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ASSESSING POLICY COHERENCE IN THE WATER-FOOD-ENERGY NEXUS

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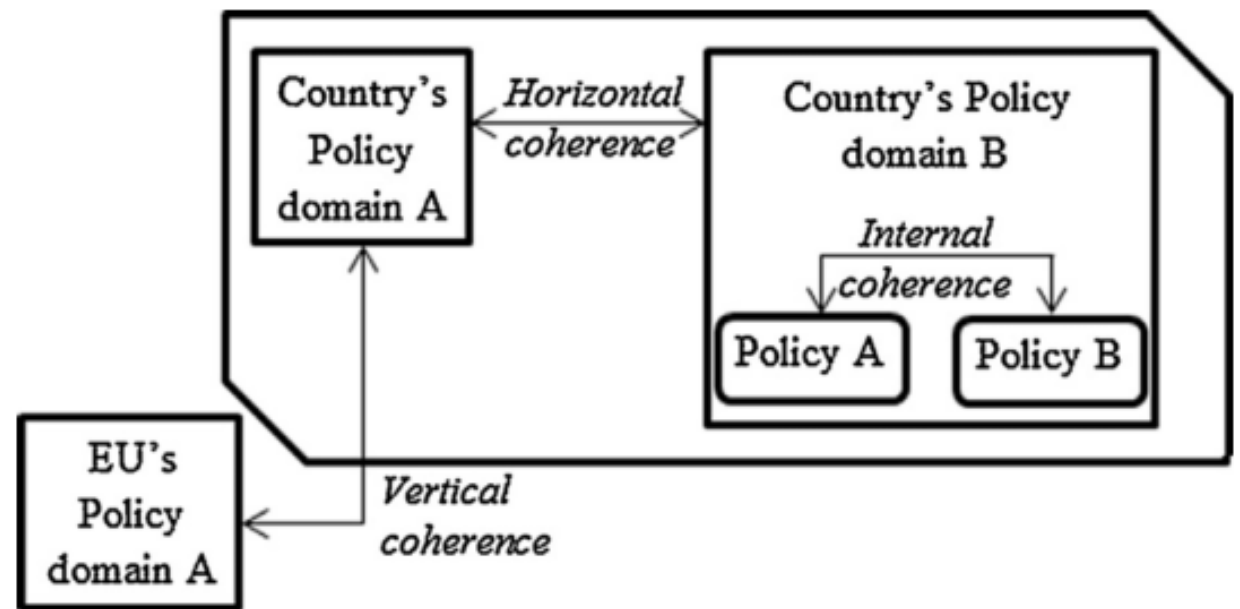
The Water-Food-Energy Nexus and Policy Coherence

- Effective governance of the W-E-F nexus is based on the integration of the complex interlinkages between these resources
- Policy coherence as important principle to politically accommodate integration between the W-E-F sectors
- The current nexus research offers some governance principles, e.g.
 - Multi-centric view: all W-E-F sectors treated with equal importance (e.g. Benson et al., 2015)
 - Multi-tiered institutions: coupling of policies across the sectors (e.g. Scott et al., 2011)
 - Strengthened institutions and bridging bodies (e.g. Hoff 2011)
 - Involvement of public and private actors, multi-stakeholder platforms (e.g. WEF, 2011)
- How does coherence contribute to effective resource governance under the W-E-F nexus?
- How can the tension between diversity and integration be effectively accommodated in governance system?

Policy Coherence

- Coherence implies that various policies are aligned because they share a set of ideas or objectives
- Often defined by its effects, e.g. production of synergies, reduction of conflicts
- Coherence as '**complimentarity of action (mutual reinforcement)**' in objectives, instruments, implementation, and outputs (Velázquez-Gomar et al., 2014: 121; Benson et al. 2016)
- types: horizontal (among policies)
vertical (between levels)
internal (within one policy area)
et al.

- Coherence is high, where objectives and processes are aligned in institutions



Broadening the Frame: Policy Coherence in an Integrative Environmental Governance (IEG) Perspective (Visseren-Hamakers, 2015)

- W-E-F nexus can be understood as a governance system of institutions, policies, and actors around the issues of water, energy, and food security
- Systems view: **Coherence determined by the relationship between the different components of the system**
 - Incorporates a multi-level perspective, and different stages of the policy cycle
 - Allows for a political, institutional perspective, incl. issues of interests and power
 - Broadens the focus for other maleficent configurations, e.g. redundancy, lacunae

Research Approach: Mixed-Methods Design

- How does coherence contribute to effective resource governance under the W-E-F nexus?
- How can the tension between diversity and integration be effectively accommodated in political system?

Large-N meta analysis

- Research on the W-E-F nexus is dominated by a (comparative) case study approach
- Great potential to aggregate and integrate this case study knowledge in systematic ways
- Transformation of qualitative narratives into quantitative data
- Analytical basis: theoretically informed and well elaborated scheme for analysis

Comparative case study

- Cases: Oldenburg region (GER), Southern Transylvania (ROM)
- Selection criteria: EU membership (common institutional frame), variation in the interconnectedness of water, food security, and energy issues (energy landscape vs. rural livelihoods), different national and sub-national policy-making
- Focus: Institutions, structure and agency, outcomes
- Methods: Policy and institutional analysis, field visits, expert and stakeholder interviews

Thank you!

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The Water-Food-Energy Nexus in the Case Study Areas: Lower Saxony vs. Transylvania

| Main Issues | Lower Saxony – Oldenburg | Southern Transylvania |
|---------------|---|---|
| Water | Non-point source pollution Nutrients | Point- and non-point pollution Infrastructure |
| Food security | ‘Industrial agriculture’ Energy cropping | Small-scale farming (peasants) Change of practices |
| Energy | ‘Energy landscape’ | Centralised system Fossils and wood |