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Innovative approaches to strengthen sustainable consumption

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The background: the ASCEE Project

- Objectives
 - identification of *innovative* policy instruments for the promotion of sustainable consumption (and greening of the market)
 - elaboration of policy recommendations with respect to SC
- Scope
 - focus on „top down“ policies of public authorities
- Approach
 - overview of innovative instruments
 - desk research and ~80 expert interviews in EU Member States
 - summarising (country) reports
 - in-depth analysis of 9 case studies
 - desk research & expert interviews with involved stakeholders
 - development of policy recommendations
 - desk research & expert workshop (Brussels, May 29th, 2008)
- Duration: February 2007 – November 2008

Some examples of found innovative approaches...

- **Regulative instruments**
 - White certificates (e.g. IT)
 - Performance targets
 - CO₂ certificates for households (UK)
- **Economic instruments**
 - VAT & product tax (HU)
 - Green funds scheme (NL)
 - Congestion charges (e.g. London, Stockholm)
 - Bonus systems
- **Behaviour of government**
 - Technology procurement (SW)
 - Promotion of carbon neutral administration (FI)
 - Behaviour Change Unit (UK)
- **Voluntary information instruments**
 - Organic label
 - Label for domestic products (HU)
- **Voluntary instruments**
 - Guiding systems in retailer shops (BE, DE)
 - Innovative public information websites
 - Red-Green Indicator for Retailers (UK)
 - Campaign „One ton less“ (DK)
 - Eco-top ten
 - CO₂ offsetting
- **Cooperative instruments**
 - Product panels (e.g. DK, FI)
 - ‘We’re in this Together’ (UK)

Most linked to CC

Different Ways to Classify Policy Instruments

● 'Classical distinction'

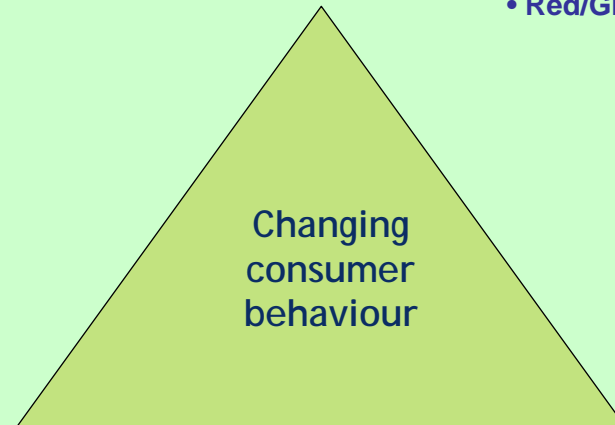
- regulatory and economic instruments
- performance of governments and public institutions (public purchasing)
- compulsory and voluntary information instruments
- other voluntary instruments and co-operative approaches

● ASCEE approach

Making sustainable consumption easy

Examples:

- Top-ten
- We're in this together
- Red/Green Calculator



Raising consumer awareness

Examples:

- Campaign "One ton less"
- Eco-teams
- Organic labels

Creating green markets/ greening markets

Examples:

- Technology procurement
- Product panels
- Green funds scheme

Conclusions from Analysis of Instruments (1)

- Hardly any „first-order innovation“...
 - completely new instrument, e.g., Red/Green Calculator, White Certificates
- ... and plenty of „second-order innovation“
 - ‚old‘ instruments in new context, e.g., GPP in Portugal, congestion charge in Stockholm/Sweden, CO₂-labelling
- Collective action
 - some instruments stimulate community-building
 - necessary since individual motivation and action requires positive social feedback („I will if you will“)

Conclusions from Analysis of Instruments (2)

- Extended evidence-base

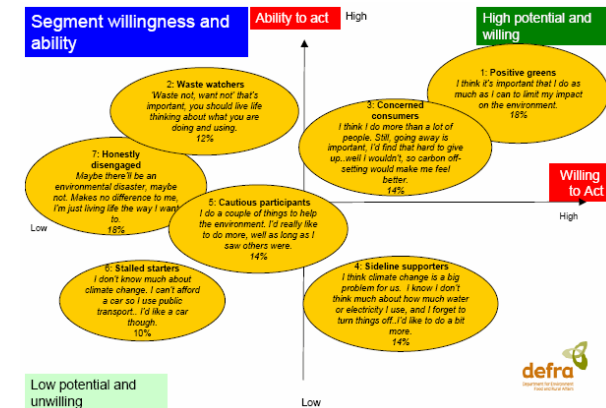
- not only technical, but also social data (e.g., UK „Framework for Pro-Environmental Behaviours“)

- Adaptability

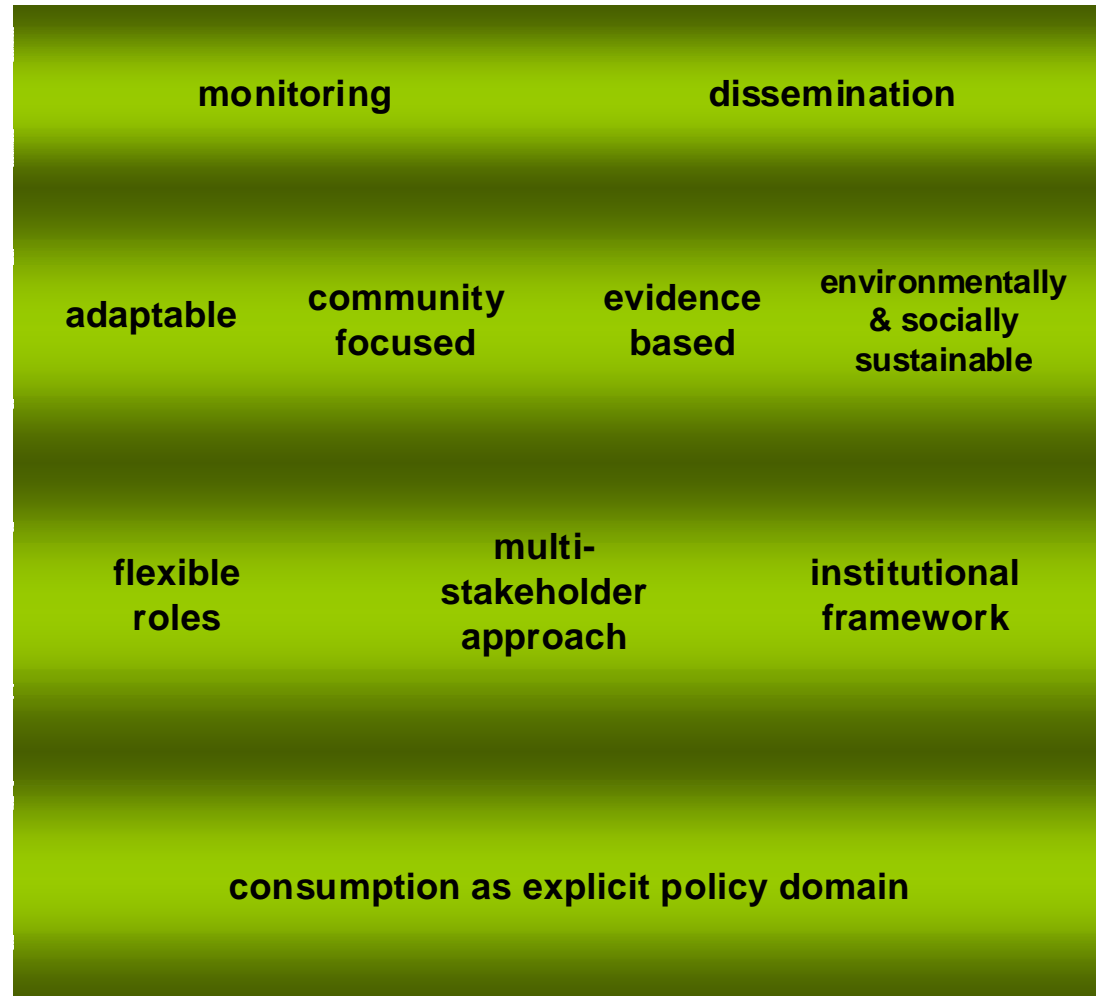
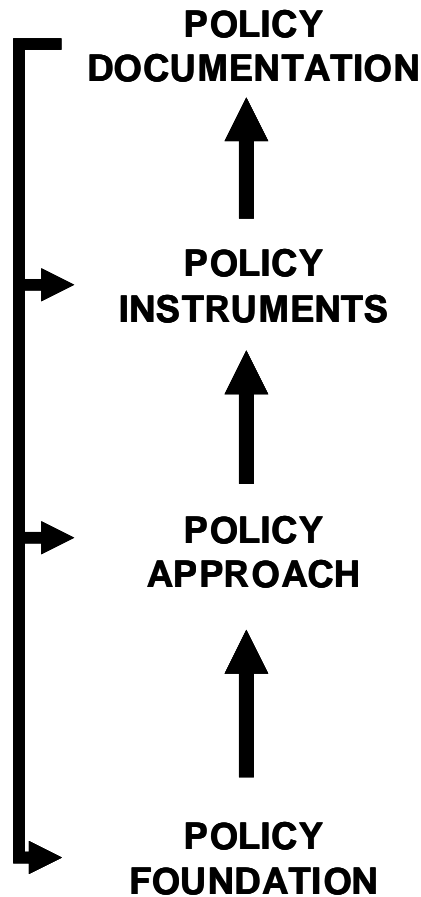
- ▶ shorter innovation cycles and accelerated market pace
- ▶ flexible instruments (e.g., TopTen) try to cope with this (half-year revision-cycles)

- Social dimension – the ‚forgotten element‘

- ▶ first steps: Fairtrade Labelling, procurement policies (see timber)

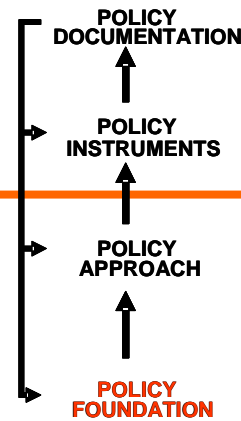


Overview of Recommendations



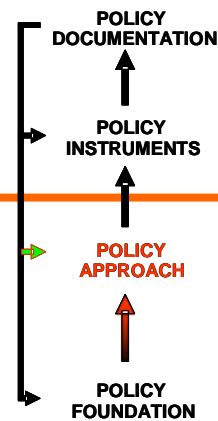
Policy Foundation

- Consumption as a policy field in its own right
 - Consider the entire consumption cycle:
 - purchase → use → after-use
 - don't confine to efficiency improvements
(„weak sustainable consumption“ Fuchs/Lorek 2005)
→ exploit the full potential of altered consumption patterns and reduced consumption levels (“strong sustainable consumption” *ibid.*)



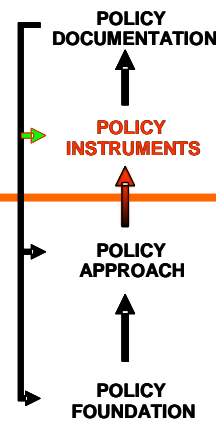
Policy Approach

- Flexible roles of public authorities
 - from regulator to facilitator (and vice versa)
 - new skills (e.g., moderation) and new approaches (e.g., public-private-partnerships)
- Appropriate multi-stakeholder approaches
 - encourage business and civil society engagement
- Suitable institutional frameworks, e.g.:
 - nomination of public body holding prime responsibility
 - encouraging inter-ministerial co-operation
 - policy framework for sustainable consumption, setting of objectives and targets
 - legislative basis for policy implementation

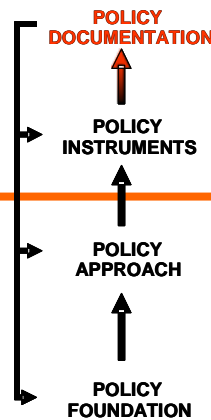


Policy Instruments

- Adaptability
 - adaptive to technological change, e.g. dynamic standards
- Community focussed
 - framework which is supportive to collective progress
- Evidence based
 - LCA data plus evidence from social sciences
 - illuminating heterogeneity of consumers, barriers for change in everyday life, relevance of social relations etc.
→ mapping of „European Sustainable Lifestyles“
- Environmentally and socially sustainable
 - social dimension not yet sufficiently addressed
 - product labelling and public procurement ‚low-hanging fruits‘?!



Policy Documentation



- Monitoring of policy impacts
 - Ex-ante assessment of potential impacts
 - Periodical monitoring of SC according to common indicators for monitoring (e.g. Sweden)
- Dissemination of innovative approaches
 - Use Open Method of Coordination
 - European SC(P) network on government level
 - Coordination of product assessment databases
 - Exchange of information between MS (‘knowledge brokerage’) with regard to best practises
 - National SC dialogues

A group of jellyfish swimming in blue water. The jellyfish have translucent, bell-shaped bodies and long, thin tentacles. They are scattered throughout the frame, with some in the foreground and others in the background. The water is a deep, clear blue.

**Thank you
for your attention!**

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