

The Evaluation of Polycentric Climate Governance

Evaluation Workshop, Finnish Environment Institute

Friday, 3 March 2023

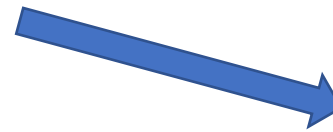
Helsinki, Finland

Dr. Jonas Schoenefeld, Institute for Housing and Environment (IWU) & Tyndall Centre for
Climate Change Research, School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia

Ten years ago... the beginning



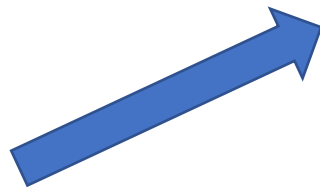
UEA University of East Anglia



Meanwhile...

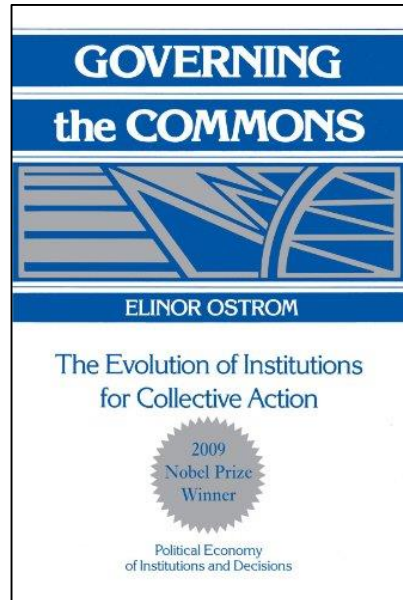


PhD studies
start in
October 2013
– Jonas moves
to UEA



Early 2014: COST
Funding gets
approved, Andy asks
Jonas to help setting it
up

Meanwhile...



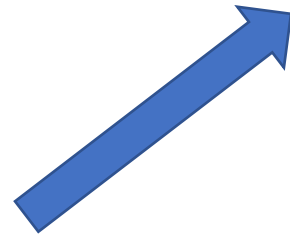
Research takes
shape...

Can polycentric
governance and
evaluation come
together (and how)?

But Elinor Ostrom
started with
monitoring... what
can we learn from
this?

The EU has a
Monitoring
Mechanism – and
Mikael is interested...

Hello Finland/SYKE



Monitoring
Mechanism, first
contact with the EEA



Can we make sense of
the data?

INOGOV →
short-term
scientific
mission, 04-06
2015

CLIMATE POLICY, 2016
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2016.1248887>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

The challenges of monitoring national climate policy: learning lessons from the EU

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ABSTRACT

One of the most central and novel features of the new climate governance architecture emerging from the 2015 Paris Agreement is the transparency framework committing countries to provide, *inter alia*, regular progress reports on national pledges to address climate change. Many countries will rely on public policies to turn their pledges into action. This article focuses on the EU's experience with monitoring national climate policies in order to understand the challenges that are likely to arise as the Paris Agreement is implemented around the world. To do so, the research employs – for the first time – comparative empirical data submitted by states to the EU's monitoring system. Our findings reveal how the EU's predominantly technical interpretation of four international reporting quality criteria – an approach borrowed from reporting on GHG fluxes – has constrained knowledge production and stymied debate on the performance of individual climate policies. Key obstacles to more in-depth reporting include not only political concerns over reporting burdens and costs, but also struggles over who determines the nature of climate policy monitoring, the perceived usefulness of reporting information, and the political control that policy knowledge inevitably generates. Given the post-Paris drive to achieve greater transparency, the EU's experience offers a sobering reminder of the political and technical challenges associated with climate policy monitoring, challenges that are likely to bedevil the Paris Agreement for decades to come.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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KEYWORDS

Climate policy; EU;
Monitoring Mechanism;
policy evaluation; policy
monitoring; UNFCCC

From monitoring to evaluation...

Elinor Ostrom's ideas on monitoring

- “Without monitoring, there can be no credible commitment; without credible commitment, there is no reason to propose new rules.” (Ostrom, 1990, p. 45)
- Monitoring is context-sensitive: „Better“ in the hands of localities?
- Ostrom's „*multiple layers of nested enterprise*“ (Ostrom, 1990, p. 101)
- Physical properties of the resource matters

3 foundational ideas of polycentric governance

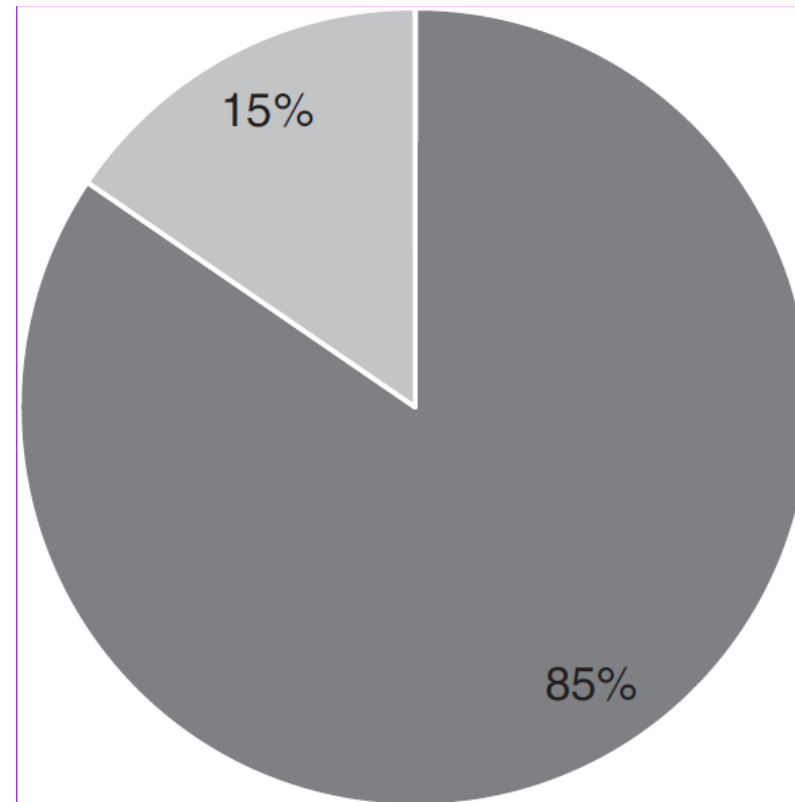
- Actors can (and do) self-organise
- Context matters
- Governance centers have to interact to enable polycentric governance

Research questions & approach



- To what extent
 - Do actors self-organize to evaluate climate policy?
 - Are climate policy evaluations context-sensitive?
 - Do governance centres interact via-à-vis climate policy evaluation?
- New database of >600 evaluations from the EU level, Germany and the UK (both national level) from 1997-2014
- Analysis of the evaluations with a newly-developed coding scheme

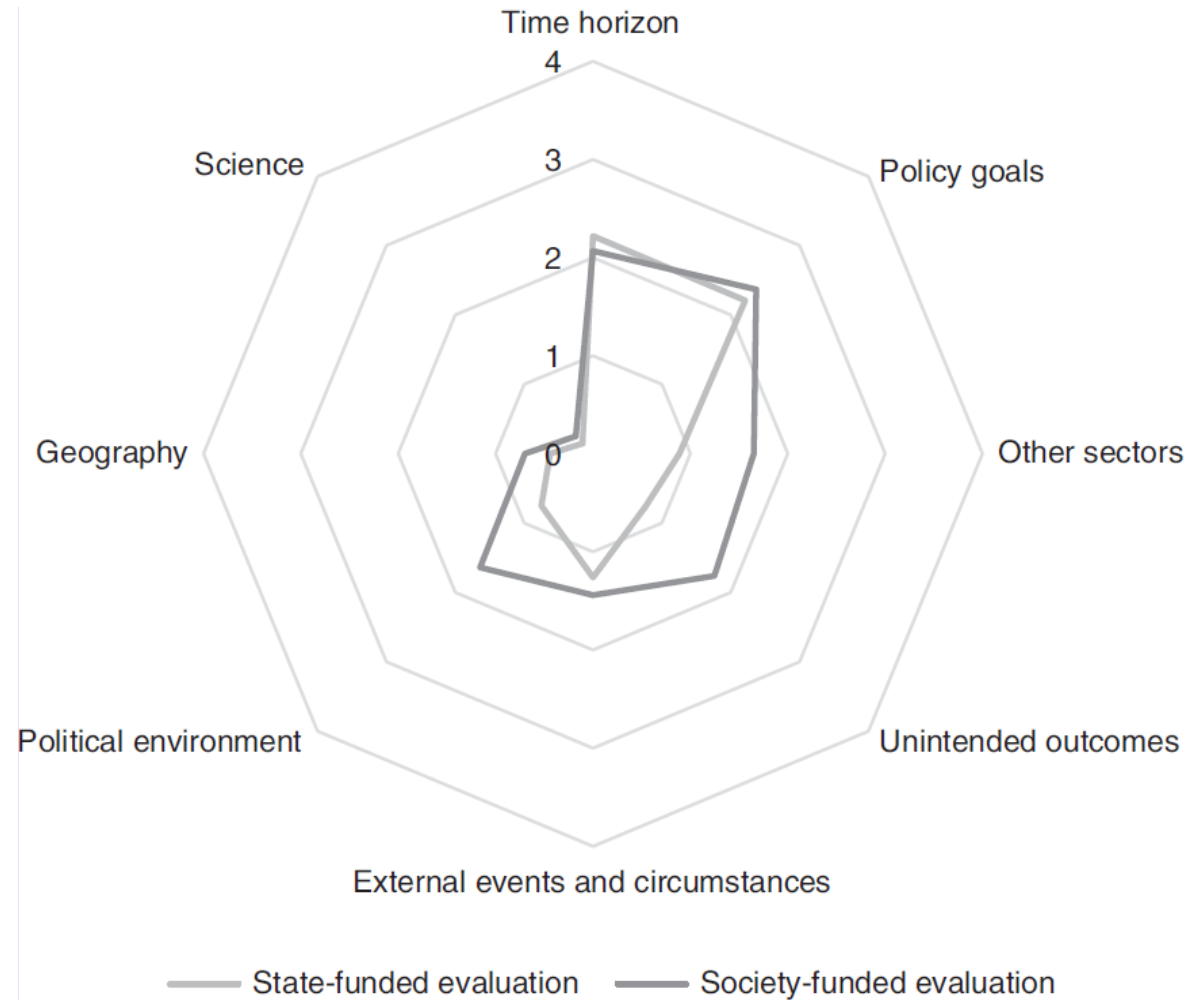
Selected results – Self-organization



- State-funded evaluations
- Society-funded evaluations

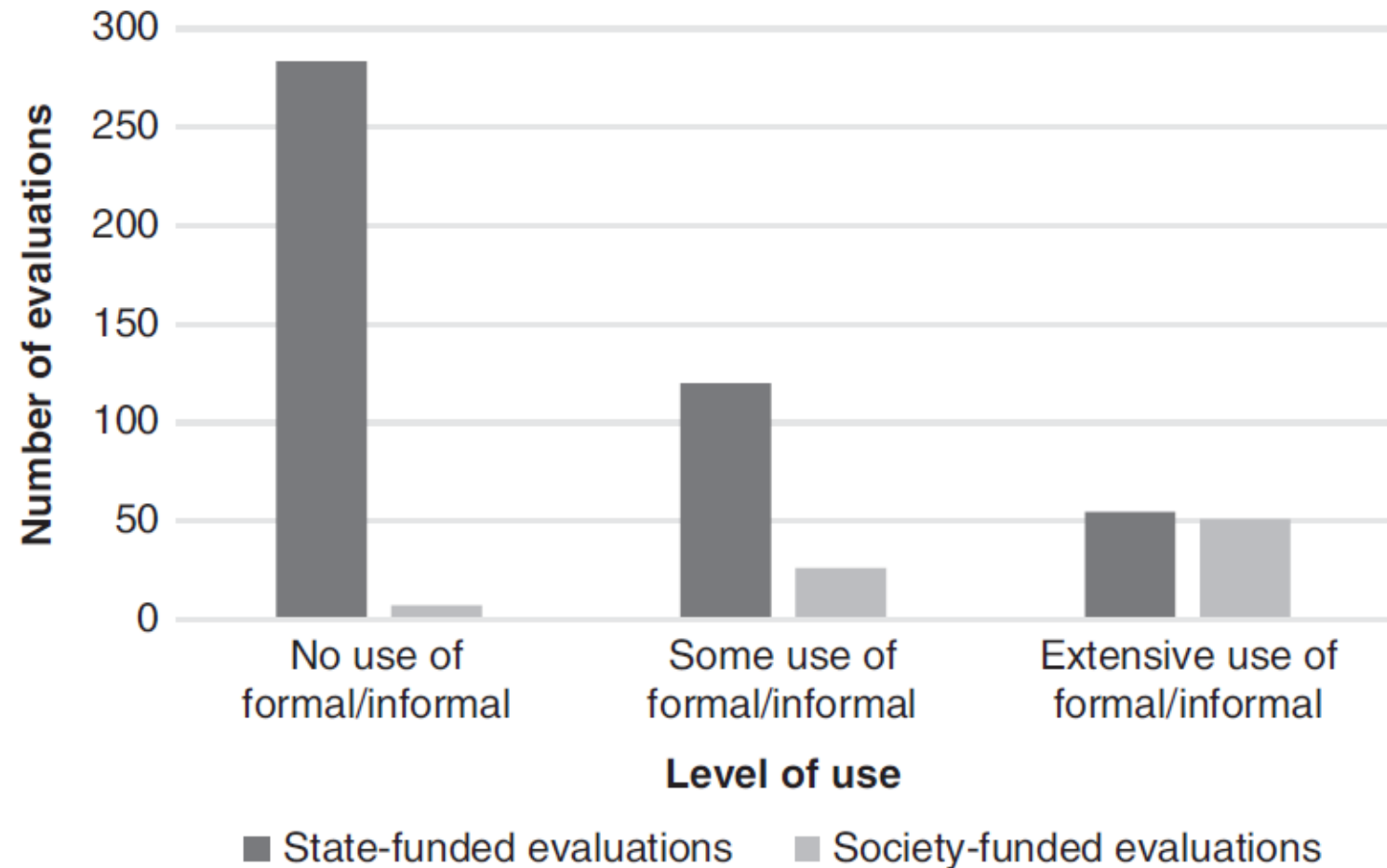
N = 542

Selected results - context



N = 542, includes extrapolation

Selected results – governance centre interactions



N = 542,
includes
extrapolation

Discussion & Conclusion



- Key insights – monitoring (from discussion with Mikael & others):
 - There may be order to the chaos...
 - Monitoring is not just technical, but also political
 - Don't worry about individual tons, it's the trend that matters!
- Evaluation in polycentric governance
 - There is self-organization in climate policy evaluation, but it's limited
 - Medium attention to context – room for improvement!
 - Interaction limited to standard aspects (e.g., executive summaries)

Who can take evaluation to the next level? EEA? European evaluation agency?

The Evaluation of Polycentric Climate Governance

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Further information:

<https://www.cambridge.org/de/academic/subjects/earth-and-environmental-science/environmental-policy-economics-and-law/evaluation-polycentric-climate-governance?format=HB&isbn=9781316511244>

Thank you!



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