

PLANET4B Research Brief

understanding Plural values, intersectionality, Leverage points, Attitudes, Norms, behaviour and social Learning in Transformation for Biodiversity decision making



PLANET4B

Understanding decision-making through disciplinary theories

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Keywords

disciplinary theories, practices, decision-making, biodiversity, social sciences, behavioural sciences

What are some relevant theories for understanding biodiversity decision-making?

PLANET4B partners, including both researchers and practitioners, made an inventory of theories potentially applicable for influencing decision-making relevant to biodiversity. We reviewed relevant literature and research projects on disciplinary approaches including behavioural and social sciences.

Thousands of research studies, position papers and articles draw attention to the threat of biodiversity loss, yet the issue is still not on the top of policy-maker's priority list. Why? What will change the mindset of decision-makers and what factors have significant impact on decision-making?

[This research report](#) takes a cross-disciplinary approach to the different behaviour science theories to draw up a complex map of the potential influencing factors of decision-making on interpersonal (individual), intrapersonal (community) and institutional level.

Key findings

Findings from the review of peer-reviewed literature and book chapters (inventory of theoretical input):

- First, theories addressing the intrapersonal level were the least represented.
- Second, theories addressing the interpersonal level were the most represented in our data.
- Third, theories addressing the institutional level were the second most represented.
- Fourth, theoretical inputs were represented by 12 disciplines from behaviour- and social sciences.

Findings from grey literature review (project inventory):

- First, grey literature at the intrapersonal level was the least represented.
- Second, grey literature at the interpersonal level was the second most represented.
- Third, grey literature at the institutional level was the most represented in our data.

Summary

- To date, very limited information is available about what influences decision-making related to biodiversity. Therefore, there is an urgent **need for information to better prioritise biodiversity** in policy making and enable relevant stakeholders.
- As part of facilitating a shared starting point for engaging with behavioural and decision-making approaches to biodiversity, the aim was to develop a **framework of disciplinary approaches** to biodiversity relevant decision-making.
- The aim was to **map expertise and experience** of theories and relevant concepts within the consortium and make it available to all partners.
- We undertook **two reviews of theoretical approaches** to decision-making potentially relevant for biodiversity.
- The first review focused on peer-reviewed **research publications and relevant theories**; the second review focused on **relevant research projects**.
- Together, the two reviews yielded **63 relevant theories**, frameworks, models, and concepts, and **12 relevant research projects**.
- Results were classified according to an intrapersonal-interpersonal-institutional gradient.
- Interpersonal and institutional perspectives were the most represented in the datasets of both reviews. As part of facilitating a shared starting point for engaging with behavioural and decision-making approaches to biodiversity, the aim was to develop a **framework of disciplinary approaches** to biodiversity relevant decision-making.

Implications for policy

The inventory of theories generated in this research makes it possible to relate the various PLANET4B case studies and their associated interventions for biodiversity to policy making level and specific policy making processes. The inventory will inform both researchers and practitioners about a wide array of theories, frameworks, models, and concepts that can be applied alone or in combination to develop targeted efforts to better prioritise biodiversity in policy and create more impactful interventions.

Implications for further research

Our classification of theories according to conceptual levels will facilitate discussions with [PLANET4B case studies](#) about which theories of change underly their expectations about systems change, the biodiversity impact of interventions in their case, and their relevant policy recommendations.

Methodology

The data material surveyed for this review consisted of published literature on behavioural- and social science theories potentially applicable for biodiversity related decision-making. Results were classified according to a gradient of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and institutional perspectives (Figure 1).

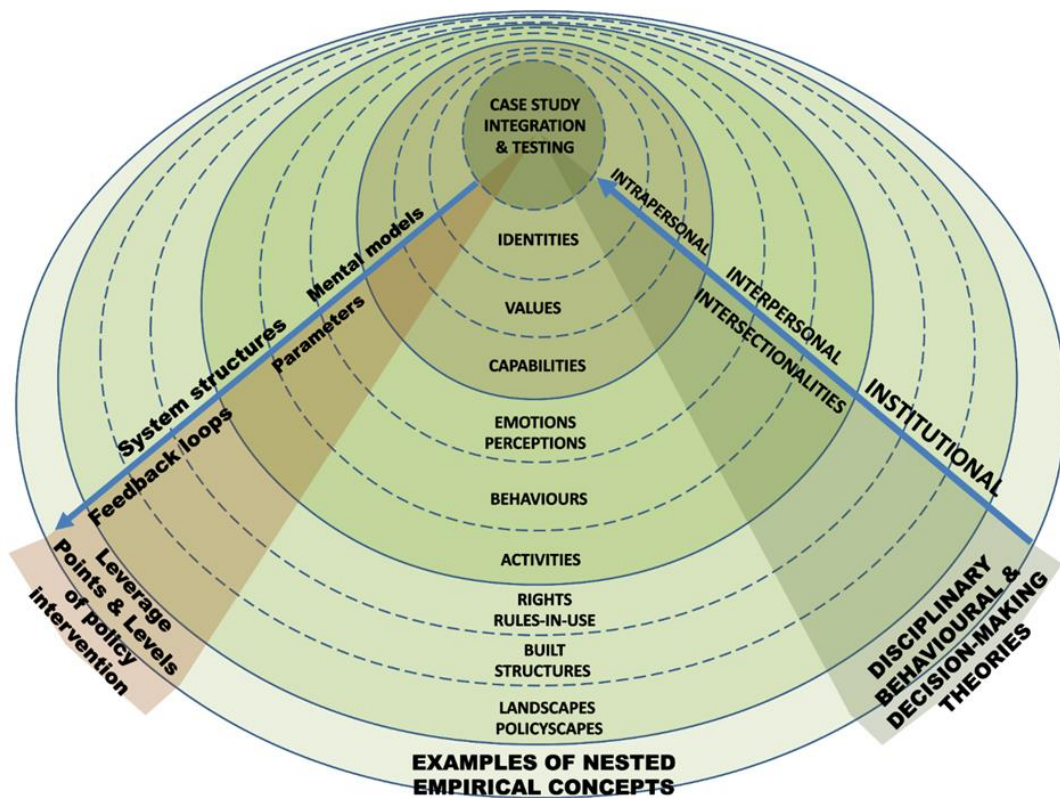


Figure 1. The classification of theories according to conceptual levels. Source: own elaboration.

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