

Policy Entrepreneurship Program

Jumping Through Hoops?



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Making Research Count: Strategies and Expectations for Influencing Policy-Making in Complex, Dynamic Environments

Spring 2015 GREAT Policy Entrepreneurship Program

*Overcoming Policy Barriers and Institutional Hurdles
that Prevent Your Research from Achieving Its Full Impact*

Evert Lindquist, Director
*School of Public Administration
University of Victoria*

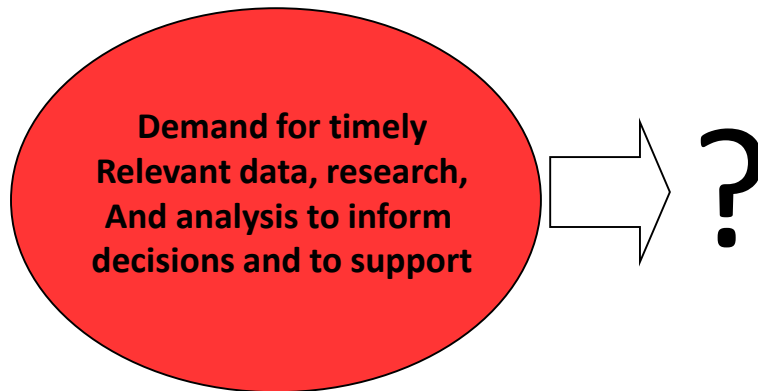
Michael Smith Laboratories
University of British Columbia
14 April 2015

Overview of Presentation

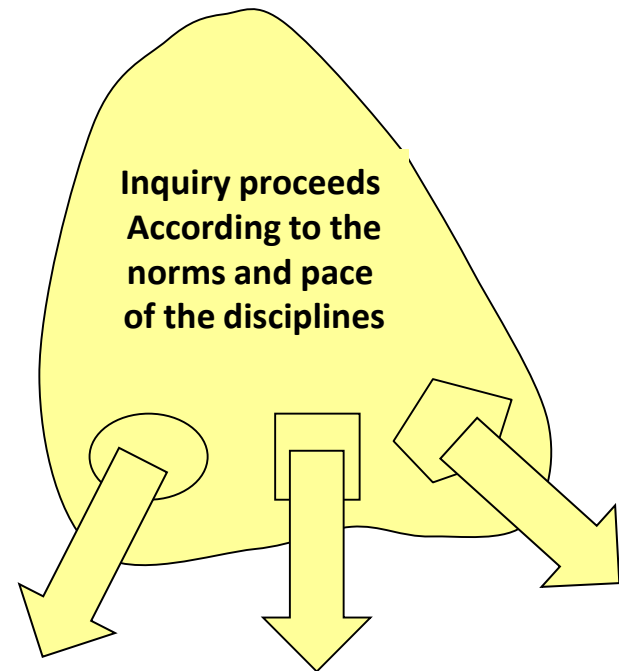
- The Two-Community Formulation
- The Modern Challenge: Research into Policy
- Some Cautionary Observations
- Relevant Frameworks & Literature
- Levels and Types of Policy Influence
- Implications of the Frameworks
- Questions for Discussion

The Two-Community Formulation

The World of Action

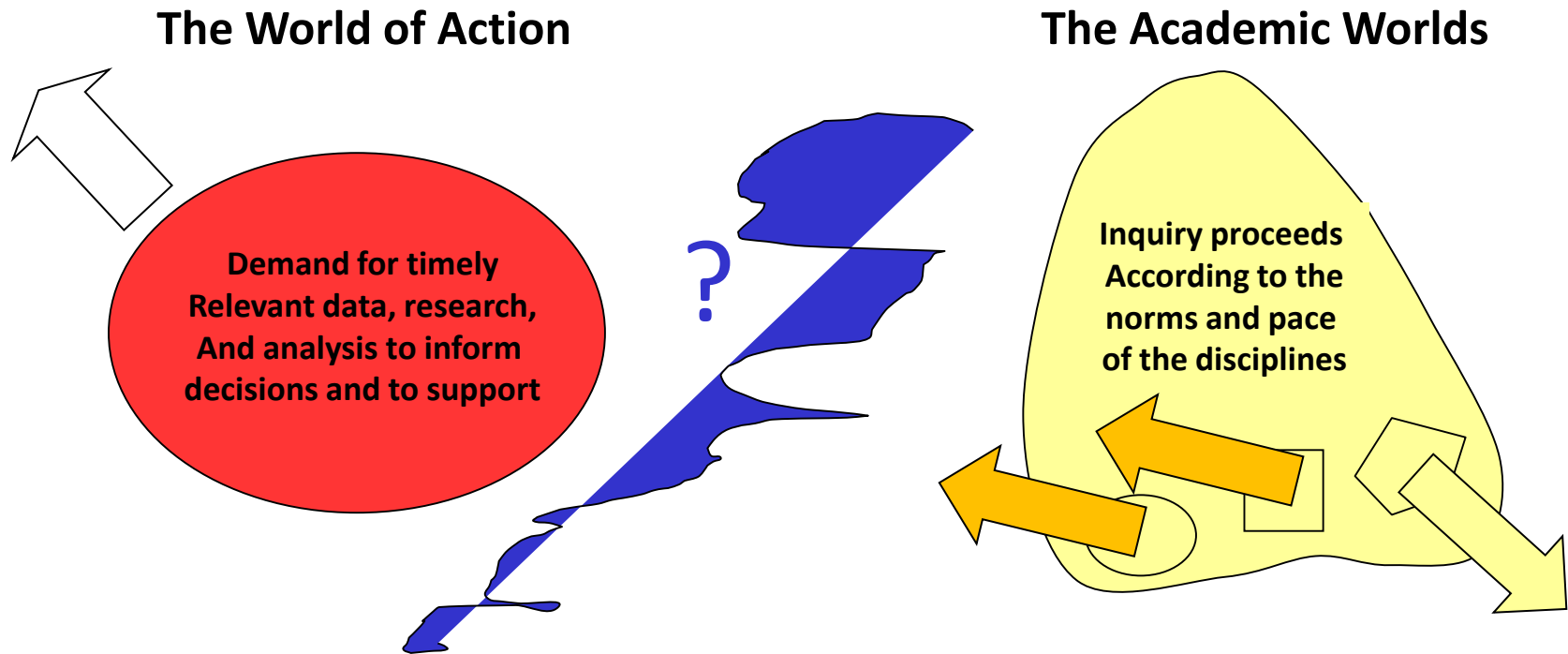


The Academic Worlds



Engineering versus the “enlightenment function” of research

The Two-Community Formulation Re-Considered



Frustrations emerging from scholars when advice is not acted on

The Modern Challenge: Research into Policy

- The challenge of ‘two communities’ long a concern
- Different cultures, time horizons, sense of possibilities
- Policy-making systems are complicated, often opaque
- Ministerial and top executive time is over-determined
- Incredible volume of information converging on them
- Policy challenges not the domain of any one department
- Policy often ‘catches up’ to practice; ↑pace of change
- Canadian “PM” government even more centralized
- Political leaders less likely to take advice from officials
- Governments see ‘mandates’ as the ‘long campaign’
- Research can challenge underpinnings of policy regimes
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Some Cautionary Observations

- All institutions asked to show ‘effectiveness’, which means commercial, policy or community relevance
- Risk: this can unnecessarily raise expectations
- Inappropriate metrics for demonstrating influence
- Like all performance regimes: displacement, diversion
- Seeking short-term impact at the expense of longer-term influence & broader consensus in research field
- Risk: can damage reputation of scholars, institutions
- **Key question**: research license or to transmit findings

Research can make a difference, challenges get surmounted, and new policies get adopted, but this requires strategy, readiness and reasonable expectations.

Conceptualizing the Challenge

Conceptualizing the Challenge with Practical Considerations in Mind

There are pertinent literatures on...

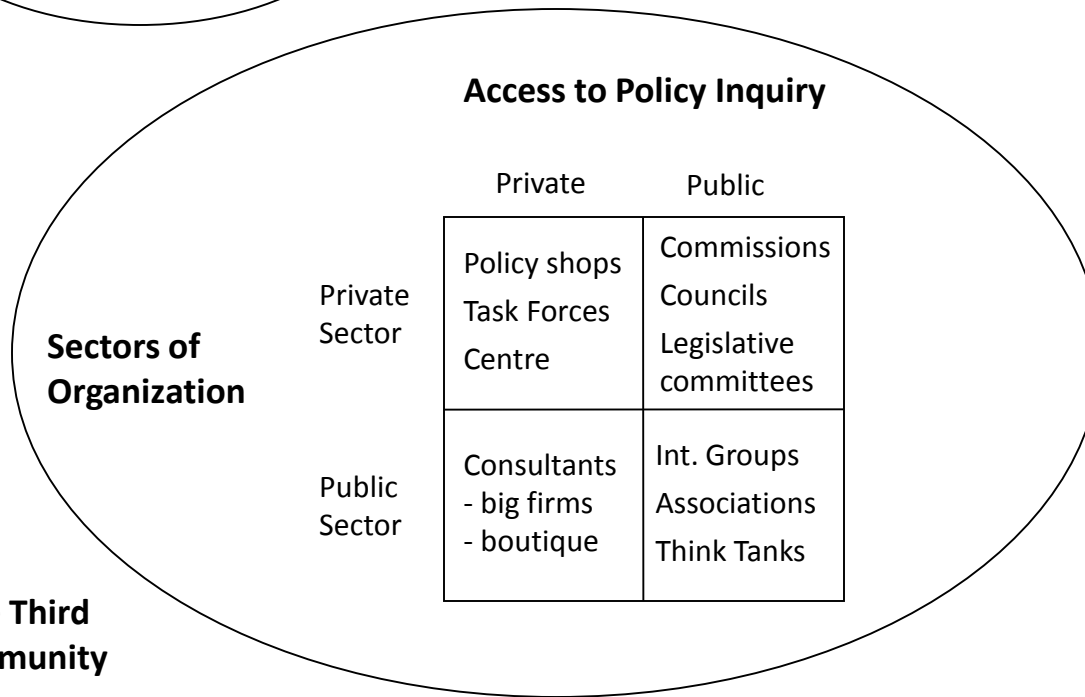
1. Broad perspectives on knowledge utilization
2. Policy communities and networks: alternative views
3. Beyond research: different modes of policy inquiry
4. Agenda-setting and policy-making processes
5. Decision regimes: routine, incremental, fundamental

1. Knowledge Utilization: The 'Third Community' and the Network of Policy Actors

The Decision Community

*Demand for timely, relevant data,
research, and analysis to support
and inform decisions*

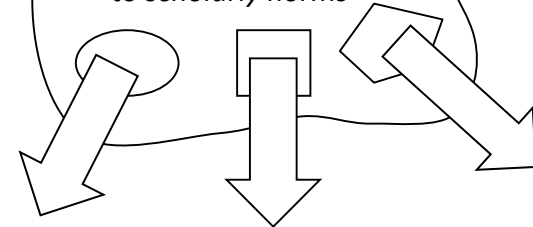
The Third Community



The Academic Worlds

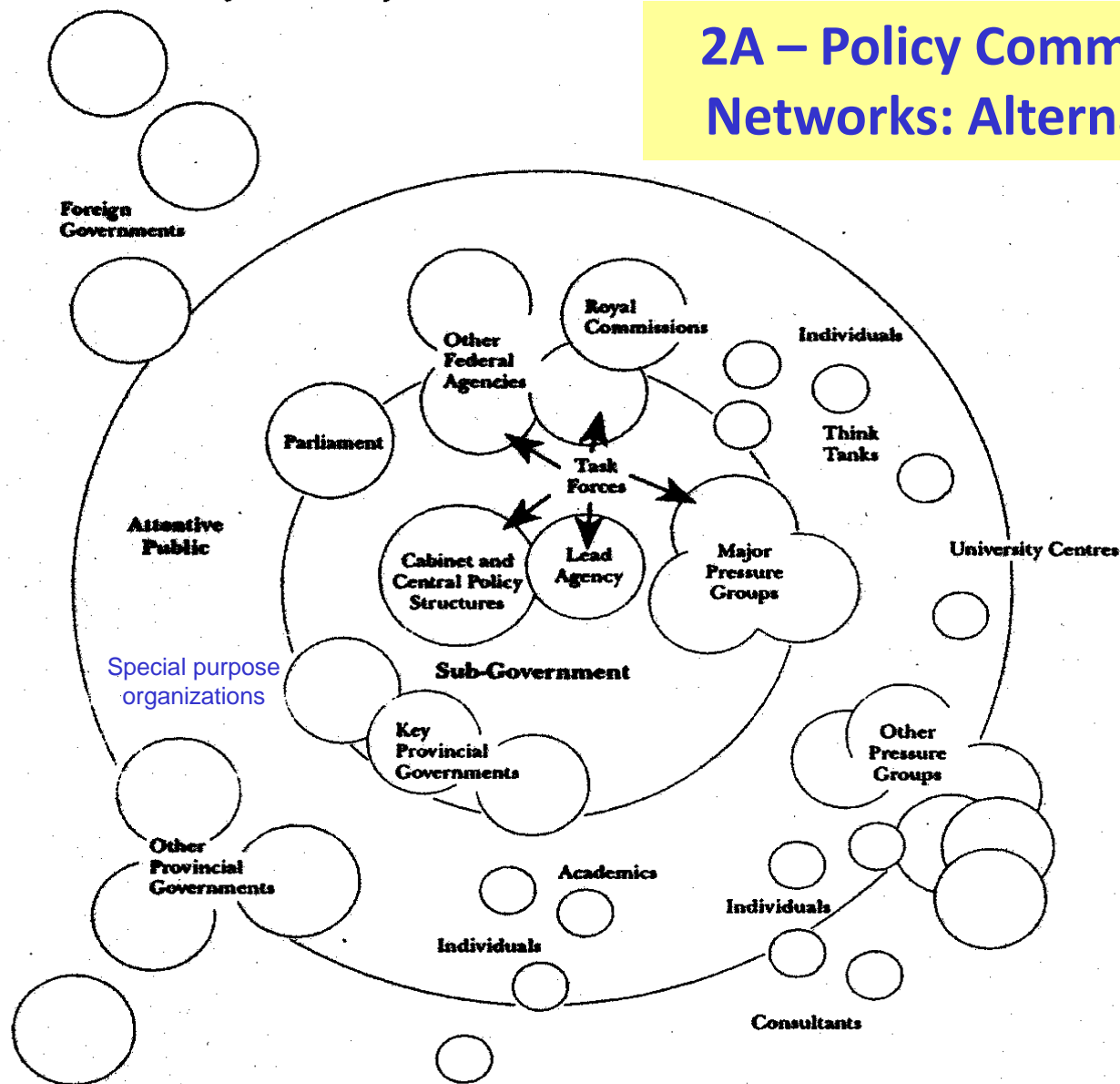
Departments
Research Centres
Professional Schools

*Inquiry proceeds according
to scholarly norms*



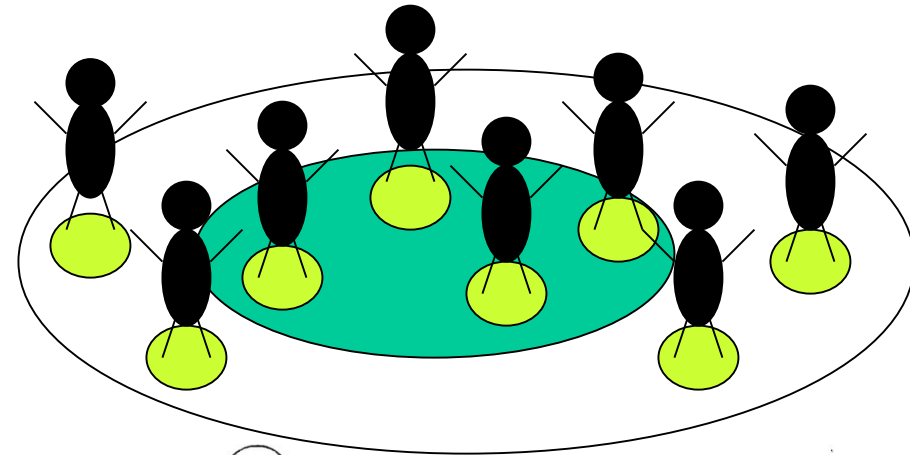
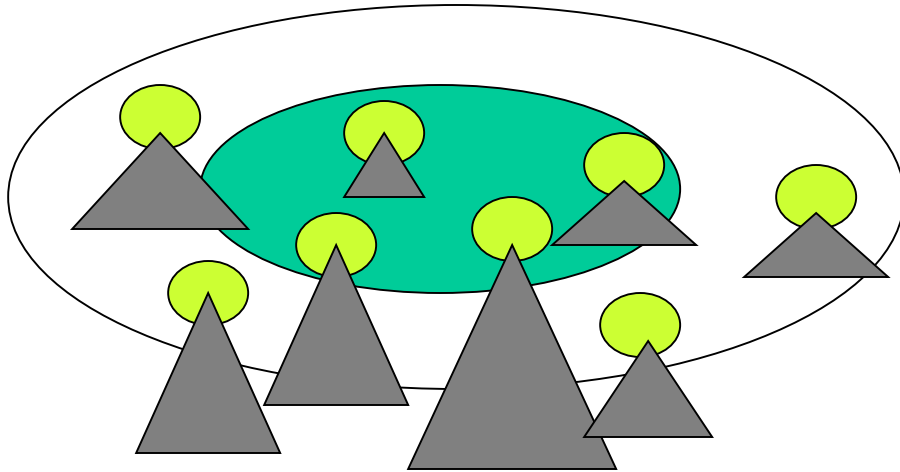
Producing policy inquiry often proceeds in a very competitive environment

2A – Policy Communities and Networks: Alternative Views



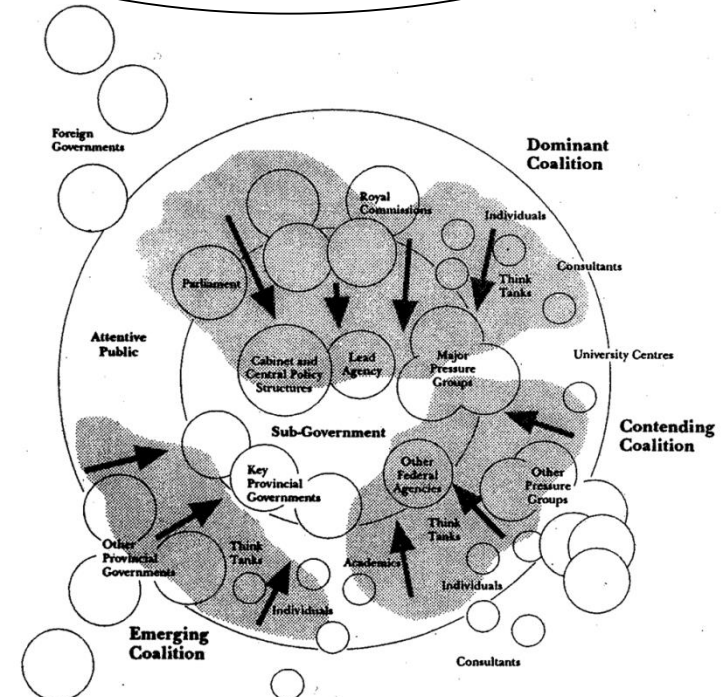
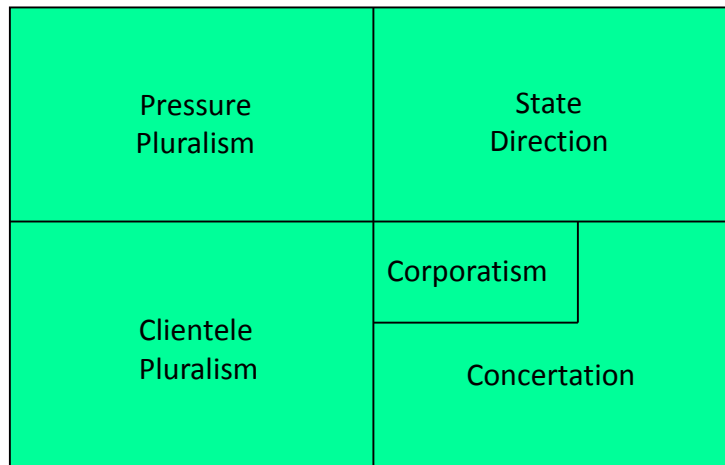
Adapted from P. Pross, "Pressure Groups: Talking Chamelons" in M.S. Whittington and G. Williams (eds.) *Canadian Politics in the 1990's*.

2B – Policy Communities: Constellations of Hierarchies, Individuals, Power or Beliefs?

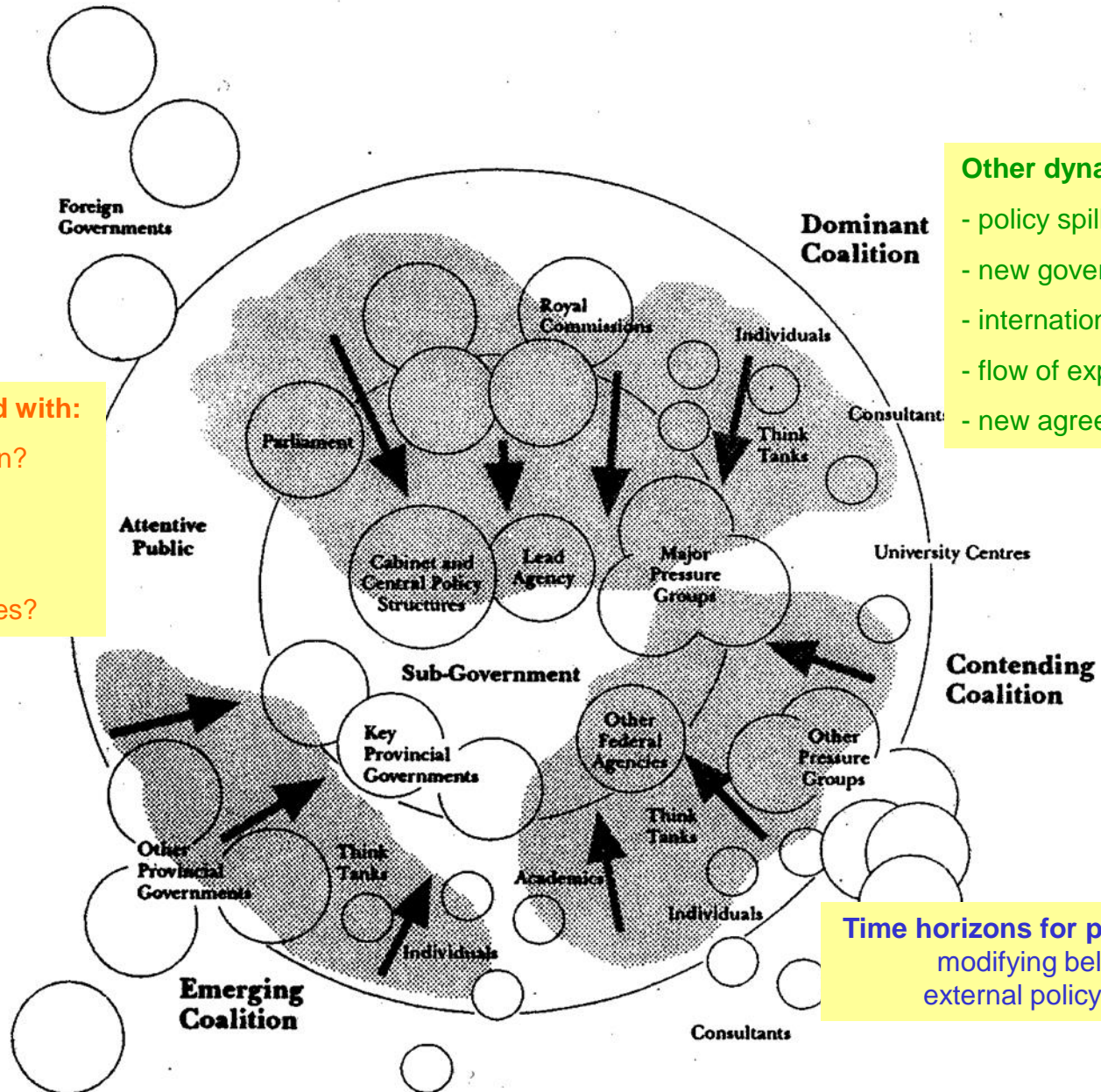


Extent of Government Organization:
Coordination and Capacity

Low ← → High

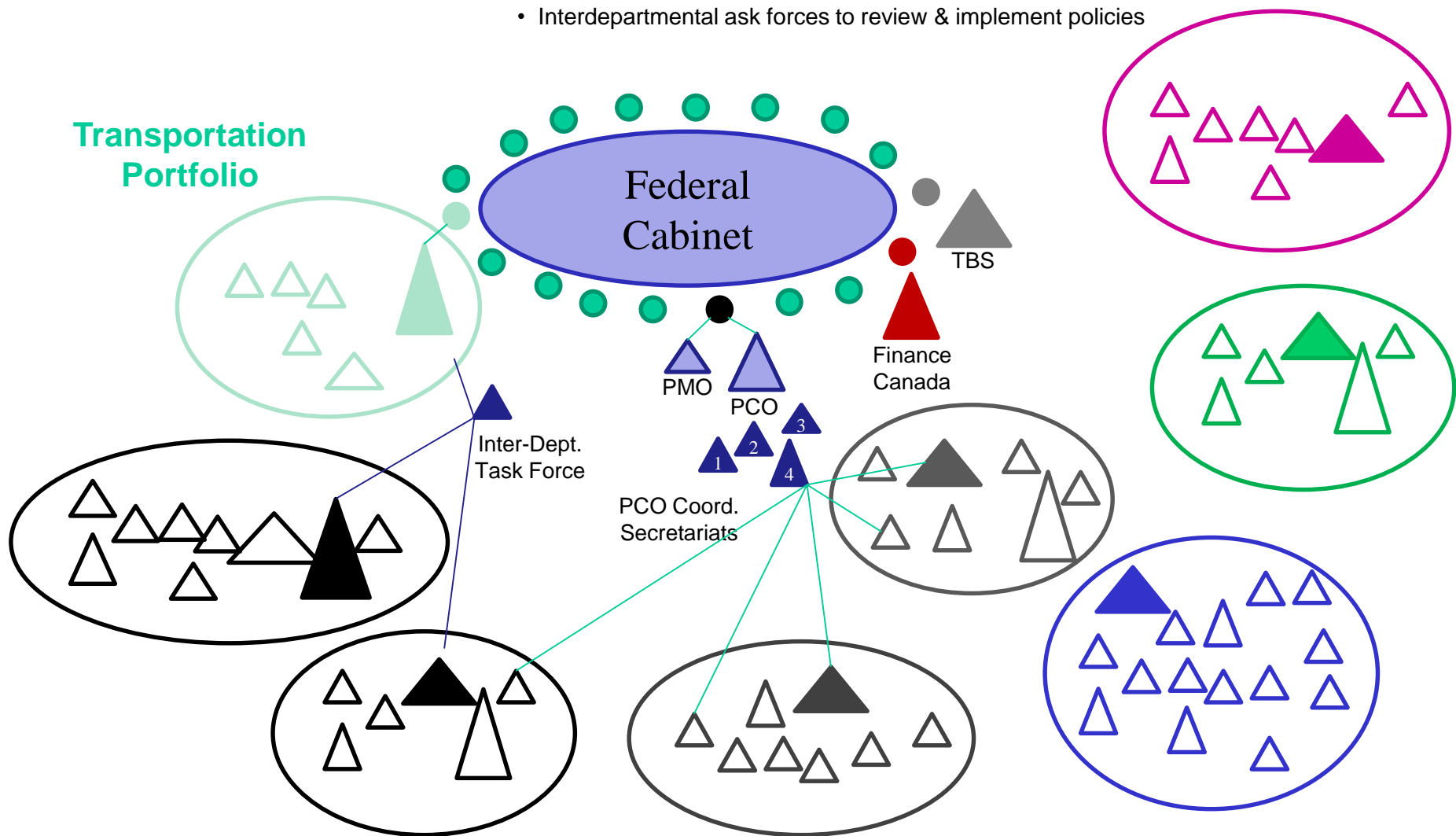


2C – Policy Communities as Belief Systems

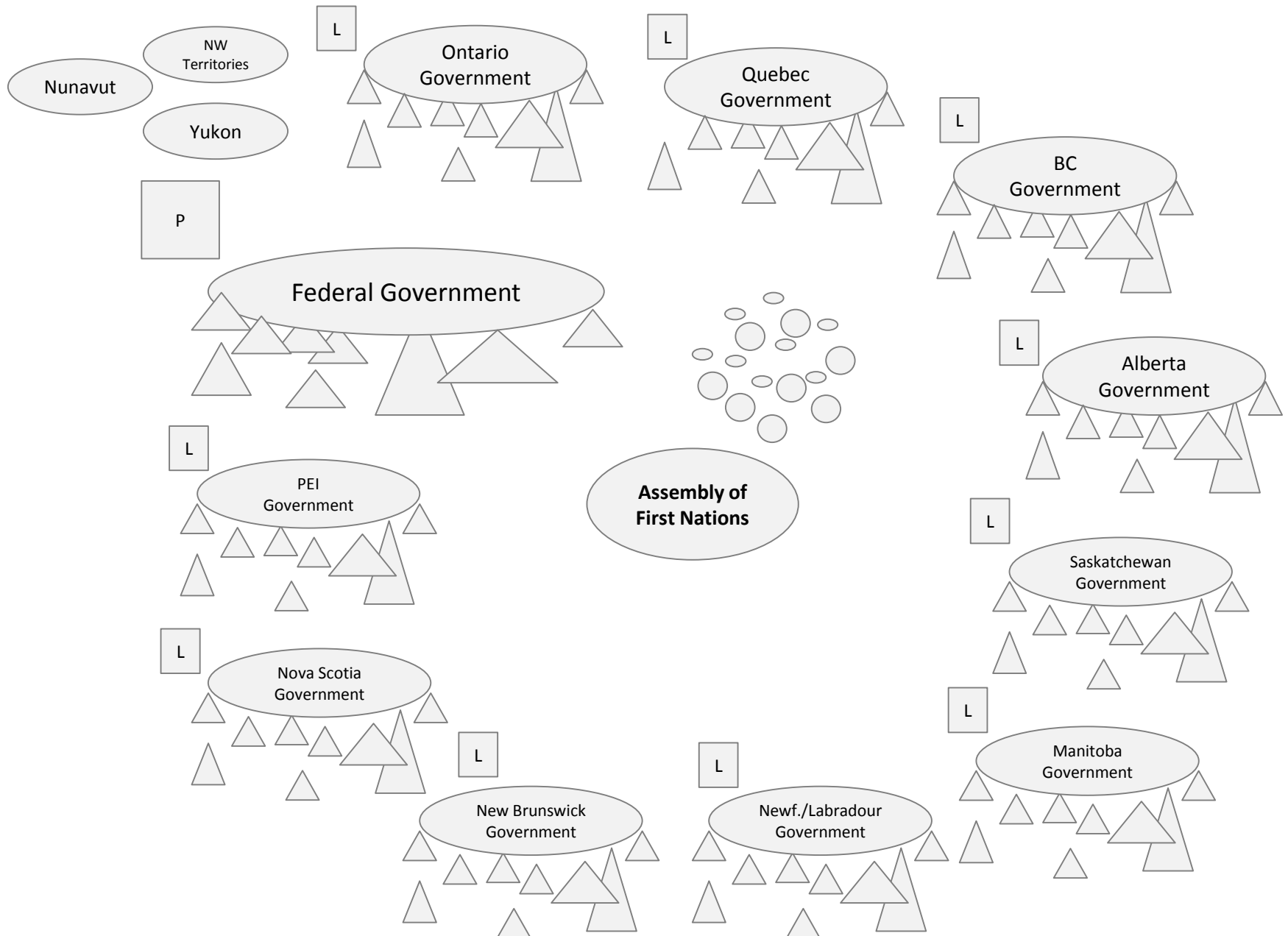


2D – Federal Government Organization

- Central agencies to coordinate, monitor and control across departments and agencies
 - Special task forces and secretariats out of the Privy Council Office (cabinet office)
 - Regular meetings between the Prime Minister and the Clerk of the Privy Council
- Oversight and prodding from the Prime Minister's Office to ministers and deputy ministers
 - Weekly breakfast meetings of Clerk and Deputy Ministers
 - Re-grouping of programs and re-naming of ministerial portfolios
- Cabinet meetings and sub-committees (Priorities & Planning Committee)
 - Interdepartmental task forces to review & implement policies



2E – Canada's Intergovernmental Landscape



3 – Beyond Research: Modes of Policy Inquiry

- basic research
- applied research
- policy research

Research

Analysis

Data

**Information
Generation**

Publication Activities

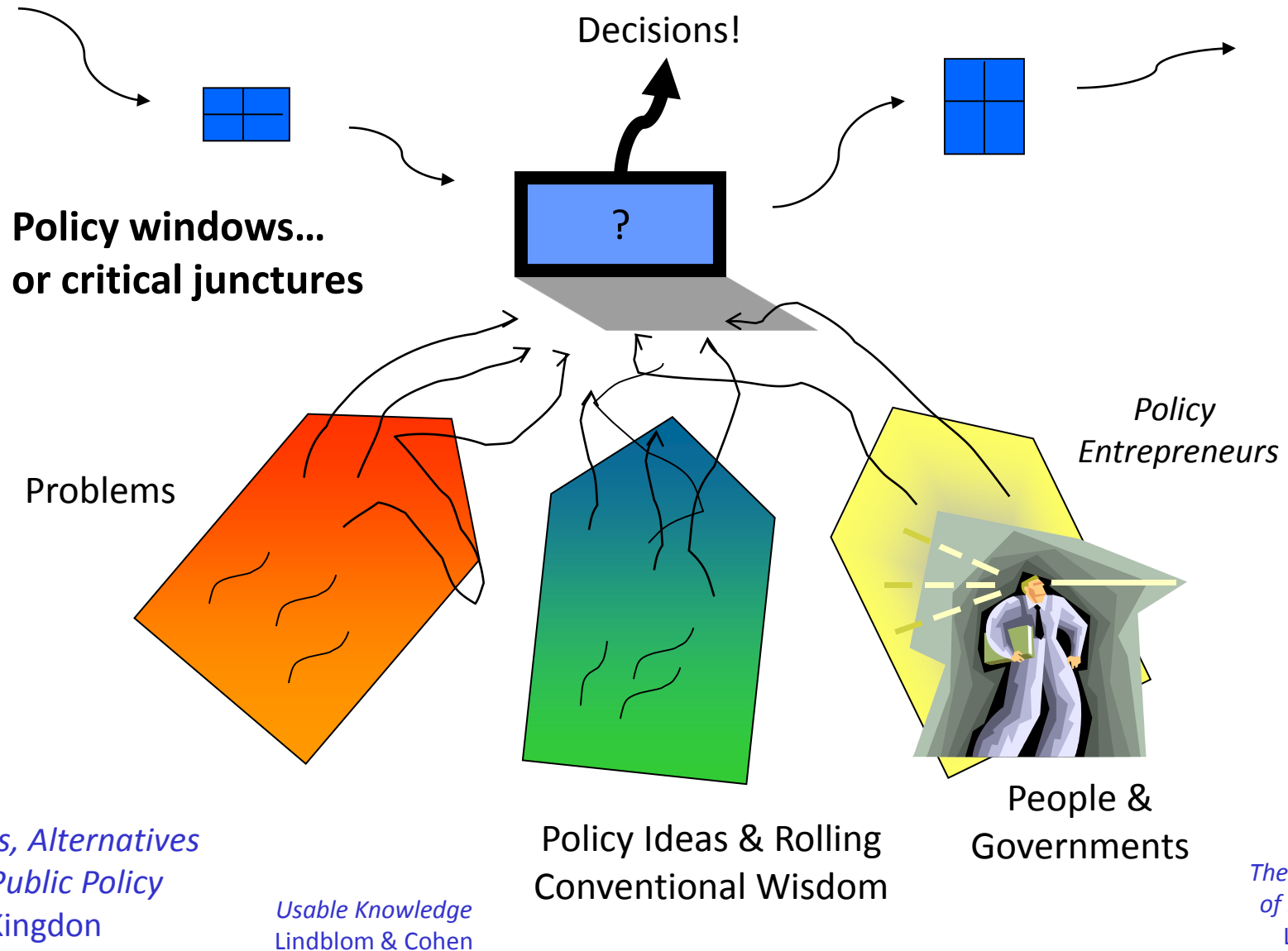
Memos
Reports
Articles
Books
Briefs
Web Sites

Convocation Activities

Workshops
Seminars
Conferences
Briefings
Speeches
E-connections

What about social media, instant journals, factoids,

4 – Agenda-Setting and Public Policy



5 – Decision-Making Regimes and Implied Demands for Information

Decision Regime	Routine	Incremental	Fundamental	<i>Emergent</i>
Status of Consensus On the Policy Base	Intact	Policy base largely intact but marginal issues arise	Core principles of policy base open to scrutiny	<i>No consensus – the field is wide open and open to development of a broad vision</i>
Number of Actors Involved in Decision Processes	A few actors with responsibility to implement policy by policy-makers	A few policymakers with a stake in the marginal issue	All policymakers and actors potentially affected or concerned about a significant change	<i>Relatively small number at the outset</i>
Type of Information Sought	Data that can inform existing routines, and analysis to determine when to switch to other routines.	Analysis on selected issues – the method of successive limited comparisons for the issues at hand.	Information on fundamental variables, and that probes underlying assumptions. Will also require analysis, data of considerable scope.	<i>Inquiry at a broad level for perspective, but work proceeds on selective issues</i>

Key implication for researchers concerns the extent to which their findings challenge the policy and administrative status quo. Different instruments? New policy regimes? New expertise required to assess merits of findings?

Practical Implications

Types of Policy Influence....

Broadening Policy Horizons

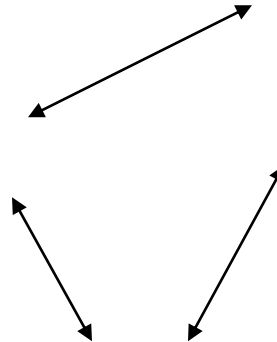
- Providing opportunities for networking & learning within the jurisdiction or with colleagues elsewhere
- Introducing new concepts to frame debates, putting ideas on the agenda, or stimulating public debate
- Educating researchers and others who take up new positions with broader understanding of issues
- Stimulating quiet dialogue among decision-makers

Expanding Policy Capacities

- Improving the knowledge and data of certain actors
- Supporting recipients to develop innovative ideas
- Improving capabilities to communicate ideas
- Developing new talent for research and analysis

Affecting Policy Regimes

- Modification of existing programs or policies
- Fundamental re-design of programs or policies
- Establish new policy regime and programs



So, “influence” is only one standard for judging success; what might be other indicators?

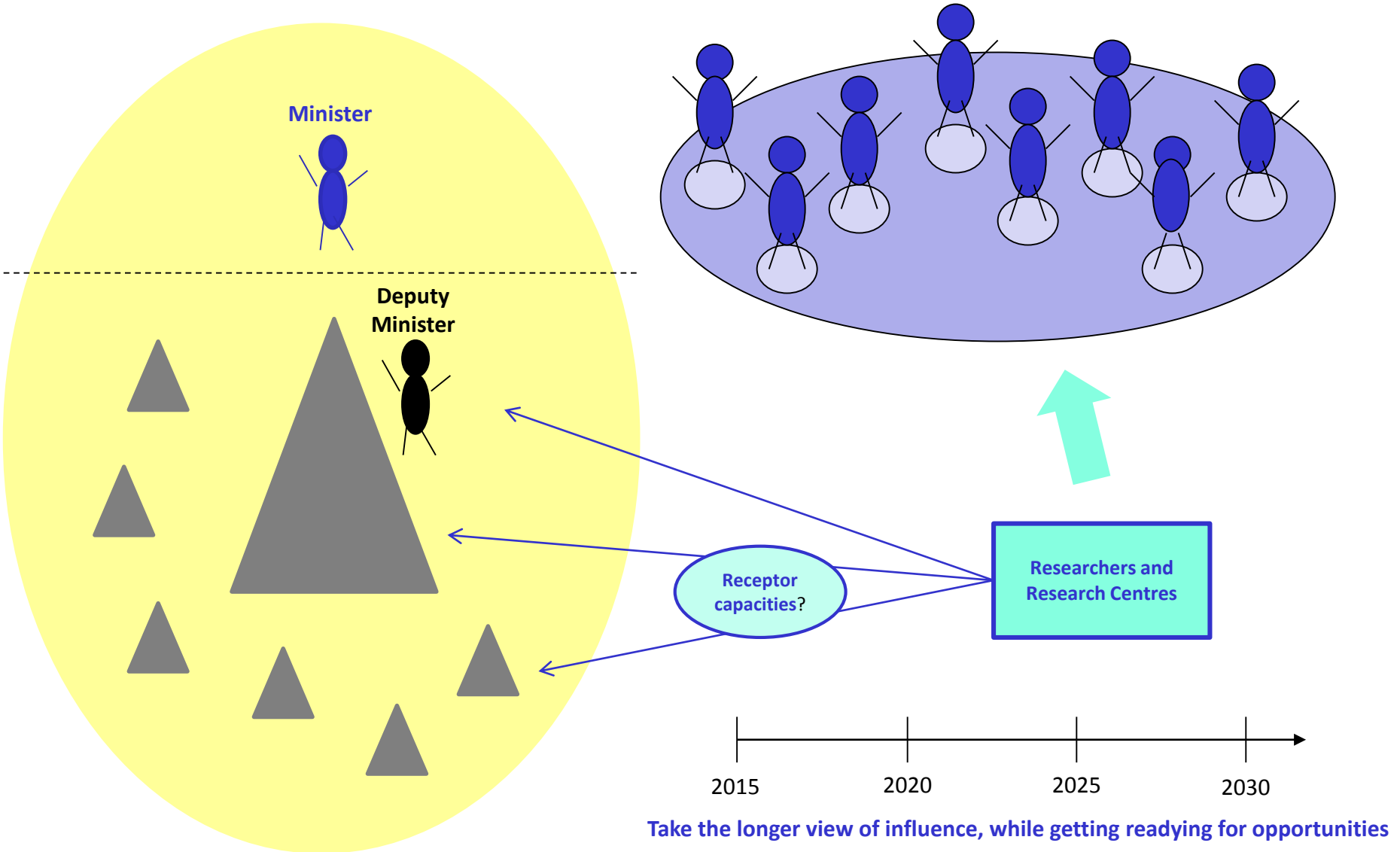
Reversing the Field: From Challenges to Strategies

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Focus: Developing Access, Trust, Expertise, Pressure Points, Plans

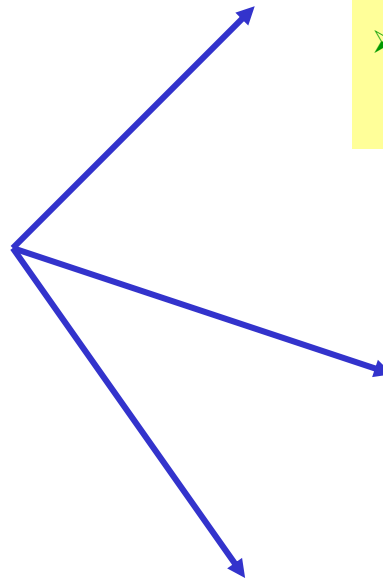
- Identify policy windows, time horizons, change ‘quotient’
- Map and expand consensus in applied research networks..
- Get international validation...
- Build/lever other capacities to influence those in power (NGOs, think tanks, associations, lobbyists, etc.)
- Build knowledge both inside & outside government (networks)
- Conferences, workshops, etc.
- Placement and recruitment of graduate students as strategy
- Fostering scholar-practitioner exchanges (short & longer term)
- Persuade first ministers...
- Innovation can start anywhere
- Readiness to make the case...
- Is implication ‘policy-ready’?
- What about pilot projects?

New Political Governance: Implications



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Thank you!

Ideas and comments are welcome....

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Nutley, S.M., et al. 2007. *Using Evidence: How Research Can Inform Public Services*.
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Ottawa: Evaluation Unit, IDRC. Available at <https://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/bitstream/10625/29252/1/118166.pdf>.