

Session 4:

Assessing policy effectiveness: a key tool for ensuring impact

On-line training session on STI policy and policy instruments

for SDGs for Asia and the Pacific

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UN-IATT Workstream 6 on
Capacity-Building in STI for SDGs

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Effectiveness of policies

- Most robust policies are typically based on sound understanding of the problem.
- Dynamics of civil society, business and stakeholder response to new policies helps design more successful policies.
- Policies developed on a ‘gut feel’ see more negative unanticipated impacts.
- Body of policy research improves over time as more evidence of success and challenges is

Good Governance Principles

Governing better through evidence-informed policy making



GOVERNING BETTER THROUGH EVIDENCE-INFORMED POLICY MAKING
26-27 June 2017, OECD Conference Centre
[Agenda](#) | [#evidence4gov](#)

Feeding high-quality evidence into policy making remains difficult, but is essential for improving public interventions. Governing better through evidence-informed policy making requires building capacity for the effective use and demand of evidence at all levels of government. This event on evidence-informed policy making developed a strategic agenda for the OECD on how to connect policy evidence on what works and what doesn't.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

- Feeding evidence into political decision-making
- Using evidence in practice: engaging with decision makers
- International co-operation on evidence-informed policy making
- Case studies in key policy areas such as early childhood intervention, access to justice, well-being, and risk and crisis management
- The realities of providing scientific advice



- How effective are GHG reduction policies?
- Assessed over 1500 climate policies for their reduction of GHG emissions.
- Time period between 1998 and 2022 (25 years)
- Only 63 found to reduce GHG emissions significantly.
- Between 0.6 and 1.8 Gigatons of reductions
- Price-based instruments seemed to be the most effective.

Assessment of Climate Policies



The screenshot shows the Science journal website. At the top, the Science logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'Current Issue', 'First release papers', 'Archive', and 'About' are on the right. Below the logo, the breadcrumb trail reads 'HOME > SCIENCE > VOL. 385, NO. 6711 > CLIMATE POLICIES THAT ACHIEVED MAJOR EMISSION REDUCTIONS: GLOBAL EVIDENCE FROM TWO DECADES'. The article title is 'Climate policies that achieved major emission reductions: Global evidence from two decades'. Below the title, the authors are listed: ANNIKA STECHEMESSER, NICOLAS KOCH, EBBA MARK, ELINA DILGER, PATRICK KLÖSEL, LAURA MENICACCI, DANIEL NACHTIGALL, FELIX PRETIS, NOLAN RITTER, [...], AND ANNA WENZEL. There is a '+2 authors' button and a link for 'Authors Info & Affiliations'. At the bottom, the publication details are: SCIENCE • 22 Aug 2024 • Vol 385, Issue 6711 • pp. 884-892 • DOI: 10.1126/science.adl6547.

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Inclusive Forum on Carbon Mitigation Approaches Papers

The Inclusive Forum on Carbon Mitigation Approaches (IFCMA) is the OECD's flagship initiative designed to help optimise the global impact of emissions reduction efforts around the world through better data and information sharing, evidence-based mutual learning and inclusive multilateral dialogue. It brings together all relevant policy perspectives from a diverse range of countries from around the world, participating on an equal footing basis, to take stock of and consider the effectiveness of different carbon mitigation approaches. The OECD IFCMA Papers series brings together outputs from the initiative's work to take stock of different carbon mitigation approaches, map policies to the emissions they relate to, and estimate their impact on greenhouse gas emissions, as well as on methodologies for computing carbon intensity of goods and sectors. [^ Less](#)

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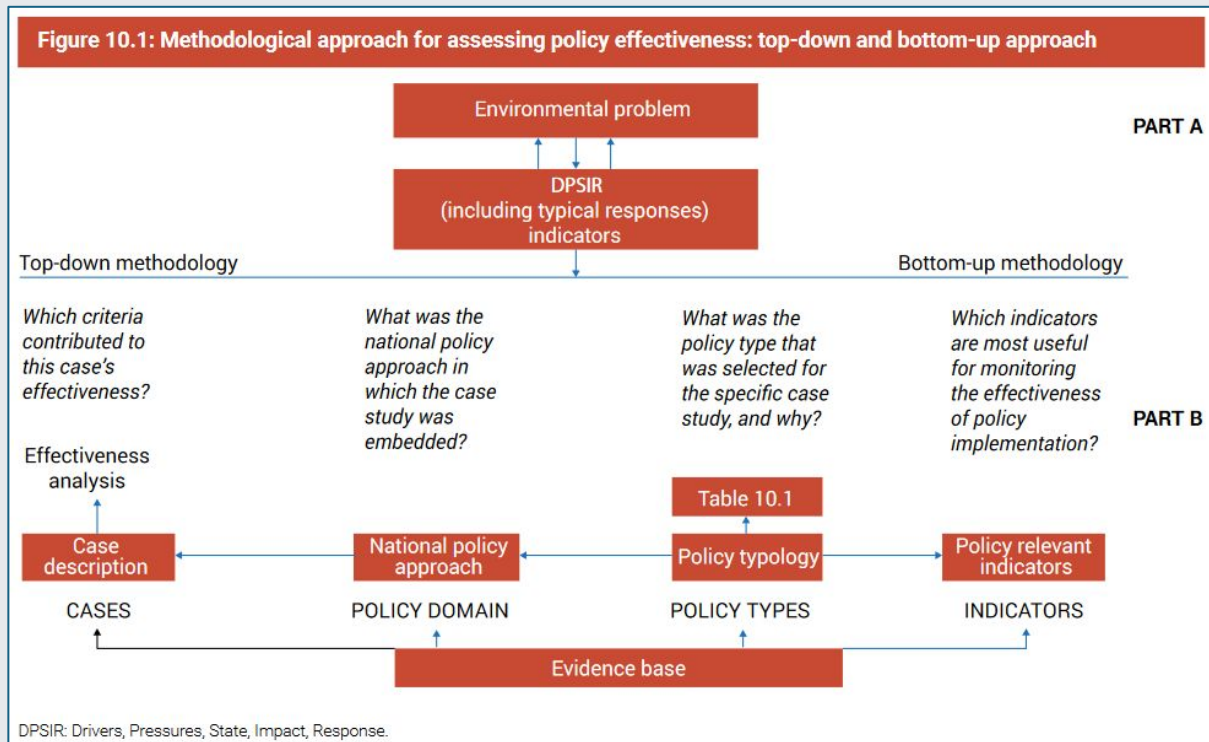
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☆ >	No. 1	09 Feb 2024	Towards more accurate, timely, and granular product-level carbon intensity metrics OECD	 PDF

- Countries invited to share data, analysis and experiences with different climate policies.
- Systematic review of empirical evidence on policy effectiveness planned for 2025.
- Advanced modelling will complement the review.
- Constructing a detailed standardized database of mitigation strategies across a broad set of countries.
- Aim is to help policymakers plan interventions with greater impact.
- Strengthen link between evidence and policies

GEO-6 Qualitative method for assessing policy effectiveness

Which criteria are important to consider?



- 12 criteria for assessing case studies”
 - i. Baseline
 - ii. Coherence/convergence/synergy
 - iii. Co-benefits
 - iv. Equity/winners and losers
 - v. Enabling/constraining factors
 - vi. Cost/cost-effectiveness
 - vii. Time frame
 - viii. Feasibility/implementability
 - ix. Acceptability
 - x. Stakeholder involvement
 - xi. Unintended effects
 - xii. Effectiveness/goal achievement
- Tracking of outcomes indicators – environmental results

Case study: The Great Green Wall to effectively decrease dust storm intensity in China



- The Chinese Great Green Wall (GGW) is one of the most ambitious projects to combat desertification and control dust storms.
- It was designed to cover a total area of 4.1 million km² (or 42.7 per cent of the total land area of the country)
- For the period 2002-2026:
 - US\$545.6 million of investment.
 - US\$373.7 million of ecological benefits.
 - US\$1,060.5 million of economic benefits.
- Tree cover increased from 5 per cent to 12.4 per cent in the programme area

Case study: The Great Green Wall to effectively decrease dust storm intensity in China

- **However:**
 - Observed decrease of dust storm intensity may simply be a consequence of climatic variability.
 - The programme was implemented only on a small portion of the affected areas and even not those that are known as core areas for dust storm sources.
 - Not all of the planted trees and shrubs survived beyond the lifetime of the programme because of mismanagement and/or lack of water.
 - A further point of critique was related to the overuse of groundwater by planting varieties that were not well suited to the arid areas.
- **Constraining factors:** lack of interest from farmers, lack of knowledge in forest management, less supervision from local governmental offices, the size of subsidy levels were issues that limited the policy impact effect.
- **Equity:** land-use rights to local people for up to 70 years, increasing interest from local people. Government resettled farmers and herders on degraded lands and provided subsidies and compensations for those who participated in restoration activities. However, there was no systematic compensation method or proper regulations.
- **Co-benefits:** Positive health effects, tourism development and job opportunities

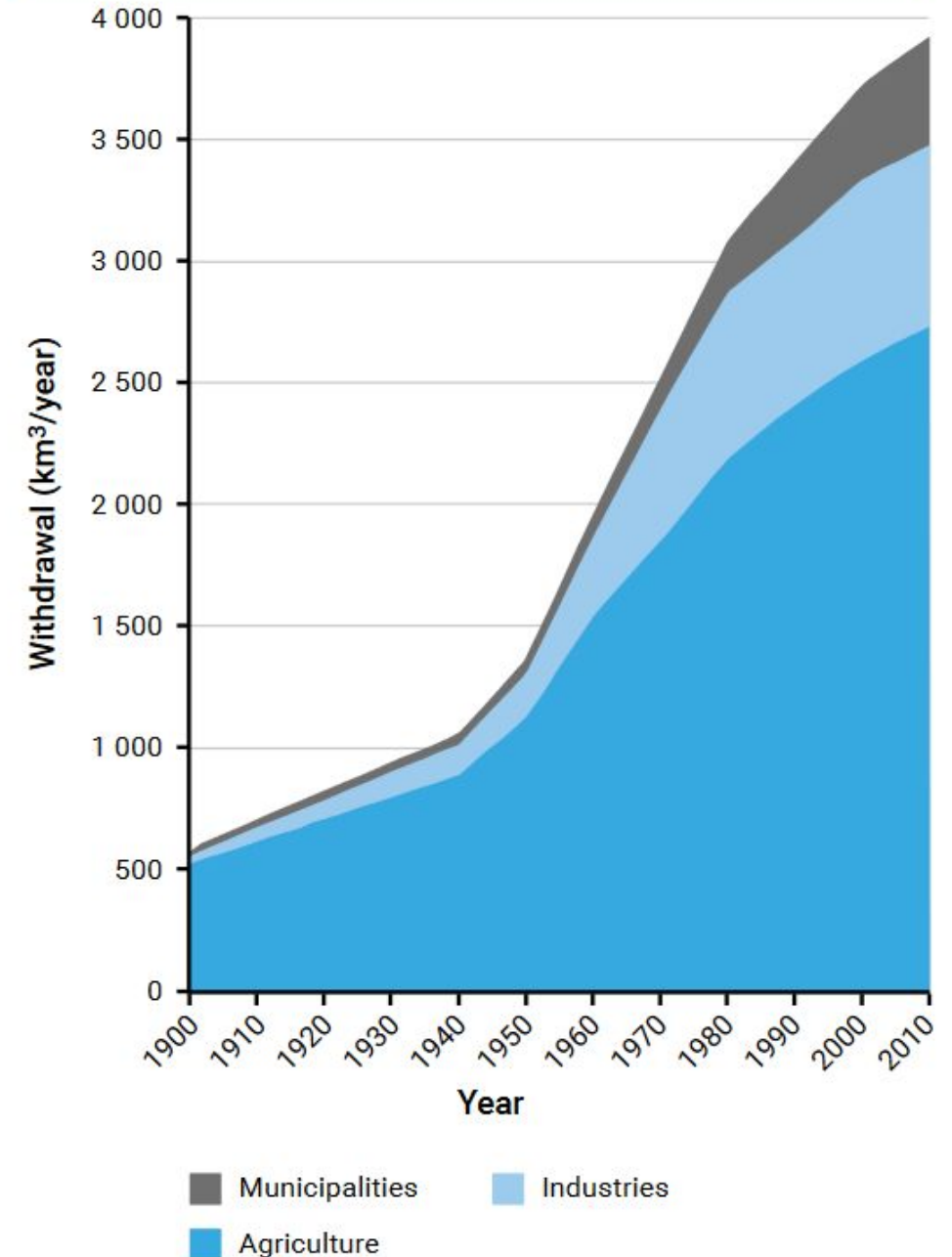
Case study: The Great Green Wall to effectively decrease dust storm intensity in China

- Possible Improvements:
 - Reduce competition for water resources between the afforested vegetation and the human water needs.
 - This could be achieved by protecting local vegetation in desertification-prone lands and planting suitable vegetation according to local conditions or in specific cases leaving the land to recover without human disturbance.
 - Consider multiple ecosystem services and their potential consequences rather than focusing only on a few services and ignoring other influences,
 - The reduction of production of agricultural goods coming along with GGW implementation triggers an increase in agricultural production elsewhere, either within the country or abroad. Respective **spillover effects** on potential land degradation associated with intensified agricultural production have not been analysed adequately to date.

Tracking policy effectiveness

- Policy development cycle is complex and time consuming.
- Once policy is implemented there is typically not much tracking of effectiveness.
- Developing effectiveness indicators before the policy is put in place can help ensure that there is some tracking.
- Strategies for reacting to these indicators also needed to ensure that aspects of a policy approach can be adapted as data become available.
- Also, new policies may/could have impacts on other policies and adaptability is needed there.

Figure 16.5: Trends in global water withdrawal by sector between 1900 and 2010 (km³ per year)



Effectiveness depends on national context

Assessment can be somewhat subjective

- If the initial situation was desperate, then any improvement can be viewed as being effective;
- High costs of some policies may take resources away from other areas;
- Is the policy benefiting wealthy individuals (free riders) at the expense of poorer communities?
- How easy is it to adapt the policy once it is in place?
- Are there transboundary issues? Are other communities or countries affected by the policy?
- Can the policy be considered more effective if co-benefits are more carefully tracked?
- How can bias be avoided in the assessment process?

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Thank you

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