
Uncovering the power relations expressed by policy instruments in the implementation of the French bioeconomy strategy

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Abstract

Social science research on bioeconomy policies has studied the specific design (e.g. policy design frameworks) and content (e.g. focus on sustainability and resilience) of such policies across countries and time. However, understanding whether and how bioeconomy policies are implemented and the effects of such implementations have not been studied so far. Especially, the power relations occurring at the implementation stage through the calibrations of bioeconomy policy instruments have received very little attention. We address this research gap by studying the implementation of the policy instruments contained in the French bioeconomy strategy to unveil the power relationships at stake. In particular, we focus on the state-citizen relationship expressed by the instruments. We do this by tracking the calibrations of the policy instruments contained in the strategy. In a first step, we develop a framework of instrument calibration and use it to collect data through semi-structured interviews with the actors involved and all the available government, scholarly and grey literatures. The goal is to collect data on each calibration dimension of our framework for several policy instruments. In a second step, we analyze the data collected using the political sociology approach to policy instruments to determine the state-citizen relation(s) in the French bioeconomy strategy. In particular, we will investigate potential differences regarding this relationship at the design and at the implementation stages. In tracking the implementation of policy instruments through their calibrations, we expose how power is exercised *throughout* the French bioeconomy policy process.

Keywords: bioeconomy strategy, policy implementation, policy instrument, instrument calibration, power, political sociology, policy process

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