



Environmental Policymaking: Process and Evolution

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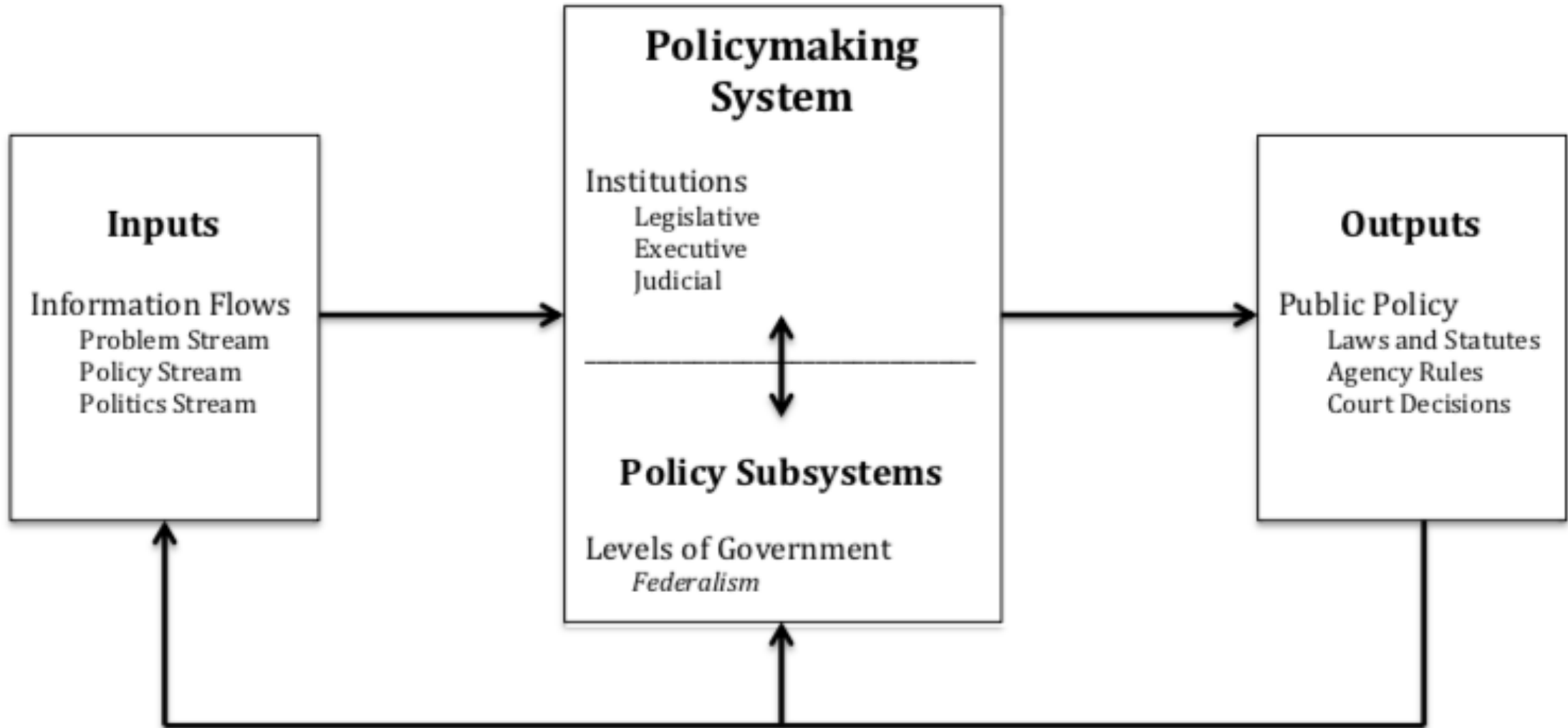
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Overview

Environmental Policymaking

- Process and policy design (*Chapter 2*)
- Evolution (*Chapter 3*)
- Future?

Environmental Policymaking Framework



The Environmental Policymaking Process

Inputs (Information Flows)

Information signals that emanate from the economic, social, and natural environment

- Problem stream
 - Information regarding conditions and potential problems
 - *The level of CO₂ in the atmosphere is 427ppm (0.0427%)*

Inputs (Information Flows)

Information signals that emanate from the economic, social, and natural environment

- Policy stream
 - Information about possible policy solutions
 - *A carbon tax is likely to reduce CO₂ emissions*

Inputs (Information Flows)

Information signals that emanate from the economic, social, and natural environment

- Politics stream
 - Information about political conditions
 - *A majority of Americans think climate change is happening*

The Environmental Policymaking System

Macro-Institutions: The three major branches of the government

- Congress: *legislative function*
- President: *executive function*
 - Executive agencies
- Courts: *judicial function*

The Environmental Policymaking System

Policy Subsystems: Configurations of actors and institutions organized around particular policy domains and are semi-autonomous from the broader policymaking system

- Federalism and *polycentricity*
 - Multiple centers of decision-making authority

The Environmental Policymaking System

Policy Actors: Individuals, groups, or coalitions involved in the policymaking process that seek to see their preferences for policy enacted

- Official actors (in government) and unofficial actors (outside government)

The Environmental Policymaking System

Outputs (Public Policies): The outcomes of government processes that are aimed at alleviating a societal problem

- Policies take multiple *forms*
 - Legislation
 - Executive orders
 - Agency rules and regulations
 - Court decisions
- The form policy takes is shaped by the institutional *pathway*

Environmental Policy Design

Environmental Policy Design

The content of the policy

- Includes:
 - Policy goals
 - Causal framework
 - Policy instruments
 - Implementation structure

Environmental Policy Goals

The outcomes that policymakers want the policy to achieve

- For environmental policy, policy goals are typically broadly defined as some level of environmental protection, harm reduction, or improved management of a natural resource
- *A reduction in the amount of greenhouse gases being emitted into the atmosphere*

Environmental Policy Instruments

The means of achieving policy goals

- Four categories
 - Using markets: *carbon tax*
 - Creating markets: *cap-and-trade*
 - Using environmental regulations: *command-and-control*
 - Engaging the public: *provide information*

Selecting Policy Instruments

- Technical process
 - Benefit-cost analysis (BCA)
- Political process
 - Stakeholders and coalition building

Causal Framework

The theory that connects the policy (p) to the desired outcome (Y)

- *How would a carbon tax reduce emissions?*

Implementation Structure

Implementation involves turning a policy into action through the application of its instruments and enforcement of its requirements

- Implementation structures include the agencies and other actors that are involved in implementing a policy
- Policy implementation often involves policy creation

The Evolution of Environmental Policy in the US

Restoring nature to its natural state is a cause beyond party and beyond factions. It has become a common cause of all the people of this country ... Clean air, clean water, open spaces-these should once again be the birthright of every American. If we act now, they can be

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Richard Nixon, State of the Union address 1970



Themes

- Development: Use of natural resources
- Conservation/Sustainable Development
 - Preservation
- Environmental Rights
- Environmental Justice

Environmental Policy Eras

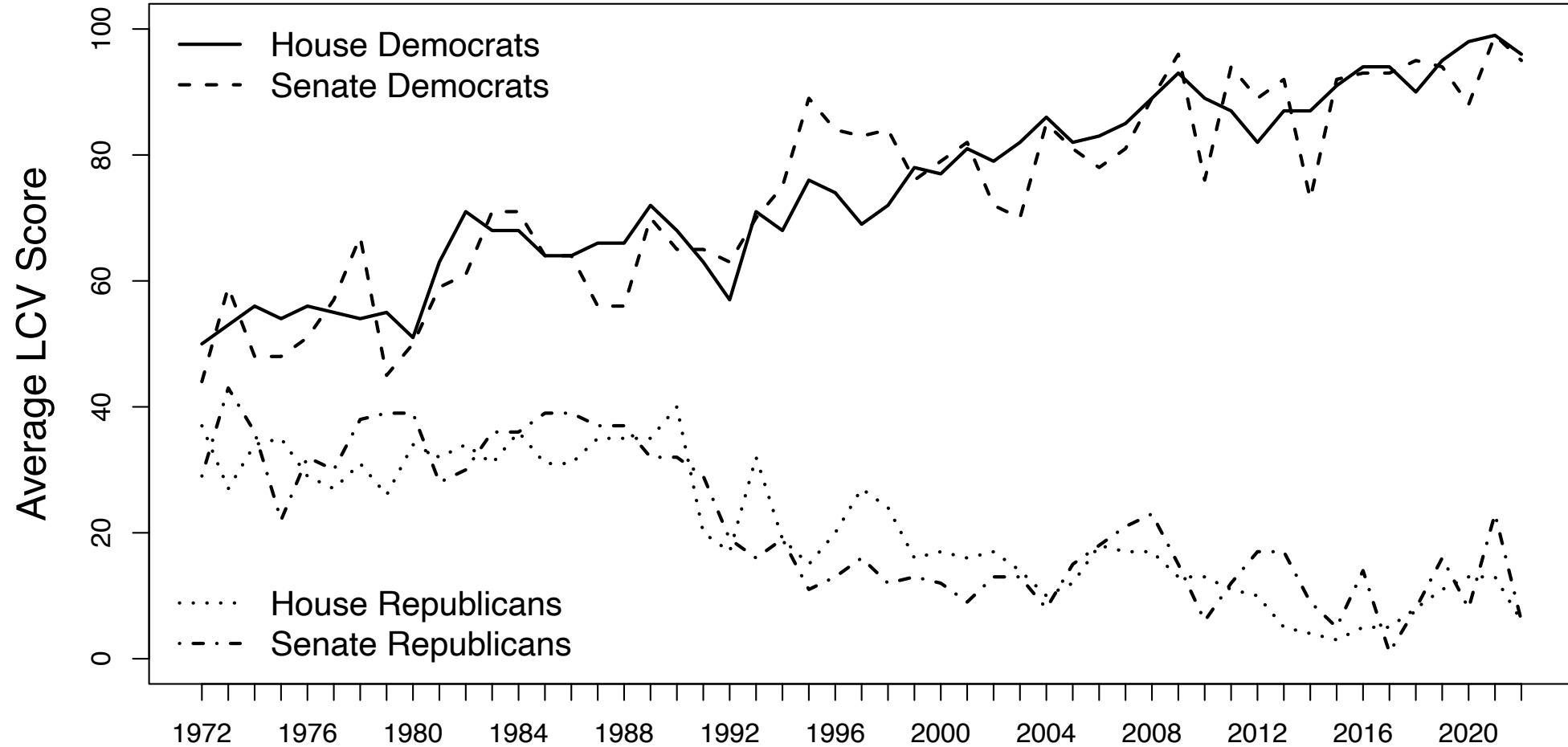
- Developmental: 1800-1890
- Conservation: 1890-1962
- Environmentalism: 1962-1980
- Reform: 1980-2000
- Climate Change
 - Polarization and stagnation
- *Retrenchment?*

Polarization and Stagnation

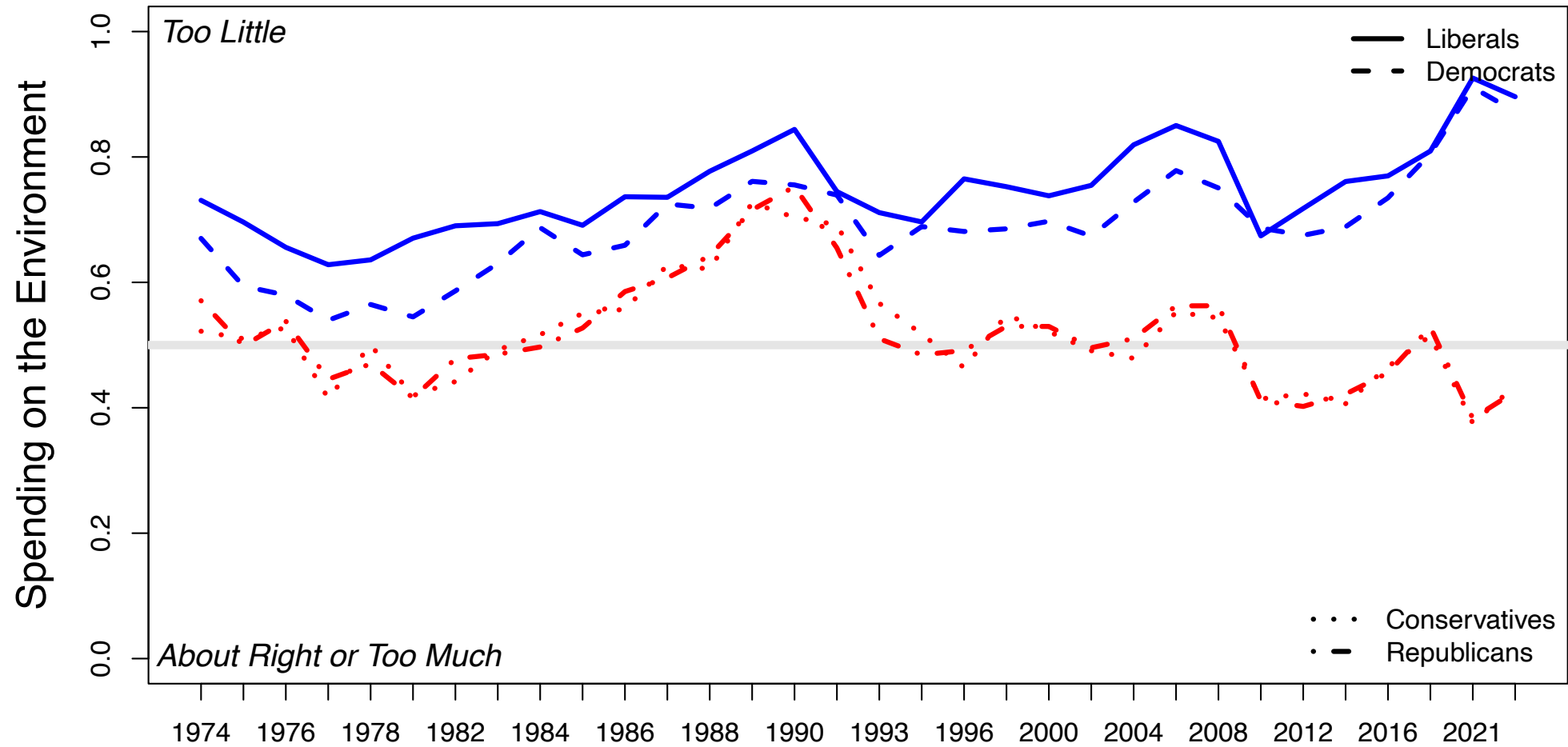
Environmental policy shaped by which political party is in power

- Energy crises of the 1970's
- Sagebrush Rebellion
- Growing skepticism of government
- Reagan, Gingrich, Tea Party, Trump
- CAA Amendment of 1990; Inflation Reduction Act of 2022

Polarization: US Congress



Polarization: The Public



What's next?

Trump 2.0

Three C's

- Capacity
 - *What will happen to the government's ability to do things?*
- Corruption
 - *What else will become politicized?*
- Constraint
 - *How will others respond?*

Retrenchment Era?

Will the green state be undone?

- Increase in the use of fossil fuels?
- Rollback of the IRA?
- Loss of data and monitoring of environmental conditions?
- Ability of the EPA to enforce regulations?
- The Court after *Chevron deference*?

Thank you!

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