

# Supporting public policy production in public health by sharing evidence

Policy Stage Model

Punctuated Equilibrium Model

François Benoit, Lead

National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy



This  
presentation  
will not be:

- A criticism of policy makers
- A rejection of policy
- An universal recipe



# The anecdote

- “There is nothing a government hates more than to be well-informed; for it makes the process of arriving at decisions much more complicated and difficult.”

-John Maynard Keynes

# Two quotations attributed to Bismarck



Laws... like, sausages, cease to inspire respect in proportion as we know how they are made  
Attributed to Otto von Bismarck

# Bismarck take 2 : this presentation

**Politics is the art of the possible**

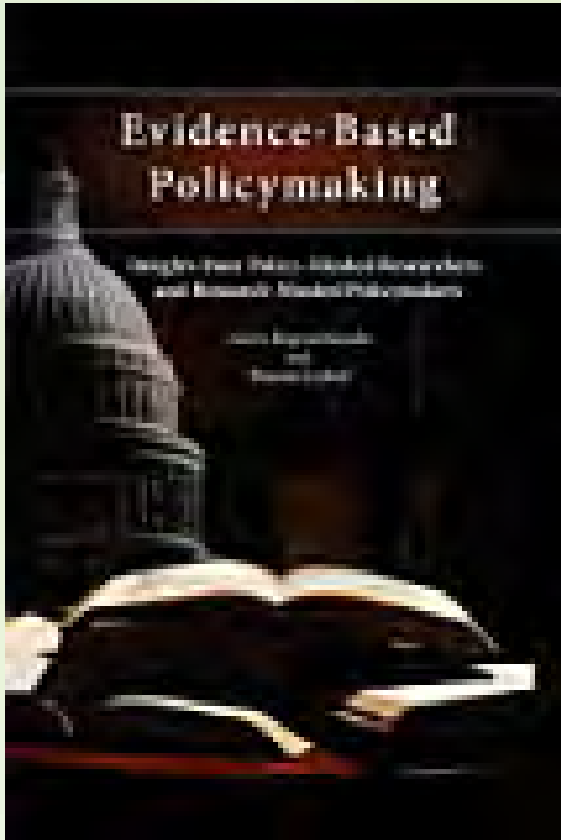
-Also attributed to Otto von Bismarck

A context-sensitive  
approach

Actors  
Problem  
Knowledge  
Stages



# American case: Evidence and policy makers



- Attitude:
  - Proactive
  - Skeptical
- Policy results:
  - Evidence considered
  - No link to evidence

Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2011). *Evidence-based policymaking: Insights from policy-minded researchers and research-minded policymakers*. Routledge.

# Attitudes: Evidence & Research

**40%**

**60%**



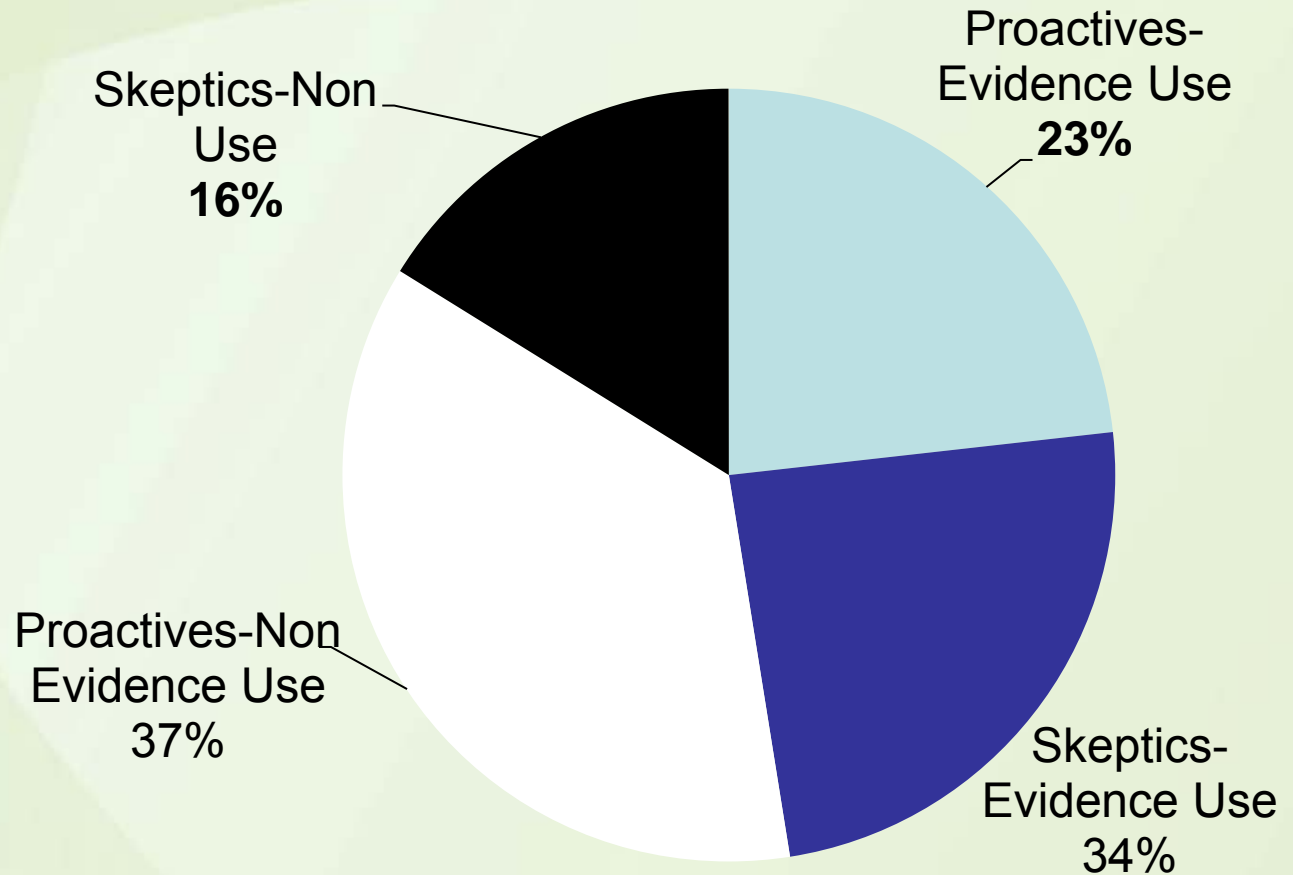
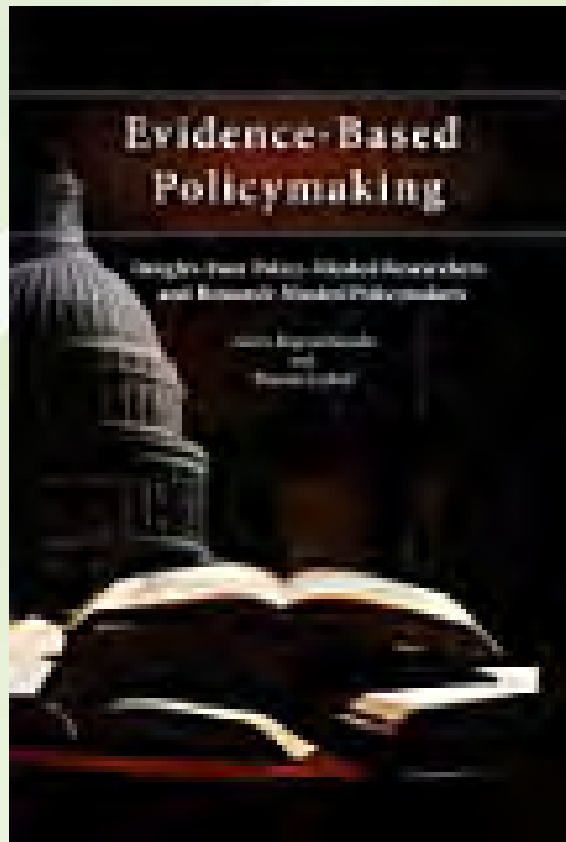
**Skeptics**

**'Proactives'**

Photo © istock/Alex Slobodkin



# Interest...but missed opportunities



Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2011). *Evidence-based policymaking: Insights from policy-minded researchers and research-minded policymakers*. Routledge.

# Attitudes: Evidence & Research

**40%**

**60%**



**Skeptics**

**Proactives**

Photo © istock/Alex Slobodkin

# Actual: Evidence & Research

**53%**

**47%**



**Absence**

**Presence**

Photo © istock/Alex Slobodkin

# Why?

## Many systematic reviews

Review article

### Health policy-makers' perceptions of their use of evidence: a systematic review

Simon Innvær, Gunn Vist, Mari Trommald, Andrew Oxman  
Health Services Research Unit, National Institute of Public Health, Oslo, Norway

**2002**  
**(45 papers)**

### The Use of Research Evidence in Public Health Decision Making Processes: Systematic Review

Lois Orton , Ffion Lloyd-Williams, David Taylor-Robinson, Martin O'Flaherty, Simon Capewell

Published: July 26, 2011 • DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0021704 • Featured in [PLOS Collections](#)

Oliver *et al.* *BMC Health Services Research* 2014, **14**:2  
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6963/14/2>



**2011**  
**(18 papers)**

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access

### A systematic review of barriers to and facilitators of the use of evidence by policymakers

Kathryn Oliver<sup>1\*</sup>, Simon Innvar<sup>2</sup>, Theo Lorenc<sup>3</sup>, Jenny Woodman<sup>4</sup> and James Thomas<sup>5</sup>

**2014**  
**(145 papers)**

# What works, according to policy makers?

- Personal contact between researchers and policy makers (13/24).
- Research timeliness and relevance (13/24).
- Summary with clear recommendations (11/24).
- Good quality research (6/24).

---

- Research confirming existing policies or supporting decision makers' personal views (6/24).
- Pressure from community or constituents (4/24).

---

- Research with effectiveness data (3/24).

Innvaer, S., Vist, G., Trommald, M., & Oxman, A. (2002). **Health policy-makers' perception of their use of evidence: a systematic review** J of Int. Health Serv Res Policy 7, 4, pp. 239-244.

# Facilitators for evidence use by decision makers

1	Accessibility	Nelson et al., 1997; Nutley et al., 2007
2	Intermediary affiliation	Dunn, 1980; Nelson et al., 1997
3	Applicability of the research question to the decision maker's situation	Beyer & Trice, 1982; Zigler, 1998
4	Credibility	Feldman, Nadash, & Gursen, 2001; Hird, 2005; Nutley et al., 2007
5	Facilitating infrastructure	Weiss et al., 2008
6	Decision makers' participation in the research process	Nutley et al., 2007; Lomas

Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2011). *Evidence-based policymaking: Insights from policy-minded researchers and research-minded policymakers*. Routledge.

# Facilitators for evidence use by decision makers

7	Use of narratives and anecdotes	Nelson et al., 1987; Nutley et al., 2007
8	Clear and concise presentation	Beyer & Trice, 1982; Feldman et al., 2001; Greenberg et al., 2003; Greenberg & Mandell, 1991; Nelson et al., 1987; Nutley et al., 2007; Weiss & Bucuvalas, 1980
9	Personal relationship between researcher and Decision maker	Bimber, 1996; Hird, 2005; Huberman, 1987; Innvaer et al., 2007; Oh, 1997, Weiss et al., 2008

Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2011). *Evidence-based policymaking: Insights from policy-minded researchers and research-minded policymakers*. Routledge.

# Facilitators for evidence use by decision makers

10	Timely for decision making	Beyer & Trice, 1982; Feldman et al., 2001; Greenberg et al., 2003; Innvaer et al., 2007; Nelson et al., 1987; Nutley et al., 2007; Weiss & Bucuvalas, 1980
11	Type of organization	Beyer & Trice, 1982; Dunn, 1980; Hird, 2005; Nelson et al., 1987
12	Use of economic data	Huston, 2002

Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2011). *Evidence-based policymaking: Insights from policy-minded researchers and research-minded policymakers*. Routledge.



# The two main explanatory factors for research use by policy makers

## Linear relation between production and use of knowledge

Knowledge push	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assumes that high-quality research will automatically lead to higher uptake and use by decision makers</li><li>• Content-related attributes of the research influence its use by decision makers. For example: notability, complexity, validity and reliability</li></ul>
Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type of research output (results) explains research utilization</li><li>• Dissemination efforts explain research utilization</li></ul>
Demand pull explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy makers identify problems and define the needs, and they ask researchers to conduct studies that will generate alternatives or solutions</li></ul>
Organizational interests explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal and organizational interests are important factor in impeding research utilization</li></ul>

## Cultural differences between decision makers and researchers

Two communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adaptation of research required: more readable and appealing reports, make more specific recommendations and focus on factors amenable to interventions by users</li></ul>
Interaction explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The more sustained and intense the interactions between researchers and users, the more likely it is that utilization will occur.</li><li>• Important factors are the so-called linkage mechanisms and dissemination efforts</li></ul>

Adapted from De Goede, J., Putters, K., van der Grinten, T., & van Oers, H. A. (2010). *Knowledge in process? Exploring barriers between epidemiological research and local health policy development*. Erasmus University.

# More studies but not more certainty

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access

## A systematic review of barriers to and facilitators of the use of evidence by policymakers

Kathryn Oliver<sup>1\*</sup>, Simon Innvar<sup>2</sup>, Theo Lorenc<sup>3</sup>, Jenny Woodman<sup>4</sup> and James Thomas<sup>5</sup>

- Access to quality research
- Researcher-decision maker collaboration
- Decision makers' skills in understanding research



# Steering away from the cookbook

REVIEW

Open Access

## New directions in evidence-based policy research: a critical analysis of the literature

Kathryn Oliver<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Theo Lorenc<sup>2</sup> and Simon Innvær<sup>3</sup>

- Decision makers are making their decisions based on 'evidence'
- Researchers have to understand what evidence decision makers need and when they need it.

Oliver, K., Lorenc, T., & Innvær, S. (2014). New directions in evidence-based policy research: a critical analysis of the literature. *Health Res Policy Syst*, 12, 34.

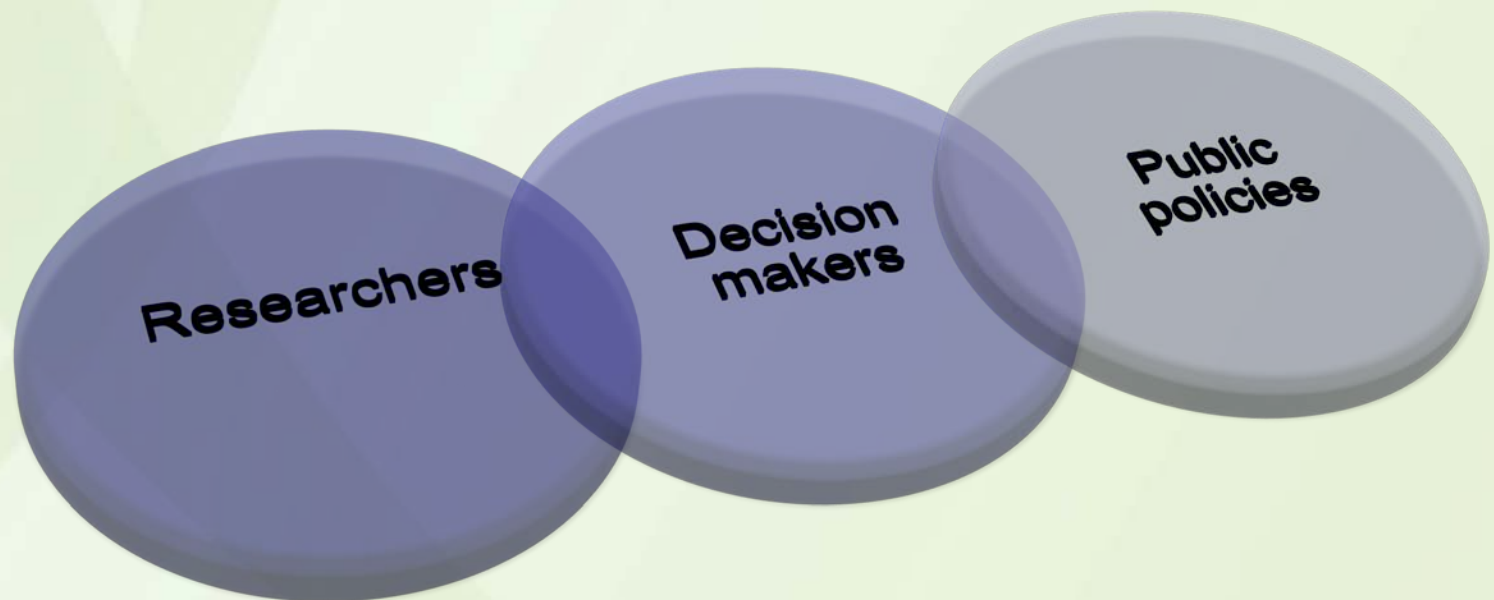
# Different kinds of knowing

## The seven useful 'knows' for public policy

- **Know what** the problem is
- **Know what works**
- **Know how** to implement the solution
- **Know who** to involve
- **Know when** to intervene
- **Know where** to allocate resources
- **Know why** humans act: symbolism, values, policy, ethics

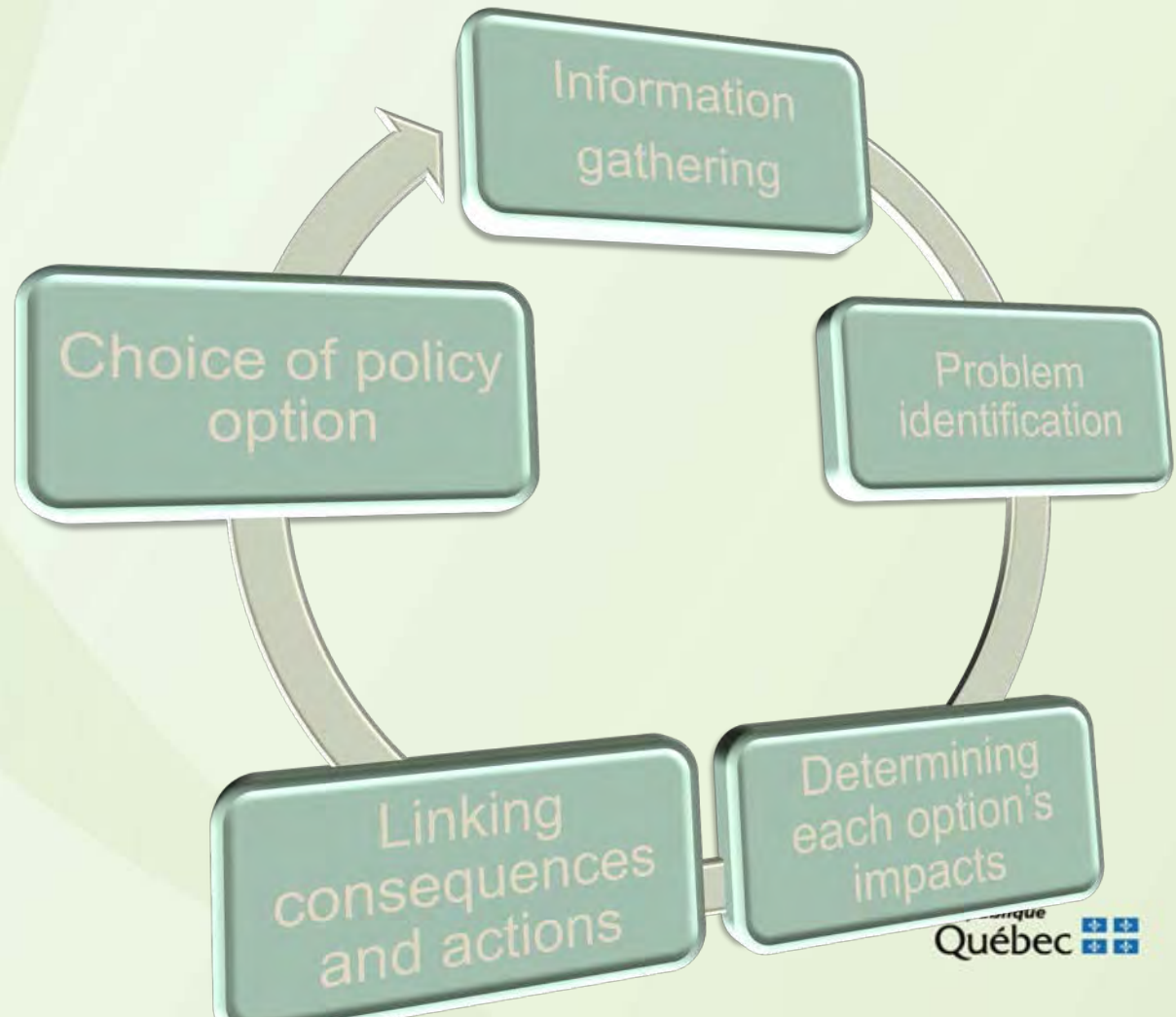
Adapted from d'Ekblom, 2011, and Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007)

# Evidence and public policies

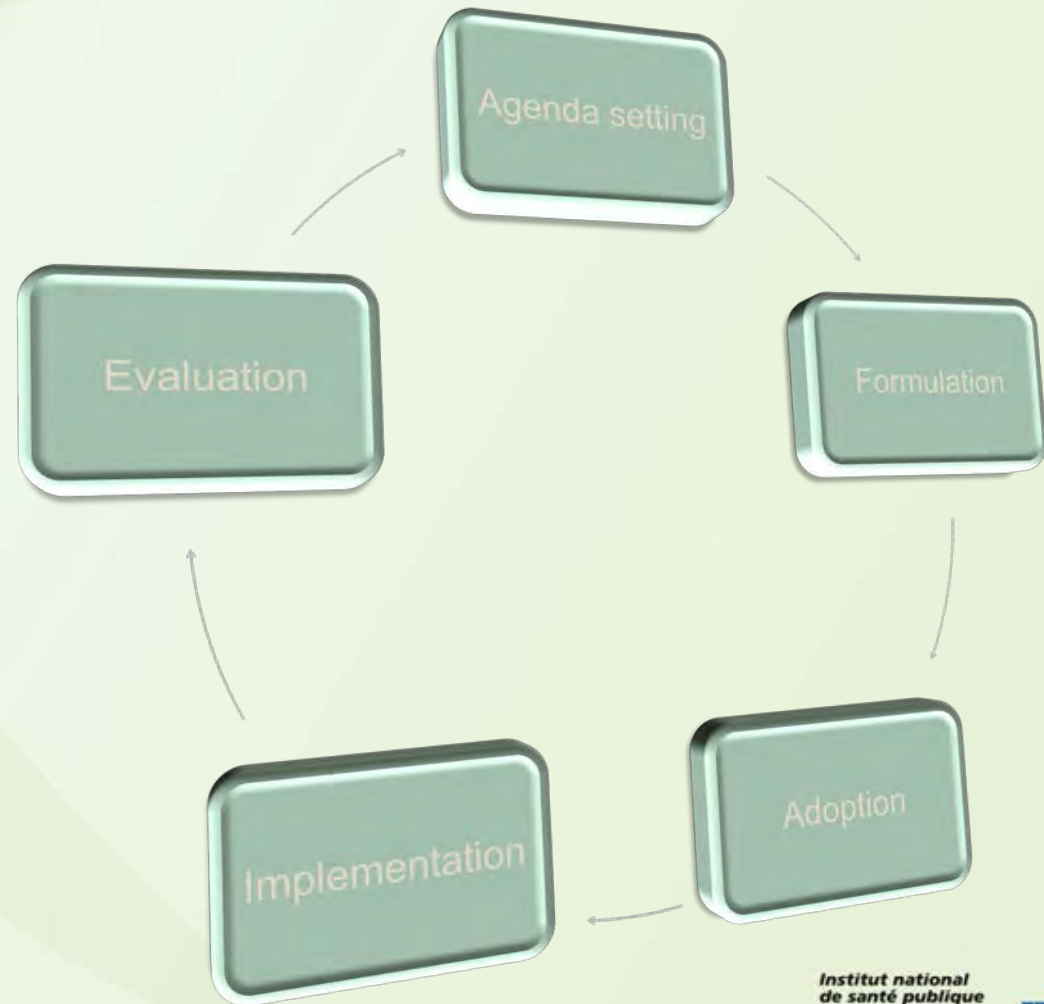


# First policy model: Stages Model

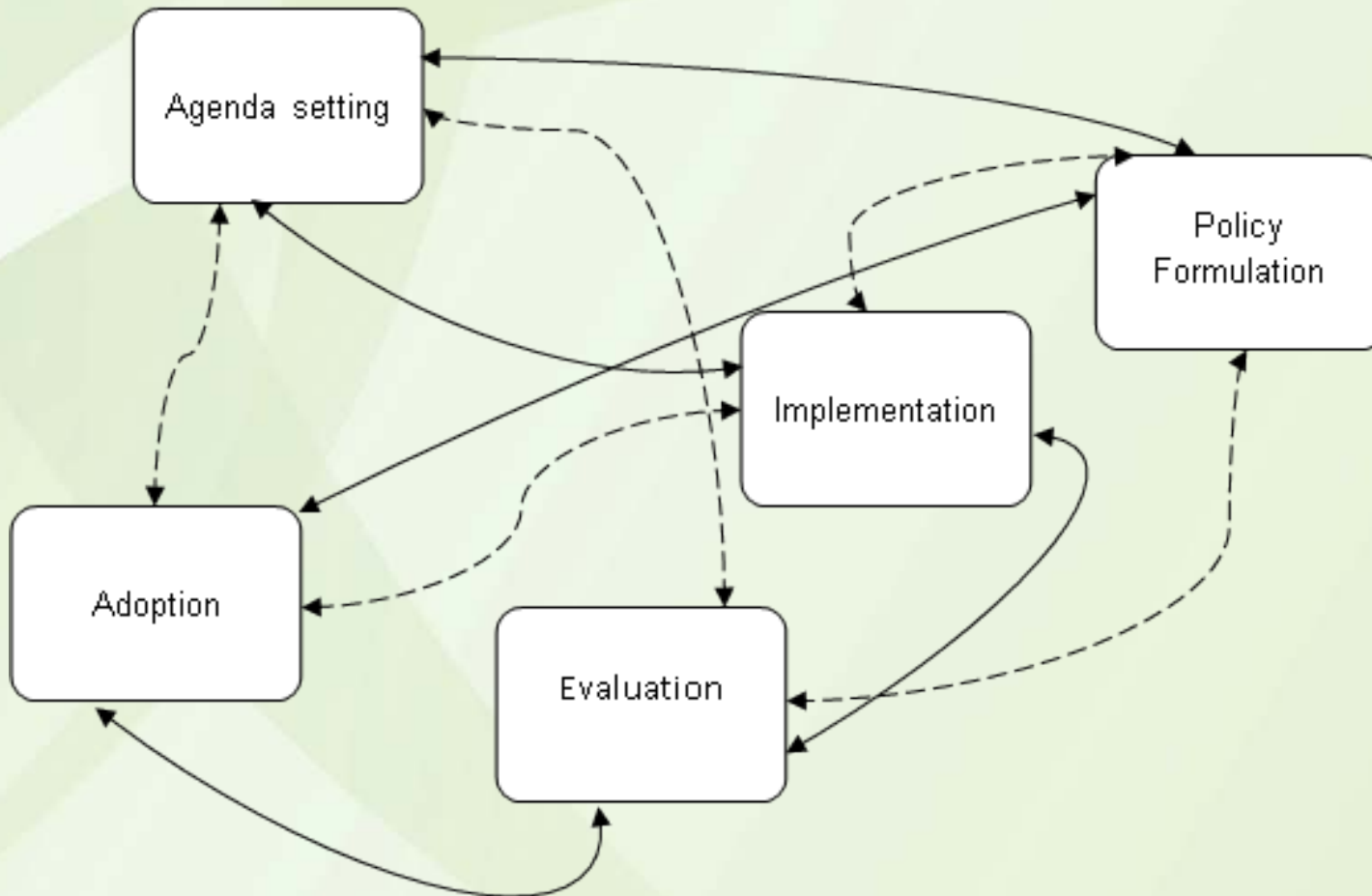
- A lens to approach public policy



# Simple and linear...at first sight



# In reality: non predictive





# Evidence and public policy stages

- Each stage ('moment') requires specific information
- Better linkages between those stages and transferred evidence should increase the relevance of the information and its use in public policies

Source: Babu, S. C., Brown, L., & McClaferty, B. (1996). *Systematic client consultation in development: the case of food policy research in Ghana, India, Kenya, Mali*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/systematic-client-consultation-development?print>  
Sutcliffe, S., & Court, J. (2005). *Evidence-Based Policymaking : What is it? How does it work? What relevance for developing countries?* Overseas Development Institute. Retrieved from: <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3683.pdf>

# Type of evidence by stage

## **Agenda setting**

## **Problem structuring**

- Identifying a problem situation and collecting evidence indicating the magnitude of the problem. This information is intended for decision makers as well as other stakeholders.
- Documenting the importance of a problem and its determinants.
- Challenging frameworks.
- Identifying the decisive, relevant data for characterizing the problem

Adapted from: Babu, Brown, & McClaferty (1996) and Sutcliffe & Court (2005).

# Type of evidence by stage

<b>Agenda setting</b>	<b>Problem structuring</b>
<b>Policy formulation</b>	<b>Forecasting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="985 485 1796 585">• Indicating which levers and policies will allow for intervention.</li><li data-bbox="985 599 1796 928">• Determining the consequences of existing or proposed policies and documenting their impacts on health and its determinants (using, for example, tools such as health impact assessment).</li><li data-bbox="985 942 1796 1042">• Detailing the impacts of each option.</li><li data-bbox="985 1056 1796 1313">• Documenting and specifying the future costs and benefits of all strategic scenarios using information generated by forecasting.</li></ul>

Adapted from: Babu, Brown, & McClaferty (1996) and Sutcliffe & Court (2005).

# Type of evidence by stage

<b>Agenda setting</b>	<b>Problem structuring</b>
<b>Policy formulation</b>	<b>Forecasting</b>
<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Monitoring</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documenting the consequences of previously-adopted policies and participating in their implementation.</li><li>• Producing analyses, but also applying technical skills, expert knowledge and practical experience, with an emphasis on the possibility of applying the evidence gathered across different contexts</li></ul>

Adapted from: Babu, Brown, & McClaferty (1996) and Sutcliffe & Court (2005).

# Type of evidence by stage

<b>Agenda setting</b>	<b>Problem structuring</b>
<b>Policy formulation</b>	<b>Forecasting</b>
<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Evaluation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing monitoring mechanisms.</li><li>• Revealing discrepancies between the policy's expected and actual results.</li><li>• Performing complex evaluations</li></ul>

Adapted from: Babu, Brown, & McClaferty (1996) and Sutcliffe & Court (2005).

# An example

*Addiction* (1996) 91(9), 1265–1270

## REVIEW

### **The analysis of policy: understanding the process of policy development**



Centre de collaboration nationale  
sur les politiques publiques et la santé  
National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy

Institut national  
de santé publique  
Québec 

# Type of strategy : agenda setting

Stage	Information to be transmitted by public health actors
Agenda setting	<p><b>Problem structuring</b></p> <p>“Researchers can influence the policy process at this stage by taking every opportunity to provide evidence to politicians, public servants, Royal Commissions and so on, in a form that is readily understood by these various groups. Consideration can also be given to providing the evidence under the auspices of groups that carry more political credibility than the individual”</p> <p><b>(Ryder 1996:1266)</b></p>



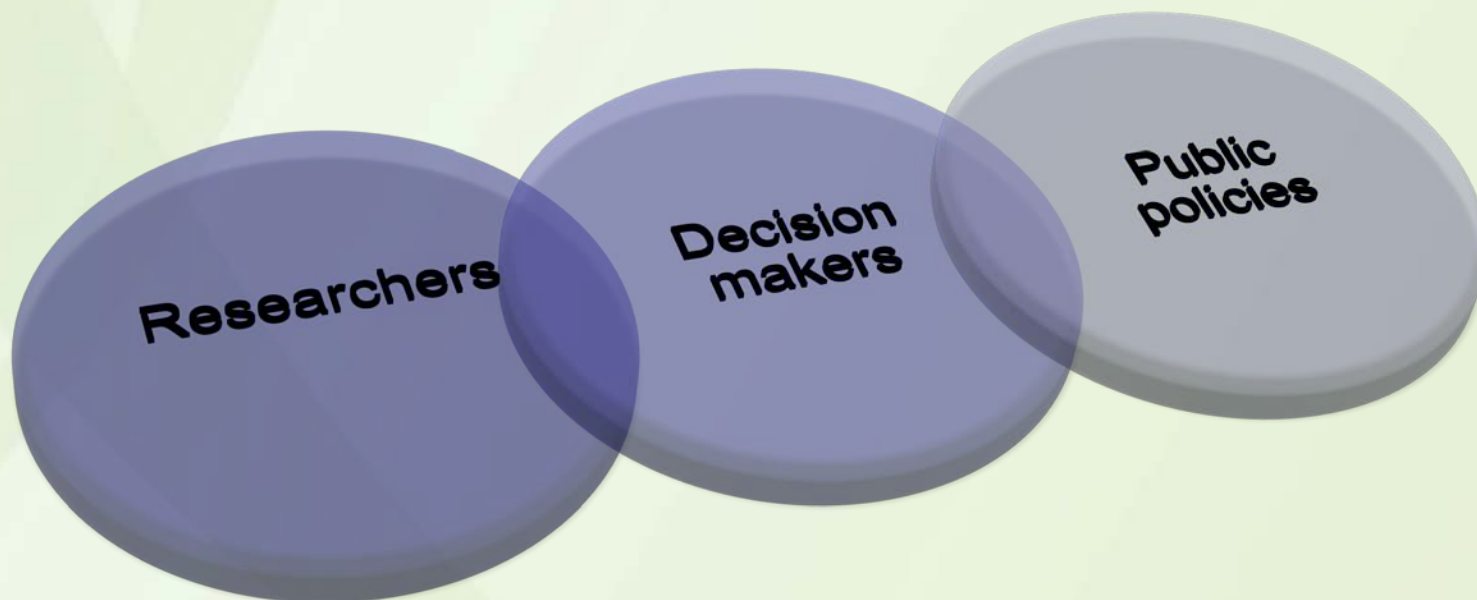
# Type of strategy : policy formulation

Stage	Information to be transmitted by public health actors
Policy formulation	<p><b>Forecasting</b></p> <p>A decision maker in Western Australia “wished to ban smoking in all the betting venues under the control of the board. Realizing that suggesting such a policy from the point of view of public health would not convince key players in the decision making process, the policy was marketed (a term used deliberately) in business terms, as a move that would attract customers because of the smoke-free atmosphere.”</p> <p><b>(Ryder 1996:1268)</b></p>

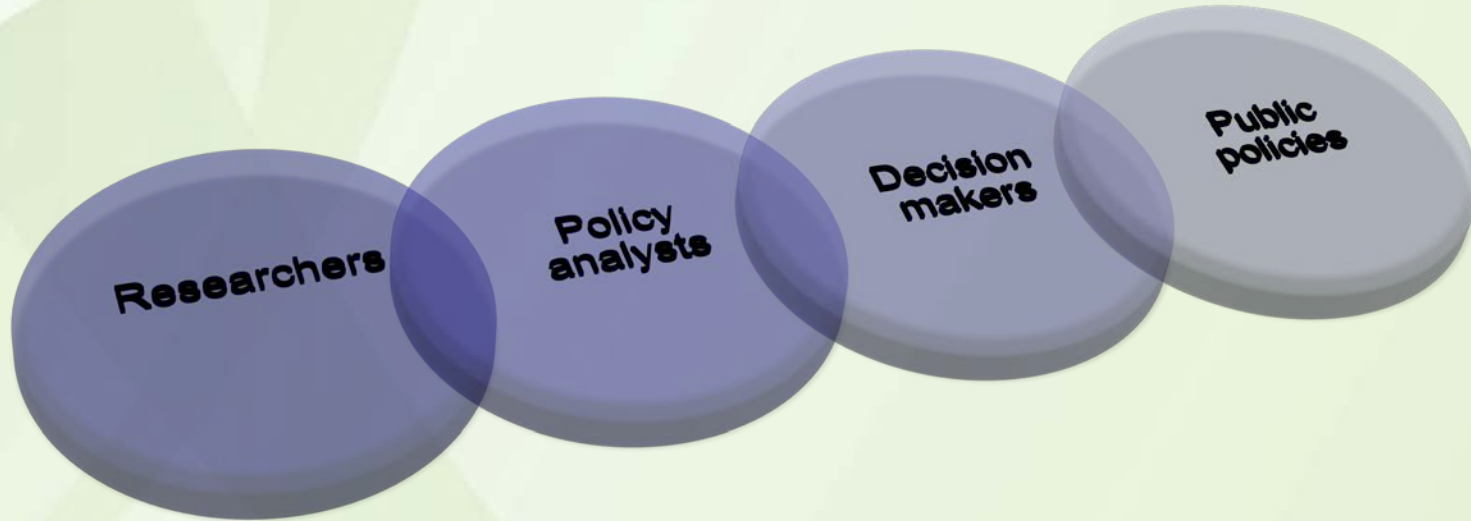




# Evidence and public policies: the «usual suspects »



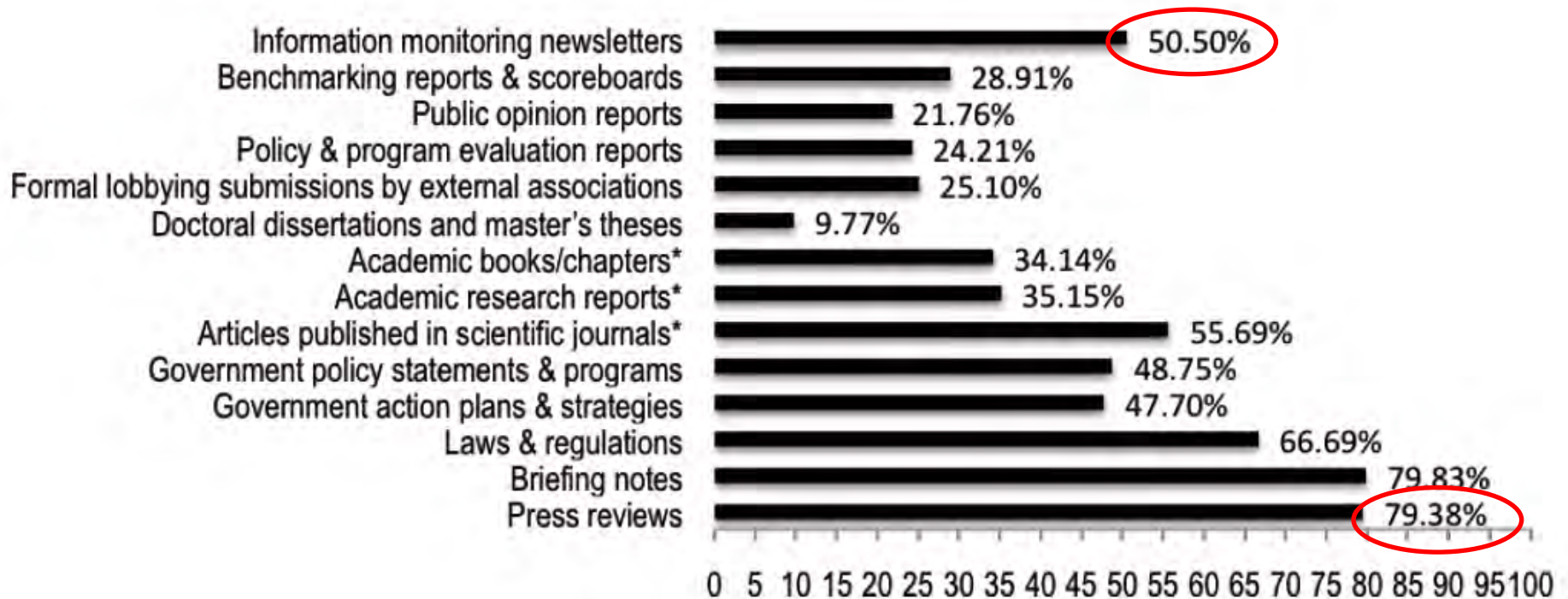
# Evidence and public policies : considering policy analysts



# Literature on policy analysts

- Descriptive:
  - Training, variable access to data and evidence, attitude vis-à-vis evidence-based policymaking, health determinants (Howlett & Fraser, 2009; Howlett, 2011; Lavis, 2002; Lavis et al., 2003; Léon, Ouimet, Lavis, Grimshaw, & Gagnon, 2013)
- Analysts' types and roles and the window of opportunity to influence public policies

# Documents used by analysts



Source: Ouimet, M., Bédard, P. O., Turgeon, J., Lavis, J. N., Gélinau, F., Gagnon, F., & Dallaire, C. (2010). Correlates of consulting research evidence among policy analysts in government ministries: a cross-sectional survey. *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*, 6(4), 433-460.

# Source of information on determinants of health for civil servants

“Civil servants from departments of labor were particularly likely to cite the media as an important source of knowledge about the determinants of health.”



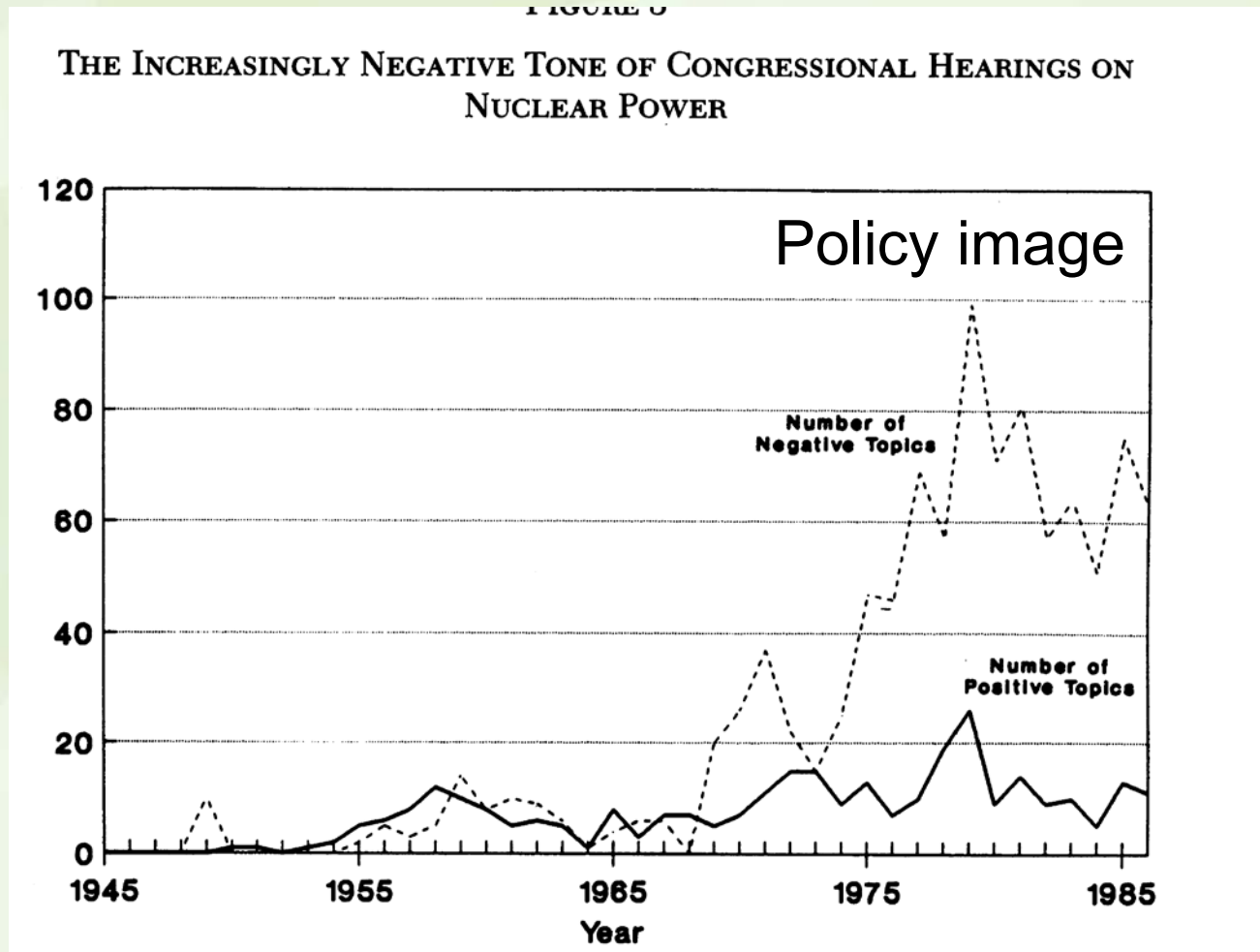
Source: Lavis, J. N., Ross, S. E., Stoddart, G. L., Hohenadel, J. M., McLeod, C. B., & Evans, R. G. (2003). Do Canadian civil servants care about the health of populations? *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(4), 658-663.

# Decision-maker, evidence and policy stage

Stages	Crusader	Pragmatist
<b>Agenda setting</b> Problem recognized by: Problem defined by:	Internal initiatives Internal signals Self	Externally motivated External signals Others
<b>Policy formulation</b> Information collection  Decision	Focus on the means Inductive analysis  Substance-oriented	Focus on the ends Problem to solve  Process-oriented
<b>Implementation</b>	Looks for compliance	Wants to know what is happening
<b>Evaluation</b>	Convictions are central  Are the goals met? Accountability and ability to claim success	Groups or information are central Is everybody happy? Influence groups: should the goals be revisited?

Source: Snare, C. E. (1995). Windows of opportunity: when and how can the policy analyst influence the policymaker during the policy process. *Review of Policy Research*, 14(3-4), 407-430.

# The Punctuated Equilibrium model



Baumgartner, F. R., & Jones, B. D. (1991). Agenda dynamics and policy subsystems. *The journal of Politics*, 53(04), 1044-1074.

# Public policies: Ever-changing or forever still



Photo Credit: © istock/leonid\_tit



# Punctuated Equilibrium

- Changes come from punctuations
- Pluralism:
  - Many interests are claiming for the policy-makers' attention
  - Short and selective attention span from policy-maker.
  - Change occurs only when policy-makers have their eye on it..



# Punctuated Equilibrium

- Default: incrementalism (marginal change)
  - Problems and definitions are established by experts from the dominant coalition
- Exception: the change
  - Brought about by
    - Exogenous shock: event, report, statistical report, media crisis (Kingdon, 1995)
    - Venue shopping



# Public policies in a complex system

- Output is never proportionate to input
- Any change is affected by negative feedback loops (opposing the change) and positive feedback loops (multiplying it)
- Change happens when it can overcome the friction from the status quo.
- The change (punctuation) is sudden.



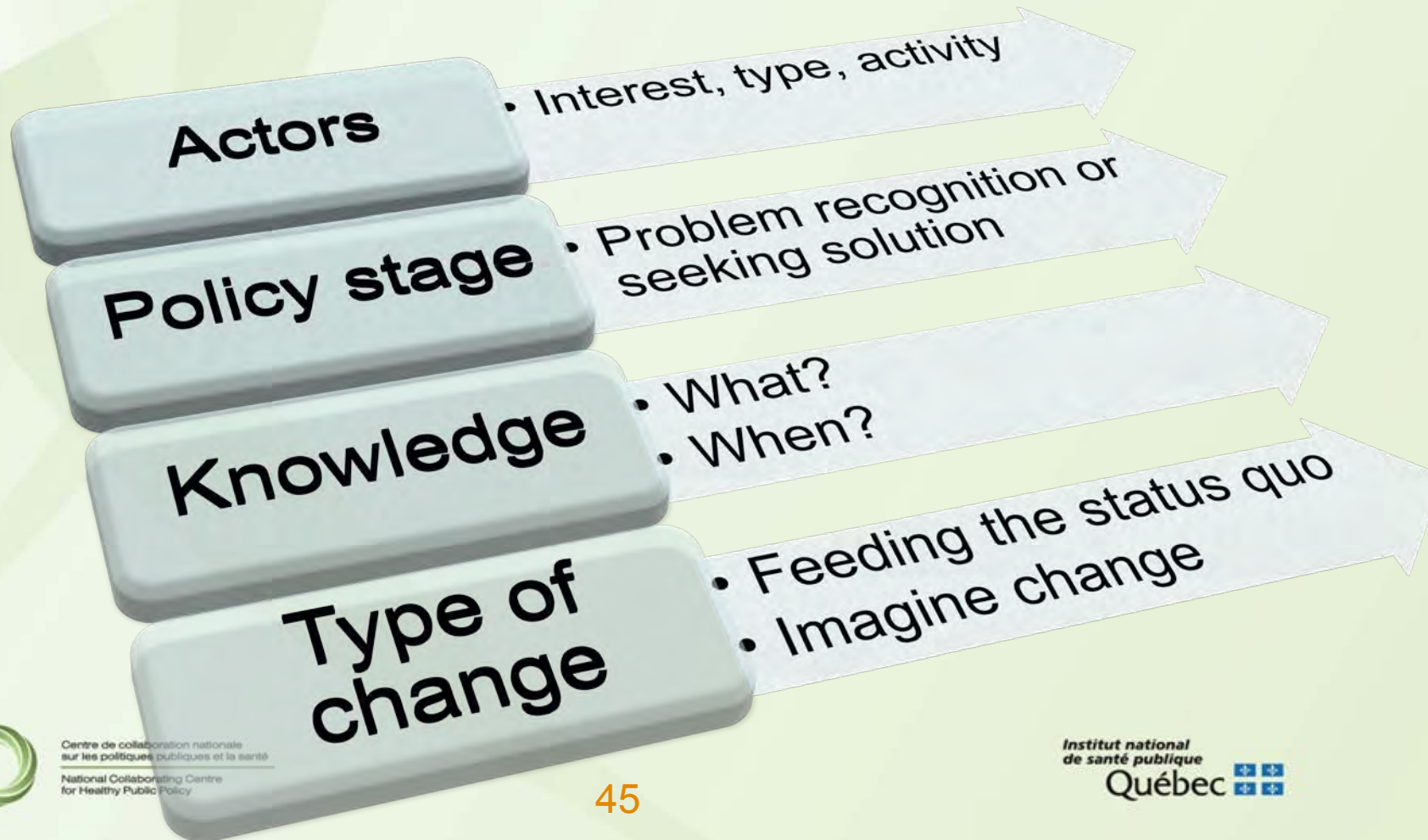
# Public policies in a complex system

- Complexity should not drive us to abandon the project of producing evidence-based public policies.
- But underline the need to adapt our production to evidence.
- The value of interactive feedback for implementation

Sanderson, I. (2009). Intelligent Policy Making for a Complex World: Pragmatism, Evidence and Learning. *Political Studies*, 57(4), 699–719. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2009.00791.x

# In summary

## A scan...rather quick



# Some references

- Babu, S. C., Brown, L. ., & McClaferty, B. (1996). *Systematic client consultation in development: the case of food policy research in Ghana, India, Kenya, Mali*. Retrieved from <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/systematic-client-consultation-development?print>
- Baumgartner, F. R., & Jones, B. D. (n.d.). Policy Dynamics Introduction : Positive and Negative Feedback in Politics.
- Baumgartner, F. R., & Jones, B. D. (1993). Agendas and Instability in American Politics. In *Agendas and Instability in American Politics* (pp. 1–55).
- Benoit, F. (2013). *Public Policy Models and Their Usefulness in Public Health: The Stages Model* (p. 10). Montreal: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Retrieved from [http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/ModeleEtapesPolPubliques\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/ModeleEtapesPolPubliques_EN.pdf)
- Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2012). *Evidence-based policymaking: Insights from policy-minded researchers and research-minded policymakers*. Routledge, part of the Taylor & Francis Group.
- De Goede, J., Putters, K., van der Grinten, T., & van Oers, H. A. (2010). Knowledge in process? Exploring barriers between epidemiological research and local health policy development. *Health Research Policy and Systems / BioMed Central*, 8, 26. doi:10.1186/1478-4505-8-26
- Diaz-kope, L. M., Lombard, J. R., & Miller-stevens, K. (2013). A Shift in Federal Policy Regulation of the Automobile Industry : Policy Brokers and the ACF, 41(4), 563–587. doi:10.1111/j.1747-1346.2007.00086.x/abstract
- Eklblom, P. P. (2011). The 5Is framework : a practical tool for transfer and sharing of crime prevention and community safety knowledge, (January 2008).
- Howlett, M. (2011). Policy Analysts in the Bureaucracy Revisited : The Nature of Professional Policy Work in Contemporary Government, 49(4), 613–633.
- Howlett, M., & Fraser, S. (2009). A Profile of B . C . Provincial Policy Analysts : Troubleshooters or Planners ? Abstract, 3(September).
- Innvaer, S., Vist, G., Trommald, M., & Oxman, A. (2002). Health policy-makers' perceptions of their use of evidence: a systematic review. *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*, 7, 239–244. doi:10.1258/135581902320432778
- Kingdon, J. W. (1995). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies (2nd Edition)*. *Policy* (Vol. 2, p. 280). doi:10.2307/3323801
- Lavis, J. N. (2002). Ideas At The Margin Or Marginalized Ideas? Nonmedical Determinants Of Health In Canada. *Health Affairs*, 21(2), 107–112. Retrieved from <http://content.healthaffairs.org>
- Lavis, J. N., Ross, S. E., Stoddart, G. L., Hohenadel, J. M., McLeod, C. B., & Evans, R. G. (2003). Do Canadian Civil Servants Care About the Health of Populations? *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(4), 658–663. doi:10.2105/AJPH.93.4.658
- Léon, G., Ouimet, M., Lavis, J. N., Grimshaw, J., & Gagnon, M.-P. (2013). Assessing availability of scientific journals, databases, and health library services in Canadian health ministries: a cross-sectional study. *Implementation Science : IS*, 8, 34. doi:10.1186/1748-5908-8-34
- Nutley, S., Walter, I., & Davies, H. T. (2007). *Using evidence: How research can inform public services*. Policy Press.
- Oliver, K., Innvar, S., Lorenc, T., Woodman, J., & Thomas, J. (2014). A systematic review of barriers to and facilitators of the use of evidence by policymakers. *BMC Health Services Research*, 14(1), 2. doi:10.1186/1472-6963-14-2
- Oliver, K., Lorenc, T., & Innvæ, S. (2014). New directions in evidence-based policy research: a critical analysis of the literature. *Health Research Policy and Systems / BioMed Central*, 12(1), 34. doi:10.1186/1478-4505-12-34
- Orton, L., Lloyd-Williams, F., Taylor-Robinson, D., O'Flaherty, M., & Capewell, S. (2011). The use of research evidence in public health decision making processes: systematic review. *PloS One*, 6(7), e21704. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0021704
- Sanderson, I. (2009). Intelligent Policy Making for a Complex World: Pragmatism, Evidence and Learning. *Political Studies*, 57(4), 699–719. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2009.00791.x
- Snare, C. E. (1995). Windows\_of\_Opportunity: When and how can the policy analyst influence the policy maker during the policy process. *Policy Studies Review*, 14(3), 407–430.
- Sutcliffe, S., & Court, J. (2005). *Evidence-Based Policymaking : What is it ? How does it work ? What relevance for developing countries ?*. *Young* (pp. 1–50). Retrieved from Institute. Consulté en ligne au : <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3683.pdf>



# Interested?

More resources at [www.ncchpp.ca](http://www.ncchpp.ca)



Centre de collaboration nationale  
sur les politiques publiques et la santé  
National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy

*Institut national  
de santé publique*  
Québec 

François Benoit  
[francois.benoit@inspq.qc.ca](mailto:francois.benoit@inspq.qc.ca)  
514-864-1600, ext 3608



Centre de collaboration nationale  
sur les politiques publiques et la santé  
National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy