

# ‘Useful’ Knowledge in Policy Advice? A linguistic-epistemological approach

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Today, everything is on the Internet - even the political sphere is online, and not just in the form of policy papers. As a result, texts are becoming shorter and easier to transmit. But important details and contexts are lost in the processing of knowledge - not only in digital transfers. Key connections are lost when knowledge is 'translated' and 'co-created'.

How can scientific knowledge be made available as it is processed?

How does scientific policy advice ‘handle’ scientific knowledge?

Scientific policy advice is a special form of scientific activity: in its advisory function, science most present content in a way that is scientifically credible, impartial and free of value judgements. At the same time, it prepares content in a way that is politically effective, i.e. in a way that guides action and is understandable to publics.

There is an imperative of usefulness for scientific policy advice. Responsibility and legitimacy are equally important in advisory practice, but are neither defined nor discussed. Ideas of orientation and usability accompany these approaches, but general rules, e.g. for the integration of ideas, methods and concepts, are not available.

What makes scientific advice provide expertise and 'deep knowledge'?

How does science explain itself, its processes, and its knowledge?

We explore this field of science communication and its artifacts to question the policy advice process and its democratic capacity. We examine the practice of scientific policy advice in Germany in terms of form, content, and function. One central question is how policy advice enables politicians and publics to act on evidence-based knowledge.

Scientific policy advice as a socio-epistemic practice:  
Textual procedures ascribing significance,  
executive authority and responsibility  
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