Knowledge Brokerage for Sustainable Development

Bridging the gap between science and policy making

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How to bridge the gap?

Simplified approaches

follow a linear model of knowledge flows and assume that the provision of correct information (science) automatically leads to a different decision (policy)

no real problem

Network-based approach

is are characterized by long-term interactions to build up trust mutual understanding of contexts, rationalities, perspectives, and interests

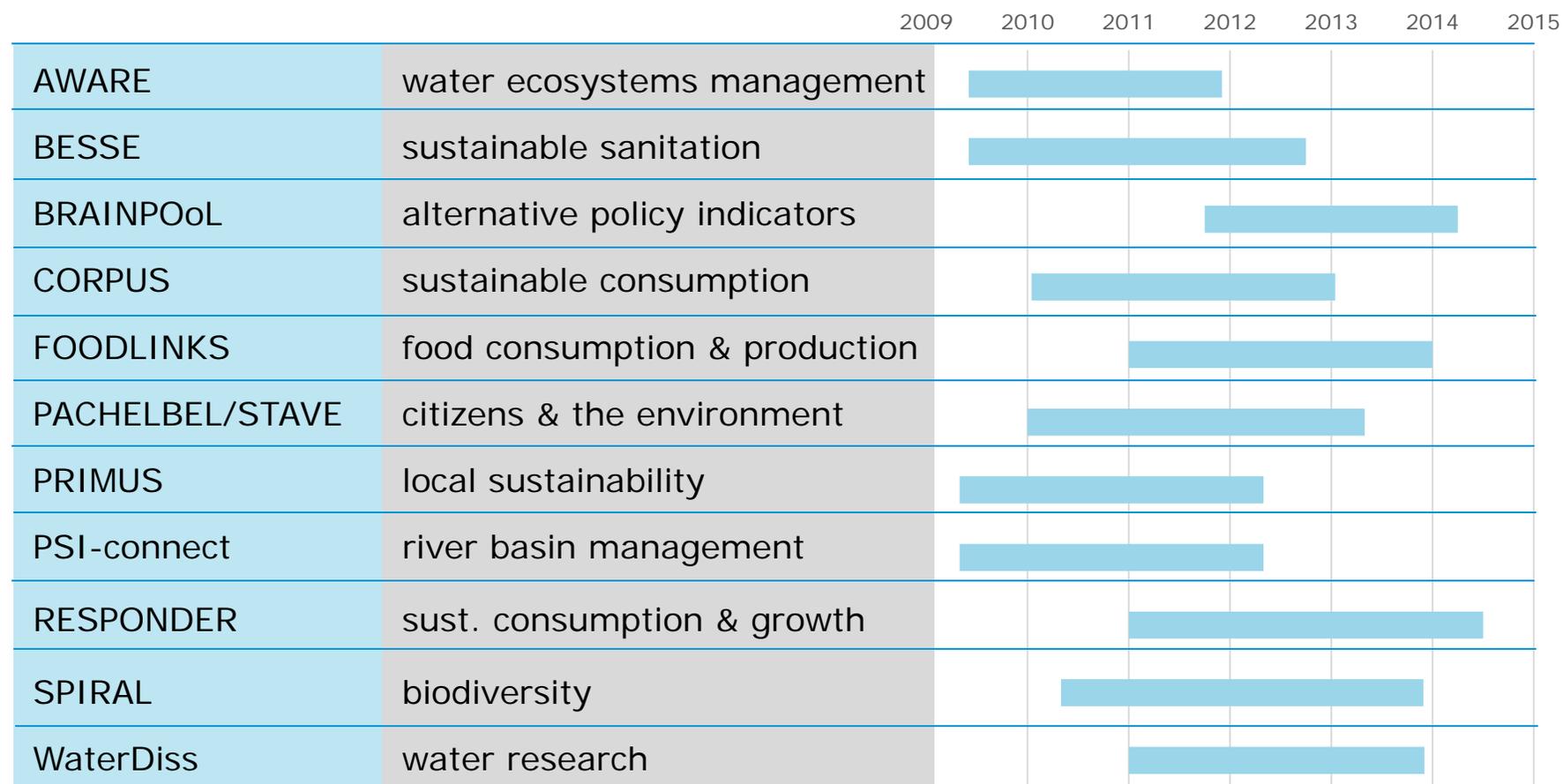**need for insights & tools**

System theory based approaches see science and policy-making as self-referential and autopoietically closed social systems and discusses the fundamental limits of knowledge transfer

no real solution

How to bridge the gap?

**11 EU funded projekts on „Knowledge Brokerage between Research and Policy Making"**

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
AWARE	water ecosystems management							
BESSE	sustainable sanitation							
BRAINPOoL	alternative policy indicators							
CORPUS	sustainable consumption							
FOODLINKS	food consumption & production							
PACHELBEL/STAVE	citizens & the environment							
PRIMUS	local sustainability							
PSI-connect	river basin management							
RESPONDER	sust. consumption & growth							
SPIRAL	biodiversity							
WaterDiss	water research							

How to bridge the gap?

11 EU funded projekts on „Knowledge Brokerage between Research and Policy Making"

average project duration 3 years

total EU contribution ~ 14.5 mio €

average EU contribution ~ 1.3 mio €
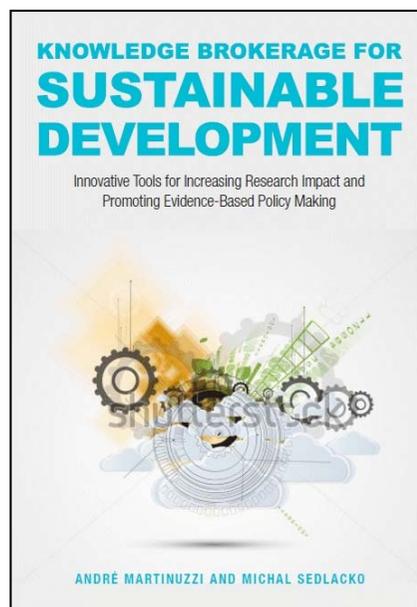
AWARE:
Sustainable Water Ecosystem Management

Tools: 'European Citizens' Juries': small panels of randomly selected citizens judging research goals and outcomes as well as solutions in the form of management options in the frame of professionally facilitated citizens conferences.

Learnings: Citizens' juries help developing **trust between stakeholders and legitimate socially acceptable solutions**.

BESSE:
Sustainable Sanitation

Tools: '**Strategic Maps**' jointly developed by technologists and policy makers, involvement of the local community through participatory technology validation.

Learnings: Scientific knowledge is inextricably **interwoven with other kinds of knowledge**.

BRAINPOOL:
Sustainability Indicators

Tools: knowledge brokerage **events and a permanent network around an online platform**, aiming to stimulate interaction between NGOs, scientists, statisticians and policy makers dealing with Beyond-GDP-Indicators.

Learning: establishing a smaller but **legitimate group** of event participants acting as the event's memory, preserving its momentum and further developing its results.

CORPUS:
Sustainable Consumption

Tools: interactive web platform ('knowledge units', some of them provided on policy makers' demand) and a series of workshops testing different tools and session formats (collaborative envisioning, **joint development of research agendas**).

Learning: Scientific knowledge needs to be **'enriched' through social processes**, reframed through the views of participants and thus fused with values and judgments.

Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft (Austria)
Ministry of the Environment (Finland)

FOODLINKS:
Food Policy Issues

<u>Tools:</u> Three thematic **communities of practice** (CoPs)
    built around concrete municipal food initiatives,
    each jointly led by a policy maker and a researcher.

<u>Learning:</u> **Social dimensions and temporal
    dynamics** of learning are more important
    than the technical and managerial
    perspective of knowledge management
    or knowledge transfer.

PACHELBEL:
Consumers' Attitude-Behaviour Gap

pachelbel

Tools: facilitation of the interface between citizens/consumers and
policy makers; 'Systematic Tool for **Behavioural Assumption
Validation and Exploration**' (using cartoons, diary excerpts,
simulated newspaper articles).

Learning: Processes of dialogue have resulted in
higher degree of reflection in policy makers.

PRIMUS:
Local & Urban Sustainability

Tools: promoting personal linkages between researchers and policy makers through networking workshops, facilitation of personal interaction, exchange of experience, and collection of **good practices of cooperation** between local governments and researchers.

Learning: The **ability of research to produce critical results** which might be difficult for policy makers to accept **needs to be protected**.

PSI-CONNECT:
River-basin Management

Tools: Instead of translating research results into the languages of target communities, the project attempted the opposite – **bringing members of other communities** (water authorities, NGOs and citizen groups, businesses, labour unions) **onto the platform of science**.

Learning: three **different roles** in the processes of KB:

(1) 'facilitative leader'
(credibility and trust of policy makers)

(2) 'knowledge broker'
(bridges professional languages)

(3) 'facilitator'
(designing event methodology, facilitation).

SPIRAL: Biodiversity-related Knowledge

SPIRAL
Linking Biodiversity & Policy

Tools: 'Dynamic **Network of Advisers**' (a panel of over 50 representatives of various communities including the scientists)

Learning: Policy making structures do not have any preference for scientific findings. Therefore scientists should find a **group close to policy making which will 'carry' their results**.

RESPONDER: Sustainable consumption and growth debates

Tools: **Participatory system mapping** as a tool for knowledge
   co-creation and to increase mutual understanding.

Learning: Main difference is not between
   a scientists and a policy makers mind,
   but the much **deeper rooted values
   attitudes** (e.g. regarding innovation
   or personal liberty).

Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und
   Reaktorsicherheit (Germany)
Federal Department for Environment, Transports,
   Energy and Communication (Switzerland)

The (often implicit) games of knowledge brokerage

1. **'Questions-And-Answers-Game'**
   - are policymakers willing and able to formulate questions (in public)
   - are researchers are willing and able to give and commit to clear answers
   - runs the risk of setting too narrow a framework for scientific inquiry

2. **'Agenda-Setting-Game'**
   - legitimacy of agenda setting remains contested
   - political responsibility may be delegated to the scientists
   - Risk of constructing an artificial lack of alternatives and reducing policy making to a form of implementation management

3. **'Community-Formation-Game'**
   - questionable if a common interest and shared practice exists
   - questionable whether time and contact intensity are sufficient to create a viable community
   - fundamental contradictions of science and policy making are downplayed

4. **'Re-Framing-Game'**
   - too time intensive and complicated for policymakers interested in fast and easy solutions
   - means to question patterns of explanation and world-views

What researchers should keep in mind

1. Policymaking takes place at different places by different actors at different times.

2. As policymaking requires fast and pragmatic decisions, the time for adequate and detailed discussions is often lacking.

3. Policymaking is primarily based in political values and beliefs, persuasion and negotiation, rather than scientific evidence and truth.

What **policy makers** should keep in mind

1. There is a lack of incentives for scientists to engage in knowledge brokerage with policymakers

2. Scientific communities, careers and reputations are organised in academic disciplines while inter- and transdisciplinarity fields are perceived only as an add-on.

3. Scientific results cannot be directly translated into policy recommendations or decisions.

What should be considered in
designing knowledge brokerage systems

1. ## Quality, types and sources of knowledge
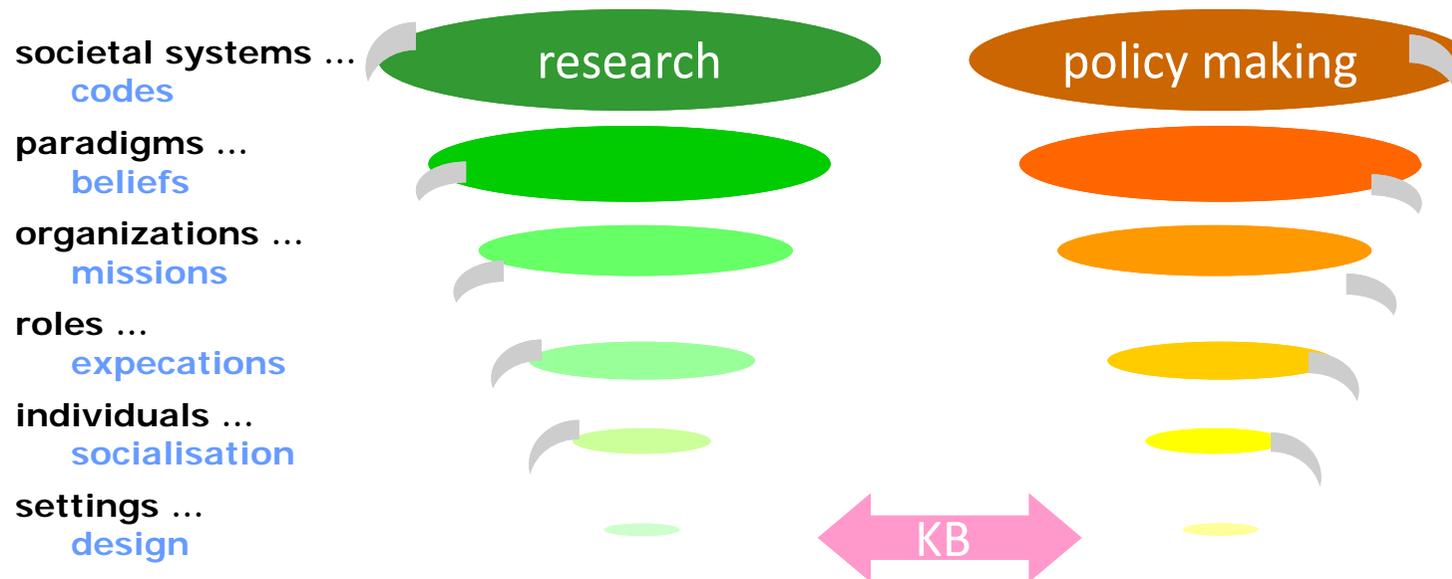
    A. descriptive statements ('facts') – measuring 'how it is'
    B. causal statements ('causalities') – clarifying 'why is it that way'
    C. predictive statements ('futures') – inferring 'what will happen if'
    D. interpretive statements ('explanations') – understanding 'how it makes sense'
    E. framing statements ('systems') – delineating 'how it could be understood'
    F. normative statements ('goals') – postulating 'how it should be'

2. ## Multilevel embeddedness of Knowledge Brokerage

3. ## Professional design and implementation

What should be considered in designing knowledge brokerage systems

1. Quality, types and sources of knowledge
2. Multilevel embeddedness of Knowledge Brokerage
3. Professional design and implementation

- **Temporary institutional arrangements for specific purposes**
  e.g. citizen panels, communities of practice

- **Documents adapted to the needs of target audiences**
  e.g. policy briefs, simulated newspaper, knowledge units

- **Co-Production of shared outcomes**
  e.g. joint research agendas, evidence documents

- **Specialized event formats**
  e.g. webinars, summer schools, brokerage events

- **'Micro-level' work formats and event tools**
  strategy mapping, system mapping, buzz sessions, real-time surveys