



# **Governance for the just transition**

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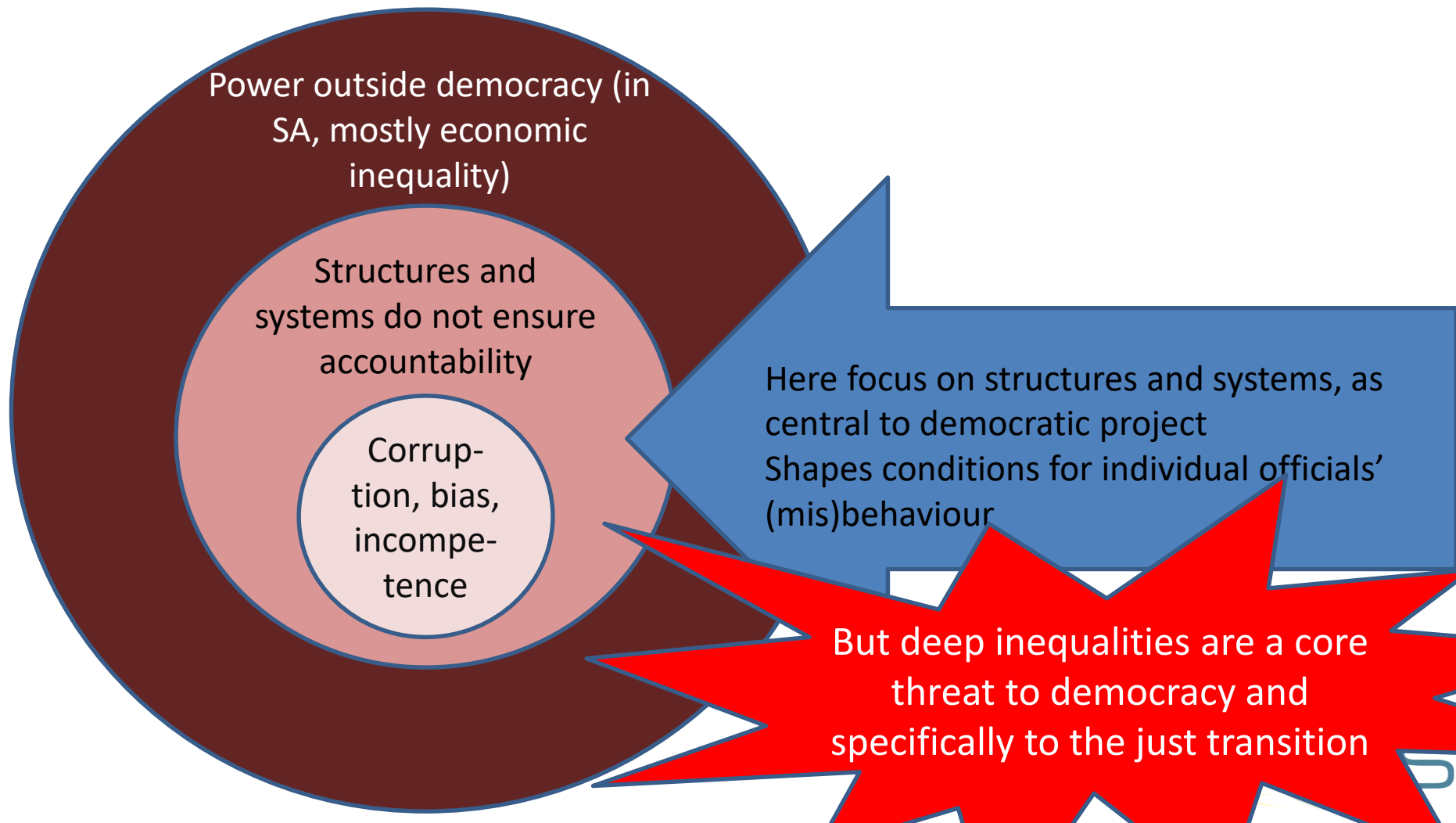
# The just transition and collective action

- Five key impacts (using TOC terminology)
  - Net zero emissions
  - Working people and communities that depend on emissions-intensive industries find alternative livelihoods
  - Anticipate and address the effects of climate change on working people and the poor
  - Stronger participatory democracy and collective action by working people and their communities
  - The transition maximises economic and social opportunities for society as a whole
- Requires fundamental shifts in social relations and market outcomes
- Government has critical role in shaping collective action
- Challenges:
  - Pursuing sustainable solutions in unpredictable conditions
  - Empowering affected citizens to influence decisions
  - Promoting solidarity and collaboration in implementation



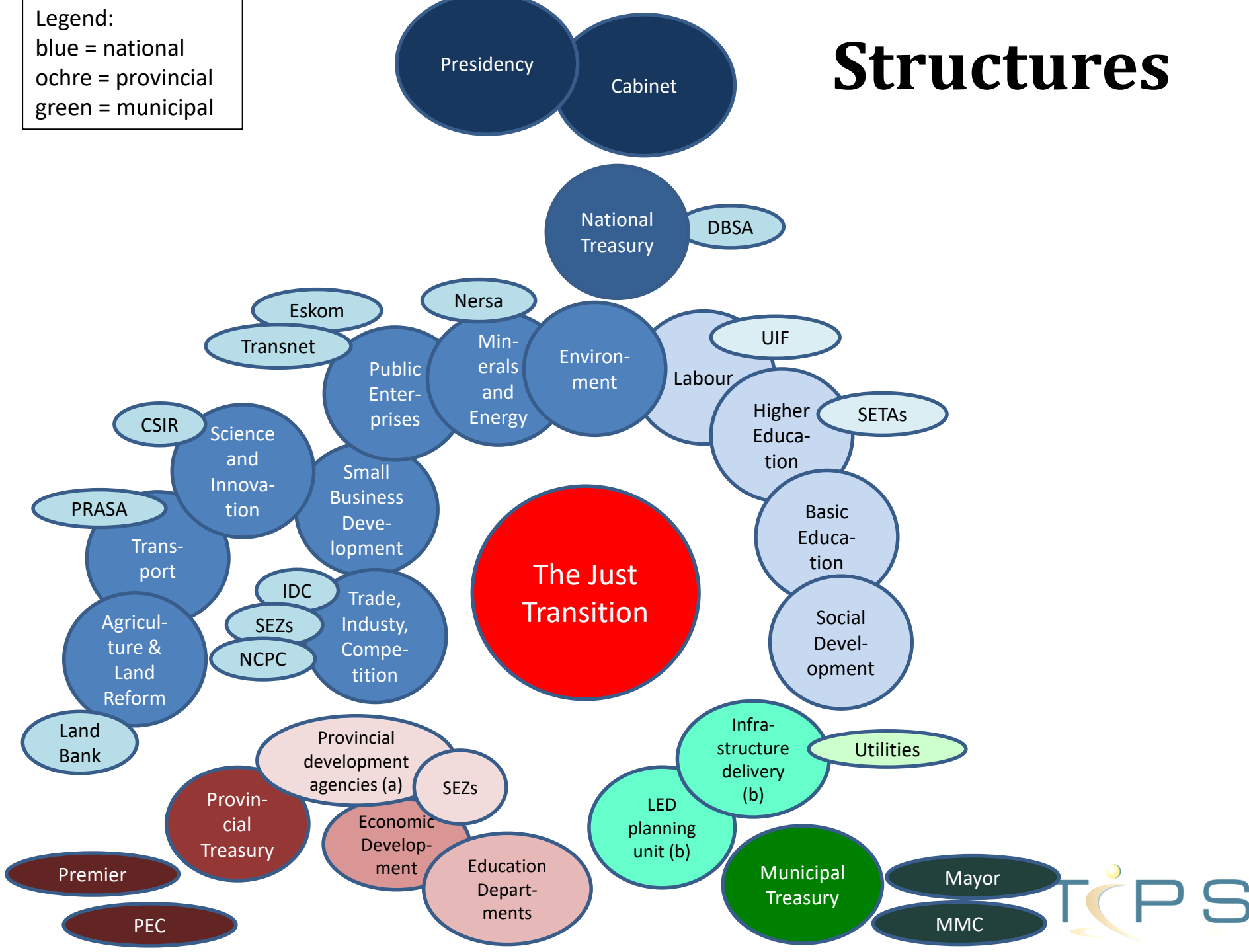
Already seeing contestation, delays and inconsistencies.  
How to improve outcomes?

# What undermines effective governance?



Legend:  
blue = national  
ochre = provincial  
green = municipal

# Structures



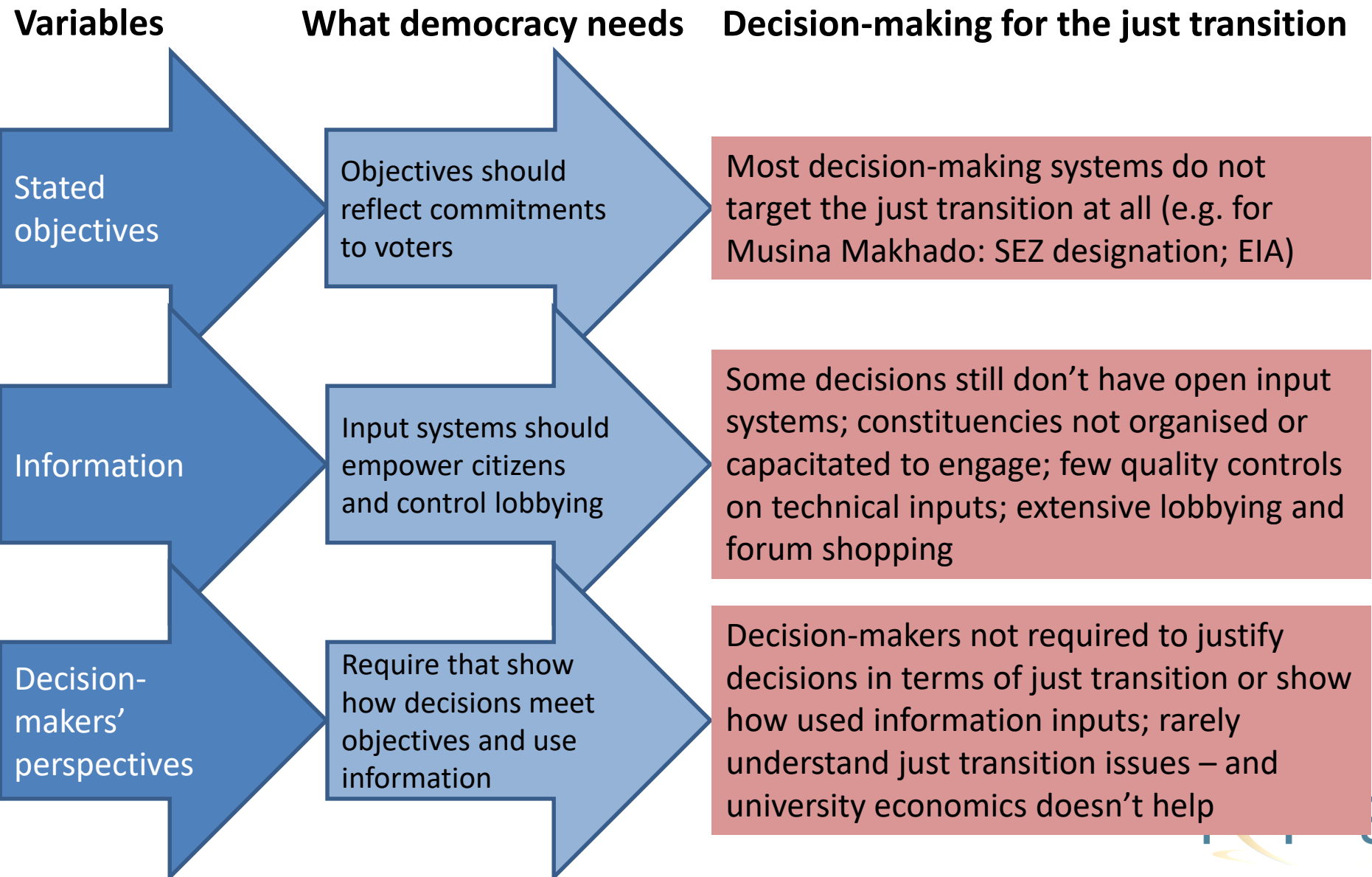
# Why?

- Overall, the state is fragmented
  - Ad hoc allocation of responsibilities for just transition as crisis has intensified
  - Impacts are not articulated clearly, much less prioritised
    - Not in mandates or KPIs for almost any department except DFFE
  - If included at all, then in terms of outputs
    - e.g. DMRE has KPIs for evaluating how it measures emissions, but not progress in reducing them
  - Means often under-resourced
- Weak coordination mechanisms
    - Do not define priority impacts for the just transition and measure progress against them
    - Only Cabinet and the courts can finally resolve disputes – they may drag on forever
    - Forums do not exist for many functions and are usually under-resourced

# Spheres

- Climate impacts largely local, but national state critical to ensure funding, technical capacity and coherence
- Autonomous elected governments but very limited Constitutional roles for provinces and municipalities
  - Municipalities: Supply and pricing of local infrastructure (bulk of spending); licencing local business; tourism promotion
  - Provinces: Education and health (75% of spending); SEZs; provincial roads; some housing
  - National: Economic and energy policy, bulk infrastructure, social grants and labour policy, security services, providing post-secondary education, setting policy on general education and health, some housing
- Municipal revenues and capacity vary sharply depending largely on apartheid spatial planning/investment
- Typically very limited capacity for economic policy – dominated by infrastructure and spatial planning with focus on households
- Biggest challenges:
  - Coal towns (mostly secondary cities in Mpumalanga – historically a heavy industrial centre)
  - Rural towns especially in historic labour-sending regions that depend on agriculture and tourism

# Decision-making systems



# Participatory democracy and the just transition

- Include citizens and their organisations directly in decision-making
- May mean:
  - Setting objectives for decision-making systems
  - Providing information
  - Helping to make decisions directly
- Participation can have various aims:
  - Information gathering (e.g. group interviews, hearings)
  - Mobilisation (e.g. training, discussions and mandating)
  - Negotiations with stakeholders
- Each differs in:
  - Participants
  - Role of technical expertise
  - Costs and risks
- Challenges:
  - Constituencies are not organised
  - Inequality affects ability to engage
  - Solutions are inherently technical
  - No time or space for public participation
  - Few officials understand how to promote participation
- Risks and costs
  - Time for engagement and mandating
  - Disappointed expectations vs flexibility
  - Managing compromise



# Using evidence

- Evidence for policymaking is always a patchwork
- Harder because just transition is occurring in a crisis – so rapidly changing conditions and science
- How to manage uncertainty without paralysis?
- The precautionary principle
  - ***Take action, but adapt as information improves***
  - Understand as a process:
    - Applies when inaction risks “serious, irreversible and uncertain consequences”
    - Decision-makers do not need to prove every move beyond a reasonable doubt but rather have shared burden of proof
    - between state and cost-bearers;
    - Government establishes iterative processes that permit decisive action but ensure learning and improvement over time;
    - Government is open to alternatives and new options based on improved information. (Bourguignon 2015:8)
- E.g.: The change in responses to COVID-19 as scientific understanding improved - from full lockdown to restrictions only on indoor social gatherings

# Some questions

- Can the impacts and outcome targets proposed for the just transition in the paper be improved?
- In terms of the session's questions around how to achieve coherence, participation, capacity and agreement on priorities:
  - What structures should drive the just transition nationally and locally?
  - What changes to decision-making systems would ensure consequences when the aims of the just transition are not being met?
  - How to ensure that just-transition oversight and implementation structures respond to the views of working people and the available evidence, rather than informal elite networks and groupthink?
  - What is the role of NEDLAC in the just transition?



**Re a leboha!**