OCP Policy Center Conference series

Cultural Political Economy and NRM

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Culture?

- 'the social process whereby people **communicate meanings**, **make sense** of their world, **construct their identities**, and **define their beliefs and values'** (Miller et.al 2010).

- But it also includes material or 'extra-semiotic' elements

Evolutionary mechanisms of Variation, Selection and Retention

- **Variation** – the contingent emergence of semiotic practices and extra-semiotic properties
- **Selection** – the privileging of particular practices and properties
- **Retention** – on-going realisation and structural coupling

Some experienced variations in Egypt

- **on-farm management** ('blame the farmers'),
- to **irrigation management transfer** ('organise the farmers')
- to **organisation at the river basin level** - ('one size fits all')
- to more **market-inspired reform**. ('let them eat grapes')

(Mollinga et.al 2007)

'Bridging Science and Policy'?

The heart of the issue

1. Centrality of Politics

- The persistence of issues of inequality, environmental degradation, malnutrition, poverty and water scarcity are **political**, rather than purely **technical**.

- **Solutions** require **political innovation** as much as they do **technical innovation**

- Speak *with* power - rather than *to* it maybe?

- The 'politics of policy'

2. Centrality of the State

- As a **network of interests** and **resources** for implementation (policy-shaping community)
- Other actors are involved and are influencial
- Critical awareness needed of **short-term** approach to '**returns**' and **implementation** informing project selection
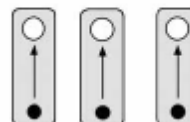- Important capacity to **institutionalise** and **enforce** change

3. Complexity – a point of departure

- Awareness of **multiple pluralities** – **institutions**, **actors** and **functions** related to nexus elements change over time and space
- **issue-driven research** – approaching stakeholders around a particular issue; develop the appropriate boundaries and concepts for that debate-based on the context.
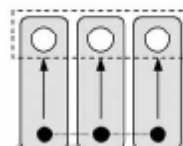
disciplinary

- Within one academic discipline
- Disciplinary goal setting
- No cooperation with other disciplines
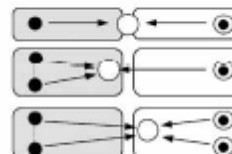- Development of new disciplinary knowledge and theory

multidisciplinary

- Multiple disciplines
- Multiple disciplinary goal setting under one thematic umbrella
- Loose cooperation of disciplines for exchange of knowledge
- Disciplinary theory development

participatory

- Involves academic researchers and non-academic participants
- Exchange of knowledge, knowledge bodies not integrated
- May be disciplinary or multidisciplinary
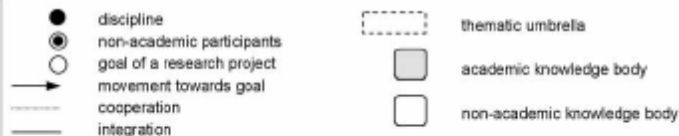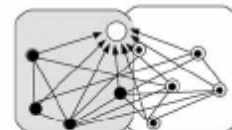- Not necessarily research, goal may be academic or not

interdisciplinary

- Crosses disciplinary boundaries
- Common goal setting
- Integration of disciplines
- Development of integrated knowledge and theory

transdisciplinary

- Crosses disciplinary and scientific/academic boundaries
- Common goal-setting
- Integration of disciplines and non-academic participants
- Development of integrated knowledge and theory among science and society

●	discipline	⌐ ̄ ̄¬ (dashed box)	thematic umbrella
◉	non-academic participants		
○	goal of a research project	▨ (grey box)	academic knowledge body
→	movement towards goal		
┈	cooperation	☐ (white box)	non-academic knowledge body
—	integration		

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Thank you!

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