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Taking stock of national responses to select environment-related SDGs and targets: a snapshot of countries in Asia and the Pacific region

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Environment
in SDGs
Asia-Pacific

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



IN
COLLABORATION
WITH



Purpose of regional stocktake

1. Which of the select environment-related SDGs and targets are issues and/or priorities for countries in the region?
2. What kinds of activities have countries already initiated to address the SDGs and environment priorities?
3. What are the main issues, challenges and barriers to countries leveraging the SDGs to effectively address their environment issues and/or priorities?
4. How can the development and environment communities help countries overcome these?

Regional stocktake methodology

Round 1

Desk Study



Round 2

Deep Dive Desk Study



Round 3

Semi-Structured In-Country Interviews



Stocktake country selection

- Starting with ADB's 40 developing members, interviewed approximately 50 experts from across ADB and regional partners to help inform selection:
 1. geographic representation;
 2. overall SDG readiness;
 3. potential needs (including operational relevance);
 4. upcoming Voluntary National Reports;
 5. ongoing work on environment; and
 6. likely interest in working on Phase 2
- Based upon the above selection criteria, regional stocktake focused on 15 countries in 4 sub-regions

Stocktake country selection

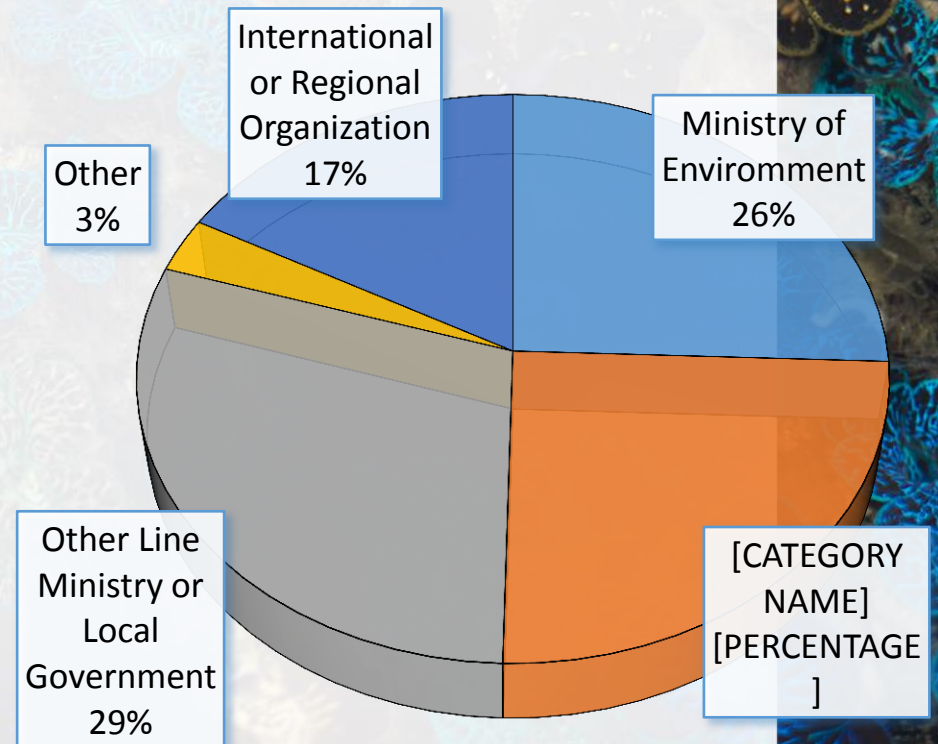
Pacific	Southeast Asia	South Asia	East, Central and West Asia
Fiji Samoa Timor-Leste	Cambodia Indonesia Lao PDR Philippines Viet Nam	Bangladesh Bhutan Nepal Sri Lanka	People's Republic of China (PRC) Kazakhstan Mongolia



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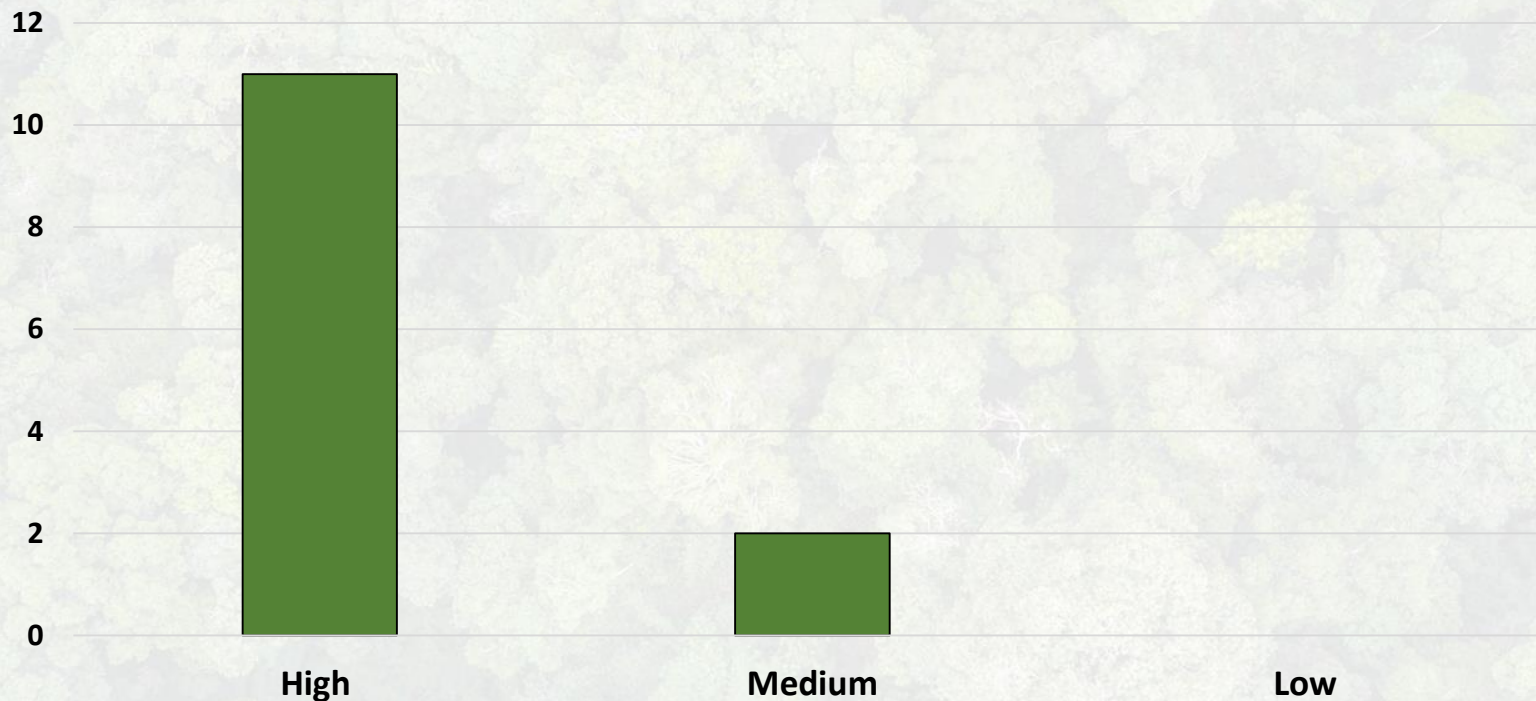
Stocktake in-country interviews

- Approximately 130 interviewees in 13 of 15 countries completed
- Interviews frequently conducted in small groups
- Most respondents from line ministries, not only environmental ministries
- Results of interviews synthesized to arrive at overall country responses



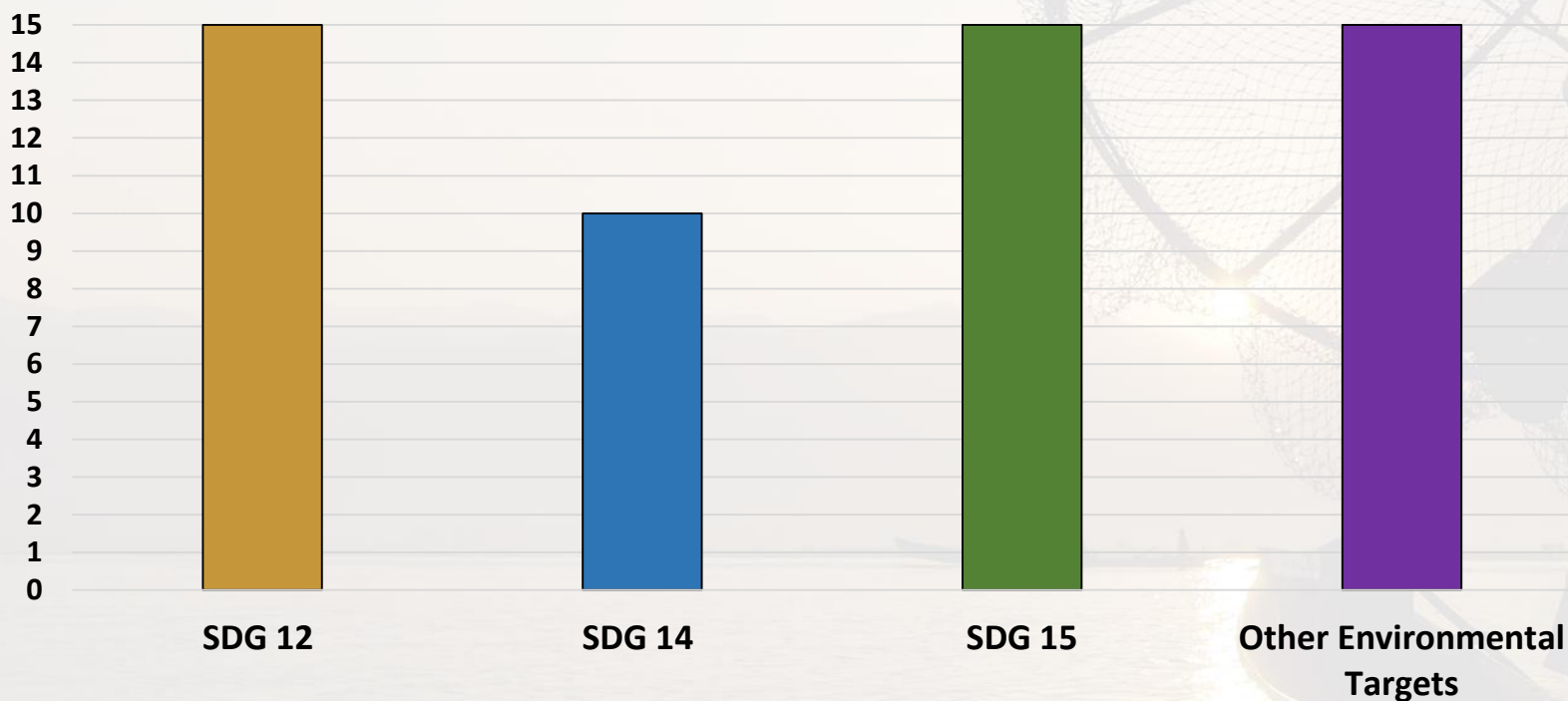
Government awareness

**Ministry Awareness of Need to Address
Select Environment-Related SDGs and Targets**

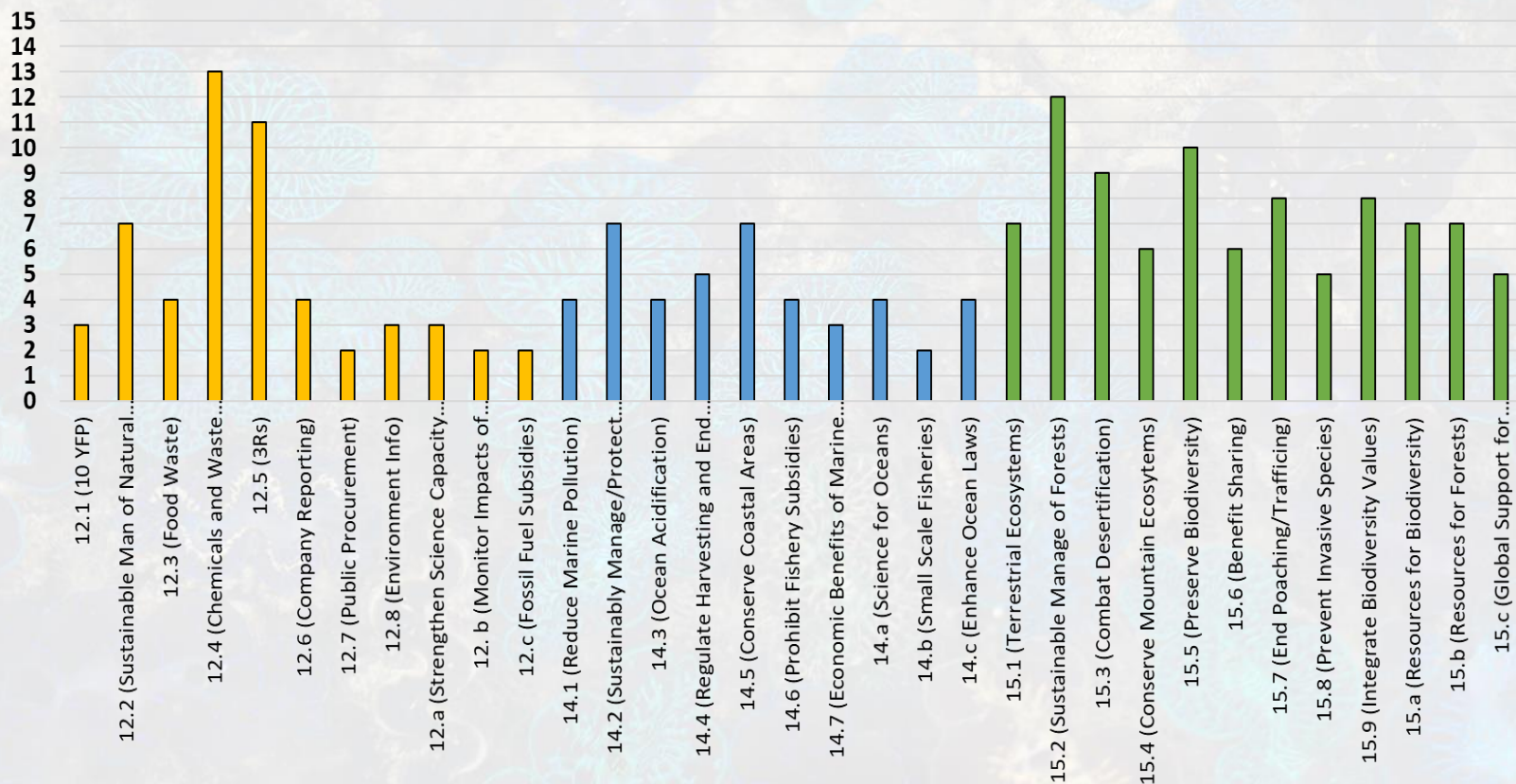


Issues/priorities for the region

Number of Countries with SDGs 12, 14, 15 and Other Related Environment Targets as Issues/Priorities



Issues/priorities for individual targets of SDGs 12, 14 and 15



Most Frequently Selected Issues/Priorities

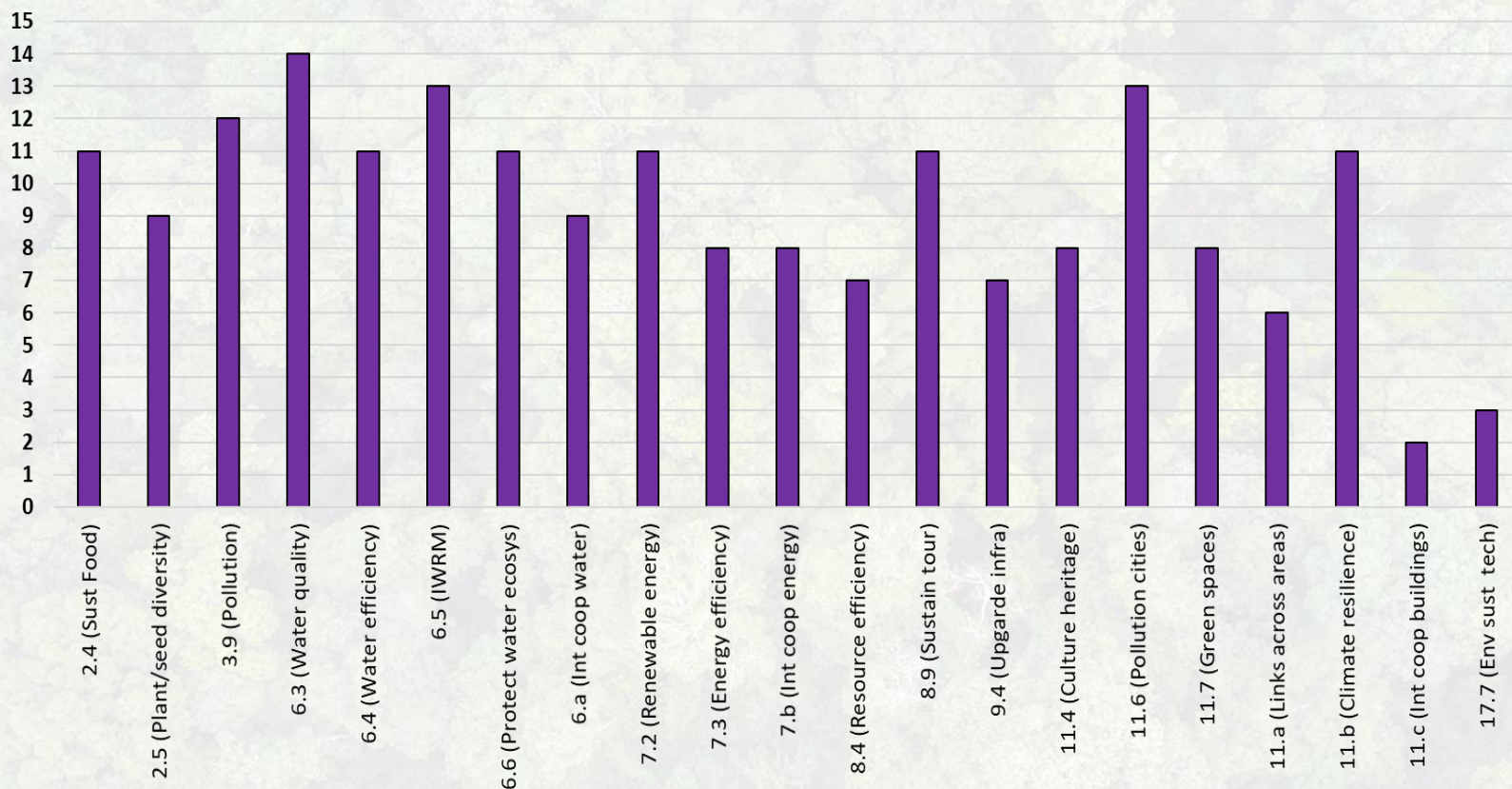
12.4 Chemicals and Waste (13 countries)

15.2 Sustainable Management of Forests (12 countries)

12.5 3Rs (11 countries)

15.5 Preserving Biodiversity (10 countries)

Issues/priorities for other environment-related targets



Most Frequently Selected Issues/Priorities

6.3 Water Quality (14 countries)

6.5 Integrated Water Resource Management (13 countries)

11.6 Pollution in Cities (13 countries)

3.9 Pollution Impacts on Health (12 countries)

Action to address SDG inter-linkages

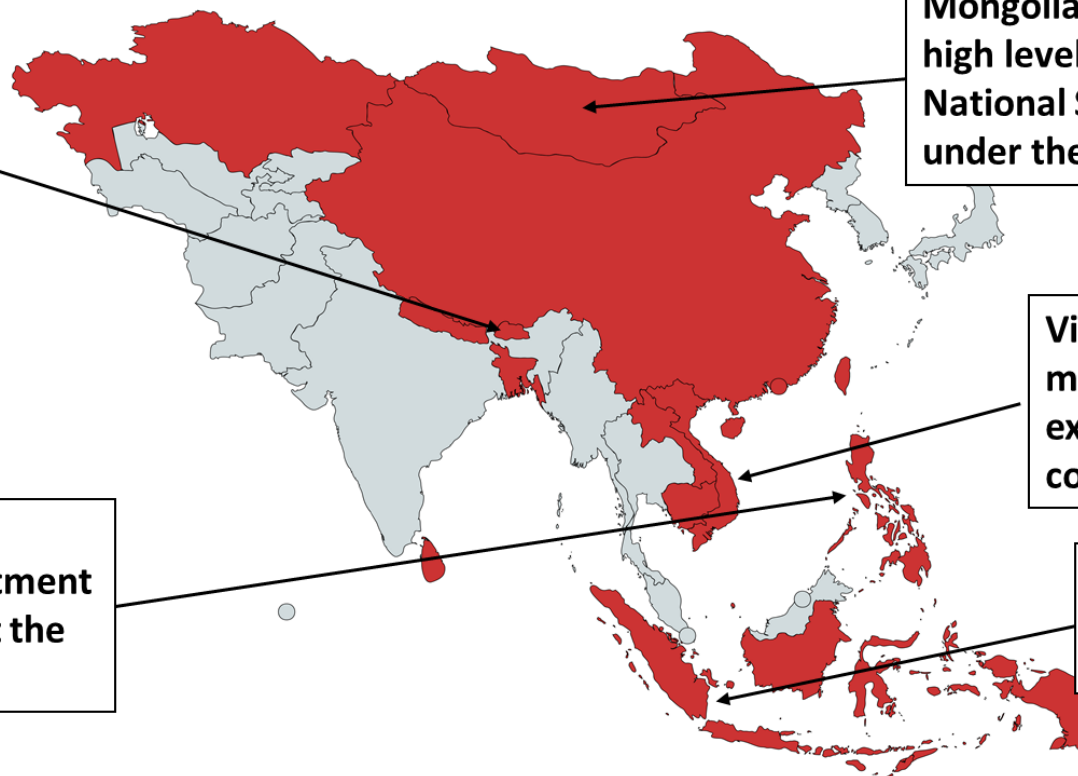
Bhutan:
aligning Key Results
Areas (or KPIs) from
existing development
plans with the SDGs

Philippines:
tagging public investment
programmes against the
SDGs

Mongolia:
high level leadership with
National SDG Committee
under the Prime Minister

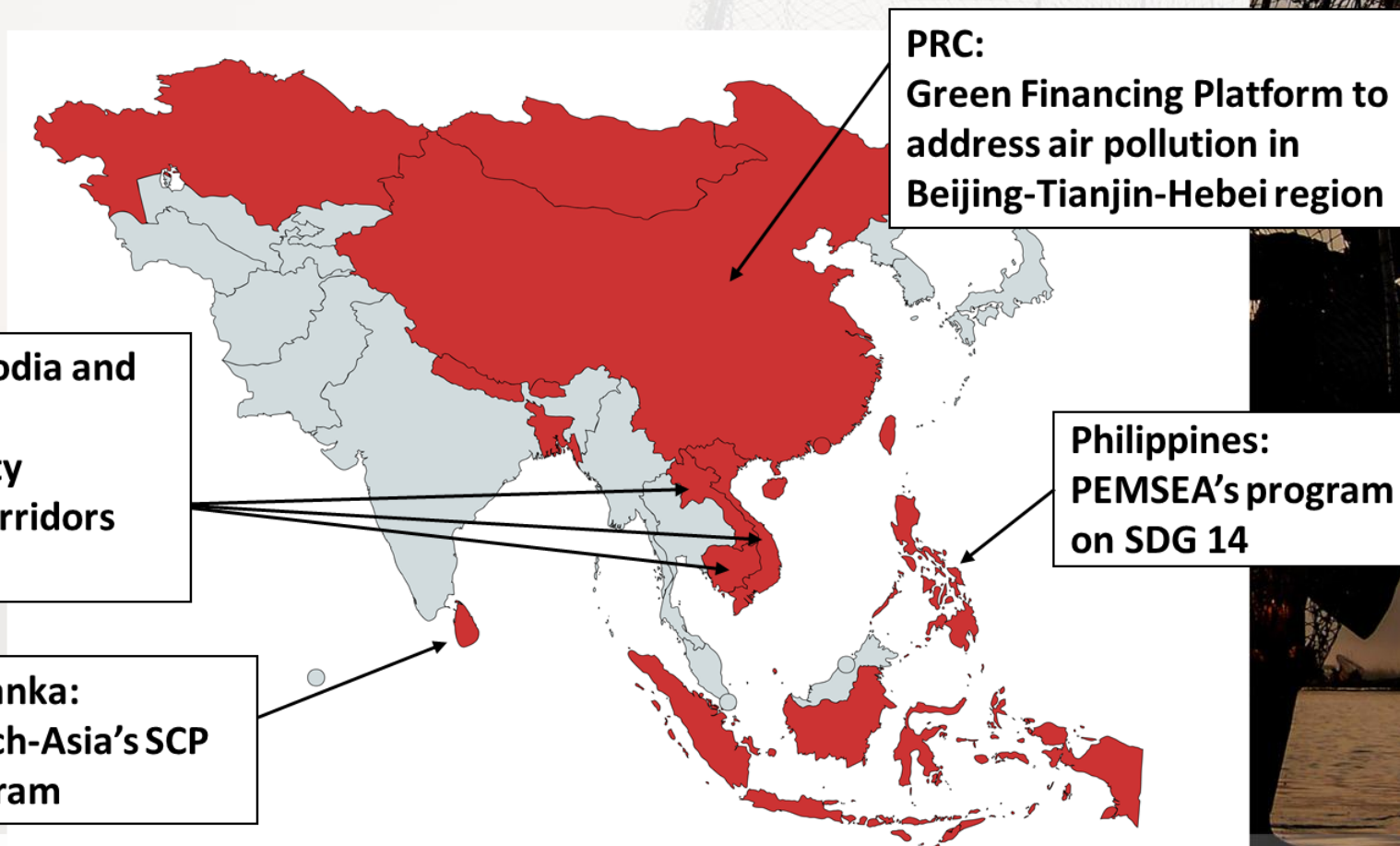
Viet Nam:
matching and mapping
exercises by central
coordinating body

Indonesia:
'localising' SDG
indicators



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Action to address environmental issues/priorities

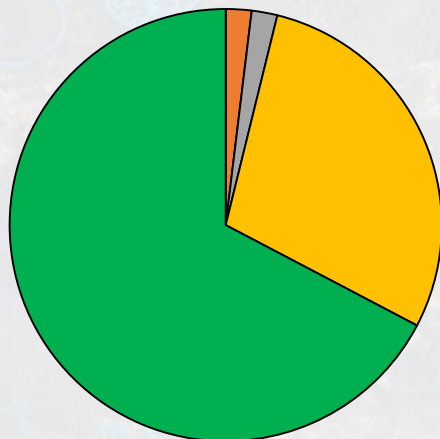


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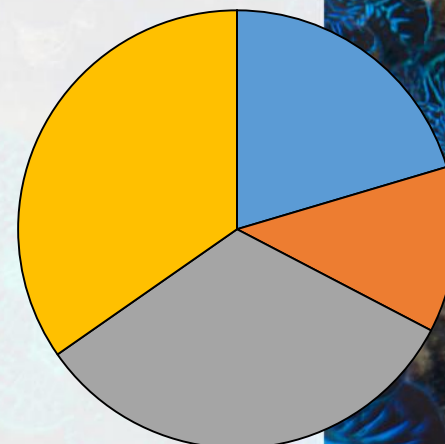
Barriers to integration/implementation

Identifying policy needs and
formulating and approving policies

Monitoring and
evaluation

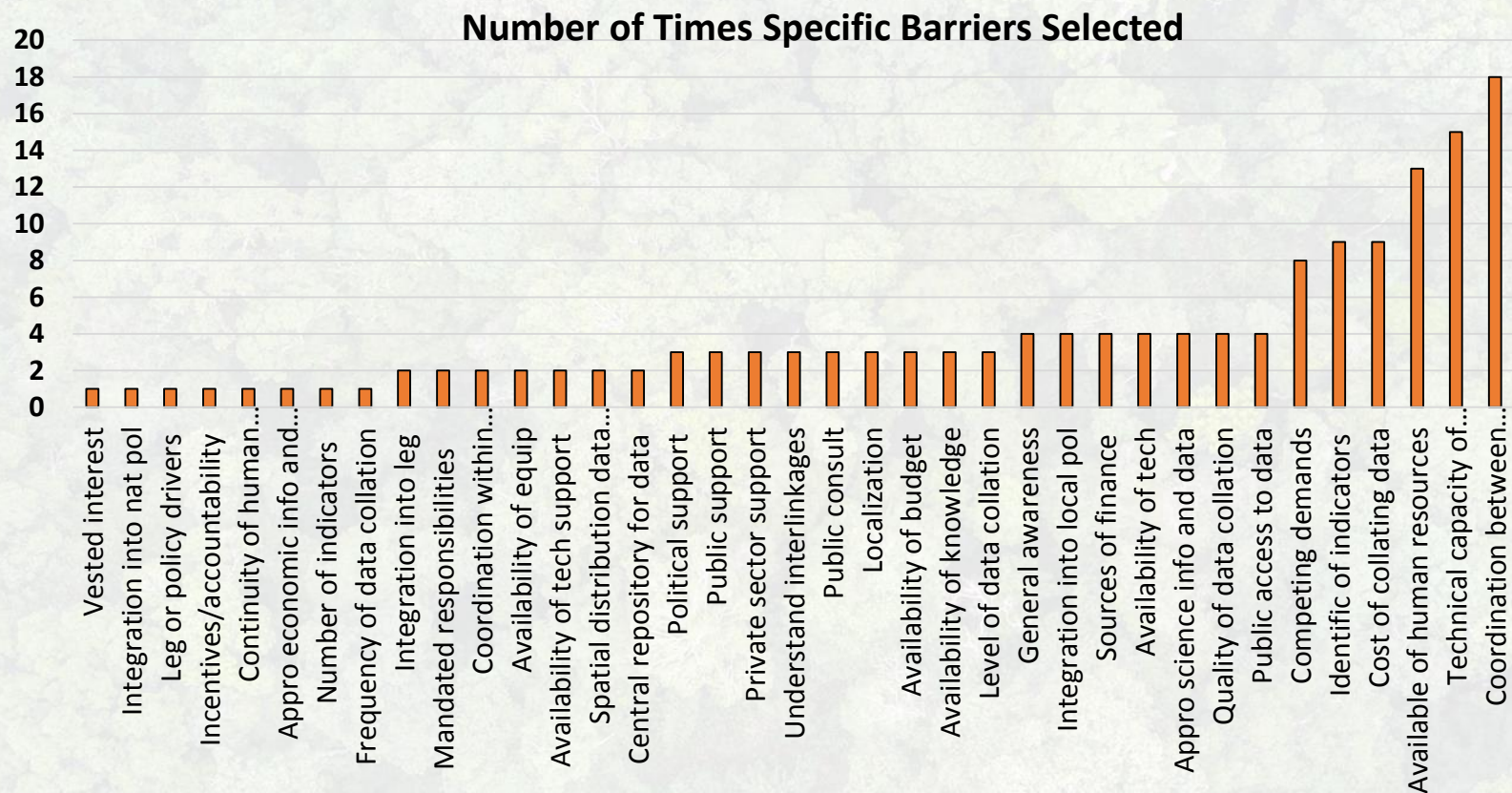


- Lack of Support or Opposition
- Lack of Integration or Incentives
- Lack of Institutional Coordination and Coherence
- Lack of Finance or Capacity
- Lack of Data or Indicators



Implementing
actions

Barriers to integration/implementation



Top 6 Barriers

1. Coordination between Ministries
2. Technical Capacity of Human Resources
3. Availability of Human Resources
4. Costs of Collating Data
5. Identification of Indicators
6. Competing Demands

Institutional arrangement barriers/needs

- **Move away from SDG 12, 14 and 15 activities being primarily ad-hoc and mostly externally driven**, requires continuity of new development direction despite discontinuous national and local leadership
- **Institutional architecture, policies and regulations do not yet reflect SDG inter-linkages**, even in countries where inter-linkages between SDG targets and ministries have been mapped these tend to be sector based, not designed for, or conducive to, integration across thematic issue of environment

Enabling policy barriers/needs

- **Understand need for data and assessment**, to support evidence based approach and therefore policies that address environmental as well as economic and social considerations
- **Understand how to resolve conflict within and between SDG priorities** e.g. between marine conservation targets and the use of fisheries for food and livelihoods (including “true” public consultation and dialogue)
- **Understand SDG 12 and its operationalization**, because for some countries it is a new concept or challenge to implement
- **Expedite updating of policies and regulations in the natural resource sector to better reflect SDGs 14 & 15**

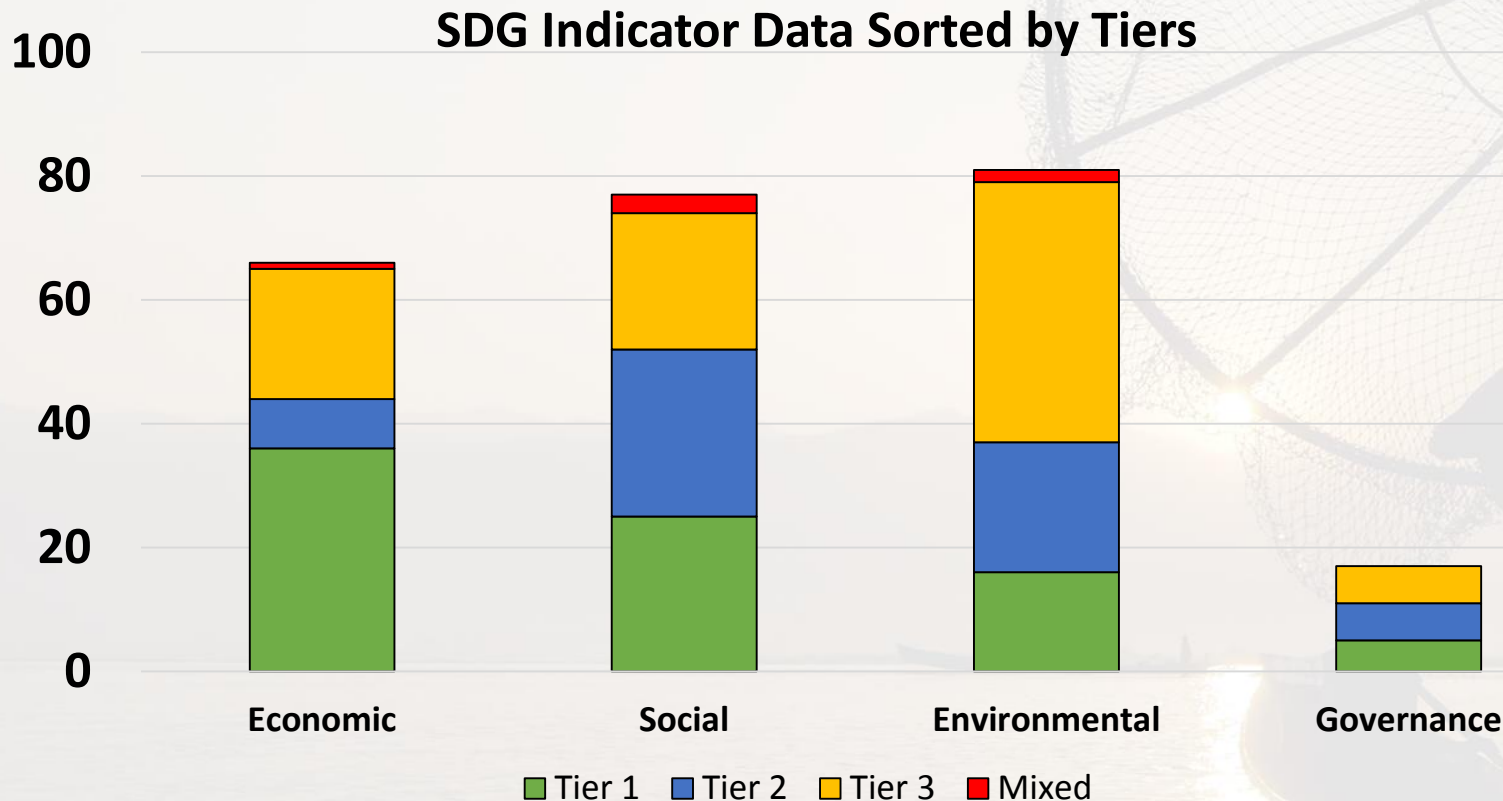
Financing and budgeting barriers/needs

- **Clear mechanisms to guide the efforts of private sector** in complementing government efforts to address SDGs 12, 14 & 15
- **Understand how to link financing (including investment opportunities/sources) to SDGs 12, 14 & 15**
- **Costing exercises to support work plans or road maps** that are being drafted to deliver SDGs 12, 14 & 15

Monitoring and reporting barriers/needs

- **Monitoring and evaluation is a huge challenge for the region**, including reporting to meet international obligations under the MEAs
- **Technical capacity and technology** to assist with collection, management and evaluation of data for SDGs 12, 14, 15 and related targets
- **Relevant statistical monitoring data**, especially for SDG 12 but also for SDGs 14 & 15 given large number of new targets and indicators
- **Use innovative data sources** to monitor SDG 12, 14 & 15 indicators where data not currently available

Regional versus global barriers/needs



Stocktake conclusions

- Many regionally important environment issues overlap with SDGs 12, 14, 15 and related targets
- Many countries are starting to leverage the SDGs to address these issues, but at target level there is considerable variation as to the issues/priorities being addressed and inter-linkages are not reflected
- Deeper integration is needed, effectively addressing inter-linkages requires changing mindsets, behaviors, capacities, mandates and the way institutions work together, at all levels
- Taking a whole-of-government approach as opposed to making decisions in linear silos alters the extent to which critical interlinkages between environment, economy and society can be addressed



Stocktake conclusions

- Top barriers for the region, including coordination, human resources, financing data and assessment, and developing monitoring indicators, are also barriers at a global level
- Many development partners are working to help overcome the identified barriers and address capacity needs, examples from the region show that integration of environment dimensions is possible
- Further, there are many existing and innovative tools that can help countries integrate SDGs 12, 14 and 15 into national policies, plans and programs
- To strengthen implementation, further guidance on how these tools can be applied to address the identified barriers and facilitate integration is needed



Thank you!