

THE SUSTAINABILITY SIGNIFICANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN THE CARRIBEAN AND THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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The Policy Environment for Environmental Policy

A) International

- Climate change negotiations
- US vs EU
- Rio + 10 (WSSD)
- WTO, UNEP, WTO, UN, BWI
(Trade, Environment, Labour)
- Globalisation
- UN S.G Global Compact
- Millennium, G.A commitments
- FTAA
- SIDS

The Policy Environment for Environmental Policy (cont.)

b) Regional

- Port of Spain Accord
- Caribbean Co-operation in Health
- Caribbean Free Market and Economy
- CARICOM, OECS, CEHI, CCA, UWI, CDB, etc.

The Policy Environment for Environmental Policy (cont.)

c) National

- Environmental goals, laws, standards
- Economic growth (productivity, trade, market access)
- Governance, social & ethnic tensions, crime, elections, Whitehall model of government
- Societal awareness

The Policy Environment for Environmental Policy (cont.)

d) Local

- Local government capacity
- Community groups
- NGOs
- Resource access and ownership
- Basic social services

The Policy Environment for Environmental Policy (cont.)

- e) The communication challenge is:
- to work at all these levels
 - articulate the top down and bottom up linkages
 - identify and analyse opportunities and challenges for Caribbean policy actors

EVOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY OBJECTIVES

ERA

DOMINANT POLICY CONCERN

Hunter Gatherer

Agriculture

Early Industrial

Colonial

Post colonial

Post 1980s

Taming nature

Ownership of land, etc

Pollution

Resource Scarcity

Pollution & resource scarcity

Sustainability (economy,
equity, ecology)

Communication Challenge: To shift the env. policy debate
from biophysical impact to sustainability significance

Principles of Sustainability Significance

- Ecological integrity at every scale
- Economic efficiency (expanding opportunities for human well being)
- Social equity - inter & intra generational
- Good governance (power, participation, accountability)
- Precaution - surprise, uncertainty, adaptation
- Now and the future integration

Principles of Sustainability Significance (cont.)

Communication Challenge:

- Keep these alive but go beyond to practical stories
- The difficult world of negotiation, compromise, conflict management, trade offs
- Dealing with complexity
- From symptoms to causes to symptom - cause dynamic

Sustainability Policy Content

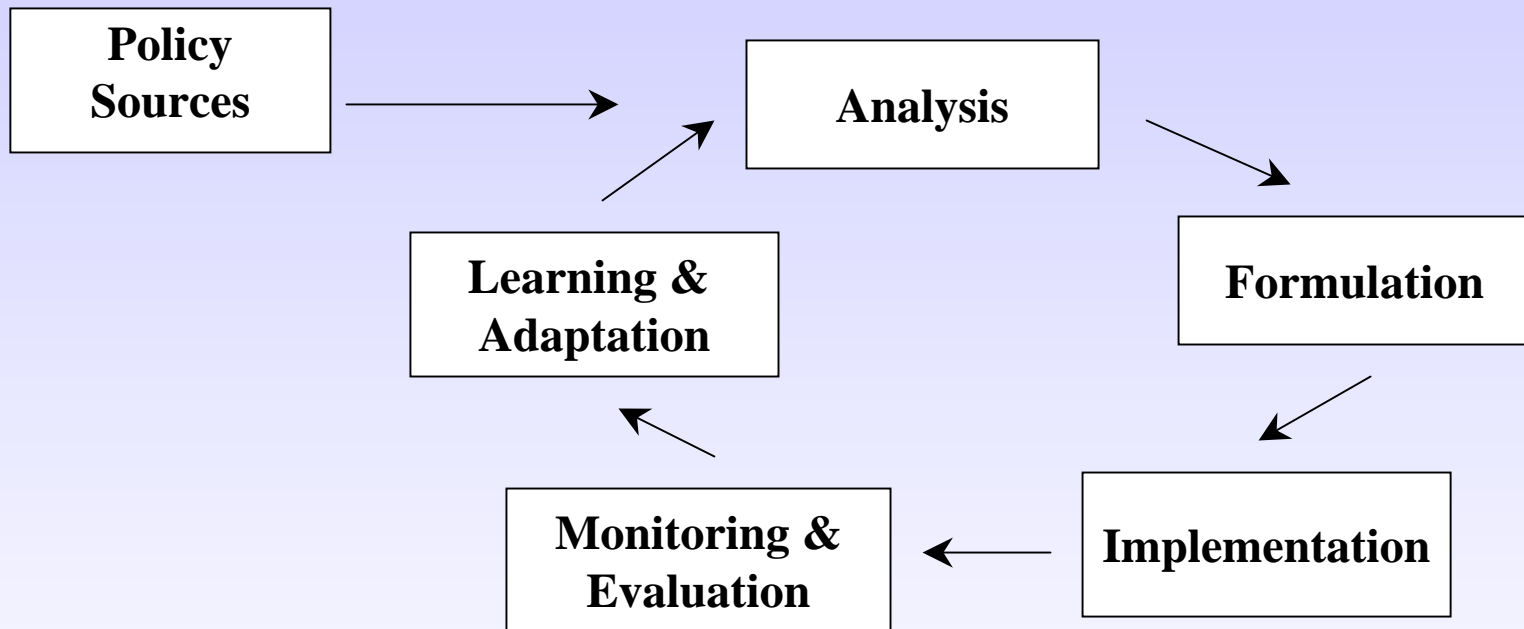
- Economic growth rate e.g 6 percent
- Employment e.g 5000 new jobs per year
- Inflation e.g 3 percent per year
- Coastal pollution levels reduced by....
- Poverty reduction targets by 2015
- Agricultural production/productivity
- Tourism
- Housing
- Drinking water
- Waste management

Sustainability Policy Content (cont.)

Communications Role:

- Articulating environmental policy contribution to such goals
- Addressing contribution of these policy objectives to env. policy goals
- Encouraging analysis and debate of the national budget in these terms

The Sustainability Policy Process



Role of Communications:

- **Facilitating multi-stakeholder processes**
- **Enabling civil society participation**

Policy Sources: crisis, vested interest, enlightened citizenry, international forces

ICT and the Policy Process

E-mail

E-conferencing

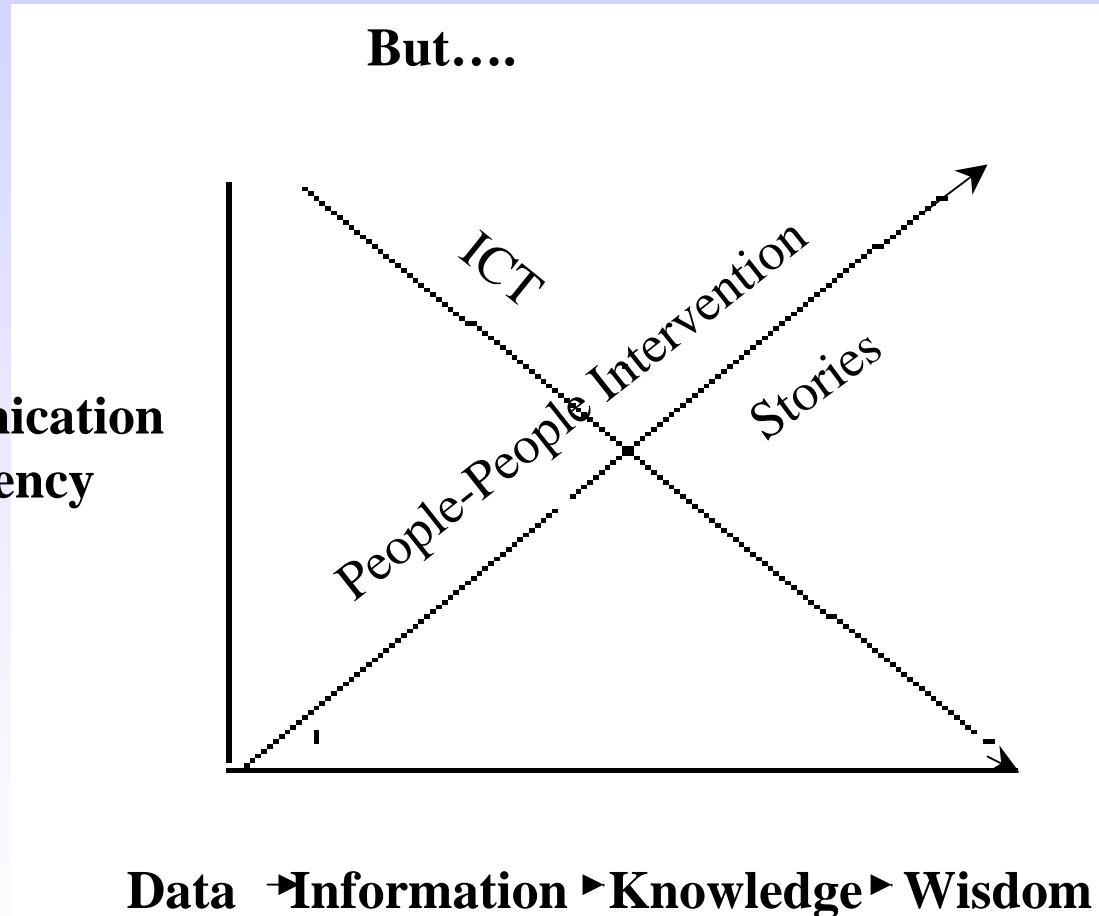
E-commerce

Websites

Internet

GIS

Communication
Efficiency



Communications and Env. Policy in the Face of Complexity

- Many interacting variables and actors
- Multiple scales - nested holarchies
- Feed back loops
- Multiple orthogonal perspectives
 - cost-benefit analysis
 - local justice system
 - narrative policy analysis
 - herd behaviour/behavioural economics

Communications and Env. Policy in the Face of Complexity (cont.)

- Diversity not consensus
- Self-organisation not command and control
- Bridging the knowledge and policy communities
- Uncertainty, surprise, optimal ignorance
- Adaptive approaches/learning how to learn
- Communicating complexity simply (not simplifying complexity)

Beware: Communication as a Substitute for Action

- Talking about it is not doing it
- Respect for those who sound knowledgeable, rather than those who do
- Classic substitutes for action
 - Workshops, seminars, meetings
 - Plans
 - Information systems
 - Reports
 - Mission statements
 - Confusing ease of understanding with ease of implementation

Beware: Communication as a Substitute for Action (cont.)

Communication for Action

- Knowing comes from doing and teaching others how
- There is no doing without mistakes
- Measure action results, not paper outputs
- Thinkers vs Doers: A false dichotomy - especially in policy
- We are all in the communications business