

BRIEF INTRODUCTION SCENARIOS

SCENARIOS

WHAT ARE SCENARIOS?

- Representations of **different possible futures** from a defined starting point.
- **Highlight/explore drivers of change and impacts of changes over a specific time**
- Enable decision-makers to:
 - Anticipate **potential changes** & develop **timely responses** to them
 - Envision **possible outcomes** of specific **policy & management measures**



DECIDING WHETHER TO INCLUDE SCENARIOS

WHEN/WHERE should this process be carried out?

During the scoping stage, the rationale, goals and policy questions for the assessment are identified. Scenarios can be considered as tools to achieve these goals as well as provide foresight for policy planning at the national level. At this point, it is useful to decide whether scenarios will be included within the assessment and if so, then it could be beneficial to agree at an early stage whether the scenarios are to be included as a standalone chapter or integrated across all chapters. It is important to also have an idea of scenarios for guiding the development of policy questions of the assessment. The role of scenarios within the assessment can be summarised in the scoping report. Further information and specific details on scenarios can be developed at the beginning of the evaluation stage.



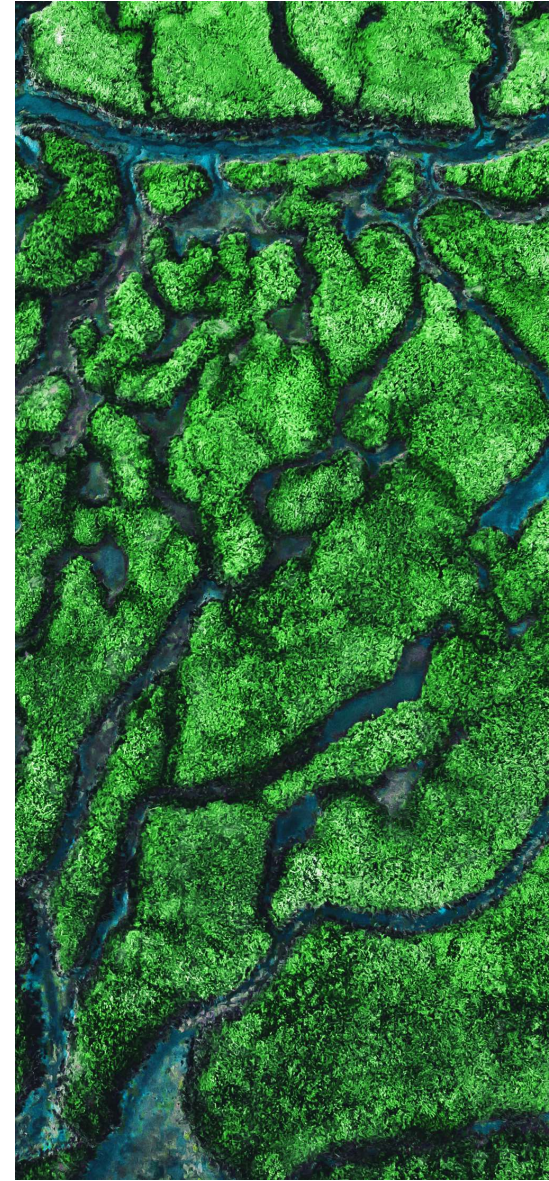
WHAT are scenarios?

Scenarios are descriptions of plausible futures, that are identified through modelling, when the elements of a system are exposed to different indirect and direct drivers, and policy and management options. They can be both qualitative and quantitative. Models can address three main relationships: (i) projected effects of changes in indirect drivers, including policy interventions, on direct drivers; (ii) projected impacts of changes in direct drivers on biodiversity and ecosystems; and (iii) projected consequences of changes in biodiversity and ecosystems on ecosystem services.

SCENARIOS

WHY USE SCENARIOS?

- Engage with **uncertainty** - represent **multiple futures**
- Address **complex relationships** between nature, its benefits to people, and possible changes over time
- **Support decision-makers** better understand and engage with **possible outcomes** of different **actions** (+ **inactions**)
- Opportunities to combine **qualitative** and **quantitative information** with **visuals** and **storytelling**



SCENARIOS

WHAT ARE SCENARIOS?

Scenarios are not predictions:

Predictions aim to estimate a single outcome with less complexity & more certainty.

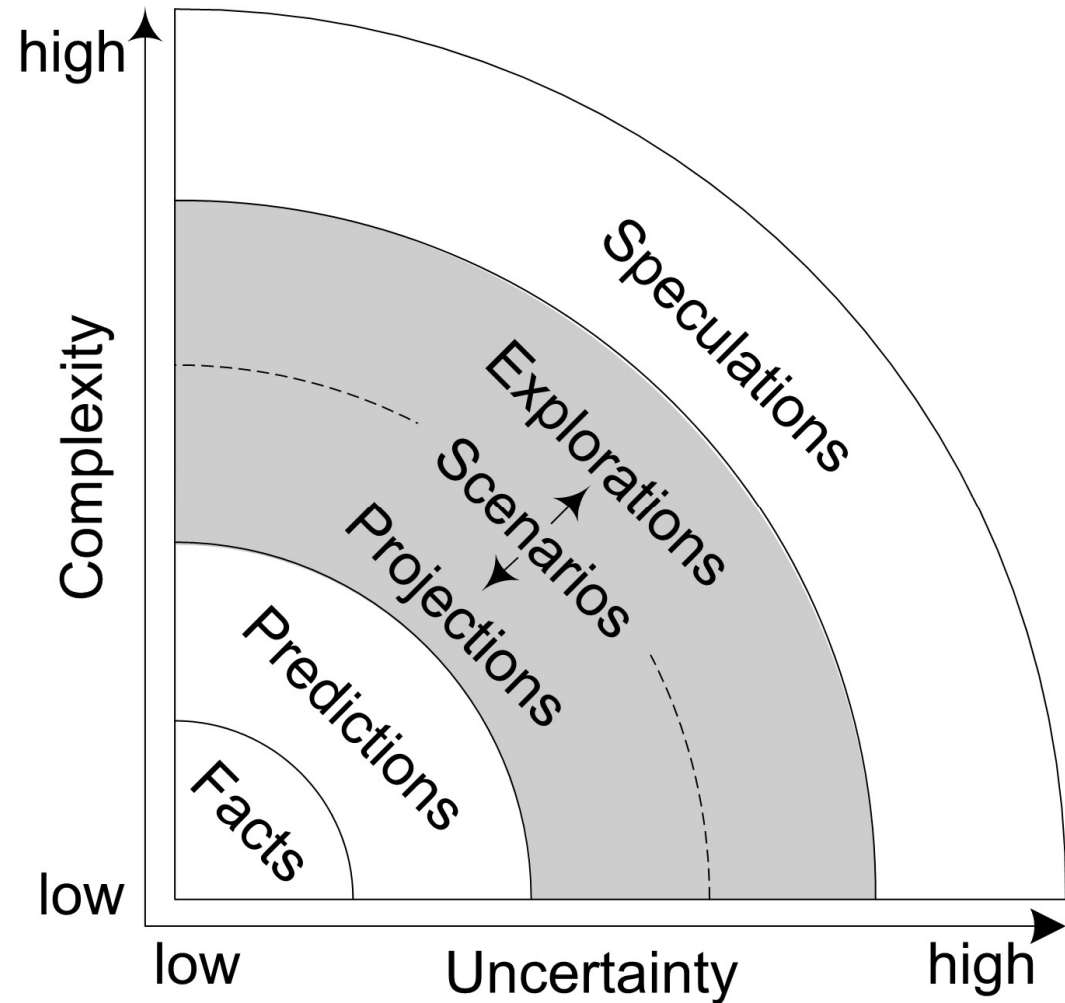
Scenarios explore multiple possible futures & engage w/ higher complexity & uncertainty

Scenarios are not speculations:

Speculations are based on future outcomes with very high levels of uncertainty.

Scenarios represent possible future outcomes with manageable levels of uncertainty

Adapted from: M.B. Zurek, T. Henrichs, 2007. Linking scenarios across geographical scales in international environmental assessments, Technological Forecasting and Social Change

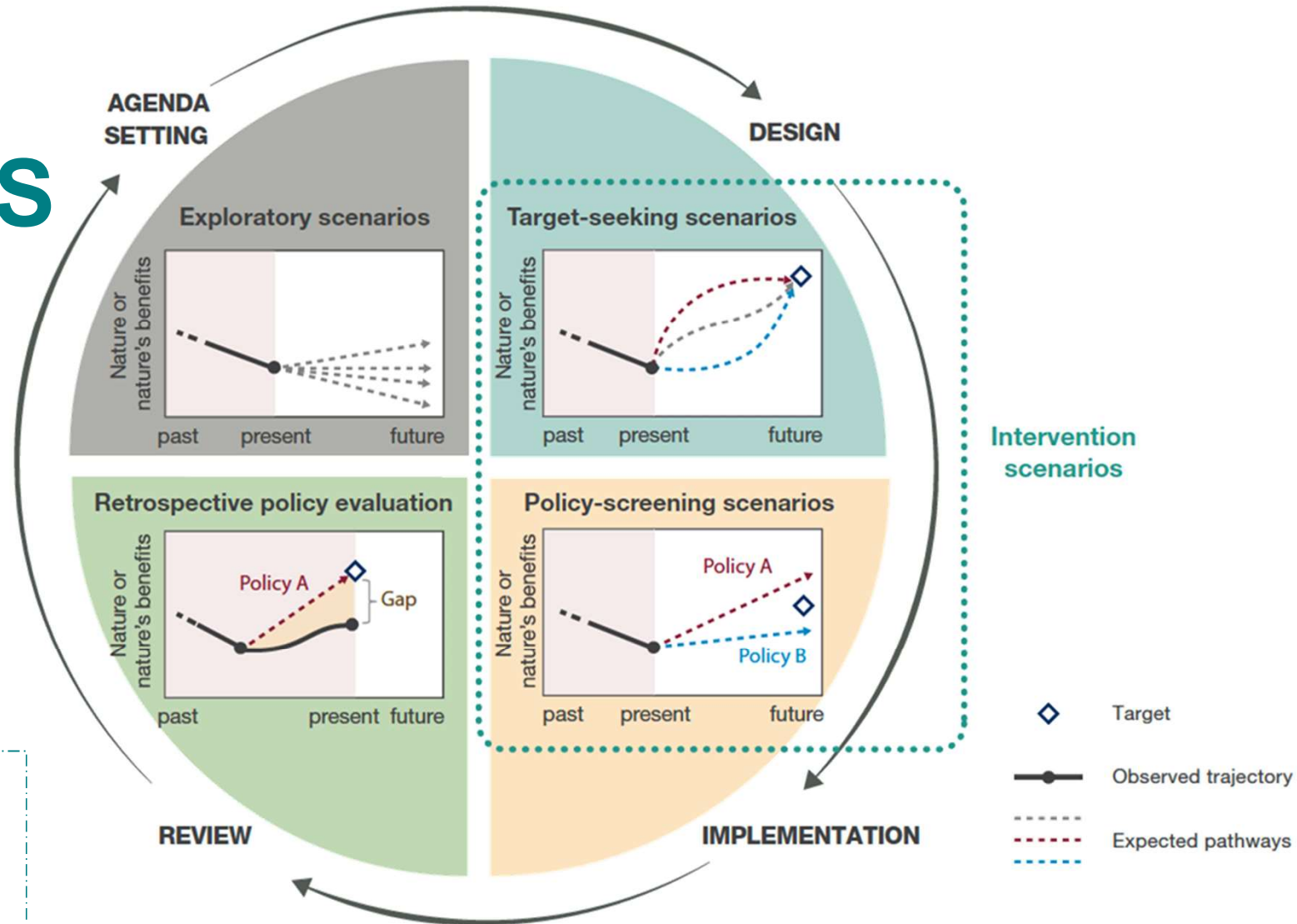


TYPES OF SCENARIOS

(IPBES 2016)

1. Exploratory
2. Intervention
3. Retrospective

Select the type(s) that can best address your key policy questions



NARRATIVES & IMAGERY FOR SCENARIOS

Two Axis Matrix

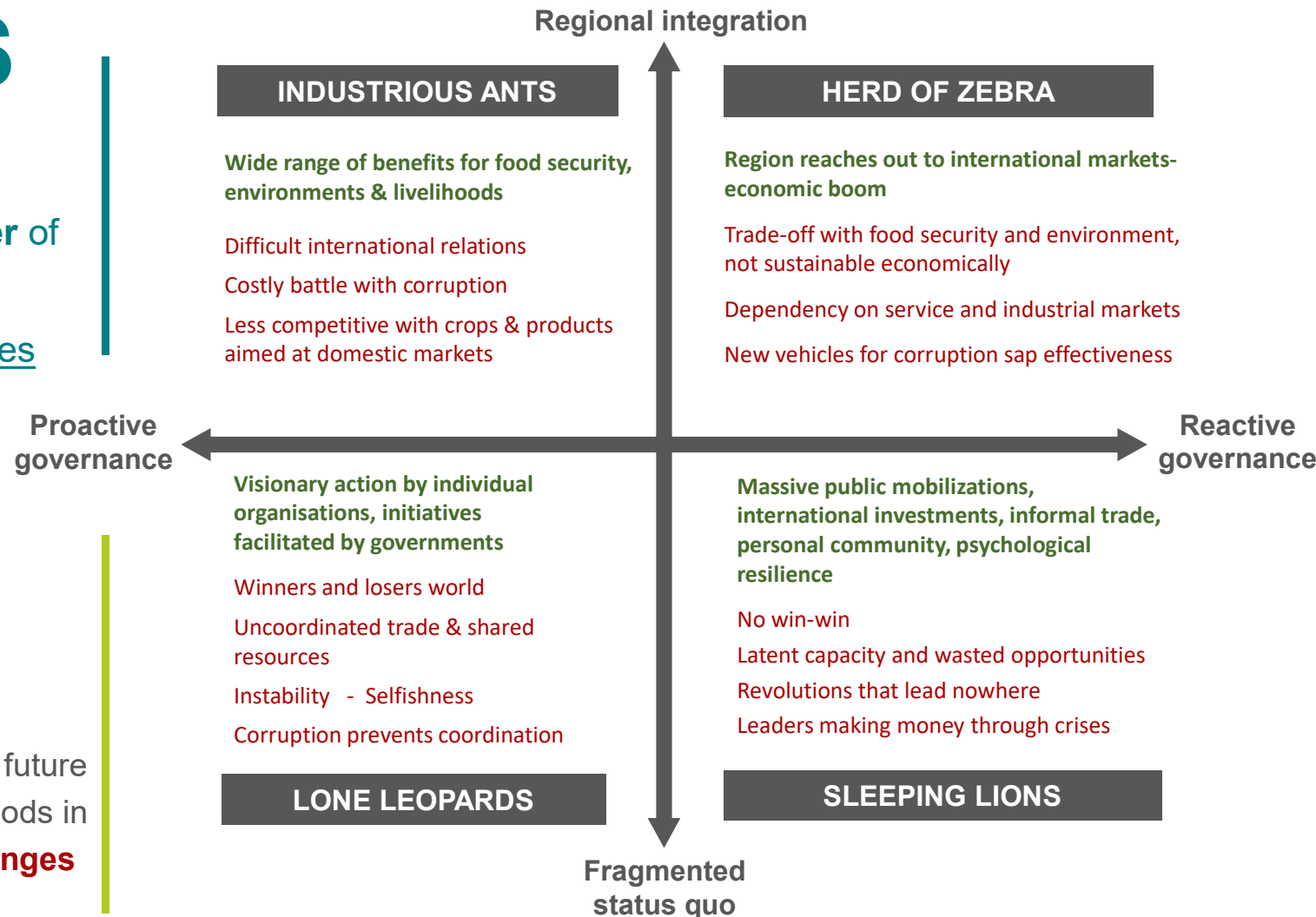
- Each axis represents **one driver** of change (total of two drivers)
- **Matrix** = possible future outcomes related to those two drivers

For example:

1. **Regional integration (y)**
2. **Modes of governance (x)**

Two drivers used to structure **four possible scenarios** related to the future of food security, environments & livelihoods in Africa including **opportunities** & **challenges**

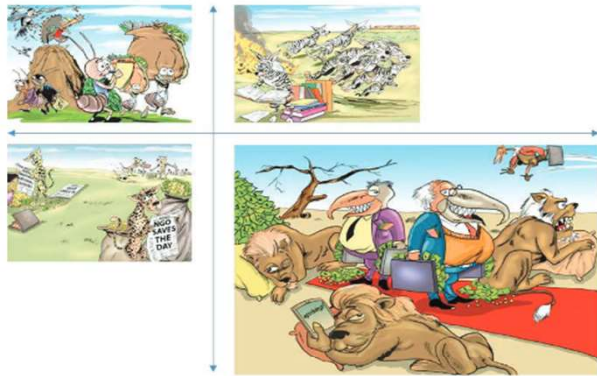
The Future Of Food Security, Environments & Livelihoods In Eastern Africa: Four Socio-economic Scenarios (CGIAR, 2013)



NARRATIVES & IMAGERY FOR SCENARIOS

Scenario narratives

Sleeping Lions – a story of regional fragmentation and reactive governance



Fragmented status quo

Figure 9. Sleeping Lions.

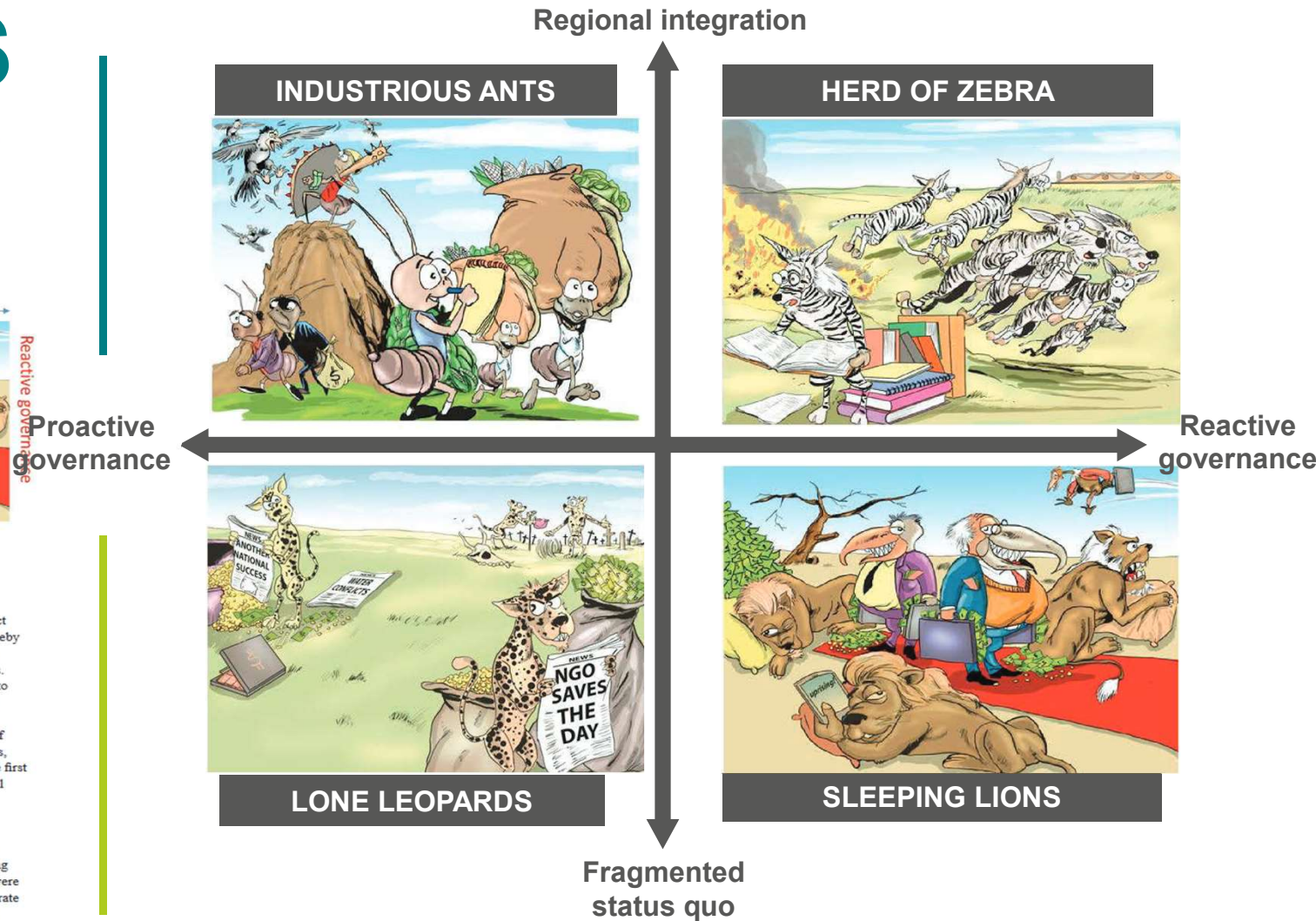
Summary

This scenario is all about wasted potential and win-lose games. Governments in 2030 act only in response to serious situations and in ways to further their own self-interests, thereby allowing foreign interests free rein in the region. Their actions – or lack of them – have devastating consequences for East Africans' food security, livelihoods and environments. Conflicts, protests and uprisings are common, but each time reform is promised, it fails to materialize. The lack of coordinated effort on climate change and its impacts means that a severe drought occurring in 2020–2022 results in widespread hunger and many deaths among the region's poor and vulnerable. It is only the adaptive capacity and resilience of communities, born out of decades of enforced self-reliance based on informal economies, collaboration and knowledge sharing that mitigates the worst effects of this disaster. The first signs of better governance emerge only in the late 2020s, but the region's population still faces a very uncertain future.

Governance: see nothing, hear nothing, do nothing

Between 2010 and 2030, East African countries experienced numerous political regime changes. While plans for common trade and market platforms and visions for the opening of country borders for trade and employment were developed, no tangible instruments were put in place to establish a regional governance system within which countries could operate as a regional bloc. Instead, each country concentrated on the factors that benefit only its

The Future Of Food Security, Environments & Livelihoods In Eastern Africa: Four Socio-economic Scenarios (CGIAR, 2013)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON SCENARIOS

- NEA Initiative guidance documents & webinars
<https://www.ecosystemassessments.net/resource/scenarios-1-2-en-fr-es/>
<https://www.ecosystemassessments.net/resource/workshop-scenarios-and-policy-jan-2022/>
- IPBES Methodological Assessment on Scenarios & Models of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
<https://www.ipbes.net/assessment-reports/scenarios>
- Scenarios produced by other national ecosystem assessment partners
https://www.ecosystemassessments.net/content/uploads/2023/10/CANARI-NEA-Report-2023_Final.pdf

The image shows two screenshots of NEA guidance documents. The top screenshot is titled "DECIDING WHETHER TO INCLUDE SCENARIOS" and discusses when and where this process should be carried out. It includes a flowchart with stages: Scoping, Evaluation, Approval, and Use of findings. The bottom screenshot is titled "GETTING STARTED WITH SCENARIOS" and discusses when this step should be carried out. It includes a flowchart with stages: Scoping, Evaluation, Approval, and Use of findings. Both screenshots feature the NEA logo and the UN WCMC environment programme logo.

NEA NATIONAL ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE
UN WCMC environment programme
CAPACITY-BUILDING MATERIAL FOR NATIONAL ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENTS

Scoping Evaluation Approval Use of findings

DECIDING WHETHER TO INCLUDE SCENARIOS

WHEN/WHERE should this process be carried out?

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Scoping Evaluation Approval Use of findings

GETTING STARTED WITH SCENARIOS

WHEN in the process should this step be carried out?

Once it has been decided that scenarios will be included within the assessment, the next step is to identify which scenario methodologies will be used. During the evaluation stage, the relevant authors will get started on synthesising and developing these scenarios based on the methods chosen.

Scoping Evaluation Approval Use of findings

Engaging stakeholders engagement & communication

WHO does this stage relate to?

Evaluating potential futures and seizing the whole range of benefits of developing scenarios in a national ecosystem assessment requires diverse expertise. The responsibility for selecting authors with the necessary skills for developing scenarios will depend on the governance structure of the assessment (see governance structure and selecting authors 2-pagers).

TOP TIP
It can be useful to include a broad range of expertise and world views to maximise benefits from the scenarios included in the assessment.