

Local Cultural Curriculum Evaluation: An Anderson Model Approach

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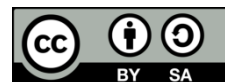
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ABSTRACT

The implementation of the Local Cultural Curriculum in Lembata Regency has not been comprehensively evaluated, despite its formal mandate under Lembata Regent Regulation No. 77 of 2022. This study aims to evaluate the implementation of the Local Cultural Curriculum of Lembata by examining the policy formulation process, curriculum implementation in instructional practice, and evaluation mechanisms at the school level using Anderson's Evaluation Model. This research employed a qualitative case study design, using SMP Negeri 2 Nubatukan and SMP Negeri Satu Atap 92 Bean as research sites. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, while data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The results show that the policy formulation process involved relevant stakeholders and reflected the objective of cultural preservation, although documentation of the process remains limited. Curriculum implementation has begun in schools; however, it faces challenges, including limited learning resources, uneven teacher competencies, and insufficient technical support from the local government. In addition, evaluation mechanisms have not been optimally implemented due to the absence of a structured monitoring and supervision system from the Education Office. Overall, the implementation of the Local Cultural Curriculum demonstrates initial positive progress but requires strengthened resources, systematic supervision, and continuous evaluation to achieve its cultural preservation objectives through formal education effectively.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social change, modernization, and the rapid pace of globalization over the past few decades have had a significant impact on the lifestyles, values, and cultural identities of local communities across Indonesia [1]. One of the most tangible consequences is the diminishing

intergenerational spaces for transmitting culture, language, and traditional practices to younger generations. This condition is not only experienced by urban communities but is also emerging within smaller cultural groups, such as the Lamaholot community in Lembata Regency. In many schools, students demonstrate increasingly limited knowledge of local traditions, symbols, languages, and values, while the social environment outside of school no longer provides sufficient space to facilitate cultural inheritance [2]. This phenomenon underscores the urgent need to develop educational policies that bridge the gap between local culture and formal education processes.

At the regional level, the Government of Lembata Regency has responded to these challenges by issuing Regent Regulation Number 77 of 2022 concerning the Local Content Curriculum of Lembata Culture. This policy was formulated as a strategic effort to preserve Lamaholot cultural identity through structured learning processes [3]. Conceptually, this policy aligns with the direction of national education reform, particularly the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which encourages schools to develop operational curricula based on local contexts [4]. However, various preliminary field findings indicate that policy implementation does not always proceed as expected [5]. Several schools continue to face limitations in developing instructional tools, selecting relevant cultural content, and enhancing teachers' capacity to integrate cultural values into teaching and learning processes [6]. Uneven school readiness, unequal access to resources, and limited technical assistance from local governments demonstrate that policy implementation continues to face fundamental challenges [7].

The urgency of this study is further strengthened by the fact that policy evaluation mechanisms have not yet been systematically implemented. Some schools conduct limited internal evaluations; however, there is no standardized monitoring and evaluation (M&E) instrument at the regency level. Consequently, the progress of curriculum implementation is difficult to monitor comprehensively and sustainably. In other words, a gap exists between the normative aspirations articulated at the regulatory level and the realities of implementation in the field, which, if left unaddressed, may hinder the long-term goal of preserving regional culture through education.

From an academic perspective, studies over the past five years on the implementation of culture-based curricula indicate that the quality of policy formulation strongly influences program success, resource readiness, and the robustness of evaluation systems [8], [9], [10]. However, research on regional cultural curricula has generally focused on classroom implementation or the development of teaching materials [11], while Subianto [12] emphasizes that comprehensive policy evaluation encompassing formulation, implementation, and evaluation stages remains rare, particularly in archipelagic contexts such as Lembata. This clearly identifies the research gap addressed in this study: the absence of a comprehensive analysis of the entire policy cycle of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum using a structured policy evaluation model.

The novelty of this study lies in its application of Anderson's Policy Evaluation Model to assess three main aspects within an integrated analytical framework: (1) policy formulation, (2) policy implementation at the school level, and (3) policy evaluation mechanisms. This approach offers a new contribution by assessing not only instructional

effectiveness but also how the policy is designed, implemented, and evaluated. Furthermore, this study provides practical innovation by identifying standardized evaluation instrument needs and mapping implementation challenges that local governments can use to refine policy frameworks.

Accordingly, the primary objective of this study is to comprehensively evaluate the implementation of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum by examining the quality of policy formulation, the school implementation processes, and the evaluation mechanisms. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of scholarship on the evaluation of culture-based educational policies. In practice, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for local governments, schools, and stakeholders to improve curriculum implementation practices, enhance teacher capacity, and develop more structured and applicable evaluation systems.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative, evaluative design to assess the implementation of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum using Anderson's Policy Evaluation Model. This approach was selected because it enables a comprehensive understanding of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation processes within real school contexts. The research sites were purposively determined using a case study approach at two public junior high schools in Lembata Regency that have implemented the regional cultural curriculum in accordance with Lembata Regent Regulation Number 77 of 2022. The main informants included officials from the Education Office, school principals, teachers responsible for local content subjects, and members of the regional curriculum development team. Informants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling to ensure diverse, relevant perspectives aligned with the research objectives.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observation of learning processes, and document analysis of instructional materials, regional regulations, and school evaluation reports. Data validity was ensured through source, technique, and time triangulation, allowing the findings to reflect the factual and holistic conditions of curriculum implementation. Data analysis followed interactive procedures of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, adapted from the Miles and Huberman model. This analytical process enabled the identification of patterns, inconsistencies, and dynamics in field-level policy implementation. With this methodological design, the study provides an in-depth evaluative account of the effectiveness of the local cultural curriculum policy and offers a robust foundation for evidence-based policy recommendations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Findings from the Policy Formulation Stage

The policy formulation stage of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum reveals complex dynamics involving cultural preservation needs, institutional capacity, and human resource readiness. Field findings indicate that, formally, the policy has a legal foundation in [3]; however, the academic study that should serve as the basis for policy formulation has not been fully developed. This condition creates a gap between policy idealism and technical

realities at the implementation level, particularly because the development of culture-oriented local content requires strong socio-cultural, educational, and policy analyses.

Furthermore, stakeholder involvement in the formulation process was relatively diverse, encompassing the Education Office, cultural practitioners, school principals, and teachers, but academic participation remained limited. In fact, academics play a crucial role in providing scientific evidence and research-based methodologies for curriculum development. The limited academic contribution led to policy documents that are largely normative and insufficiently grounded in schools' empirical needs. This finding aligns with Howlett et al. [13] argument that education policy formulation must be based on scientific analysis to ensure effective and measurable implementation. Findings regarding the incompleteness of supporting documents further underscore that the formulation process did not fully comply with regional curriculum development standards, which require clear implementation guidelines, achievement indicators, and structured evaluation tools. Dunn supports this condition [14], asserting that policies formulated without adequate analytical instruments are prone to gaps between policy objectives and expected outcomes.

Table 1. Summary of Findings at the Policy Formulation Stage

Aspect	Field Findings
Policy Basis	Regent Regulation No. 77/2022 is available; however, the academic study is incomplete.
Stakeholder Involvement	Includes government offices, schools, and cultural figures; academic participation remains minimal.
Supporting Documents	Initial guidelines exist but lack detail and do not include indicators or implementation instruments.

Source: Primary data processed from interviews and document analysis (2024)

The findings presented in Table 1 reinforce Dunn's [14] argument that policies lacking strong analytical foundations are vulnerable to implementation gaps. The absence of a comprehensive academic study at the formulation stage has resulted in the local content policy lacking clear operational direction. This is further supported by field data showing that teachers independently interpret curriculum structures and instructional methods for Lamaholot cultural content. Without a solid academic framework, policy implementation becomes heavily dependent on individual school initiatives rather than a strategic framework established by the local government.

The limited involvement of academics also weakens the integration of scientific perspectives in curriculum development. According to Setiawan et al. [15], expert participation is essential to ensure that regional curricula possess strong content validity and pedagogical orientation. The absence of academics on the policy formulation team has led to a policy that is more administrative than research-based. In terms of supporting documentation, the available implementation guidelines fail to clearly define success indicators, content structure, and monitoring procedures. This deficiency leaves schools without standardized guidance for developing instructional materials. Consistent with Jannah's [16] findings, regional curricula that lack detailed implementation documents tend to result in uneven implementation across schools.

Overall, the findings indicate that the policy formulation stage does not yet reflect the principles of evidence-based policymaking. This condition constitutes a primary factor explaining why school-level implementation has not been fully optimal and why systematic evaluation remains difficult. Consequently, this stage represents a critical point for improvement to ensure that the local cultural curriculum policy can effectively achieve its intended goal of cultural preservation.

Findings from the Policy Implementation Stage

The implementation of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum in the two public junior high schools demonstrates complex dynamics. In general, schools have implemented cultural learning in accordance with the mandate of the Lembata Regency Government [3]; however, the level of consistency remains varied. Classroom observations reveal that some teachers have integrated Lamaholot cultural content into lesson plans, instructional media, and formative assessments. Nevertheless, others continue to employ conventional teaching approaches with limited incorporation of local cultural elements. These differences primarily stem from a lack of training, limited learning resources, and the absence of standardized instructional modules. This field condition indicates that policy implementation is strongly influenced by schools' internal resource readiness, as emphasized by Sabatier and Mazmanian [17], who argue that successful implementation depends on the capacity of implementing agents and the availability of structural support.

In addition, teachers expressed a need for structured instructional guidelines to help them develop lesson plans grounded in Lembata culture. To date, teachers have largely relied on personal experience, orally transmitted cultural knowledge, and support from local communities. While these efforts are valuable, they do not guarantee uniform quality of instruction across classes or schools. This finding aligns with Fullan's [18] perspective that curriculum implementation requires systemic support, including training, supervision, and a consistent learning ecosystem, to ensure that changes in teaching practices do not rely solely on individual initiative.

On the other hand, the involvement of cultural community members, such as traditional leaders, weavers, and local artists, remains sporadic. Their participation is crucial for enriching learning materials, enhancing cultural authenticity, and improving students' learning experiences. The limited collaboration is largely attributable to the absence of formal mechanisms for cooperation between schools and cultural communities, as well as to school budget constraints. These findings highlight a gap between policy expectations that emphasize community engagement and the realities of implementation, which continue to focus primarily on teachers' and schools' roles. This gap aligns with Anderson's [19] critique that implementation failures often arise not from flawed policies but from inadequately prepared operational mechanisms.

Table 2. Summary of Policy Implementation Findings

Implementation Aspect	Field Findings
Teacher Readiness	High enthusiasm but limited training; reliance on personal knowledge
Learning Resources	No standardized modules; many materials sourced from local communities
Institutional Support	Supervision from the Education Office is irregular; technical assistance is limited.
Community Participation	Present but not systematic; collaboration remains informal.
Impact on Students	Increased interest in local culture; competency development remains uneven

Source: Primary research data (observations, interviews, documentation), 2024

Overall, the data presented in Table 2 indicate that implementation is underway but has not yet reached the ideal standards envisioned by the local government. Teachers occupy a strategic position as agents of change; however, their capacity is not yet fully supported by the system. This condition is consistent with top-down implementation theory, which emphasizes the importance of implementer readiness and the comprehensiveness of policy guidelines [20]. The findings regarding limited learning resources further reveal a gap between policy norms mandating culture-based learning and field realities that lack adequate support. This reinforces the notion that successful implementation requires alignment among regulations, resources, and cross-stakeholder coordination.

Furthermore, although students demonstrate positive responses to cultural learning, their competency attainment remains influenced by variations in teaching strategies. The lack of methodological uniformity indicates that the policy has not yet established clear implementation standards at the school level. Accordingly, this study underscores the need to develop structured instructional guidelines, enhance teacher capacity, and strengthen coordination mechanisms among schools, local governments, and cultural communities to achieve effective and sustainable curriculum implementation.

Findings from the Policy Evaluation Stage

The research findings at the evaluation stage indicate that the evaluation mechanism of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum has not been implemented systematically and remains largely limited to informal assessments at the school level. Most of the schools examined conduct internal evaluations based on teacher observations, instructional reflections, and routine discussions among educators. However, no standardized evaluation instruments were identified to measure the achievement of learning objectives, the quality of the implementation process, or the effectiveness of policy support. This condition illustrates that policy evaluation is still sporadic and does not adhere to structured program evaluation principles as recommended in contemporary public policy literature [14], [21].

From the perspective of local government, monitoring of curriculum implementation is highly limited. The Education Office provides only general supervision, not one specifically focused on the local cultural curriculum, and it has not developed periodic reporting formats that schools are required to complete. The absence of evaluation guidelines has led schools to interpret evaluation processes independently, resulting in non-uniform data. This finding is consistent with Anderson's [19] argument that the evaluation stage represents a critical point in the policy cycle, as it assesses whether policy implementation

has achieved the intended outcomes or has instead deviated from its original objectives. Irregularities at the evaluation stage may prevent governments from detecting implementation problems early.

Specifically, teachers reported a lack of measurement tools to assess improvements in students' cultural competencies, including knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Researcher observations revealed that assessment practices remain limited to simple tests and practical assignments that are not fully aligned with cultural competency standards outlined in the curriculum documents. The absence of standardized instruments undermines the validity of evaluation results. In fact, evidence-based evaluation is strongly recommended for the management of local curricula, enabling policymakers to revise policies based on authentic data [22].

Furthermore, the findings indicate that schools have not used evaluation results to inform instructional improvement strategies. For instance, although teachers recognize limitations in cultural learning resources, no formal follow-up action plans have been developed. The lack of such feedback loops suggests that the policy cycle has not been completed, as the evaluation stage should generate feedback that drives policy adjustments and instructional improvements. Anderson [19] emphasizes that policies lacking evaluation-and-improvement cycles tend to stagnate and struggle to achieve substantive effectiveness.

Table 3. Summary of Policy Evaluation Findings

Policy Aspect	Evaluation	Field Findings
Evaluation Instruments		No standardized instruments available; evaluations based on teacher reflection and informal observation
Education Monitoring	Office	General supervision; not specific to local culture; no mandatory school reporting
School-Level Evaluation		Unstructured; based on teacher perceptions rather than curriculum indicators
Use of Results	Evaluation	Not used for improvement feedback; no formal follow-up recommendations
Achievement Indicators		Not operationally defined; student achievements are poorly documented.

Source: Primary research data compiled from interviews, observations, and document analysis (2024).

The findings in Table 3 confirm that policy evaluation is the weakest component of the overall implementation cycle of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum. The lack of standardized evaluation instruments prevents schools from establishing benchmarks for assessing instructional effectiveness. This situation reflects a gap between the policy objectives stipulated in the Regent Regulation and evaluation practices in the field. Dunn [14] argues that policies not evaluated systematically are prone to implementation bias, as governments lack sufficient data to assess program success.

Moreover, the absence of structured monitoring mechanisms from the Education Office causes evaluation processes to rely heavily on individual teacher interpretations. Similar studies by Susilawati and Sugmawati [23] also demonstrate that the success of local curriculum implementation depends heavily on robust evaluation systems and strong local government support. Accordingly, this study underscores the urgent need to strengthen the evaluation dimension of policy to ensure that curriculum implementation can be continuously monitored and lead to sustainable improvement.

3.2 Discussion

This discussion synthesizes the research findings across the three main stages of policy evaluation policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy evaluation by integrating them with relevant theories and previous empirical studies. Such integration is essential to ensure that the analysis not only describes empirical phenomena but also contributes to the development of policy theory, particularly in the context of implementing culture-based local content curricula.

Alignment of Findings with Anderson's Policy Evaluation Theory

Anderson's policy model emphasizes that public policies can function effectively only when their three core components operate sequentially and interactively: policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy evaluation [19]. The findings of this study consistently demonstrate that although all three stages are formally present in the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum policy, the quality of their execution varies considerably.

At the formulation stage, field findings reveal that regulatory documents such as [3] are available; however, they are not supported by adequate academic studies. This condition aligns with Dunn's [14] critique that policies formulated without a strong analytical foundation tend to produce outcomes that are insufficiently responsive to social and institutional contexts. The lack of academic grounding has resulted in imprecise goal-setting, unclear strategies, and the absence of measurable indicators of success. Consequently, the policy appears more symbolic and administrative in nature rather than substantive.

At the implementation stage, this study identifies a significant gap between policy design and the actual conditions within schools. This finding is consistent with Lipsky's [24] perspective that policy implementation is heavily influenced by the capacity of implementing actors, resource availability, and the operational environment. Teachers, as street-level bureaucrats, continue to face limited access to learning resources, insufficient training, and a lack of technical assistance from local government authorities. These constraints hinder alignment with policy intentions and lead to variations in quality across schools.

At the evaluation stage, the study finds that the implementation assessment has not been supported by standardized monitoring instruments, resulting in inconsistent evaluation reports that are difficult to use as a basis for subsequent policy decisions. This finding is consistent with Patton's [22] evaluation model, which emphasizes that evaluations must employ standardized methodologies to generate accurate, actionable feedback. Without such instruments, the evaluation process fails to function as a critical feedback mechanism within the policy cycle.

2. Integration of Findings with Previous Studies

The findings of this study confirm and extend previous research on the implementation of local content curricula. For instance, Syafnan et al. [25] demonstrate that curricula based on local wisdom often encounter challenges related to teacher readiness and limited instructional media. Similarly, Rasidi and Istiningsih [26] emphasize that the success of cultural curricula depends heavily on support from local governments and collaboration with

cultural communities. The findings of this study reinforce these prior conclusions while also introducing a new contextual emphasis by highlighting the absence of academic studies as a fundamental root problem, an aspect that has rarely been addressed in similar research. Thus, this study does not merely replicate earlier findings but provides an important elaboration by demonstrating that weaknesses at the policy formulation stage significantly determine the low effectiveness of both implementation and evaluation. This provides a new theoretical insight by showing that incomplete policy rationality at the formulation stage cascades to subsequent stages, particularly in the context of regional education policy.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions (Research Novelty)

The primary novelty of this study lies in three key aspects. First, it applies Anderson's policy evaluation model to analyze a local cultural curriculum, an approach that remains relatively uncommon in studies of regional curriculum policy in Indonesia. Second, it identifies the root causes of policy failure from the formulation perspective rather than focusing solely on implementation. While most previous studies emphasize school-level execution, this research traces policy weaknesses back to fundamental shortcomings at the formulation stage. Third, it strengthens the argument that cultural preservation through education cannot be effectively realized without robust academic documentation, particularly comprehensive academic manuscripts. This finding enriches the literature on evidence-based policy in education. From a practical perspective, this study offers actionable recommendations for strengthening teacher capacity, developing standardized evaluation instruments, and revising policy design through more comprehensive academic research.

Final Synthesis and a New Conceptual Model

The final synthesis of this study indicates that misalignment among policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation results in suboptimal policy effectiveness. When policies lack a strong academic foundation (formulation gap), implementation in the field becomes fragmented and inconsistent (implementation variability), and evaluation fails to generate usable information (evaluation failure). These three conditions form a structured causal pattern. Accordingly, this study proposes a new conceptual model suggesting that the success of a Local Cultural Curriculum is determined by three structural prerequisites: (a) academic rationality in policy formulation, (b) institutional capacity in implementation, and (c) sustainable, standardized evaluation instruments. This model reinforces Anderson's (2019) policy framework while simultaneously providing empirical contributions within the dynamic context of regional cultural curriculum development.

Implications

The findings of this study on the implementation of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum using Anderson's Policy Evaluation Model yield several important implications for the development of regional education policy, the strengthening of school capacity, and the advancement of knowledge in educational policy evaluation. These implications reflect how empirical findings from the stages of policy formulation, implementation, and

evaluation can drive regional education systems toward more structured, evidence-based, and sustainable practices.

Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on regional education policy evaluation by applying Anderson's model to a local content curriculum. The findings at the policy formulation stage—particularly those related to weak academic and analytical foundations—reinforce the argument that effective education policies require robust policy knowledge and adequate empirical evidence [14], [27]. This study extends the understanding that regional curricula are not merely administrative products but outcomes of policy processes that require academic legitimacy, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and systematic monitoring frameworks.

Practical Implications for Local Government

From a practical standpoint, this study emphasizes the need for the Lembata Regency Government to strengthen the foundations of its policies in two main directions: improving policy formulation documents and enhancing implementation capacity at the school level. The finding that policy formulation documents are insufficiently grounded in academic research implies the need to develop academic manuscripts and policy briefs as integral components of evidence-based policymaking. The government should also prepare detailed technical guidelines, including standards for instructional processes, success indicators, and routine monitoring mechanisms. Furthermore, sustained support for schools through teacher training programs, the development of culture-based learning resources, and collaboration with cultural institutions represents an urgent need. Without such interventions, curriculum implementation is likely to remain sporadic and dependent on individual schools' initiatives.

Implications for Schools and Teachers

For schools, this study implies the need to enhance teacher competencies in developing cultural teaching materials, contextual learning strategies, and authentic assessment practices. Teachers, as the primary agents of implementation, require continuous professional development that emphasizes integrating cultural values, culturally literate methods, and critical pedagogy. In addition, schools should establish partnerships with traditional leaders, cultural communities, and cultural advocacy groups to address limitations in learning resources and enrich instructional practices [28]. Findings from the evaluation stage indicate that schools require improved documentation systems, including cultural learning portfolios and periodic evaluation reports. Well-documented implementation processes will enable schools to conduct reflection more effectively, identify challenges, and formulate more targeted follow-up actions.

Implications for Public Policy and Educational Governance

Another significant implication is the need to establish policy feedback mechanisms that connect schools with local government authorities. The absence of standardized evaluation instruments constitutes a major obstacle to ensuring policy sustainability. Local

governments may develop monitoring dashboards or standardized evaluation tools to capture the progress of local content curriculum implementation periodically. This approach aligns with the policy literature, which emphasizes the importance of performance monitoring within the policy cycle [13]. Through such mechanisms, the policy process does not end with the issuance of regulations but evolves into a complete policy cycle that is adaptive and responsive to field dynamics. This implication is critical to ensuring that cultural curriculum policies function not merely as formal documents but as living practices embedded in everyday educational activities.

Social and Cultural Implications

This study also carries important social implications, particularly in terms of restoring and strengthening the cultural identity of the Lembata community through formal education. Implementing a cultural curriculum can enhance cultural literacy, foster pride in local identity, and integrate local wisdom values into the character development of younger generations. However, these outcomes can only be achieved if robust implementation mechanisms, adequate resources, and continuous evaluation support the policy.

4. CONCLUSION

This study directly addresses three main focal points: the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of the Lembata Local Cultural Curriculum. First, regarding policy formulation, the study concludes that although there is a strong commitment from the local government and relevant stakeholders to introduce a curriculum grounded in local culture, the formulation process has not been adequately supported by academic studies. This condition indicates that strengthening the analytical foundation is a fundamental requirement to ensure the policy has more precise, more measurable operational directions.

Second, in terms of implementation, the curriculum has been carried out by schools through various adaptations, including the integration of Lamaholot cultural elements into instructional materials and learning activities. However, the effectiveness of implementation largely depends on teacher capacity, the availability of learning resources, and technical support from the local government. These findings highlight the need for more systematic mentoring strategies and adequate facilities to ensure optimal curriculum implementation at the school level.

Third, regarding policy evaluation, the study finds that the evaluation process has not been conducted in a structured manner due to the absence of standardized monitoring instruments and reporting systems. This weakness hinders continuous improvement efforts and limits the local government's ability to assess policy effectiveness comprehensively and holistically.

Overall, this study contributes to the development of educational policy scholarship by demonstrating that the success of regional curriculum policies is not determined solely by the strength of regulatory frameworks, but also by the coherence and continuity among policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. These three aspects should be viewed as an integrated policy cycle in which each stage influences the others and must be developed through analytical, participatory, and sustainability-oriented approaches.

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