Advocacy Coalition Framework

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Outline

- Advocacy Coalition Framework
- Case studies

Advocacy Coalition Framework

Policy process

- **Policy process**: a process through which the public policy (or its components) is produced, terminated, or revised

- Policy process is **shaped by**:

  1. interactions of **diverse actors** influenced by **institutional** structures (Ostrom 2014; Sabatier 1988)
  2. policy **discourses** and **frames** (Shanahan et al. 2011)
  - (number of more general structures and events)

- Different policy process theories tend to emphasize different dimensions of the policy process

Agency: bounded rationality

- Individuals are **goal-oriented** but have **limited** time, resources and cognitive ability to consider all information, solutions, etc. (Simon 1957, Cairney 2012)

→ they use **heuristics** to make "good enough" decisions

- Individuals rely on **beliefs** to decide to which information pay attention

→ Individuals (actors) tend to **act** according their **enduring beliefs** rather than according their short-term rational interests

Belief system

- Actors related to the world through **perceptual filters** (heuristics) based on **enduring beliefs**

- **Assimilation bias:** belief systems condition actors to accept and interpret policy-relevant information in way that supports their beliefs

Type of Belief	Resistance to Change	Entrenchment	Example
Fundamental core beliefs	Very resistant	Span multiple subsystems	Political Ideology
Policy core beliefs	Resistant	Subsystem wide	Effectiveness of policy instruments
Secondary beliefs	Most susceptible	Relate to area within a subsystem	Budgetary allocations

Source: (Weible, 2006, p. 99; Sabatier, 1988, p. 145)

Policy process and advocacy coalitions

- Policy process involves (1) **diversity of actors** and their **groups** and occurs (2) mostly at the level of a **policy subsystem –** subset of political system defined by issue area

- Actors perceive policy problems through a **system of policy beliefs** and struggle to translate their beliefs into policies

- **Advocacy coalitions** (1) share policy beliefs and (2) coordinate their efforts

- Dominant vs. minor **coalitions**
- Principal vs. auxiliary **coalition members**
- Policy **brokers**

Policy subsystem

- **Policy subsystem** is a subset of political system defined by particular issue area (Weible et al. 2016).

- # of coalitions, patterns of coalition's beliefs and coordination → three **different types of subsystems**

Table 1 – Three policy subsystem types.

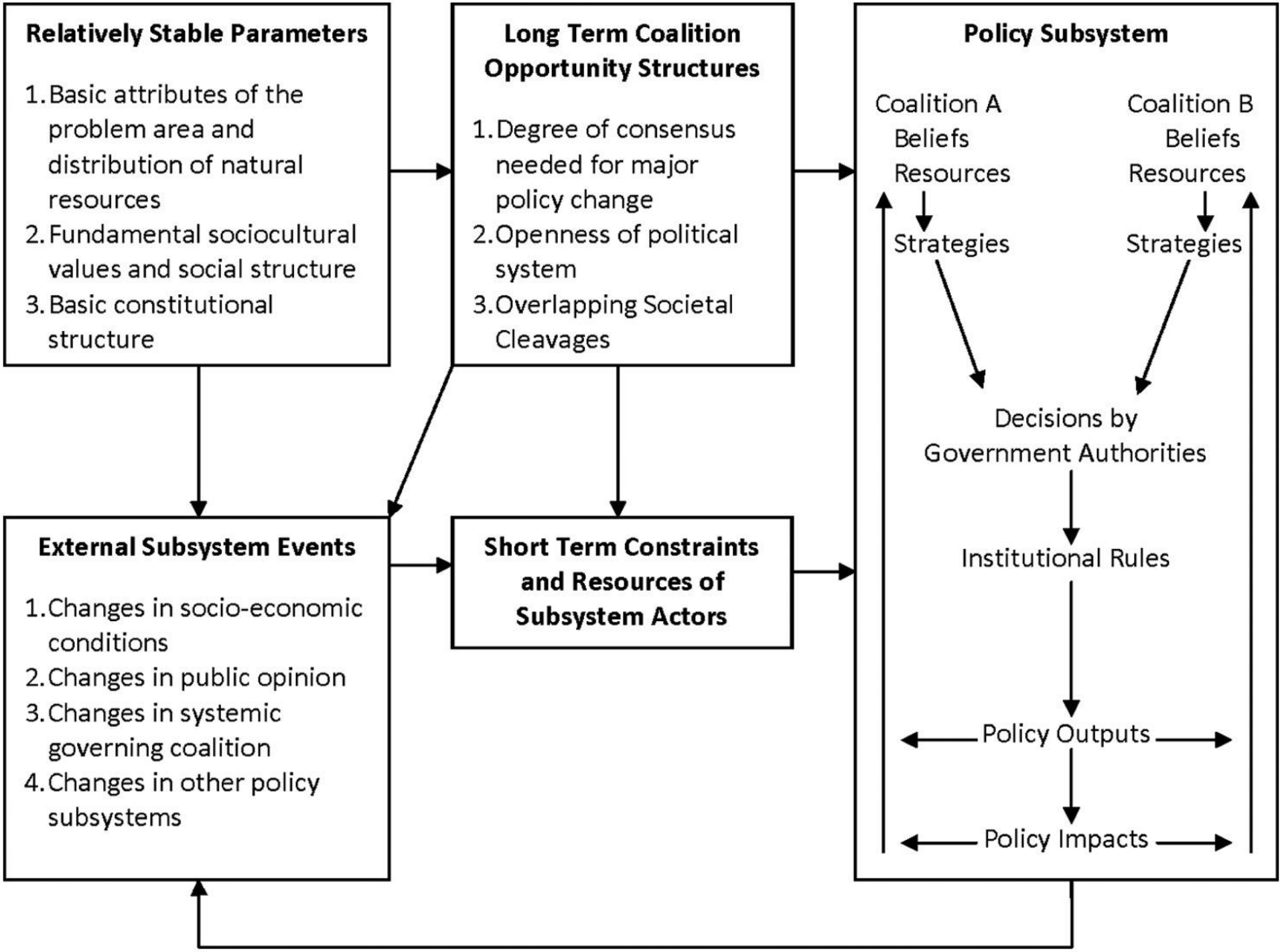
	Unitary subsystems	Collaborative subsystems	Adversarial subsystems
Coalitions	Dominant coalition with high intra-coalition belief compatibility and high intra-coalition coordination	Cooperative coalitions with intermediate inter-coalition belief compatibility and high inter and intra-coalition coordination	Competitive coalitions with low inter-coalition belief compatibility and high intra-coalition and low inter-coalition coordination
Degree of Centralization and Independence	Authority is centralized and interdependence with other subsystems ignored	Authority is decentralized, fragmented across policy subsystems, or both. Coalitions share access to authority.	Authority is centralized but fragmented within the policy subsystem, fragmented across policy subsystems, or both. Coalitions compete for access to authority
Venues	Coalition influences decisions in one or two amiable venues (legislature, agencies)	Coalitions attempt to keep decisions within inclusive, consensus-based institutions	Coalitions seek to influence decisions in any amiable venue (courts, legislatures, agencies)

Policy change

- **Major PC:** changes in the core aspects of the policies
- **Minor PC:** changes in the secondary aspects of the policies

Four **pathways** to policy change:

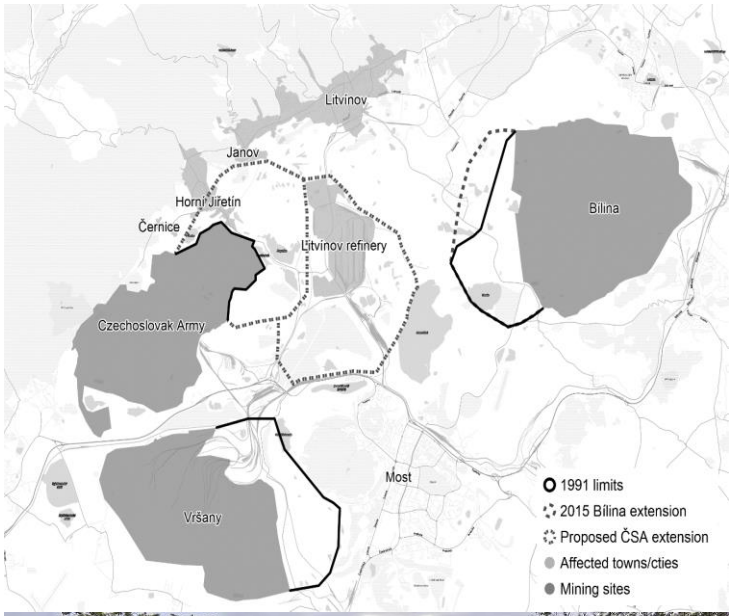
1. **External events:** changes in government, disasters, crisis, etc.
2. **Internal events:** actor collapses, corruption affairs, etc.
3. **Policy-oriented learning:** gradual change in coalition beliefs reflecting new information
4. **Negotiated agreement:** resulting from collaborative institutions or hurting stalemate


Relatively Stable Parameters
1. Basic attributes of the problem area and distribution of natural resources
2. Fundamental sociocultural values and social structure
3. Basic constitutional structure
Long Term Coalition Opportunity Structures
1. Degree of consensus needed for major policy change
2. Openness of political system
3. Overlapping Societal Cleavages
Policy Subsystem
Coalition A
Beliefs
Resources
Strategies
Coalition B
Beliefs
Resources
Strategies
Decisions by Government Authorities
Institutional Rules
Policy Outputs
Policy Impacts
External Subsystem Events
1. Changes in socio-economic conditions
2. Changes in public opinion
3. Changes in systemic governing coalition
4. Changes in other policy subsystems
Short Term Constraints and Resources of Subsystem Actors

Advocacy Coalition Framework: A Case of Czech Coal Policy

Case study: Czech coal policy

- brown coal production accounts for 46% of TPES and 51% of electricity mix
- it is concentrated in the Sokolov Basin and the **North Bohemian Basin**
- the **territorial mining limits** has been established by **government decree** in 1991



stakes:

- a lifting of “the limits” became a key issue in energy policy since then
- **transition pathway** to decarbonized economy very much depends on the future of coal

Adversarial subsystem

- Defined by (1) **competing coalitions** with (2) low inter-coalition belief compatibility and (3) high intra-coalition and (4) low inter-coalition coordination (Weible et al. 2010: 524)

- Further expected: **coalitions compete for access to decision-making**

- Further expected: (some) experts are principal allies or opponents of the coalitions → **high political use of expert info by coalitions**

(Weible et al. 2018)

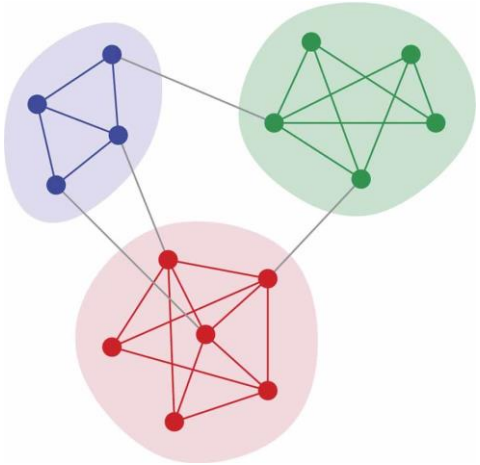
Advocacy coalition detection

1. Shared policy core beliefs

- normative assumptions on how specific **policy field** ought to be organized
- captured by 4 Likert-type scales:
- **economy:** costs/benefits of coal, regional development
- **environment:** environmental and health impacts
- **policy:** future of coal in energy mix, question of the mining limits
- **process:** trust among key actors, regulatory framework

2. Factions

- **cohesive parts of a network**
- groups of actors that are connected more among themselves than with others



Data collection

- organizational actors involved in **coal policy** subsystem

sector	**responded**	**total**	**response rate (%)**
central and regional governance	16	16	100
central and regional political parties	16	18	89
environmental non-governmental organizations	8	9	89
research organizations	14	16	88
professional associations & trade unions	3	7	43
industry	11	17	65
total	**68**	**83**	**82**

- the survey instrument (a self-administered online questionnaire) collects data on attribute variables: (1) **policy core beliefs** and (2) **network ties**

network	**tie**
political influence (PI) network	directed binary tie
expert information (EI) exchange network	directed binary tie
political cooperation (PC) network	directed binary tie

Usual suspects: Industry coalition

policy core beliefs:

- coal as a basis of economic growth
- should be part of future energy mix
- mining limits should be rescinded
- legislative framework and stakeholder engagement are adequate

- Led by **state-owned energy company** and **Ministry of Trade and Industry**
- Highly influential with **direct access to decision-making**

consists of **16** organizations:

- 2 state agencies (central)
- 1 regional agency (Ústí region)
- 2 political parties (central)
- 3 political parties (Ústí region)
- 1 research organization
- 5 companies, 2 NGOs

Usual suspects: Environmental coalition

policy core beliefs:

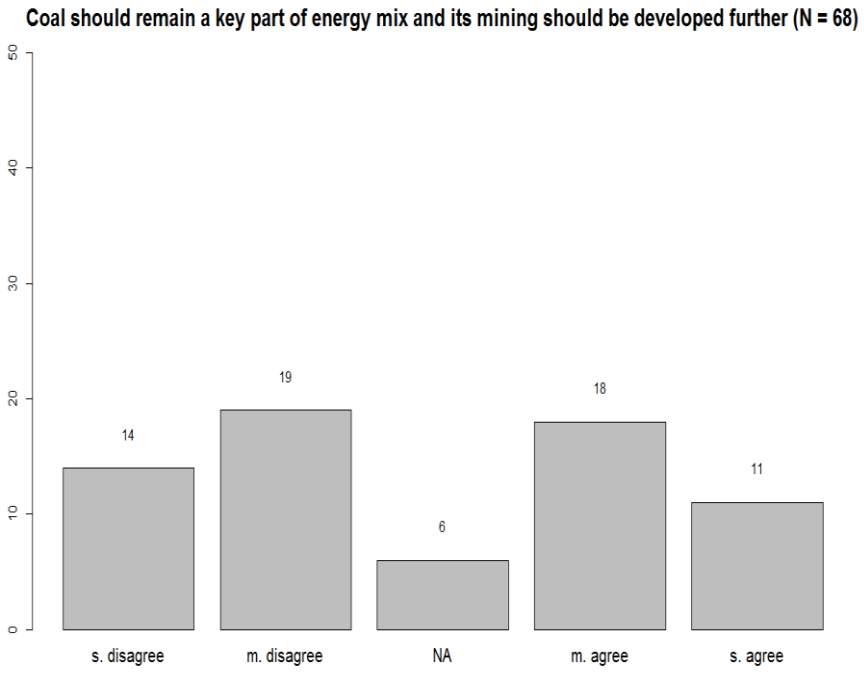
- coal mining has severe enviro impacts
- should not be base for future energy mix
- mining limits should not be rescinded
- legislative framework and stakeholder engagement are not adequate

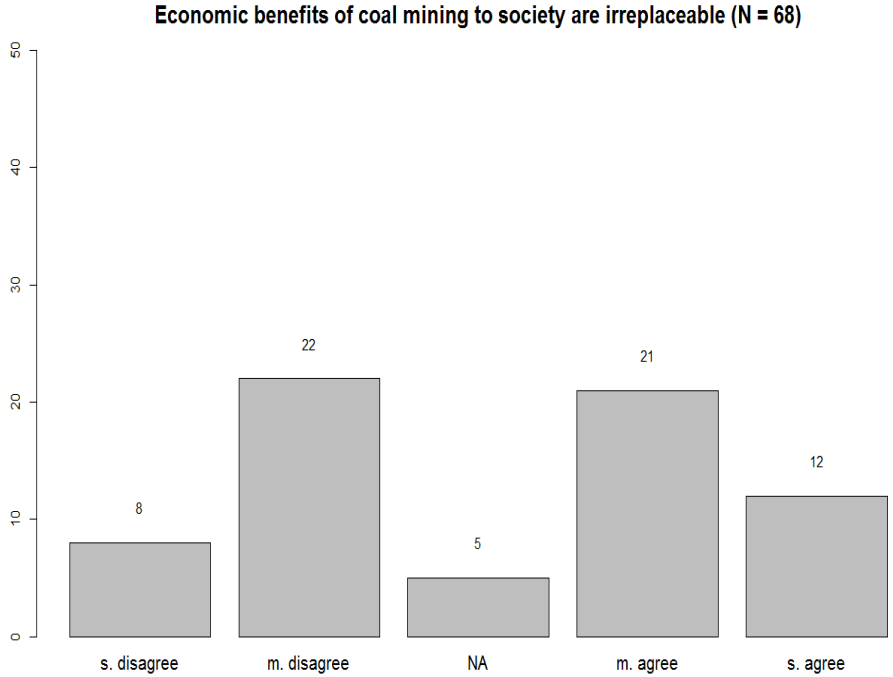
- Consists mainly of ENGOs and research organizations
- Emphasis on **relational capacity** as well as **expert knowledge**

consists of **17** organizations:

- **8 ENGOs**
- 2 state agencies (central)
- 1 political party (central)
- 6 research organizations

Polarized policy core beliefs distribution

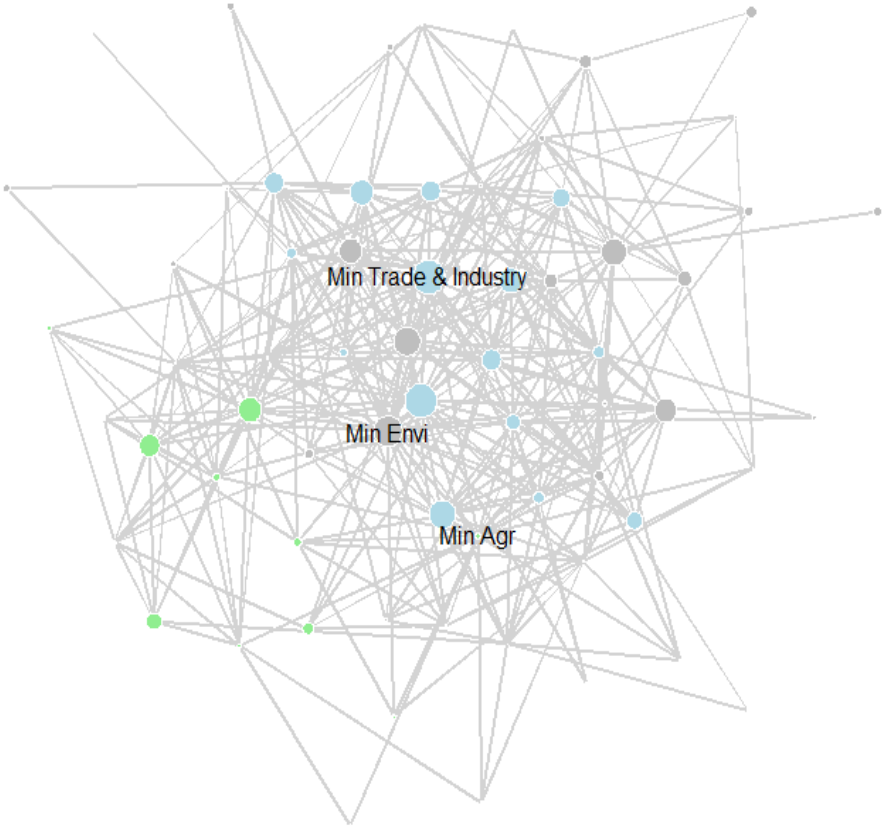




Fragmentation of the decision-makers

- Decision-making actors (DMAs): competent ministries and ruling (central and regional) political parties

- Key DMAs – three competent ministries – belong to different groups



Industry Coalition = blue
Environmental Coalition = green
residual group = grey
node size = reputational power

ACF: Coal policy in Czechia

Two competing coalitions in a fragmented political system (Ocelík et al. 2019)

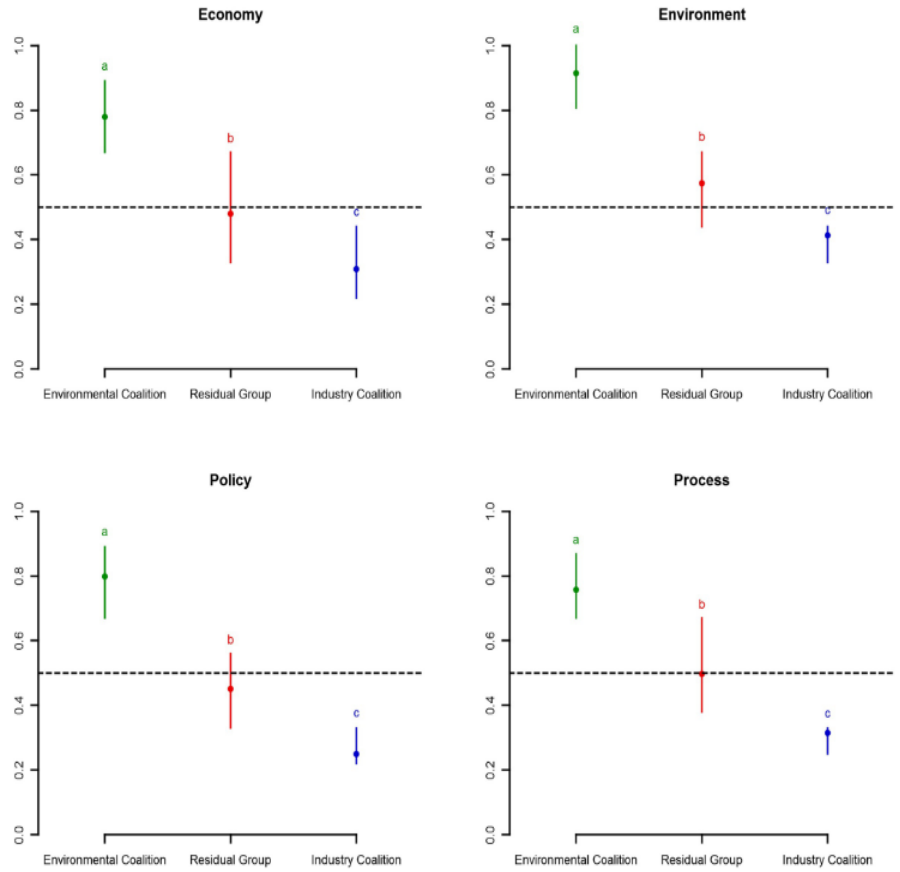


Fig. 1. PCB comparison based on coalition membership.[1,2]
[1]All variables range between 0 (strong pro-coal position) and 1 (strong anti-coal position). For details on PCB dimensions, see the *Data and Methods* section and Appendix B.
[2]Multiple comparisons test was used to determine pairwise differences between the three groups for each dimension. The groups marked with a different superscript letter and different color are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. For more information, see Appendix B.

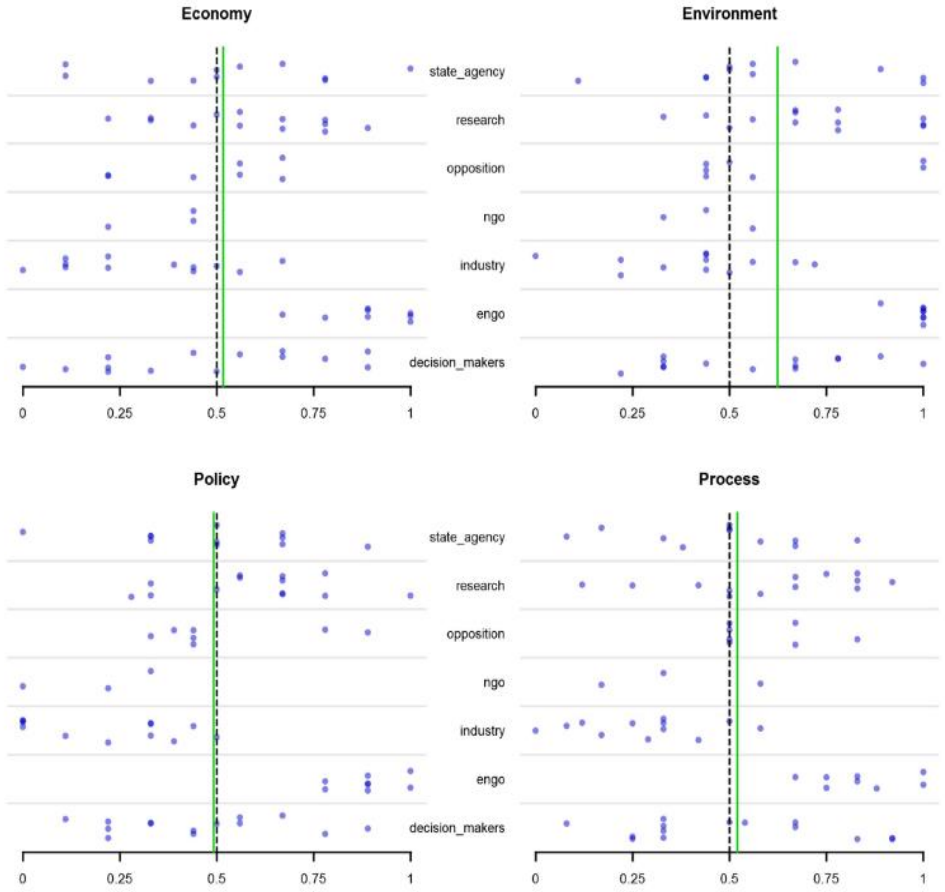


Fig. 2. PCB scores based on actor type.[1,2]
[1]All variables range between 0 (strong pro-coal position) and 1 (strong anti-coal position). For details on PCB dimensions, see the *Data and Methods* section and Appendix B.
[2]The blue dots represent the scores of individual organizations. The dotted line represents a neutral position (0.5); the green line represents the mean value.

Use of expert information

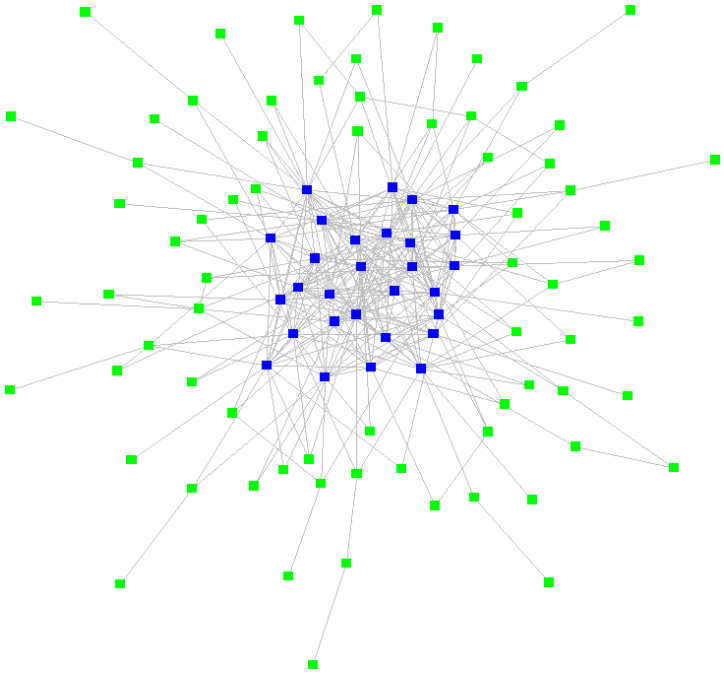
- **Expert information** is crucial for management of complex socio-technical systems (Giddens 1990) – includes **evidence-based policy-making**

- Its importance increases under **conditions of uncertainty** (Cairney et al. 2016)

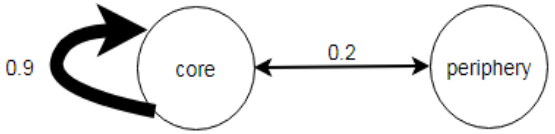
- Two opposing approaches:
  - **Technocratic governance:** exp info abrades ideological differences and “builds bridges”
  - **Expertise politics:** exp info is used to defend ideological positions of their holders/providers

Block modeling

- Block model (BM) is **a simplified representation of a network** (White et al. 1976):
  - Groups of nodes with similar relations to others (blocks)
  - Patterns of relations among blocks (social roles)



	core	periphery
core	0.9	0.2
periphery	0.2	0.05



network density = 0.12
only interactions with sign. different density displayed

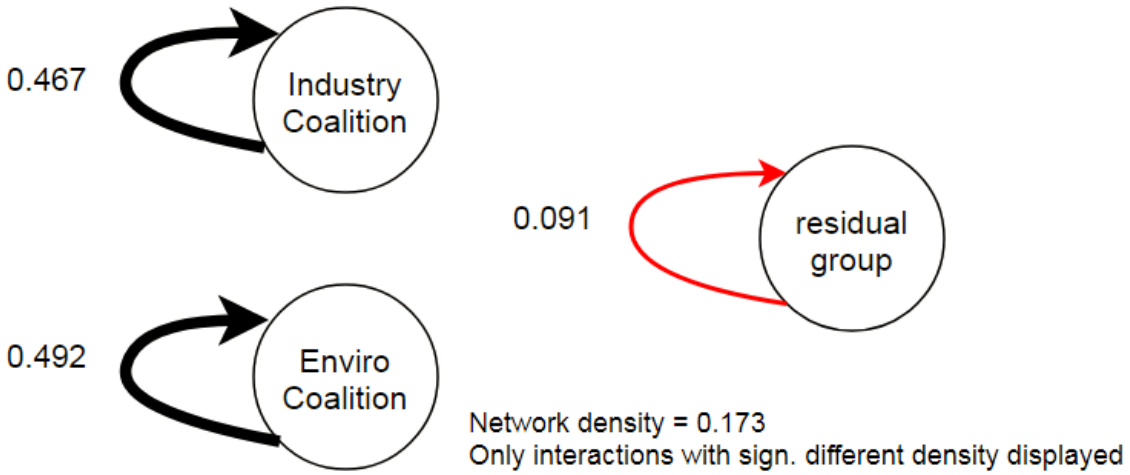
Expert information: Tell me, I am right?

- Coalitions identified based on **political cooperation** and shared **policy core beliefs**

Blocked density matrix: expert information
Adj R^2 = 0.102

	Industry Coalition	Enviro Coalition	residual group
Industry Coalition	**0.467**	0.161	0.158
Enviro Coalition	0.147	**0.492**	0.064
residual group	0.186	0.127	0.091

Bolded cells indicate significant differences from the average (network density = 0.173)



Expert information: Tell me, I am right?

- **expert information** is crucial for management of complex socio-technical systems (Giddens 1990)
  - **evidence-based policy-making**
  - its importance increases under **conditions of uncertainty**

- ~~**technocratic governance:** exp info abrades ideological differences and "builds bridges"~~
- **expertise politics:** exp info is used to defend ideological positions of their holders/providers

- **more than 2.5 times more likely to exchange expert information within advocacy coalitions than between the coalitions**

➢ contributes to **polarization** and limits **policy change by learning**

Main findings

- **Two adversarial coalitions** detected
- Support for a **fragmentation of the decision-making actors** → limits formulation of coherent policies
- **Expert info exchange strongly overlaps with the coalition patterns** → limits policy learning between coalitions
- Altogether, findings support the thesis on **contestation of the transition process**
- **Expectation:** major policy change rather due to external factors such as the EU's regulation and macro-economic trends

(Ocelík et al. 2019)