

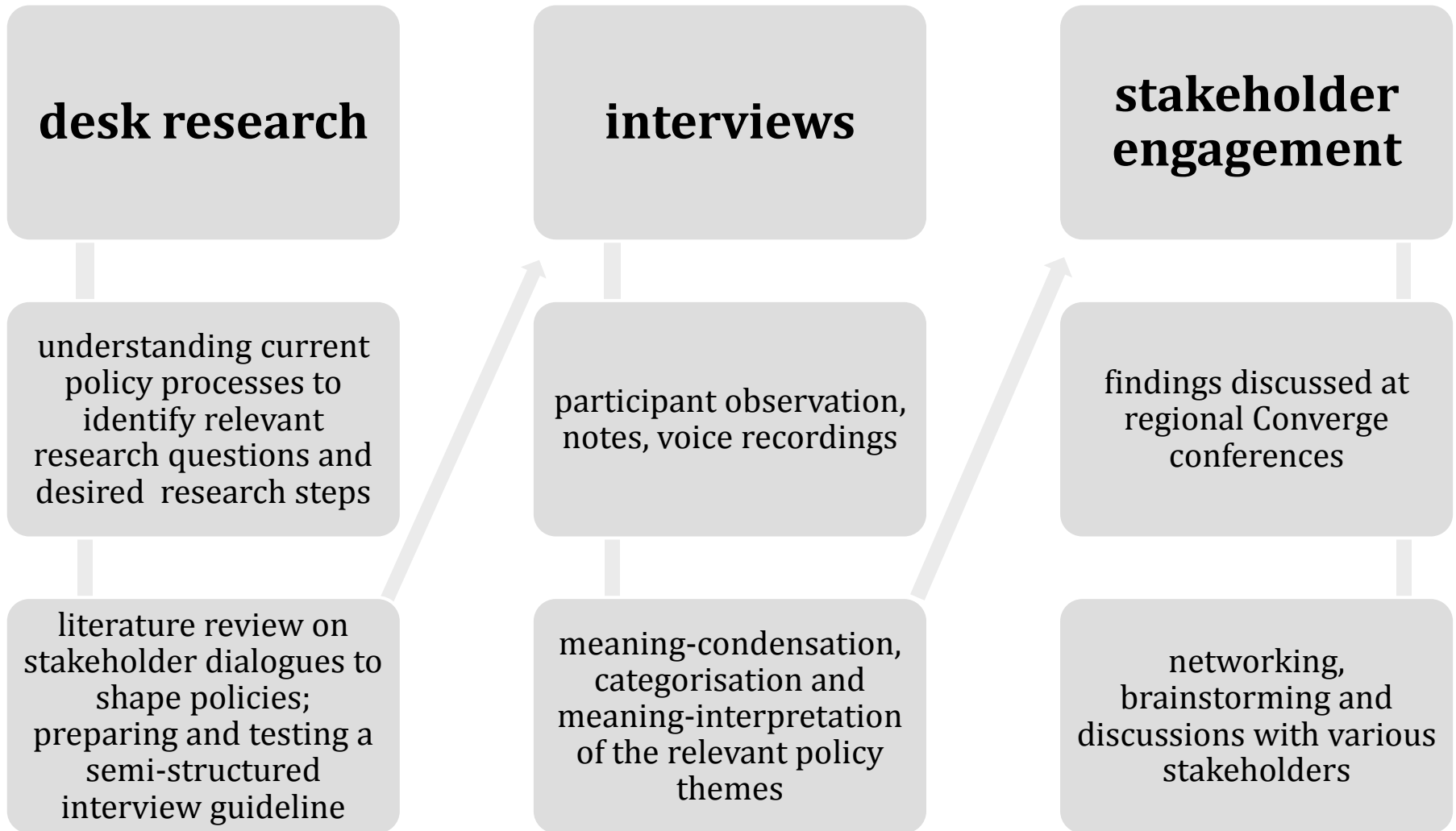
# EQUITY AND SUSTAINABILITY: CONVERGING POLICY COMMUNITIES

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# methodology



- assessment of perceptions through personal interviews
  - CONCEPTS: SD in this unit, personal definition of sustainability, equity and limits, Convergence framework
  - MAIN CHALLENGES AND ACTORS: organisations, documents or conceptual frameworks highlighting the message of limits/equity
  - POLICY INSTRUMENTS: best practice examples, programs or projects; policy toolkit to facilitate engagement in the process of transition
  - SCALE: how to “Europeanise” the Convergence concept
  - FUTURE PROSPECTS: developments you expect, research needs.
- in April-May and October 2012 with 15 policy officers at DG Environment, DG Development, DG Health and Consumers, DG Climate, DG Trade; and 3 independent policy experts working at MEP Greens/EFA Group, international research institutes and grassroot initiatives

- 1) „convergence policy” does not exist, only SD policy and various sectorial policies; some argument for convergence
- 2) focus of SDGs has gradually shifted focus: human rights, development issues are better incorporated.
- 3) global equity is not accepted by the EU policies. Job and growth comes first; equity and limits comes only next.
- 4) imminent policy trap: toolbox extend to market-based instruments, green investments - no exit from growth paradigm in the EU policy.
- 5) contraction is encompassed by the EU2020: Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth -- crucial to better incorporate the equity within limits arguments in the EU 2020.

- 6) coherence understood as new focus (conceptual hook) but not radical change in policymaking. No links between DG Env & Dev. Policy coherence can not be successful if organisational setting does not live up to it.
- 7) environmental policy is successful, however reducing inequality (in access to resources) is less realistic.
- 8) convergence regarded adequate for starting reasonable conversations with stakeholders in sustainability debates.
- 9) policies address complex systemic interactions but process level of convergence is entirely missing from EU policies.
- 10) ENGOs could be engaged for the convergence framework

# findings



- 11) evidence needed on successful engagement processes - how we get to the desirable future
- 12) multiple crises offer a favourable governance context, sense of urgency for realworld solutions; bottom-up, networked, participatory policy approaches
- 13) Convergence as a 'pre-policy concept', a plug-in for policy-makers - crosscutting several DGs work and could offer creative space for intergroup meetings at the EU.
- 14) Convergence as a 'hook' captures various policy areas and invites to an open debate.
- 15) serve up results and feed into current debates.

## **Transdisciplinary research and analysis on**

- real thresholds, regional level limits, boundaries, real pressure points, interactions
- indicators in resource efficiency and their interlinkages – interaction on the global level.
- cost of non-action: cost of non-compliance, non-implementation of policies to show benefits.

*“Science has revealed most global threats to the environment so far. The majority of them have also worked very hard to convince politicians and the general public of the reality of their discoveries.”*

*“Scientific information is already there: the king is already naked, the economy collapsed”*

*“We know what is sustainability - how to get there, how to implement social and cultural change. We do not know what people want and willing to do, what is politically feasible for the most marginalised communities”.*

*“You do not need a lot of science to know that the way we live is unsustainable, but to get other people to accept that is a challenge.”*

*“in the EU policy we fail without sufficiently clearly expressing the dangers in an indicator-oriented way.”*

*“no one knows what will work, but it must be an evolving and rapidly adapting bunch of solutions”*

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