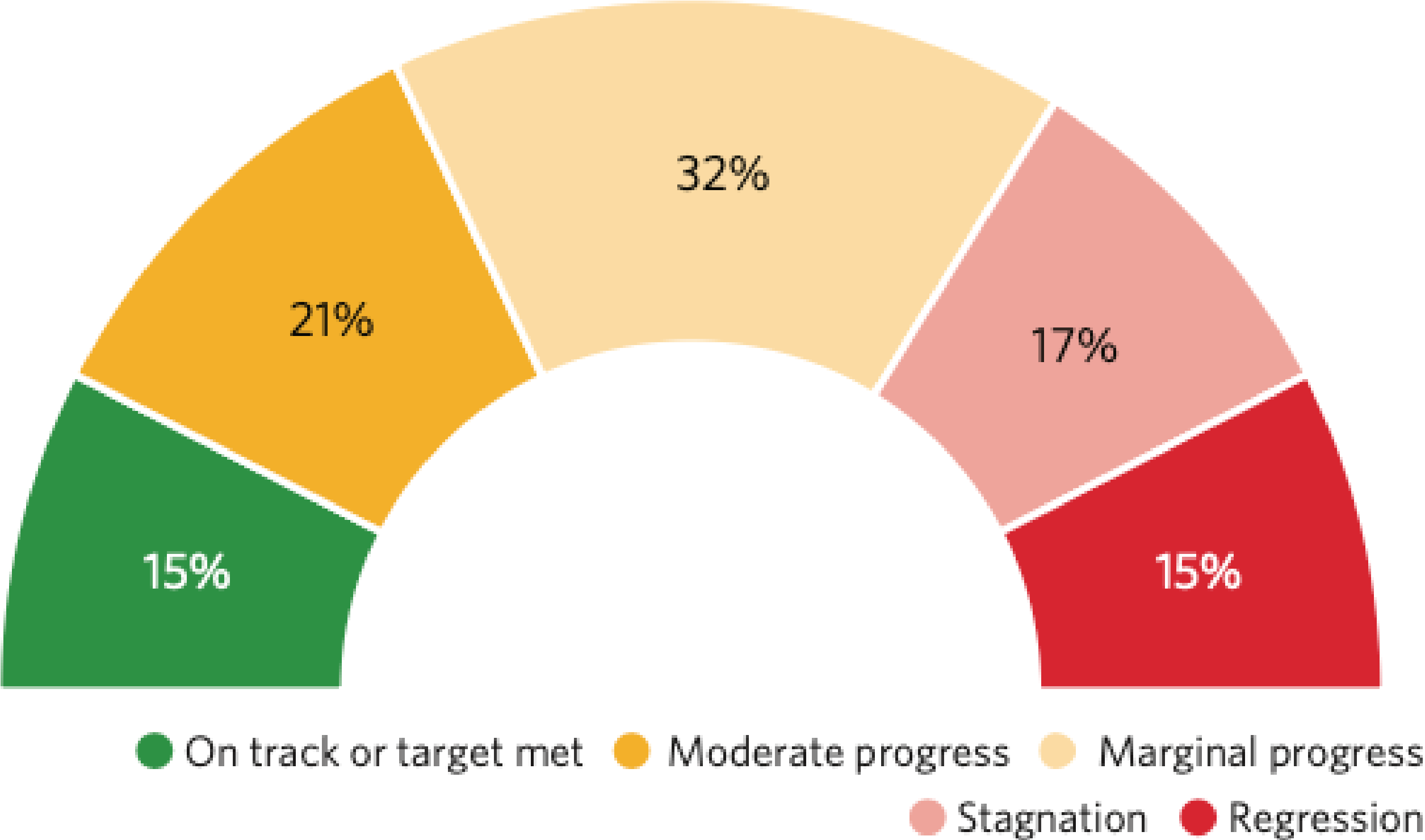
Finance



Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development

Sustainability action delayed

Overall progress assessment across 139 targets with trend data, 2025 or the latest data

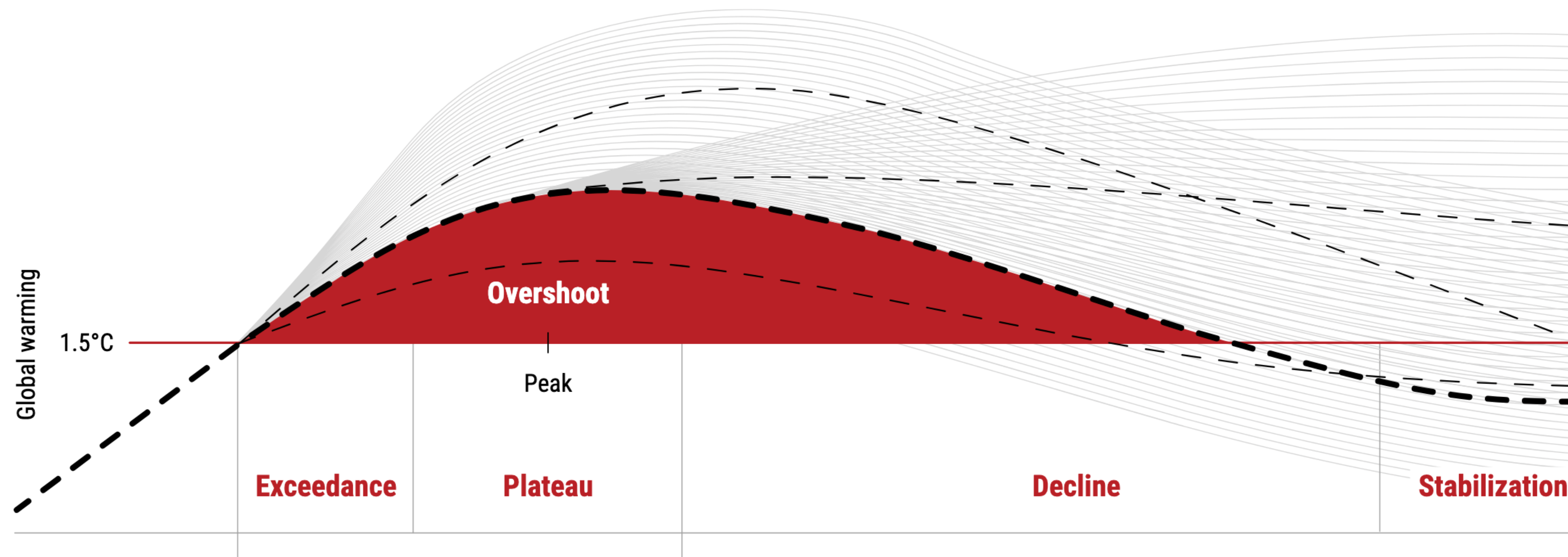


The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026



Climate goals unmet

UNEP “Limiting Overshoot” (Aug 2026)

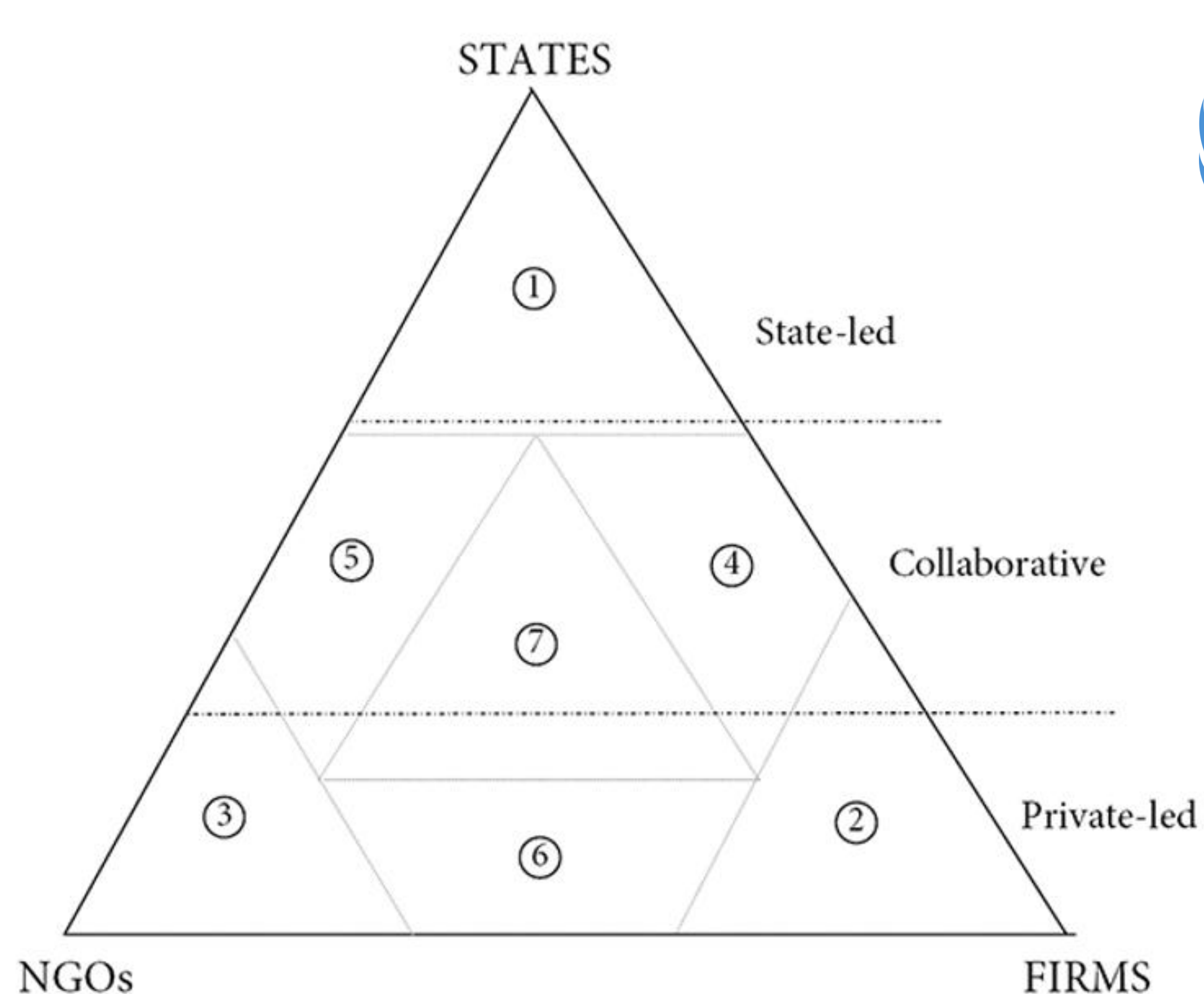


...amid the crisis of multilateralism

5. *We note with grave concern the significant and interconnected challenges and setbacks related to [...] climate change, disasters, biodiversity loss, pollution, water, and health. These challenges and setbacks are amplified, inter alia, by **ongoing disruptions to global supply chains, growing geopolitical tensions, global economic volatility, and rising inflation**. We underscore the need for enhanced international cooperation [...], particularly to support developing countries, including the poorest and most vulnerable.*

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
Ministerial Declaration, July 2026 (E/2026/L.16-E/HLPF/2026/L.1)

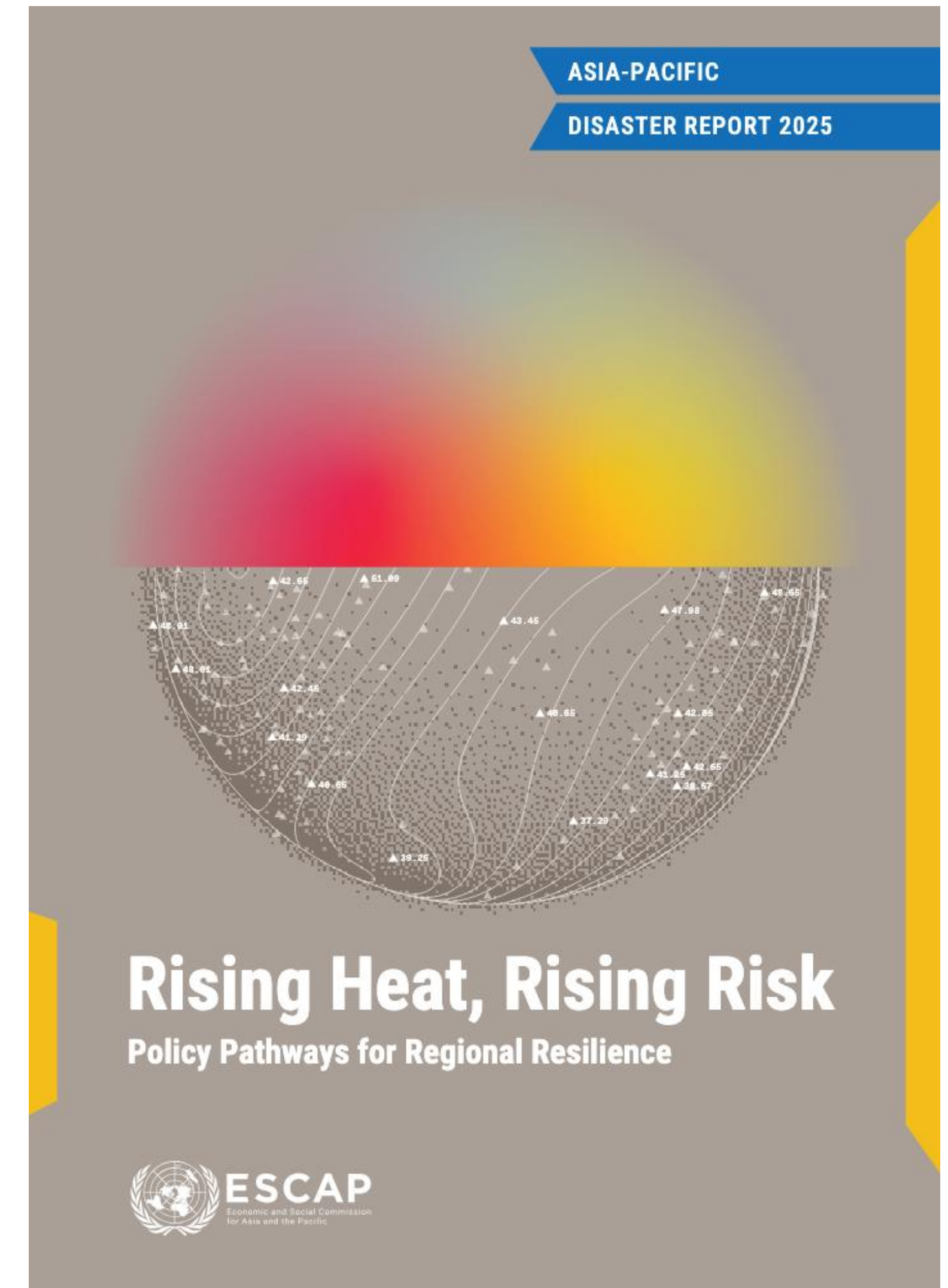
Governance triangle: non-state actors' active roles



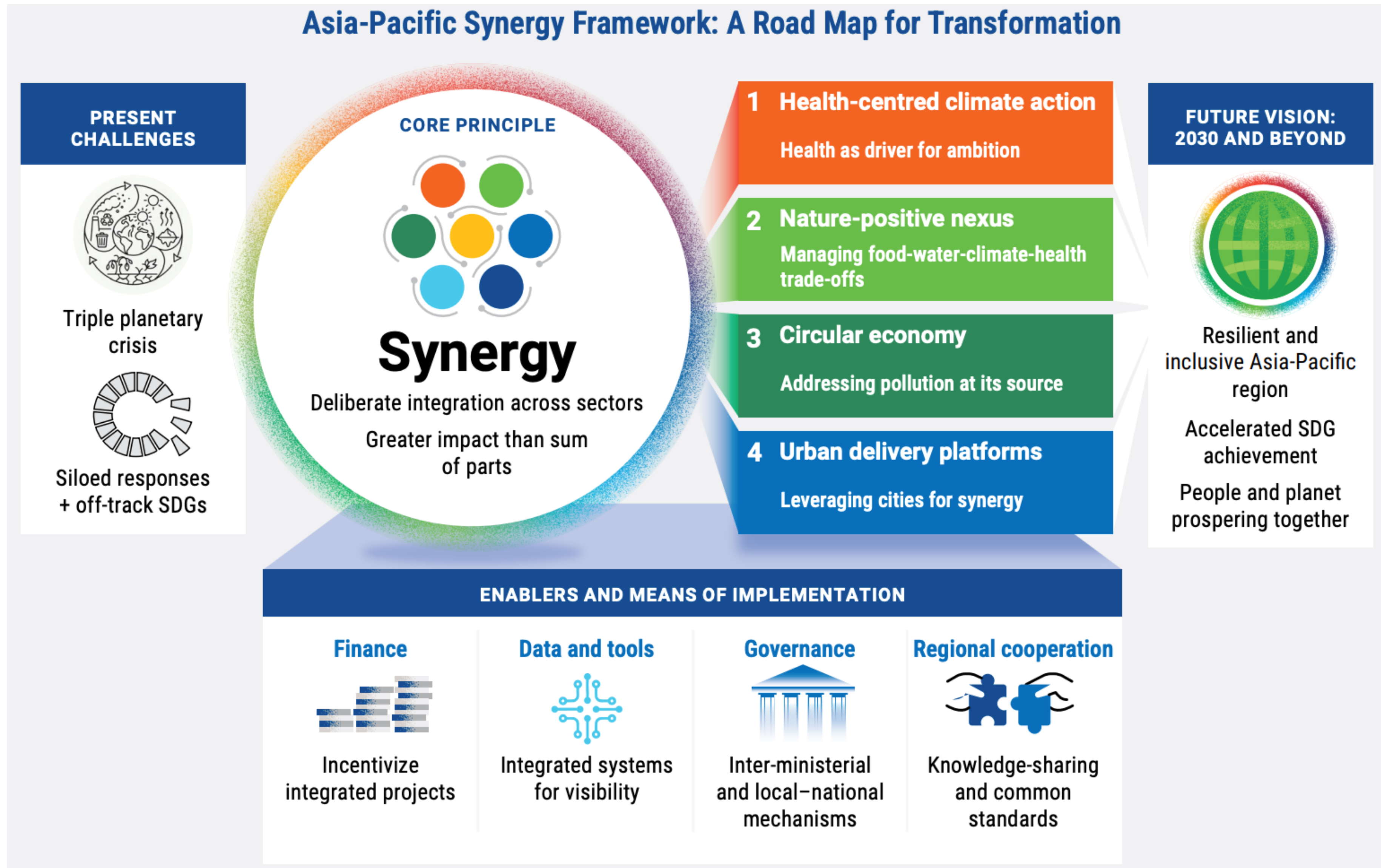
Needs for sustainability-minded private workers

Systemic risks in Asia-Pacific

- In Asia and the Pacific, rising temperatures are impacting all, everywhere. There are **cascading impacts** for multiple infrastructures and interrelated food, water, and energy systems.
- Climate change is a global phenomenon; **policy coordination at the regional level** will be key to advancing multilateral cooperation for human resilience to disasters
- **Financing for heat resilience** requires strategic integration into existing adaptation plans, development funding and policy streams



Visions for transformation



UNU-IAS Postgraduate Degree Programmes

MSc in Sustainability (2-year programme)

PhD in Sustainability Science (3-year programme)

Closely linked with the **institute's research activities** in the following areas:

- **Governance for Climate Change and Sustainable Development (GCSD)**
- Biodiversity & Society (BDS)
- Water & Resource Management (WRM)
- Innovation & Education (IVE)

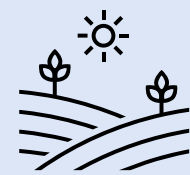


Diploma Programme: Specialisation on the Paris Agreement (SPA)



Focus on the Paris Agreement

Develop leaders equipped with the expertise to strengthen the implementation of the Paris Agreement



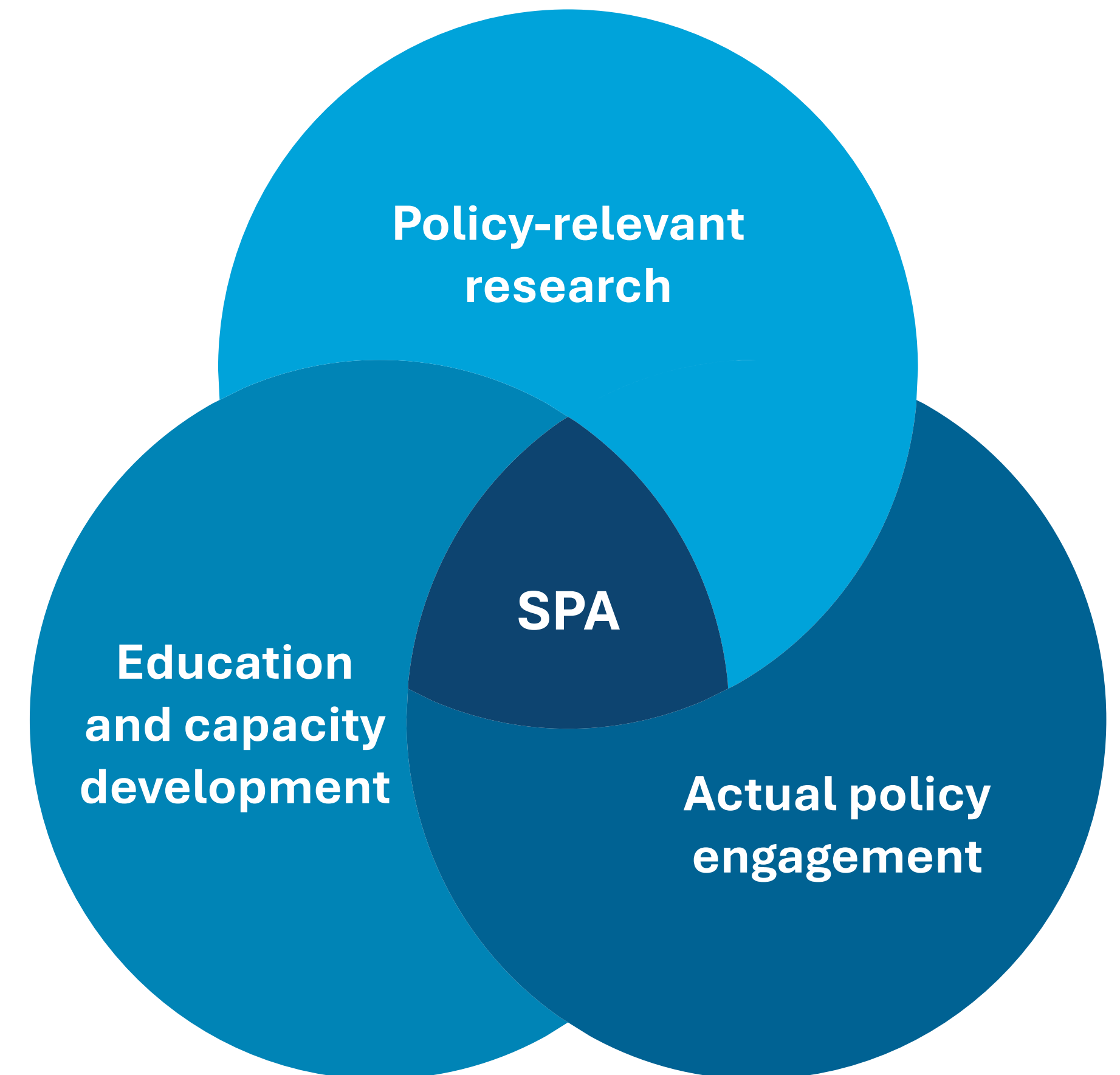
Theory and practice

Education based on UNU's policy-oriented research combining theoretical depth and practical relevance



Additional Diploma

Our Diploma proves the high-level expertise on implementing the Paris Agreement and improving climate governance.



Thank you

Naoyuki Okano

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