

Organizational Approaches to Measurement and Evaluation

Kerstin Åstrand

The Evaluation Unit, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

EEN Forum June 8, 2010



The European Union (EU)

The Riksdag (The parliament)

The Government
the Government Offices

EPA	HSV	AMV	SoS	etc.
Central government agencies				

The National Audit Office

Parliamentary control

ITPS

SADEV

Government agencies specialized in analysis & evaluation of government policies

REGIONAL & MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES

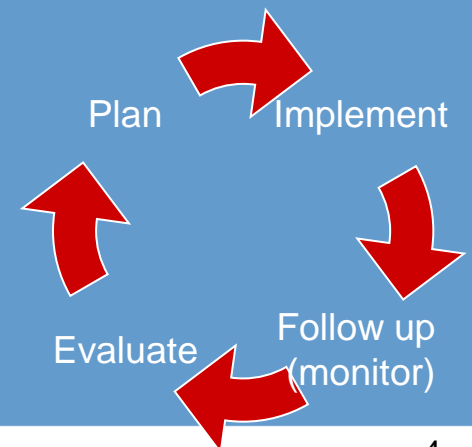
The Evaluation Unit...

- ✓ Supports the Agency in evaluation matters
- ✓ Performs policy evaluations
- ✓ No external funding
- ✓ Consists of 6 evaluators (mixed backgrounds)



Who evaluates at the Swedish EPA?

- The civil servants at the operational units
- External evaluators – researchers and consultants
- The Environmental Objectives Council
- The Evaluation Unit



Evaluations at the Evaluation Unit

- Evaluations are initiated in 3 ways:
 - Requested by the EPA
 - Requested by the Government (Ministry of Environment)
 - Self-initiated
- Priorities based on the EPA strategy for policy evaluation (usefulness, feasibility, timing, strategic areas; e.g. climate, marine environment, nature conservation).



What do we evaluate?

- Effectiveness/results – the extent to which an intervention has achieved its objectives, what were the results?
- Impact – Intended and unintended effects
- Processes – How did the decision making, planning or working processes go?
- Relevance – the extent to which an intervention conforms to the needs and expectations of target groups
- Efficiency – the extent to which the costs of an intervention can be justified
- Social scientific approach and methods – qualitative/quantitative

General challenges

- Usability
- Transparency
- Feasibility
- Accuracy & credibility
- Timing

Examples from Recent Evaluations...

The Action Plan for Green Public Procurement (GPP) (Jan. 2010)

Evaluation focus:

- Monitor the extent to which the measures detailed in the action plan were implemented.
- Examine why and on what grounds environmental requirements are set in practice.
- Examine whether the action plan brought about a clearer distribution of roles and responsibilities between the stakeholders at central and national level.



Evaluation challenges

- Identifying relevant scope, focus and questions, balancing timing and resources
- In-depth knowledge or broad?
- Selection of interviewees

What We Found:

- Measures in the action plan were implemented,
- Fundamental problems still remain; lack of knowledge, uncertainty about the regulatory framework and a poor level of political commitment.
- Work on the action plan has generated valuable experience for the central organisations at national level to build on, but division of responsibilities at central and national level remains unclear.
- Ability, understanding and will effect if and how environmental requirements are set.
- The government faces a challenge in creating the incentives needed to encourage procuring agencies to be capable of setting environmental requirements to a greater extent.



The 2010 wolf hunt (May 2010)

Challenges:

- Official and unofficial purpose
- Credibility
- Usability



The purpose:

- To learn from practice – from the work with drafting the controlled order.
- Examine how the stakeholders involved experienced the drafting process (transparency, influence and interaction).

What we found:

- Consultation, dialogue and openness are key factors in having a successful process. Being able to express oneself and being heard are important for legitimacy.
- The issue of *who* will be allowed to express themselves had significance for the legitimacy of the process. A broader and more even representation for various interest groups regarding the wolf issue would possibly have favourably affected not only the legitimacy of the process, but also the acceptance of the controlled order decision.
- This study also indicates that legitimacy interests would have been served by making the underlying documentation (research) as broad as possible.
- Time, or rather the lack of it, affected who participated, their extent of participation, openness and the conditions surrounding the implementation of the decision at the regional level.
- As part of the efforts to achieve transparency, this study indicates that there is reason to review the documentation routines at the EPA.

Thank you for listening!



Discussion Questions to Consider...

1. What is one example of a successful approach you've used to evaluate a program with data quality issues?
2. How do you weigh the input of evaluation stakeholders with differing points of view?
3. What criteria can an evaluator apply to assess the impact of data quality issues on the integrity of evaluation findings?
4. How can evaluators encourage acceptance and buy-in for negative findings?
5. What techniques have you used to encourage the use of evaluation findings?