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Mainstreaming NBS: Enhancing local policy coordination and coherence

McKenna Davis, Ecologic Institute
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Setting the scene: European NBS policy landscape

EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030



EU Urban Greening Plans for cities with over 20000 inhabitants

European Green Deal
a just and inclusive green transition in the EU by tackling climate and environmental challenges



EU Soil Strategy 2030

The Soil Strategy Vision for 2050:
All EU soil ecosystems are healthy and more resilient and can therefore continue to provide their crucial services. There is no further land take and soil pollution is reduced to levels that are no longer harmful to people's health or ecosystems. Protecting soils, managing them sustainably and restoring degraded soils is a common standard.

EU Nature Restoration Law proposal

- New binding targets suggested by the law:**
- restore habitats and species protected by the EU nature legislation
 - reverse the decline of pollinators by 2030
 - no net loss of green urban spaces by 2030 and a minimum of 10% tree canopy cover in European cities**
 - improved biodiversity on farmland e.g. for grassland butterflies, farmland birds, high-diversity landscape features
 - restore drained peatlands
 - healthier forests with improved biodiversity
 - at least 25.000 km free-flowing rivers by 2030
 - restore seagrasses and sea bottoms

EU Adaptation Strategy

- Implementing NBS as **"no-regret" measures** to increase climate resilience and contribute to multiple Green Deal objectives
- NBS are essential for sustaining healthy water, oceans and soils.**
- Europe needs to leverage more investments in nature-based solutions** to generate gains for adaptation, mitigation, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and health.

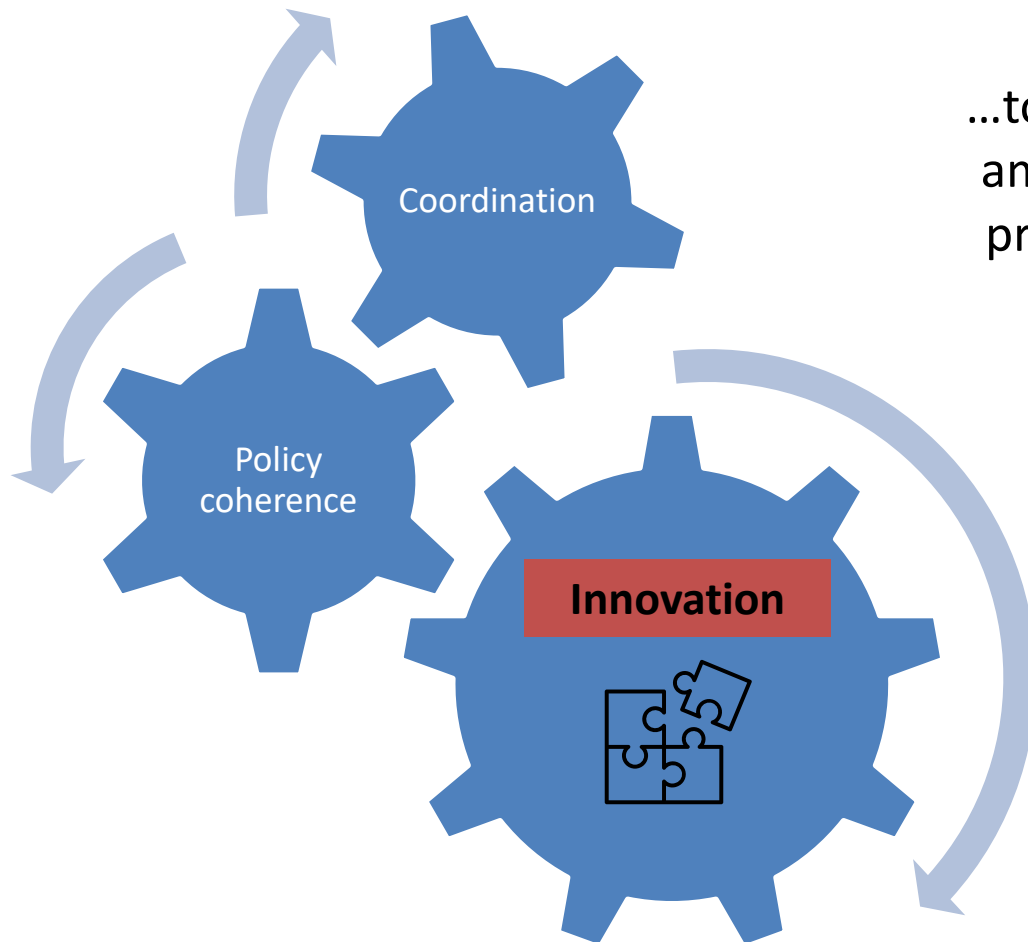
From EU to local: How to work within or overcome current governance barriers for mainstreaming NBS?

Complex issues rooted in different policy arenas & cutting across levels of government → require collective action, BUT...

- Single-purpose organisations / specialised units → unrealised synergies
- Fragmented responsibility; lack of cooperation among policies, agencies, ministries and levels of government → duplicate efforts and inefficiently use resources
- Lack of management tools for addressing inconsistencies or conflicts between different department objectives and priorities
- Knowledge and capacity constraints → limit development of new approaches, frameworks for collaboration, etc

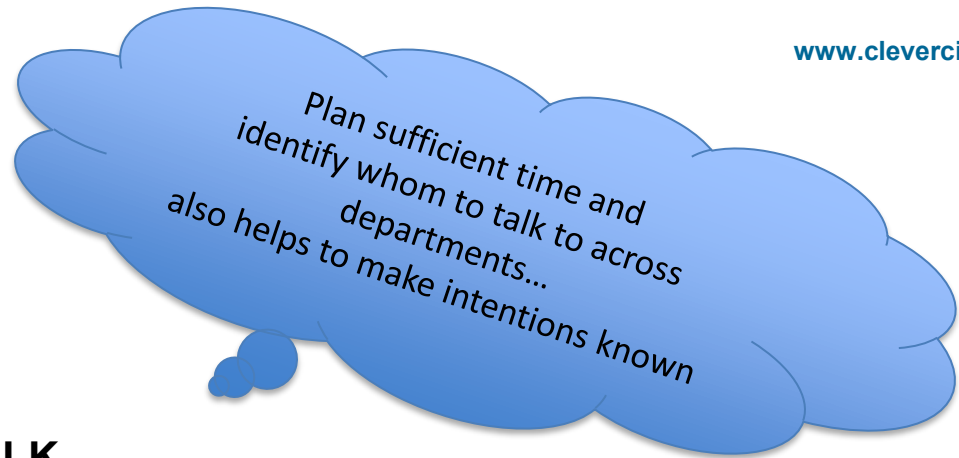


Moving towards increased coordination, coherence, and innovation...



...to achieve compatibility among policy arenas and prioritize collective goals

Coherence



Back to basics: TALK TALK TALK

1. Where does the policy (instrument) fit into the overall policy landscape?
 - Review policy framework, financial and planning barriers/opportunities, etc
 - Reflect on policy cycle: what windows of opportunity are coming up (also within existing policies)?
 - Is there a need to reframe your narrative to gain buy-in or integrate with complementary policies/instruments?
2. Are there any potentially unintended/unexpected trade-offs or externalities if implemented? Or untapped synergies to support?
 - Look ,outside the box‘ and examine other environmental, economic and social policy areas
 - *Keep an eye open for potential funding and synergies*

Coherence

- Clearly define and analyse issues, including potential inconsistencies
- Ensure consistency with government goals and priorities

Aspects of the policy (instrument) to consider:

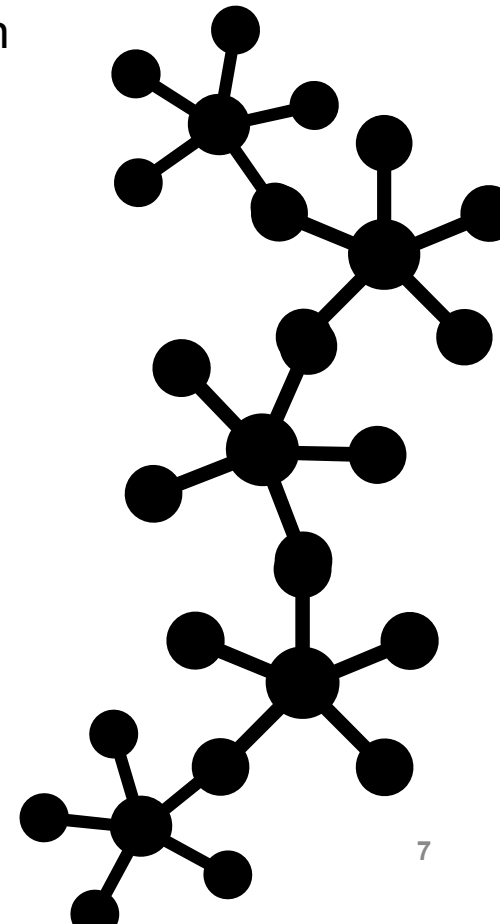
- **Objectives:** Are objectives consistent and aligned with the overarching shared objective? Do the actions of the policy harmonise to serve this common purpose?
- **Instruments:** Are all the instruments within the policy complementary to those in other policies, by addressing a different dimension of the shared problem?
- **Target populations:** Do the people targeted by the instruments across policies encompass the entire target population? Or do multiple policies target the same population*?

*as individuals may have multiple characteristics (e.g. woman, single parent, indigenous), this refers to specific subsets of those being targeted

Coordination

Coordination among the agents in charge of policy execution is required to transform *coherence in design* into *coherence in practice*

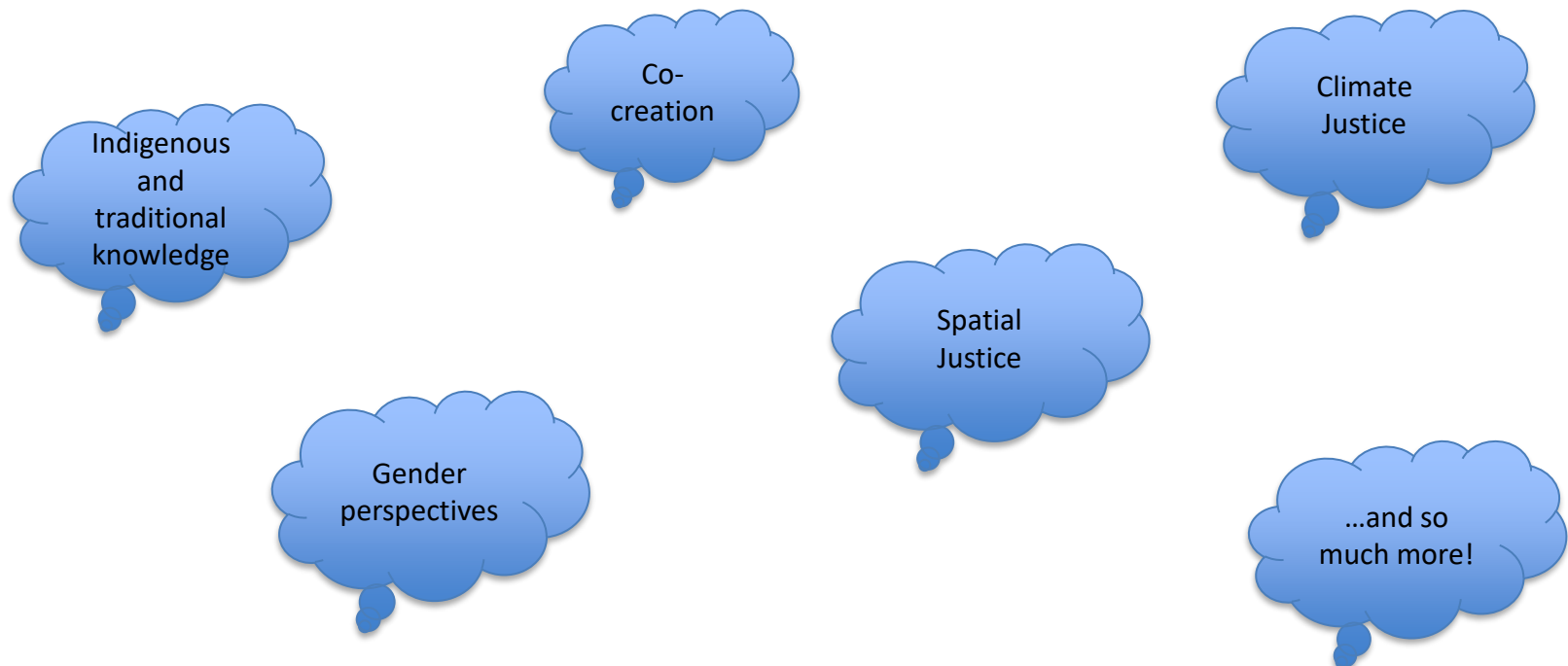
1. Agree on common, shared overarching goal(s)
2. Utilise or develop structures and procedures for information sharing
3. Set clear responsibilities and specific rules to ensure that the implementation of each program/policy is related to the initial goal(s)
4. Identify potential synergies or redundancies in the implementation of the programs/policies



Innovation

How can we incorporate different narratives, ways of thinking, communicating and learning into our work?

What alternative methods or narratives exist that are critical for NBS, which could help align with other agendas?



How do we identify and ensure implementation of changes in Policies for NBS

Coherence

Back to basics: TALK TALK TALK

1. Where does the policy (instrument) fit into the overall policy landscape?
2. Are there any potentially unintended/unexpected trade-offs or externalities if implemented? Or untapped synergies to support?

Aspects of the policy (instrument) to consider:

Objectives, Instruments and Target populations

Coordination

1. Agree on common, shared overarching goal(s)
2. Utilise or develop structures and procedures that foster information sharing
3. Set clear responsibilities for policy administrators and specific rules to ensure that the implementation of each program/policy is related to the initial goal(s)
4. Identify potential synergies or redundancies in the implementation of the programs/policies



Final thoughts: Guiding principles to keep in mind

- Prioritise measures that improve ecosystem condition, while contributing to well-being and prosperity for net societal gain
- Address inter-dependencies and trade-offs
- Set long-term objectives and plans for securing essential ecosystem processes
- Ensure adaptive management
- Coordinate integrated planning across governance sectors, levels and decision-making frameworks
- Enable stakeholder engagement

Further resources

- Urban Governance Atlas - *September 2022*
 - <https://interlace-hub.com/urban-governance-atlas>
- EU Guidance on integrating ecosystems and their services into decision-making (EC, 2019)
 - https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/pdf/SWD_2019_305_F1_STAFF_WORKING_PAPER_EN_V2_P1_1042629.PDF





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Thank you!

mckenna.davis@ecologic.eu

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