

Abstract proposal for “Knowledge Brokerage as participatory interaction processes linking research, policy and civil society: what are the main characteristics of effective and successful KB”

Factors for successful interactions between policy, research and civil society
A comparative analysis of policy relevant agro-environmental modelling

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Wicked issues (Rittel, 1973) have taken an increasing importance in the political world. Be it the Blair administration’s commitment to base policy on evidence or the EU’s engagement to enhance the policy-relevance of scientific research, the integration of scientific evidence into the decision process has become an indispensable principle of governance during the last decade. At the same time, the need for a renewed form of legitimacy through direct participation of citizens into political decisions has not ceased to rise. These requirements have crystallized into agro-environmental model-making: researchers have been solicited both to work within the constraints of the policy process and to integrate citizens’ knowledge.

Under certain circumstances, agro-environmental modelling has proven to be a brilliant knowledge broker. More and more commonly, analytical frameworks involve policy-makers and citizens for the conception of scenarios as well as for the choice of indicators, policy options and instruments.

Nevertheless, many such attempts to bridge the gap between science, policy and civil society have resulted in mitigated outcomes. By tracing agro-environmental model-making in France and Germany in contrasted case studies through content analysis and interviews, we investigate the conditions for successful interactions. More precisely, we expect to shed light on the role of institutional, policy as well as on scientific contexts and variables in determining the success of this knowledge broker.