

# Capacity needs for living evidence in environmental decision-making

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**Rapid and Living Evidence Synthesis for  
Environmental Action: Best Practices and  
Next Steps**

# Why LES matter in environmental context?

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## Context:

- Polycrisis
- Time-sensitive and urgent decisions, high uncertainty, short policy windows
- Scientific evidence evolves rapidly

Static evidence base often cannot fully support these dynamic systems.

## LES can facilitate:

- faster science–policy alignment  
=> adaptive policymaking



Photo credit: Nasa



# New systems, new needs

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- Living systems require new thinking around evidence production, knowledge brokering, evidence user engagement and evidence use
  - ✓ Specific infrastructure
  - ✓ Long-term funding to support living evidence ecosystem
  - ✓ Reconfiguration of roles and actors in evidence ecosystem
  - ✓ Methodological support for rigorous living and automated systems
  - ✓ Cross-sectoral syntheses, based on policy and practice needs

# Where evidence producers need capacity?

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**Task:** Move from project-based → continuous synthesis models

**Important roles:** evidence curators, automation/pipeline managers

## Technical & methodological capacity

- Skills in living systematic review methods (continuous searching, screening, extracting, updating, version control)
- AI-assisted workflows: AI-assisted searching, screening, data extraction pipelines
- Rigorous **standards** for (environmental) LES conduct and reporting, ensuring **quality & consistency**
- **Trust-building mechanisms** (e.g. via procedural objectivity, transparency, engagement, conflict-of-interest safeguards)

## Infrastructure

- Platforms for hosting and updating living reviews
- Interoperable data systems and open repositories for seamless data flow
- Long-term funding models
- Publishing practice for living outputs: baseline reports, updates/versioning, maybe even living protocols?

## Collaboration across evidence ecosystem

- **Co-production:** Stronger co-framing of policy- and practice-relevant questions
- Working across disciplines (environmental sciences, economics,...), capacity sharing!
- Coordinating distributed teams in continuous, rather than project-based, workflows

# Where evidence users need capacity?

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**Task:** Understand and act on continuous stream of evidence

## Evidence literacy

- Understanding what “living” means (updates, versioning)
- Interpreting conclusions

## Institutional infrastructure

- Pilot use of LES in priority areas (biodiversity,..)
- Processes to act on new evidence
- Processes to use “latest best evidence”
- Procurement models that support continuous evidence

## Collaboration with producers

- **Co-production:** Strong co-framing, questions based on policy or practice needs
- **Trust-building** (e.g. reliability, relevance, consistency, transparency, engagement, institutional endorsement)

# Further support

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## Evidence intermediaries

- Translate LES into **decision-ready formats**: briefs, dashboards (standardized)
- Help build trust to facilitate use of LES

## Tech developers

- Build interoperable user-friendly LES platforms
- Enable **transparent and validated** AI-supported pipelines
- Comply with Responsible use of AI in evidence SynthEsis (RAISE)

## Funders

- Shift to **long-term** programme funding for infrastructure & maintenance
- Incentivise collaboration across evidence ecosystem
- Support capacity building, especially in LMIC

# Opportunities

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- **Build on what exists:**

- Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative (**ESIC**)
- **Joint AI methods group** (across Cochrane, Campbell Collaboration, JBI & the Collaboration for Environmental Evidence), **RAISE** initiative
- Other LES projects, Alive's **Living evidence atlas**
- EPPI Centre's Living Evidence Synthesis **Toolkit**

- **Embed LES in real-world environmental decisions**

- Link to global policy and monitoring frameworks (SDGs, Biodiversity, Climate, Pollution, Oceans)

# Thank you!

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