

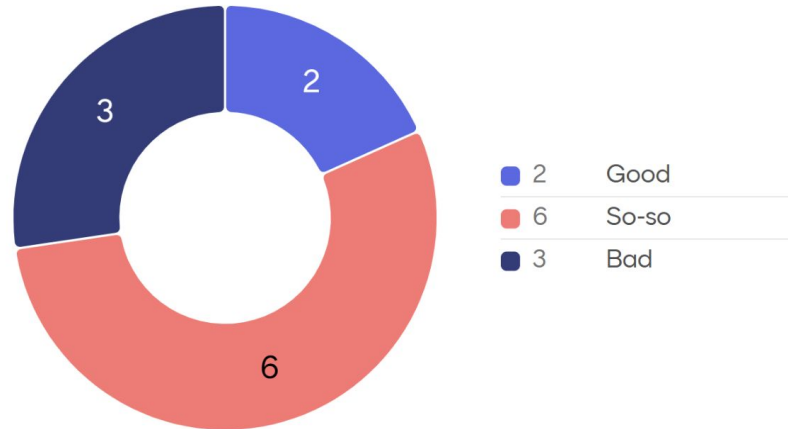
Science Policy Action Network

Sustainability in your research
Ziad Sahlab

30.09.2025



What is your overall opinion of the science-advice system and practices in your country?



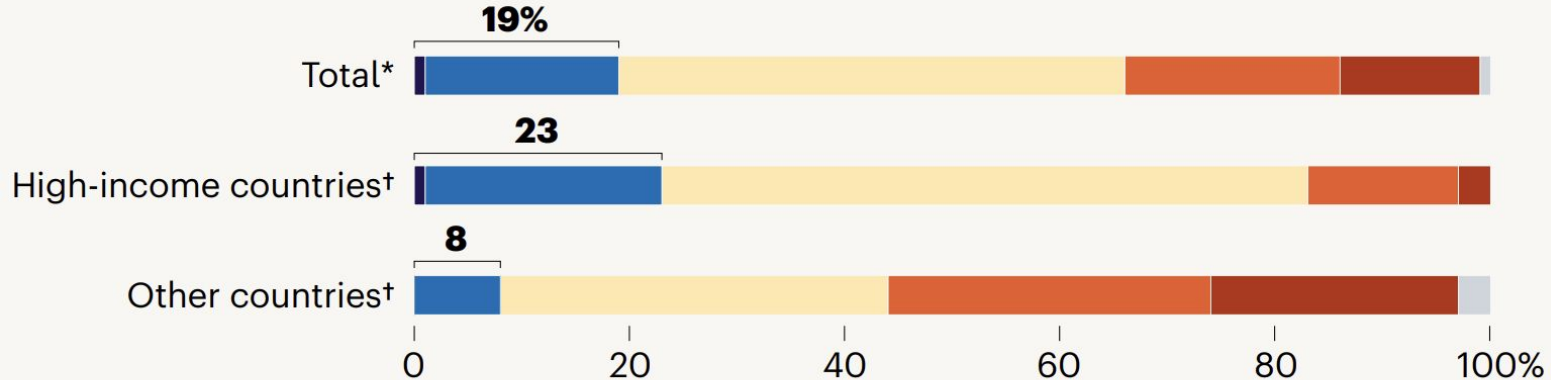


What is your overall opinion of the science-advice system and practices in your country?

POOR OPINIONS

Q: What is your overall opinion of the science-advice system and practices in your country?

Legend: Very good (dark blue), Good (blue), Patchy (yellow), Poor (orange), Very poor (dark red), No opinion (grey)

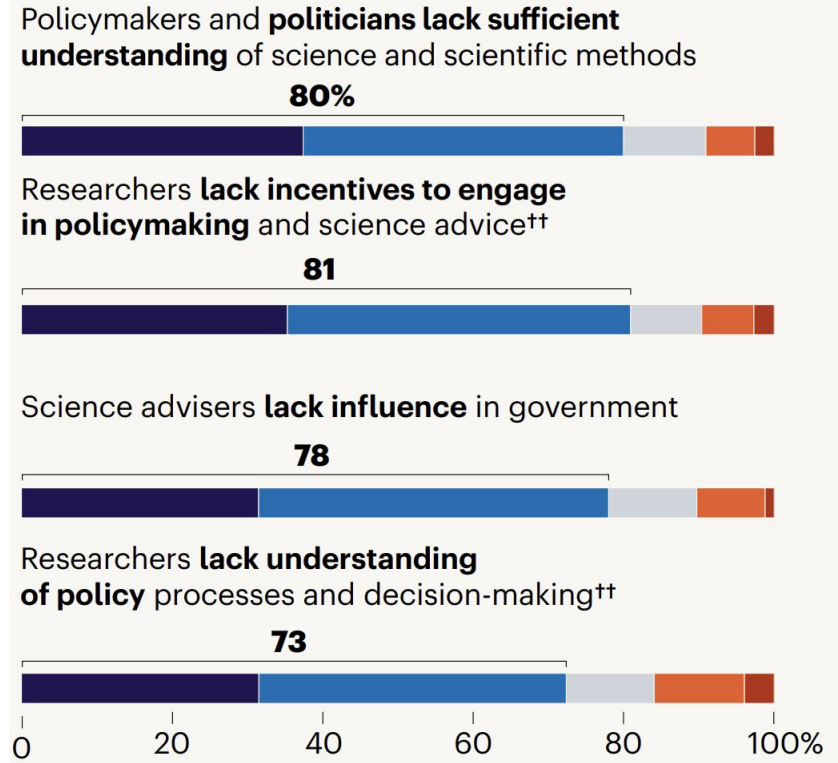


*389 overall respondents. †249 gave their countries (113 high-income, 136 other, by World Bank income group).



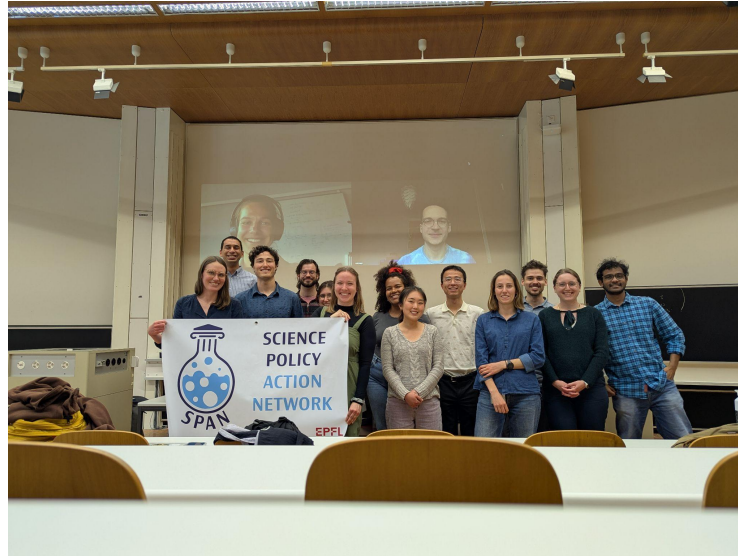
Barriers to effective science advice:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree





Student association at EPFL that aims to bridge the gap at the **interface of science and policy**



Activities

Outreach

- Invited talks and panel discussions



- Workshops



2-3x per semester

Action

- Generating and publishing Policy briefs



Ville de Lausanne



- Monthly coffee Chats

Continuous

Networking

- Manage and develop collaborations
- Professional and community networking
- Internal apéros and events



1-2x per semester

Timeline



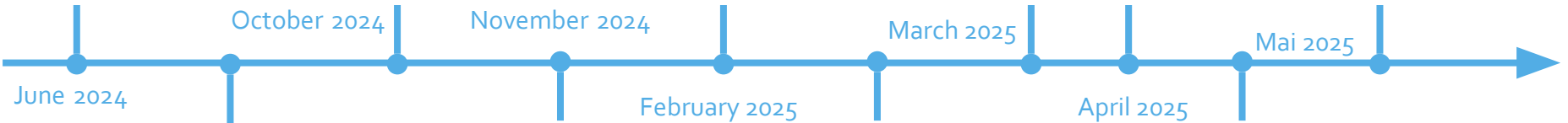
Inaugural
lecture with
Prof Aklin

Negotiation skills
workshop

Recent graduate
testimonies

Policy Brief Workshop
Series

Multilateral
Negotiation Workshop



Roundtable
discussion with
EPFL professors

UN and Outer
Space

Semaine de la
Durabilité

Geopolitics of
Energy transition





How can scientists get involved?

- National and International organizations
 - Dr. Mazlan Othman former head of UNOOSA
 - Prof. Evelyn Trutnevyte - IPCC report head author
- Science consulting
 - Sophie Girardin - Swiss parliament
 - Benedikt Knüsel - ETHZ science policy interface



What are the available tools?

- Transversal skills
 - Negotiation skills
 - Ability to synthesize information
 - ...
- The policy brief
 - Scientific research → Action and policy making



Credit where credit is due

Policy brief writing workshop



Prof. Jorg Balsiger



Alice Guilbert

What is a policy brief?



Decision aid

A written tool to facilitate decision making

Memo

Well-reasoned, easy-to-read, and concise note

A call to action

Guidance on specific policy implementation

- Academic work (typically) clarifies how we got here
- A policy brief (typically) outlines where we go from here



- Audience
- Evidence
- Recommendations
- Typical structure
 - Title
 - Executive summary
 - Context
 - Policy alternatives
 - Policy recommendations
 - Actionable steps backed with evidence
 - Specific & appropriate for the audience

POLITICOPRO

POLICY BRIEF TEMPLATE

How to choose a target audience?



- Stakeholder mapping

“Actors who **have an interest** in the issue under consideration, who **are affected** by the issue, or who—because of their position—**have or could have** an active or passive **influence** on the decision-making and implementation processes.”

-Varvasovszky & Brugha (2000)

- Stakeholder mapping tools

- Venn Diagramm
- Power-interest grid
- Salience model

How to formulate a policy problem?



What is the problem?



Timeliness

Is there an urgency or an opportunity?



Scale

Geographical, political



Key aspects to include



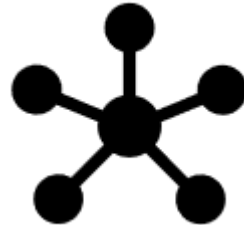
Facts

To support evidence-informed decision making



Interdisciplinarity

To address the problems holistically



Linkages

To demonstrate interdependence





- State the **problem + context** clearly
- Provide **policy recommendations/implications**
- Back up recommendations with **evidence**
- Promote **change/action**
- Emphasize **new evidence and solutions** over problem description



- Start with a **summary + key points** up front
- Organize with a **clear structure** and **signposted sections**
- Use **boxes** for figures, case studies, glossaries, and context
- Write in **accessible language**: short sentences, common words
- **Avoid jargon**
- Use **active voice** for clarity and impact



**United
Nations**

Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Products

- UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<https://desapublications.un.org/most-downloaded-policy-briefs>

Memos to Trump: Policy recommendations the new president might actually like

By John Mecklin | January 17, 2025

- Policy memos to Pres. Trump by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists
<https://thebulletin.org/2025/01/memos-to-trump-policy-recommendations-the-new-president-might-actually-like/>

Want to learn more?



- Video resources

Video 1: <https://youtu.be/cSDpj1RhsfM>

Video 2: https://youtu.be/BjS2FW7_pNc

Video 3: <https://youtu.be/zPbZ52lvYDw>

Video 4: <https://youtu.be/YnQ3ajamEUA>

Want to learn more? Join us!



POLICY BRIEF



SCIENCE
POLICY
ACTION
NETWORK

WORKSHOP



30 SEPTEMBER CE1100

17:00-20:00



REGISTER



Team



Prof Michael Aklin
Advising Professor



Ziad
President



Hanbit
Vice-President and
Action Pillar Head



Christophe
Treasurer and
Networking Pillar Head



Nina Eggert
Institute advisor



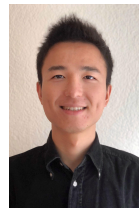
Ravi
Secretary



Nora
Webmaster



Beatrice
Outreach Pillar Head and
Graphic designer



Tao
External Communications



Noémie
Sustainability expert



Jeanne
Action Pillar head



YOU?



Our founders



Get in touch!



Mailing list



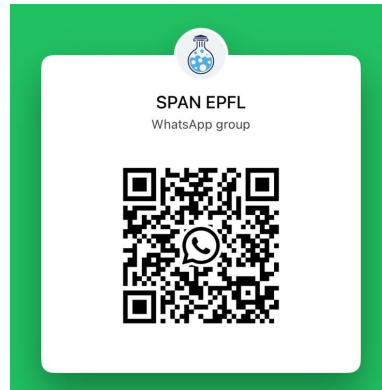
Website



LinkedIn



@SPAN_EPFL



SPAN EPFL
WhatsApp group

Upcoming events

- 30/09: Policy Brief writing workshop
- 30/10: What to expect from COP30 - a roundtable discussion with COP participants
- Week 17/11: model COP



- What is the problem and why is it important?
- At what scale does the problem manifest?
- Why is action required now?
- Who causes the problem, and who suffers the consequences ?
- What other issues are linked to yours ?