



Translating Science into Action: Strategies for Engaging Policy Makers

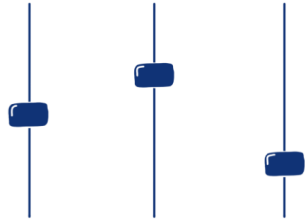
Belgian Polar Community Day 2024

Karen van Loon

Outline

- The basics
- What do policymakers want from us?
- Where to begin?
- The competition for policymakers' attention
- What should we do?
- Conclusions

Some terminology



Policy is...

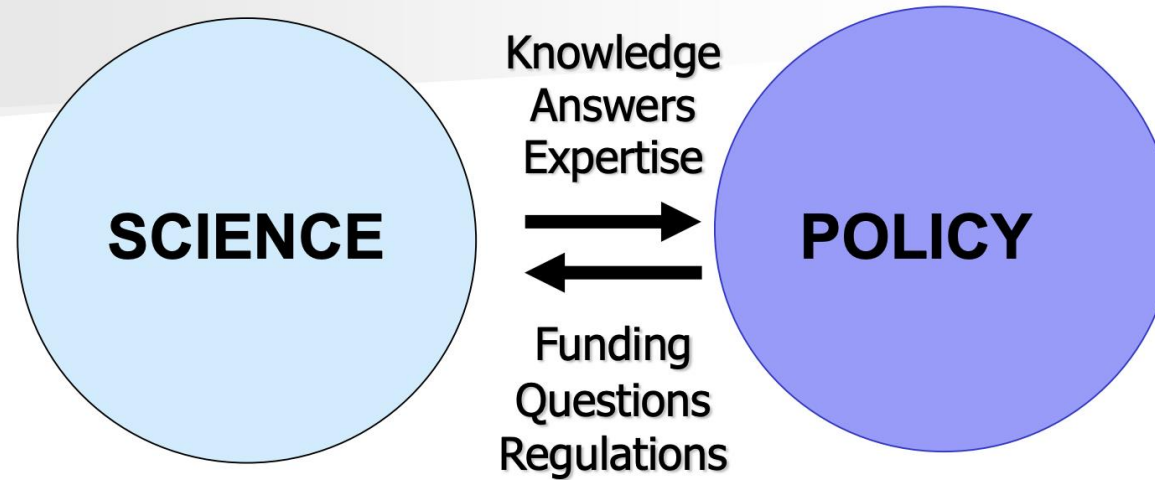


Politics is...



Science is...

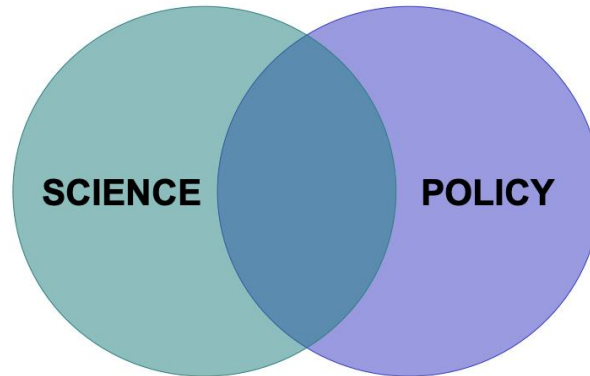
A naïve vision...



- Mutually exclusive and hermetic categories
- Science as an isolated and deterministic system providing value-free 'truths'.
- Two independent monologues which intermittently exchange products

A vision of co-evolution

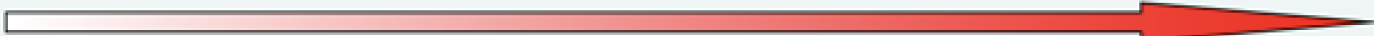
- Science and policy as intersecting and coevolving domains of human activity:



- To manage the intersection between science and policy, some processes are implemented – spontaneously or not – which happen precisely at the intersection: *science-policy interfaces*

Four idealised roles of science in policy and politics (Pielke 2008)

Pure Scientist • focuses on research not its use • provides knowledge so decision makers can use it • has no direct connection with decision makers	Issue Advocate • focuses on implications of research for a particular political agenda • aligns with a group which advances its interests through policy and politics • engages with decision making process • seeks to reduce the scope of decision choice
Science Arbiter • stays removed from policy and politics • provides expert advice to decision makers • only provides scientific input • does not interact with stakeholders	Honest Broker • integrates scientific knowledge with stakeholder concerns to identify/inform decision options • places scientific understanding in the context of decision options • seeks to expand the scope of decision choice



LOW

Level of engagement with stakeholders & decision process

HIGH

What do policymakers
WANT FROM US?



Science for policy: where to begin?

1. Define your motivation

- Supporting evidence informed policy?
- Increasing the impact of your research?
- Ensuring that your research isn't misinterpreted?

Science for
policy: where
to begin?

2. Determine the level of
government(s) you want to
engage with

Science for
policy: where
to begin?

3. Outline the policy areas that
are related to your research

Science for
policy: where
to begin?

4. Identify relevant actors and
their role in the policymaking
process

Science for
policy: where
to begin?

5. Connect with relevant
stakeholders

There is a competition for policy-makers' attention

IMPACT is **NOT** a **COINCIDENCE**, it can be **PLANNED**

4R's



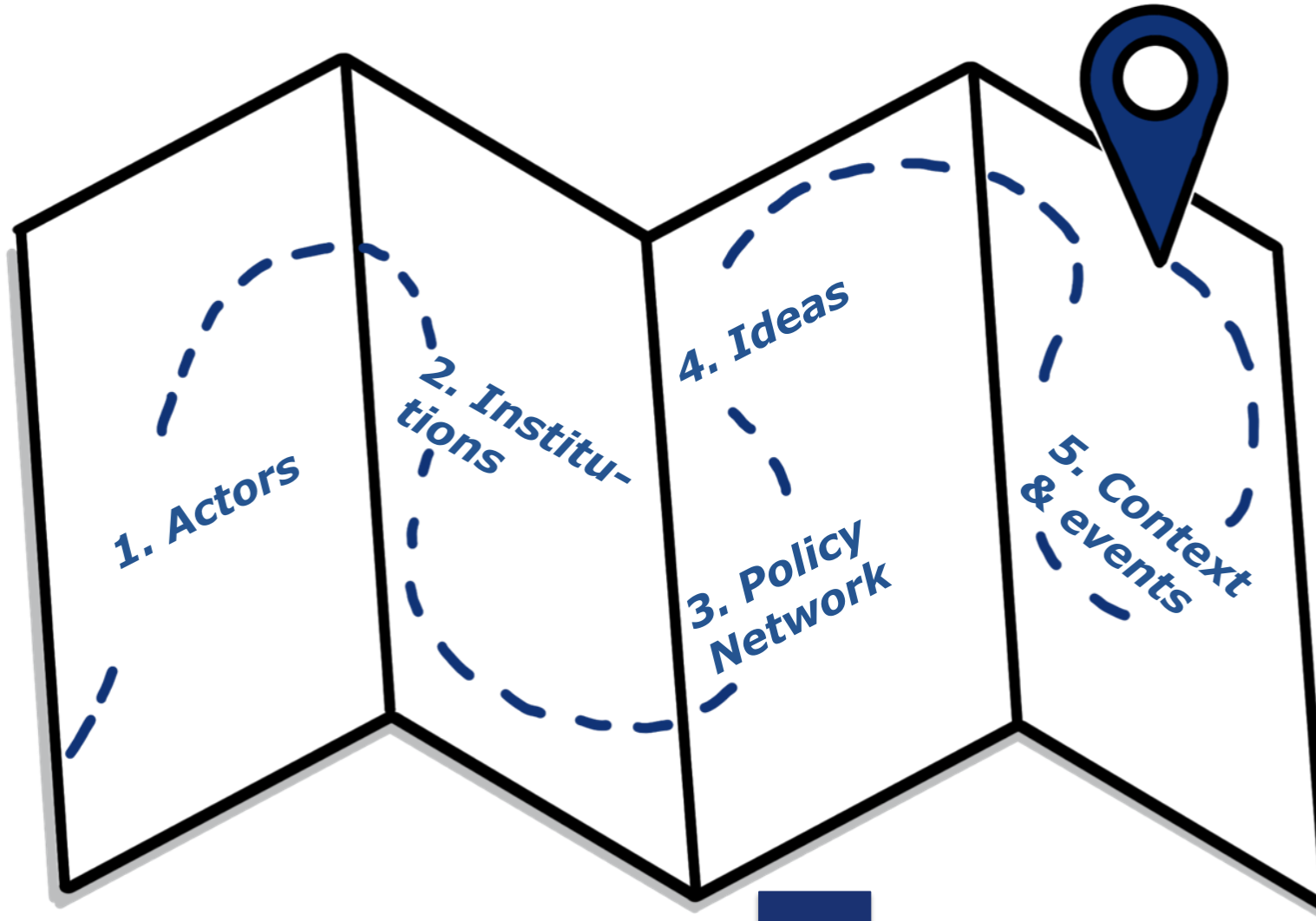
right **PLACE**

right **TIME**

right **FACT**

right **WAY**

Mapping the Policy Environment



The politics of
Evidence-based
Policy making
Paul Cairney

The competition for policymakers' attention

- Why should people **LISTEN** to **you**?
- Institution **authority** is **NOT** always **ENOUGH**
- Identify your **ALLIES**
- Anticipate **HOT TOPICS** /occupy space
- Build your **NETWORK** - "Meet and greet"
- There is a **PSYCHOLOGY** of policy making
 - Long term presence is **KEY**
 - **ONE-TO-ONE** relationship => **TRUST AGAIN!**

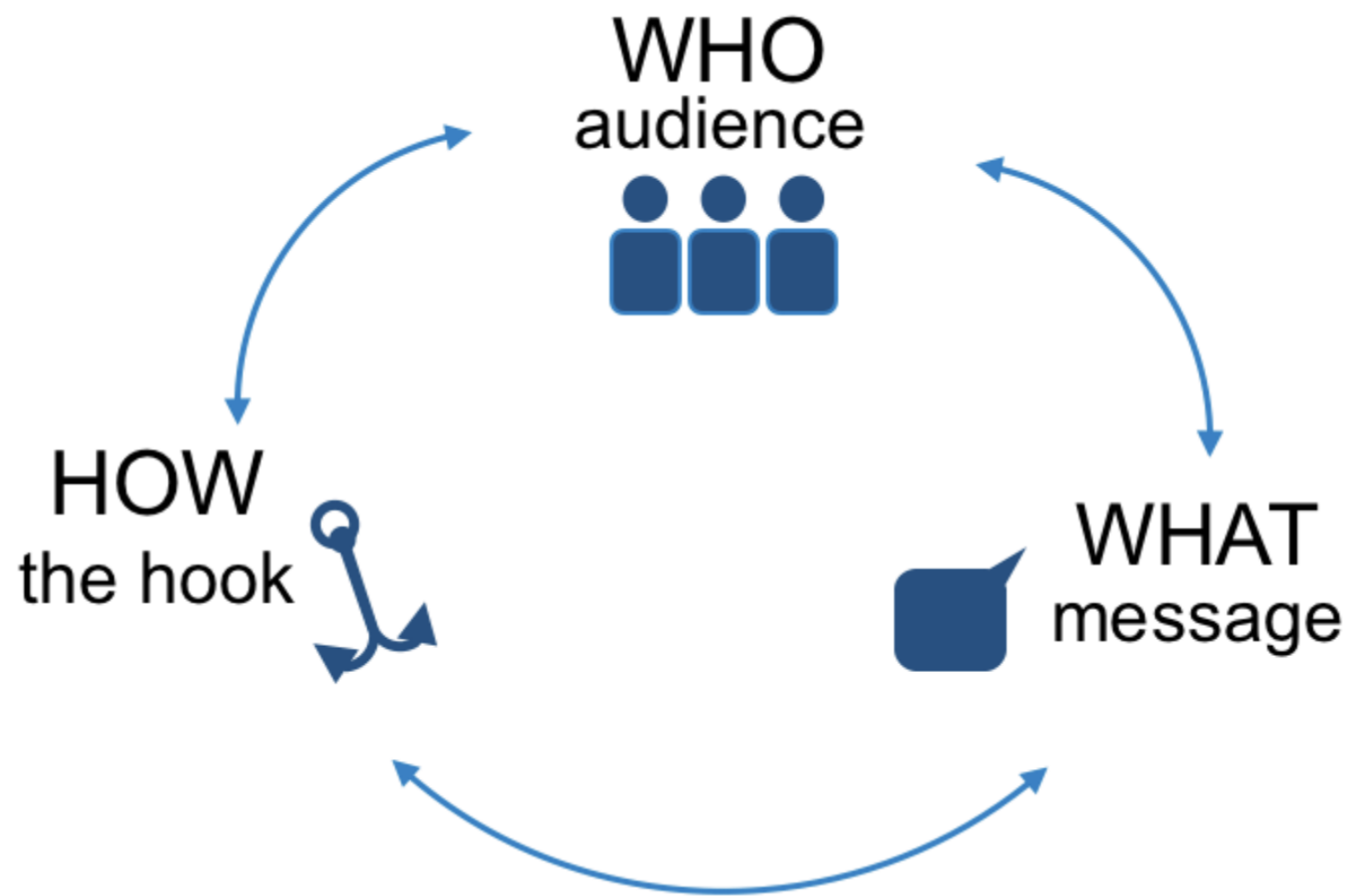


what should we do?



Have a clear
KEY MESSAGE





Audience analysis

How can I **solve**
their **problem**?

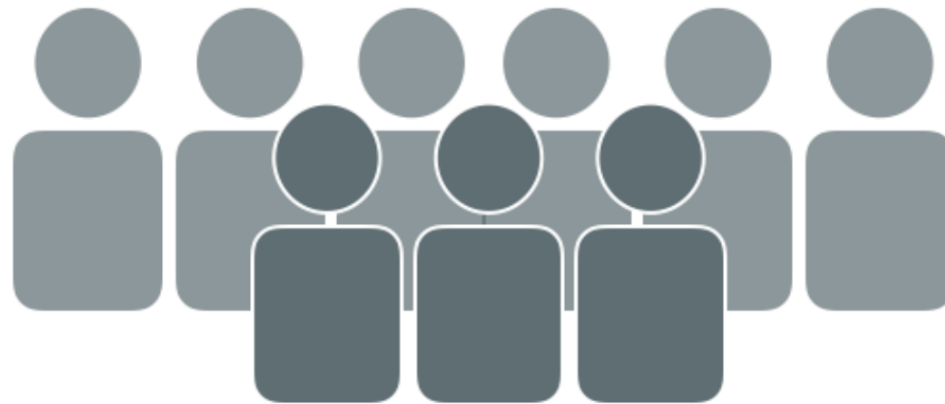
Why are they
here?

How can you best
reach them?

What **are**
they like?

How might
they **resist**?

What **keeps** them
up at night?

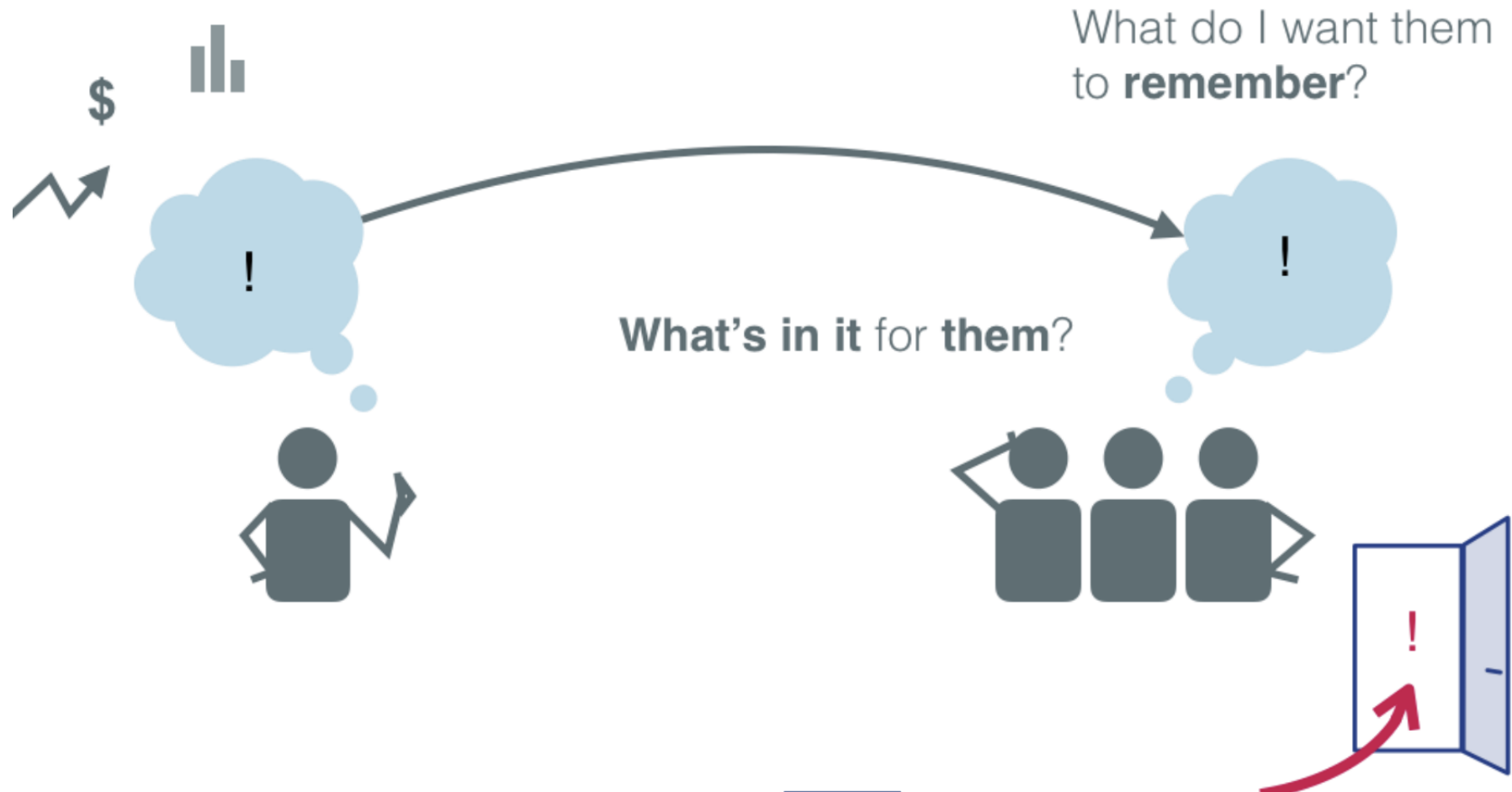


▶ know your
audience

Be a born
STORY TELLER



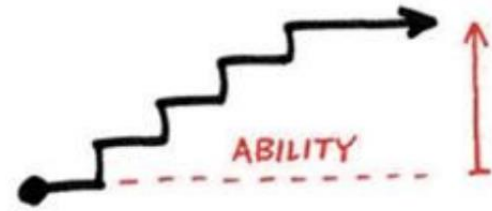
Story line with the end in mind





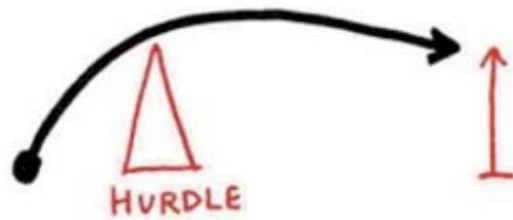
The REPORT

Conveys the facts.



The EXPLANATION

Teaches new insights or abilities.



The PITCH

Recommends a new action or solution.



The DRAMA

Inspires a new way of looking at the world.

VISUALS

Can make all the difference



3

Lessons learned under bridging science & policy

1. **Anticipate** and **being proactive**

2. **Know your client** - Adapt your communication to fit your audience

3. Provide **understandable** policy options that resonates to layman

4. Establish your **network** and build **TRUST**

Questions?

Thank you!

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Sources

- Science for Policy Handbook

Vladimír Šucha and Marta Sienkiewicz, 2020

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/book/9780128225967/science-for-policy-handbook>

- Supporting policy with scientific evidence

https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/dataset/k4p-dataset-44904_en

- <https://www.scienceforpolicy.com/deepdives>