Rob Verheem Oslo 2010

Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment

A crash course on SEA

How can SEA assist governments in making informed political decisions?
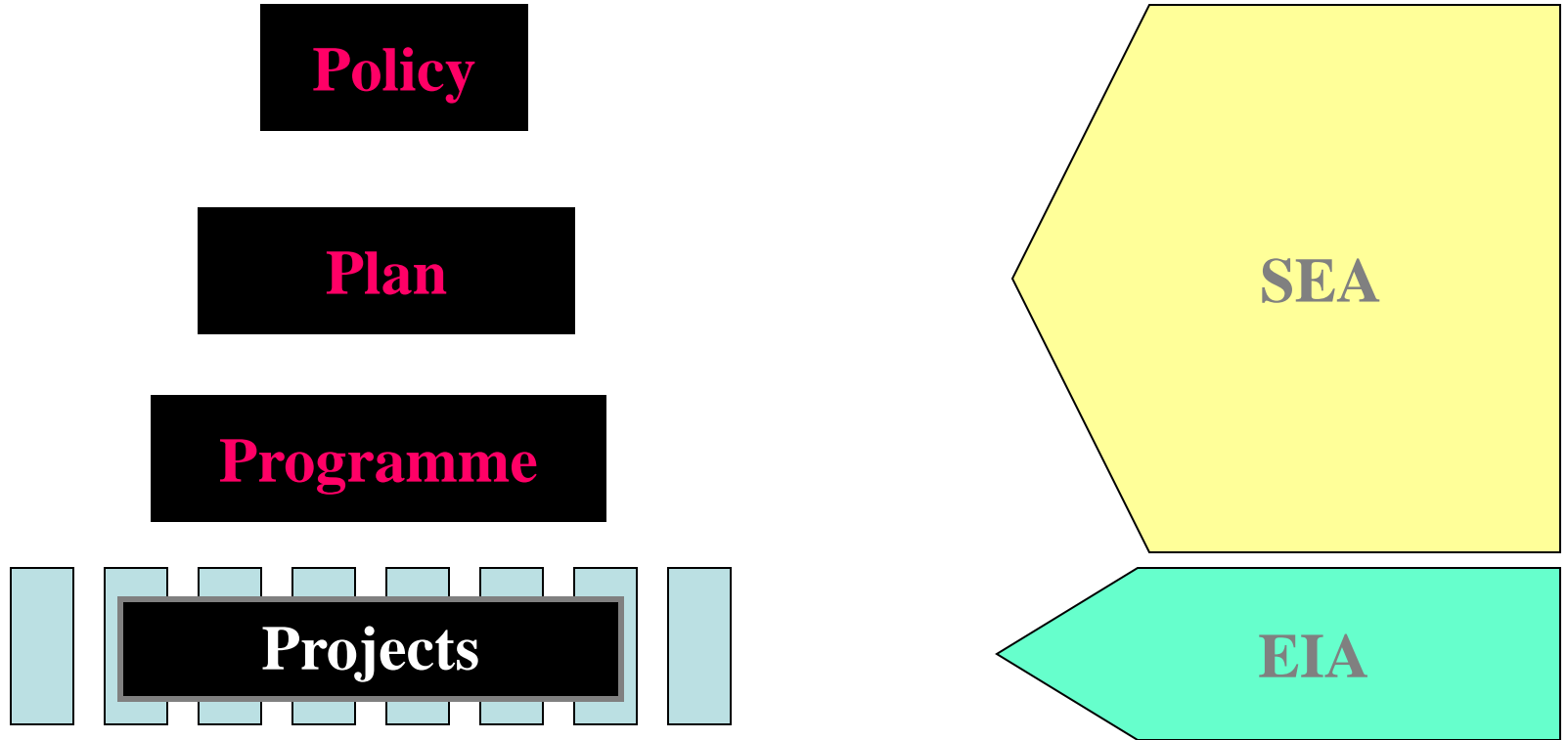
What is SEA?

OECD DAC SEA task team (2006):

- **analytical** and **participatory** approach
- to **integrate** environmental considerations into policies & plans
- to evaluate the inter linkages with **economic** and **social** considerations.

How does SEA relate to EIA?

Policy

Plan

Programme

Projects

SEA

EIA

Why is SEA used?

- Because of the benefits it brings

- A good SEA can help in:
    - *identifying better opportunities*
    - *prevent costly mistakes*
    - *building stakeholder commitment*
    - *reducing poverty more effectively*
    - *preventing conflicts*
    - *do cheaper and more effective EIA*
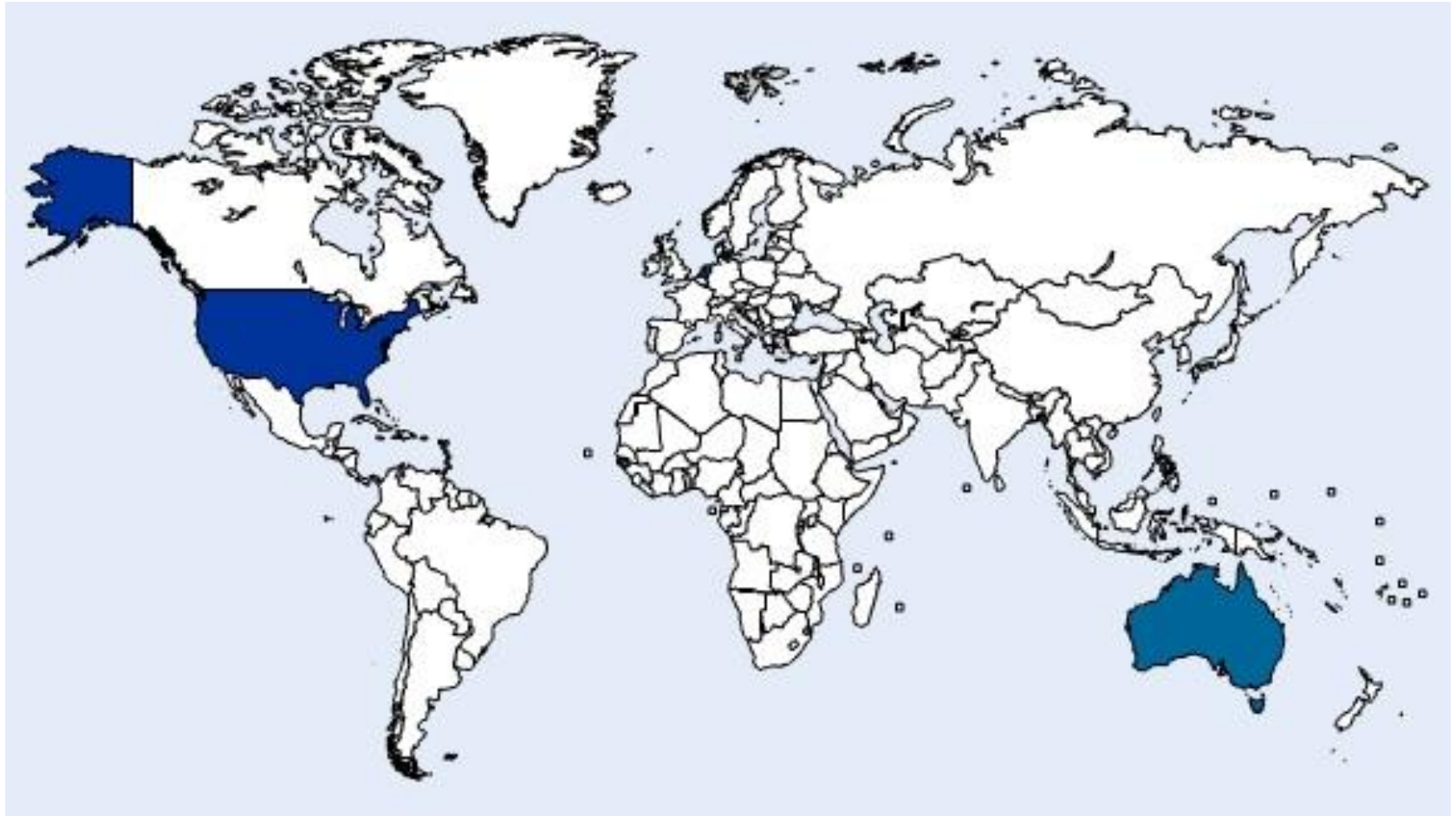
SEA & the Paris Declaration

- *Development agencies and partner countries jointly commit to develop and apply common approaches for SEA at the sector and national levels.*
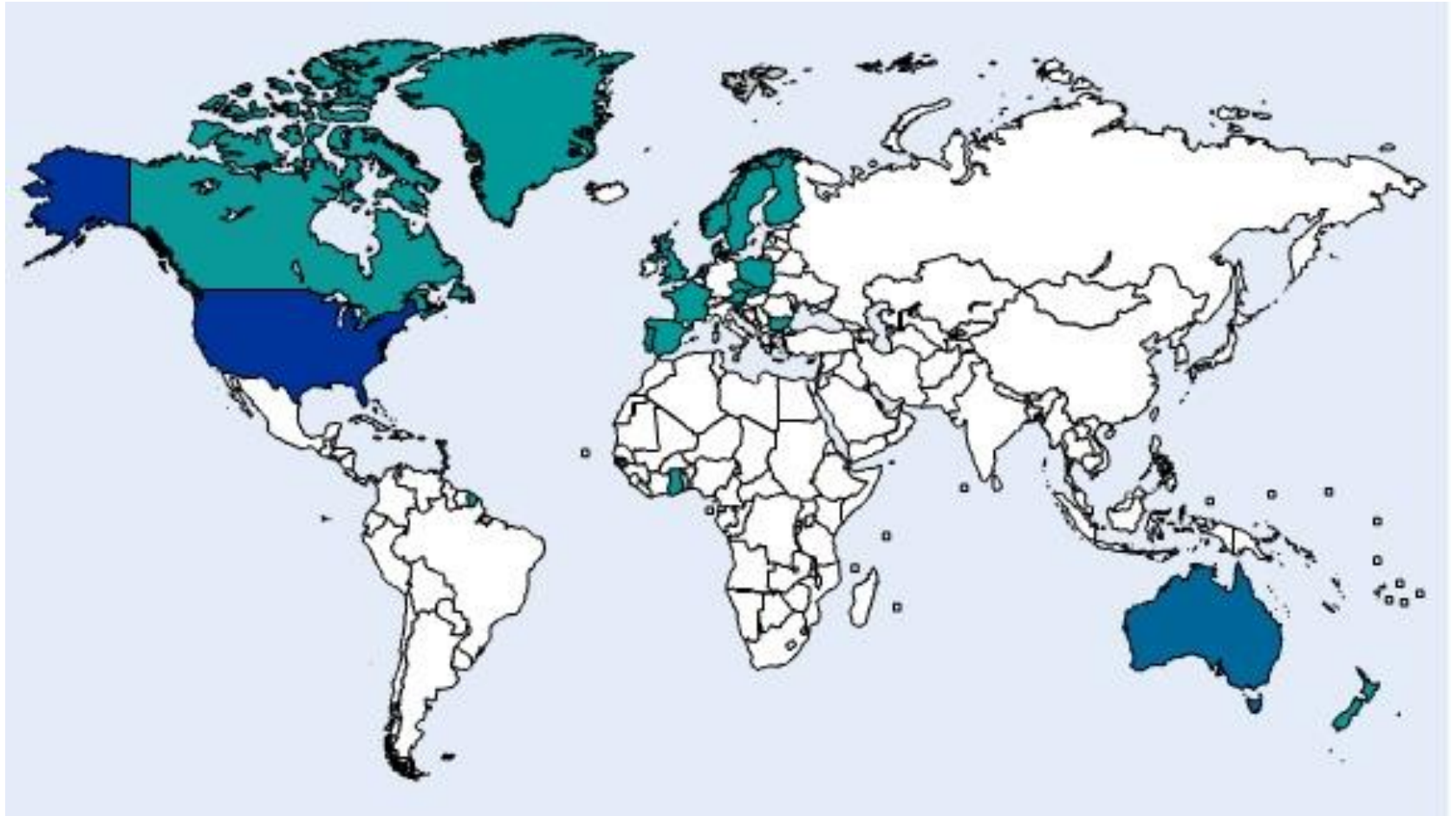
SEA and MDG 7

Target 7.A:

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes
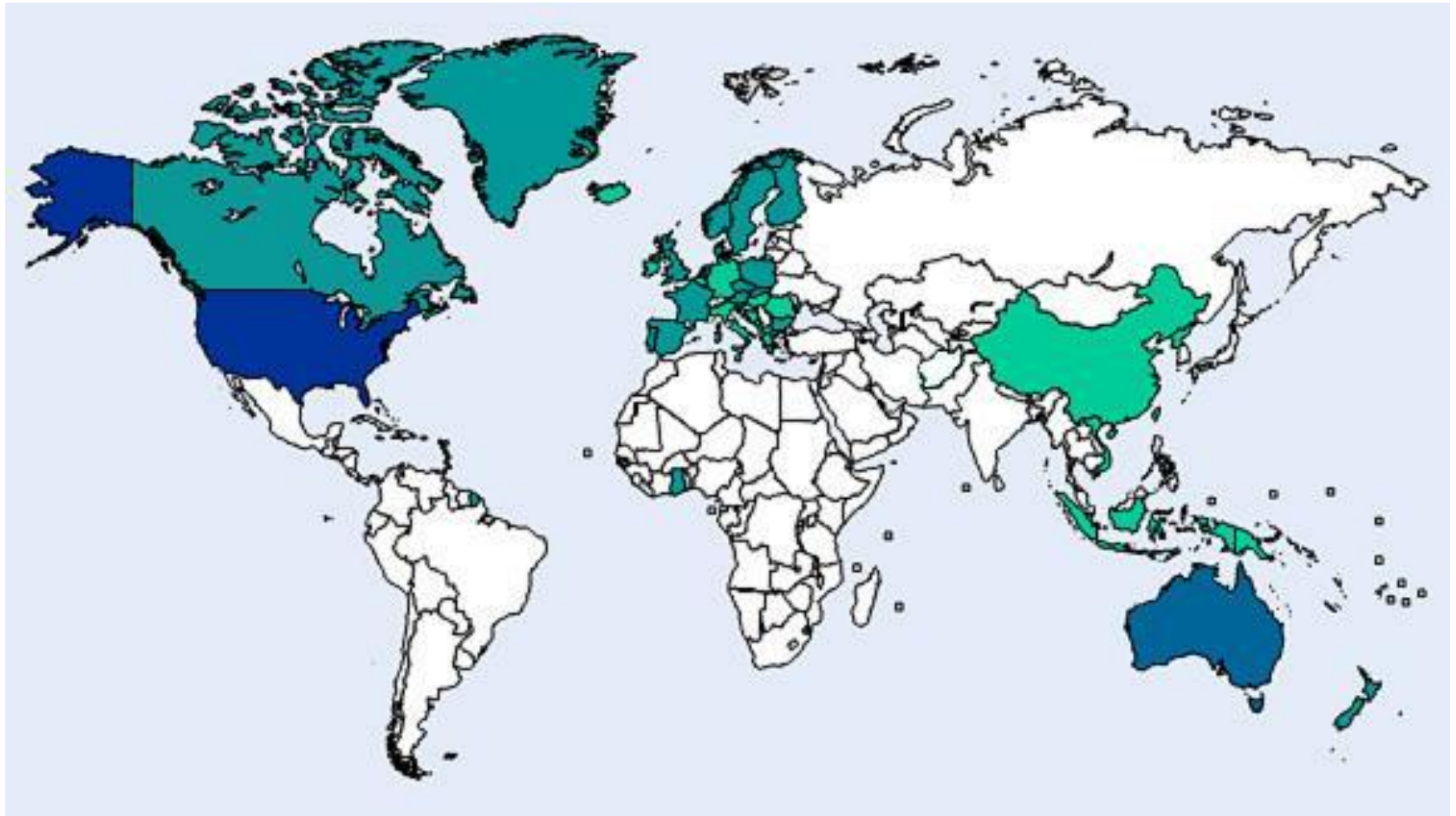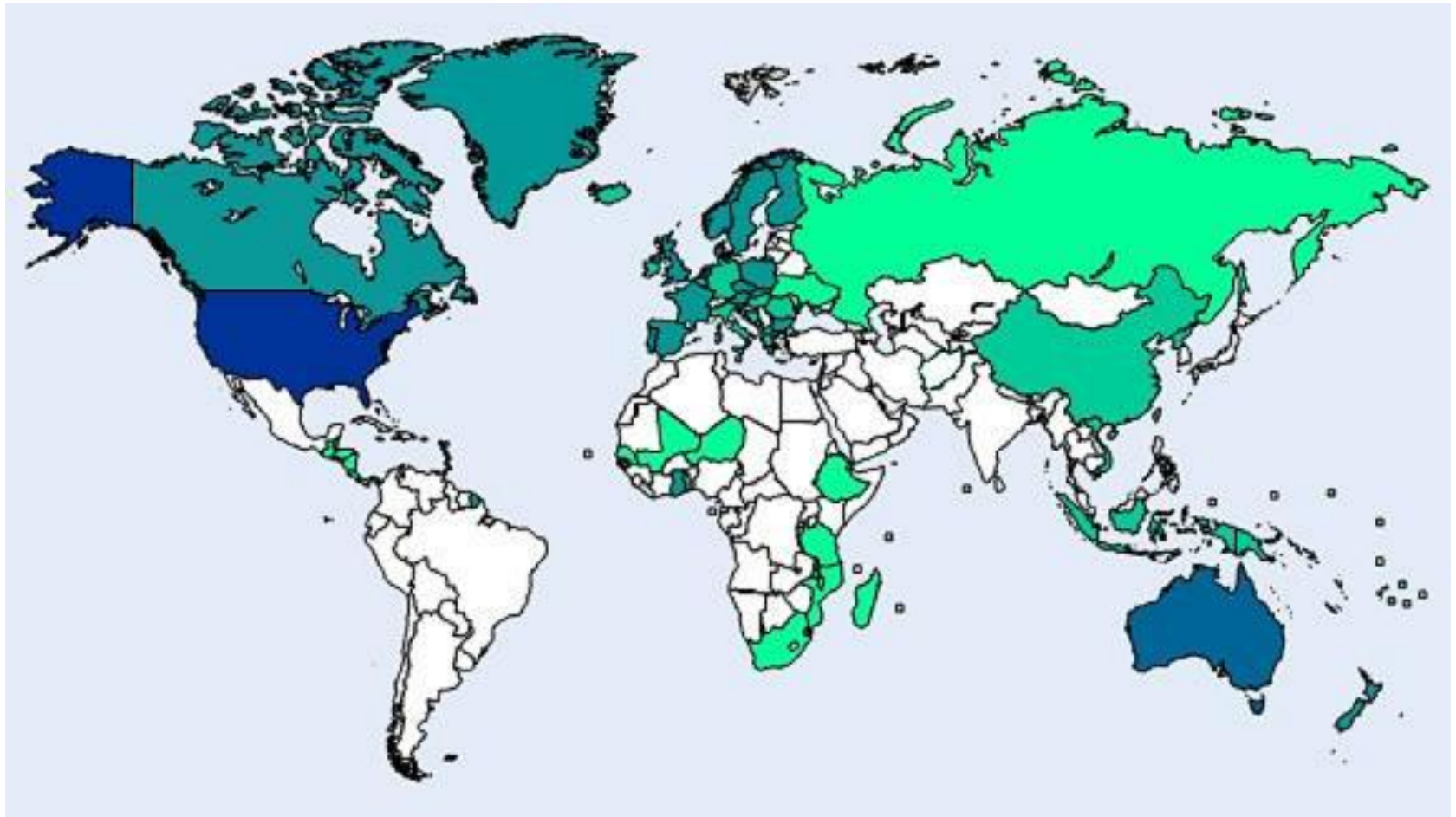
Where is SEA used? before 1990

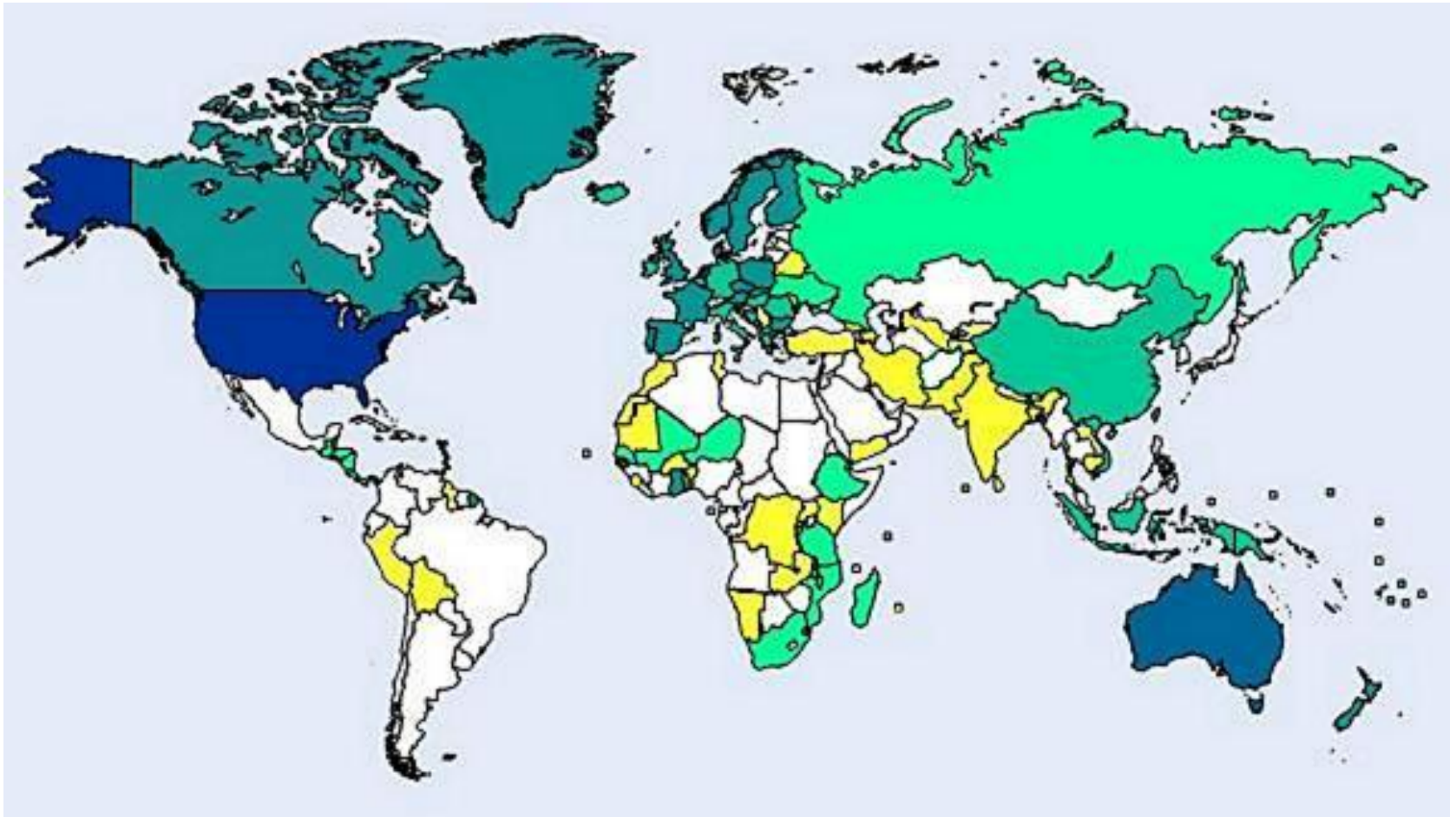# SEA legislation implemented 1990-1999

SEA legislation implemented 2000-2009
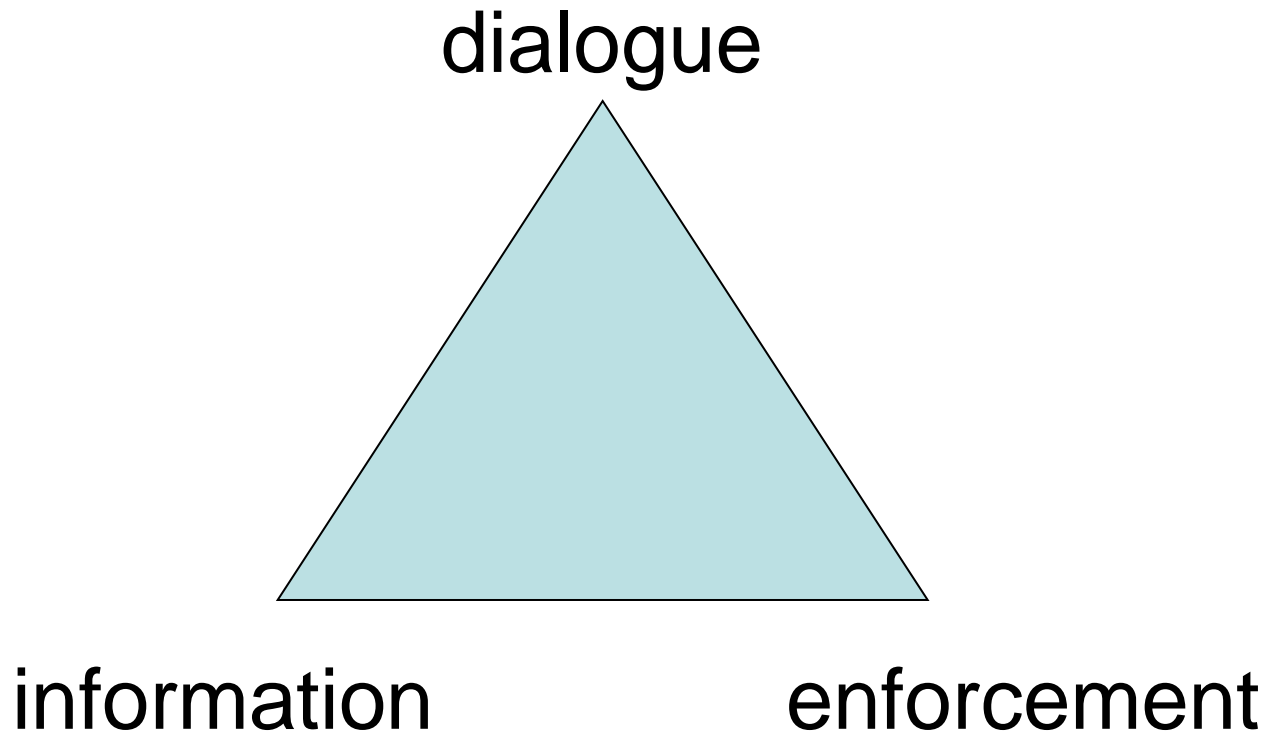
SEA legislated, not yet operational

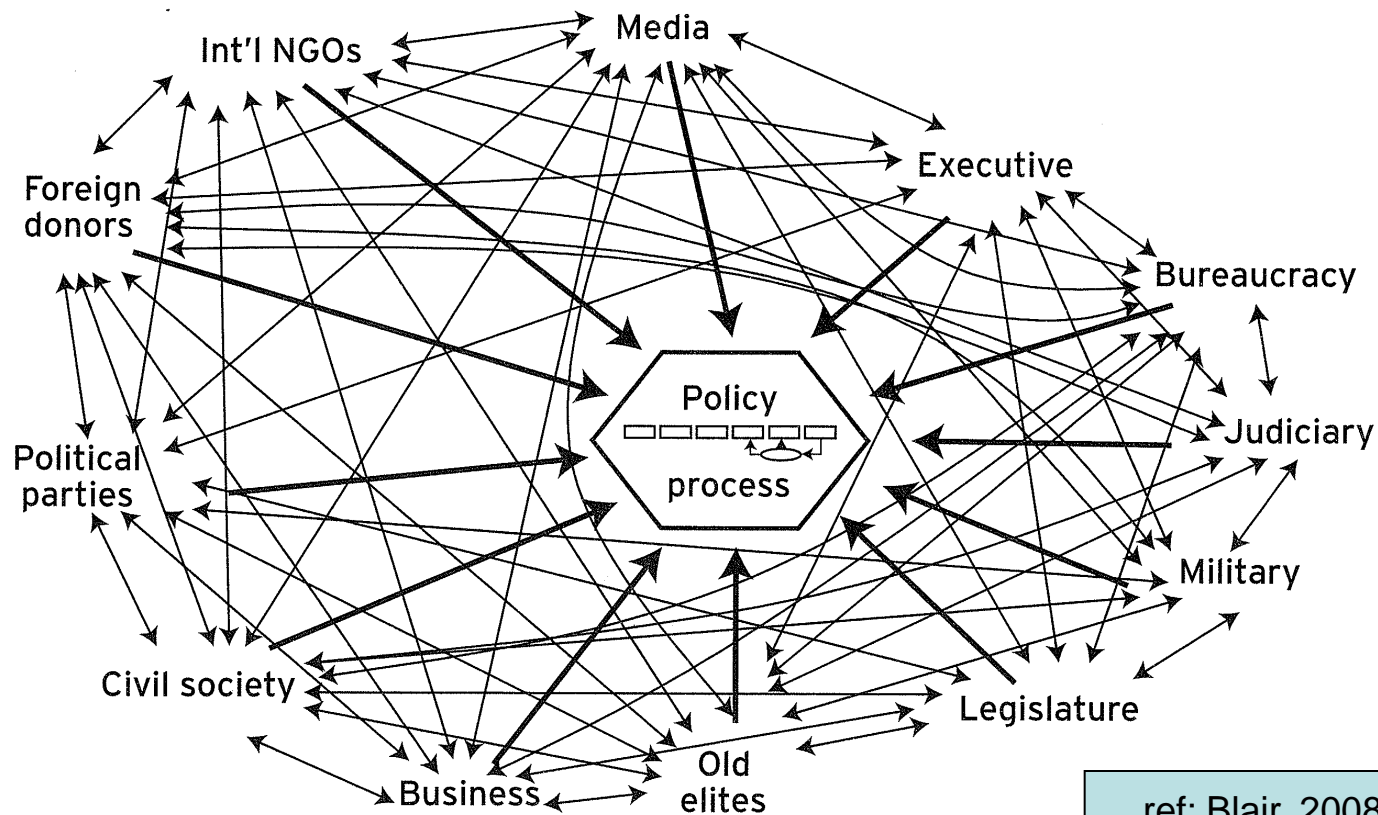# SEA activities by SEA task team members

How to do SEA?

- Many forms and shapes

- Tailor made depending on context:
  - Abstract policy or concrete plan?
  - Three years or three months available?
  - Data availability?
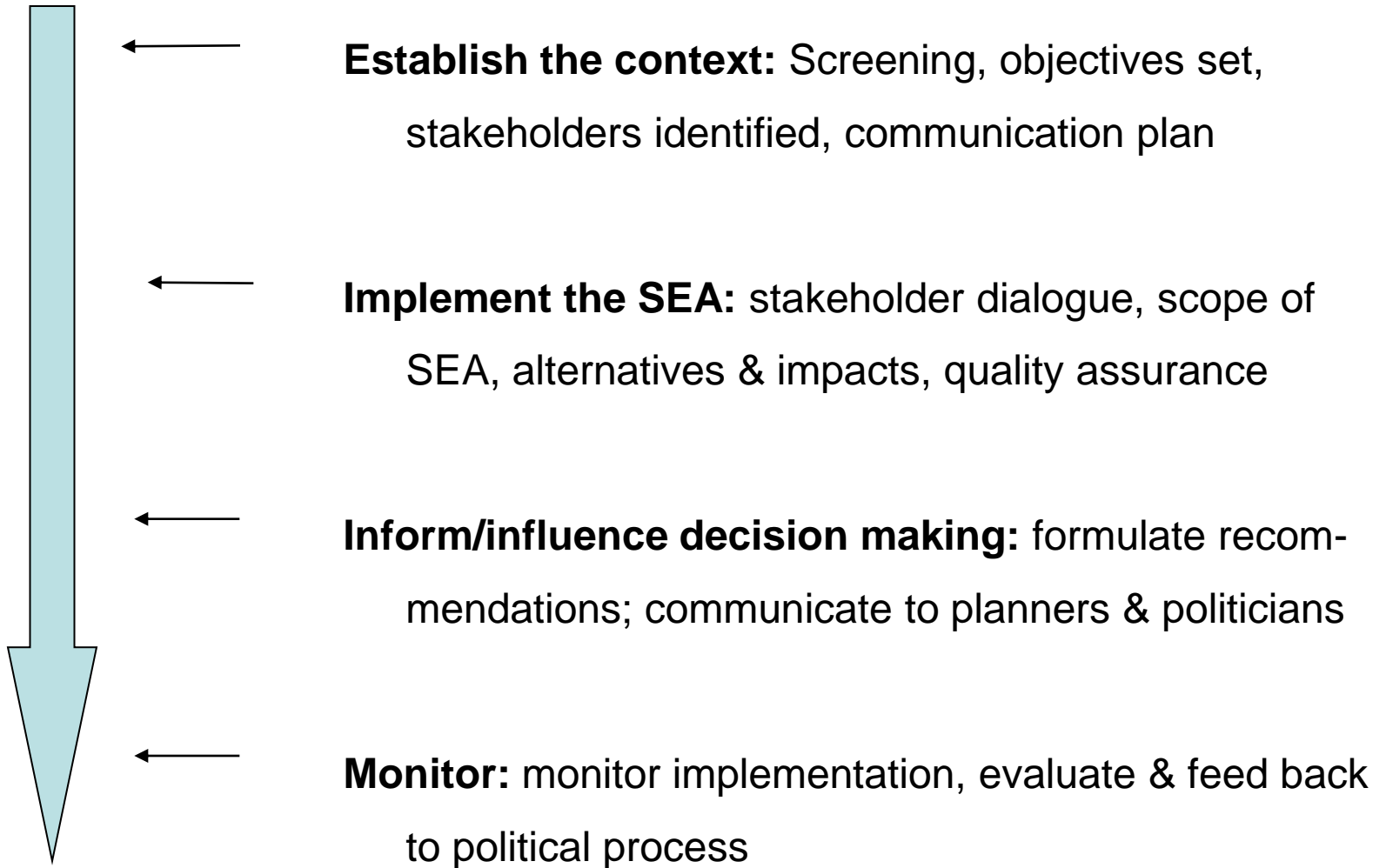 - Environment only, integrated or sustainability assessment?

What are key elements of SEA?

dialogue

information   enforcement

Influence in a complex world

ref: Blair, 2008

What are key stages in plan/program SEA?

Establish the context: Screening, objectives set, stakeholders identified, communication plan

Implement the SEA: stakeholder dialogue, scope of SEA, alternatives & impacts, quality assurance

Inform/influence decision making: formulate recom-mendations; communicate to planners & politicians

Monitor: monitor implementation, evaluate & feed back to political process

How to manage SEA in practice?

PPP   influence   dialogue   information
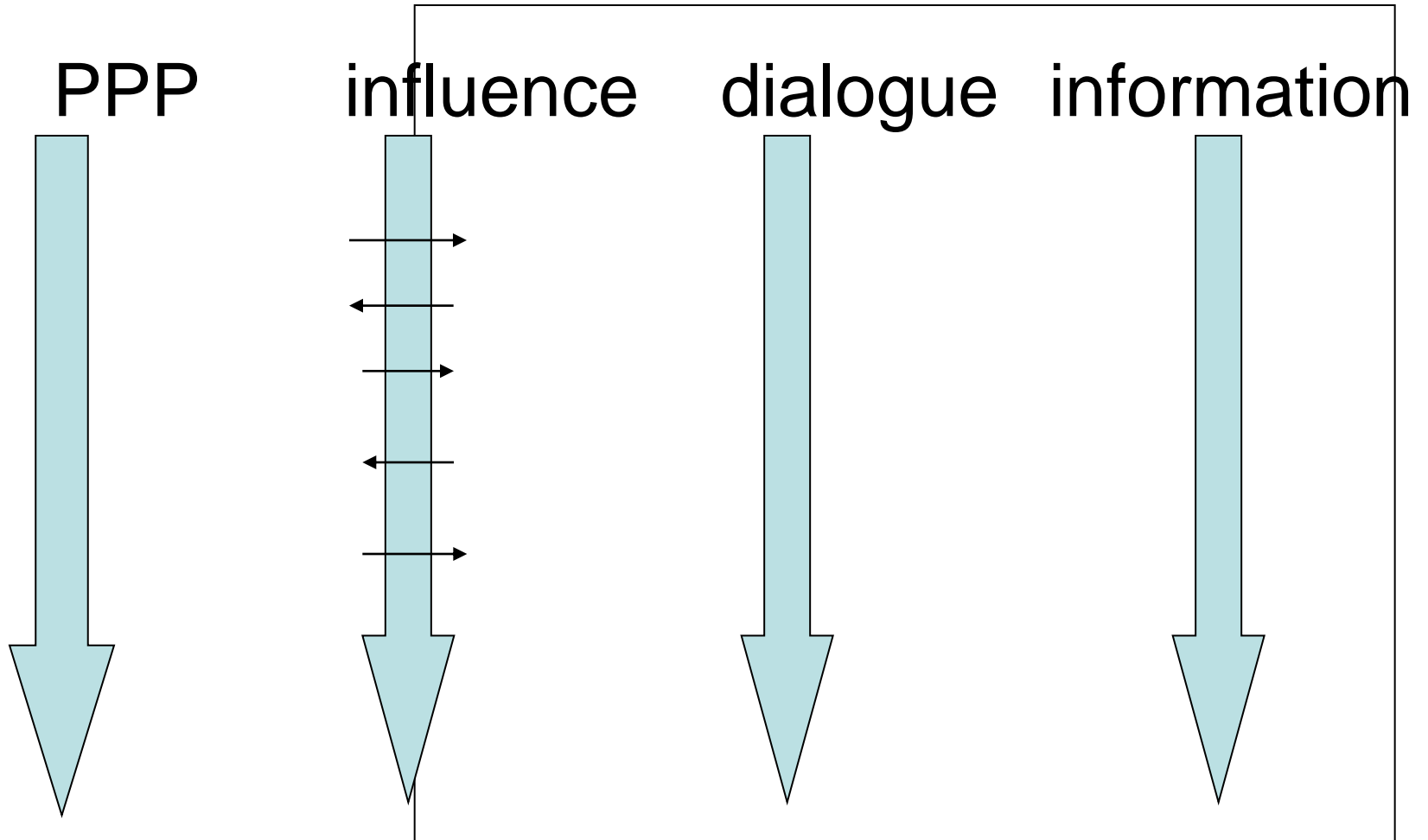
China's new SEA regulation

- China's natural resources are threatened

- SEA to safeguard a more sustainable economic growth

Example: SEA to avoid mistakes

Argentina flood protection

- 50 flood protection projects in 3 river basins

- Cumulative effects of all projects in a river basin

- SEA showed: coordination of cities and agencies in a basin urgently needed

Reform of water policy in Indonesia

- SEA response to call for greater transparency of government

- SEA included extensive public participation, thus creating trust

Example: SEA to find the best alternative

Mozambique transport SEA

– New mine and transport to harbour: proponent wants highway through sensitive ecosystem

– SEA to assess 'railway alternative':

- Less damage to ecosystems
- More beneficial side effects to country as a whole