

Workshop Insights

Enabling systems-oriented reasoning of landscape resilience

Nature Tech Unconference · May 2026 · ~25 participants · Alice, Kudzai & Edita

OVERVIEW

The workshop used a landscape case study to explore how different stakeholders — landscape initiatives and corporate supporters — interpret and use the same landscape assessment data. It generated productive disagreement and surfaced both areas of genuine alignment and significant structural gaps.

The exercise created initial confusion (substantial data provided alongside significant data gaps), which was intentional. This friction eventually produced fruitful conversations about what data is needed, what is missing, and what would make data actionable for each group.

WHERE THE TWO GROUPS ALIGNED AND DIVERGED

Shared interests	Key tensions
• Securing landscape supply chains • Attribution of results to investment • Forward-looking funded plan with shared visibility • Quality-of-life and community impacts • Long-term, systemic impact data • Engaging large-capital corporates	• Land tenure — corporate control vs. community ownership • Pricing — investment expected to lower costs for corporates • Paternalistic framing vs. equity lens • Different definitions of 'resilience' • Commitments expected on both sides • Tech–government translation gap

CENTRAL QUESTION: GAPS IN CURRENT DATA SYSTEMS, TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

Data availability

Short timescales and missing baselines Three years from baseline to reassessment is rarely sufficient to understand systemic patterns. Suggestion: retrospectively set baselines where data already exists. Longer-term local knowledge needs to be incorporated — oral histories, traditional practice records.
Missing ecological and economic data Corporates need soil health, biodiversity and water quality data. Landscape initiatives need profit/loss visibility, yield quality grades and productivity metrics. Neither group currently has full access to what the other holds — data collaboration is largely absent. See: datacollaboratives.org

No benchmarks

Indicators around yield, poverty and gendered land tenure are presented without reference points. Without benchmarks it is impossible to determine whether results represent progress, stagnation or decline. Definitions of terms like 'degraded' vary between assessments and are rarely stated explicitly.

Data granularity too coarse

Landscape-scale data is too aggregated to drive site-level decisions. Both groups need finer-resolution data on specific plots, communities and ecosystem functions.

Interpretation

Weak link between goals and metric results

Participants could not readily determine whether stated landscape goals had been achieved. Indicators are collected but the causal story — why poverty decreased, what drove yield improvement, whether restoration increased or decreased tourism — is not told. Corporates want attribution: which changes can be credited to their investment?

No forward-looking scenario analysis

Corporates making investment decisions need conservative forward scenarios, not only retrospective data. Climate risk integration and nature-risk tools are not yet connected to landscape data outputs.

Claims and validated attribution packages

Corporates need clarity on what types of claims are available and verifiable. Without validated attribution, investment cannot be confidently linked to impact, limiting both internal business cases and external reporting.

Social and community

Absence of qualitative and community data

Community priorities, attitudes toward corporate involvement, historical land use, what has been grown and where it has been sold — this context is largely missing. The video presented during the exercise was described as 'powerful,' illustrating how qualitative data can carry meaning that numbers alone do not. See: participatorymethods.org/participatory-monitoring-and-evaluation

No reflection space for shared goals

When shared goals are not achieved, there is currently no structured mechanism to examine why. Both parties noted this gap — understanding failure modes is as important as tracking success metrics.

Policy and markets

Carbon markets and policy not connected

Landscape data is not integrated with policy frameworks or carbon and biodiversity markets, even though these directly shape corporate interest and the viability of landscape initiatives. Certifications — their presence and type — are also not surfaced clearly.

Translation gap between tech and government

Nature tech providers and government actors use different languages and frameworks. Building a common understanding is a prerequisite for landscape data to influence policy — and for policy context to inform what data gets collected.

WHAT WOULD MAKE DATA ACTIONABLE

For landscape initiatives

Clearer interpretation tools showing how metrics relate to each other and to goals. Means to communicate results to investors without requiring technical expertise. Contextual framing — economic, social, political — around what the numbers show. Community validation built into monitoring processes.

For corporates

Relevant indicator filtering — not all metrics, only the ones that match their risk and opportunity profile. Attribution and validated claims packages. Conservative scenario analysis for investment decisions. Visibility of risk of not investing, alongside opportunity.

For both

A realistic, funded forward plan with shared visibility. A common language across stakeholders, including government. Data collaboration infrastructure that is voluntary, secure and enables insight-sharing without full proprietary disclosure. Longer data series with retrospectively-set baselines where possible.

Notes for next time

Role-play the exercise in advance and make the brief and questions more specific. Print out more copies. Consider structuring the case study data into tiered packs — baseline data first, supplementary data released in rounds — to better simulate real-world information asymmetry.