

# Matching knowledge brokering strategies to environmental policy problems and settings

Sarah Michaels

Department of Political Science, 533 Oldfather Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0328, USA

## Abstract

The benefits of utilizing intermediaries to broker understanding between environmental scientists and policy makers have become widely touted. Yet little is known about the tasks boundary spanners undertake to develop environmental policy solutions and how these tasks fit into frameworks intended to advance public policy decision making. Such frameworks may be constructed to aid decision makers in differentiating between the types of environmental policy issues that confront them or the policy settings in which they are operating. Consequently, this paper examines how six different knowledge brokering strategies; informing, consulting, matchmaking, engaging, collaborating and building capacity might be employed in responding to different types of environmental policy problems or policy settings identified in decision aiding frameworks. Using real world examples, four frameworks are reviewed. They are; Lindquist's [Lindquist, E.A., 1988. What do decision models tell us about information use? *Knowledge in Society* 1 (2), 86–111; Lindquist, E.A., 1990. The third community, policy inquiry, and social scientists. In: Stephen Brooks, S., Gagnon, A. (Eds.), *Social Scientists, Policy and the State*. Praeger, New York; Lindquist, E.A., 2001. Discerning policy influence: framework for a strategic evaluation of IDRC-Supported research] decision regimes, Turnhout et al.'s [Turnhout, E., Hisschemoller, M., Eijsackers, H., 2007. Ecological indicators: between the two fires of science and policy. *Ecological Indicators* 7 (2), 215–228] science policy typology, Holling's [Holling, C.S., 1995. What barriers? What bridges? In: Gunderson, L.H., Holling, C.S. (Eds.), *Barriers and Bridges to the Renewal of Ecosystems and Institutions*. Columbia University Press, New York, pp. 3–34] adaptive cycle and Kurtz and Snowden's [Kurtz, C.F., Snowden, D.J., 2003. The new dynamics of strategy: sense-making in a complex and complicated world. *IBM Systems Journal* 42 (3), 462–483] Cynefin domains. For the different problem types or policy settings described in the decision aiding frameworks primary knowledge brokering strategies are identified. While the frameworks differ in their conceptual constructions, the applicability of specific knowledge brokering strategies serve as a commonality across particular problem types and policy settings.

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