

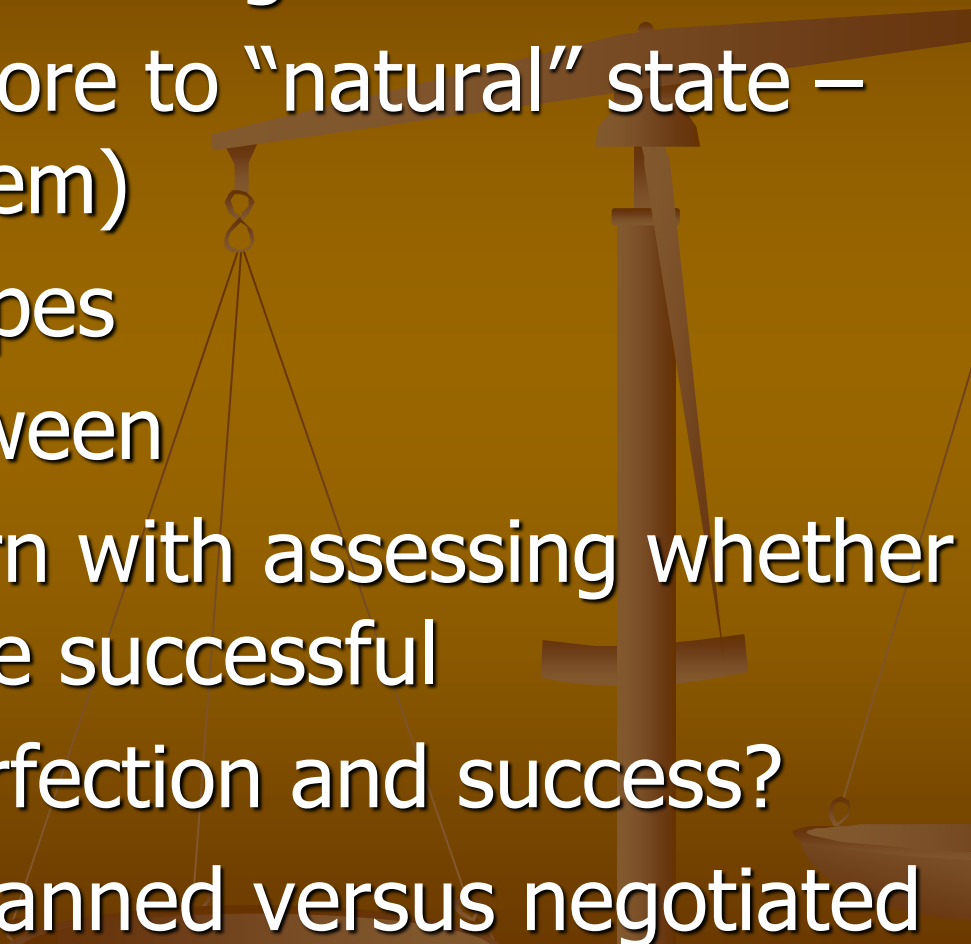
Is seeking perfection in FLR outcomes achievable or desirable?



Robert Fisher
William Jackson
Will Unsworth

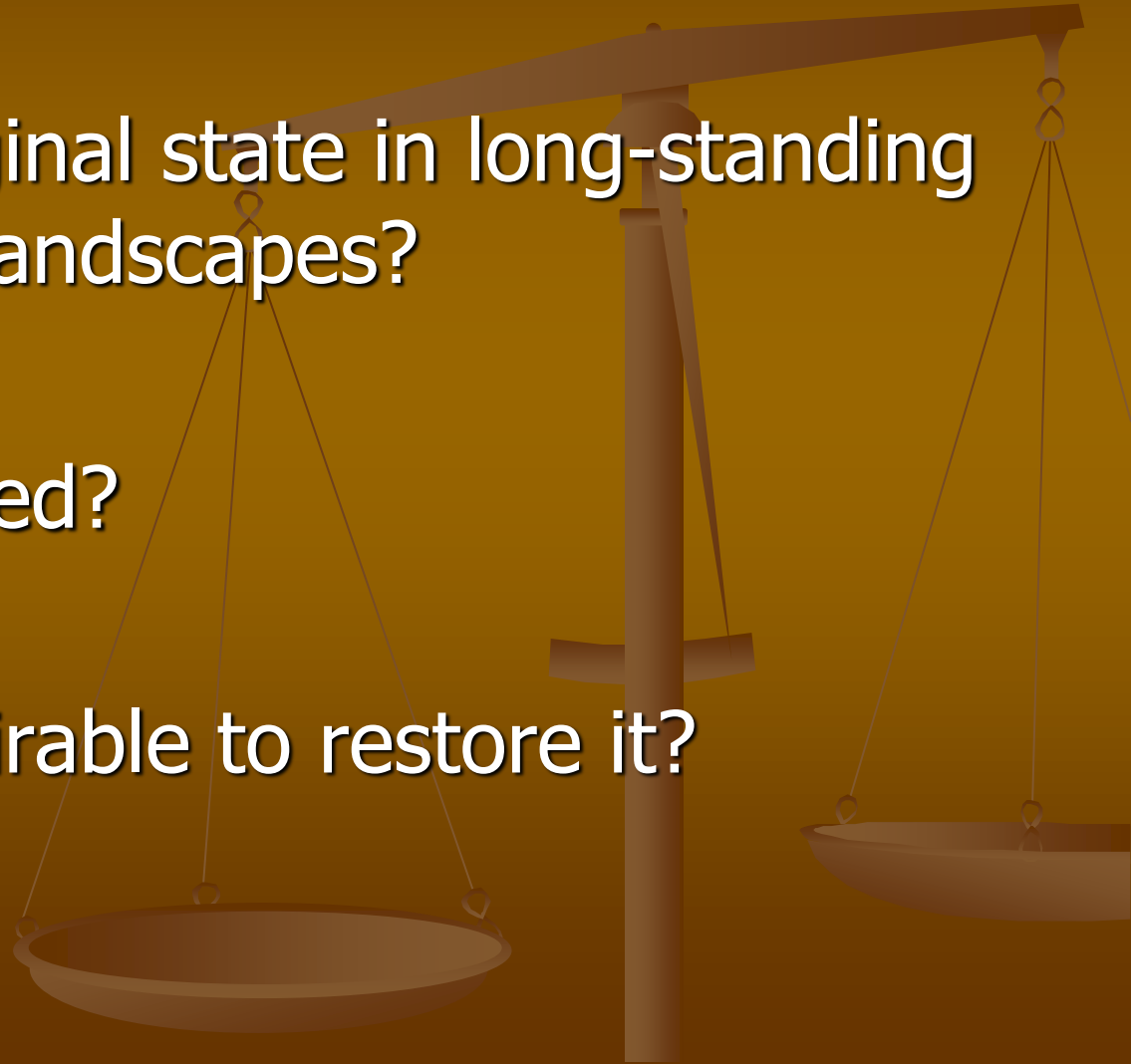
International Conference on Forest Landscape Restoration,
Makati New World Hotel, Manila, 25-27 February 2019

The challenge

- Different understandings of FLR:
 - Biophysical (restore to “natural” state – reference ecosystem)
 - Peopled landscapes
 - And a lot in-between
 - Common concern with assessing whether FLR activities are successful
 - Who defines perfection and success?
 - Landscapes – planned versus negotiated
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FLR in anthropogenic landscapes

- ❑ What is the original state in long-standing anthropogenic landscapes?
- ❑ Can it be restored?
- ❑ Is it always desirable to restore it?



Ramu-Markham Valley (PNG)

- Central portion mainly grasslands
- Regarded as largely anthropogenic (land clearing and fire)
- Population history – not very well documented
- But... anthropogenic grasslands probably date back 2-3 millennia
- Current landuse practices maintain grasslands (growing population)



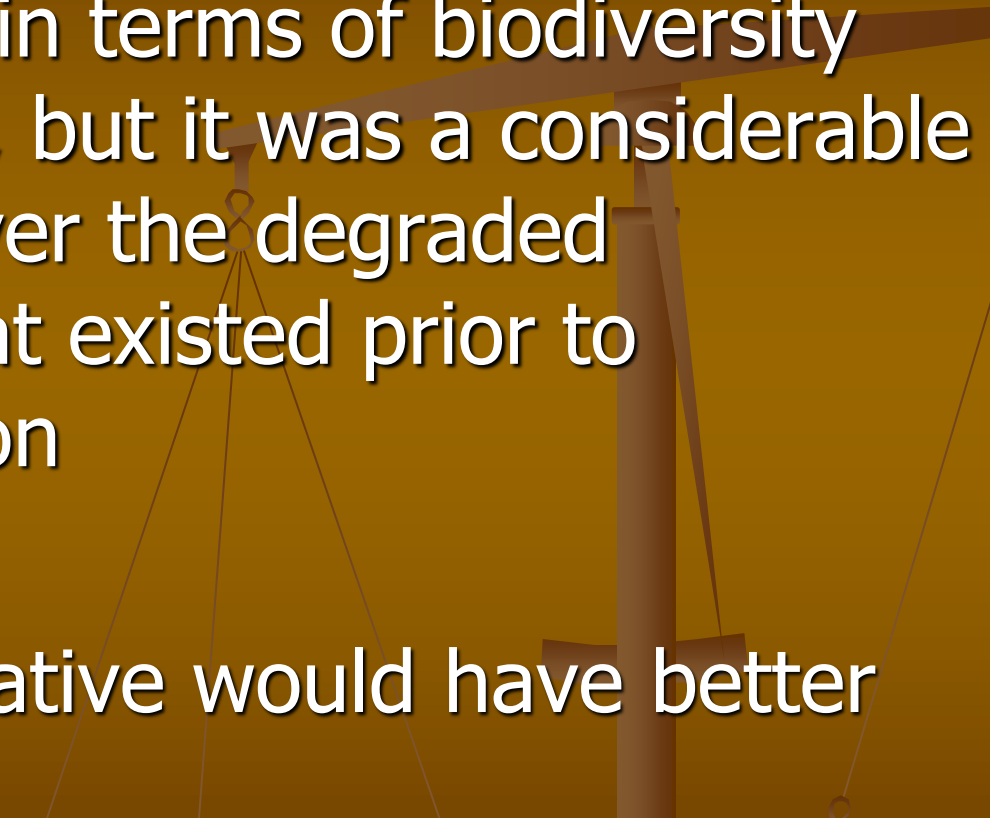
Best of available alternatives?



Pred Nai (Thailand)

- Mangrove forest
- Damaged by activities of outsiders (logging and shrimp farming)
- People took control – improved resource condition and biodiversity by restoration
- Improved production of marine animals – benefits to poorer members of community
- Improved biodiversity



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- The restoration in terms of biodiversity was not perfect, but it was a considerable improvement over the degraded environment that existed prior to community action
 - No *viable* alternative would have better results

Negotiated landscapes



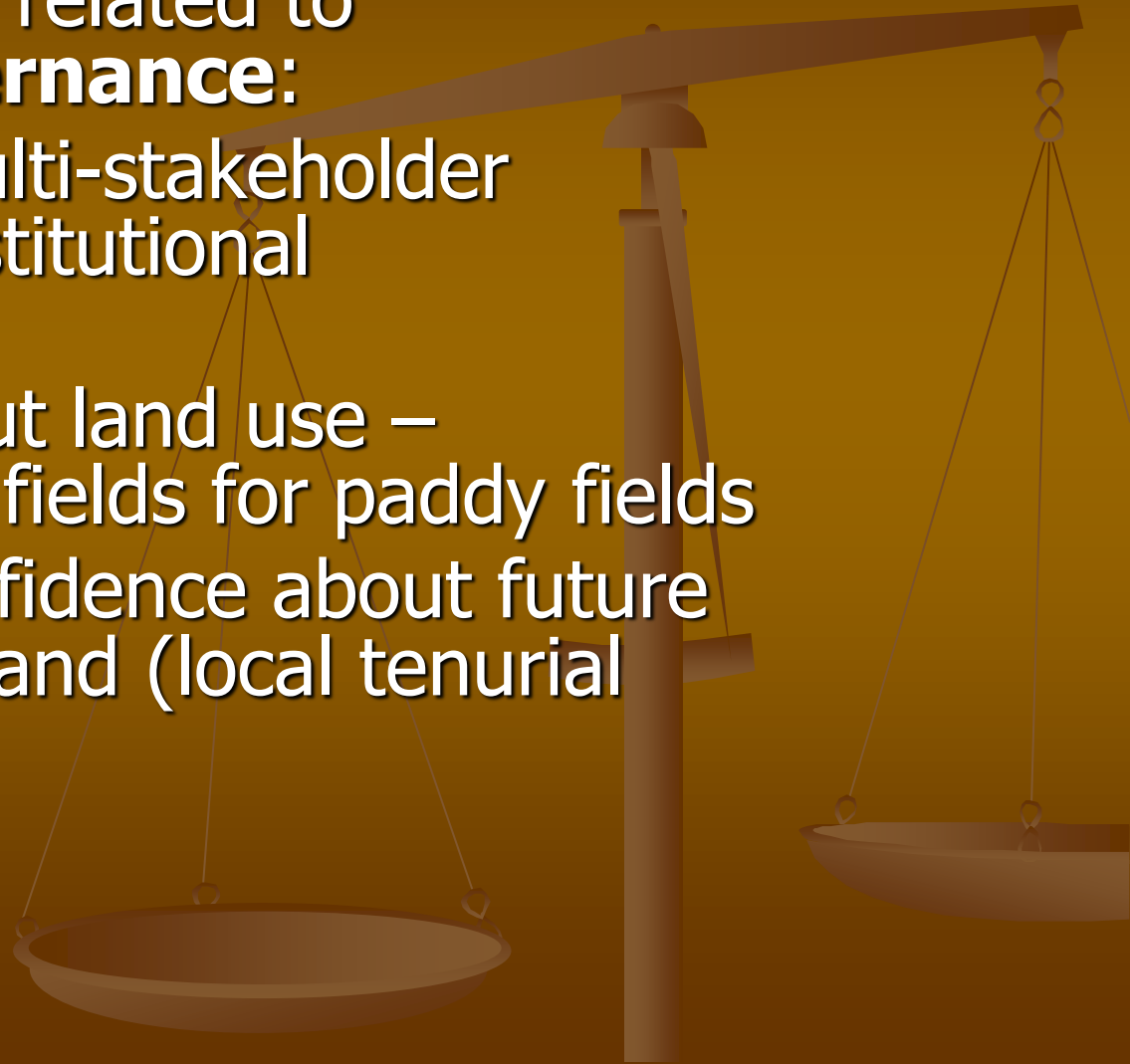
Doi Mae salong

- A military protected area under the control of the RTAF.
- Population includes ex-Kuomintang and various ethnic groups.
- Attempt to reforest in honour of the King's anniversary
- IUCN involved at invitation of RTAF – LLS program



LLS at Doi Mae Salong

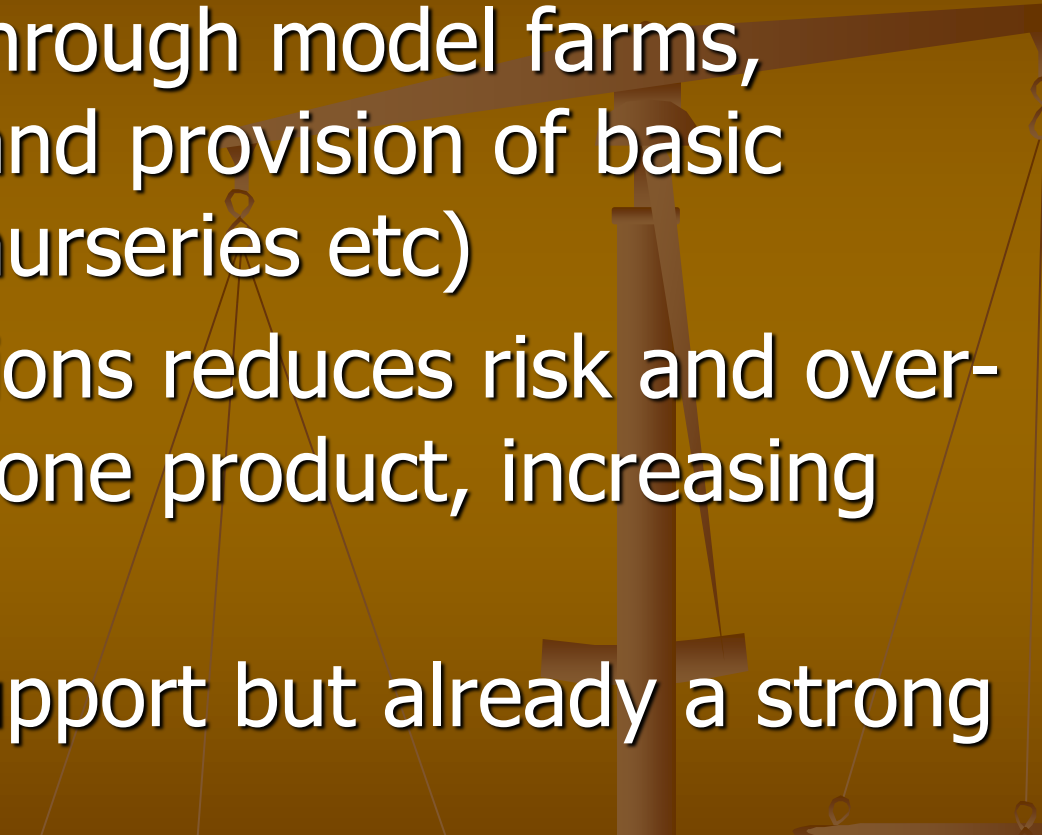
- Key interventions related to **landscape governance**:
 - Establishing a multi-stakeholder platform (new institutional arrangements)
 - Negotiations about land use – swapping upland fields for paddy fields
 - ⇒ increased confidence about future access to use of land (local tenurial arrangements)



- Restoring forest cover in erosion-prone areas
- Erosion control (contours etc)
- Native species
- Agroforestry for income and slope stabilisation
- Developing paddy fields and irrigation where possible

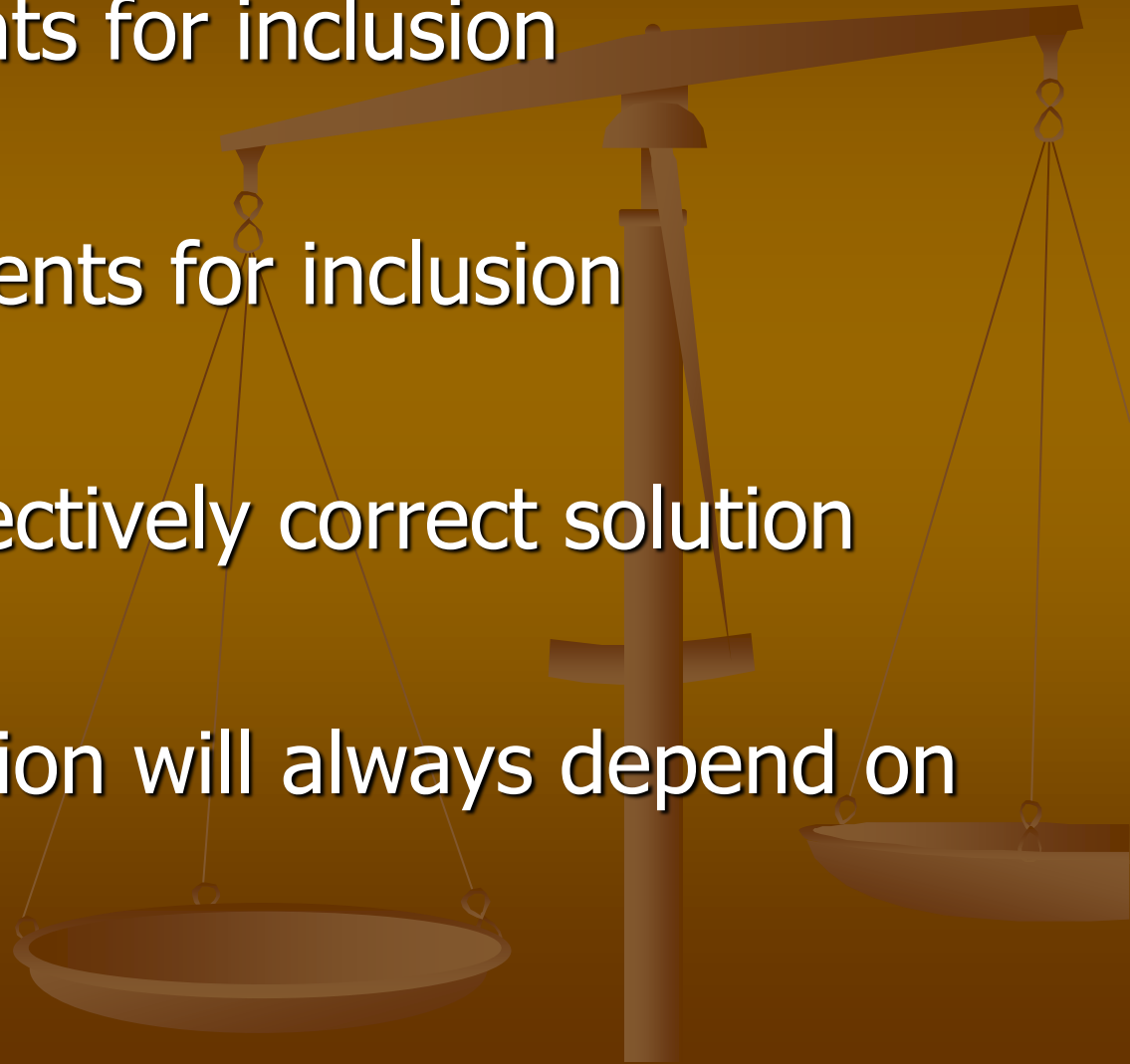
⇒ **Emphasis on more sustainable agricultural practices**



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- Mixed farming systems: promotion of new crops with income generating potential and farm activities through model farms, demonstration and provision of basic infrastructure (nurseries etc)
 - ⇒ multiple options reduces risk and over-dependency on one product, increasing resilience
 - Some market support but already a strong local market

Who defines what is “perfect” (what are the objectives)?

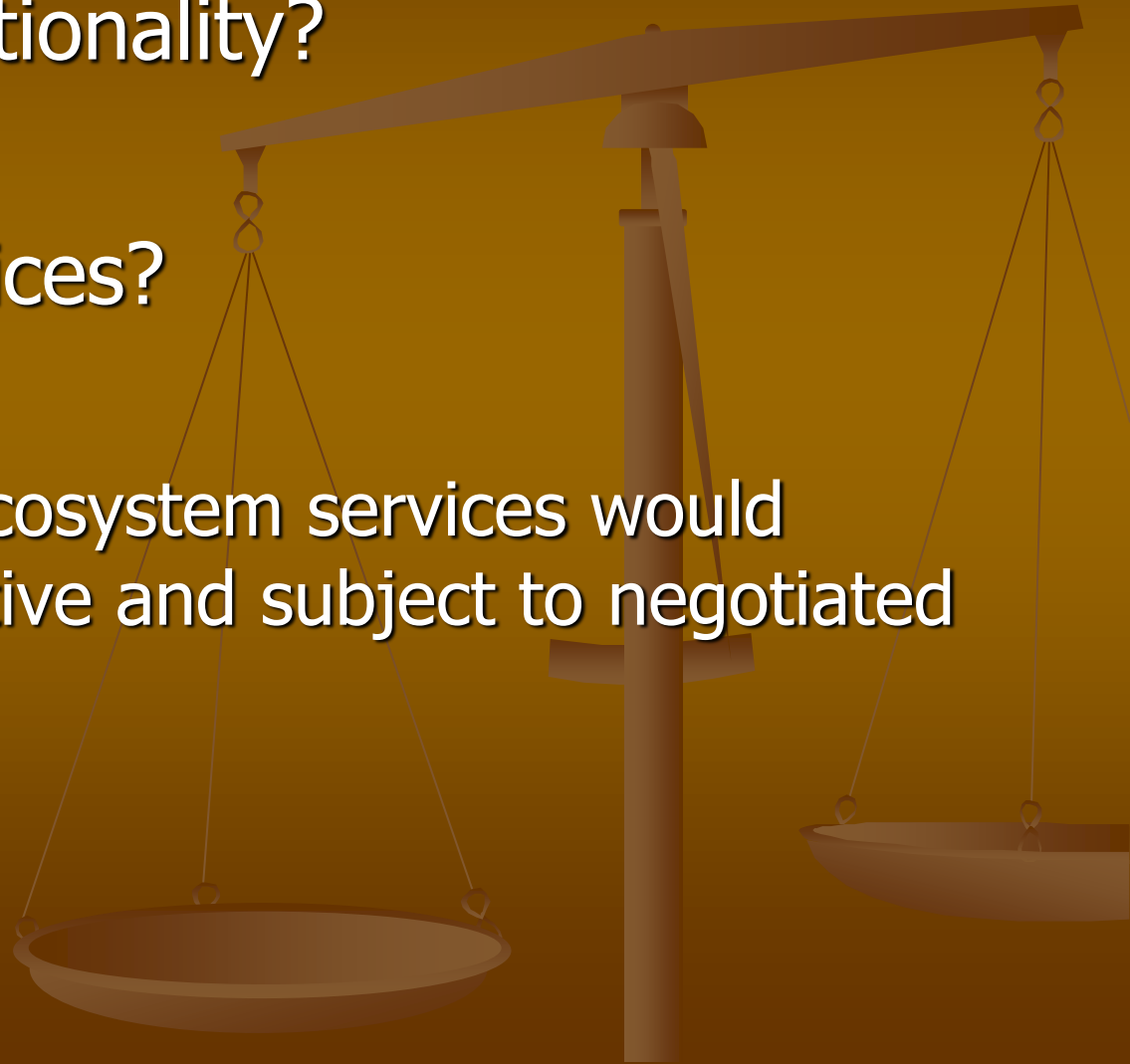
- Ethical arguments for inclusion
- Practical arguments for inclusion
- There is no objectively correct solution
- Success/perfection will always depend on compromise



Alternative ways of assessing success?

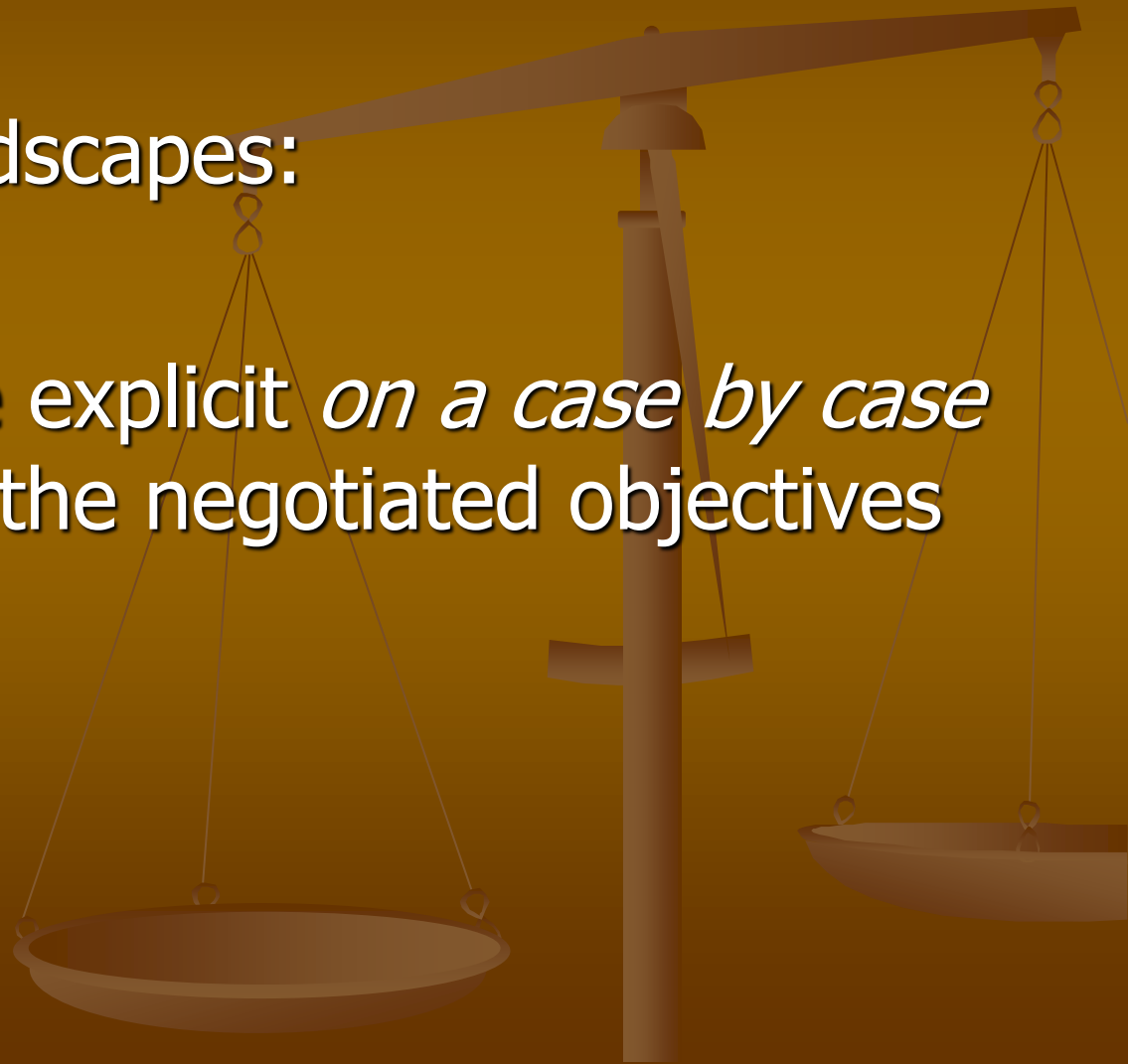
- Ecosystem functionality?
- Ecosystem services?

But an index of ecosystem services would always be subjective and subject to negotiated interests



In negotiated landscapes:

Do we need to be explicit *on a case by case basis* about what the negotiated objectives of FLR are?



*Don't let the perfect be the
enemy of the good*

