

# **Characteristics of Good Public Policy and Policy-Making**

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# Outline

- What is policy? and what is policy-making?
- Nature of science policy and policy for science
- Loci of biotechnology and biosafety policy-making
- Key features of good policy-making

# What is policy?

- Public policy as a course of action(s); it is what a government decides to do or what NOT to do. Decisions on action and/or inaction are often articulated through executive statements or decrees, policy papers, written plans, administrative orders, etc

# What is policy-making?

- Policy-making is the process of setting the agenda, structuring a specific problem and adopting specific actions (incl inactions) to solve the/a problem
- Often not formal and technical but political

# Nature of science policy and policy for science

- Increasingly knowledge-intensive and multidisciplinary
- Growing complexity—many actors with many vested interests, many issues around any key policy issue
- Uncertainty—scanty information to better structure policy problems and articulate options

# Loci of policy-making

- Diffused and spread across the institutional terrain
- Under constant change
- Often in competition for authority, autonomy, public resources, and even public recognition
- Under constant influence of different stakeholders (think tanks, companies, civil society, and others)

# Features of good policy-making and good policy

- Policy-making as process or processes not isolated event. Policy as narratives.
- Knowledge-based (scientific evidence)
- Executive and political leadership
- Incremental or gradual (as opposed radical) approach, evolutionary based on learning
- Participatory, inclusive and local ownership
- Open, transparent and democratic

# Features of good policy-making and good policy

- Non-linear not step-by-step approach from consultancy-workshop- preparation of cabinet memos-parliament
- Good policy regime—Intra-policy coherence and extra-regime coherence
- Good policy regime—must be consistent with the Supreme Law (Constitution) of the country or State and international agreements



# Good policy

- Implementable using current or existing capacities (skills, institutions, infrastructure and finances)
- Time-based and should possess inbuilt mechanisms for self-termination or renewal