

Governmental Initiatives for Environmental Policy Integration:

A Further Specification of Benchmarks and Normative Standards

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Two major approaches to sustainable development:

- ▶ Within the discourse initiated by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED: The Brundtland Commission, 1983-1987), and carried through politically by the UN, EU, OECD, etc.

The Political Discourse

- ▶ Within the discourse initiated by (mainly) critical academics at the launch of the Brundtland Report (1987).

The Academic Discourse

There is considerable overlap between the two discourses – but also considerable conflict between the two as to:

- the desirability and legitimacy of the political discourse
- the “correctness” of the Brundtland understanding of SD inherent in the political discourse.

While the political discourse seeks consensus and practical results within a *context of governance* – the academic discourse pursues consensus and change within a *context of academic science*

Introduction to the EPI problematic:

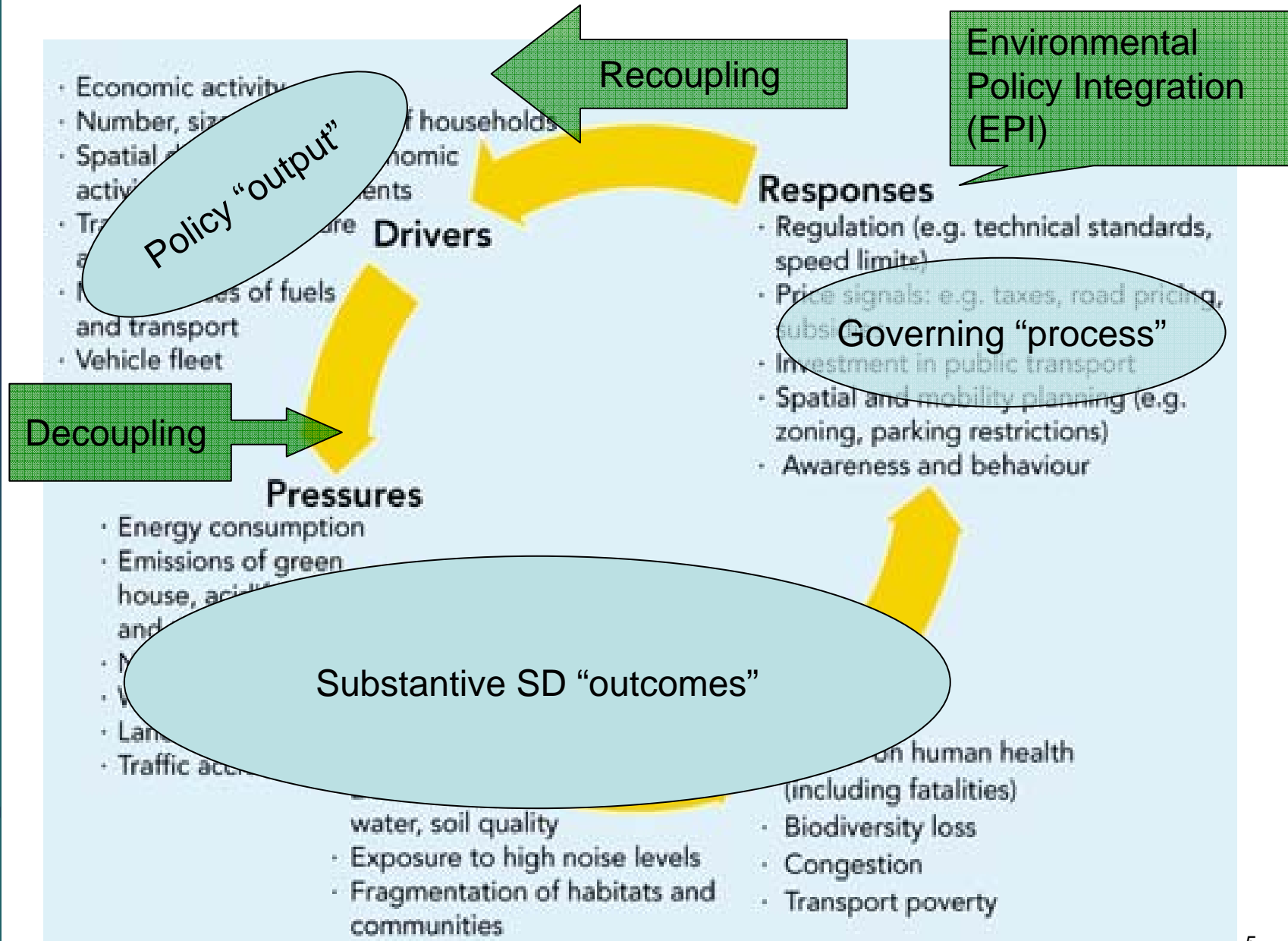
- “Decoupling” is an essential task for achieving sustainable development in high-consumption societies (A top priority of the UN, EU, and OECD).
- Environmental Policy Integration (EPI) is a crucial instrument for achieving decoupling – with a **strong** legal-political mandate
- EPI has both instrumental implications within the “political discourse” (“governance for sustainable development”); and scientific implications within the “academic discourse” (EPI as a topic for policy analysis and implementation theory).
- Within the political discourse of SD, EPI must be clarified as to both its normative and operational characteristics – **with the former anchoring guidelines for the latter**
- Within the academic discourse of SD, EPI can be analyzed as to the conditioning factors (variables) influencing the functionality and substantive quality of its outputs and outcomes

EPI research to date:

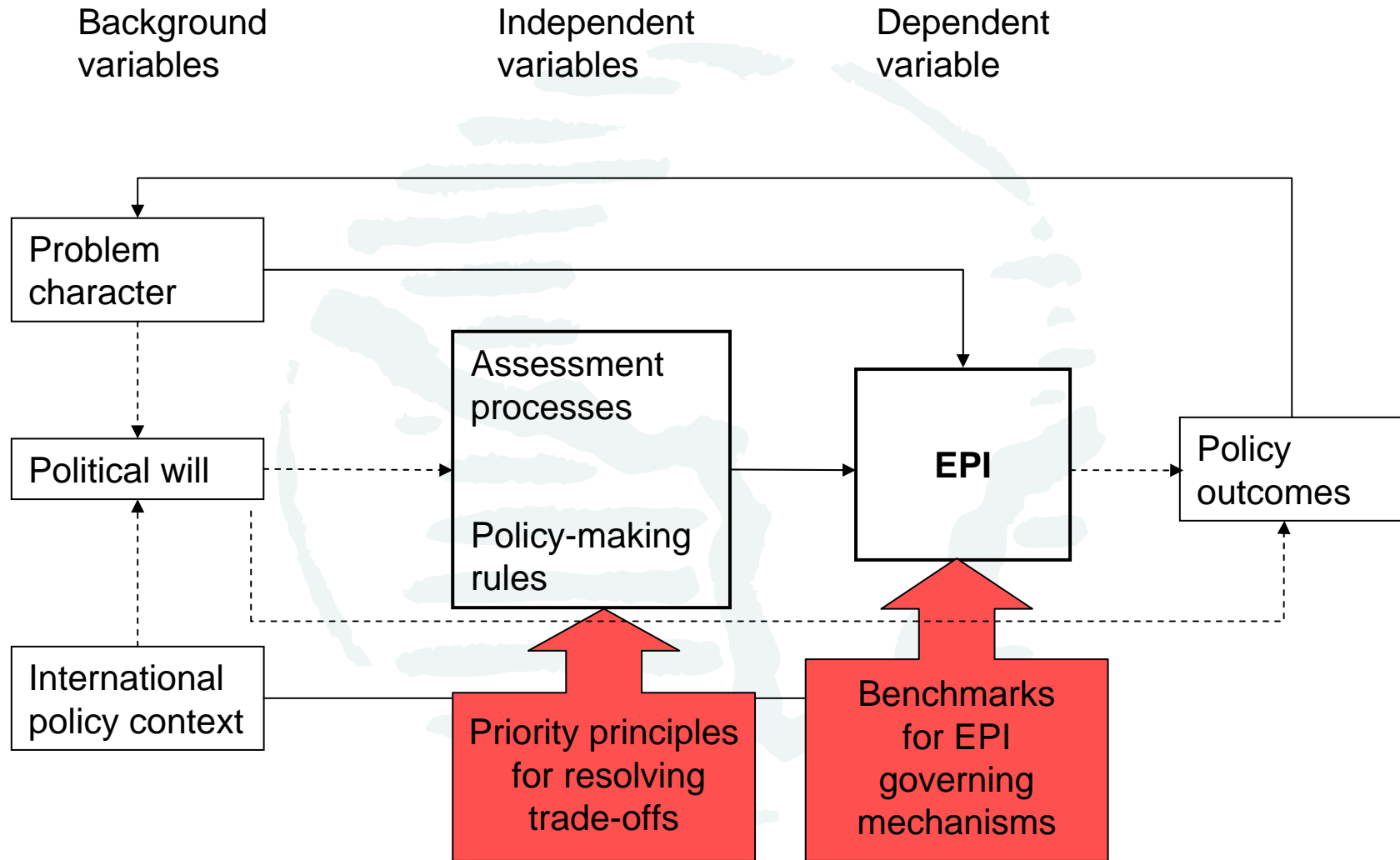
- Environmental Policy Integration involves:
 - a ***governing process***;
 - designed to produce ***integrated policy outputs***;
 - which aim to achieve ***discernable SD outcomes***.

- Considerable progress on the understanding of EPI has been made within both the political and academic discourses:
 - Lenschow (et al.) (2002); basic text
 - Lafferty (2001; 2004); Lafferty and Hovden (2003); Nilsson and Persson (2003); normative-conceptual analysis
 - Jordan (2002; 2004); in-depth empirical analysis
 - Persson (2004); conceptual-analytic “state of the art”
 - European Environmental Agency (2004); strategic “state of the art”

EPI as governing mechanism for decoupling: DPSIR model



The analytical model of EPI: Nilsson and Persson (2003)

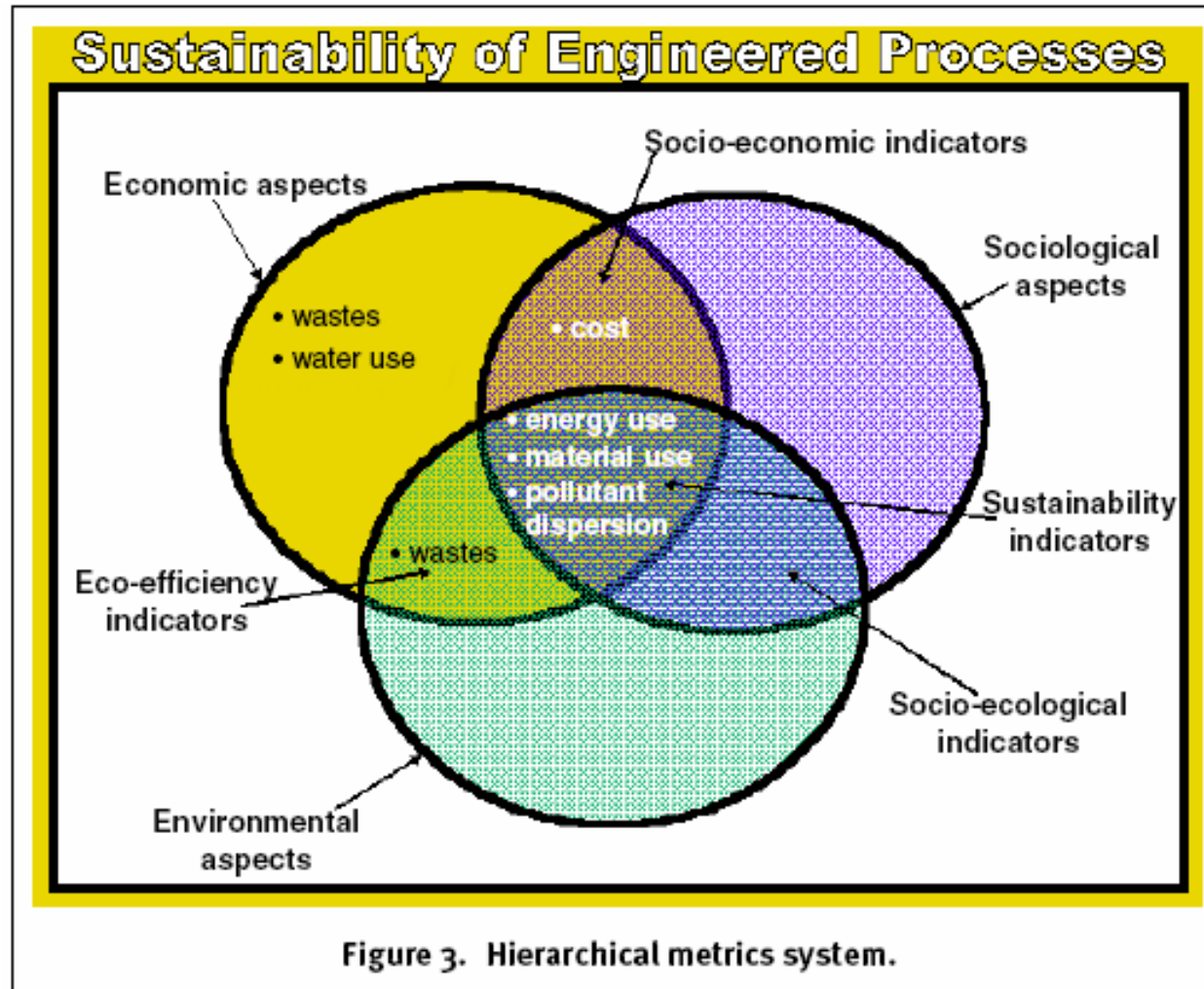


**Two key features of the political-strategic discourse:
The ProSus Approach**

Institutional/procedural benchmarks for vertical policy integration (VEPI): The responsibility of ministries	<u>Evaluation: Norway</u> 0 1 2 3 4
Scoping reports of sectorial activity identifying major environmental impacts associated with key actors and processes	3
Sectoral forums for dialogue and consultation with relevant stakeholders and affected citizens	0
Sectoral strategies for change, with basic principles, goals, targets and timetables	2
Sectoral action plans with specified tactics for achieving goals with target-group related policy instruments	2
Green budgets for highlighting, prioritizing and implementing action plans	1
Monitoring programs for evaluating implementation and revising strategies and action plans	0

Institutional/procedural benchmarks for horizontal policy integration (HEPI): The responsibility of governments	<u>Status Norway</u> 0 1 2 3 4
A “constitutive” mandate providing provisions for the special status of environmental/sustainable-development rights and goals.	4
An over-arching strategy for the sectoral domain, with clearly enunciated goals and operational principles, and a political mandate with direct backing from the chief executive authority.	3
A national action plan with both over-arching and sectoral targets, indicators and time-tables.	2
A responsible executive body with designated responsibility (and powers) for the overall coordination, implementation and supervision of the integration process.	2
A communications plan stipulating sectoral responsibility for achieving overarching goals, and outlining how intra-sectoral communications are to be structured and made transparent.	1
An independent auditor with responsibility for monitoring and assessing implementation at both governmental and sectoral levels, and for proposing revisions in subsequent generations of strategies and action plans	0
A board of petition and redress for resolving conflicts of interest between environmental and other societal objectives, interests and actors	0

II. Promoting SD “outcomes”: The issue of trade-offs and priorities



Source: Sidkar, S.J. “Sustainable development and sustainability metrics”, *Perspective*, AICHE Journal, Vol. 49, No. 8: 1932

Guidelines for EPI as:

- a “first-order operational principle” (Lenschow 2002);
- designed to achieve legal “normative closure” (Nollkaemper 2002);
- as a governing mechanism for sustainable development:

SD policy integration implies a trade-off between:

1. Principles and criteria for policies designed to: (A) satisfy the “essential needs” of “the world’s poor” – South and North; present and future generations (**the social dimension**)
2. Principles and criteria for policies designed to: (B) achieve stable economic performance adequate to achieve (A) (**the economic dimension**)
3. Principles and criteria for achieving (A) and (B) without damaging the long-term functionality (sustainability) of natural life-support systems – locally, nationally, regionally and globally (**the environmental/ecological dimension**).

Governed by a “regulatory principle”:

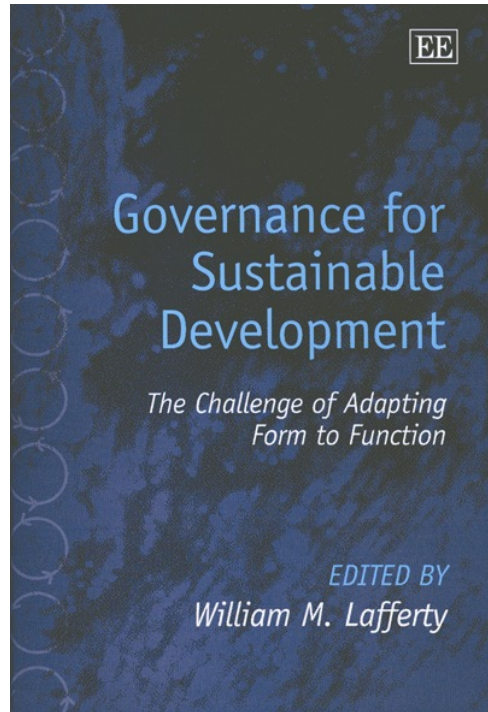
The principles and criteria of (3) constitute a “proviso” (“sustainability”), for making judicious decisions on (1) and (2) (“development”)*

* Lafferty and Langhelle (1997), *Towards Sustainable Development*. Macmillan

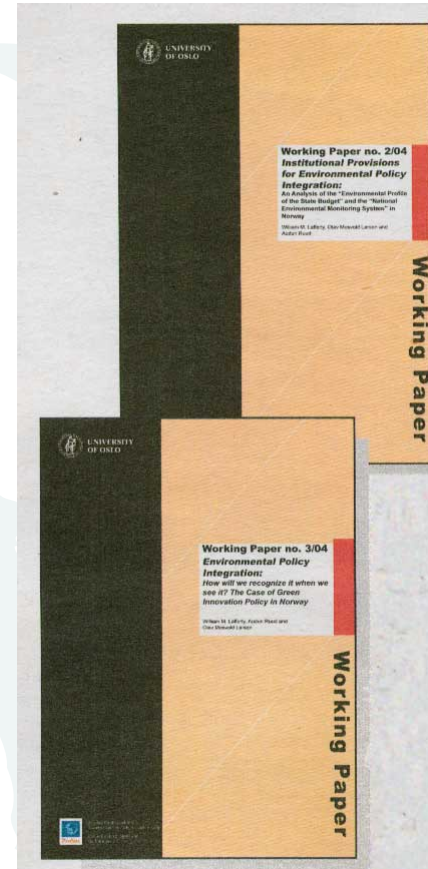
Application of EPI as “regulatory principle” implies **an alternative** “**canon for practical judgement**” for resolving SD trade-offs:

- Strengthen the ecological premises for sustainable development as constitutional-legal priority
- Clarify and apply a scientific understanding of tolerance levels for “natural life-support systems”
- Clarify and apply a normative-analytic understanding of reasonable standards for “essential needs”
- Develop lexicographic rules/procedures for applying the “regulatory principle”: determine the meta-rules for “trump”
- Provide specific safeguards against irreversible damage to life-support systems through the “precautionary principle”
- Acknowledge and institutionalize external “judicial review” of the application of the “canon”

For greater detail on the approach:



Edward Elgar 2004: www.e-elgar.co.uk



Panel sessions:
3C and 4A

The "uncut" version of today's presentation:
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