Introduction: Public Policy Development & Review

NPC Training Workshop
20 October 2020
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Outline of presentation

A. Policies in context - definition & meanings

B. Policies - purpose & rationale

C. Policy analysis & design

D. Closing remarks
What do we mean when we talk about “policy” in general?

“[P]ublic policy refers to a proposed course of action of government, or guidelines to follow to reach goals and objectives, and is continuously subject to the effects of environmental change and influence.”

*NL Roux (2002)*
What do we mean when we talk about “policy” in context of the NPC?

- evaluate the effectiveness of Government socio-economic policies;
- coordinate the development of government socio-economic policies to ensure consistency

*National Planning Commission Act 2 of 2013*
What’s in a name?

- Policies
- Guidelines
- Action plans
- Strategies
- Policies that contain “strategies” and “action plans”
B. Policies - purpose & rationale
Policies - purpose & rationale

- Communicate aims and priorities within government & to public
- Promotes transparency
- Give effect to constitutional and legislative provisions
- CONS: Time-consuming, may detract from implementation
Is a policy necessary?

- Required by legislation, e.g. Aquaculture Act, 2002, Act 18 of 2002
- International commitments, e.g. Convention on Biodiversity
- Implied by legislation, e.g. Co-operatives Act, 23 of 1996
- To fulfil government priority/address new and emerging issues...
C. Policy analysis & design
Policies - structure and content

- Reference to legal framework, incl regional/international commitments
- Problem description
- Objectives and priorities
- Institutional mapping
- Implementation plan
- Indicators, M&E framework
Policy design & analysis

- Define & analyze problem
- Construct policy alternatives
- Develop criteria for evaluation
- Assess alternatives
- Conclusions
Impact on dimensions of Sustainable Development
Generic hallmarks of “good” policies?

- **Clarity of purpose** - clearly identify key issues
- **Integration with other policy instruments** - other policies, legislation, NDP
- **Organisation & presentation of the plan** - clear and logical
- **Evidence-based** - policy plan rests on factual diagnostic evidence base
- **Internal consistency** - closeness of links between objectives and strategies/actions; methods and anticipated results
- **Monitoring and evaluation** - provide for monitoring policy implementation and identify entities carrying out monitoring and evaluation?
D. Closing remarks
Challenges & areas for improvement?

- Lack of implementation details, who will do what (reads like a policy proposal)
- Mapping of institutions
- Need more analysis of inter-connectedness of issues, especially in SDG era
- Inadequate link to resources, budget
- Role of private sector & incentives
- Length & complexity - relevance for target audience?