



Striving to Integrate Delivery of Water Policies: the Challenges of Governing Differently

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Background



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- Europe-wide aim of improving coherence or integration of policy delivery (e.g. Nilsson et al. 2012, EPG)
Integrative quest entails governing differently
- Our focus on Water Framework Directive (WFD) & Floods Directive (FD)
 - Is this being achieved yet? If so, how?
- Stated goal e.g. Art 9 of FD, CIS 2019-21
 - But WFD & FD differ in scope and goals
 - And multiple literatures highlight potential challenges likely



Our study



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■ 2016-18: Plans made for policy implementation

- Content analysis of RBMPs (for WFD) & FRMPs (for FD)
 - 9 sets (Czech Republic; Flanders; Rhine; Spain; Sweden; UKx4)
- Survey of CIS 'Working Group F'
 - Simple questions – 19 returns
- Interviews with FD & WFD implementers
 - Progress, challenges, examples in 6 cases (Flanders; Sweden; UKx4)
 - Central & regional implementers, FD & WFD, 24 interviews in total



■ 2019-20: 4 x UK non-statutory Catchment partnerships

- Smaller scale than RBMPs
- Analysis of catchment plans
- 21 interviews with coordinators & partners

■ Qualitative interpretive analysis informed by Environmental Policy Integration (EPI), collaborative governance, partnership working

(Jordan & Lenschow, 2010 EPG; Marshall *et al*, 2010, JEPM; Benson *et al*, 2013, LUP)



Findings: Integration via statutory planning?

- Little evidence in plans (RBMPs & FRMPs)
 - Vague, formulaic and/or brief statements
- Those developing plans do attend to it
 - Survey and interviews – hidden work to cross silos
 - Emergent themes on interpersonal collaboration, coordination and team-working
- Expectations for future progress
 - Provide national-level structure, guidance
 - Improve coordination across teams and levels
 - Share data and expertise
 - Enable local or catchment-level action and pilots *hence where we went next...*

Findings: Progress at the catchment level?

- Partnerships: integrative but no formal remit for policy integration
 - Goals of non-statutory partnerships *do* overlap with WFD & FD
 - Ecological goals stronger – flooding ‘work in progress’
- Interviewees feel that partnerships are worthwhile
 - Hard to ‘prove’ difference made to policy delivery
 - Helps with knowledge-sharing especially of other people and processes (also data, places and measures)
 - Collaboration and communication again vital
- Constrained by existing policies and policy institutions
 - Policy delivery agencies are often key partners
 - Also often funders of partnerships ‘core costs’ and activities
 - Particularly challenging to find funding for core costs - coordinators - yet coordinators key to collaboration and ‘joined up’ working

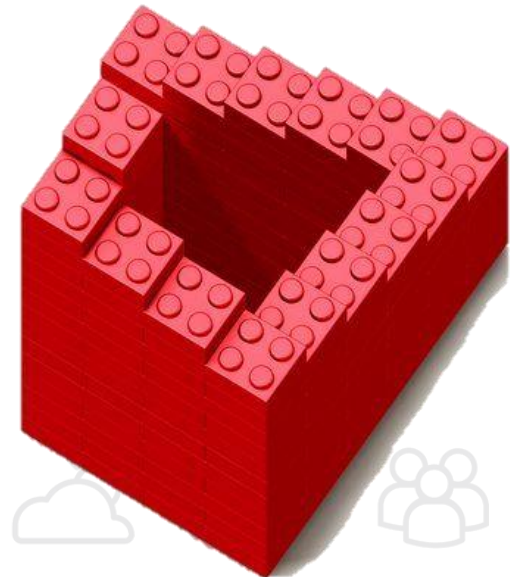
Summary



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- Tendency to shift responsibility for integration downwards
 - Policies → policy instruments → implementation → partnerships
 - Seeking to minimise degree of institutional change required?
- Repeated themes across levels – integration via collaboration? About processes and personal practices & aptitudes coupled with (non)enabling governance & institutional arrangements

Policy implementers and plans point to catchment partnerships....
....yet partnerships seek formal policy planning processes to enable integration



Discussion



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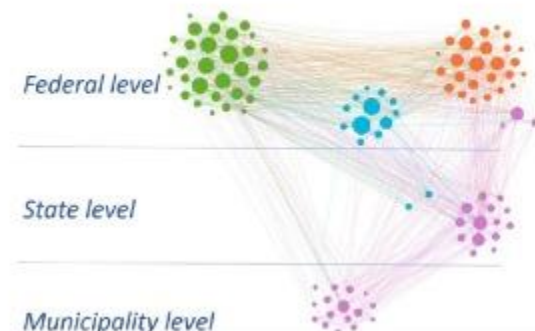
- No easy solutions for ‘joined up’ policy delivery.
 - Partnerships’ focus on collaboration helps, but they are constrained
 - Cannot just push responsibility down
- Ideas to improve progress
 - More appreciation of practices and emotional labour of individual actors that shape how policy plays out in practice, at all levels
 - See as multi-level challenge that needs new enabling institutional arrangements –take seriously the need to govern differently



Discussion

- Future research needs
 - How to identify, connect and value practices that support integration?
 - Policy entrepreneurs and ‘street level bureaucrats’ and ‘interface bureaucrats’ (e.g. Lipsky, 1980; Svensson, 2019, IntJPublicAdm)
 - What are the enabling institutional arrangements, and how may they be achieved?
 - EPI and policy coherence (e.g. Jordan & Lenschow, 2010, EnvPolGov)
 - Nexus governance (e.g. Pahl-Wostl, 2019, EnvSciPol)
 - Networked vs hierarchical governance (e.g. Gregorio et al 2019, GlobEnvC)

Cross-level climate change networking in Brazil



Conclusion

- Integrative governance remains elusive: will it remain a constant quest?
- We offer some ideas to start tackling this, but more work needed as challenges are pervasive across levels





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www.hutton.ac.uk/research/projects/water-integration

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