



Manaaki Whenua  
Landcare Research

# Agents of Change

**A research aim in Moving the Middle: Empowering land managers to act in complex rural landscapes**

Melissa Robson-Williams and Manaia Cunningham, Justin Connolly, Holly Cunningham, Nikki Harcourt, Nick Kirk, Sam McLachlan, Ange McFetridge, Bruce Small, Flo van Noppen



# What we'll cover today

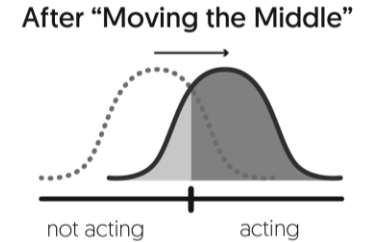
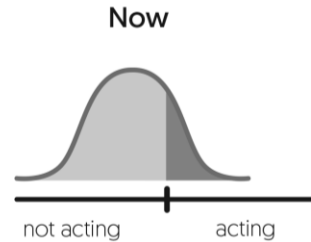
- Brief introduction to Moving the Middle and Agents of Change research aim
- Key messages from research so far:
  - Range of agents of change
  - Leverage points and the 'depth' of intervention
  - Influence approaches
  - Why whenua Māori is different
- How you can take on board the key messages



# Moving the Middle

Goal: To **give land managers greater confidence & agency** to voluntarily improve their environmental performance

By **identifying & using intervention points for change** in systems affecting land manager decisions





# Agents of Change

To support a shift towards **more sustainable practices on the land**

We are focussing on non-traditional agents of change, and our aim is to understand which agents are effective and make them more **understandable, relatable and supportable**



## Key messages from the research so far

We think:

- There is a greater diversity of agents of change than is currently recognised or supported
- Agents are intervening at different depths of leverage, often unintentionally
- There are multiple influence approaches agents can use
- Agents of change work differently on whenua Māori



## Diversity of agents of change





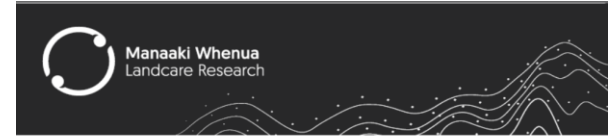
# Which agents are currently recognised and supported?

Survey being circulated



Currently, (a) how **relevant** is this type of human change actor in enabling Aotearoa's shift toward more sustainable land practices, and (b) to what degree does your organisation **support** the actor(s) for that purpose (please consider full range of possible support e.g., financial, networking, endorsement, advice etc.)?

	Current relevance of actor	Current level of support by your organisation
Rural and ag professionals e.g. advisors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Financial professionals e.g. advisors, banks	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Individual community mobilisers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Artists, creatives, musicians	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Local and urban food initiatives e.g. urban farms,	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

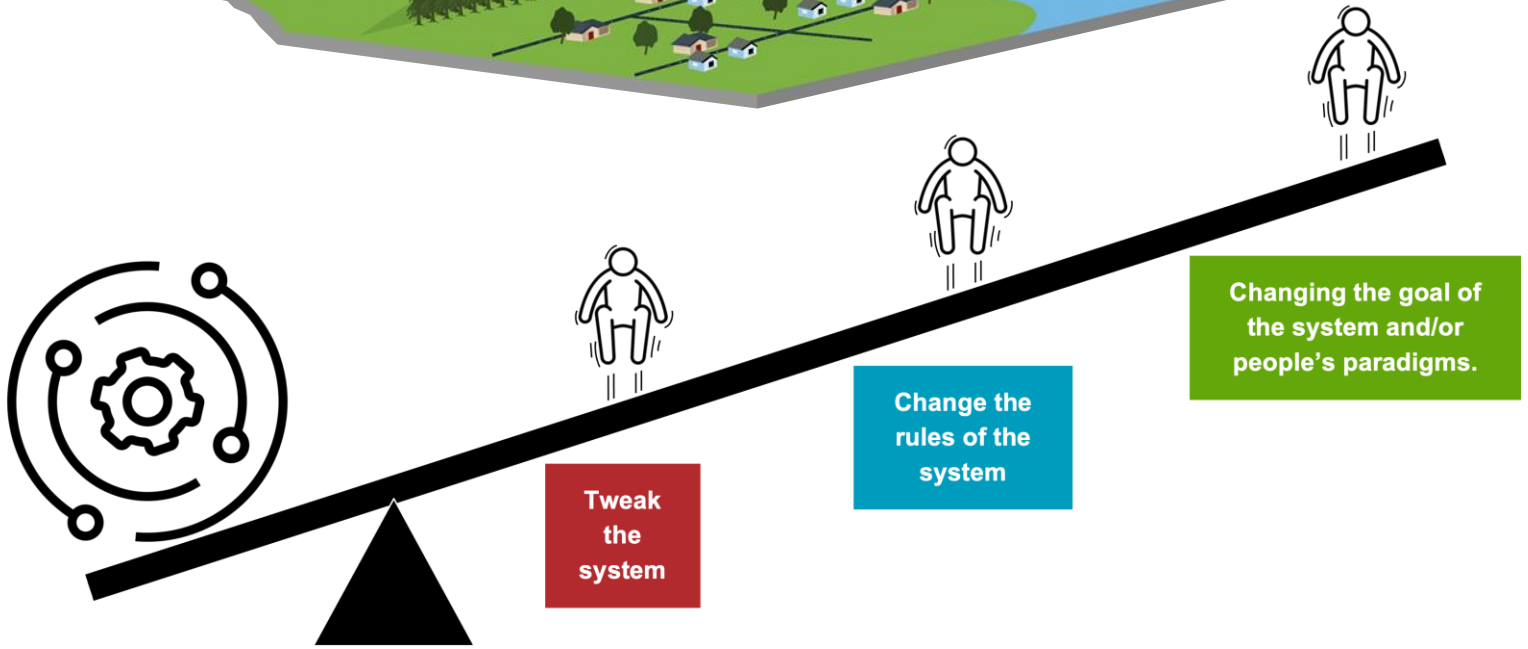
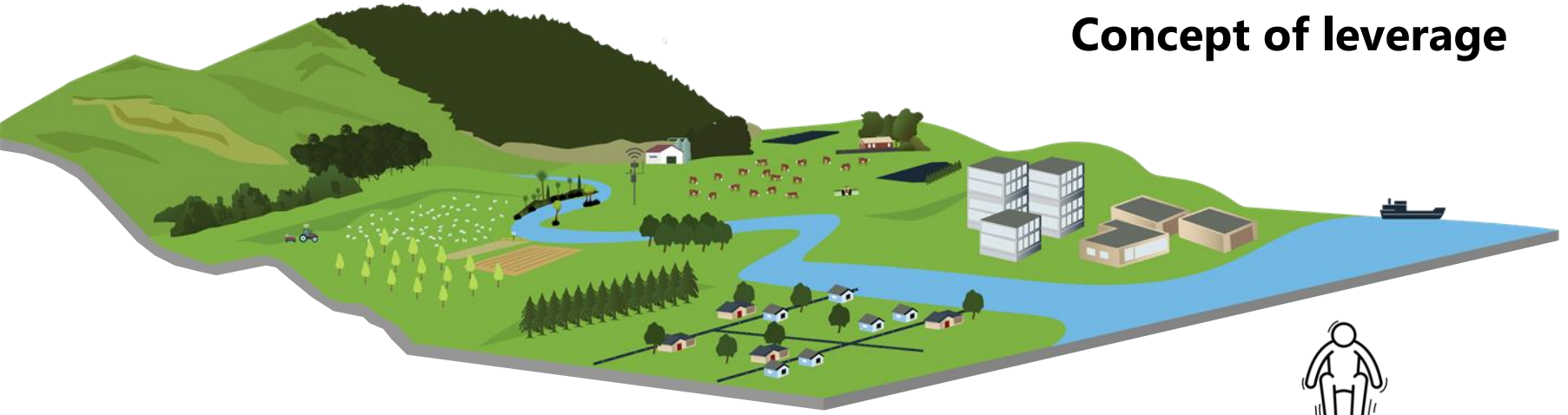


Non-human like objects, concepts, practices and processes may also act as agents of change.

Currently, (a) how **relevant** is this type of **non-human agent** in enabling Aotearoa's shift toward more sustainable land practices, and (b) to what degree does your organisation currently **support** the non-human agent for that purpose (please consider the full range of possible support e.g., use, promotion, endorsement, advice, funding, etc)?

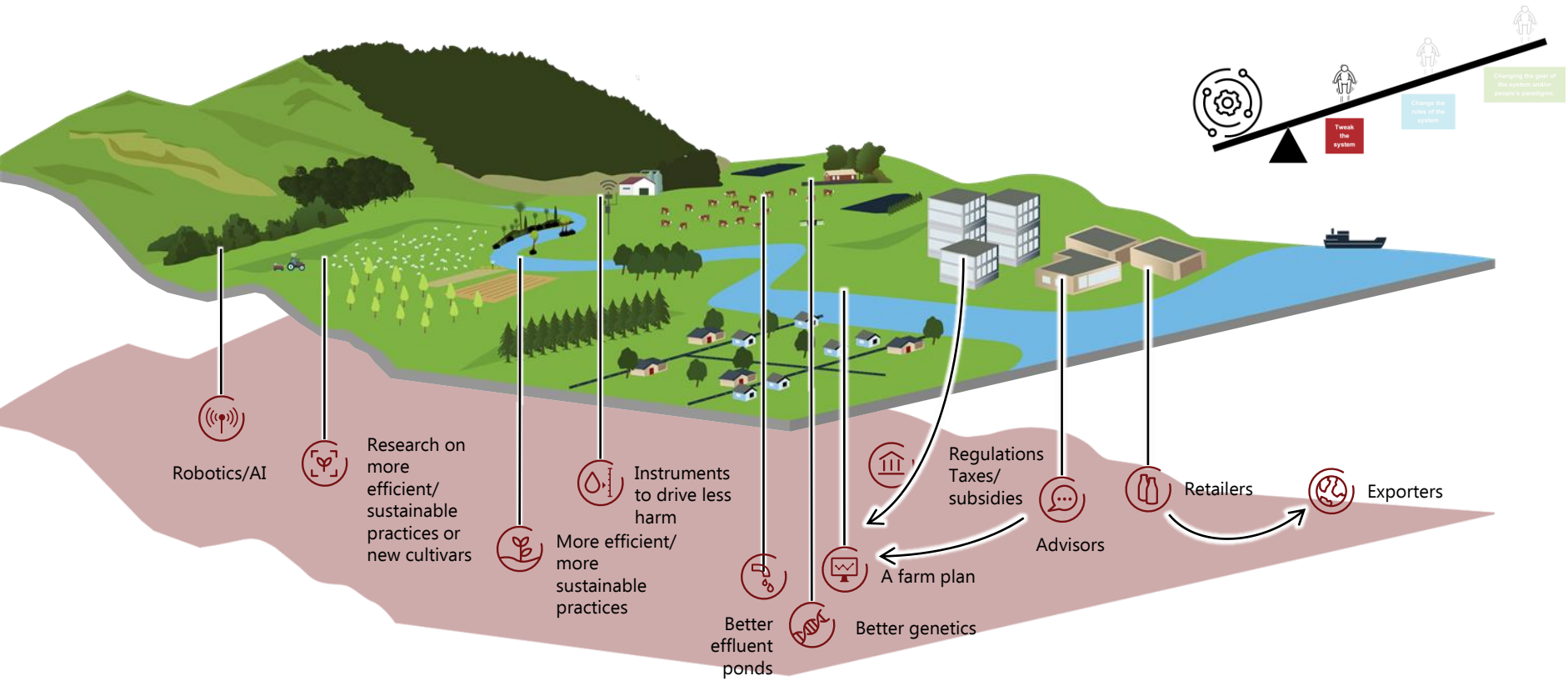
	Current relevance of agent	Current level of support by your organisation
Māori spiritual and cultural beliefs: Te ao Māori worldview	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mātauranga Māori	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Rights of Nature initiatives e.g. legal personhood of the environment, nature represented on company boards	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Rights of Future Generations initiatives e.g. Commissioners for the Future.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

# Concept of leverage

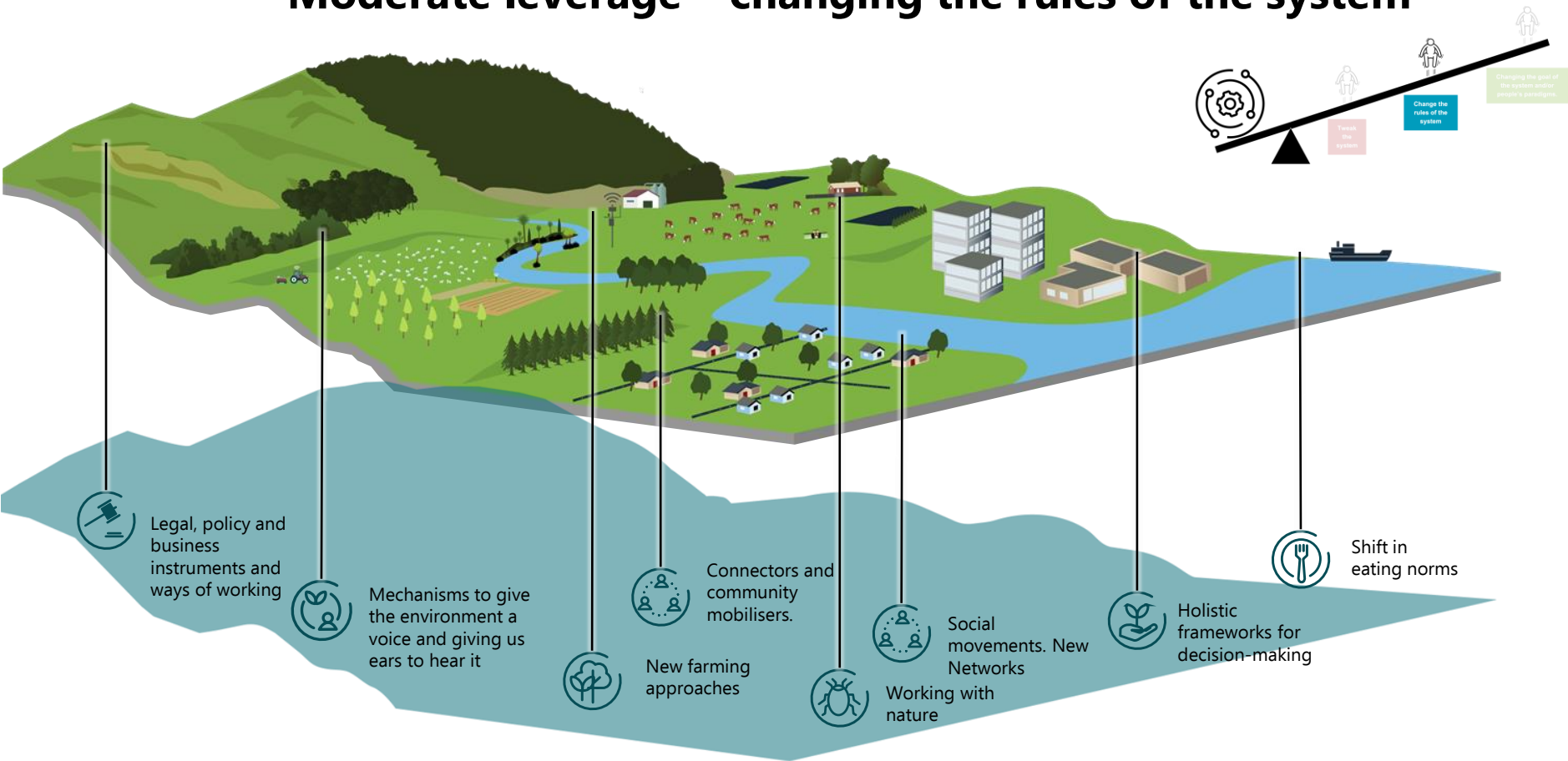




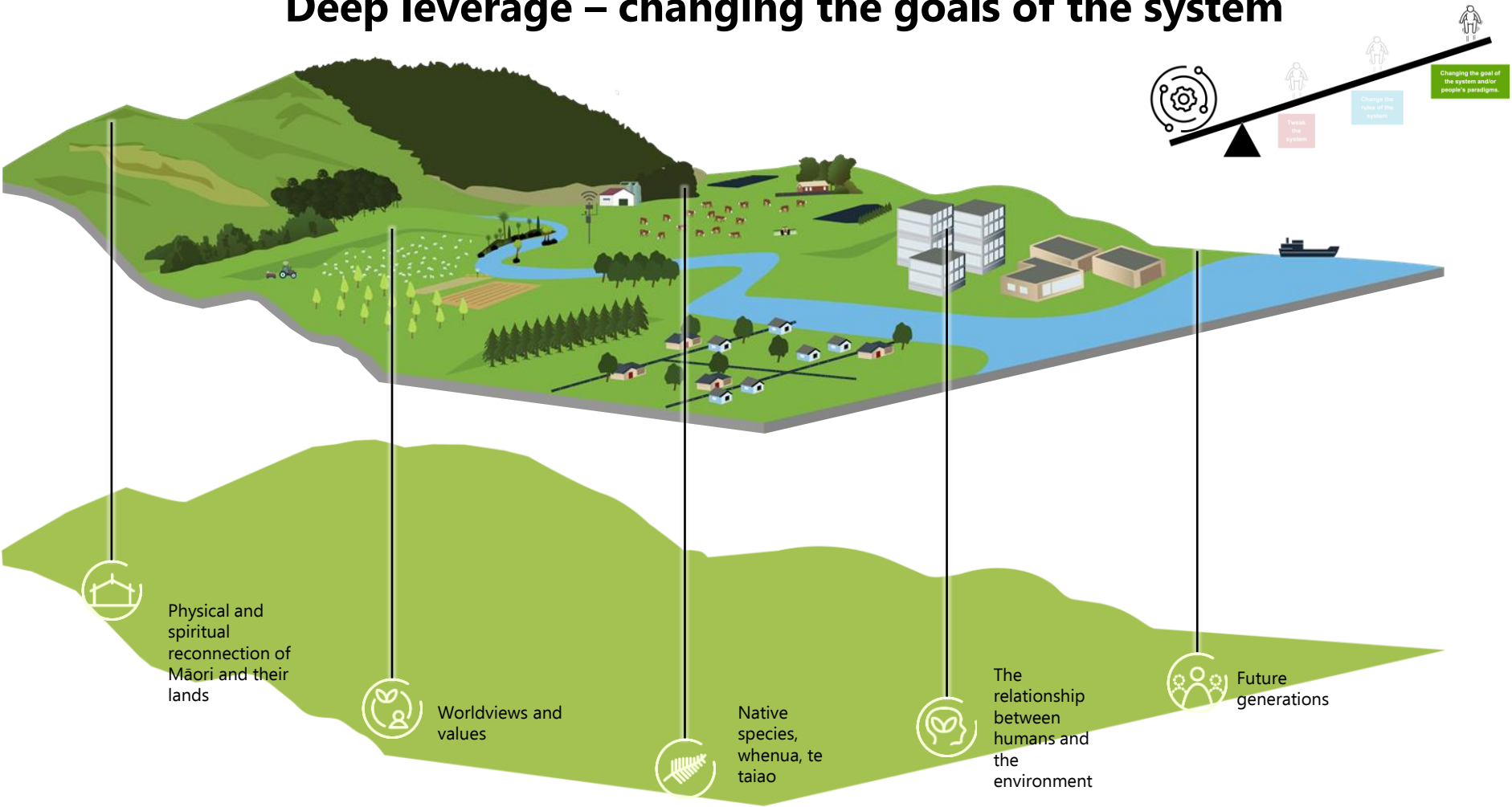
# Shallow leverage – tweaking the system



# Moderate leverage – changing the rules of the system



# Deep leverage – changing the goals of the system

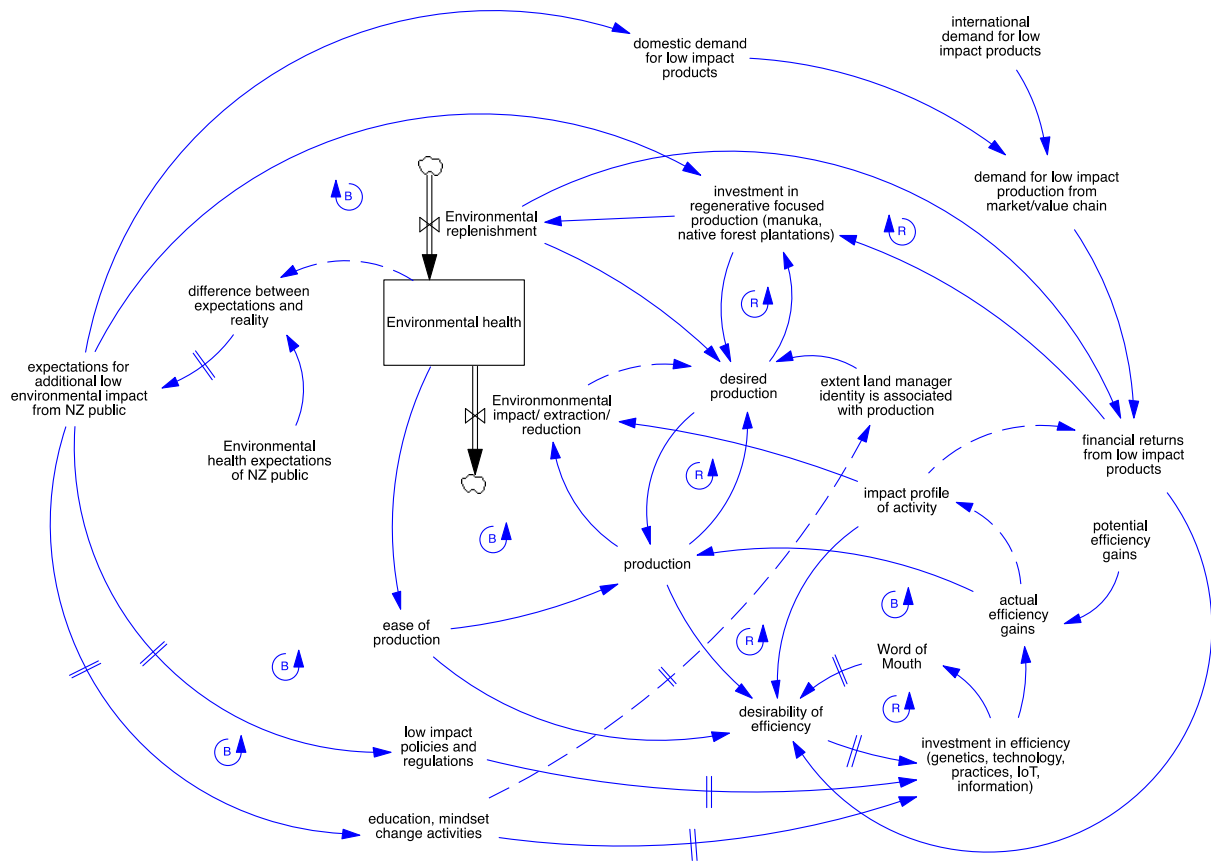
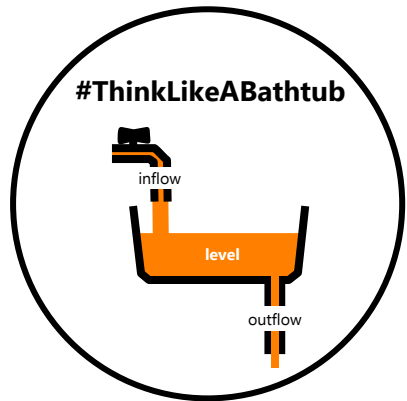




## Case studies

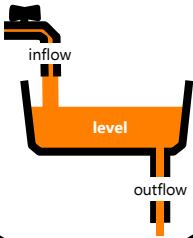
Case studies	Type of intervention	Depth of intervention
Information/ knowledge broker	Tweaking the system	Shallower
Technology		
Mobilising communities	Changing the rules of the system	
Amplifying voice of environment and future generations		
Recognising and enabling youth		
Changing relationship between human and the environment	Changing the goals of the system	
Spiritual and physical reconnection of Māori with land		

# Draft causal diagram of influence approaches





# #ThinkLikeABathtub



expectations for additional low environmental impact from NZ public

difference between expectations and reality

Environmental health expectations of NZ public

Environmental health

Environmental impact/ extraction/ reduction

production

ease of production

low impact policies and regulations

education, mindset change activities

desirability of efficiency

investment in efficiency (genetics, technology, practices, IoT, information)

Word of Mouth

actual efficiency gains

potential efficiency gains

financial returns from low impact products

desired production

extent land manager identity is associated with production

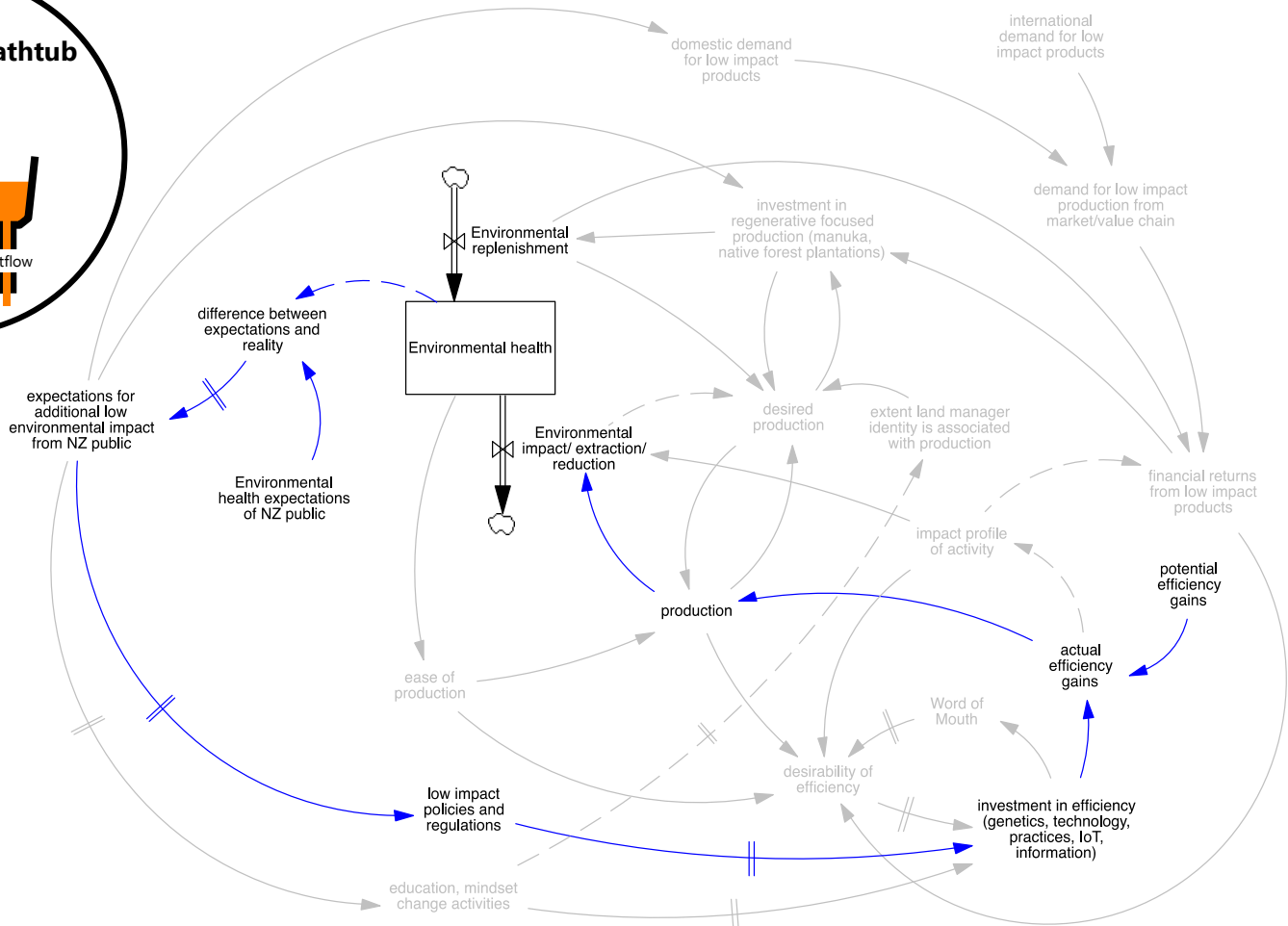
investment in regenerative focused production (manuka, native forest plantations)

Environmental replenishment

domestic demand for low impact products

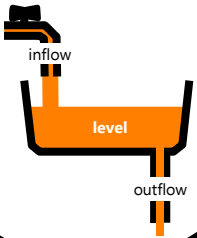
international demand for low impact products

demand for low impact production from market/value chain





# #ThinkLikeABathtub



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difference between expectations and reality

Environmental health expectations of NZ public

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impact profile of activity

actual efficiency gains

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financial returns from low impact products

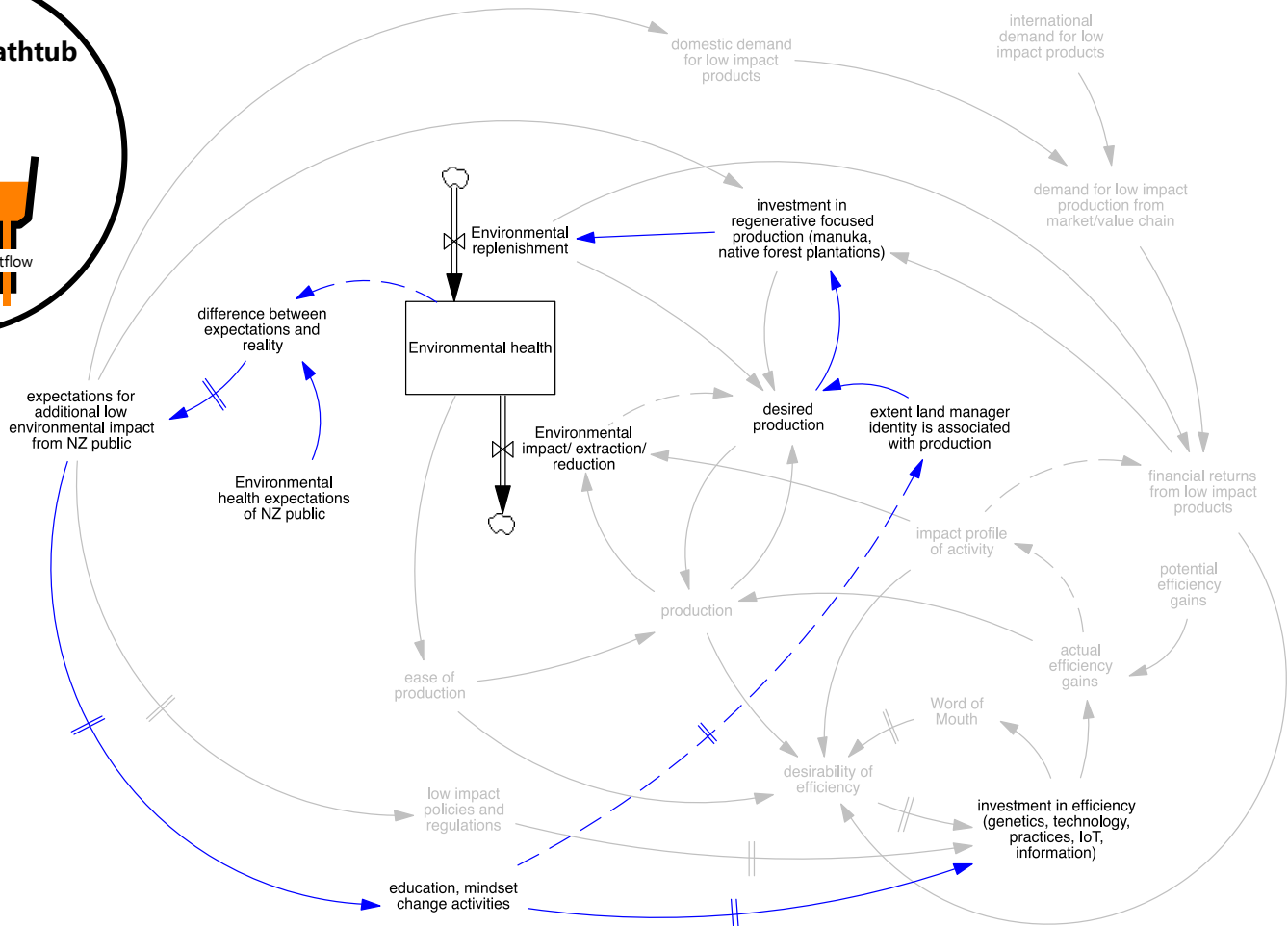
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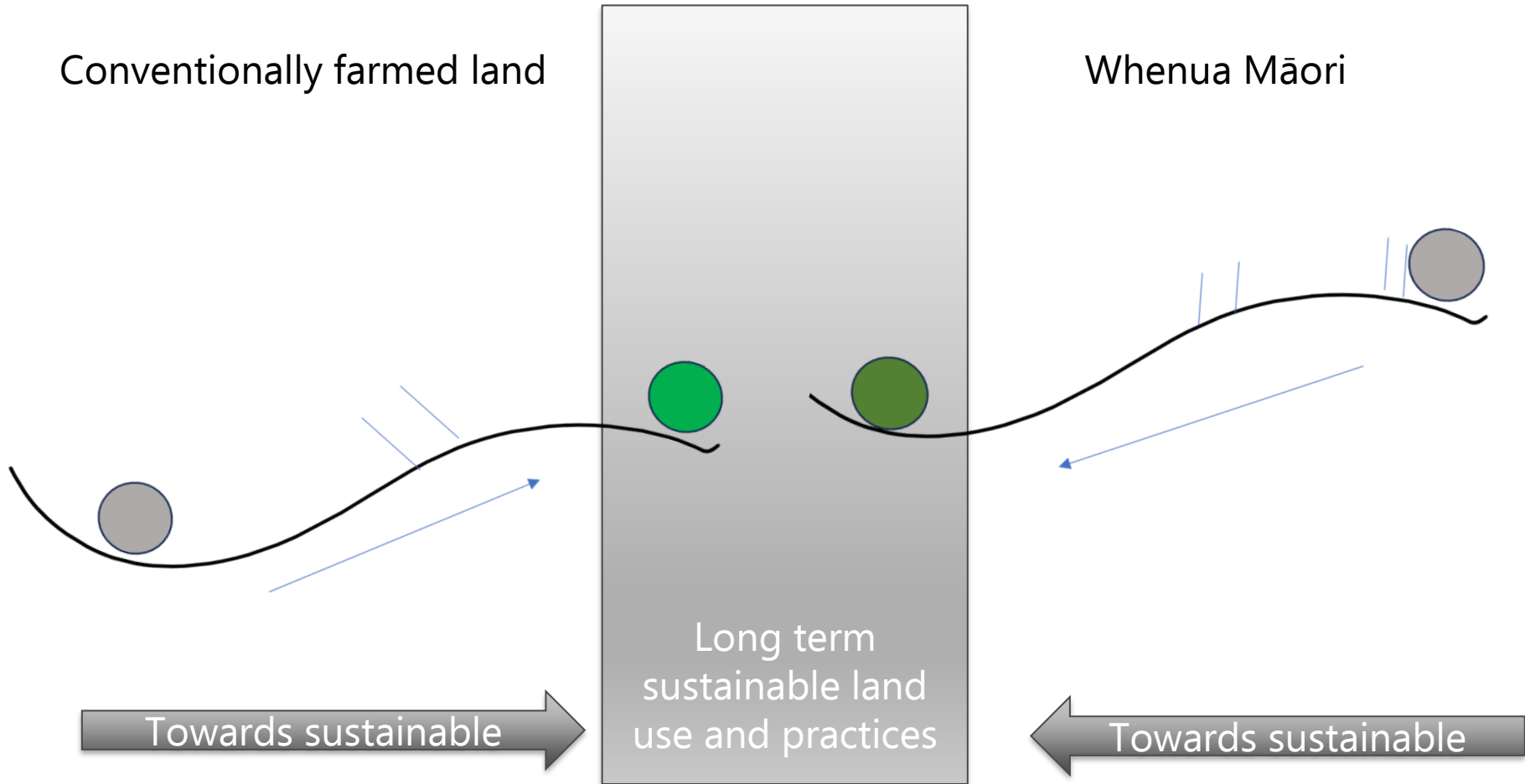




# Different framings in the project

Conventionally farmed land

Whenua Māori







## Key messages from the research so far

We think: There is a greater diversity of agents of change than is currently recognised or supported

**You might consider: whether there are other types of agents that you could support**

We think: Agents are intervening at different depths of leverage – often unintentionally

**You might consider: the depth of your interventions, or of the agents you support – and whether your aspirations and your interventions are well aligned**

We think: There are multiple influence approaches agents can use

**You might consider: the multiple pathways of influence on the change you are trying to bring about – not just direct, obvious or ‘proximate’ approaches**

We think: Agents of change are different on whenua Māori

**You might consider: making sure you recognise those differences in your work**

Thank you for your time

