

Towards a revolution in the assessment of academics ?

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YES !

AGREEMENT ON REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

20 July 2022

- 4 main pledges
- 6 supporting pledges
- 805 signatories so far (including “widening countries”)

“

‘Publish or perish’ and metrics have led us into a blind alley. Let us start recognising the full breadth of value created by researchers.

”

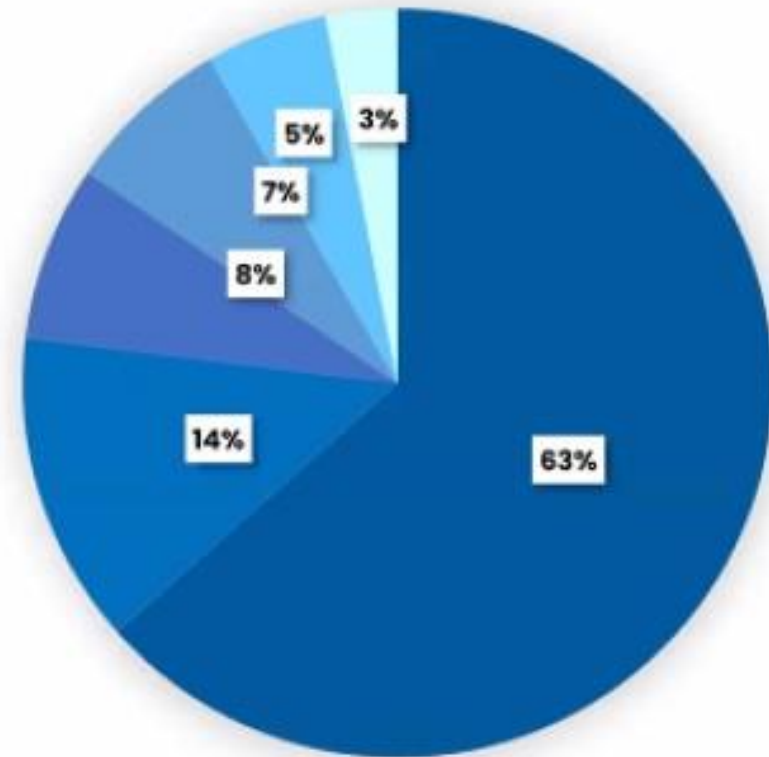
— Marc Schiltz, President of Science Europe

Core commitments

1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research
2. Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators
3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index
4. Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment

Coalition of the willing (CoARA)

- Membership is only open to signatories of the Agreement
→ at present over 700 members
- 6 categories
 - *Universities*
 - *Research centers*
 - *Academies, learned societies, associations of researchers*
 - *Funding organizations*
 - *Not-for-profit organizations*
 - *National agencies*



Funders are joining in



- Discontinuing controversial metrics such as JIF and h-index to assess researcher(s) applying for funding
- Reverting to more narrative forms of CV (such as the R4R1)
- National REF's follow suit



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission





PUSHING
THE FRONTIERS
OF INNOVATIVE
RESEARCH

However...

A Pathway towards Multidimensional Academic Careers

A LERU Framework for the Assessment of Researchers

LERU position paper

Background of the paper

- assessment of researchers is a core activity for universities
 - LERU wants to explore how the future may look like
- we want to do justice to the wide range of profiles and contributions needed in research today
- LERU universities have been and are frontrunners in this domain

How to assess for more diversity ?

- The first commitment is to acknowledge a larger variety of academic contributions
- From our survey conducted amongst LERU members in 2020, this was already common practice
 - as well for research, education and public engagement
- LERU universities have always looked beyond h-indexes and JIF in assessing individual researchers

Contributions to research

Open access publications

Contribution to the subject area through expertise, research output, scientific impact and i

Recognition in the scientific community

Collaborations and interdisciplinarity

Data stewardship

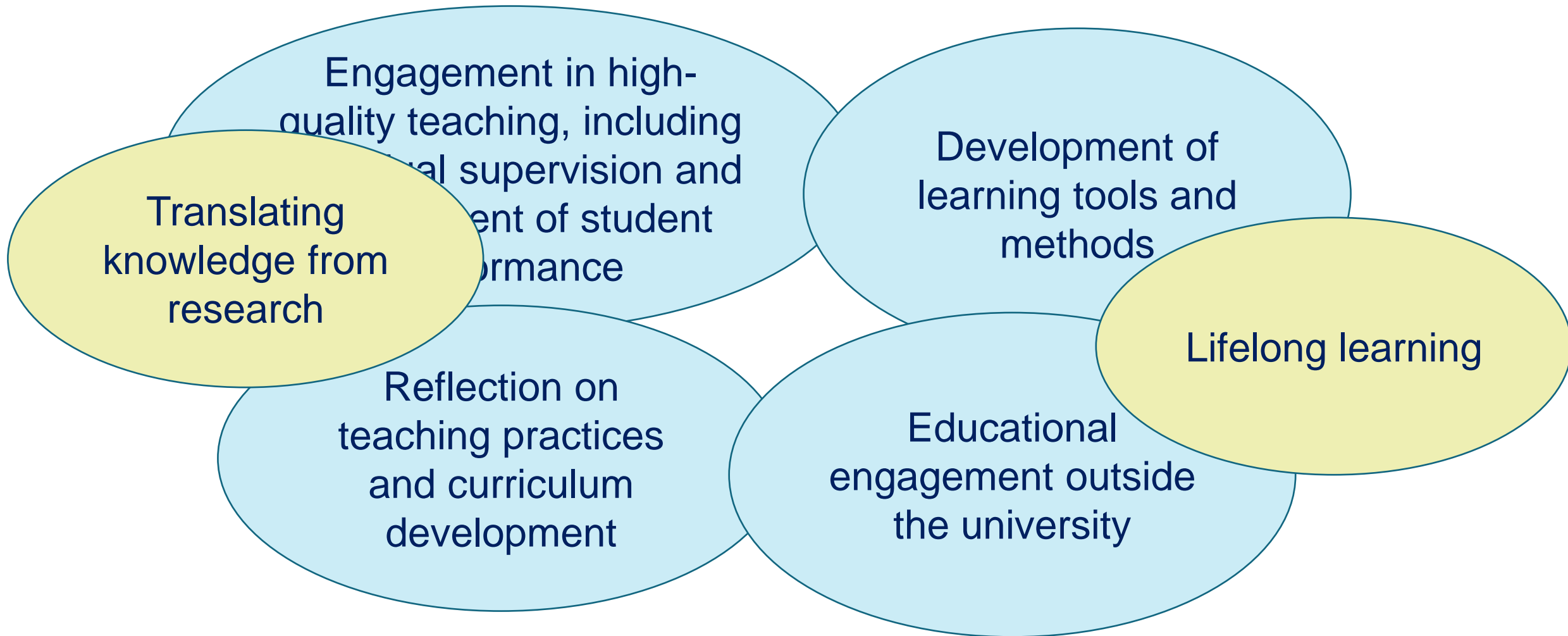
Track record in funding

Research strategy

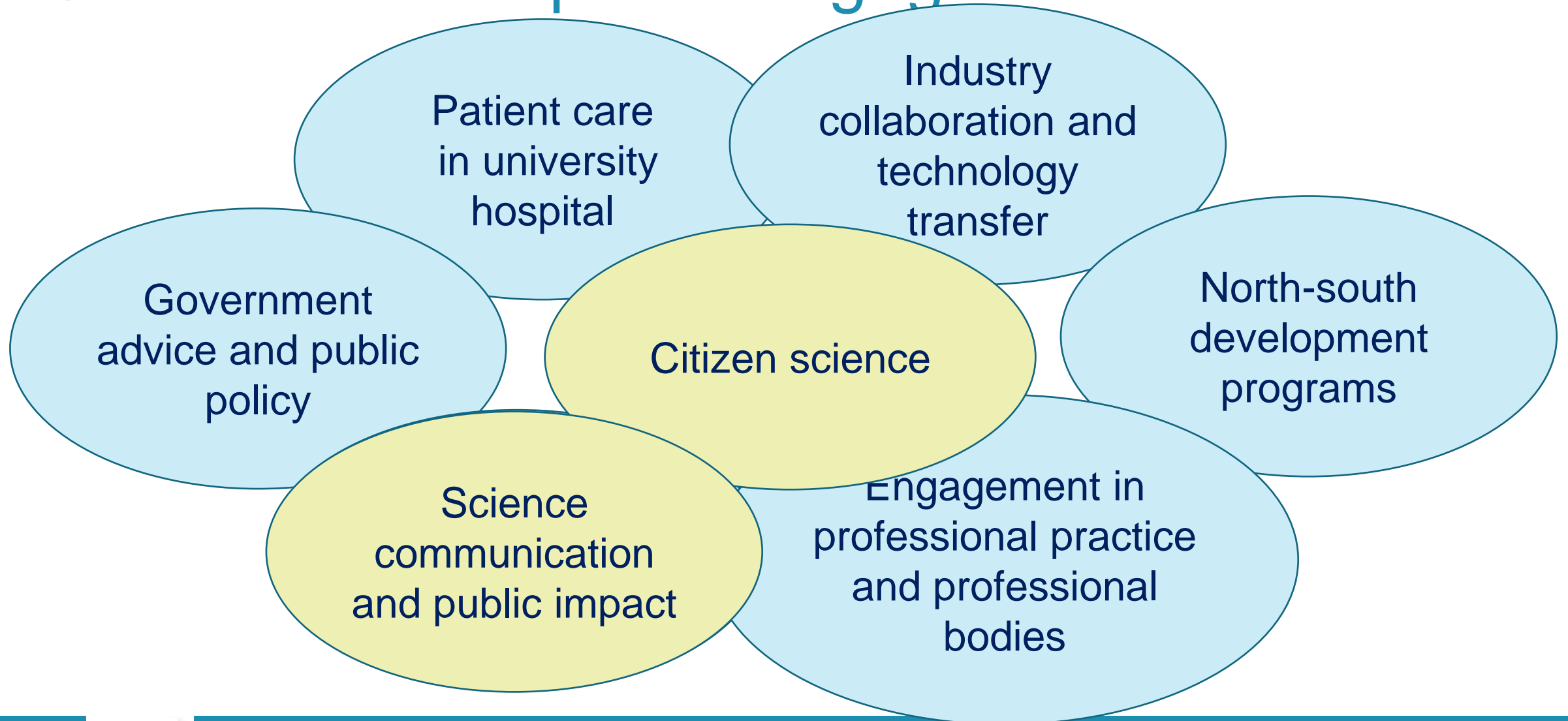
Advancement and enablement of junior researchers

Software engineering

Contributions to education

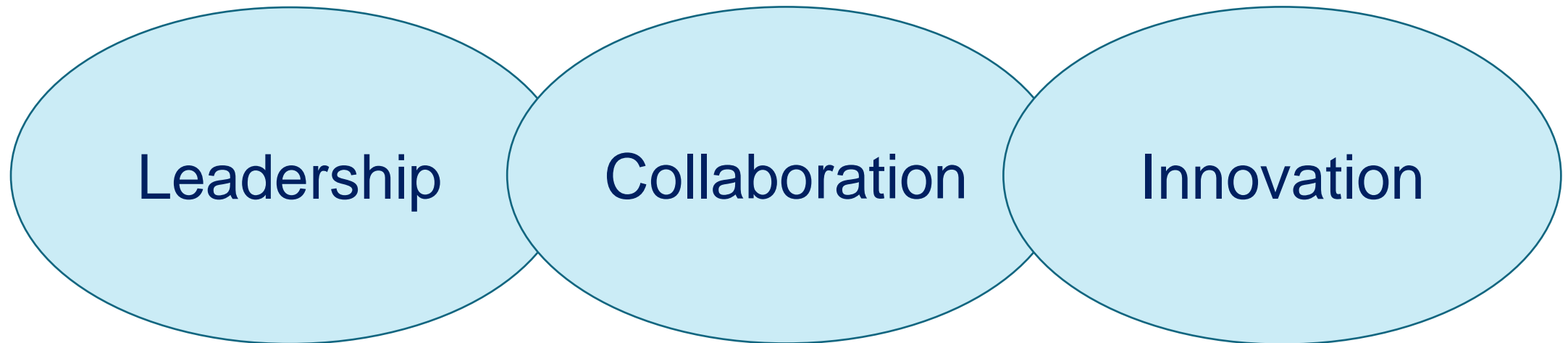


Contributions to public engagement



Acknowledge personal development and potential

- increasing organizational responsibilities and expectations
- requiring personal development and interpersonal skills



Some recent examples



- TEAM
- RESEARCH
- IMPACT
- PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE
- LEADERSHIP
- EDUCATION



Education



Research



Engagement

Three core responsibilities

Four dimensions



Development and Innovation



Academic Leadership



Sharing Knowledge



Teamwork



The contextual perspective

- assessment traditionally occurs as in a vacuum
- excluding context factors may lead to systematic bias
- this is well documented from an EDI perspective, focusing on the personal context of the researcher
 - we should also look at the academic context of a researcher

Issues with this broader assessment

- you can't be good at everything, avoid putting more pressure on candidates
 - it takes more time and effort from panels
- comparing different profiles is difficult, watch out for bias and implicit hierarchies
 - how do you assess personal development ?
- will this new way of assessment have an impact on our international position ?

Conclusion

- the assessment of academics is evolving, and will continue to do so
- it is not enough to use narrative CV's instead of metrics, you need to change your focus from counting output to judging achievement
- recognition of a diversity of contributions makes the assessment process complex, time consuming, delicate and messy
 - alignment and coherence is needed on the level of the broader (international) ecosystem