

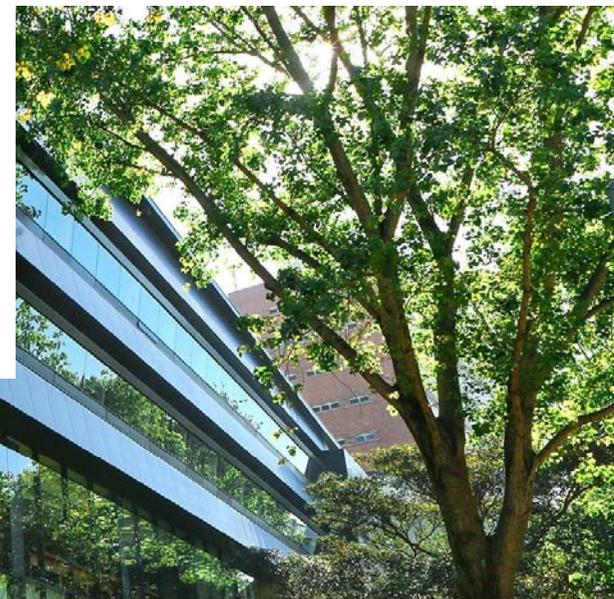
Acknowledgement of Country

Are we speaking the
same language?



Australia Awards

Scholarships



Content

1. Purpose
2. Methodology
3. Findings
4. Sharing experiences and thoughts

Can we use the same
evaluation criteria regardless
of the policy domain of the
intervention we need to
evaluate?

Evaluation

Communication



Environmental program evaluation

‘Assessment of the merit, worth and value of administration, output and outcome of environmental policies, which is intended to play a role in future, practical action situations’.

Mickwitz 2006



Environmental program evaluation

‘We must see environmental evaluations as **proxies**, or approximations of what is happening as a result of any intervention, program, or policy’.

Preskill 2009



Environmental program evaluation

‘Evaluation of interventions related to natural resources includes two systems, instead of just one, namely: the human and the natural systems. Thus (...) **two-system evaluands** require us to adapt evaluation methods for comparison and attribution and to address differences in time and space occurring across the systems’.

Rowe 2012

How has the evaluation of
voluntary environmental
programs been conducted so far?

Voluntary environmental programs (VEPs)



Methodology

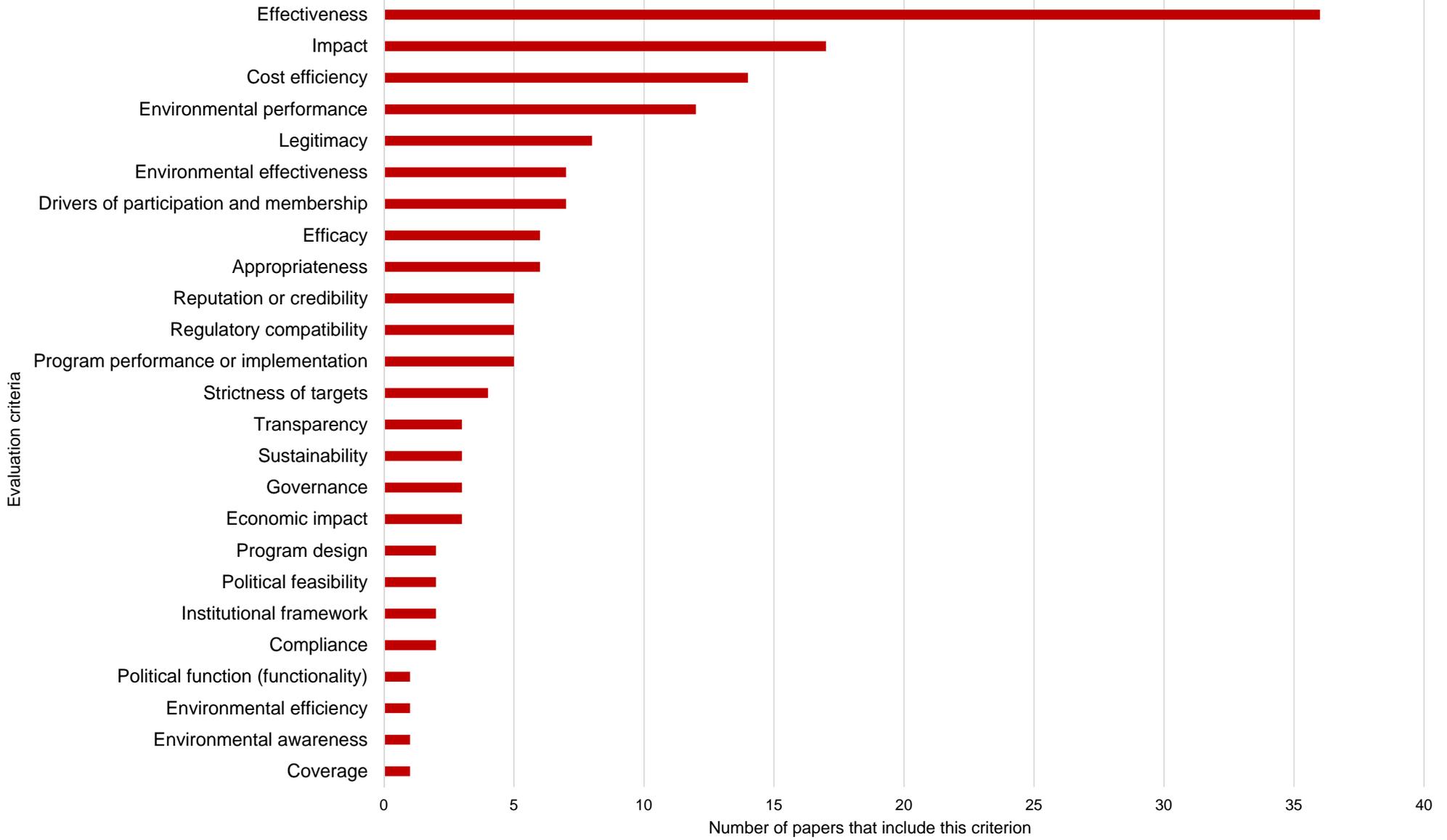
1. Lit review (69 papers / 1995-2015)
2. Identification of evaluation criteria
3. Revision of accuracy and consistency
4. Critical appraisal

Findings

1. Environmental program evaluations tend to employ traditional evaluation criteria
2. Lack of consistency and accuracy
3. Predominance of post-positivist approach
4. Lack of temporal, spatial and scale considerations

25 main evaluation criteria

1. Appropriateness
2. Compliance
3. Cost efficiency / efficiency
4. Coverage
5. Drivers of participation (membership)
6. Economic impact
7. Effectiveness
8. Efficacy
9. Environmental awareness
10. Environmental effectiveness
11. Environmental efficiency
12. Environmental performance
13. Governance
14. Impact
15. Institutional framework
16. Legitimacy
17. Political feasibility
18. Political function (functionality)
19. Program design
20. Program performance
21. Regulatory compatibility
22. Reputation or credibility
23. Strictness of targets
24. Sustainability
25. Transparency



Criterion	Number of papers	% of the total
Effectiveness	36	52.2
Impact	17	24.6
Cost efficiency	14	20.3
Environmental performance	12	17.4
Legitimacy	8	11.6
Drivers of participation and membership	7	10.1
Environmental effectiveness	7	10.1
Appropriateness	6	8.7
Efficacy	6	8.7
Program performance or implementation	5	7.2
Regulatory compatibility	5	7.2
Reputation or credibility	5	7.2
Strictness of targets	4	5.8

Criterion	Number of papers	Percentage of the total
Effectiveness	Outputs focused	
Impact		
Cost efficiency		
Environmental performance		
Legitimacy	8	11.6
Drivers of participation and membership	7	10.1
Environmental effectiveness	7	10.1
Appropriateness	6	8.7
Efficacy	6	8.7
Program performance or implementation	5	7.2
Regulatory compatibility	5	7.2
Reputation or credibility	5	7.2
Strictness of targets	4	5.8

How effectiveness is defined?

Burritt, Lewis and James (2005) Analysing the effectiveness of an environmental voluntary agreement: the case of the Australian national packaging covenant	Effectiveness as the nearness of actual results to the achievement of expectations
Chidiak (2002) Lessons from the French experience with voluntary agreements for greenhouse-gas reduction	Effectiveness as degree of target agreement
Esteban, Visseren-Hamakers and de Jong (2014) The Legitimacy of Certification Standards in Climate Change Governance	Effectiveness understood as 'institutional performance' regarding the results. They operationalize effectiveness in terms of output, outcome and impact effectiveness
Jiménez (2007) Voluntary agreements in environmental policy: an empirical evaluation for the Chilean case	Effectiveness as the extent to which VAs contribute to a higher level of environmental protection compared to the situation without them



What the theorists say?

- Framing the evaluation requires careful consideration in choosing the focus, and specifying the context and potentially **confounding factors** (Mickwitz).
- Addressing attribution requires recognizing the limits of establishing causality while maintaining **counterfactual thinking** (Mickwitz)
- **Scale matters**. One needs to determine at what level of the social scale to focus the evaluation: local, national, or international (Bruyninckx).
- Appropriate attention to **timing**—determining both when to do an evaluation and how to bound the time period being evaluated (Hildén)

What the theorists say? Critical appraisal

- Deciding on **which stakeholders to involve** (Preskill). Determining the stakeholder in environmental issues is often challenging.
- It is important to use **several alternative theories of change** instead of just one. (Hildén, Weiss, Ferraro)

Critical appraisal

- None of these studies recognised time dimension
- Spatial scale was sometimes considered
- Post-positivist approach (quasi-experimental approaches, econometric models)
- Very few include counterfactual approaches
- Causation continues to be the

References

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