

Forest Policies for the 21st Century

Sixth Executive Forest Policy Course

27 May - 6 June 2013, Thimphu, Bhutan

The Normative Policy Process

Jennifer Conje

6th Session of the Asia-Pacific Executive Policy Short Course

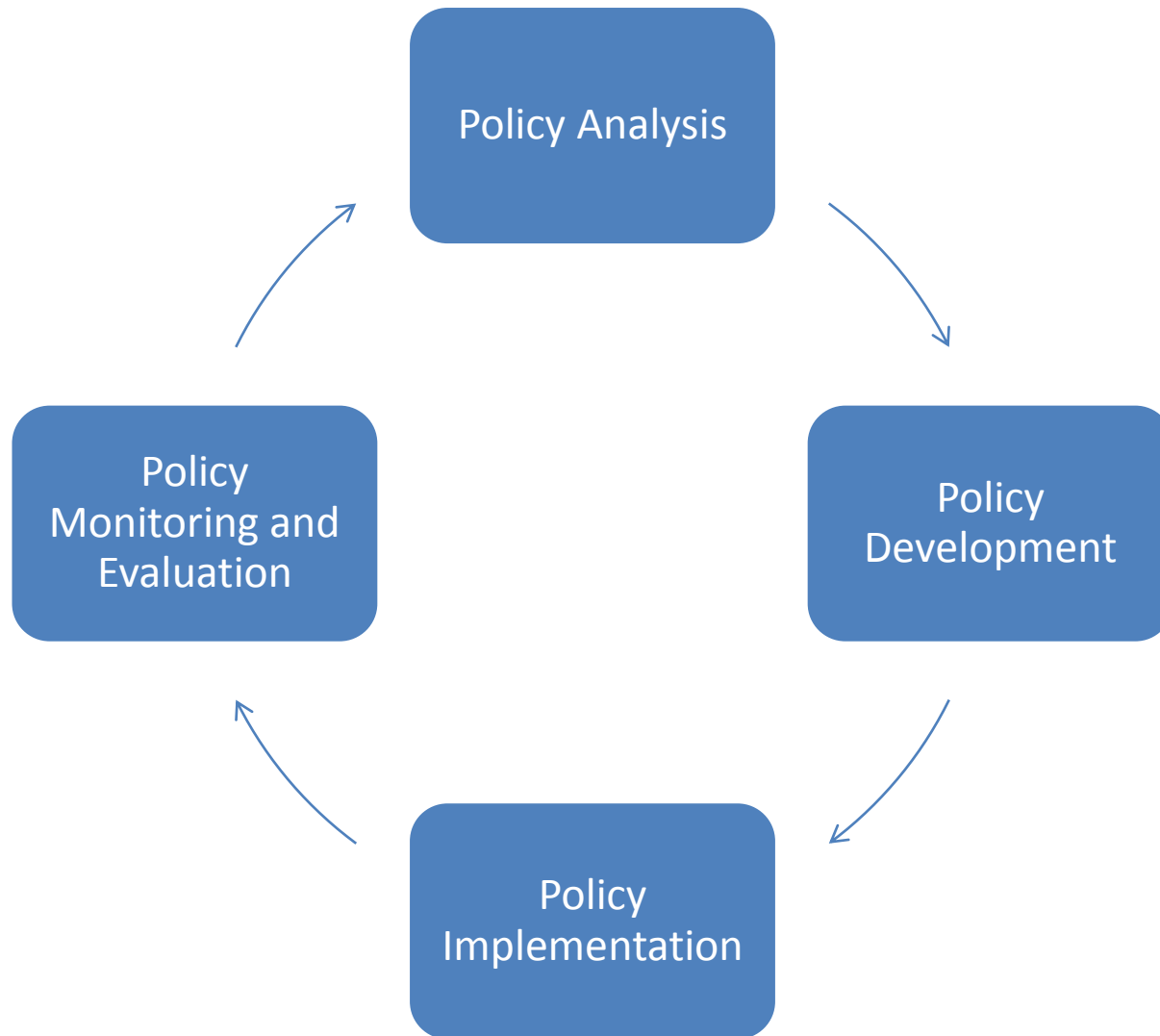
Thimphu, Bhutan

May 27 – April 6 2013

Organized by: Asia-Pacific Forest Policy Think Tank



The policy process diagram



The Eightfold Path of Policy Analysis (Eugene Bardach)

- 1. Define the problem**
- 2. Assemble evidence**
- 3. Develop alternatives**
- 4. Select criteria**
- 5. Anticipate outcomes**
- 6. Confront trade-offs**
- 7. Select “best option”**
- 8. Tell the story**

1) Define the problem

- Get beyond the rhetoric / think outside the box
- Don't define the solution into the problem
- Quantify as much as possible
- Be careful about tackling too many problems in one policy
- Identify key stakeholders
- Important to understand underlying causes
- Discuss definition with colleagues/stakeholders and build consensus

ACTIVITY

(10 minutes):

- Think about the forest issue you talked about last night.
- Briefly define and write down the main problem in one or two sentence (s). If the problem is complex, write up to three main problems (s).

(15 minutes):

- Break up in groups headed by CTS, Pat, Sim and discuss
 - Is the way the problem defined the true problem?
 - Was the way the problem defined fall into any of the traps described?
 - Are there other ways the problem could be defined?

2) Assemble evidence

- **Start Early**
- **Cost Benefit Analysis on collecting evidence**
- **Ensure that you check existing literature/best practices**
- **Keep those opposing your work in mind**
- **This step is political as well as analytical**

ACTIVITY

Time: 3 minutes

Thinking about the issue, write down:

- (1) A research topic that can be undertaken to help you better understand the problem; and
- (2) A major stakeholder or organization that should be consulted
- (3) Another country that may have dealt/is dealing with the same problem
- (4) Another sector which you may learn from to develop innovative alternatives to the problem

3) Develop Alternatives

- Start comprehensive, end up focused
- Always try to come up with inventive solutions, not just the current prevailing preferred political options
- Consult with others

4) Select criteria for evaluating alternatives

- **Efficiency**
- **Equitability, fairness**
- **Political and social feasibility**
- **Legality**
- **Robustness and improvability**

5) Anticipate the outcomes

- **Attach quantifiable estimates**
- **Break even estimates**
- **Develop scenarios**
- **Put yourself in the other person's shoes**
- **Think about the potential undesirable and unintended side effects**

6) Confront trade offs

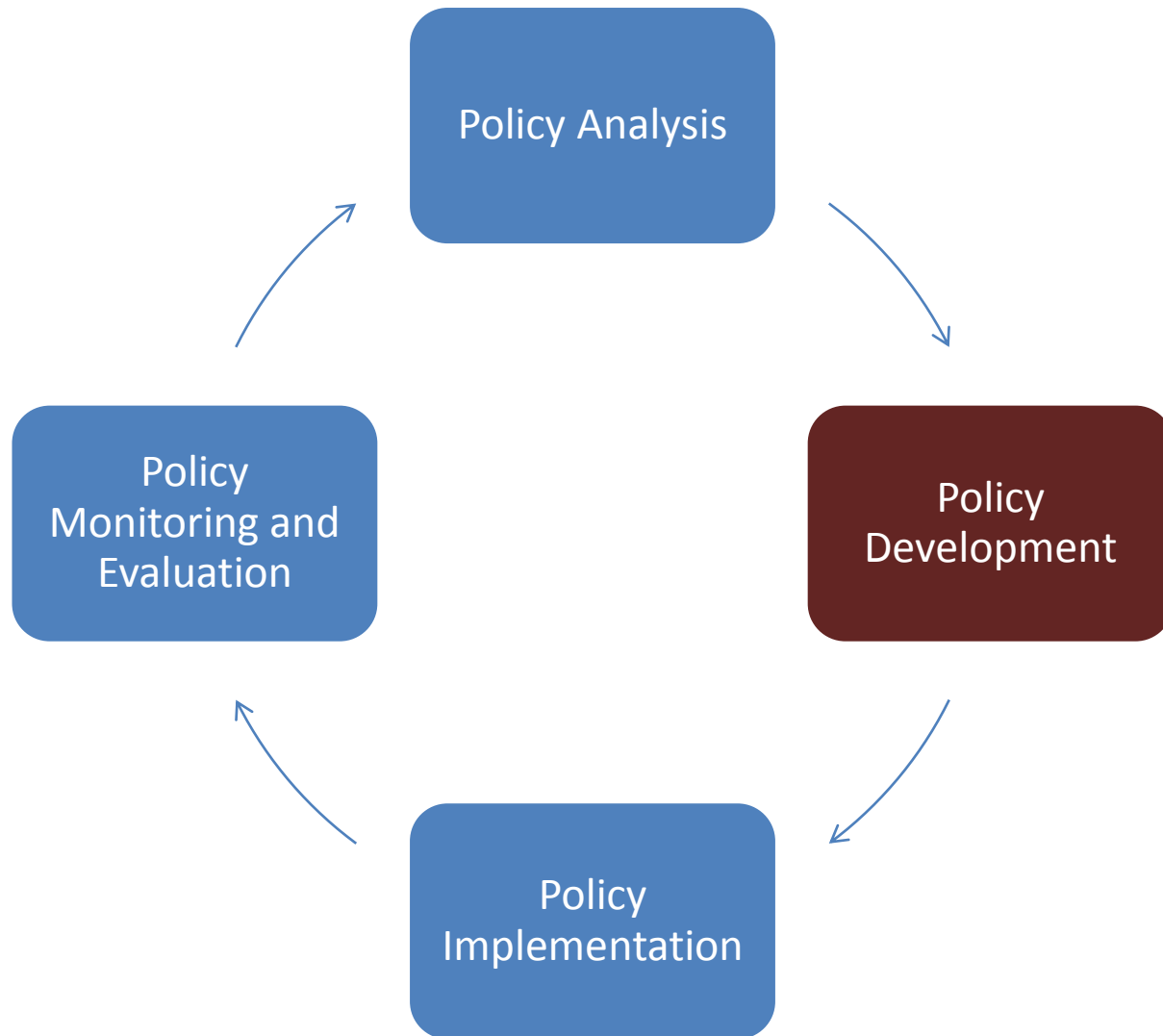
- **Eliminate weaker alternatives**
- **Compare to base case, such as doing nothing to solve the identified problem**

7) Select the best options

- **Select potential alternatives and apply the “Twenty-dollar-bill test”**

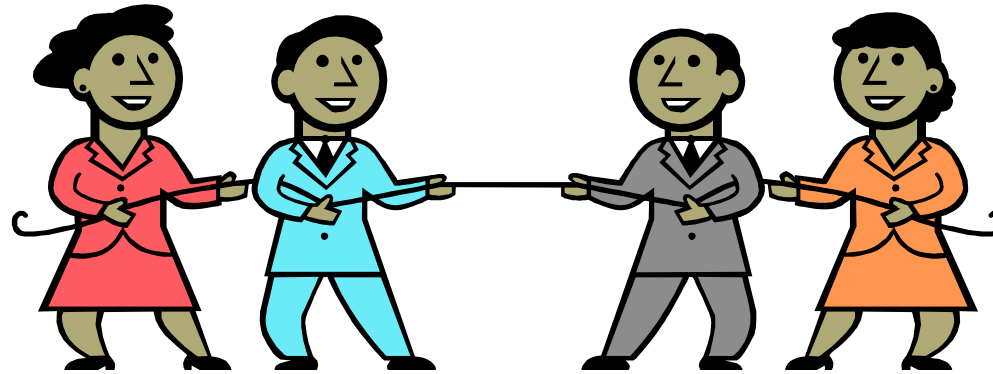
8) Tell your story

- Use simple language and share with others
- Identify the likely audience (For whom is the story?)
- Consider the medium (the shorter the better)
- Follow a logical narrative flow
- Provide executive summary (for long reports), lots of tables and graphics, references and sources
- Make limitations clear



There are two main steps in the **policy development phase**:

- 1) Alternative policy proposals are put forth.
- 2) The policy prescription is chosen, including selection of appropriate policy instruments, ideally through a consensus building process in consultation with major stakeholders.



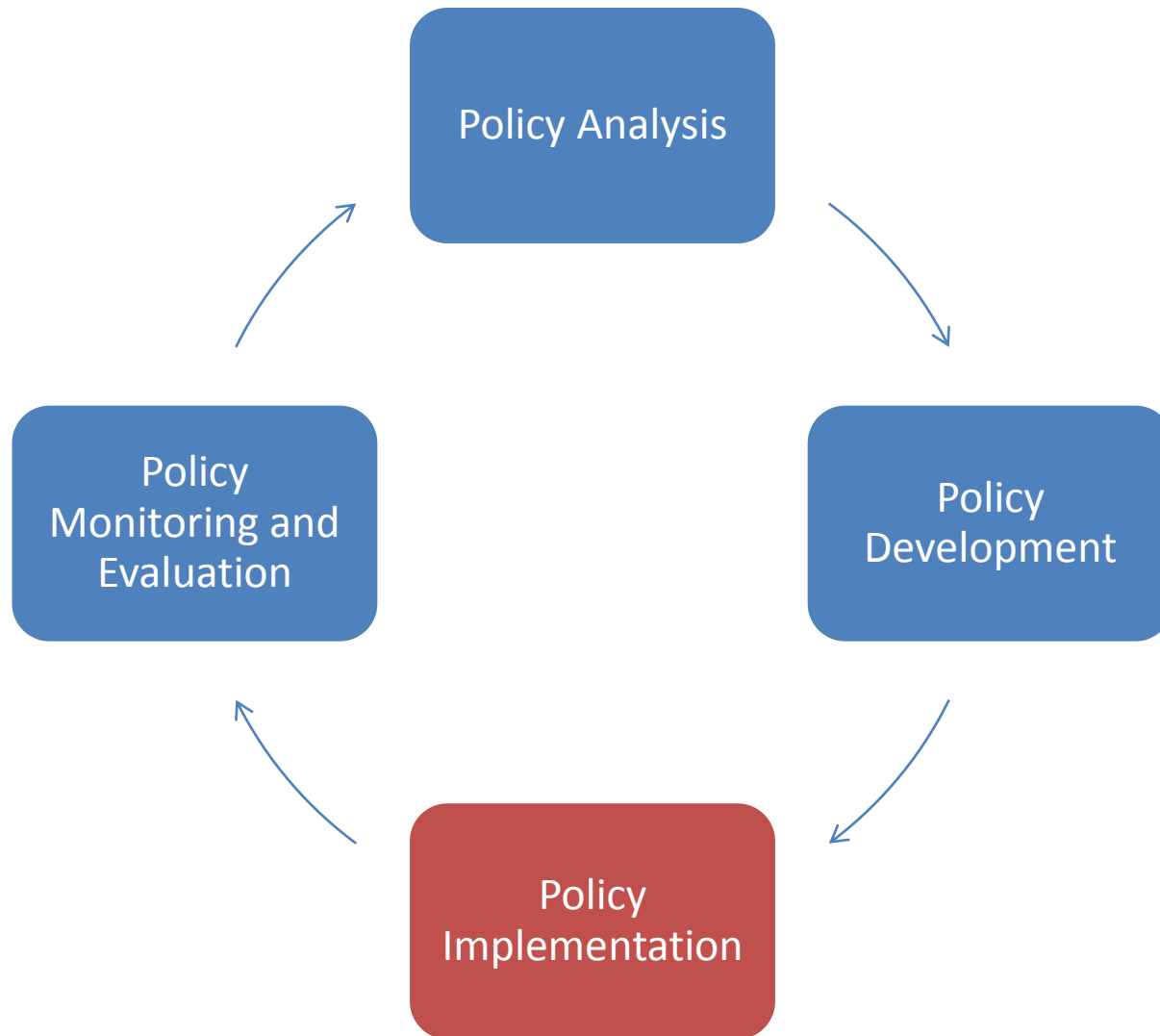
NEGOTIATION and DECISION MAKING = Publicly shared vision

QUESTION: What are some values or principles that lead to effective policy development?

Some values/ principles that lead to effective policy development

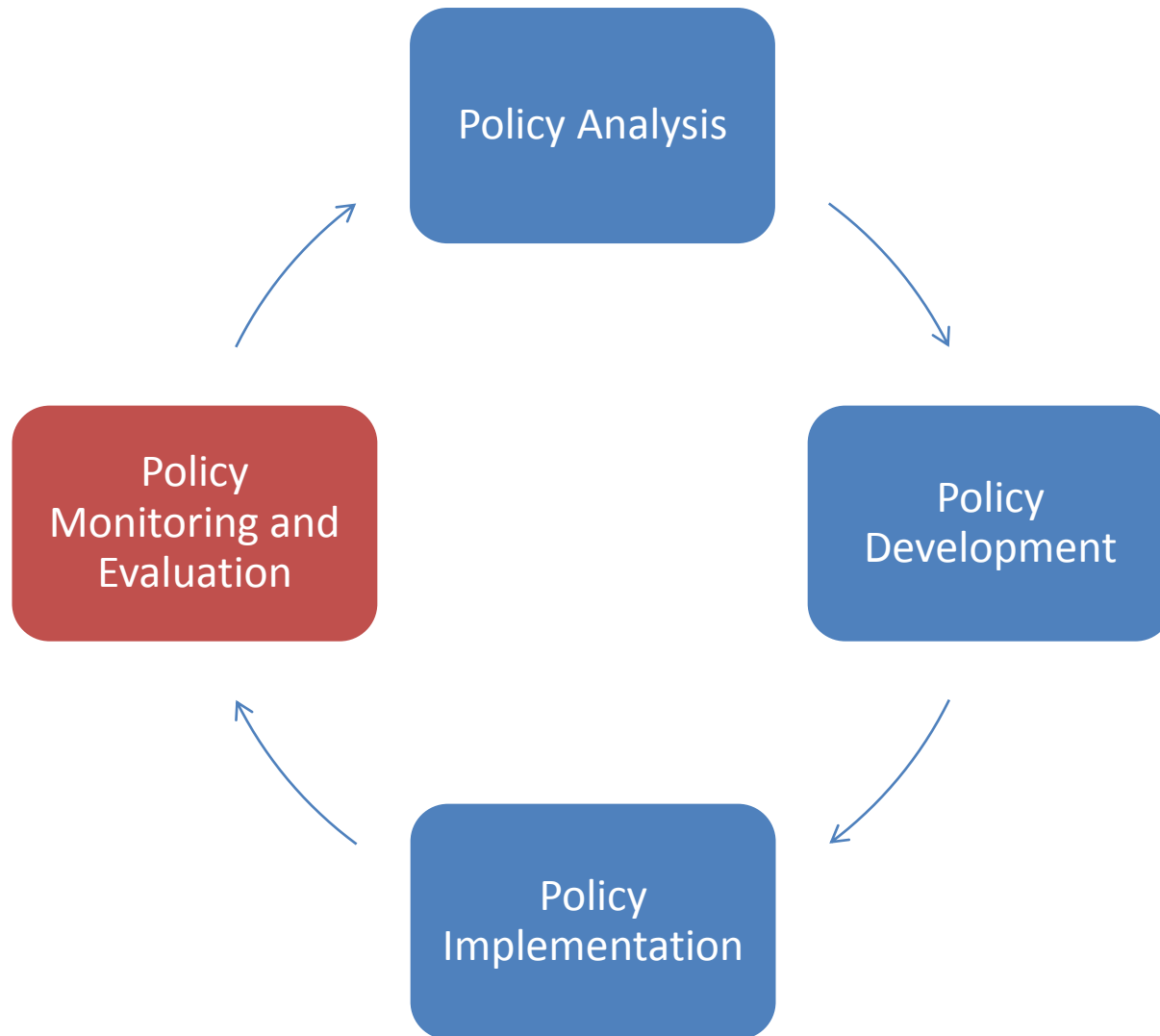
- **Firm political commitment at different levels**
- **Transparency of decision making process and the roles and responsibilities of its advocates**
- **Creating space for true multi-stakeholder engagement**
- **Recognition of customary laws and traditional rights and knowledge**
- **Searches for opportunities for policy reform that will improve other pressing international and government goals, in particular contributing to economic development**

- **Assesses the structure of existing incentives and the factors that may reduce a policy's effectiveness - takes into consideration broader economic, political, governance and social conditions**
- **Carefully appraises the potential effects of policy change on different stakeholders, both public and private, and considers ways to minimize the losses or negative impacts to particular parties**
- **Anticipates how the policy may give rise to new incentives and new behaviors**



Implementing Policies

- **Prepare strategies (including financial strategies) and action plans**
- **Develop financial plan**
- **Strengthen capacities**
- **Develop monitoring and evaluation system**
- **Set up a coordination and participation mechanism**
- **Develop communication strategy and raise awareness**



Policy monitoring refers to the process of detecting how the policy is doing.

Policy evaluation refers to the process of assessing the entire policy process and its impact.

***Impact* can be assessed by mitigation of the main problem and the achievement of objectives identified in analysis and development phases.**

Main Actions taken in the M&E Phase

- 1) Selecting the elements to be M&E and define C&I
 - o What is the information we need (based on what criteria)?
 - o How can we measure those issues (indicators)?

Quantitative, Qualitative, Geographical, and Timeframe

- 2) Data collection and measurement
- 3) Document and analyze the lessons learned (Evaluation)
- 4) Communication of the information

- **Data can be obtained through the use of a range of tools (cost benefit analysis, GIS, participatory evaluations).**
- **The data must be stored in sufficiently developed information systems which is used as the basis to assess trends and efficiency of the forest policy implementation**
- **Data needs to be collected in a systematic and transparent manner**
- **Engagement of stakeholders/communities critical**

- **Theory Failure vs. Implementation Failure**
- **Key to being able to do adaptive planning and management**

Theoretical Model:

Understanding the policy issue or problem

- ➔ Exploring possible options for resolving the problem
- ➔ Weighing up the costs and benefits of each; and then,
- ➔ Making a rational choice about the best option.

In reality:

- Policy-making is often non-linear.
- It is incremental and complex.
- Political & bureaucratic context are key factors.