

Building up Regional to Global Sustainability:

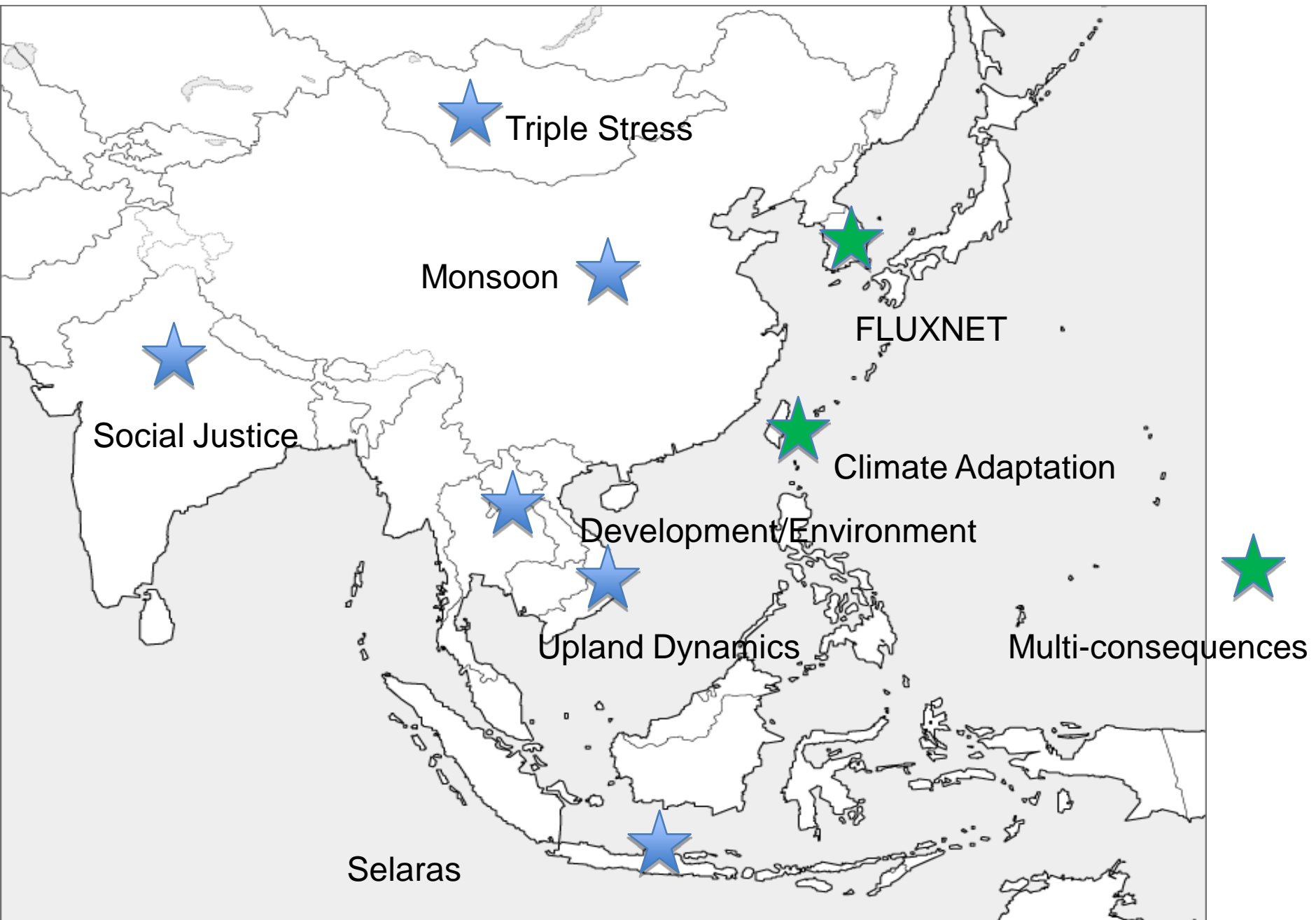
## Asia Vision

# Reports on Asian Environmental Issues

## Session 1



Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), Kyoto, Japan



# Regional Perspective on Sustainability

## ..... Diversity

The regional perspective demonstrates the great geographical, ecological, social diversity found in Asia;

*And yet* the high degree of social-ecological, economic and climate and biophysical interaction and linkages that creates this diversity.

*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*    Unity in diversity



# Regional Perspective on Sustainability

.....Hotspot

We can observe in Asia both the causes and effects of key social-ecological problems of our time .

No global sustainability without Asian sustainability

Our key question from the session:

How can our understanding of the Asian region contribute to an Asian vision of sustainability that can illuminate what is needed in global sustainability?



# Asian Challenges

- Historical patterns of resource use and extraction
- Persisting developmental needs and potential (the poor and disenfranchised in India, in the steep lands of N. Vietnam)
- Challenges of globalization (investment that doesn't support local livelihoods, cultural change marked by confusion among traditional knowledge and value systems)
- Unique climatic phenomena (e.g. monsoon), changes in these systems related to climate change (increased flash flood, drought), and high disaster risk



# Asian Challenges

- Challenges to traditional livelihood systems (e.g., pastoralists) and to traditional resource management regimes (e.g., water)
- Navigating trade-offs associated with development goals and social justice (e.g., dam building)
- Inequity between people and between sub-regions
- Social and ecological concerns associate with increased resource trade within the region (e.g., water diversion, energy/hydropower export)

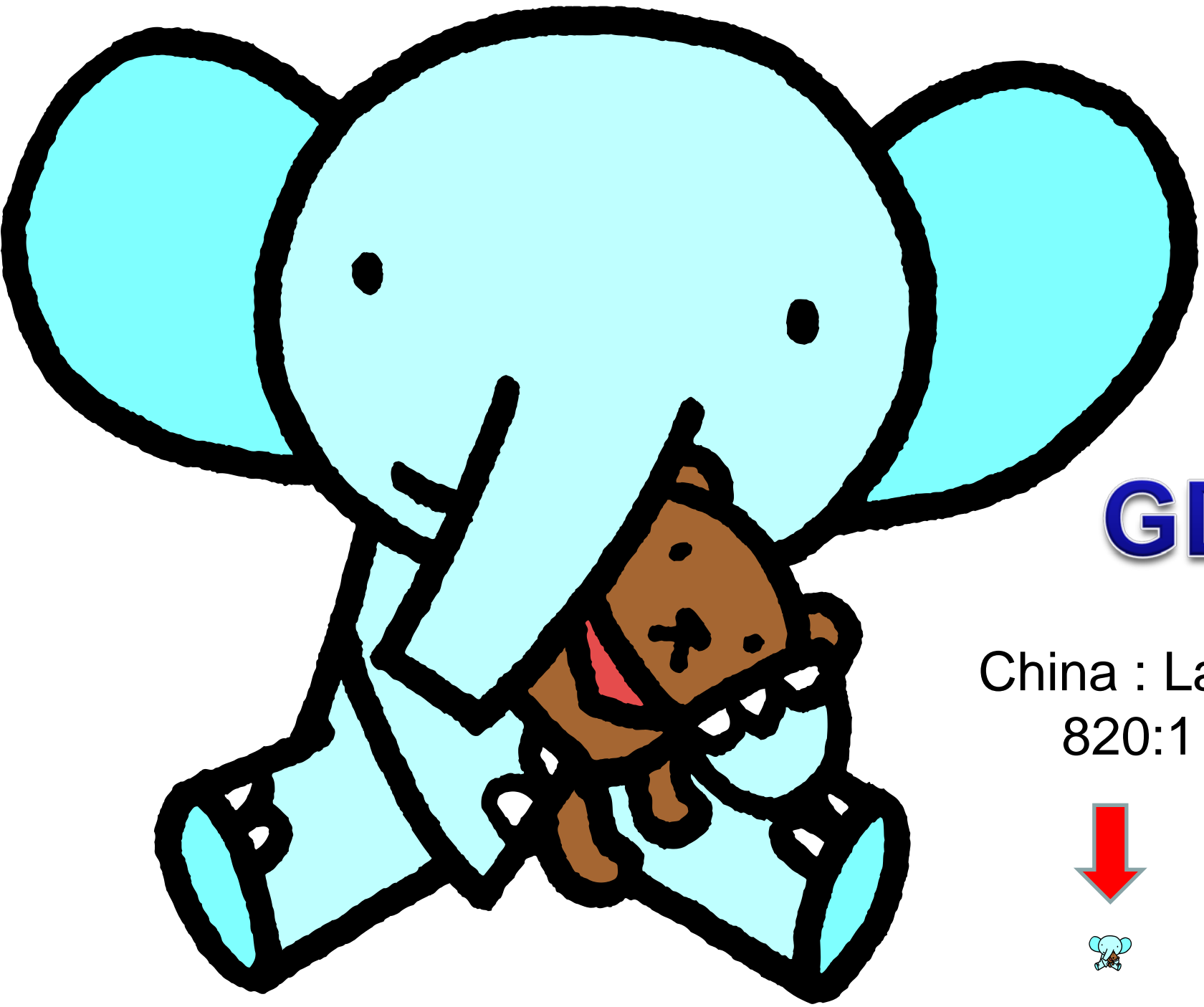




# Population

China : Laos  
235: 1





GDP

China : Laos  
820:1





# Asian Challenges

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- Navigating trade-offs associated with development goals and social justice (e.g., dam building)
- Inequity between people and between regions
- **Social and ecological concerns associate with increased resource trade within the region (e.g., water diversion, energy/hydropower export)**



# Asian Goals

- Move from development based on value extraction to that based on Asian way of human capacity building
- Educate future generations to devise innovative and integrative approaches to environmental problem solving
- Promote the marriage of traditional wisdom, formed from long-term, co-evolved socio-ecological systems, with the impulses of modernization  
温故知新



# Asian Goals

- Encourage forms of investment and development that support livelihoods
- Balance rural and urban development  
⇒ Session 2-3
- Create conditions for economic and environmental equity that supports basic human needs and freedoms and social equity (not just poverty reduction)
- Reduce environmental degradation and encourage sustainable use of resources



# To Global Goal

- With six months since the disaster in Japan, the world has witnessed too clearly the possibility of 'unthinkable' environmental events, the great danger they present to human life, and their capacity to rework human patterns of thought and action. Our best understandings of present patterns of social and ecological change indicate that humanity is entering a period of thresholds, of increased likelihood of rapid and unpredictable change in social-ecological systems. Addressing contemporary change requires collaborative and transdisciplinary research capable of describing this change in its real complexity.
- At the same time, we must turn our attention to these problems now, and not delay, and develop the vision for local, regional and global sustainability that allow communities and societies to make decisions based on their best understandings of the contemporary world and of human wellbeing in the midst of dynamic and changeable nature.
- We must apply the full range of human intelligence to this task.

