

Policy learning, a proactive approach: Clash of the clans rebooted?

Within the madding crowd there are propositions to facilitate a science-policy interface that will determine the nature of policy making amongst respective participants. Environment related global policy issues are hereby brought to light in aid of an easier *modus operandi* that include all related parties.

As part of this madding crowd, I too have found myself stuck between a rock and a hard place (given I am a marine geologist I admit to eroding this idiom far beyond use) in the science field wanting to participate in policy-making strategies and sea level studies that will in aid the progress of science without negatively effecting the environment and in any way contribute to effects of global warming. Government platforms offering learning that will bridge the gap between science leaders and policy makers are few and far between to actively engage in the policies that govern us.

This clash of the clans includes the seesaw between the demand for more knowledge (especially beyond traditional measures of research) and the risk of verbosity, or lack of scientific credibility. Science-policy interfaces (SPI's) can bridge the gap between scientific leaders and policy makers (who are oftentimes at loggerheads with each other due to wicked policy problems) through policy learning.

The implementation of models like the Pragmatic-Enlightened Model (PEM) are used to include assessment processes which aid in the learning of policies and that which surrounds policy-making. Scientific assessments on an international level include integrating accessible information, making policy related scientific information available to the general public and considering the many different perspectives at play that could, for example, end up in controversy.

Building blocks of deliberative policy learning generally include: Representation, empowerment, capacity building, and, of course, spaces for deliberation. For this well-rounded contribution to be of value there needs to be the inclusion of various marginalised viewpoints, disciplinary insights, and local and institutional knowledge.

- Assessment making has some pros over long term vision for what may arise surrounding wicked policy issues, however this shouldn't always be considered the preferred route of action.
- Since PEM related assessments have high potential it will be beneficial to engage in discussions of other seemingly high theoretical outcome of alternative SPI's.
- Large scale (i.e. international and intergovernmental research projects) associations for integrated scientific assessment processes may already contribute to global policy learning.

This may be an attempt to both have our cake and eat it, wouldn't that be all fine and dandy!

Article reviewed:

Kowarsch, M., et al 2016. Scientific assessments to facilitate deliberative policy learning. *Palgrave Communications*, 2(1), pp.1-20.