

Effective governance for Sustainability: Beyond the polycrisis lies complexity

Introduction at the SF Webinar
on SDGs 15 and 16
29 June 2023

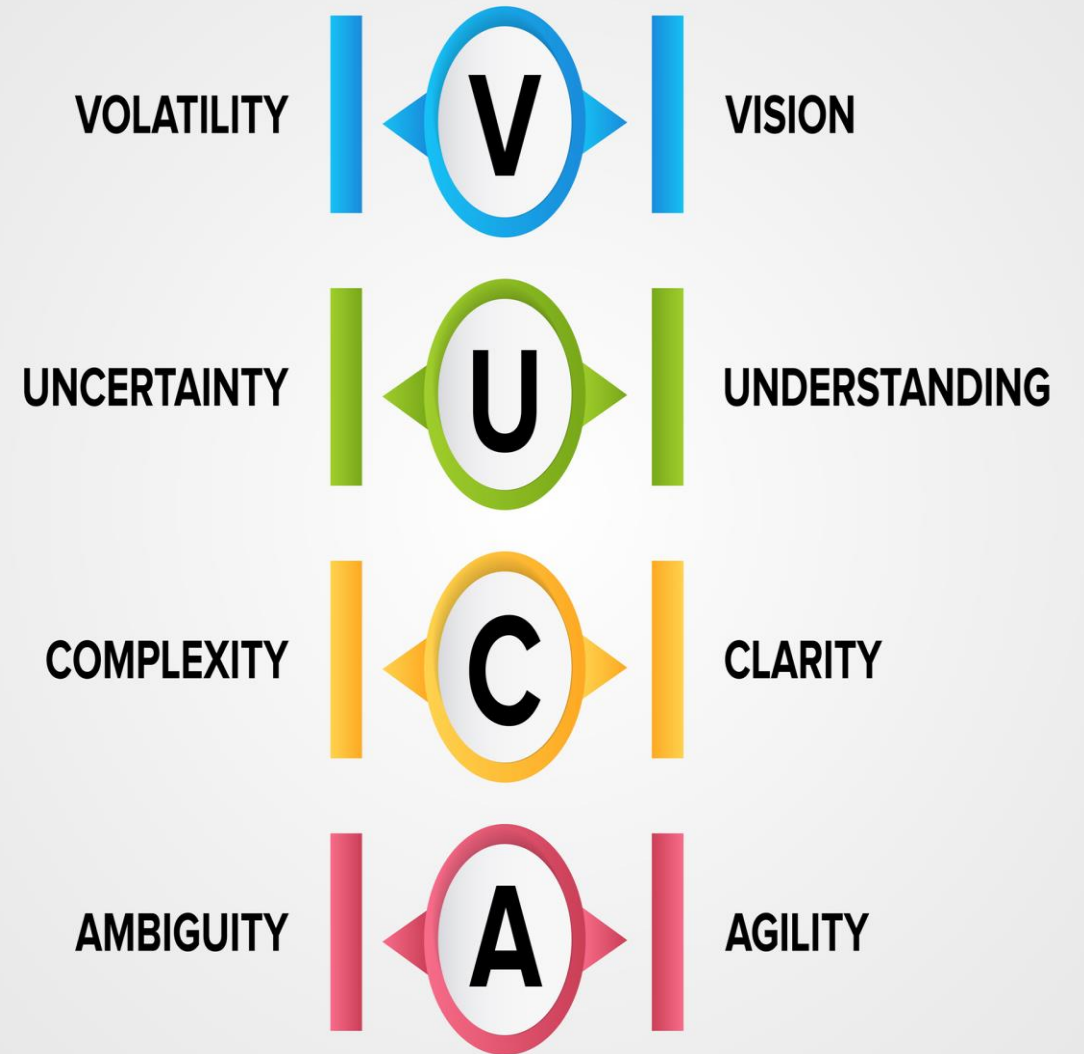
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Stakeholder Forum
FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



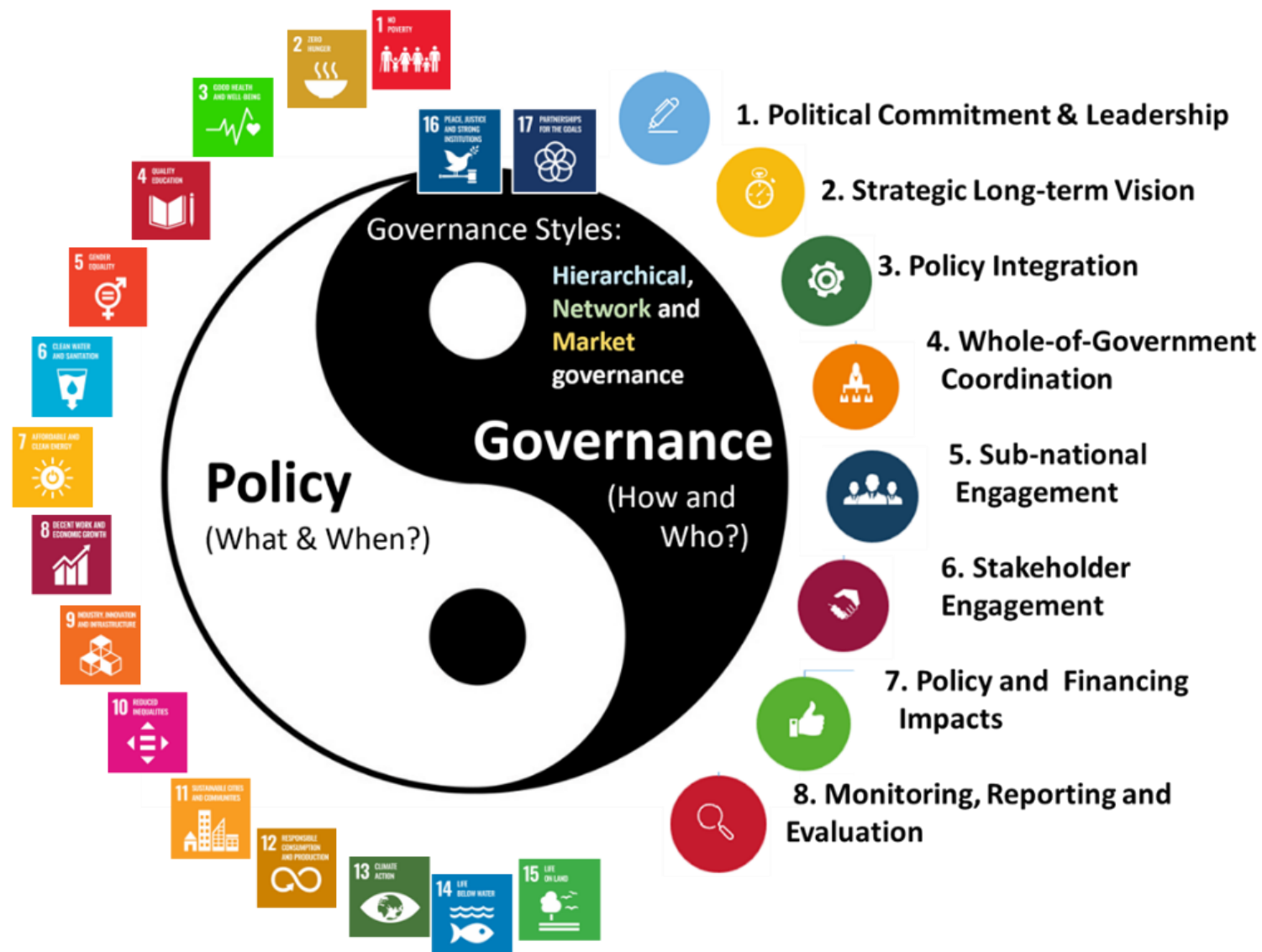




The 2030 Agenda

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (SDG 17.14)

- **Sound policy** and **effective governance** need each other
- **Policy** gives the direction but to get things done, “ultimately, it’s all about **governance**”

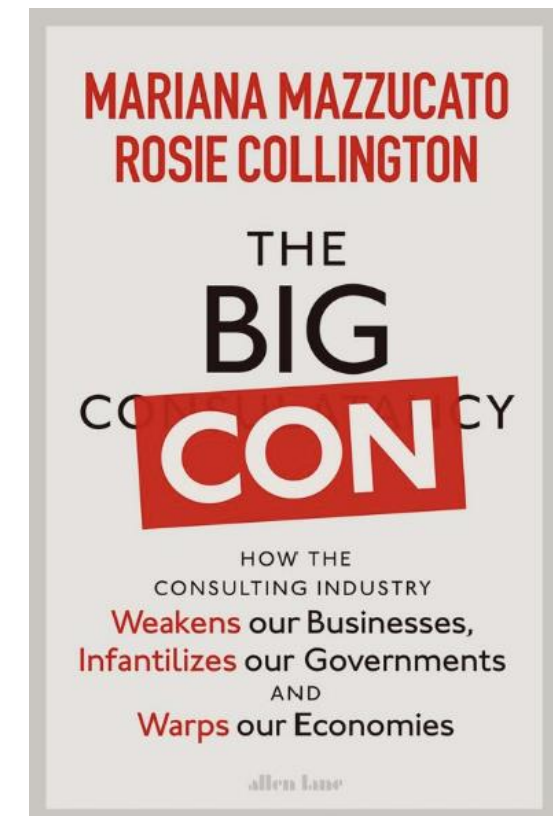




1. Public Administration & Governance (PAG), Public-sector Workforce, and Digital government need a political, financial and intellectual boost

Mazzucato is right:

- The public sector has been neglected and undermined for decades and has lost much of its responsiveness and expertise
- Consultancies have hollowed out public administration and made governments dependent on them
- Governments have lost their collective intelligence and basic expertise -> *recovery through peer learning!*
- How to rely on Rule of Law if governments cannot make effective laws anymore...-> *boost inhouse expertise*

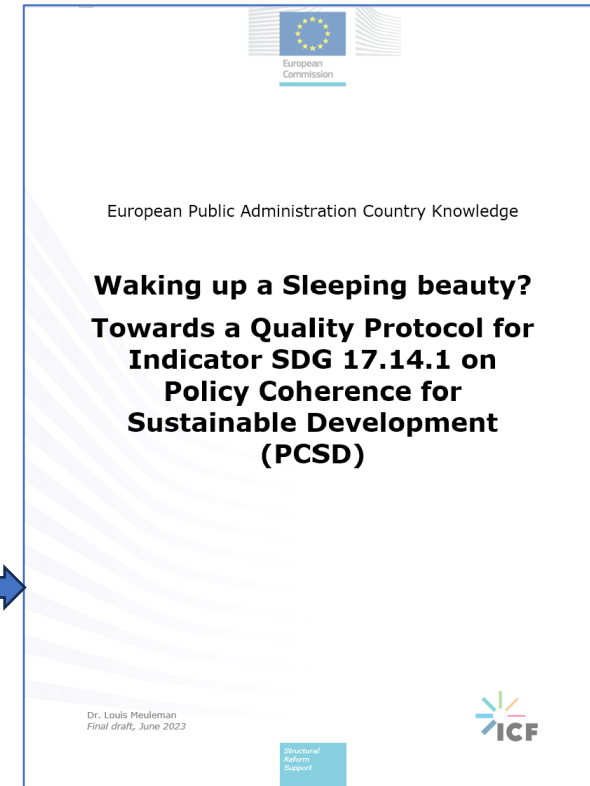




2. Public Administration & Governance remains invisible for politicians and public as long as its quality is not measured with SDG 16/17 indicators

Indicator 17.14.1 on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) is a good example:

- PCSD is a proxy for effective governance for the SDGs.
- 8 dimensions, and a self-assessment tool (by UNEP), but 3 y after reaching TIER II level, it's NOT being used.
- The self-assessment tool is unreliable, but can be trusted if a **quality protocol** is added; a concrete proposal will soon be published.
- Time is running out: at the global review of all SDG indicators (2024/25) this one is about to be abolished





3. The polycrisis drives out complexity governance because crisis management is short-term, needs legislative shortcuts and huge amounts of money, and can afford to ignore parliaments, stakeholders, and the best knowledge. In addition, it is addictive... This is a big risk for the SDGs



- Crisis management is important in current times, but many crises are also **‘wicked’, complex problems** with interest conflicts.
- Crisis management asks for a fast, top-down approach; complex problems require testing, trying, reflecting, which is a slower response.





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Public Strategy for Sustainable Development

Ultimately, it's all about governance!


[Learn more](#)

Events




EEA Seminar on Policy & Governance for sustainability transitions
MAY 2023 - The European Environment Agency organises with the EEA Scientific Committee a seminar on policy and governance for sustainability...

News




Beau Lieu Café on 4 May 2023 - Video
MAY 2023 - On 4th May, a Beau Lieu Café on "SDGs in Better Regulation for Evidence-Informed Policymaking" took place at the Residence...

Publications



Can crisis governance drive out capacity for complexity governance?
APR 2023 - The fact that much of the political focus and resources are being used for crisis management can divert attention from complex, 'wicked'...



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Thank you for your attention!

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