How to make Global Assessments more effective

Based on the 2008 cohort of worldwide environment-related outlooks

n Global Environment Outlook -4 --- UNEP

n Climate Assessment 4 --- IPCC

n OECD --- Environmental Outlook to 2030

n AgAssessment (IAASTD) ---- hosted by World Bank, FAO *et al*.

Light coordination among assessments

→ Spotting potentially contradictory messages

Quick synthetic overview of 4, then 8, large reports in terms of substance

→ Reflections by the makers: how to make future assessments more effective

GEO-4	AR4	EO 2030	IAASTD
The poor	Climate Policies	BRIC responsibilities	Agriculture: what frame?
Environment impact on human wellbeing? Effectiveness of policies?	Human influence? Regional impacts? Policy options?	Effective instruments? 'Cost of policy inaction'	Optimize planet or optimize regions?
National environment policies UNEP programme of work	Climate and energy policies UNFCCC	National policy coherence BRIC accession policy	National & bloc policies on • agriculture • technology • trade • related resources
All environment issues	Climate, energy, land, water	Eclectic but wide choice including health impacts, fisheries	Food system; ag production, land, nutrients, fresh water

The three archetypal motives

GEO-4	AR4	EO 2030	IAASTD
The poor	Climate Policies	BRIC responsibilities	Agriculture: what frame?
		Optimize your policies	
			Establish your vision
Prepare for cross-winds you do not control			

Found contradictions?

No sensitive issues beyond what we expected

- Biofuel production
- GMOs
- The future of coal
- Environmental consequences of ongoing trade liberalisation
- The future of Africa

Joint statement, alerting national delegates to parallel processes

But meanwhile
within the families

- Ag trade <u>versus</u> economy-environment projections

- Planetary food system <u>versus</u> regional self-sufficiency

- Expansion of sanitation coverage <u>without</u> expansion of sewage treatment leads to massive point sources

- As early-as-possible mitigation <u>versus</u> as-late-as-possible

- 'Zooming-in' <u>below</u> original level of detail
  - Mexico urban air pollution
  - Kent county water stress

How to make global assessments more effective: lessons

'Possible significance of these assessments = to reduce the political risk of doing the right thing'

1. Embrace uncertainty

2. Embrace diversity of knowledge

3. Embrace diversity of circumstances

How to make global assessments more effective (continued)

4. Enhance participation (define, select, manage)

5. Enhance engagement with policy makers (scoping, review)

6. Establish an institutional home

How to make global assessments more effective *(continued)*

and of course

7. Point out trade-offs

8. Use historical evidence, too

9. Be humble when selling model-based findings

Concluding assertions

n There is no single best way to conduct an outlook study

n More parallel assesments are going to be compiled in view of the SDGs

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