



Prof. Louise Steel



Introducing UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES
Making the Humanities Matter

UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES

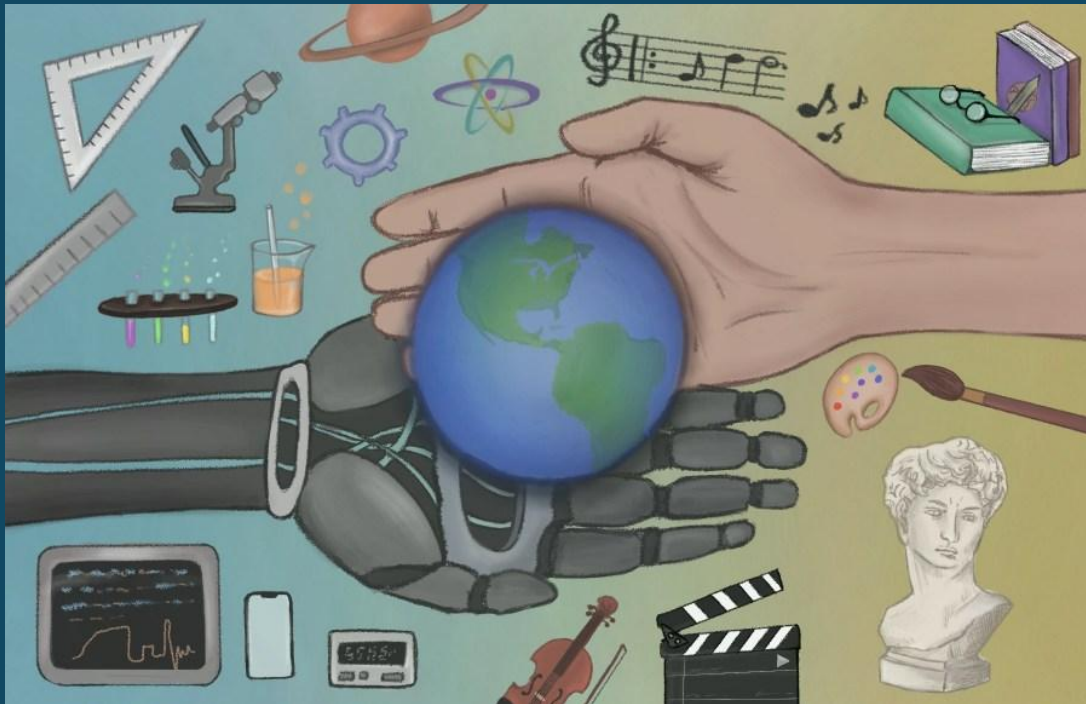


Priority programme in UNESCO-MOST

The first **humanities-driven** sustainability science initiative within UNESCO

Recognises limits of relying on environmental sciences & technological solutions

Humanities Informed Research



Changing the research landscape

How a problem is understood in the humanities is different to how it is understood in the sciences

Emphasis on
historical and
cultural
context

Critical
awareness of
ethical
concerns

Respecting
different
knowledges
and expertise

Club of Rome
Knowledge-Action Hub

Princeton/CUNY Hub
Past socio-ecological change,
adaptation & resilience

University of Pretoria
Southern African Hub

University of Cologne
Planetary Health Hub

University of Wales
UK Hub



Hub Family Network

Transdisciplinary Approach



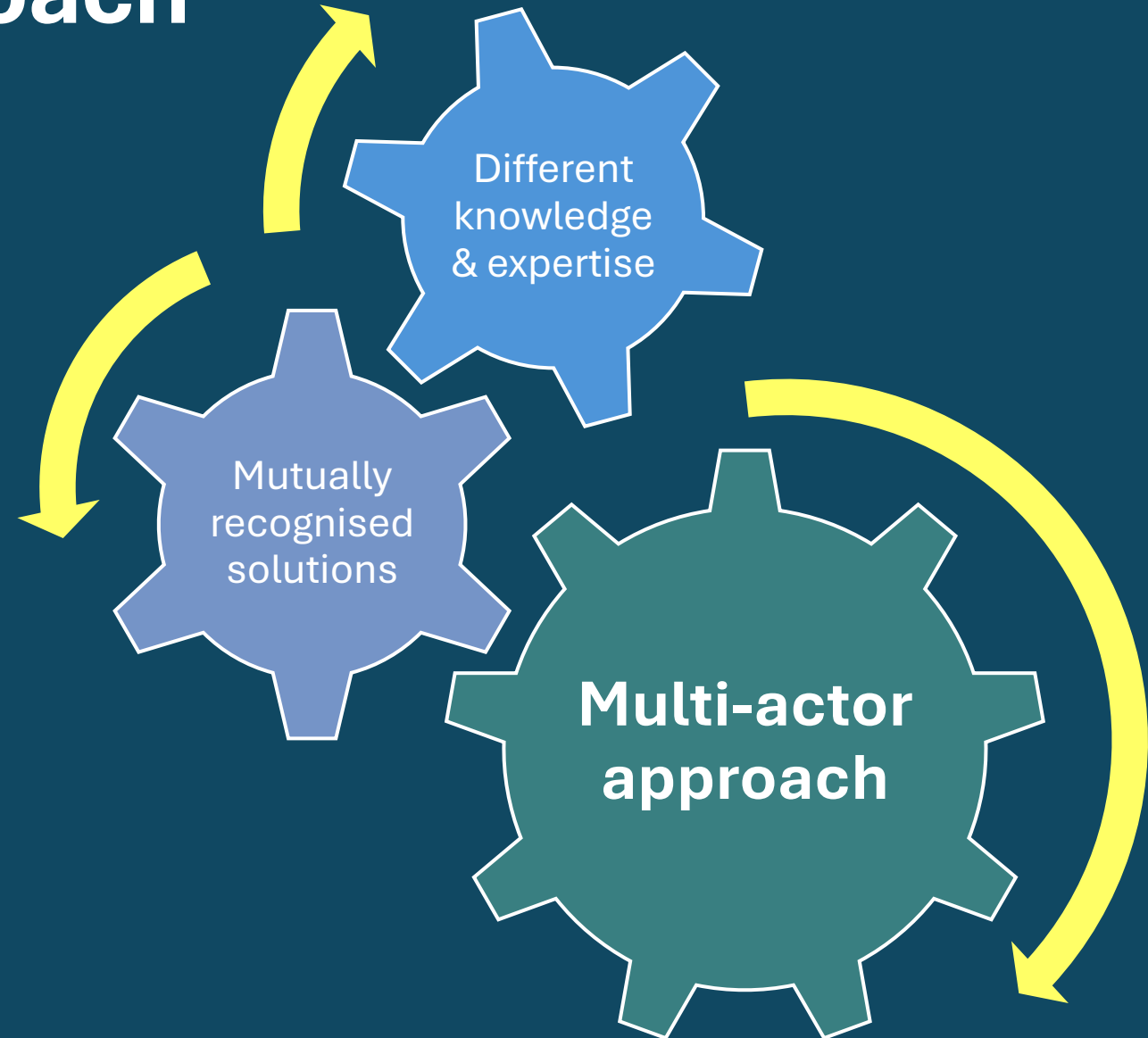
Inclusive research which recognises and embeds the concerns and expertise of people outside academia



Societal partners are equally involved in co-designing research to address significant social issues



All parties are equally engaged in co-producing outputs



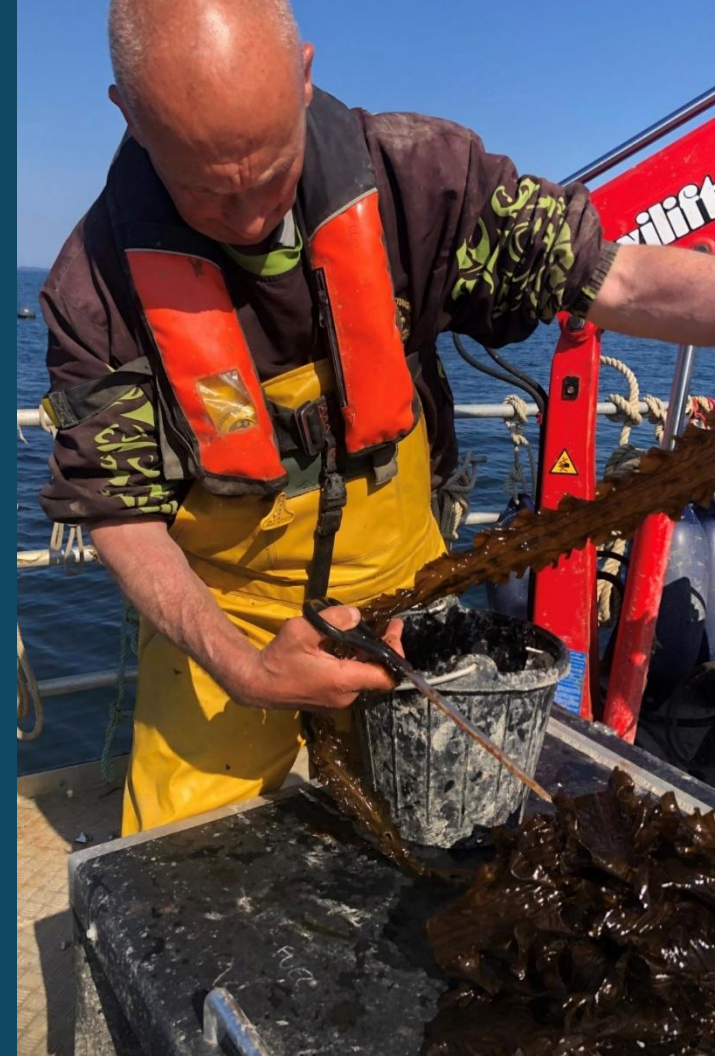
Braiding Knowledges:

Co-creation of mutually endorsed local solutions

Ethical: shared values and responsibility

Shared ownership of knowledge, results,
dissemination

Respecting different knowledges and expertise



Climate and Cultural Heritage Joint Call

- Role of cultural heritage in climate adaptation
- Intangible cultural heritage is increasingly recognised as an important resource for climate adaptation



Coastal TALES

Telling Adaptations: Living Environmental Stories for Coastal Resilience

Environmental Story-Telling



Indigenous and Traditional Knowledges



Climate Adaptation





How can traditional stories help deliver innovative local solutions to the changing climate in northern coastal regions?

Participant Observation

- Attentive engagement
- Living/working **with** a community
- Understanding lived experience and embodied knowledge in context
- Creating enduring relationships through participating in daily activities
- Not separating ourselves from and objectifying the community
- “is not about writing other lives, but joining with them in the common task of finding ways to live” (Ingold 2018: 14)



Emerging Themes

- Importance of recording traditional knowledge before it disappears
- Qualitative knowledge vs. quantitative data
- Value of embodied, place-based knowledge
- Need for localised solutions
- Problems of regulations & legislation



Intangible Heritage

- Cardigan Bay Fish: trying to preserved traditional ways of fishing that are gradually being forgotten
- Preserving (and honouring) the practices of their ancestors, because they know they might be last ones
- Embodied knowledge: choreographed actions, very ritualised practices that work



Ancestral Knowledges

- Coracles: very ancient, indigenous river fishing practice
- A way of life which is on the brink of extinction
- Work in pairs in little bowl boats
- Work at night & know river by feel, flow soundscapes
- Embodied knowledge which can only be taught by doing.
- Deep intimate knowledge of how the river once was and an emotional attachment to being in the river



First Findings from Coastal TALES



- How to translate traditional, local heritage knowledge to policy makers
- Gap between deeply embedded ancestral knowledge and short-term politics
- Mismatch between rhythms of the ecosystem and the timeline of legislation and licensing



Any questions?

