The hidden influence of governance in SEA: Organisational environments

Margarida B. Monteiro | Maria Partidário

Strategic approaches to Environment and Sustainability research group (SENSU), Centre for Management Studies of Instituto Superior Técnico, University of Lisbon, Portugal
positions SEA as an instrument of **signification** (interpret and give meaning to actions) and **legitimation** (give value to actions to validate decisions)
1. ... And why to think about organisational environments?

Peterson (2010): use of SEA depends on the legal regulation and guidance, but also on administrative capacities and expertise.

Peterson and Vahtrus (2019): decision-makers should be better informed about what the SEA is meant to do and what not.

Partidário and Monteiro (2018): public organisations in Portugal are not ready to ‘think SEA’

Bond et al. (2016): organisational legitimacy (openness and transparency) and knowledge legitimacy (knowledge or facts used).
1. ... And why to think about organisational environments?

“I don’t know how it started, either. All I know is that it’s part of our corporate culture.”
1. ... And why to think about organisational environments?

WHO WE ARE?
2. Organisational environments
2. Organisational environments
2. Organisational environments
2. Organisational environments

- Actors with interpretative functions
- National Culture
- Individual
- Group
- Organisational
- Systems of values, rules & knowledge
- Legitimation strategies
- Interaction culture and structure
Organisational Culture (OC) towards SEA may function as **blocker or enabler** in steering sustainability.
Exploring the type of culture within an organisation can support the understanding of the organisational commitment towards SEA, and ultimately on how learning organisational change can be implemented successfully for sustainability.
3. Organisational culture: exploratory features

Contextual patterns
Structural configurations
Strategy

Leadership & power
Communication & perception
Decision culture
3. Organisational culture: exploratory features

Contextual patterns
Structural configurations
Strategy

Leadership & power
Communication & perception
Decision culture

Abilities & skills
Absorptive capacity

Motivations & expectations
Values
5. Final thoughts

There are no effective or ineffective cultures: an organization is its culture

**Asymmetry** of interests

OC as influential: **mediator in the agency ability** for innovation towards SEA

Level of **preparedness** of organisations and their ability to deal with SEA becomes a crucial aspect to be considered: capacity for SEA

**Commitments** towards SEA: **change in SEA agency?**
EXECUTIVE CULTURE

ONLY AN EXEC CAN UNDERSTAND AN EXEC.

ENGINEERING CULTURE

WE ARE THE EXPERTS! WE BUILD THE SOLUTIONS!

OPERATOR CULTURE

ALL THESE PEOPLE ARE CLUELESS.

Thank you!