

# APPLYING THE FRAMEWORK

The framework provides a practical approach for diagnosing transformation challenges, understanding their psychological foundations, and identifying opportunities for intervention. The following steps illustrate one possible way of applying the framework in practice.

## Step 1: Diagnose the Challenge

The first step is to **identify the primary transformation challenge**.

Ask:

- *Where does the transformation process appear to be struggling?*
- *What symptoms are visible?*
- *Which outcomes are not being achieved?*
- *Which Infrastructure Challenges seem most relevant?*

In practice, multiple Challenges often occur simultaneously. The goal is not to identify a single “correct” challenge, but to understand which bottlenecks appear most significant.

Once the challenge has been identified, the second step is to **explore the Psychological Domains involved**.

Ask:

- *Which psychological dynamics may be contributing to the challenge?*
- *Are issues related to trust, fairness, identity, social norms, agency, emotions etc. visible?*
- *Which Domains appear strongest?*
- *Which Domains appear weakest?*

Most transformation challenges involve multiple Domains operating simultaneously. Understanding these interactions helps identify deeper leverage points beyond visible symptoms.

## Step 2: Identify Potential Entry Points

Transformation does not always begin in the same way. Different contexts, cultures, organizations, and stakeholder groups may require different entry points. While some transformation efforts begin with shared understanding, others begin with relationships, emotions, communication, or concrete action. The most effective entry point depends on where momentum can most realistically be created.



### Cognitive Entry Point

**Understanding → Cooperation → Action**

Useful when:

- actors lack shared understanding
- complexity is high
- priorities are unclear

Typical starting mechanisms:

- Mental Model Alignment
- Systems Mapping
- Future, Scenario & Experiential Engagement



### Relational Entry Point

**Connection → Trust → Cooperation → Action**

Useful when:

- trust is low
- relationships are fragmented
- collaboration is weak

Typical starting mechanisms:

- Trust-Building & Reciprocity
- Dialogue, Conflict Transformation & Perspective Integration
- Psychological Safety & Supportive Spaces



### Emotional Entry Point

**Experience → Emotion → Engagement → Action**

Useful when:

- issues feel distant
- motivation is low
- empathy and connection are needed

Typical starting mechanisms:

- Future, Scenario & Experiential Engagement
- Emotional Acknowledgment & Regulation
- Constructive Emotional Activation



### Narrative Entry Point

**Story → Meaning → Engagement → Action**

Useful when:

- relevance is unclear
- attention is limited
- collective vision is missing

Typical starting mechanisms:

- Narrative Framing & Storytelling
- Messenger & Social Influence
- Meaning-Making & Interpretation



## Behavioral Entry Point

**Action → Experience → Agency → Commitment**

Useful when:

- actors are stuck in analysis
- momentum is needed
- learning-by-doing is possible

Typical starting mechanisms:

- Behavioral Planning
- Accountability & Commitment Structures
- Feedback & Progress Visibility

## Step 3: Design a Mechanism Portfolio

*Similar to an orchestra, different mechanisms play different roles and become most powerful when intentionally combined and sequenced over time.*

Transformation rarely emerges from a single intervention. Most successful initiatives combine multiple mechanisms that reinforce one another over time. ClimateMind refers to these combinations as **Mechanism Portfolios**.

A Mechanism Portfolio is a **deliberately designed combination of Design Mechanisms used to address a specific transformation challenge**.

For example:

### Cooperation & Coordination Challenge

#### Relevant Domains

- Trust
- Fairness, Responsibility & Morality
- Social Norms

#### Potential Mechanism Portfolio

- Dialogue, Conflict Transformation & Perspective Integration
- Trust-Building & Reciprocity
- Legitimacy & Fairness Processes
- Accountability & Commitment Structures

### Public Engagement Challenge

#### Relevant Domains

- Emotions, Well-being & Resilience
- Agency
- Social Norms

### Potential Mechanism Portfolio

- Narrative Framing & Storytelling
- Messenger & Social Influence
- Constructive Emotional Activation
- Activation of Individual & Collective Agency

Different contexts will require different combinations, sequences, and intensities of mechanisms.

## Step 4: Embed Mechanisms into Psychological Infrastructure

Many interventions generate temporary effects but fail to create lasting change. The long-term objective is therefore not only to activate mechanisms through individual interventions, but to **embed them into the structures, processes, cultures, and governance systems that shape everyday decision-making and implementation.**

*This is the core idea of **Psychological Infrastructure**: creating conditions that allow transformation capacities to persist beyond individual projects, single leaders, or specific moments of attention.*

Examples include:

- Trust embedded through participatory governance processes
- Accountability embedded through reporting and review systems
- Psychological Safety embedded through meeting structures and leadership practices
- Sense-Making embedded through learning and reflection processes
- Agency embedded through participation and decision-making structures

## Step 5: Reflect, Learn, and Adapt

Climate and biodiversity transformation is rarely linear. Challenges evolve, contexts change, and new opportunities emerge. As interventions are implemented, it can be helpful to periodically reflect on the following questions:

- *Which Challenges have become less visible?*
- *Which Domains appear stronger than before?*
- *Which Mechanisms have been most influential?*
- *What unintended consequences have emerged?*
- *Which capacities have become embedded in the system?*
- *What remains fragile or dependent on specific individuals?*

The goal is not perfection, but **continuous learning and adaptation.**

## A Framework for Continuous Learning

The framework should not be understood as a one-time assessment tool or a fixed intervention model.

Rather, it offers a structured way to diagnose transformation challenges, understand their psychological foundations, design targeted interventions, and strengthen psychological infrastructure over time.

There is no single pathway to transformation. Different contexts may require different entry points, mechanism portfolios, and adaptation processes. The value of the framework lies not in prescribing a universal solution, but in helping practitioners identify where transformation capacity is constrained and how it can be strengthened.

Used in this way, the Challenges, Domains, and Design Mechanisms provide a shared language for understanding transformation processes, identifying leverage points, and building the psychological infrastructure needed for effective climate and biodiversity transformation.

## Final Reflection

*By strengthening psychological infrastructure, organizations and institutions can improve their capacity to navigate complexity, build trust, sustain cooperation, translate ambition into implementation, and remain resilient under pressure.*

Climate and biodiversity transformation is ultimately a human challenge as much as a technical, political, financial, or ecological one.

The purpose of this framework is not to provide universal solutions, but to make visible the psychological dynamics that shape whether transformation efforts succeed, stall, or fail.

The framework is intended as a starting point for further experimentation, learning, adaptation, and practice across climate and biodiversity governance.