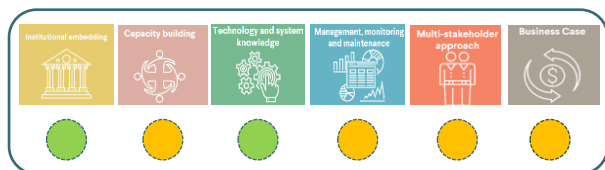


Methodological Framework to Address Barriers and Enablers for Building with Nature in Asia

Building with Nature was intended as a design approach to develop nature-based solutions for water-related infrastructure such as flood defences, sustainable port development and ecosystem restoration. However, we also recognise that it has evolved into a series of design principles that guides practitioners using a nature-based approach for sustainable development in general (in any terrestrial or aquatic environment). Climate change, sea-level rise, flood-risk, ocean acidification, species extinction, habitat degradation, loss of traditional livelihoods, salt-water intrusion, unsustainable industries, social fragmentation, subsidence, pollution, health and safety are just some of the challenges associated with modern settlements, particularly those around the coast. Recognizing that roughly 50% of the world's population lives within 100km of the coast brings these manifold challenges to bare. Building with Nature was born out of necessity - recognition of its namesake for a resilient future especially in light of a fast-changing world.

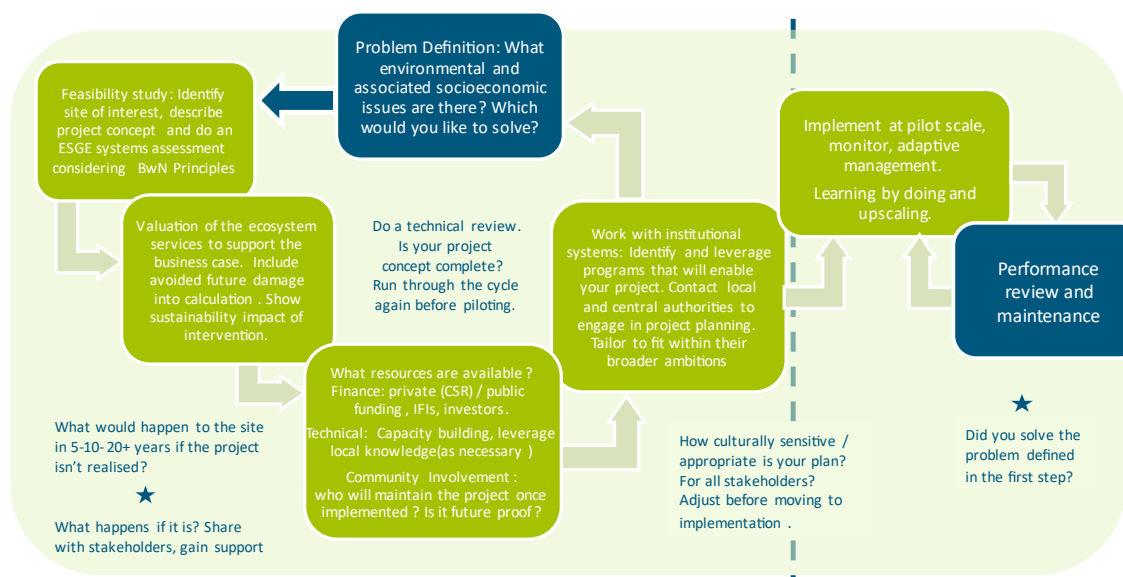
Royal HaskoningDHV (RHDHV) carried out this project to identify barriers and enablers and to create a working model (the framework) to support the adoption of Building with Nature in Asia. This project focused on 6 Asian countries: China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines and Vietnam. RHDHV (Netherlands) worked with EcoShape, Wetlands International (and their regional teams), WWF and RHDHV's international staff across these countries to understand the various challenges and opportunities experienced in regard to implementing BwN projects in each country.

Post-interview analyses revealed the state of play in each country regarding each of the six categories of enablers that EcoShape has drawn from previous projects: (i) Technology and System Knowledge, (ii) Multi-Stakeholder Approach, (iii) Management, Monitoring and Maintenance, (iv) Institutional Embedding, (v) Business Case, and (vi) Capacity Building. Based on expert opinions, we organised these into score-cards with colours per enabler reflecting the traffic light system. Green to red indicated favourable to less favourable conditions respectively for each enabler. E.g. Red for multi-stakeholder approach, suggested little to no stakeholder engagement is taking place or the circumstances make it difficult to engage with multiple stakeholders.

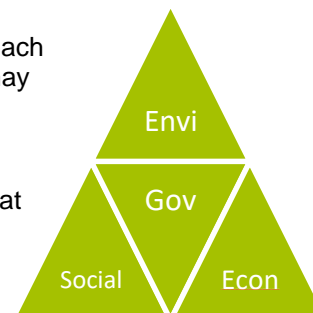


We noticed similar patterns emerge and common issues with BwN in Asia – critical factors were also identified. While one may be quick to think the critical factors for a successful implementation of BwN tend to be technical or environmental in nature, the critical factor for all countries was found to be either **economic** or **governance** related. Also, in nearly all cases, knowledge of how to value ecosystem services or develop a sound business case for NbS was limited and as a consequence, the propositions, if not broadly supported by government, would face serious challenges for implementation. In fact one might argue that this is also very much linked to capacity building (which may be necessary to bring decision makers up-to speed on BwN in general). We examined the barriers and enablers per country as well and introduced “points of entry” into the slide-deck. This and other common issues around BwN led to the development of a framework that would help practitioners implement projects in Asia (or anywhere else for that matter).

Supporting the Methodological Framework – BwN Adoption



In the course of the project we incorporated an ESGE triangle to characterize each country, giving practitioners a quick sense of the importance of each – which may affect how they tailor their BwN proposition in each country as well. One of the principal enablers of BwN is a strong multi-stakeholder position, in fact it's a fundamental design principle. Ironically, in certain countries, such participatory processes are quite limited, yet through strong governance it appears they are at times more successful at implementing projects. It remains to be seen if top-down projects will enjoy the same longevity as those actively supported by locals if the latter had more agency.



The end-product is the framework in a slide-deck form (together with a supplemental document), that helps to support the adoption of Building with Nature in Asia i.e. supporting project planners to address their respective landscape challenges using a BwN approach. These project ideas may then be pitched to appropriate parties in each country to get started. After all, one of the most important elements to facilitate the adoption of BwN is “learning by doing” – knowledge development on the enablers through practical (pilot) projects.

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