

# A Regional Framework for the Next Generation of Urban Greening

in the San Francisco Bay Area



**Lauren Stoneburner**, Melissa Foley

October 29, 2025 | State of the San Francisco Estuary Conference

A research institute delivering  
**visionary science** that  
empowers people to  
**revitalize nature**  
in our communities

# SFEI

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Photo by Shira Bezalel

[sfei.org](https://sfei.org)

# Presentation overview

- **Needs and challenges** of planning for multiple benefits
- A **Regional Framework** for urban greening
- A path to **regional collaboration**

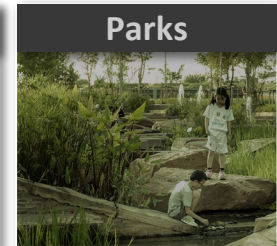
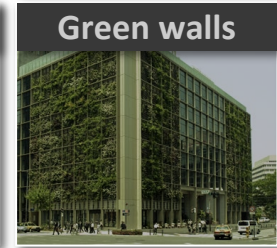


# - Urban greening -

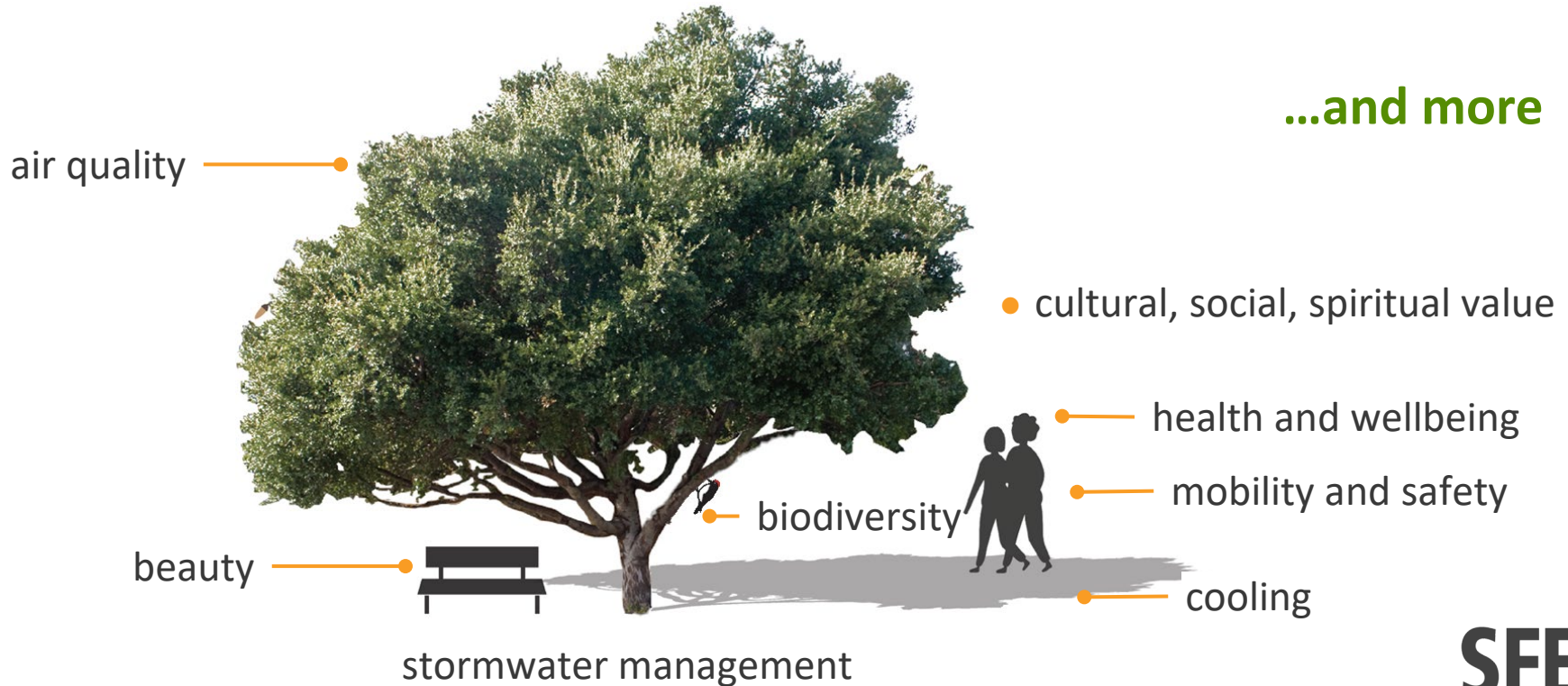
**Nature-based solutions** in urban areas that **mimic natural processes** and deliver **multiple benefits**

*Also called:*

- *green infrastructure*
- *green stormwater infrastructure*
- *nature-based solutions*
- *low-impact development*



# Planning can boost multiple benefits of urban greening





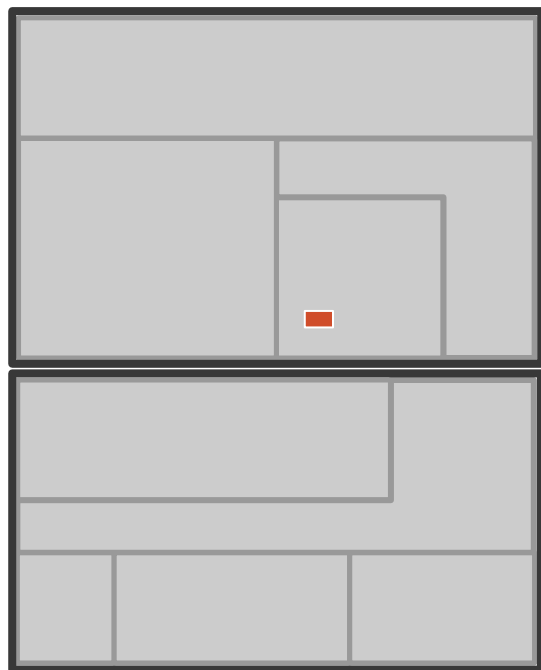
# Scale affects benefit outcomes

■ site

- Detailed assessments
- Responsive to local needs



# Scale affects benefit outcomes



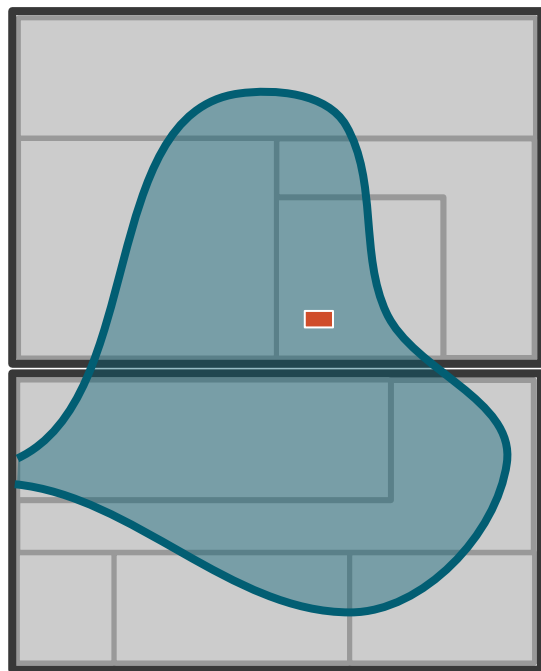
■ site

city

county

- Detailed assessments
- Responsive to local needs
- Network of projects
- Align with jurisdictional boundaries

# Scale affects benefit outcomes



■ site

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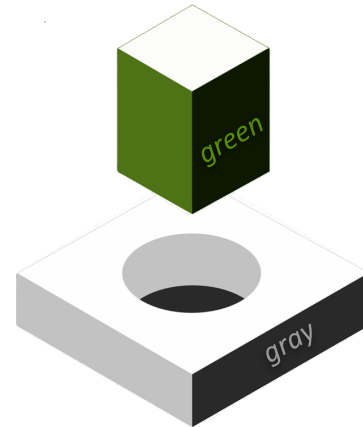
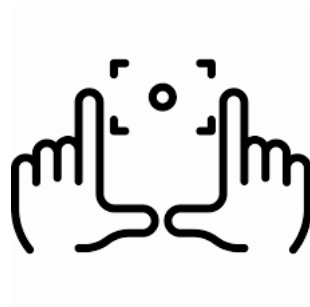
watershed

- Detailed assessments
- Responsive to local needs
- Network of projects
- Align with jurisdictional boundaries
- Intergovernmental coordination
- Manage the full system



# Landscape-scale planning is challenging

- Limited (and unequal) resources
- Narrow jurisdiction and mandates
- Systems built around gray infrastructure



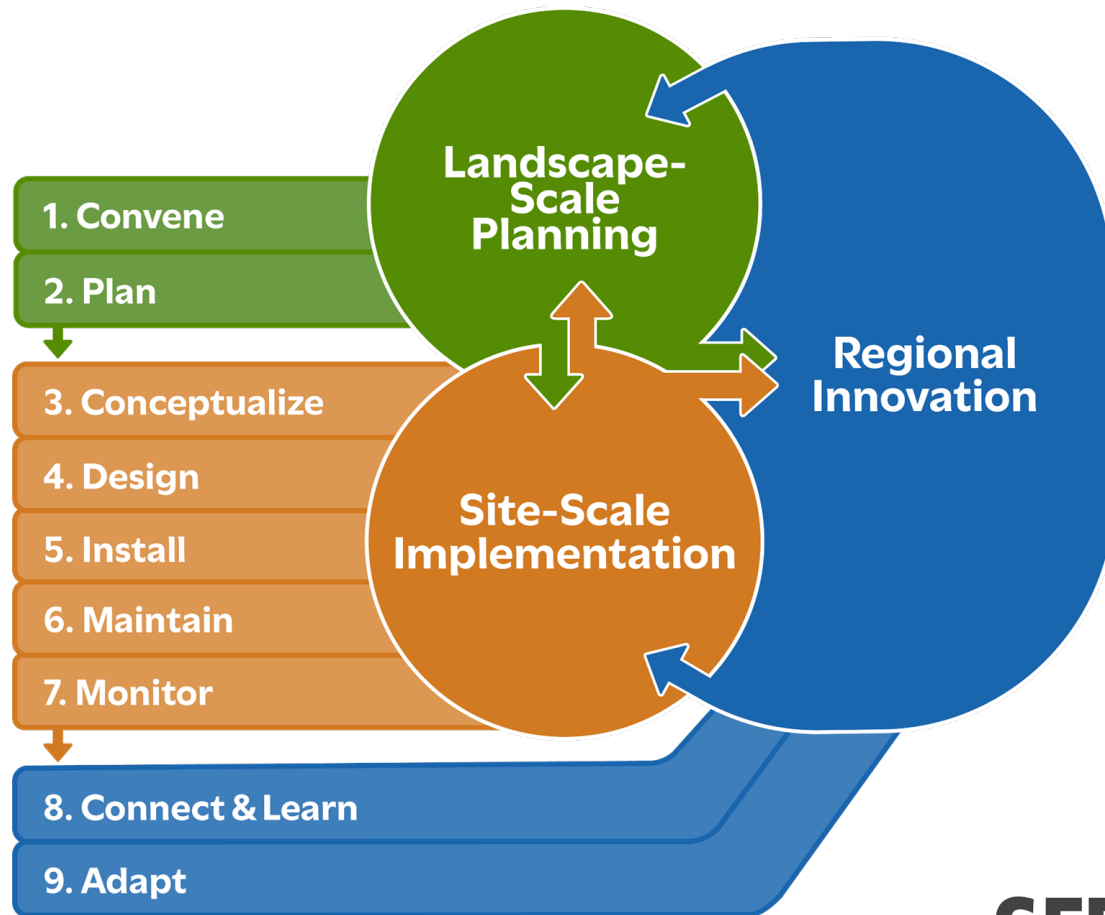
# Regional Framework

for the Next Generation  
of Urban Greening



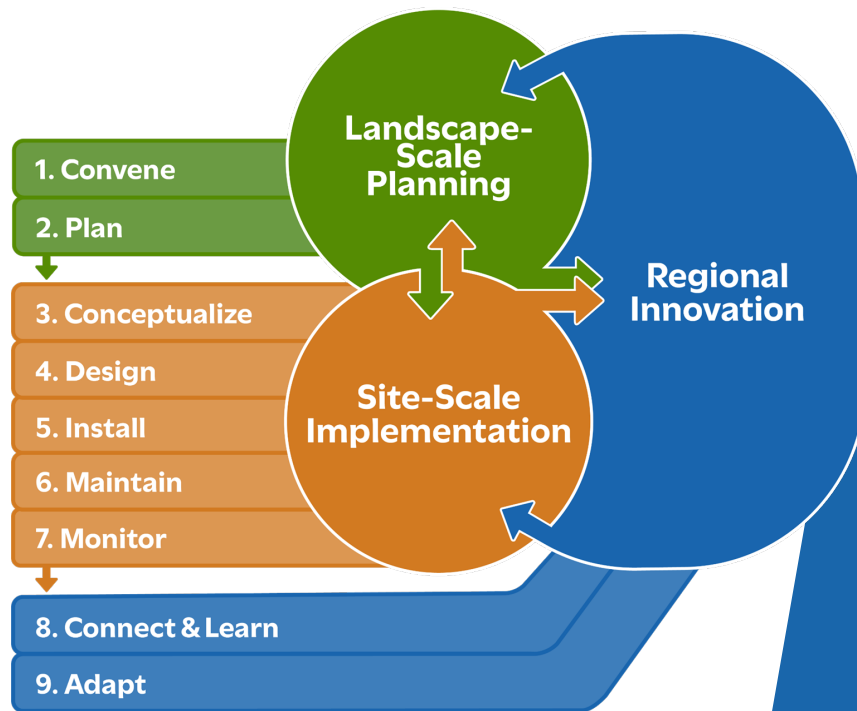
# Regional Framework

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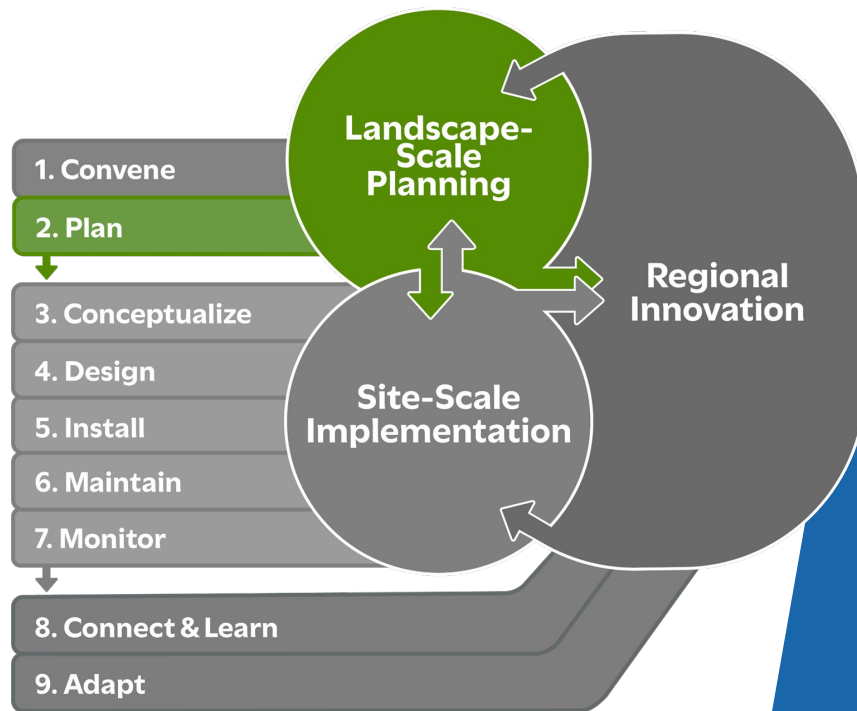
# For each step...

- Approach
  - Current
  - Suggested improvements
- Key partners
- Key resources
  - Existing
  - Gaps to fill
- Case studies



# For each step...

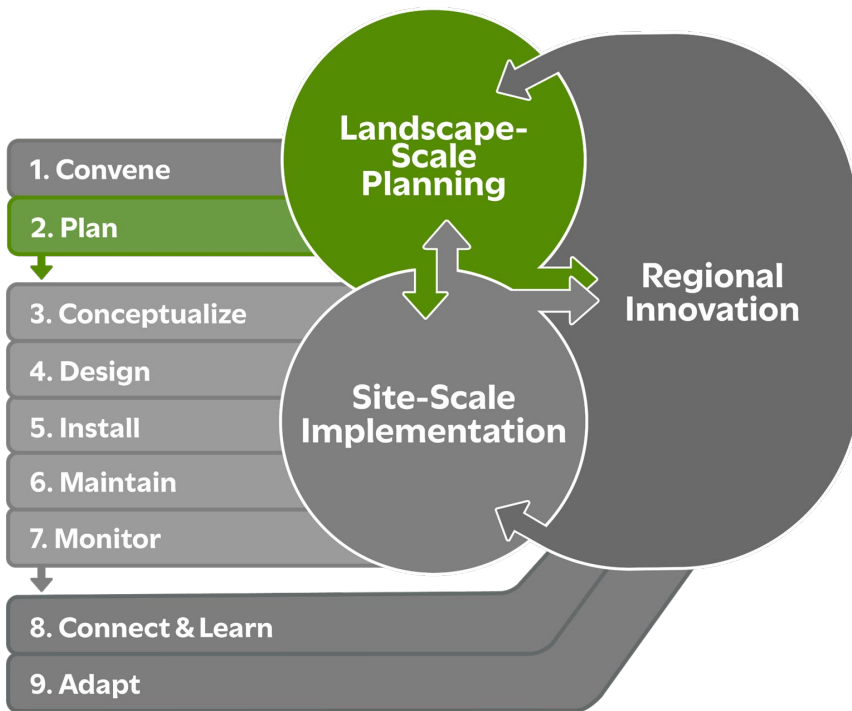
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## 2 Plan

### What is it?

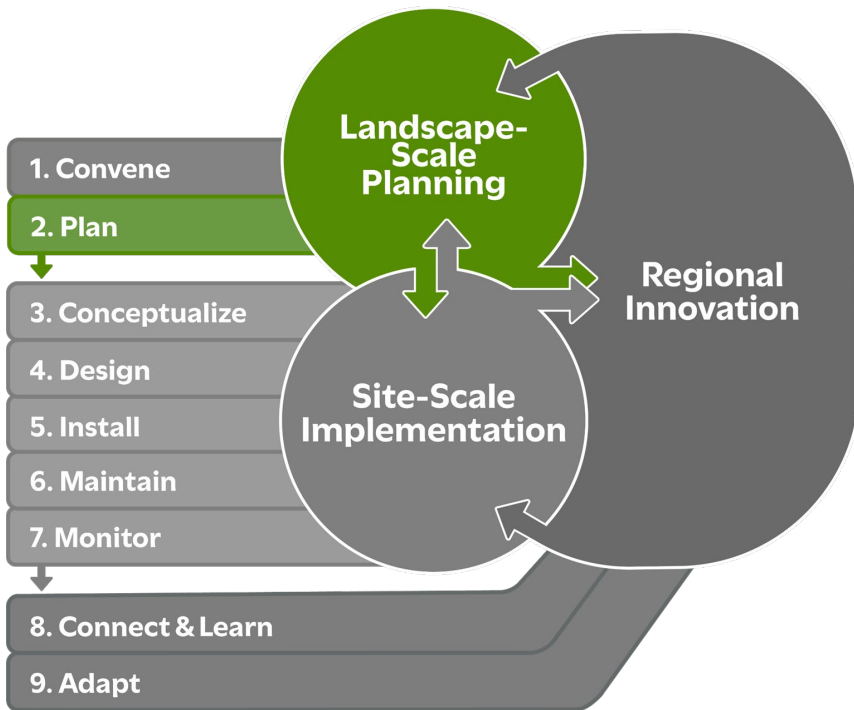
- Articulate shared vision and goals
- Outline actionable steps for implementation across the landscape



## 2 Plan

### Approach

- Plan across landscape
- Plan across agencies
- Plan for multiple objectives
- Center community





## 2 Plan

### Key partners

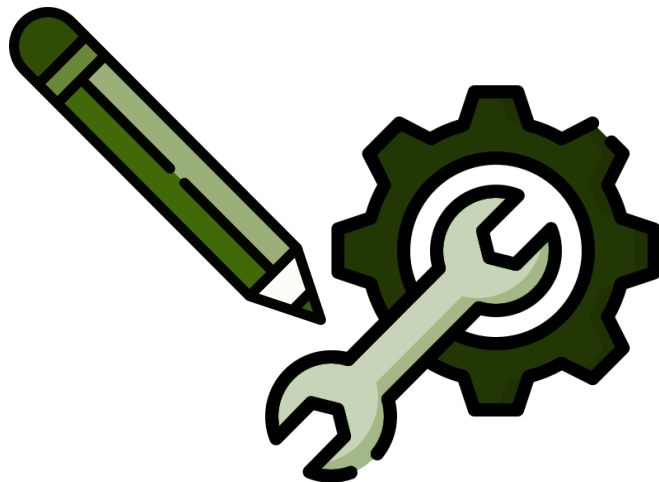
- Community-based organizations
- Cross-agency and cross-jurisdiction staff
- Scientists and researchers



## 2 Plan

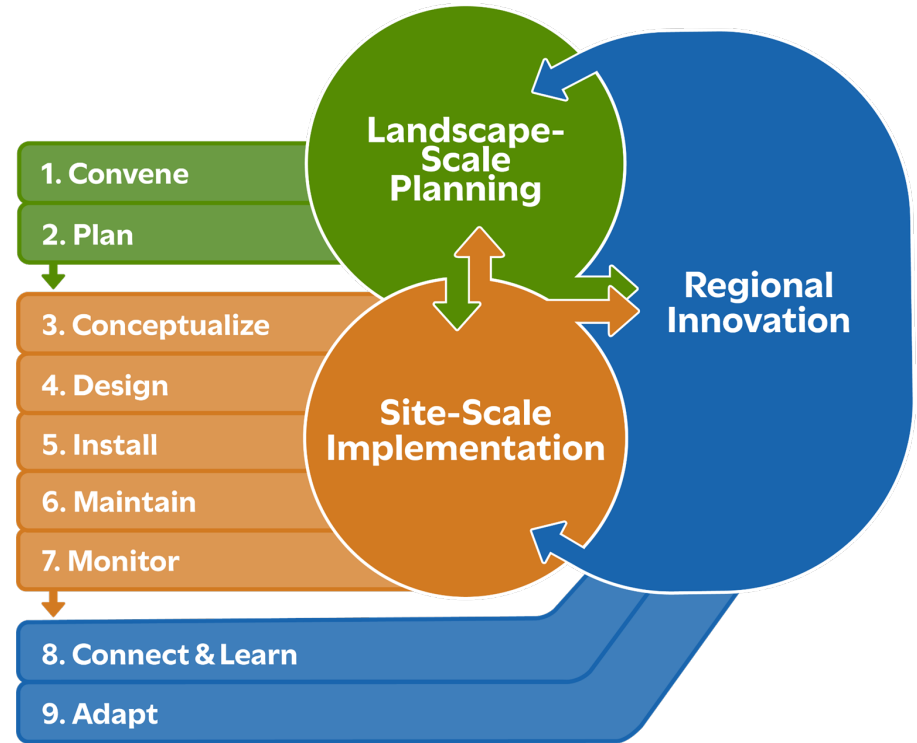
### Key resources

- GreenPlan-IT (*SFEI*)
- Urban InVEST (*Natural Capital Project at Stanford*)
- Urban Displacement Project (*UC Berkeley*)
- etc.



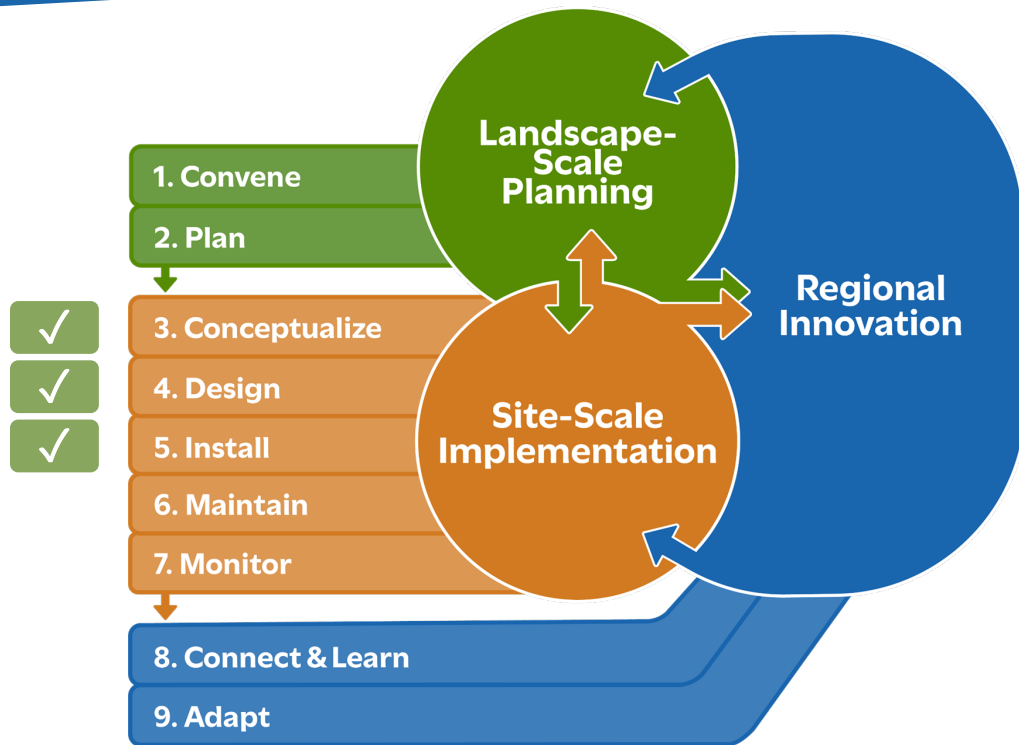
# A path to regional collaboration

# Some steps are implemented more than others



# Some steps are implemented more than others

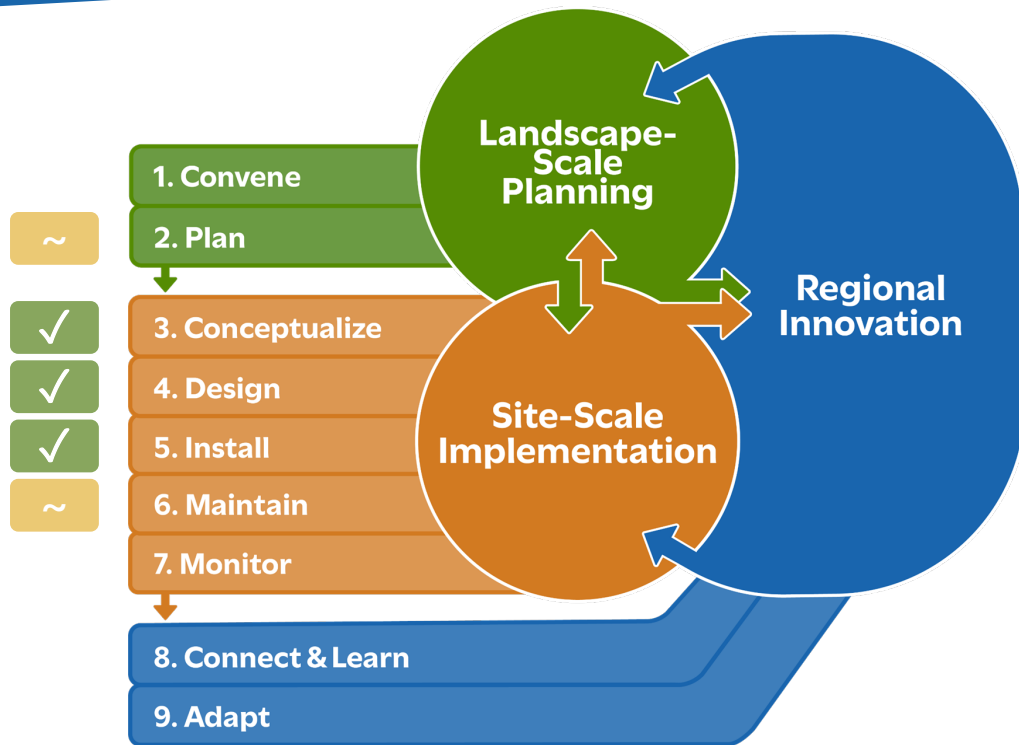
✓ **Conceptualize** → **Install** are essential and resourced



# Some steps are implemented more than others

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~ **Maintain** and **Plan** implementation is spotty

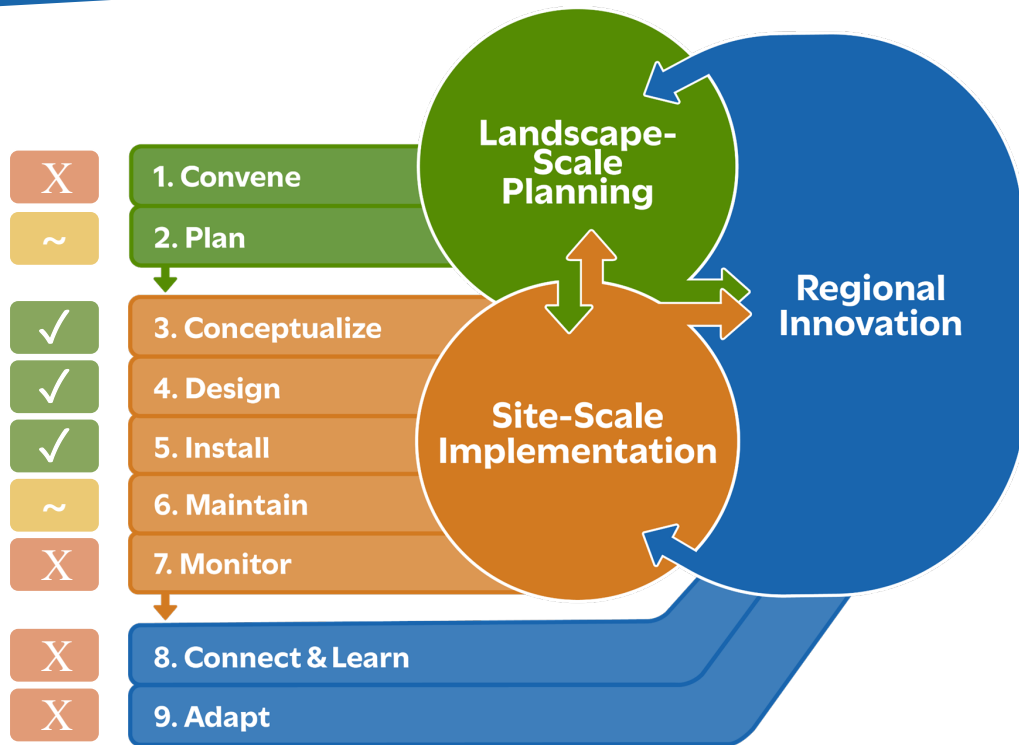


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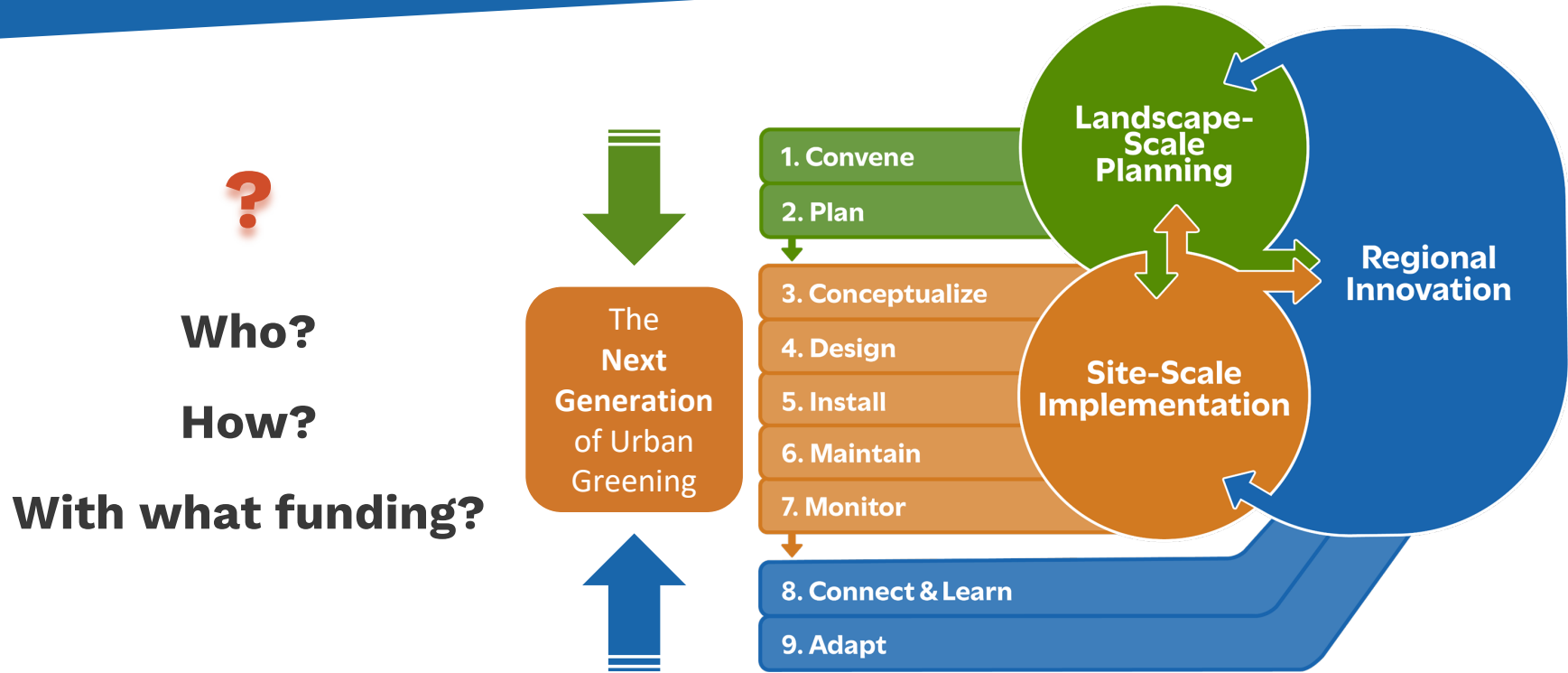
X Foundations to **collaboration** and **adaptation** need more attention



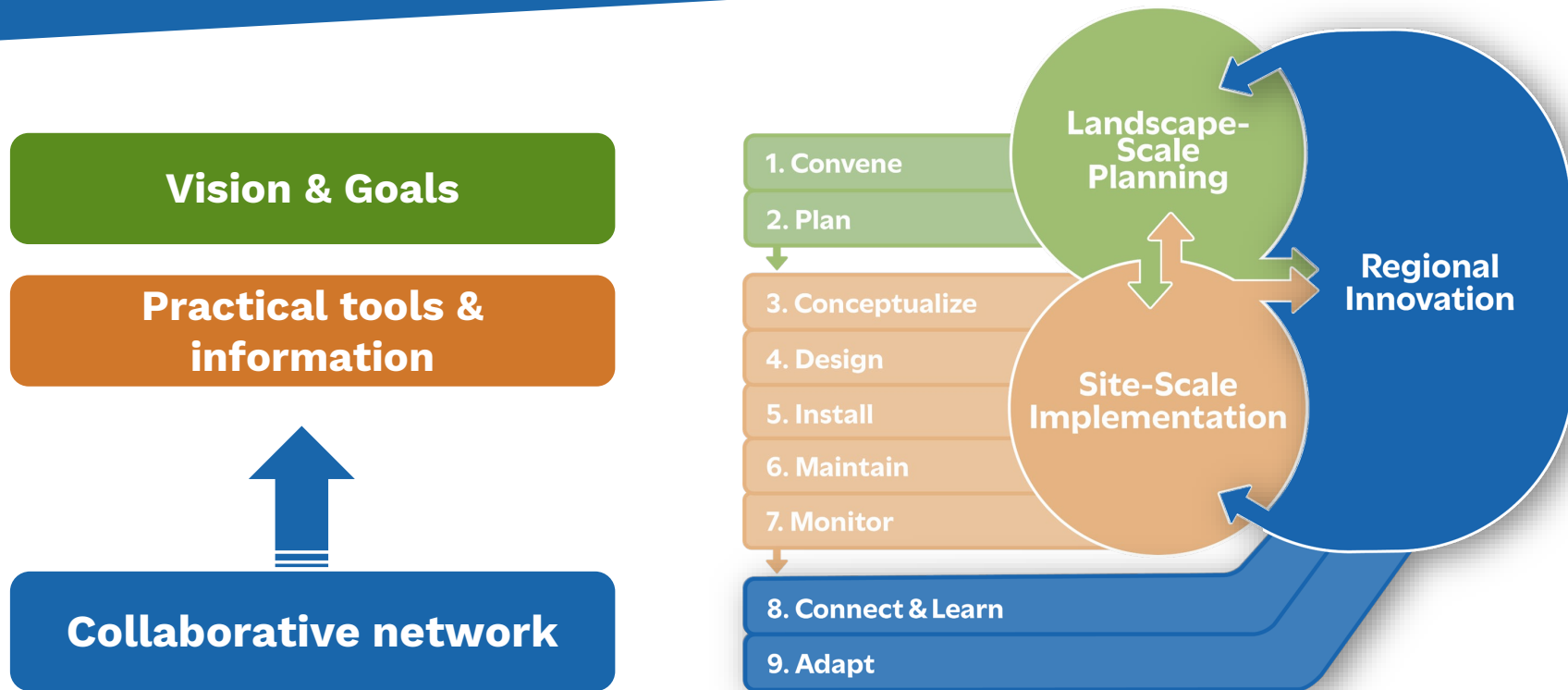
Implemented: ✓ Almost always ~ Sometimes X Rarely



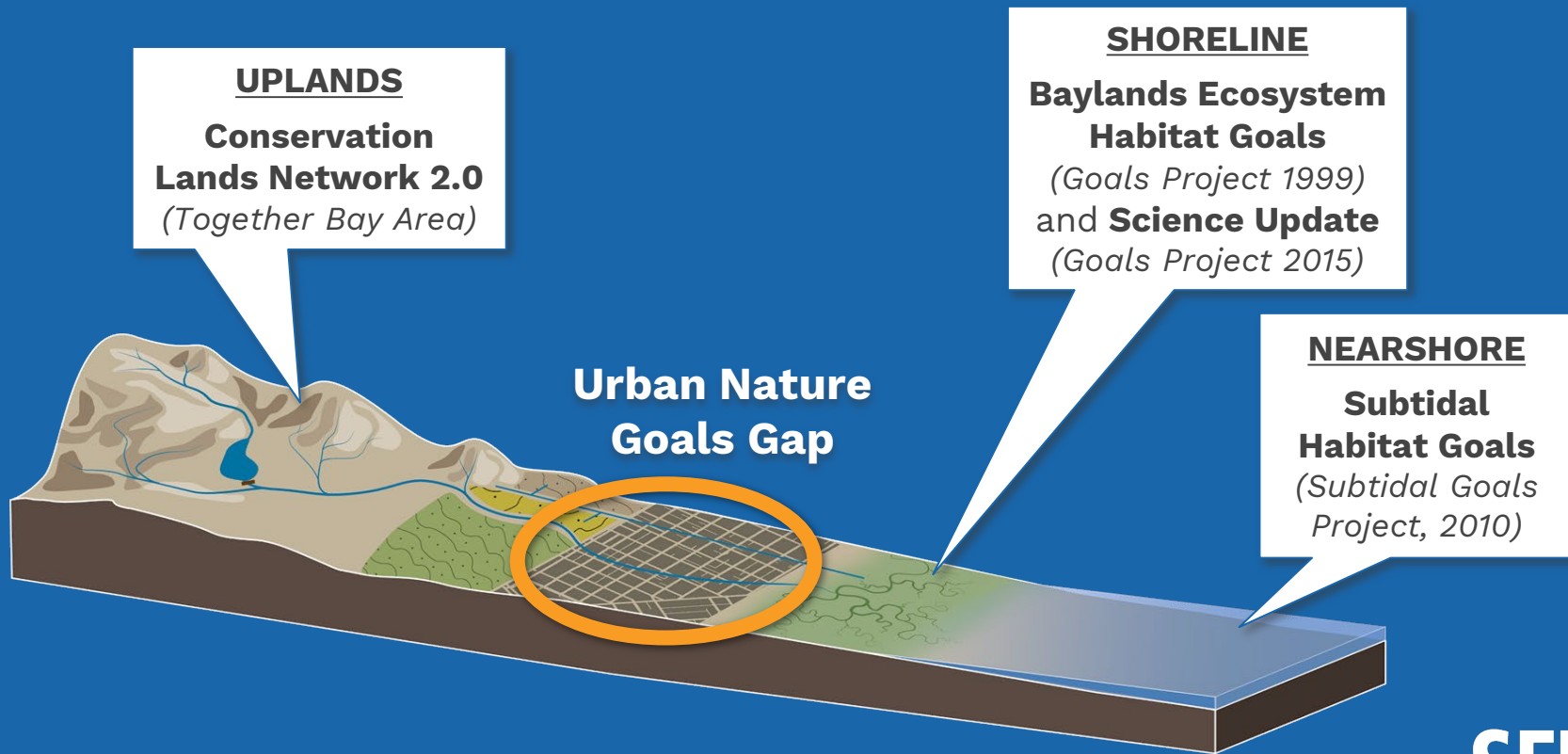
# Missed steps are our path to more effective projects



# An Urban Nature Collaborative



# Precedents for regional goal-setting



# Who to talk to about the Collaborative



**Emily Corwin**

Engineer

Director of Strategic  
Initiatives

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**Melissa Foley**

Ecologist

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**Karen Verpeet**

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Program Managing Director

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# Launching the *Regional Framework*

at the 4<sup>th</sup> and final

**Regional Forum**

for the Next Generation of Urban Greening

**December 1st  
2:30 - 4:30PM**

RSVP



**SFEI**

[bit.ly/regional-forum-2025](https://bit.ly/regional-forum-2025)





# Thank you!

Follow updates at [sfei.org/projects/next-generation-urban-greening](https://sfei.org/projects/next-generation-urban-greening)

Regional Forum



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