



The 'Governance-Check': practical experiences from an Austrian governmental structure assessment fostering Earth-centered governance

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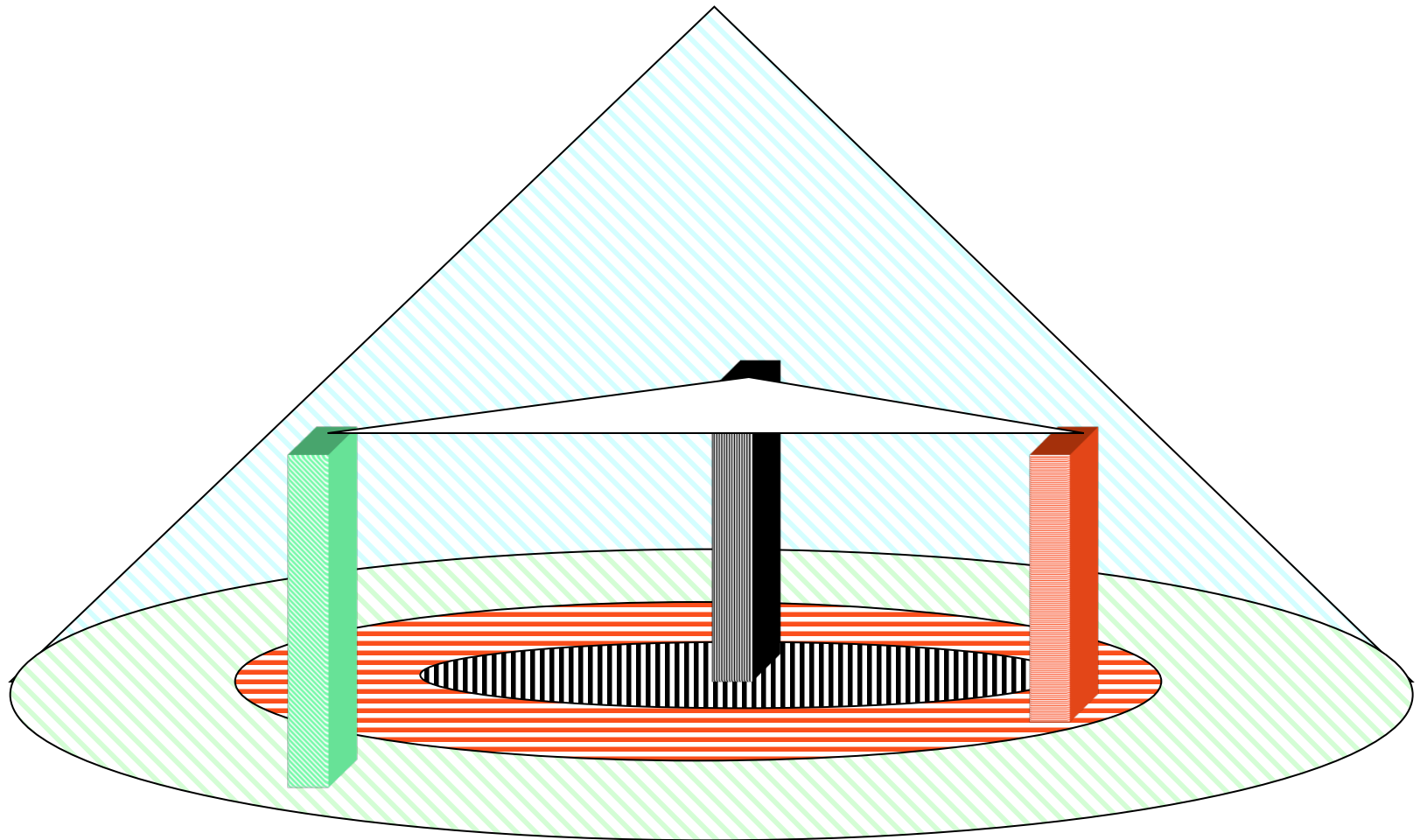
1. Introduction

1. Sustainable Development as a widely recognised concept since 1987
2. main ingredients: social, environmental and economic sustainability
3. Adequate earth-centred governance structures form a basis and a precondition towards a sustainable development

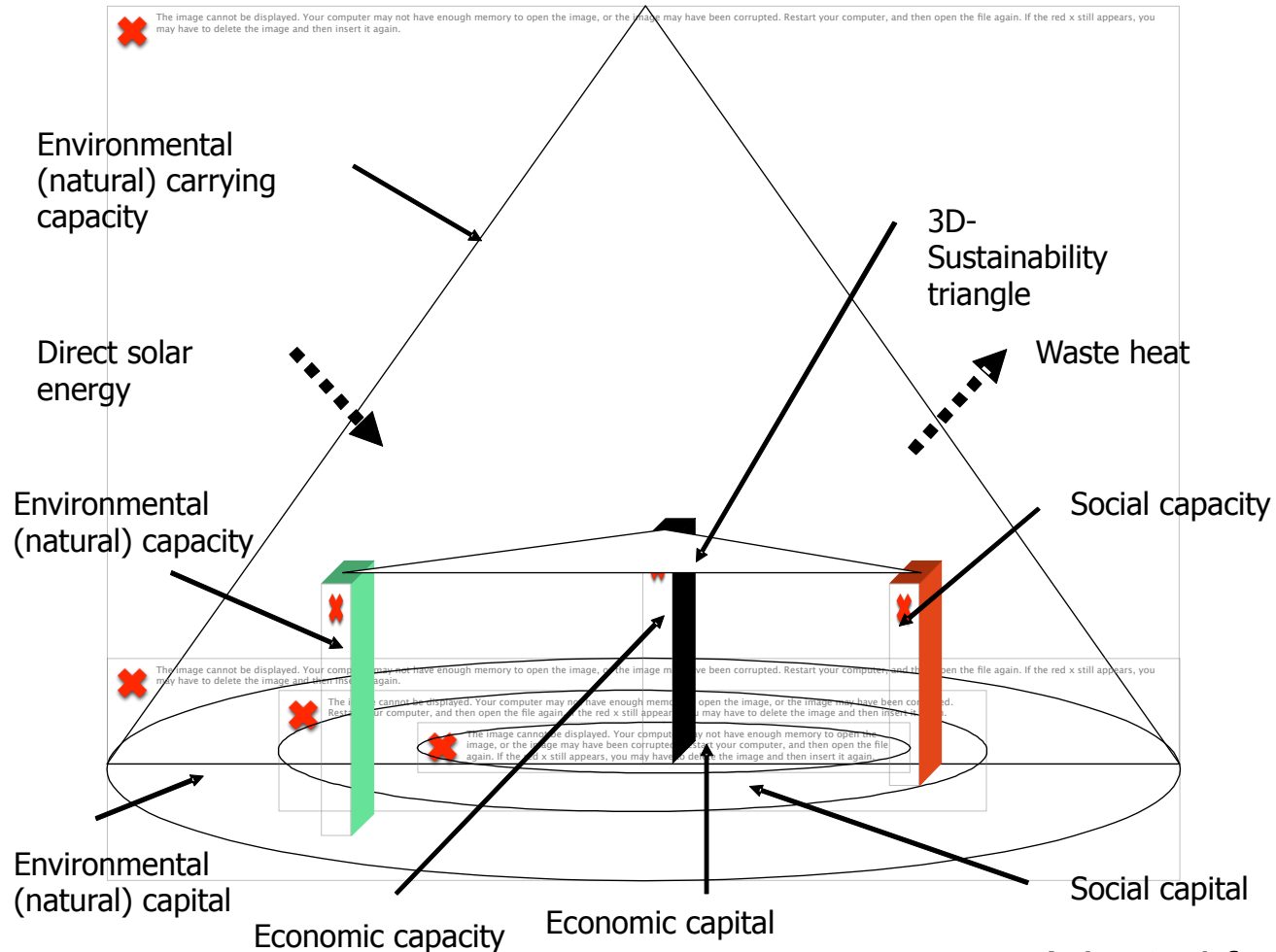
2. Research questions

1. Is the basic **distribution of competences** in national states sustainable?
 2. Is the institutionalized **relationship between political stakeholders** sustainable?
- **Aims:**
 - To provide a reliable method for the assessment respectively
 - To show its application in practice
 - **Common basis** of assessment methods:
3-D Sustainability (Mauerhofer, 2008)

2. 3D-Sustainability in detail



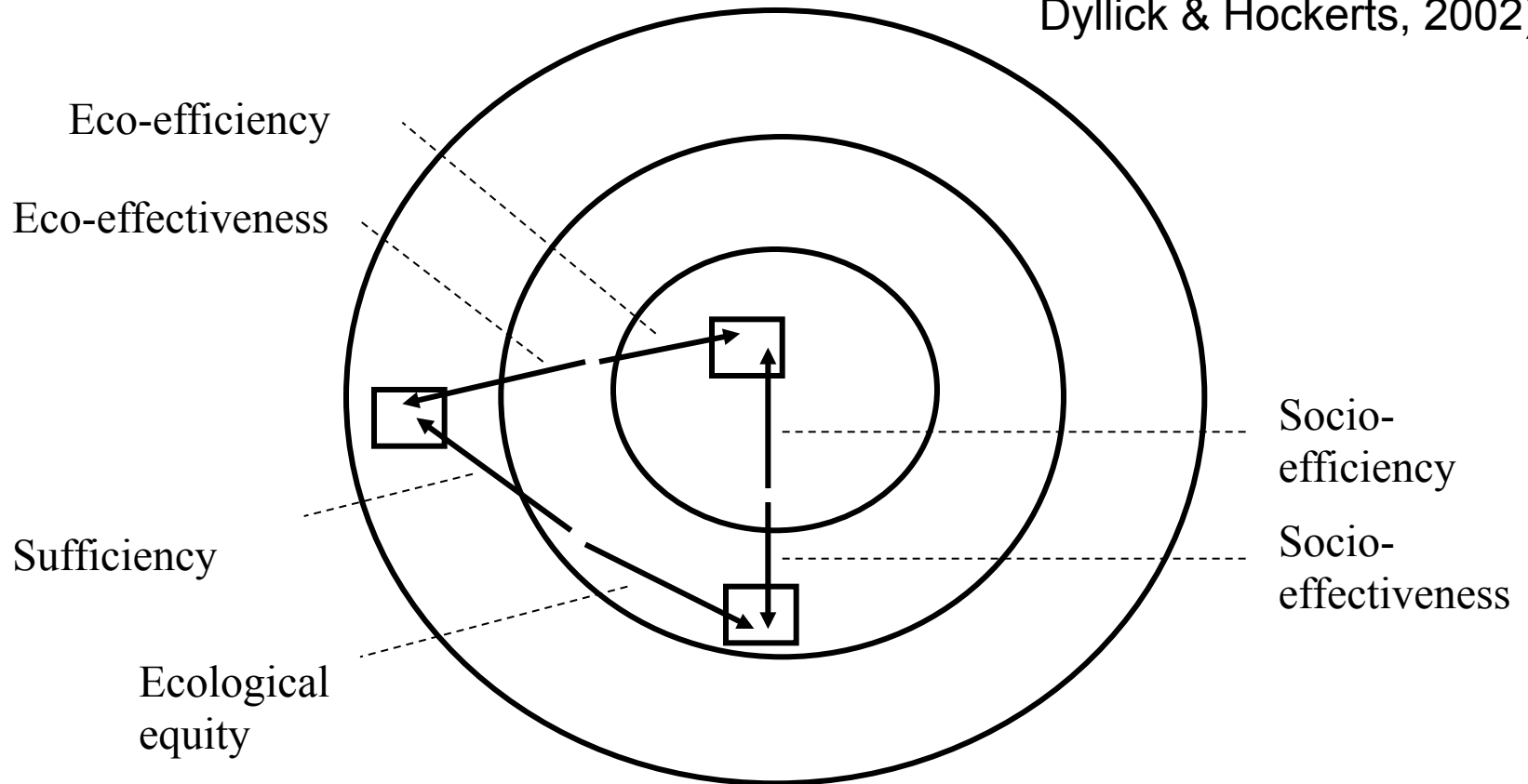
2b. 3D-Sustainability in detail



Adapted from:
Mauerhofer 2008

2c. 3D-Sustainability from above

Adapted from: Mauerhofer 2008 (triangle based on Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002)



2d. General, not fixed hierarchy of priorities for sustainable development measures

Sufficiency

Eco-effectiveness

Ecological equity

Socio-effectiveness

Eco-efficiency

Socio-efficiency

- Change through a shift of the **burden of proof**
- Reflects the precautionary principle

(Mauerhofer 2008)

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METHODOLOGICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL OPTIONS

3-D Sustainability: An approach for priority setting in situation of conflicting interests towards a Sustainable Development[☆]

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to provide a new approach to objectively assess hierarchies and priority setting in the relationship between environmental, social and economic sustainability within

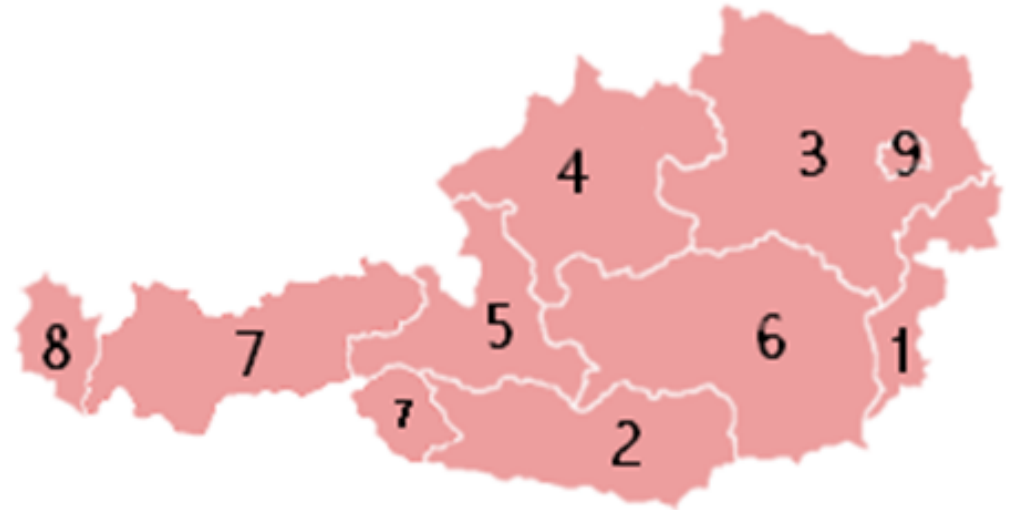
Pages Attachments Comments

3. Distribution of competences

Basic assessment questions:

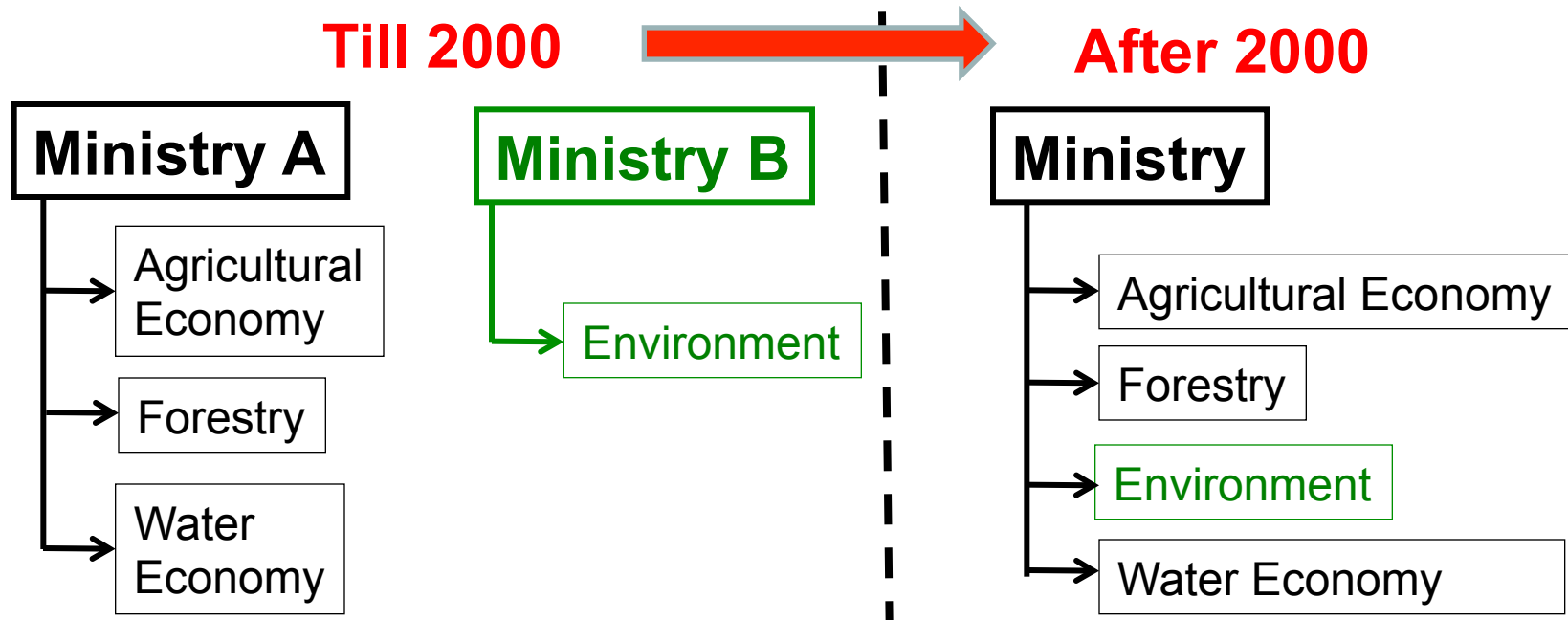
1. Is the competence distribution among different geographic authorities coherent?
 - Example: provincial nature conservation competence in Austria
2. Is the competence distribution to one authority free of conflicts of interests?
 - Example: federal competence for agronomy, forestry, environment and water economy

3.a. Provincial nature conservation competence in Austria



- Environmental capital concerning biodiversity (species, habitats)
- Competence distributed to 9 provinces (legislativ/administrativ)
- No binding coordination duties on national level
- Duty to coordinate comes from regional legal integration (EU)

3.b. Federal competence for agricultural economy, forestry, environment and water economy



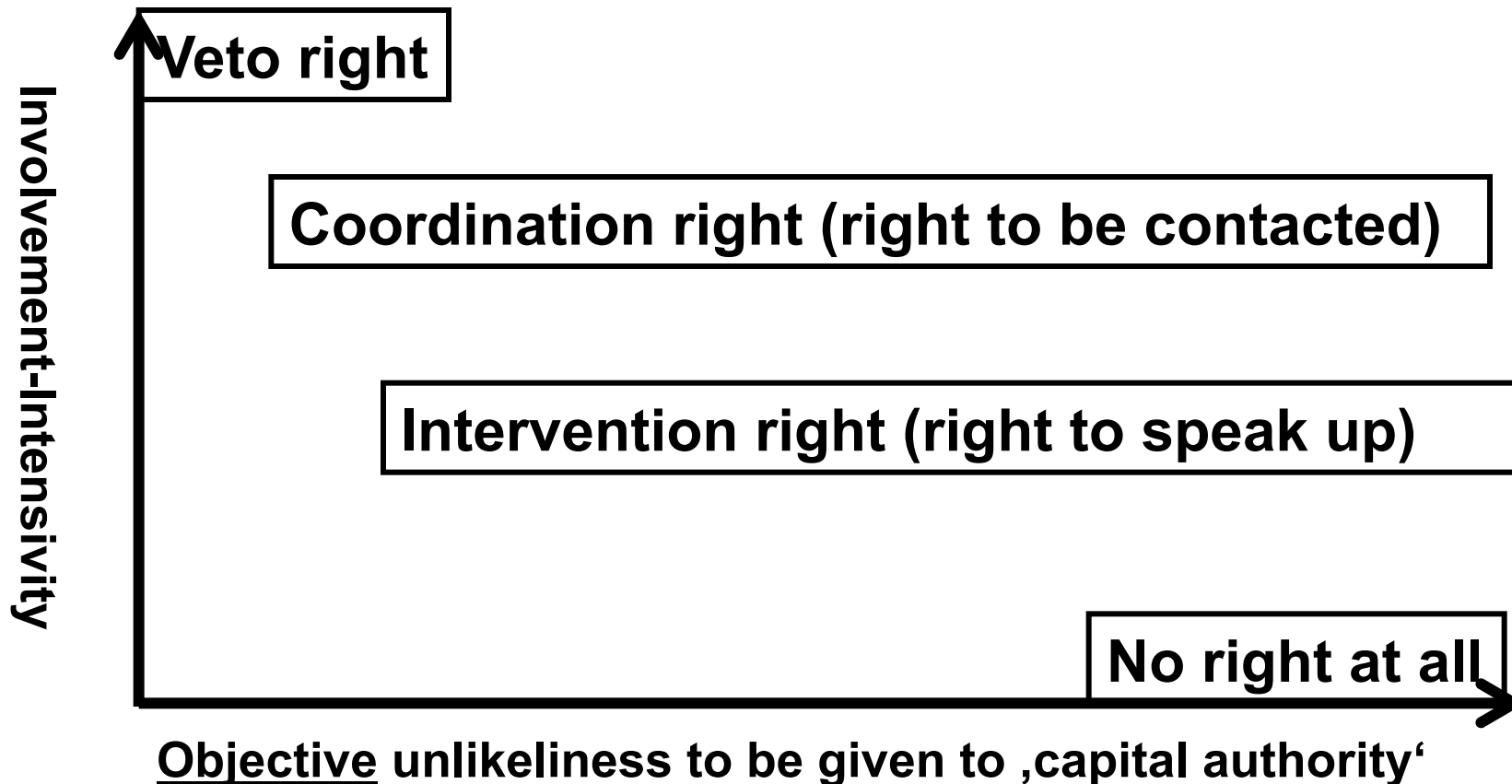
- Other **environmental capital** (+ **carrying capacity** of air, water, forests) and **economic capacity** concerning its 'sustainable' use
- Competences shifted to **1 federal ministry** (after 2000)
- **Capacity** ministry \leftrightarrow **capital** ministry (**conflict of interests!**)
- CO₂ in agriculture, biofuels or solar, agri-environmental measures

4. Relationship between political stakeholders

Basic assessment questions:

1. Which institutionalized coordination mechanism are foreseen in legal documents?
2. How are they distributed, also with regard to the burden of proof?
 - Example for both: Institutional coordination mechanism between Ministry competent for water (maintenance in a good environmental status, economic use...) and other authorities in Austria

4.1. Institutionalized coordination mechanism in legal documents



(Apart of unanimous proposal of law drafts through Ministers to Parliament)

Example concerning distribution in Austrian water sector

Minister responsibility	Minister for	Water sector
A. Ecological capital	Environment	Prepares policy and legal acts (conflict of interest!)
B. Ecological carrying capacity	Same than A	
C. Costs of general permission of facility types (economic capital)	Finance	Veto right (Art. 12 Water Law Act)
D. Technical personal + procedure of general permission of facility types (economic capacity)	Commerce	Veto right (Article 12)
E. Data for water contamination register (economic capacity)	Commerce	Veto right (Article 59/2)
F. Effect on authority responsible for waterways (economic capacity)	Transport	Veto right (Article 59/2)

Example concerning distribution in Austrian water sector I

Minister responsibility	2 nd Authority	Water sector
G. Release of Water Framework Ordinances (capital & capacity)	All provinces	Right to be contacted (Art. 54/1)
H. Measure against imminent danger (capital & capacity)	Respective province	Right to be contacted (Article 54/4)

-in total: 12 cases of institutionalized coordination mechanism with one or more other authorities
- With 1 'capital ministry' and 3 'capacity ministers' (Ministry of Justice?) and with provincial authorities (responsible for capital e.g. species, habitats as well as capacity issues)
- 9-10 veto rights and two rights to be contacted found in Act

4.2. General critical aspects

1. In many cases:
 - a. 'Capacity authorities' are given veto rights concerning natural capacity and natural carrying capacity without any **burden of proof**
 - b. 'Natural capital authorities'/'natural carrying capacity authorities' are not provided with veto rights themselves
 - c. In comparison: in budget negotiations the Minister of Finance (economic capital) has general a Veto right
2. Sometimes no own authority for natural capital exists at all
3. Beyond institutionalized coordination mechanisms other non-institutionalized ones exist (e.g., political-party driven ones)

5. Conclusions

1. Distribution of competences:
 - a. Austrian provincial competence for nature conservation is geographically incoherent → corrected through regional integration (EU) towards more earth-centredness
 - b. Austrian federal competence for agronomy, forestry, environment and water economy leads to conflicts of interests (not anymore solved by external discussion)
2. Institutionalized relationship between political stakeholders (example “water sector”)
 - a. About 1/3 of the veto rights are given to capital authorities in the Austrian water sector → unlikeliness, that veto rights are given to a ‘capital authority’, is found to be rather high (instead of low)
 - b. About 2/3 of the Veto rights are given to ‘capacity authorities’ (and even without any **burden of proof**)

Thank you for your attention!



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