

Project: Policy integration across the forestry and water policy domains in the EU

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Overview of the dissertation approach

The current project envisages three to four studies, one focused at a different governance level and focusing always on the concept of policy integration between the forest and water policy sectors taking a comparative approach.

- A previous exploration study will survey the concept of policy integration and how it has been operationalized in the literature. A proposed definition will be proposed.
- The first study consists of a comparative analysis of water-forest integration policies per EU Member State and using Quantitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to understand which factors mediate the choice of a given type of policy integration (or non-integration) between both two policy sectors.
- The second study continues with a comparative approach following the trajectories of different regions from the European Union towards cross-sectoral policy-making across the water and forest sectors, with a focus on the degree of conflict and cooperation between the proponents and opponents of greater integration of these policy subsystems. Case selection will be made upon similar contextual conditions on the ecological dimension, but different outcome (i.e. different policy integration).
- The third study has the focus at the local level. The selected case study is that of the locality of Kleine Kinzig in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, in which the factors that prompted the establishment of a policy which integrates the water and forest sectors will be analysed. Although primarily this third study only foresees to focus on the mentioned case in BWU, a comparative perspective could be added if a suitable case is identified from Catalonia, to maintain consistency across the previous studies. This study will use the method of Agent-based modelling to understand the linkages between the social and the ecological dimension of the case of policy integration.

The main research questions which are grounding the project are the following:

- How can policy integration be defined and operationalized.
- Which policies between the water and forest sectors are present at different governance levels? How can these policies be categorized in terms of diverse types of policy integration? Does any link exist between type of integration and different configuration of elements of the policy subsystem (context, actors, etc.)?
- Did the implementation of the WFD triggered policy integration? Which other triggers played a role on the type of policy integration between the water and forest sectors?
- Who are the advocates of cross-sectoral policy making between water and forest, and who is opposing it? What are the conflicts and which are the cooperation opportunities? Which conflicts were salient and how did they affect the capacity for cross-sectoral policy making? Which role is playing the scientific community?
- How does cross-sectoral policy-making across the water and forest sectors change across governance levels? How do the conflicts and cooperation opportunities between stakeholder change, also across governance levels?