Using New Methods to Study Translation of Policies Regarding Water Sustainability
Austin Kim, Student, Ridgewood High School
austinkim0415@gmail.com
August 1, 2020

Establishment of a reliable water sustainability system is a challenge all countries must collaborate to overcome because water does not exist within borders. The World Economic Forum's "The Global Risks Report 2019" considers a water crisis to be both likely and dangerous (World Economic Forum, 2019). Although there is no immediate global water crisis, many individual nations are suffering from water scarcity. The United Nations (UN) is aware of this situation and continues to take action. For example, the United Nations listed water sustainability as one of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. Moreover, the United Nations plans to facilitate knowledge and best practice exchange related to water and sustainable development (International Decade for Action - Water for Sustainable Development, 2016). The United Nations' decision shows the importance of policy transition and cooperation among global organizations. The conventional method to understand policy translation has been through creating and studying a multi staged model which have certain limits(Mukhtarov 2014). However, this research aims to study cases of policy translation through a new method of focusing on the policy actors. This will allow the researcher to gain a more flexible understanding of policy translation processes. Using this new method, the researcher will analyze and compare two separate cases of implication of Alliance for Water Stewardship Standards (AWS Standards), which is a framework for achieving ideal water management created by the Alliance for Water Stewardship(AWS). The research intends to analyze and identify similarities and differences between separate cases of policy translation. Ideally, the findings of this research will improve researchers' understanding of the process of policy translation, especially in the field of policies regarding water sustainability. Next, the results of this research will pave the path for more extensive research on this topic in the future. For example, researchers could look to further develop on this method and use it to fully understand the details of the process of policy translation.

Introduction

Achieving water sustainability is probably one of the most important and challenging quests presented for humanity. The World Economic Forum's "The Global Risks Report 2019" considers a water crisis to be both likely and dangerous in the future (World Economic Forum, 2019). Continuous attempts have been and are being made around the globe to achieve water stability around the world. In response to this issue, the United Nation plans to facilitate knowledge and best practice exchange related to water and sustainable development (International Decade for Action - Water for Sustainable Development, 2016). As these examples show, sharing of ideas between groups is a crucial step in global cooperation. This research will focus on the concept of policy translation, the transfer of ideas between nations and organizations. Understanding the mechanism of policy translation can impact how our global society operate and will give us leads on how to reach the ultimate goal of global water sustainability,

In this paper, I will analyze policy actors in hopes of understanding the process of policy translation in relation to water sustainability efforts. The conventional method of studying policy translation is to produce a multi-stage model (Mukhtarov 2014). However, this paper makes an attempt to take a different approach of focusing on the policy actors. Policy actors are individuals or organizations influential and crucial in the process of policy making. Idealistically, this will allow for a more fluid approach to policy translation. The method used to study Alliance for Water Stewardship standards (AWS standards). AWS is a globally recognized organization that is in cooperation with other organizations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The AWS Standards, framework/guideline for major water users to achieve better water management, is accepted and utilized by many major water users around the world. This paper will focus on two cases of AWS Standards application : the case of Iberesparragal, Spain and the case of Tamil Nadu, India. These cases are contrasting because while the case of Iberesparragal was the first application of AWS in Europe, the AWS had been in association with Tamil Nadu for a long time. The two cases will each be analyzed compared using the unconventional approach of focusing on the policy actors. The findings will direct researchers on how to improve the method of understanding the process of policy translation. The underlying goal of this research is to attempt a different type of approach on studying the transfer of a policy regarding water sustainability.

Background Information

The AWS is a global organization with a vision of a water - secure world that enables people, cultures, business, and nature to prosper. It works to bring together major water users, governments, and organizations such as businesses and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to cooperate with the shared goal of sustainable water management and water security. AWS created a standard that provides a framework for local water users to reach their goals by working collaboratively with others to improve their water management levels.

The AWS Standards helps businesses with water risks, public sector organizations, and others. Having been confirmed by ISEAL(the global alliance for credible standards system), the AWS Standards is widely accepted. Users of the AWS standards have to fulfill various criterias shown in figure 1 to be affirmed as a member.
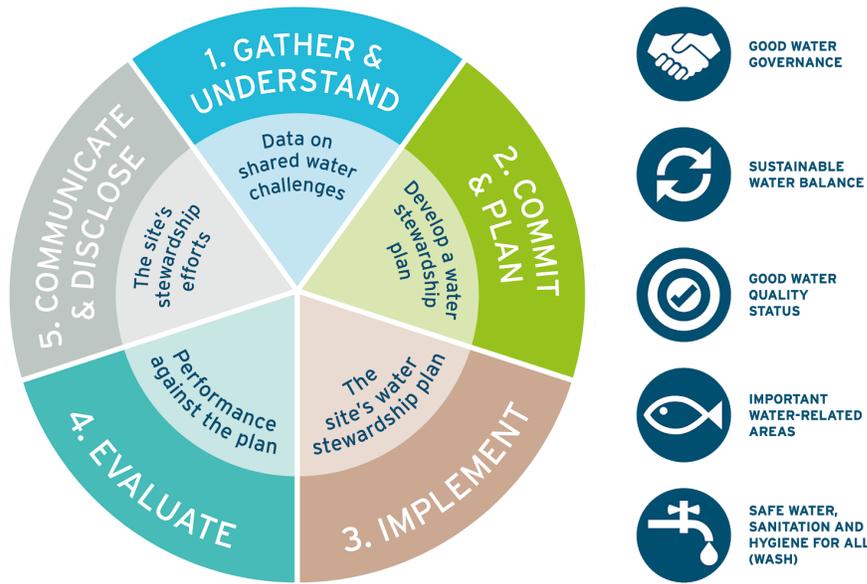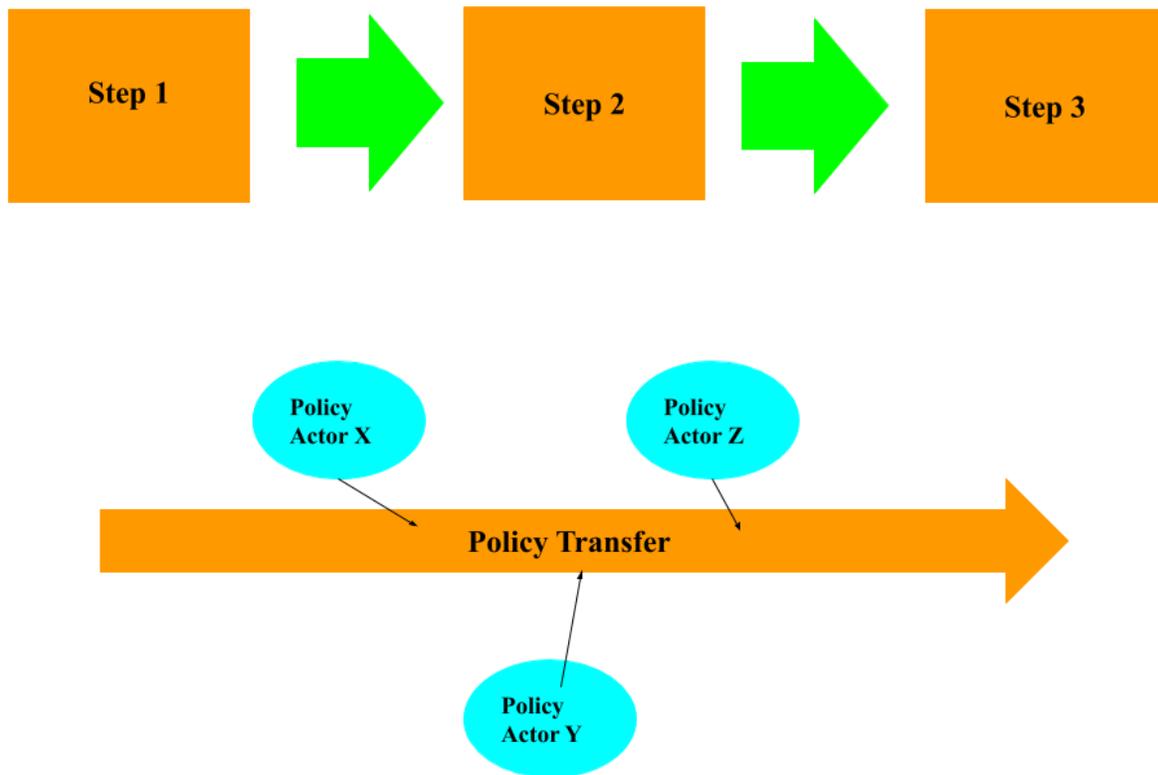
(Figure 1)

These are the steps and criterias defined for AWS standards. After meeting these standards, a site is accepted as a member of AWS and scored core, gold, or platinum.

The Conceptual Framework (The Unconventional Method)

The conventional way of understanding policy translation is through creating and studying a multistage model. (citation)Such step-by-step formulas can be effective, but have limitations. For example, such a multi-stage model will not be able to deal with an unexpected variable that does not fit into the model. Therefore, I decided to study a policy translation through a different and more flexible method of only focusing on the policy actors, participants of the process. Focusing only on the participants of a policy translation will simplify the process while accounting for everything that happens in it.

(Figure 2)
Figure 2 is a visual representation of comparison of two different methods. The model on the top is a conventional multistage model. The bottom model is a visualized version of the new method. Instead of dividing the whole process into multiple steps, I will focus on individual policy actors and roles they play in the process. In every policy translation process, various policy actors are involved. This research compares and contrasts the importance and roles of each participant to gain better understanding. Moreover, this will allow us to compare separate translations of policies without exception ; we only have to focus on the actors which allows for a clearer comparison.

Literature Review

In "Rethinking the travel of ideas : policy translation in the water sector", Farhad Mukhtarov calls for a distinction between policy translation and other words that carry similar but different meanings. Mukhtarov defines policy translation as an "approach with an explicit attention to policy actors in the process of the travel of ideas" (Mukhtarov, 2014). Mukhtarov's approach policy translation traces the participants in the process and where the distinction between 'global', 'national', 'regional' and 'local' become blurred (Mukhatrov, 2014). Moreover, Mukhtarov's definition of policy translation pays close attention to the direct actors of the process. He claims policy translation to provide an analytical framework to guide scholars in understanding how policy agents interact in order to advance the process of travel of ideas. This approach, compared to the conventional approach, provides more fluid understanding.

Mukhtarov's approach is very similar to what I plan to do in this paper. Similar to Mukhtarov's version of policy translation, I will attempt to ignore the borders that divide global, national, and local and focus on policy actors to understand the process of policy translation.

Water Sustainability Policy Translation Case Studies

Introduction

In this section, I will first analyze two cases of AWS Standards application. The case of Iberesparragal, Spain and Tamil Nadu, India has been specifically chosen because while both ended successfully, they had a differing start. After analyzing both of the cases, I will compare the major participants of the two. This will demonstrate the effectivenesses or shortcomings of my method.

Case of Iberesparragal, Spain.

The policy translation of AWS standards in Spain began from a citrus farm called Iberesparragal. The CEO of Iberesparragl, Luis Bolanos, wanted to utilize a new farming method in order to protect his farm against agricultural challenges such as droughts, climate change, and threats to soil fertility. For his new farming method to be used, new significant changes were needed. Such changes could not be done simply and required new irrigation infrastructures, capacity buildings and cooperations with other groups. He found solutions for his problems through EDEKA, a supermarket chain in Germany which was working with Iberhanse-Naturgreen, Iberesparragal's owner. EDEKA already had a cooperative effort going on with WWF. Iberhanse-Naturgreen joined this partnership and launched the 'Zitrus Project'. The Zitrus project aimed to make various improvements in biodiversity, toxic load reduction, and irrigation practices.

The AWS standards served as an opportunity for the Zitrus project to win certification from a global, third party organization. Moreover, the framework and goals presented by the AWS standards matched what the Zitrus project sought to do. The cooperative efforts of AWS, EDEKA, and WWF soon discovered that agricultural practices were linked to anticipated decrease in pre   cipitation from climate change. Moreover, they found that the biodiversity of the farm area was in danger because of chemical use and misunderstanding of the environment.   Based on their discoveries, the cooperative groups planned actions and changes for AWS certification. Major improvements on water quality, natural ecosystem, legal compliance, and water governance were made. The case in Iberesparragal proved to be one of the most successful sites of AWS certification, receiving gold. Moreover, this was the first usage of AWS standards in Europe, signifying many possible future cases (AWS 2019).

The factor that makes AWS standards so effective is the combined efforts among water users. In the case of Iberesparragal, three major participants, EDEKA, Iberhanse-Naturgreen, and WWF, were involved. They launched a cooperative project to reach the goal of improved water management. AWS standards, which have a reputation as a reliable certification from a globally recognized third-party organization, were exactly what the Zitrus project needed to gain recognition . AWS's reputation played a big role in convincing the Zitrus project to work for AWS certificates. Through Iberesparragal's use of AWS standards, AWS also continued to improve its reputation and the reliability of its standards. Additionally, this was the first time AWS standards were used in Europe, so it also allowed AWS to expand its regional coverage and relevance. After the successful implementation of AWS standards in Iberesparragal, more groups in Europe are now likely to follow. This allows for a continued cycle of systematically strengthening water sustainability efforts and coordination along with a simultaneous growth in AWS standards legitimacy and spread.
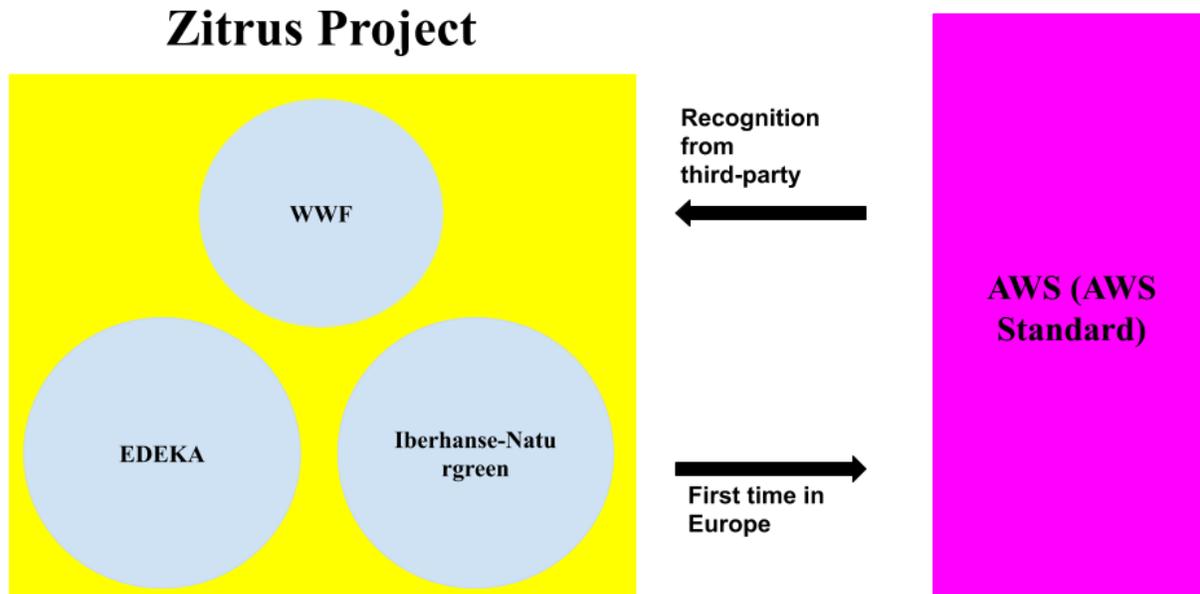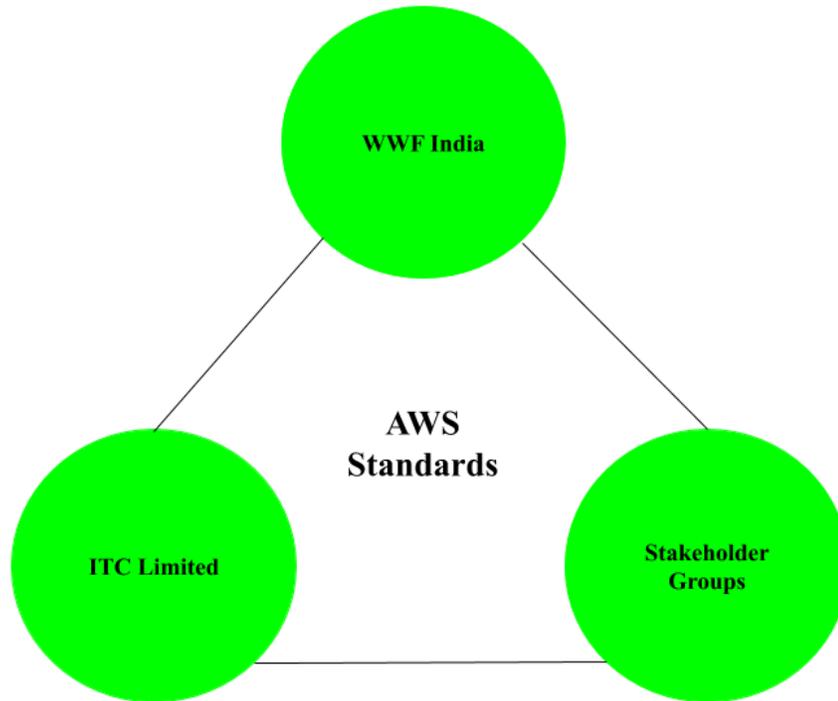
(Figure 3)
Case of Kovai Tamil Nadu, India

       ITC Limited, a powerful private sector company in India, has been connected to AWS since its creation. Sanjib Kumar Bezbaroa, the company's VP, Corporate Environment, Health & Safety, participated in the AWS International standards Development Committee. Naturally, ITC Limited became a member of AWS.

       Tamil Nadu was one of ITC's high water risk sites and was selected for installation of AWS standards. ITC's Paperboards & Speciality Papers Division (PSPD) was placed in Tamil Nadu. The factory obtained water from a nearby stream, which branches off from Upper Bhawani River Basin and was highly affected by weather conditions such as inconsistent rainfall. Moreover, the river basin suffered from excessive unplanned and unsustainable water usage and water intensive cropping patterns. The cooperative effort of ITc, WWF, and AWS found out that 90% of Bhawani river water was being used for agriculture which caused instability in water management.

       To solve this problem, ITC collaborated with WWF India to understand and identify possible water risks and challenges. After identifying the problems, improvements were made under cooperation with local water users (villages, farms). First, maximum water use efficiency has been used to improve water balance. Next, recycling of water has increased from 40% to 60% in total. The case in Tamil Nadu has been very successful and has received a platinum score from AWS (AWS 2020).

Of course, collaboration with different groups was essential for success. ITC worked with various stakeholder groups. For example, collaborations with local water user groups (farmers, villagers), local public sector agencies, research institutes, and other companies have been made. In this case, the framework provided by the AWS standards allowed for an effective evaluation of the collaborative efforts that were very different from the previous case

(Figure 4)

Comparison of Two Cases

An analytical comparison of two cases can be done through comparing the roles of their policy translation participants. The case of Iberesparragal and the case of Tamil Nadu do share some similarities, but show some clear differences. The Zitrus project was certified by AWS because it wanted recognition from a global third-party organization. From a business viewpoint, such certification will certainly benefit companies by creating connections and friendships. Although the framework of AWS standards did play some role in achieving ideal water management, it is clear that the primary goal of Zitrus project was to gain certification. On the other hand, ITC Limited required assistance from AWS to reach stable water management. Prior to AWS intervention, Bhwani river was seriously suffering. The framework from AWS standards took a significant role in improving situations and installing water stability in Tamil Nadu. Next, ITC Limited already had an established connection to AWS while Zitrus project was the first instance of AWS standards being used in Europe. Considering this, it appears the case of the Zitrus project was the more adventurous one among the two. Compared to success in Tamil Nadu, the success in Iberesparragl built a foundation for AWS to spread among other nations.

One of the similarities is that the WWF was involved in both cases. In fact, in the case of Iberesparrgal, WWF was already participating in the Zitrus project prior to AWS participation. WWF might have some influence on the spreading of AWS Standards on the globe, although there is not enough evidence to fully make this claim. Another similarity is that both cases had agricultural problems. In both cases, smooth cooperation with local farms/villages were made possible through the AWS Standards framework.

Conclusion.
Limitations & Future Directions

In this paper, two cases of AWS Standards implications were studied and compared. This is important because it helps researchers understand the mechanism of policy translation. In the two cases studied in this paper, AWS and the AWS Standard's role was to assist the local water users achieve better water management. In future research, I will study more cases of AWS Standards implication using this method and look for any possible changes of its role.

Moreover, future research could focus on developing and improving this new method. Although the effectiveness of this method should be decided after more work, it is clear that focusing on policy actors helps researchers understand the process better. On the other hand, there were some limitations too. There was almost no pre-existing research done on this case of AWS Standards applications. The knowledge, therefore, was gathered solely from case studies provided from AWS. Perhaps, if more data were available, this research could have been more extensive in its comparison of various viewpoints. In the future, this method of studying the participants of policy translation should be done on various types of ideas/policy to check its effectiveness and include interviews that incorporate perspectives of various types of participants and those involved at various levels (management, employees, government and more). Moreover, direct comparison between multi-stepped model methods and this method could be made. Idealistically, this method will allow us to gain clearer understanding in the phenomenon of idea translation.

'

Bibliography

AWS, (2019). Water Stewardship in Andalusia, Spain : The case of Iberesparragal.
        https://a4ws.org/download/water-stewardship-in-andalusia-spain-the-case-of-iberesparra
        gal/

AWS, (2020). ITC Limited PSPD, Unit - Kovai Tamil Nadu, India.
        https://a4ws.org/download/implementing-the-aws-standard-itc-limited-india/

Mukhtarov, F. (2014). Rethinking the travel of ideas: policy translation in the water sector. *Policy
        & Politics*, *42*(1), 71-88.

United Nations, (2018). Water Action Decade.
        https://wateractiondecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/UN-SG-Action-Plan_Water-A
        ction-Decade-web.pdf

World Economic Forum, (2019). The Global Risk Report 2019.
        http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Global_Risks_Report_2019.pdf