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**Constructing Maastricht's Third 'C':  
A Study of the Ideational Causality of Policy  
Coherence for Development in the EU**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the evolution of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) in the EU. The overarching purpose is to give an example of ideational causation in the EU, and concretely, to illustrate how a norm can cause changes to policy and to policymaking. It is argued that the PCD concept is essentially a norm, because it provides a guideline for how to prioritize between differing and often conflicting policy objectives. The PCD norm is traced from its official 'birth' at the High Level OECD DAC meeting in 1991 to its current status, while an attempt is made to single out changes made to process (policy-making) and outcome (policies). Changes made to two central EU policies, namely the CAP and the CFP, are investigated, as to explore whether an effect of PCD can be observed. Moreover, the evolutionary stage of the PCD norm is determined according its 'norm life cycle'.

*Key words:* Policy Coherence for Development, ideational causality, norms, EU policy-making, constructivism

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LIST OF ACRONYMS	
ACP	African, Caribbean, Pacific (States)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CEPS	Centre for European Policy Studies
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
COARM	Council Working Group on Conventional Arms Experts
CODEV	Council Working Party on Development Cooperation
CSP/RSP	Country Strategy Paper/Regional Strategy Paper
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DG	Directorate General (of the European Commission)
EBA	Everything But Arms Initiative
EC	European Commission
ECD	European Consensus on Development
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Making
EP	European Parliament
FLEGT	Forrest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FPAs	Fisheries Partnership Agreements
GAERC	General Affairs and External Relations Council
IA	Impact Assessment
ISC	Inter-Service Consultations
IUU	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing
JAR	Joint Annual Review
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MS	Member State
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCD	Policy Coherence for Development
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization

# 1. Introduction

In the mid-nineteen nineties, a coalition of NGOs ran a series of campaigns against different EU policies related to *inter alia* beef, chocolate and fisheries (Carbone 2008). The NGOs were outraged by the incoherence of EU policies, as illustrated by the ‘dumping’ of subsidized beef in a region where the EU was simultaneously supporting the local beef industry through development aid. Unfortunately, examples of such incoherencies were real – and not rare. The question of coherence, meaning the absence of conflict between various EU policies and sometimes referred to as consistency<sup>1</sup>, is not new to the EU or any other polity for that matter. As pointed out by Simon Nuttall, “we should all like our policies and actions to be characterized by consistency, if only because the logical alternative is inconsistency, a concept which carries almost exclusively negative baggage” (Nuttall 2005, p. 93). Although consistency of policies is referred to already in the Single European Act, achieving it has been easier said than done. Avoiding incoherence (or the broader concept of inconsistency) necessarily means prioritizing between different, and sometimes conflicting, policy objectives, and how is the EU to do this without a formal hierarchy of interests? One answer to this question is the concept of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), which was first discussed in the OECD DAC in 1991. Rather than just seeking generic policy coherence, PCD emerged as norm, which would designate this coherence to the benefit of the developing countries (that had long felt the impact of incoherence). The following paper will investigate PCD as an emerging norm, a norm that is slowly making an impact on EU policy-making and policies.

## 1.1. Purpose and Research Questions

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to give an example of the causal impact of ideas and to show that a normative ideation, namely the norm<sup>2</sup> of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), promotes action and even change in the EU. The paper will be structured around an attempt to answer the following three questions:

1. *How did PCD emerge in the EU?*
2. *How has PCD affected the way policy-making is undertaken in the EU (process)?*
3. *How have policies been reformed according to PCD (outcome)?*

These question will allow for an exploration of the origins of PCD, showing how it has entered EU policy-making as a norm, how it has changed policymaking and how it may have changed policies. As such, the paper will contribute to the body of literature that highlights the role of norms and values in the EU, while claiming that such motivational factors can exist alongside rational and materialistic considerations. By exploring the way the PCD norm functions we will also be exploring the potential of PCD in the EU to put

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<sup>1</sup> Coherence and consistency are often used interchangeably, although they are not entirely identical concepts. Consistency refers mainly to the EU’s problems of speaking with one voice. Here, only the term coherence will be used henceforth. For a discussion on the difference, see ECDPM 2007.

<sup>2</sup> An idea, also referred to here as an ideation, is an overarching term, which includes such concepts as norms, cultures, doctrines, paradigms, etc. Therefore, PCD is understood as being an idea (or ideation) in general and a norm more specifically.

development concerns in the driver's seat. Moreover, we will be adding to the argument for or against the EU's potential to become a coherent external actor.

## 1.2. Definition of Policy Coherence for Development

PCD has been defined by the EU as “ensuring that the EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries, and that these policies support development objectives” (ECD 2005). PCD can be broken down further, into five different types that are both more specific and more operative. These five types can be defined as follows:

- *Horizontal Coherence* refers to the potential problems raised by the interaction between various policy areas (more specifically, with regard to development policy it refers to the consistency between aid and non-aid policies),
- *Vertical Coherence* refers to the relationship between member states and the EU (more specifically to development policy it refers to the consistency between different policies across Member States (in between themselves and the EU) in terms of their combined contribution to development),
- *Internal Coherence* refers to the consistency between the objectives of a given policy (more specifically to development policy, it refers to the consistency between purposes of aid, channels, function),
- *Donor-Recipient Coherence* refers to the interaction between policies adopted by the industrialized countries and those adopted by developing countries, and
- *Multilateral Coherence* refers to interaction between international organizations, such as the UN and the International Financial Institutions, which often promote incompatible goals (Carbone, 2008; 326).

## 1.3. Delimitations

PCD can be approached in many different ways and to many different ends. Coming from a development perspective, it would certainly be tempting to investigate the effectiveness of PCD in the EU with regard to development policy. As the original purpose of PCD (be it horizontal, vertical, internal or otherwise) was to make development aid more effective and efficient, it would seem natural to test this very aspect of the concept as it has been introduced in the EU. Although this is something of interest to me, it is out of the scope of this paper, both in terms of the timeframe, the financial feasibility and the length restrictions. Evaluating PCD in relation to its actual effect on developing countries (via policy changes) would require a wide-reaching evaluation of donor policy, recipient policy, projects, etc. This would be too large a project for present purposes. In stead, I will focus on the extent to which and how PCD functions, even before its potential positive or negative effects are felt.

Furthermore, as described in the previous section, PCD can be split into five different types of coherence, namely vertical, horizontal, internal, donor-recipient and multilateral. Although all types, when investigated in the context of the EU, could potentially reveal aspects of the EU as an actor in development and its potential as a coherent external

actor, the paper will mainly be focused on the horizontal aspects. Moreover, the horizontal coherence up for investigation will be that of the EU (i.e. not horizontal coherence in the Member States). To sum up, PCD in the present context will mean horizontal coherence of EU policies, unless otherwise mentioned. Finally, horizontal coherence embodies the prioritization between different objectives of the EU, which permits the illustration of the ideational argument and the struggle between material interests, norms and values.

#### **1.4. Disposition**

The thesis at hand will be structured as follows. In chapter two, the theoretical approach and the methodological framework will be presented and discussed, culminating in a presentation of the research design. In chapter three, the first part of the analysis will be introduced, with the purpose of answering the first research question: *how did PCD emerge in the EU?* Chapter four contains the second part of the analysis, dealing with research question two: *how has PCD affected the way policy-making is undertaken in the EU (process)?* The last research question, namely *how have policies been reformed according to PCD (outcome)*, will be dealt with in chapter five, which will contain the two case studies. The thesis is concluded by some reflections about the study and some suggestions for further research.

## **2. Theoretical Considerations and Methodology**

The overarching argument of this paper will be that ideas and norms have the potential to influence action in the EU in general and, more specifically, that the evolution of PCD in the EU is an example of such ideational influence. It will not be argued that choices are made exclusively on the basis of ideations. However, an argument that leaves room for the influence of ideation will be best situated within the realm of social constructivism, which allows for ideational factors to be considered. The following chapter will thus begin by outlining the most relevant tenets of constructivist theory, before turning to the methodology.

### **2.1. The Social Constructivist Approach**

It will be worthwhile to begin by outlining how constructivist literature, rather than any other approach, fits with the research at hand. PCD, other than generally being an ideation, is first and foremost a norm<sup>3</sup>, designed to guide policy makers. It stipulates how to prioritize between different options, often in situations where objectives are not necessarily compatible with one another. Specifically, PCD asks that non-aid policies be designed in such a way, that they do not have negative effects on development efforts, be they direct or indirect. When arguing that a norm, rather than material interests or utility maximization, guides behavior and informs policy making, a sociological or constructivist

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<sup>3</sup> A norm can be defined as follows: “authoritative rule or standard by which something is judged and on that basis approved or disapproved. Examples of norms include standards of right and wrong, beauty and ugliness, and truth and falsehood” (Columbia 2004).

approach will be the most fitting. At the core of constructivist theory is the objection that actors' preferences and interests should ever be taken for granted. Constructivists argue that agents and structures are mutually constitutive, meaning that "the social environment in which we find ourselves, defines (constitutes) who we are ... At the same time, human agency creates, reproduces and changes culture through our daily practices" (Risse 2004, p. 161). This does not necessarily mean that actors cannot act rationally to maximize their interests, and constructivism therefore often complements rational interpretations. It does mean, however, that in explaining a given situation and its outcome, it will be worthwhile to investigate how these interests were formed. It is emphasized, that the way an actor interprets his reality will inform the range of choices available to him.

Regarding logics of action, constructivists (as well as sociological institutionalists<sup>4</sup>) differ considerably from their liberal and rational peers<sup>5</sup>. Scholarship that emphasizes the rational actor will hold that actors adhere to a behavioral *logic of consequences*, "that is a rational act is one that will produce an outcome that maximizes the interests of the individual unit" (Fierke 2007, p. 170). Constructivists on the other hand, argue that actors follow a *logic of appropriateness*. This logic does not deny rationalism, but "what is rational is a function of legitimacy, defined by shared values and norms within institutions or other social structures rather than purely individual interests" (Ibid). Again, "opposing norms against rationality or rational choice is not helpful in explaining most of the politically salient processes we see in empirical research – processes we call 'strategic social construction', in which actors strategize rationally to reconfigure preferences, identities or social contexts" (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Hence, the present study will not deny the possibility that actors attempt to act rationally, but it will hold that interests and objectives are circumscribed by a context that is influenced by such ideations as norms, culture, identities, etc.

To sum up, the constructivist approach is necessitated by the understanding and conceptualization of PCD as an ideation, and more specifically as a norm (as described above). Norms can be classified as ideations, and this determines the type of argument employed in this study. In the words of Craig Parsons: "We can talk about structure without being structuralists or institutions without being institutionalists, but we cannot even discuss many ideational elements without implying a certain logic" (Parsons 2007, p. 96). The logic that Parsons refers to is a causal one, namely ideational causation. Before elaborating on this concept, the following section will briefly outline how PCD has previously been covered in the literature.

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<sup>4</sup> Differentiating between sociological institutionalism and constructivism is, to put it mildly, not an easy task and, accordingly, they are often used interchangeably. For present purposes, it might be useful to think of sociological institutionalism as belonging to the realm of constructivism, albeit a sub-category which focuses exclusively on institutions (which can be defined broadly).

<sup>5</sup> For a rational account (liberal intergovernmentalist) see for example Moravcsik (1993) and for an ideational interpretation see Parsons (2002).



## 2.2. PCD in the Literature

The body of literature on PCD covers a plethora of aspects, although as of yet, it cannot be said to be expansive. The literature can be separated into two groups, one consisting of scholarly contributions and the other of what we may call professional contributions. The scholarly contributions comprise articles and books concerned with PCD, whereas the professional contributions combine documents produced by the European institutions (e.g. the EC, the EP, the European Council), work commissioned by these institutions, and reports and documents produced by other international organizations, such as the OECD DAC and international NGO platforms. Since this study will contribute to the pool of scholarly contributions, the focus here will be on those. Perhaps one of the largest collective contributions to the literature on PCD is the dedication of an issue of the *Journal of European Integration* to the topic. The first article presents the concept of policy coherence for development and the debate since its institutionalization in the early 1990s (Carbone 2008). The following articles focus on specific policy areas. Although the articles treat PCD, their focus is either on PCD in combination with another issue (such as the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability and the ‘actorness’ of the EU in Bretherton and Vogler 2008) or they are concerned mainly with the outcome (as for example Matthews 2008). What is interesting about those articles concerned with outcome is that they almost all focus on the possible *effect of policies on development*, but not on establishing *the effect of PCD on policies*. As such, the EU’s policies are most often the independent variable, having an effect on international development, which becomes a loosely defined dependent variable. On the contrary, this study will treat PCD as the independent variable and policies of the EU as dependent.

Another considerable contribution, which deserves mention, is the volume *Policy Coherence in Development Co-operation* (Forster and Stokke (eds.) 1999). The volume gathers the work of no less than 16 contributing authors. Nevertheless, as is true for most good scholarly works, a few minor criticisms can be made. Although PCD is divided into some sub-categories (as exemplified above, p. 2), they are not nearly as refined as those employed by Carbone (2008). This drives the authors to pay less attention to the difference between motivations for engaging in PCD and the contexts that characterize the *different types*. As such, Forster and Stokke (1999) argue that PCD should be approached as a rational choice model. This is undoubtedly true for what has in this study been termed *internal, donor-recipient and multilateral coherence*, as they are chiefly present within one sector, namely development cooperation, and are therefore mostly about effectiveness. However, it is less safe to assume that *horizontal coherence* can be boxed into a rational choice model, given that it is inherently about priorities between different objectives (of different sectors). On the other hand, they are not specifically concerned with PCD, but rather with policy coherence *in* development co-operation. The difference may seem insignificant, but becomes instrumental because Forster and Stokke have a different starting point than the present study. In their account, the fact that policy coherence should be for development (horizontally) is not problematized and the question of prioritization is thus to some extent left open (see Forster and Stokke 1999, p. 25-32). In the present study, however, policy coherence has been designated as being *for* development, which goes some way to challenge the rational choice model because it

will easily present an obstacle to the utility maximization of most other policy areas. Or in other words, making aid more effective and efficient within the development sector can easily be seen as a process of rational choices, but when PCD becomes a norm that guides priorities between different sectors, rational choice is not guaranteed. As Forster and Stokke point out themselves, “what is considered a rational choice is system specific and, accordingly, vary from one system to another” (Ibid, p. 25). Perhaps most importantly, it should be noted that Forster and Stokke’s version of rational choice is ultimately not incompatible with considerations of ideations. Accordingly, Forster and Stokke state that: “predominant world views influence decisions along with values and interests, and constitute a framework for rational choice” (Ibid, p. 25). This view of rational choice could accommodate the notion that PCD, as a norm, becomes part of this framework. The present study has the ambition of adding to the body of literature both due to its exclusive focus on the PCD norm and because it will not be assumed that policy coherence is always about the efficiency and effectiveness of policy.

### 2.3. Methodology

In the following section, the method and design of the study will be outlined. First, a definition and consideration of ideational arguments and causality will be presented. Then, the method of process tracing and the use of case studies will be discussed. Finally, the design of the study will be summed up in its entirety.

#### 2.3.1. Ideational Causality

As discussed briefly in the above section on theory, ideational arguments differ considerably from their institutional and structural counterparts. In this section, ideational arguments and the concept of ideational causality will be discussed, as to situate the argument within the tradition of social science. The tradition for making ideational arguments is rich, especially within the constructivist camp. However, according to Craig Parsons (2007) “when many political scientists hear the word ‘culture’, they still share Goering’s famous inclination to reach for a gun” (Parsons 2007, p. 94). There are several reasons for this, which will become clear throughout this section. First, let us define ideational arguments. Borrowing from Parsons we might seek our definition in the following:

“...when we say that people hold certain culture or beliefs, we are not just making a descriptive statement that leaves open the causal dynamics. It makes little sense to call something a ‘belief’, unless we also mean that someone *believes* in it: that they use it to assign meaning and interpret the world around them. Thus the very notion of ideas, cultures or beliefs<sup>6</sup> leads us straight to

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<sup>6</sup> The list of ideations does not stop at these three, but also includes norms, ideas, symbols, identities etc. More specific to policy, ideas might include, inter alia, issue-area doctrines and policy paradigms. See for example Parsons (2007) and Yee (1996).

the core logic of ideational explanation. It explains action as a result of people interpreting their world through certain ideational elements” (Ibid, p. 96).

An ideational argument is thus based on the assumption that certain ideational elements, in our case the PCD norm, cause action because people interpret their world through these elements. This does not preclude rational actions, rather it means that what is rational is defined through preexisting ideations. Parsons refers to this as ‘a-rationality’, meaning that rational actors in an environment that is to some extent uncertain depend on interpretive filters that help them organize their preferences and priorities (ibid, p. 98). In the case of policy-making in the EU, the uncertainty arises in the field of tension between the different priorities and objectives of the various sectors. PCD can thus be perceived as the norm that helps them organize and prioritize these objectives. It is worth noting, that ideational arguments do not all grant an equally large causal role to ideation. A-rational ideational claims overlap considerably with institutionalist claims, and as such, many ideational elements (norms, practices, etc) “could fit with an institutionalist claim” (Ibid, p. 99). Once again, the line between the constructivist approach and the sociological institutionalist one becomes blurry. Nevertheless, the overlap indicates that ideational elements may cause action in more than one way. This means that a given ideation can affect action in both an ideational way, meaning that people act based on what they truly think is legitimate or appropriate, or it can affect them in an institutionalist way, meaning that they act according to the given ideation because they feel bound by (for example) an institutionalized norm and non-compliance has consequences (Ibid, p. 100).

Ideational arguments face a number of challenges, but there are ways in which these can be overcome. According to Parsons, ideational explanations have traditionally been criticized from three angles. First, it is often claimed that ideational argumentation is not explanation. Second, ideational claims are too hard to verify. Third, even those ideational claims that can be verified are too superficial and therefore not worth doing. In other words, “explaining actions with culture or ideas is akin to saying ‘he wanted it because that is what he wants’” (tautology) (Parsons 2007, p. 105). The first challenge is based on well-recognized causational criteria, outlined by scholars as Weber and Hume. As an example, Hume argues that for A to cause B, A must necessarily exist independently of B, occur before B in time, and A must always cause B (Hume [1948] 1975, as cited in Parsons 2007, P. 105). These requirements are hard to meet for ideational claims, but Parsons offers three suggestions as to how these challenges might be overcome (Parsons 2007, p. 112). First, we must ask careful, specific questions about cause and effect. In essence, this means that we must take care to explicitly separate the ideation in question from the action it is supposed to have caused. Second, we must recognize that any intentional explanation of action takes cognitive pathways and appeals to actors’ understandings. This argument challenges the scientific upper-hand of structuralists and institutionalists, by positing that even “the strongest structural claim cannot coherently insist that people react to structural positions in the same physical way that the apple is compelled by gravity” (Ibid.). Or to put it differently, the Weberian criticism that ideational arguments deal with understanding rather than explanation, can be put aside by pointing to the fact all arguments must consider how people assign meaning to their

environment. Lastly, we must note the similarity of ideational claims to the particularistic logic of institutionalism. Specifically, “like institutionalism, ideational claims open space for their distinct dynamics with a ‘negative explanation’ in the past – showing that particular ideational elements were not the necessary reaction to preexisting conditions across some range of alternatives – but then build a more conventional causal explanation on the consequences of this earlier development” (Ibid, p. 113).

Turning now to the second challenge to ideational claims, namely that they are too hard to verify. This challenge stems from the fact that ideations are intangible. You cannot touch or see a norm. Nonetheless, structural and institutionalist claims rest, to a certain degree, on intangibles as well. A case in point is the non-demonstrable concept of rationality, which is necessary in order to link constraints and incentives to action (Ibid, p. 114). Moreover, there are instances where it may even be easier to document beliefs than more tangible facts<sup>7</sup>. Practically, there are many available methods by which beliefs can be documented, such as surveys, interviews, etc. The two major issues to be confronted, according to Parsons, are in stead grabbling with the researcher’s own subjectivity and specifying the degree of autonomy of the ideation from structural and institutional conditions. With regard to the latter, Parsons advocates “ tracing their origins [the ideational elements] or changes over time prior to the action we seek to explain, making a negative argument that some combination of structural and institutional ambiguity, unpredictability or actors’ irrationality permitted a range of interpretations” (Parsons 2007, p. 115). With regard to the study at hand, the ideational element (the PCD norm) will be traced from its origin to the changes it has caused, both to policy-making and to policy, while considering rival causal explanations, as prescribed above.

The final challenge to ideational arguments is that it is superficial. Rather than suggest specifically how this challenge can be overcome, Parsons points to the flaws in famous ideational scholarship that have acted as wood to the fire of this perception of ideational arguments. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba’s *The Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963) is criticized for treating culture as both the dependent variable and the independent variable, thus not paying enough attention to the causality involved (Parsons 2007, p. 118). This suggests that, as discussed earlier, taking care to separate the ideational element from the action it supposedly caused, will do much to confront the arguments that ideational arguments are superficial. Another heavyweight that, maybe ironically, has added to the bad reputation of ideational arguments is Samuel Huntington’s *Clash of Civilization* (Huntington 1996). The problem here is that “in writing for a broad non-scholarly audience he [Huntington] makes little effort to support it [his claim]” (ibid, p. 119). It is a truism that, when writing a scholarly paper, you should always support your claim, and the reader should rest assured that all efforts to do so in the present case will be made. Having now considered the pitfalls of ideational argumentation, it is to the

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<sup>7</sup> Parsons uses the example of documenting George W. Bush’s belief that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction versus documenting whether or not, in actual fact, Iraq had such weapons. Had the latter been the easier task, much bloodshed could probably have been avoided! (Parsons 2007, p. 115).

support of the claim that we now turn, namely the more specific details of the design. For an example of how ideational argumentation can overcome the challenges discussed, see Parsons (2002).

### 2.3.2. Process Tracing and the Case Study Method

The method employed in this study will be the case study method. George and Bennett argue that a case is defined as an instance of a class of events, where the term class of events means a phenomenon of scientific interest (George and Bennett 2005, p. 17). In this case, PCD in the EU is an instance of ideational causation in the EU and more specifically, an instance of a norm changing and influencing policy-making. As there will be only one case, the research conducted will be in the form of within-case analysis. However, to answer research question number three (how have policies been reformed according to PCD?), two further cases in the form of two EU policies will be explored, where PCD is identified as the independent variable and the policies are the dependent variables. The choice of the case study method is based on the in-depth analysis needed with regard to answering the research questions, and on the advantages offered by the method in this regard<sup>8</sup>. At present, it will be pertinent to look at these advantages, with a view also to the limitations of the method. According to George and Bennett (2005), there are four main advantages associated with the case study method. First, case studies offer the possibility of achieving a high level of conceptual validity. This means that, by doing case studies, you will often avoid the pitfall of ‘conceptual stretching’ that is sometimes associated with statistical research. You may also do away with the problem of ‘equifinality’, “that is, they involve several explanatory paths, combinations of sequences leading to the same outcome...” (Ibid, p. 20), by closely examining the case in detail. In practice, this will mean considering alternative explanations. Second, case studies are especially apt at finding new variables and deriving new hypotheses. When carrying out qualitative research, to which case studies largely belong; the researcher will often obtain answers to questions that he didn’t expect. This opens up for the discovery of new variables. Third, case studies are strong when exploring causal mechanisms. The detailed exploration of a case allows the researcher to look at intervening variables and helps to identify what “conditions present in a case activate the causal mechanism”<sup>9</sup> (George and Bennett 2005, p. 21). Fourth, case studies can be modeled to accommodate complex causal relations, including equifinality, complex interaction effects and path dependency (Ibid, p. 22). In the present case, all of the advantages offer something important. In particular, the strength of case studies in exploring causal mechanisms is useful, as this is at the core of the assignment. When exploring PCD in the EU and how it was introduced, it will be crucial to explore the context, in order to explain why the norm emerged when it did.

Case studies, like all other social scientific methods, have their limitations too. The most important limitations and trade-offs (as discussed in George and Bennett 2005, p. 22-34)

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<sup>8</sup> This is mainly relevant for the study as a coherent case study, whereas the two smaller case studies will be cursory and brief, aimed solely at testing for specific changes and reforms.

<sup>9</sup> Whereas some scholars would deny the need to look at causal mechanisms, which leave space for explanation between cause and effect, this thesis will speak in their favor.

include case selection bias, identifying scope conditions and lack of representativeness. With regard to case selection bias, George and Bennett argue that within the case study method, it is sometimes relevant to choose both cases based on the dependent variable or cases where the researcher has foreknowledge, as this can allow for a stronger design (Ibid, p. 23-25). In the present case, the policy cases will be chosen solely based on the criteria that they have traditionally cared little for development objectives, and can thus be termed least-likely cases. Identifying scope conditions (i.e. how much does PCD matter in policy-making?) will be a problem for this study too. However, the point here is not to say how much it matters, but to test whether it matters at all. Finally, as for the lack of representativeness, the point of this study is not to generalize about PCD in policy-making, but to explore it within the context of the EU. As the EU is *sui generis*, making general statements about PCD's effect on policy-making would be futile. Moreover, the point of this study is not to say that policy-making in the EU is always dependent on norms, but rather to give an example of how and when it is.

Now turning to the method, which will be employed in the analysis, namely process tracing. To define process tracing, we might say “the process tracing method attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanisms – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable” (Ibid, p. 206). As this study is concerned with causality, process tracing is a fitting method, because it allows for the illustration of PCD in the EU from start to end (or to the current state) while exploring the link between each stage. For process tracing to be useful in confirming a theory, George and Bennett (2005, p. 217) suggest considering alternative hypotheses, which is very much in line with Parsons suggestion that a negative argument be made with regard to the role of other causal mechanisms. This suggestion simultaneously points to the greatest challenge to process tracing, namely that, if trying to confirm a theory, the researcher must be able to handle and treat potentially numerous independent variables and to account for their compatibility (or in some cases, spuriousness). Throughout the study, such alternative explanations will be considered.

### **2.3.3. The Research Design**

As to sum up the previous sections, the method of this study will consist of a case study and process tracing, with a view to establishing ideational causality. The overall case study will be that of PCD in the EU, whereas the two smaller case studies involved in answering research question three, as described above, will be the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The selection criterion for these two smaller case studies is, as aforementioned, that they have repeatedly been criticized for not paying attention to their effects on developing countries - that is, they have traditionally not complied with PCD.

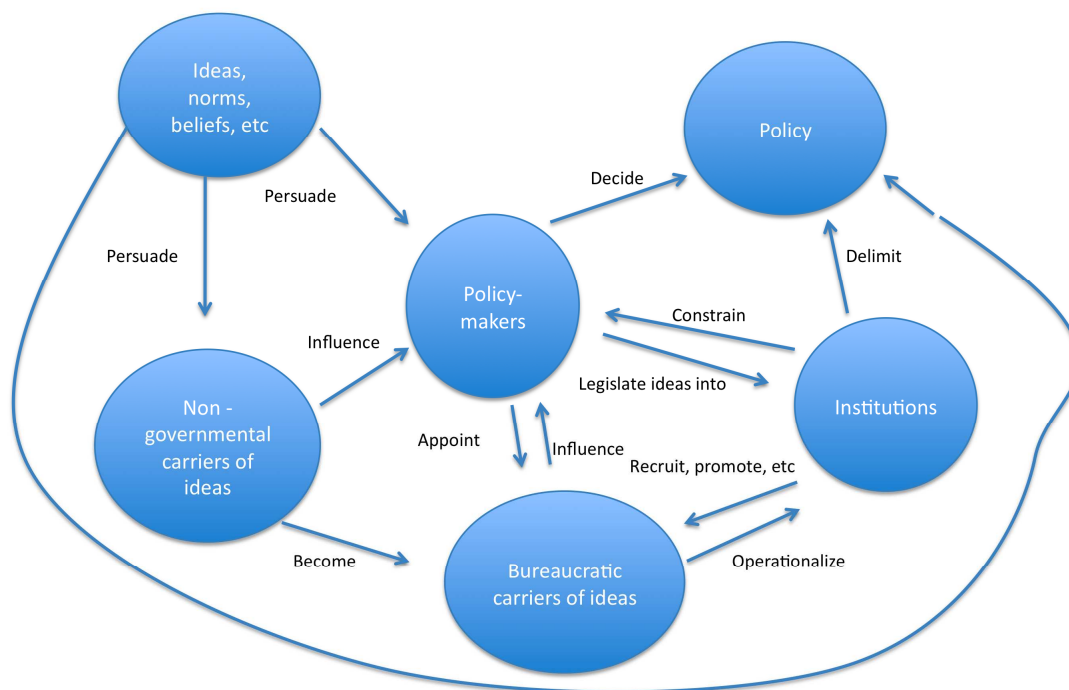


Figure 1. Causal linkages between ideas and policy (Yee 1996, p. 87).

Thus, they would serve as strong evidence that PCD is having an effect, provided that changes in line with the PCD norm can be observed. Moreover, both policies are Community competence, which coincides with the focus of the study, surveying only horizontal coherence in the EU. The process tracing will focus on some of the relevant steps as outlined in figure 1 above.

The data employed in this study consists of official documents, scholarly texts such as journal articles and books, media sources such as newspaper articles, and interviews. The interviews are semi-structured and those interviewed have been selected based on their identities as stakeholders in PCD (see appendix 1).

Research Question	Unit in Causal Linkages	Data
1	Idea, norms, beliefs, etc Nongovernmental carriers of ideas Policymakers	Official documents <sup>10</sup> , scholarly publications on PCD and media sources.
2	Policy-makers Institutions	Official documents, scholarly publications
3	Policy	Official documents, NGO publications, interviews

Table 1. Overview of data material.

The point of carrying out such interviews is to gain further insight into the policy-making process of the EU and to ascertain perceptions of PCD. The selection of documents and literature is constrained by availability and access. I have attempted insofar as possible to

<sup>10</sup> Official documents include, but are not limited to: European Commission documents, European Council documents, documents from the European Parliament, OECD documents and policy briefs, as well as documents from other international organizations, such as the UN.

survey all available literature on the topic and, as regards official documents, they have been selected based on their reference to PCD, their relationship with relevant policy, and their inclusion in other scholarly work. Table 1 contains an overview of the data material in connection with the research questions. Having at this point presented the research questions, the motivation, the theoretical approach, the methodology and the design of the study, we must now turn to the analysis.

### **3. The Birth of PCD and its Introduction into the EU**

The following section will trace the PCD norm from its invention to its introduction into the EU system. By way of various documents, research question one (*how did PCD emerge in the EU?*) will be explored, paying special attention to the motivations involved in the promotion of PCD and the possible alternatives proposed to PCD. In terms of figure one above, this section will survey how the PCD norm has persuaded nongovernmental carriers of ideas, as well as policy makers.

#### **3.1. The OECD DAC and PCD**

It is hard to establish where any ideation comes from, but there seems to be agreement within the literature that the first official discussion of policy coherence occurred at a High-Level Meeting of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 1991 (cf. Carbone 2008, Holland 2008, Forster and Stokke 1999). It is worth noting here at the outset, that a committee like the DAC itself rests on a fair share of norms and values, primarily the very basic (albeit traditionally Western) norm of providing aid for the benefit of developing countries. The first provision of the mandate of the DAC runs as follows: “The Committee will continue to consult on the methods for making national resources available for assisting countries and areas in the process of economic development and for expanding and improving the flow of long-term funds and other development assistance to them” (DAC 2010) and the primary tasks of the committee are thus to issue analysis and guidance in key areas of development. The European Commission (EC) has been a member of the DAC since 1961. According to Forster and Stokke, the rationale of the DAC for promoting policy coherence largely fits into the rational choice model, given that they emphasized efficiency and effectiveness of donor policies in their argumentation for PCD. Forster and Stokke sum up DAC’s argumentations as follows:

“The development assistance of donor governments (and multilateral agencies) should be better coordinated in order to be more effective and efficient vis-à-vis its development objectives. Waste through duplication should be avoided and the development assistance of one donor should not counteract that of another. This applies not only to their aid and aid policy,



but also to their policies within other areas such as trade, investments and security<sup>11</sup> (Forster and Stokke 1999, p. 27).

As noted above, the mandate of the DAC specifically points the committee in the direction of creating solutions that will make development aid more effective and efficient. It is no wonder, then, that they should emphasize this in their argumentation for increased coherence. The more interesting question to explore is for whom this coherence is sought and why, a question to which the answer will further illuminate the elements of the PCD norm. Answering this question is not possible without a consideration of the various reasons for why donor governments give aid in the first place. There are of course rational reasons for granting aid to developing countries, such as improving international stability or increasing exports, but these exist alongside reasons that belong very much in the normative realm. Such arguments would emphasize the moral reasons for giving aid, solidarity and shared humanity, but also ideations such as the identity of the donor or legitimacy. As an example, the webpage of EuropeAid, the EU's agency for managing aid, refers to both the EU's *responsibility* to assist developing countries and challenges to *humanity as a whole* (EuropeAid 2010). Development aid, then, can be motivated by normative as well as materialistic and rational concerns. Hence, it would be reasonable to claim that policy coherence is sought for both the benefit of donors *and* recipients, for rational *and* normative reasons.

The argumentation used by the DAC in its 1996 follow-up publication confirms this. Here the DAC uses both lines of reasoning. Reflecting on the fact that the number of people living in poverty would continue to grow, DAC argues that “those of us in the industrialized countries have a strong *moral imperative* to respond to the extreme poverty and human suffering that still affect more than one billion people” and that “our *solidarity* with the people of all countries causes us to seek to expand the community of interests and values need to manage the problems that respect no borders” (OECD 1996, p. 1 [italics mine]). This clearly reflects argumentation that is ideational and normative, with its reference to moral imperatives, values, and solidarity. With regard to the rational motivations advanced by the DAC, they highlight that “we also have a strong *self-interest* in fostering increased prosperity in the developing countries” (Ibid [italics mine]). Hence, donor governments engage in development cooperation and the DAC promotes policy coherence for both rational and normative reasons, which provides the answer to the question posed above, about who PCD is for. PCD is ultimately a norm that grows out of both rational and normative concerns. Even Forster and Stokke note that “a developmental perspective prevails over conflicting, self-centered concerns” (Forster and Stokke 1999, p. 29). However, as mentioned elsewhere, different policy areas will operate with different worldviews and what is rational for one may not be rational for the other. This does not pose a serious problem for the rational choices involved in four out of five types of policy coherence, as they are all situated more or less within the development sector. Yet, for the fifth type of coherence, namely the horizontal type, these worldviews might be at odds, which could result in some actors making choices that are not rational from their perspective. It was thus bold, when the DAC report (OECD 1996) essentially

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<sup>11</sup> Here, Forster and Stokke are drawing on OECD 1992, 1996 and 1997.

made the case for PCD by outlining how non-aid policies were affecting developing countries at the time, and suggesting that “we should aim for nothing less than to assure that the entire range of relevant industrialized country policies are consistent with and do not undermine development objectives” Ibid, p. 18). It would indeed be rational for a policy system, like the EU or any of its Member states (MS), to make sure it is not giving with one hand and taking with the other, so to speak. In fact, the strive for policy coherence (internal) is not unique to development policy, it occurs in other sectors as well (see e.g. see May et al. 2005). It is, however, curious that the efforts to do so should occur with development cooperation at its core. One could conceive of policy coherence for security or policy coherence for trade, but these norms do not formally exist (although it would not be unreasonable to argue that such norms are employed informally!). That the DAC was the first to promote policy coherence is important because they managed to situate the anchor of the policy coherence norm, which could make a whole policy system more efficient and effective, within the field of development policy, and thus created the PCD norm.

### **3.1.1. The DAC as a Norm Entrepreneur**

The DAC<sup>12</sup> has continued to promote the PCD norm ever since, both through declarations, policy briefs and by publishing peer reviews on PCD in its member states including the EU. Although this is not the focus of the paper, it is worth mentioning that the DAC has played a role in the promotion of the PCD norm that is akin to that of a ‘norm entrepreneur’. The concept deserves to be introduced briefly here, because it has figured prominently in constructivist research on norms (cf. Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, Ingebritsen 2002) and because it is linked to theories on the spread of international norms that can usefully complement the present study in asserting how the PCD norm has fared and where it stands. Norm entrepreneurs are a group of individuals that “mobilize support for particular standards of appropriateness and persuade states to adopt new norms” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p.897–901). The DAC has certainly done so by putting PCD on the agenda, but also by continuing to support and monitor the norm. As Ingebritsen (2002, p. 13) points out, some might view the DAC as simply engaging in strategic action, but this should not discount the effect of their efforts to promote PCD. As an example of such an observation, Forster and Stokke point out that “by introducing the new concept of policy coherence, the OECD succeeded in ensuring a prominent role for itself and its old drive for increased co-ordination of donors’ policies and in setting the agenda for co-ordination” (Foster and Stokke 1999, p. 27). However, as noted above, regardless of the possible self-interested motivations of the DAC, it made a difference that it was within this committee, chiefly concerned with development cooperation, that PCD was born. The point of considering the role of the DAC as a norm entrepreneur is firstly to classify the role it has played, and secondly to point towards a lesson that research on norms can teach us. Finnemore and Sikkink

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<sup>12</sup> Of course the DAC is nothing without its MS, meaning that some states must have acted as entrepreneurs for PCD within the organization in collaboration with the DAC secretariat. Information about such positions is however not obtainable.

(1998) structure the spread of norms according to three phases, as illustrated in figure 2 below.

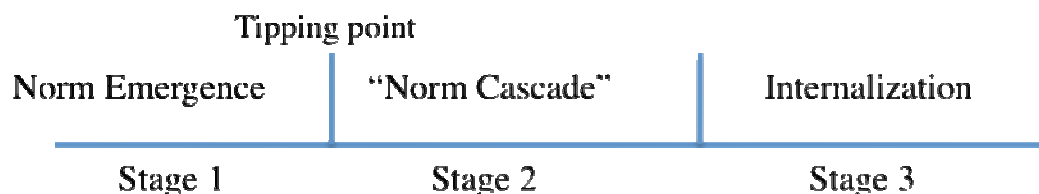


Figure 2. Norm Life Cycle (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 896).

At stage 1, the norm is born and advocated by its entrepreneurs. At stage 2, the norm cascades as it spreads to several states, being advocated by norm leaders. In stage 3, the norm is taken for granted and is no longer subject to debate. According to Finnemore and Sikkink, the norm life cycle is “important to understand because different social processes and logics of action may be involved in different stages” (Ibid, p 895). This again resonates with the notion that both rational and ideational motivations are in place when it comes to PCD. For the purposes of the present study, this theory is important because it can guide the process tracing of the PCD norm, to determine how far the norm has come and to help keep track of its evolution. Before we move on then, we will briefly consider the motives, actors and mechanisms supposedly involved in these stages, as illustrated below in table 2.

	<i>Stage 1: Norm Emergence</i>	<i>Stage 2: "Norm Cascade"</i>	<i>Stage 3: Internalization</i>
<i>Actors</i>	Norm entrepreneurs with organizational platforms	States, international organizations, networks	Law, professions, bureaucracy
<i>Motives</i>	Altruism, empathy, ideational, commitment	Legitimacy, reputation, esteem	Conformity
<i>Dominant mechanisms</i>	Persuasion	Socialization, institutionalization, demonstration	Habit, institutionalization

Table 2. Stages of norms (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 898).

In stage 1, where the norm entrepreneurs are involved, we should expect to see altruistic, ideational, empathic motives and persuasion at play. The DAC as the norm entrepreneur certainly has an organizational platform, with its position as being a committee of the OECD. It has also, as discussed above, shown motives that are empathic, altruistic and ideational in that “a developmental perspective prevails over conflicting, self-centered concerns” (Forster and Stokke 1999, p. 29). Finally, the DAC has engaged in persuasion of its members, by way of publishing reports and hosting meetings and discussions. In addition, the DAC has engaged in persuasion by employing material arguments, such as “... We also recognize that those responsible for public money are accountable for its effective use” (OECD 1996, p. 2). For DAC to have been successful norm entrepreneurs, we should then expect the norm to move towards stage 2, although it would first have to reach a tipping point, meaning that a critical mass of states would

have been persuaded by the norm<sup>13</sup> (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 901). If we relate the theory to the causal linkages from figure 1, we would expect the norm to reach its tipping point when it has influenced and/or persuaded both nongovernmental carriers of ideas, bureaucratic carriers of ideas and a relevant number of policymakers. In line with the process tracing method and keeping the theory of Finnemore and Sikkink in mind, it will be pertinent to move on to survey the discussion of PCD at EU level following the High Level meeting in 1991.

### 3.2. The Early Years of PCD in the EU

Mention of policy coherence for development in the EU occurred only shortly after the discussion at the High Level Meeting of the DAC in 1991. According to Carbone, “the origin of the debate on policy coherence for development in the EU can be traced back to the Treaty of Maastricht, which officially introduced “a policy in the sphere of development cooperation” among the activities of the EU” (Carbone 2008, p. 330). With this new policy, the EU introduced what has become known as the three C’s. The first C stands for *complementarity*, which means that the community policy shall “be complementary to the policies pursued by the Member States” (The Maastricht Treaty 1992, article 130u). The second C stands for *coordination*, meaning “the Community and the Member States shall co-ordinate their policies on development co-operation and shall consult each other on their aid programmes, including in international organizations and during international conferences” (ibid, article 130x). The final C is for *coherence*, although the term is not actually used in the treaty. Rather, the provision states that “the Community shall take account of the objectives referred to in Article 130u in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries (ibid, article 130v). This is not a strongly stated PCD in that it only states that the Community *shall take account* of the objectives of the development policy, yet it is not easily overlooked. The Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force on 1 November 1993, was signed on 7 February 1992, but the drafting officially occurred during the European Council on 9 - 10 December 1991, only shortly after the first discussion of PCD at the DAC (which occurred on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of December). This indicates that the EU more or less from the beginning, at least in writing, accepted the PCD norm. Nevertheless, according to the literature, the principle of PCD was to lay dormant for years before it reached the stage that the DAC had in mind.

Although the three C’s had been introduced in the Maastricht Treaty, there was still considerable uncertainty about their scope and how they would be implemented. In this instance, the EC might have been expected to take the lead, but oddly this was not the case. In stead, in its communication “Development Policy in the Run Up to 2000” (Commission 1992a), the “EC concentrated on coordination and the shortfalls of the implementation of a truly coordinated policy; less attention was given to coherence”

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<sup>13</sup> This ‘critical mass’ has not been defined in the literature yet, but empirical research suggests that norm tipping occurs only after a third of all states in a system have adopted the norm (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 901).

(Carbone 2008, p. 331). We might have expected the EC to take on a role of norm entrepreneurs within the EU, taking their lead from the DAC, yet the push was to come from elsewhere. When the communication was presented at the Development Council in November 1992, some MS “urged the European Commission to prepare a study and to report within a year on the practical consequences of the coherence principle” (Ibid). In its declaration, the Council stated the following:

“The Council recognises the linkage between development co-operation policy and other Community policies. It also recognises the need to take account of their impact on developing countries. The Council urges the Commission to consider how this impact assessment might be carried out more systematically especially with regard to new proposals. It invites the Commission to report in time for the meeting of the Development Council in November 1993 on how it takes account of the objectives referred to in paragraph 18 in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries” (Commission 1992b).

This statement indicates two things. First, the acknowledgement of the link between development and non-aid policies and the wish to treat this link systematically, indicates that the idea of PCD has entered the thinking of the MS ministers. Second, the Council wishes to advance the PCD norm further than merely recognizing the links. Nevertheless, PCD was not by way of the Council’s enthusiasm off to a smooth start. In fact, the EC would again become the laggard in terms of spreading the PCD norm. The EC failed to produce the report within the year given, “lamenting inadequate staff levels and a dismissive attitude of some member states” (Carbone 2008, p. 331). The PCD norm was thus stalled by the EC, presumably because staff was already overburdened and could not undertake the rather difficult task of operationalizing PCD. Thus, the tipping point for the norm to cascade had not occurred yet, and, referring to the causal path of figure 1, the norm had not sufficiently persuaded policymakers and non-governmental carriers of ideas had not yet significantly influenced them. However, other actors, which have yet to be considered, would soon emerge to further the spread of the PCD norm.

### **3.2.1. Norm advocates: NGOs and Commissioner Nielson**

In 1993, when the EC was supposed to have presented the Council with its report including the impact assessment of non-aid policies on development, European NGOs began running campaigns that highlighted these exact effects. According to Hoebink, European NGO’s began running campaigns against meat exports in 1993, claiming that they were *de facto* subsidized and were ruining the local sector. Moreover “the incoherence between European development policy and commercial policy was expressly pointed out by the lobbying parties” (Hoebink 2001, p. 20). At this point, several MS governments commissioned investigations into the meat exports and their effects, as alleged by the NGO campaigns. Thus under pressure, the EC eventually presented a report on the meat exports in November 1994, which finally explicitly used the term (in)coherence.

The decision was as follows:

“It is therefore necessary to take measures to end the serious incoherence that exists between the agricultural policy and the development policy of the Community. Such measures are all the more urgent because this harmonisation is a duty imposed by the Treaty on European Union (article 130v)” (Commission 1994).

This also marks the first time that the EC intended to take action based on the ‘coherence-article’, and is thus the first instance where the PCD norm is employed. Yet the progress made was modest. In fact, seeing as no specific proposals were advanced by the EC with regard to removing the harmful beef export subsidies (Hoebink 2004, p. 337); it was yet again up to the MS to further the institutionalization of the PCD norm through the Council. The EC, represented by Commissioner Manuel Marin, had merely proposed that they continue the study and consultations (Ibid). At the following meeting of the Development Council in 1995, some of the so-called likeminded countries<sup>14</sup>, in this case Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands, proposed setting up mechanisms to deal with cases of incoherence, such as cross-sectoral Council meetings, but these suggestions were rejected by both France and Germany (Carbone 2008, p. 331). The Council Conclusions simply said: “The Council asked the Commission to continue the discussions in this area [consistency, or coherence, of policies] in conjunction with the Directors-General for Cooperation of the Member States” (Council 1995). In 1997, the Council did adopt, probably thanks to the efforts of the Dutch Presidency, a resolution (Council 1997) that covered links between development and four themes, namely peace building, conflict prevention and resolution; food security; fisheries; and migration (see Hoebink 1999 and Carbone 2008). In the resolution, the Council invites the EC to write annual reports on coherence, and suggests the possibility of joint Council meetings and expert consultations. Nevertheless, the EC once again ended up stalling the process and only circulated a non-paper in 1999 (Carbone 2008, p. 332) and not, as expected, a report in 1998. The end of the century thus saw the PCD norm stalled, not due to a lack of advocates, but due to the slow efforts of the EC and objections on the part of some MS. Hence, the PCD norm had yet to persuade policy-makers of the EC and of some national governments, although the NGO campaigns indicate that the norm was growing in parts of civil society. It is not a given, that MS in favor of the coherence norm would have continued to push the agenda, had it not been for changes in the EC.

In November 1999, a new Commissioner was appointed to the Development portfolio. Paul Nielson, a former Danish Minister of Development Cooperation, made PCD a central part of his mandate. In the spring of 2000, shortly after Nielson took office, a series of proposals were finally tabled, and the group of directors general accepted a

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<sup>14</sup> See for example Elgström and Pilegaard, 2008: “the so-called like-minded countries are the EU actors that have advocated development concerns most vociferously over the years (and are also well known as relatively generous bilateral aid donors)...” (p. 371).

document containing specific instruments. In February 2000, DG Development circulated a policy paper on PCD entitled ‘Towards improved coherence between the Community development policy and other Community policies’, which was far more critical than previous documents, especially towards the Common Trade Policy, the CAP and the CFP (Hoebink 2004, P. 204). Nevertheless “It was clear very quickly that the document went too far, was too critical and was buried in the Commission. A new, really watered down version, with a title in which the word ‘coherence’ was substituted by the word ‘consistency’, was debated in the Commission’s meeting half of April and then brought to the Council” (Ibid). That the EC acted so cautiously again could be a reflection of the expectations that the Council would not accept a too critical document, but it is likely also a reflection of the different worldviews present in the EC. As such, the very critical policy paper may have met with fierce resistance from other policy areas. Regardless of the motivations, the joint statement made by the EC and the Council merely held that “to ensure consistency, the objectives of Community development policy will be taken into greater account in the conduct of other common policies” (Commission 2000a). Ironically, as pointed out by Carbone (2008), after a whole century the PCD norm had come no further than its legal basis in the Maastricht Treaty, article 130v, in that objectives of development policies should simply be *taken into account*. In 2000 then, PCD had not exactly developed as the DAC had envisioned (at least not in the EU) and the norm looked set never to reach its tipping point, never to cause an effect. Yet, a change in the international donor environment gave new impetus to PCD, namely the renewed focus on poverty reduction and the focus on reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

### 3.2.2. International Context: the MDGs

Dominant ideologies in development cooperation come and go. In the 1980’s, Structural Adjustment Plans dominated the development agenda, pioneered in particular by the Bretton Woods Institutions (referred to as the Washington Consensus). In the 1990’s, the formula consisted of governance reforms and democratization (see e.g. Hydén 1999). However, at the turn of the century, concerns about decreasing levels of ODA and a negative perception of aid effectiveness, lead to a reassertion of the primacy of poverty reduction. Moreover, a series of UN conferences during the 1990’s on environment and development, social issues and gender equality also served to highlight specific issue areas to be worked on (Carbone 2008). This eventually led to the formulation of the UN Millennium Declaration at the Millennium Summit of 2000 and forged a consensus around what were to become the MDGs<sup>15</sup> (Holland 2008). Interestingly, the initial benchmarks for the MDGs were presented much earlier, in a report, which has already been introduced here, namely the DAC report *Shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: the Contribution of Development Cooperation* (OECD 1996). The bases for the MDGs appear on page two of this report and were thus advocated alongside PCD. Here, we find development goals for economic well-being, social development and environmental sustainability. As the MDGs were advanced by the DAC in the same report as that which advocated PCD, the

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<sup>15</sup> 8 specific goals for developing countries that the international community has committed to and which are to be reached before 2015. See all 8 at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

argumentation used to promote their adoption is identical and the fate of these two concepts have become intricately linked. When the final formulation of the MDGs was adopted in 2003, this marked a change in the international community where all 191 UN Members would now be bound by these 8 targets, when carrying out their development cooperation (Holland 2008, p. 344). In the EU, whose MS were now also bound by the MDGs, new impetus was added to the ongoing efforts to promote PCD, as the lofty new development goals necessitated new thinking.

In 2005, the EU presented and adopted the first European Consensus on Development (ECD), a document “which commits the member states and the EU institutions to a common view on the promotion of international development and a common implementation strategy” (Carbone 2008, p. 332). The ECD was, aside from a notable addition to ongoing European integration, the first time that PCD really found a serious footing in the EU<sup>16</sup>. With regard to the MDGs, article five of the ECD highlights their importance, “The primary and overarching objective of EU development cooperation is the eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development, including pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals” (ECD, article 5). Shortly after, the commitment to PCD is reaffirmed: “We reaffirm our commitment to promoting policy coherence for development, based upon ensuring that the EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries, and that these policies support development objectives” (ECD, article 9). Given the formulation in article 35 of the ECD, there can be no doubt that the MDGs and PCD are linked. It reads as follows:

“The EU is fully committed to taking action to advance Policy Coherence for Development in a number of areas. It is important that non-development policies assist developing countries' efforts in achieving the MDGs. The EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries. To make this commitment a reality, the EU will strengthen policy coherence for development procedures, instruments and mechanisms at all levels...” (ECD, article 36).

Thus, what was to finally catalyze proper commitments to PCD in the EU was a set of goals, originally promoted *in tandem* with PCD by the DAC. It was not until the UN General Assembly adopted these goals that the EC finally went to work on PCD. On its own, the PCD norm did not fare so well, perhaps “because of the assumption that the needs of developing countries were taken care of through development assistance” (Carbone 2008, p. 332). The MDGs put the industrialized countries' previous efforts into a context that highlighted the need to go further than had previously been thought necessary, which brought PCD forcefully back on the agenda. And it was not merely talk

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<sup>16</sup> The text regarding PCD as it appears in the Maastricht Treaty was not changed in either of the following treaties (Amsterdam, 1997 and Nice, 2001).



and empty commitments this time. The EC presented two communications in 2005 that made specific suggestions regarding the operationalization of PCD (Commission 2005a and 2005b), both of which we shall return to in the following chapter. For now, however, it will be pertinent to briefly sum up the evolution of the PCD norm so far, and to relate it to the theories on norms and the causal linkages as illustrated in figure 1.

PCD was introduced into treaty law (the Maastricht Treaty) almost immediately after it was first discussed at the DAC High Level meeting in 1991. It was to take more than a decade however, before the norm gained a serious footing in the EU through the ECD. This came after the UN MDGs had been universally adopted, adding urgency to development cooperation efforts. It was thus not until this point, that the PCD norm reached its tipping point and started cascading, which it did with the ECD (given that all MS are party to this agreement). If we compare the norm's progression to the causal linkages in figure 1, we will see that policymakers had now been persuaded by the PCD norm, as had the bureaucratic carriers of ideas. Nongovernmental carriers of ideas, such as the NGOs running campaigns against beef export subsidies in the 1990's had been persuaded and had started influencing policymakers. By 2005, serious commitments had been made and specific practical proposals had been drawn up. The EU had aligned its development policy with the MDGs, reflecting on both rational and ideational motivations as follows: "Combating global poverty is not only a moral obligation; it will also help to build a more stable, peaceful, prosperous and equitable world, reflecting the interdependency of its richer and poorer countries. Our efforts at coordination and harmonisation must contribute to increasing aid effectiveness" (ECD, articles 1 and 3). It is crucial to point out that, even though PCD was promoted as a sort of tool to increase effectiveness and avoid wasted resources, it was not until it was specifically coupled with the MDGs that the norm gained momentum in the EU. Policy Coherence understood in effectiveness terms, could have been designated as being for any purpose (e.g. security, growth, etc.), but because it was first advanced by the DAC and because it became coupled with the MDGs, it would be for development, and more specifically for poverty reduction and the eight goals. It may be pertinent here, to consider the relationship between the MDGs and PCD in further detail, given that it could raise questions about causality. The question that could be raised is whether the MDGs then caused PCD and thus subsequent events? Given that PCD emerged on the EU agenda years before the MDGs, this does not seem the case. Rather, the relationship between the MDGs and PCD is more correctly understood as a case of a 'normative fit', where the MDGs provide the necessary context for the PCD norm to cascade<sup>17</sup>.

It may thus be argued; following the framework on ideational causality suggested by Parsons (cited previously), that PCD was "not the necessary reaction to preexisting conditions across some range of alternatives". To elaborate on this, the rational reaction, understood as utility maximization, would more likely have seen the PCD norm adapted

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<sup>17</sup> Bernstein explains the idea of a 'normative fit' (or socio-evolutionary explanation of norms) as follows: "explaining the selection of norms requires an examination of the interaction of ideas (proposals for new norms) with the social structural environment of already institutionalized norms that they encounter" (Bernstein 2000, p. 465). See also Björkdahl 2006.

to advance other agendas than development cooperation. Another likely expectation would have been for the PCD norm to remain dormant, much like it did in the 1990's. In the language of causality, this means that we have our 'A' (in reference to the arguments advanced by Hume, cited elsewhere) in the form of a PCD norm that has reached its tipping point. The next step will be to explore the changes to the policy-making process, which have occurred according to 'A' (and after 'A') that will allow us to determine how 'A' has caused 'B'. 'B' in this instance being the non-aid policies of the EU with potentially detrimental effects on development objectives. Hence, we now turn towards the institutionalization of the PCD norm.

#### **4. Towards Institutionalization of the PCD Norm**

The following chapter will investigate the degree of institutionalization of PCD. Institutionalization is similar to internalization, meaning that a norm is taken for granted. However, institutionalization pays special attention to the mechanisms used to implement the norm and whether these are used consistently. Indicators of the degree of institutionalization are the changes made to the policy-making process with the goal of implementing PCD practically. These will be explored in the following. Therefore, the chapter will serve to explore research question two: how has PCD affected the way policy-making is undertaken in the EU? However, before the specific efforts of the EU are examined, it will be useful to commence with some considerations of the challenges that exist to establishing PCD in the EU.

##### **4.1. Challenges to the Implementation of PCD**

It should already be clear by now, that although PCD as a norm should guide policy-makers when faced with prioritizing competing objectives; this is much easier said than done. As Paul Hoebink explains:

“As government has to deal with many parties and pressure groups, it may well be impossible to find optimal solutions that satisfy all parties concerned and achieve all objectives. Consequently, it is frequently necessary to settle for second best solutions, which may in turn lead to incoherence” (Hoebink 1999, p. 325).

It would not be an overstatement to say, that coherence is more an example of the exception than of the norm. Another important challenge to coherence is the compartmentalization of governments, with its many ministries, departments and institutions. Sometimes, a central government will not be in a position to gather up a complete picture of all that is going on in the different policy fields, which will hamper coherence in the long run. Moreover, politicians and administrators tend to be shortsighted, keeping only the immediate gains and consequences in mind (Hoebink 1999, p. 325). With regard to the EU as a polity, some specific challenges to PCD can be identified. Andrea Koulaïmah-Gabriel (1999) identifies four conditions that are lacking in

the EU from an original list of 8 conditions proposed by the DAC, conditions which may be seen as necessary for obtaining PCD. First, the EU lacks clear leadership. This, according to Koulaïmah-Gabriel, is detrimental to the EU's quest for coherence, because the lack of clear leadership results in unclear priorities. Second, the EU lacks an acknowledged strategic capacity. By this, it is meant that the EU lacks a central analytical unit, which would be at the disposal for both the EU institutions and the MS, and which would provide strategic capacity. One would think that the EC could play that role, but Koulaïmah-Gabriel argues that it has not been able to do so, due to MS' reluctance to hand over powers. Third, the responsibility for coordination is too fragmented. As an example, no mechanism exists for resolving disagreement between the Council and the EC (Koulaïmah-Gabriel 1999, p. 357). Fourth, the EU suffers from complex and institutionally differentiated decision-making procedures. It is argued that, "the EU, with its two parallel levels of decision-making, its three pillars and its complex procedures has an intrinsic tendency to incoherence" (Ibid) (more on this aspect in section 4.2.3.). As an example, given that competence does not always rest with the EC, incoherencies that are caused by national policies cannot be corrected at European level. The issue of the compartmentalized nature of EU policy-making in relation to PCD has also been explored in depth by Elgström and Pilegaard (2008). They argue, "that the highly compartmentalized character of EU policy fields and the disjointed decision-making machinery constitute historically grounded institutional obstacles to coherence" (Elgström and Pilegaard 2008, p. 364). It follows that the institutionalization of PCD is no easy task and that efforts to do so will depend both on increased coordination and political will.

#### **4.2. Putting PCD into Practice**

At the end of chapter three, it was mentioned that the EC, in 2005, presented communications that finally included some concrete suggestions for institutionalizing PCD in the EU. At the outset of the first document the EC states:

"Better development cooperation, including more finance and improved aid delivery, is extremely important, but is in itself not sufficient to enable the developing world to reach the MDGs by the year 2015. It is generally acknowledged that the improvement of the coherence (vertical and horizontal) of developed countries' policies would put the developing countries in a much better condition to reach the MDGs" (Commission 2005a, parenthesis mine).

The MDGs and the PCD norm are now inextricably linked, seeing that the MDGs have provided a normative fit for the PCD norm, whereas the PCD norm will facilitate the attainment of the MDGs. In the communication, the EC also identifies several links between aid and non-aid policies, as well as it identifies existing structures that will be used for furthering PCD. One of these structures, highlighted by the EC, was the Impact Assessment tool, which could be applied across the EC. Furthermore, the EC identified

and advanced 11 priority areas<sup>18</sup>, with associated PCD commitments. As for the practical implementation of PCD, the EC suggested drafting a midterm PCD report between the time of [their] writing and the next MDG review, as well as they, following the lead of the EP, “will, inter alia, look at the existing assessment and screening mechanisms applied within the EC, and consider expanding their approach – in an appropriately adapted format – to the Council and the EP” (Ibid). In the second communication, which focused on accelerating progress towards the MDGs more generally, the EC again reiterated its intention to produce a report on PCD progress and emphasized the necessity of using non-aid policies to complement development aid. It stated: “Almost all EU policies impact on developing countries, directly or indirectly... To ensure that such policies, where they result in bilateral cooperation programmes with developing countries, have maximum impact, they must be implemented in accordance with the fundamental principles of development cooperation...” (Commission 2005b). Clearly, the EC has come a long way from the 1990’s, where it hesitated to even point out a connection between EU development policy and the simultaneous impact of non-aid policies. The communications were well received by the Council, which in its meeting (GAERC configuration) of May 2005, welcomed the communications and decided to add a 12<sup>th</sup> focus area for PCD, namely climate change (Council 2005). Moreover, the Council concluded as follows:

“The Council will assess existing internal procedures, mechanisms and instruments to strengthen the effective integration of development concerns in its decision making procedures on non-development policies... the Council invites the Commission to further reinforce its existing instruments, notably its impact assessment tool and consultations with developing countries during policy formulation, and consider new ones when necessary in support of a strengthened policy coherence for development” (Council 2005).

The crucial question to be addressed then is whether and how the Council and the EC made these efforts, respectively. The next sections will deal with these questions.

#### **4.2.1. PCD Mechanisms in the EC and the EP**

This section will explore how the EC has begun to institutionalize PCD and how the norm is handled in the EP. As part of the process towards operationalizing the three C’s of the Maastricht Treaty (complementarity, coordination, and coherence), the EC commissioned a series of evaluations with the European Center for Development Policy Making (ECDPM). In 2007, the ECDPM *et al.* published its evaluation of the work carried out towards increasing PCD (ECDPM 2007). The ECDPM assembles a framework for looking at PCD in any polity, which is useful for understanding the

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<sup>18</sup> These areas are: trade; environment; security; agriculture; fisheries; social dimension of globalization, employment and decent work; migration; research and innovation; information society; transport; and energy.

progress made at EU level. First of all, they introduce a language of PCD mechanisms, where a ‘mechanism’ is defined as “a mechanism that is a clearly identifiable object of study, with concrete features, such as a name and some terms of reference that include PCD as a purpose even as part of a wider scope” (ECDPM 2007, p. 24). These mechanisms are further divided into three types as follows:

- i. “Explicit **policy statements** on coherence which translate external policy pressures into a declaration of what the government intends to do, indicating intent, providing focus and guiding officials and other actors;
- ii. **Administrative and institutional mechanisms** (such as inter-departmental coordination in government, or a specialized coherence unit) to promote coherence in the definition and further refinement and mutual adjustment of different policies and the execution of the commitment;
- iii. **Knowledge input and assessment mechanisms** (information and analysis capacity) to support an evidence-based approach to policy formation to underpin and inform the need for policy coherence” (Ibid).

The point of dividing the mechanisms into these types, is that it makes it easier to assess progress with such different mechanisms present, but also that it is considered necessary to have mechanisms of all three types within a polity. The presence of all three types of PCD mechanisms thus provides for a PCD system, as illustrated in figure 3.

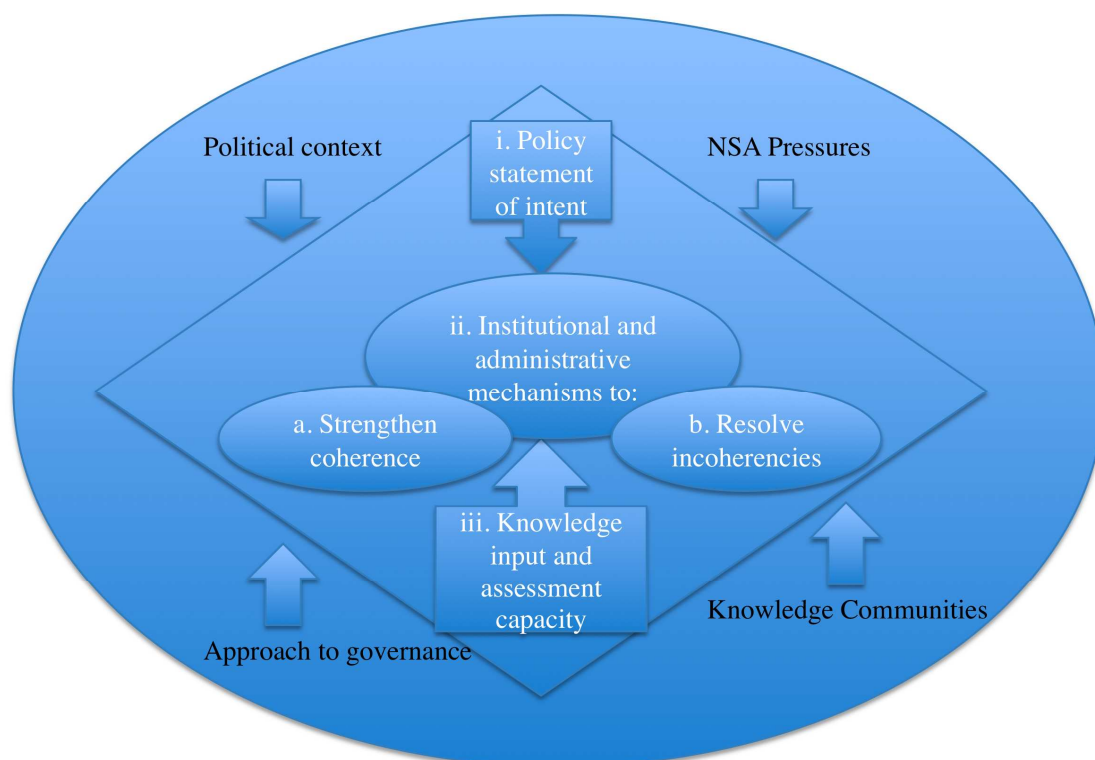


Figure 3. A PCD-system: PCD mechanisms in their operating context (ECDPM 2007, p. 32).

In the EU, PCD mechanisms of all three types can be identified. To be precise, the study revealed that the EU institutions had four *explicit statements* on PCD, five *administrative and institutional mechanisms*, and one *knowledge input and assessment mechanism*. This is a relatively high count, at least when compared to the mechanisms established on average in the MS

(see ECDPM 2007, p 52). Table 3 below summarizes the PCD mechanisms identified at EU level.

Explicit Policy Statements	Administrative/Institutional	Knowledge Input/ Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maastricht Treaty (art. 177)</li> <li>- 2000 Development Policy Statement; 2005 ECD</li> <li>- Commission's Communication (2005) 134 on PCD</li> <li>- European Council Conclusions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CSP/RSP programming</li> <li>- Country Teams</li> <li>- Inter-service Working Group</li> <li>- Inter-service Consultation</li> <li>- Development Committee (EP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact Assessment</li> </ul>

Table 3. Summary table of identified PCD mechanisms (ECDPM 2007, p. 124).

The policy statements identified as PCD mechanisms have already been examined elsewhere, whereas the other mechanisms deserve further investigation. The *Country Strategy Papers and Regional Strategy Papers* (CSP/RSP) are used for programming of EU development aid and are carried out in collaboration with the recipient countries. In these CSPs (or RSPs), countries are asked to advance priority sectors for the aid they will receive, as well as they must consider the possible effects of other EU policies in their own national context. In the EC's communication from 2006 on the common framework for drafting CSPs it thus reads: "Policies other than aid policy are at least as important insofar as they contribute or affect developing countries in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The principle of consistency with other EU policies requires special attention. This section must, where relevant, address the following areas: [all 12 PCD focus areas]" (Commission 2006). Although the word consistency is used, the text clearly refers to coherence, and the CSPs/RSPs are thus classified as PCD mechanisms, insofar as they provide officials of the EC and recipient countries with a platform for screening policies for incoherence. This is also where the *Country Teams* act as mechanisms. A country team is "a technical forum that brings together all DGs and EC officials concerned with cooperation in a country. Their task is to coordinate the Commission's interests and ensure policy coherence. They do the coherence analysis for their country of concern" (ECDPM 2007, appendix 3). The PCD norm has thus made an impact on the way programming is carried out, in that it must be included as a section in the CSPs. Although programming is not policy-making, but is rather based on existing policies, it would be reasonable to assume that incoherence discovered in the drafting of CSPs can be fed into the policy-making process.

The *Inter-service consultations* (ISCs) are standard procedure in the EC. It may be said that "the inter-service consultation process is the institutional consequence of the principle of collegiality of the European Commission" (ECDPM 2007, appendix 3). All decisions by the EC are agreed and adopted by the entire EC, and accordingly, all EC proposals are shared with other DGs for comments before they are voted upon. With regard to PCD, this would give DG Development the chance to comment on the potential negative effects on developing countries of a proposal from another DG. The evaluation carried out by ECDPM has the ISC as one of its specific cases, and concludes that although it has great potential as an effective PCD mechanism, it would be even better if it had a

specific PCD mandate (ECDPM 2007, p.102, 108). Nevertheless, the ISC remains a powerful PCD mechanism when applied consistently. The *Inter-service Working Groups* are similar to the ISCs as PCD mechanisms, though they are of a less formal nature. These groups are informal working groups that are assembled according to all geographical areas of the EC. “Proposals that can have an impact on development are discussed in this context before being circulated among all DGs through the inter-service consultation” (Ibid, appendix 3). Although the ISC and the Inter-service Working Groups are not new policy mechanisms, established with PCD in mind, the inclusion of PCD concerns in these mechanisms is a change in and of itself. The same is true for the *Impact Assessment* (IA), which was set up in 2002. The ECDPM describes the IA as follows: “Through the impact assessment process, the Commission identifies the likely positive and negative economic, environmental and social effects of proposed policy actions, and outlines potential synergies and trade-offs in achieving competing objectives, thus enabling informed political judgments to be made about the proposal” (Ibid). The Council has also identified the IA tool as a tool for promoting PCD (Presidency 2005) and it is as such no accident that it is being used for screening of policies. There are as such a handful of tools available to the EC when trying to promote coherence. Two other mechanisms are worth mentioning at the time of writing, which are not included in the evaluation. DG Development has an established unit charged with the responsibility of upholding the PCD norm, namely directorate A’s unit one for ‘forward looking studies and policy coherence’, which means that significant resources in the form of human resources are dedicated to PCD. Finally, the EC now publishes a bi-annual report on PCD, of which two have so far seen the light of day. These reports will be discussed briefly in the following section.

The EP’s Committee of Development (DEVE) is the final mechanism included in the ECDPM evaluation. DEVE is the EP’s watchdog for development issues, and has often brought up issues of coherence in its reports and hearings. Again, the critique of DEVE in the evaluation rests on the assumption that it would be a better mechanism if it were to have PCD included in its mandate. This has not changed since the conclusion of the evaluation, but DEVE remains active with regard to PCD (see for example DEVE 2010). In sum, both the EC and the EP have identified mechanisms by which PCD can be promoted, or in other words, a PCD system can be identified at EU level. Nevertheless, when it comes to policy-making, it will be necessary to secure the engagement of the political level. After a brief discussion of the EC PCD reports we shall therefore turn to the Council and the relevant PCD mechanisms developed in its structure for the purposes of increasing PCD.

#### **4.2.2. The Bi-Annual PCD Reports**

As mentioned previously, the EC suggested in its first real communication on PCD (Commission 2005a), that it should draft a midterm PCD report. The Council welcomed this suggestion in its conclusions of October 2006, saying that the report, which would now be a biannual publication, should: “provide the Council with the basis for carrying out a general review of PCD across the Union as a whole as well as for assessing the application of PCD, including the issue of capacity, in the Council decision-making

processes (and in all its configurations)” (Council 2006). In 2007, the first such report was presented. According to Carbone, “contrary to general expectations, the European Commission produced a critical report”<sup>19</sup> (Carbone 2008, p. 334). The first report fills up a ‘modest’ 255 pages and comprises an investigation of both the PCD mechanisms in place (EU and MS level) as well as estimations of the progress on PCD in the 12 focus areas. It largely relies on the evaluation by ECDPM et al, described previously. One of the key issues that the report points out is the sectorally compartmentalized nature of the Council’s decision-making procedure, which poses a great challenge to PCD. The investigations of the policy areas fill up most of the report and each consists of an estimation of the potential incoherencies, what is being done to address them and what institutional mechanisms can and are employed in the process of improving PCD. The report also identifies outstanding issues, issues that can and should be improved in order to establish a stronger PCD system. Amongst these issues are the need to intensify dialogue with partner countries as well as the EP and civil society, improving information sharing on PCD issues, and better use of the IA mechanism (Commission 2007, p. 50-51). As such, the EC PCD reports are potentially very strong PCD mechanisms (of the knowledge input/assessment kind).

The second report was adopted in the fall of 2009. It is clear in the text that the outstanding issues identified in the 2007 report have received attention and that attempts have been made to improve mechanisms across the board. With regard to the IA mechanism, the EC undertook a revision of the guidelines used for these, and the report thus explains: “The revised IA guidelines applicable since January 2009, put the Commission in a better position to ensure Policy Coherence for Development, in so far as they call for a more in-depth analysis of possible ways in which EU policy initiatives might affect developing countries. The guidelines state that ‘initiatives that may affect developing countries should be analysed for their coherence with the objectives of EU development policy” (Commission 2009, p. 13). In relation to this, the EC has also begun the annual drafting of informal PCD work plans, which allows for early identification of initiatives and legislative proposals that may have an impact on developing countries. In 2008, this led to the identification of 26 initiatives, whereas 37 were identified in 2009 (Ibid). Further to the perceived need to improve dialogue with partner countries, the report highlights the publication of the first Joint Annual Reports (JARs) in the context of the CSPs. These were prepared by the EC and partner countries together and made reference to one of the 12 PCD policy areas 136 separate times, most frequently trade, climate change, environment, and trade (Ibid, p. 18). Of other interesting developments, the report also notes the first Cotonou Agreement ‘article 12 consultations’, which took place in February 2009. The Cotonou Agreement is the EU-ACP Partnership Agreement, which covers development, trade and the political dimension of these countries’ relationship with the EU. Article 12 of this agreement “sets up a consultation mechanism to promote the coherence of Community policies

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<sup>19</sup> Note that many NGOs have criticized the reports for being too optimistic. As an example, the NGO platform Concord Europe has published its own report to compliment the EC’s, and to provide a more critical perspective (see Concord 2009).



which might affect the interests of the ACP countries” (Commission 2009, p. 17) and was thus invoked by the ACP group to request information on “five Commission initiatives dealing with the use of pesticides, nickel substances, fisheries cold chain requirements, the renewable energy directive and the FLEGT licensing system” (Ibid). Again, if used consistently, this article also provides for a concrete PCD mechanism.

Hence, the EC’s PCD reports have been useful in identifying and evaluating PCD mechanisms, but have also served as *de facto* mechanisms by doing so and by raising awareness. To exemplify, the 2009 report made the suggestion that the 12 PCD policy areas should be decreased to five, to provide added focus. The Council subsequently followed this suggestion, selecting the following five areas for further concentrated PCD work: climate change, food security, migration, trade/finance, and security and peace building (Council 2009). Moreover, the difference from the first report to the second also reveals that changes *have* been made in the policy-making structure, at least as regards the EC. This is exemplified by the changes made to the IA guidelines, to make them more compatible with promotion of the PCD norm. What the reports also make crystal clear is that PCD mechanisms in Council are lacking, and that the institutionalization of PCD here is problematic in particular. It is to this issue that we will now turn our attention.

#### **4.2.3. PCD Mechanisms in the Council**

The fact that the greatest difficulties with regard to institutionalizing the PCD norm lies within the Council structure has already been alluded to, and there seems to be broad agreement on this in the literature (cf. Commission 2007, ECDPM 2007 and Carbone 2008). This was confirmed in a study of PCD in the Council, carried out by the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in 2006. It found that the greatest challenge to PCD in the Council stems from the decision-making structure. Ideally, the GAERC<sup>20</sup>, which coordinates the agendas for other Council formations, would play a coordinating role in terms of PCD. However, this role is made difficult by the input they receive from COREPER, which is split into two formations, each responsible for a series of sector policies. This undermines the oversight of the GAERC (CEPS 2006, p. 13). Below COREPER are the Committees, representing different sectors, and below these are the Working Parties (WPs). It is estimated that 70 percent of decisions are finalized in the WPs, 15 percent at COREPER level, and finally 15 percent in the Council (Ibid, p. 12). This would mean that for PCD to be effective in the Council, institutionalization of the norm is crucial at WP level. Unfortunately, “there is by no means a standard operating procedure for the interaction between CODEV and the other working groups covering non-development policies” (CEPS 2006, p. 24). The involvement of CODEV varies between policy areas. For example, little contact has been documented between CODEV and COARM whereas CODEV was officially in the lead on the Climate Change Action Plan where it cooperated closely with the International Environmental Issues WP (Ibid). In fact, research has indicated that sectoral interests generally dominate all these subordinate Council bodies (Ibid, p. 12). In addition, there is a fear that holding joint

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<sup>20</sup> With the Lisbon Treaty, the GAERC is now split into the FAC (Foreign Affairs Council) and the GAC (General Affairs Council), which might further frustrate coordination.

meetings of WPs will become unmanageable (Ibid, p. 16). It would seem that this situation has not changed and that a solution to this problem has yet to be found (interviews with WP members). Nevertheless, some possible venues for PCD promotion were identified.

The most promising venues for PCD in the Council are to be found in its Secretariat and with the Presidency. The Council Secretariat is charged with managing negotiations, being a political counselor and secretariat to the Council and sometimes acting as a mediator (CEPS 2006, p. 26). Moreover, according to the Council's Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat is responsible for "organizing, coordinating and ensuring coherence of the Council's work" (Ibid). The Secretariat is also expected to be neutral, just like the Presidency, for whom it acts in a supporting role. Therefore the Secretariat can be seen as an important player and mechanism for PCD in the Council. The Presidency, as the agenda-setter, can also play an important role in ensuring PCD. In recognition of this, the EC suggested creating a 'Rolling Work Programme' (cf. ECD), carried out by each Presidency, to identify upcoming initiatives that may have an impact on developing countries – and in addition that the Presidency carry out a sort of PCD screening. According to the 2009 PCD report, "The screening exercise has been carried out by all Presidencies since 2007. Several Member States find that even though, progress has been made with this exercise, the status of PCD screening remains unclear and specific follow-up is seen as ad hoc" (Commission 2009, p. 15). Regarding the Rolling Work Programme, the report laments that although the German Presidency prepared this for 2007, not all Presidencies have subsequently updated it. It is recognized that preparing the programme is laborious, and that without specific and systematic follow-up, the exercise loses its value. It may be said then, that although work to promote PCD in the Council is ongoing, many challenges remain to its successful institutionalization at this level. Whether or not these issues will be resolved remains to be seen and must be seen to depend largely on political will.

The preceding chapter has explored the mechanisms available in the EU for promoting the PCD norm. It has illustrated the degree of institutionalization of PCD in the EC, EP and the Council, and it seems clear that the EC has made the most progress. Having thus explored how the EU institutions have worked towards institutionalizing PCD, it should be possible to provide an answer to research question two, namely *how has PCD affected the way policy-making is undertaken in the EU (process)?* The efforts to promote PCD have largely occurred with an emphasis on using already existing mechanisms, such as the ISC, the CSPs and the EP Committee of Development. Nevertheless, changes have been made, such as the reformed guidelines for conducting IA, to better include the external development dimension. Moreover, new mechanisms have also been created with a view to institutionalizing PCD, such as the Rolling Work Programme, the informal PCD work plan of the EC, the new PCD unit in DG Development and the PCD reports. Although not all these mechanisms function to their full potential, we can still establish a certain effect of the PCD norm on the policy-making process, given the modifications and new mechanisms described above. Whereas it may sound trivial, it is nevertheless true that

without the PCD norm there would be no PCD unit, no PCD reports and no informal PCD work plans. Similarly, if no one were convinced by the norm, efforts to promote it would not continue. In terms of the evolution of the PCD norm, we might suspect that we are still at stage two (norm cascade), given that many challenges to its institutionalization still exist. Whether or not the PCD norm has yet had an effect on policy, and whether it has reached stage three of its evolution (internalization) will be the topic of the following chapter.

## **5. CFP and CAP: On the Road to Greater Coherence?**

This last chapter will serve the purpose of answering research question three: how have policies been reformed according to PCD? The chapter consists of two small case studies, one exploring the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and one on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). As such, this chapter provides the last step in exploring how far the PCD norm has come, namely to see if PCD has also had an effect on policy and whether the CAP and the CFP have become more or less coherent with development policy.

### **5.1. The Common Agricultural Policy**

The CAP has historically been one of the most criticized policies as regards PCD. It remains a problematic policy from the perspective of developing countries as is clear from the fact that, aside from trade, it is the most frequently mentioned policy in the PCD section of the CSPs, where developing countries can point out incoherencies (Commission 2007). The question is not whether the CAP has become completely compatible with development objectives, but rather how it has been changed to be less incoherent and how that relates to the PCD norm. First, however, it will be pertinent to explain briefly why the CAP has traditionally posed such problems for development.

From the creation of the CAP up until the late 1980's, the Council and DG Agriculture and Rural Development ran the policy with little to no regard for external impacts and the policy was seen as strictly internal (CEPS 2006, p. 104). It would become clear, however, that the CAP has a number of complex effects on developing countries. The traditional model of the CAP came with a number of Price Support Mechanisms, which helped to ensure a stable price for agricultural commodities in the EU. The system relied on a set target price, which was agreed upon at EU level, 'import tariffs', and the use of an intervention price. The intervention price was the price given when surplus was bought up by states, to later be released back onto the market (Matthews 2008, p. 383). Aside from keeping the prices superficially high in the EU and making it hard to export agricultural commodities to the EU due to the import tariffs, these measures did not have as massive effect on the developing world. Nevertheless, the EU would soon become self-sufficient in many goods, which resulted in the introduction of export subsidies. "These export refunds bridge the gap between the high internal market prices and the lower world prices in most years and make possible the export of higher-priced foodstuffs out of the EU" (Ibid). These have been heavily criticized for their trade-distorting effect and their impact on developing countries' agricultural sectors. When EU

products are exported to developing countries accompanied by export subsidies, they are able to compete with local products because they can be sold cheaper (while at the same time receiving the same high price as in the EU). This has given rise to extreme cases of incoherence, such as the beef incidence mentioned previously, where beef was practically ‘dumped’ in an area where DG Development was supporting the local cattle industry. The CAP as a protectionist policy thus had far to go in terms of taking development concerns into account. This is made all the more important because the EU was, and is, the developing countries biggest agricultural trading partner (cf. Matthews 2008, Commission 2007). As it happened, beginning in the 1990’s, impacts on developing countries have increasingly informed agricultural policy-making (CEPS 2006, p. 104), resulting in several reforms and alterations. We will now turn to how these changes have made the CAP more compatible with development objectives.

Throughout the last two decades, the CAP has undergone a series of reforms, including the 1992 MacSharry reform, the 1999 Agenda 2000 reform and the 2003 Luxembourg Agreement on the Mid-Term Review of the CAP (Matthews 2008, p. 382). According to Matthews (2008), “the ‘new CAP’ is a rather different animal to the traditional policy widely, and rightly, criticized by developing countries” (p. 382). Without getting into the detail of the various reforms, it can be said that the biggest change to the CAP is the increased emphasis on budgetary payments rather than market price support as described above. Budgetary payments originated as a form of compensation to farmers when the artificially high intervention prices were slowly scaled down, and were initially tied (‘coupled’) according to number of hectares or heads of livestock (Ibid, p. 386). The 2003 reform started a process of ‘decoupling’ these payments, meaning that, while producers still have to own a set amount of land or livestock, the payments are separated from the actual production (this is called Single Farm Payments). As such, there is a smaller risk of overproduction and agricultural trade is less overtly subsidized. The CAP is thus being moved in a direction where there are fewer export subsidies<sup>21</sup>, lower intervention prices and a larger share of decoupled budgetary payments – in short, a more liberalized CAP. This represents a reduction of trade-distortion, which is to the benefit of agricultural producers in the developing countries. The CAP does continue to distort trade, but to a lesser degree than it did two decades ago (Commission 2008, p. 4). It is important to note, that not all developing countries benefit from trade liberalization. Countries that are net food importers will stand to lose when export subsidies are decreased, because they will no longer enjoy access to cheap subsidized food (cf. Matthews 2008 and Commission 2009). The EC is aware of this and an example of how this complexity is taken into account could be the abolishment of the Sugar Protocol. Here the EC made 1.284 billion Euro available in accompanying measures over the period 2006-2013, to the benefit of developing countries’ sugar producers who stood to lose out because prices would be lower (Commission 2009, p. 102). At the same time, developing countries enjoy special status when exporting agricultural goods into the EU.

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<sup>21</sup> In fact, the EU has made an offer, in the context of the Doha Development Agenda, to phase out all export subsidies by 2013, conditional upon similar commitments by other developed countries.

As an example, least developed countries (LDCs) enjoy quota- and duty-free agricultural exports under the Everything But Arms Initiative (EBA)<sup>22</sup>. Moreover, ACP countries “benefited from the non-reciprocal preferential access arrangements under the Cotonou Agreement” (Ibid, p. 386). Preferential trading terms have also been secured through the Economic Partnership Agreements, although these have been criticized for not taking development concerns sufficiently into account. In sum, it would seem that although the CAP continues to be a protective policy and still distorts trade, efforts have been made to make it more ‘development friendly’.

It is of course up for debate whether or not these changes have occurred because of adherence to the PCD norm. As mentioned earlier, the reforms and the attention to development started around the same time as discussions on PCD began in the DAC and subsequently in the EU. This at least indicates that the kind of thinking embodied in the PCD norm had already spread to the policy-sphere of agriculture at that point. However, interviews carried out for this study revealed that PCD is not a concept often discussed in agricultural WPs. In fact, the agricultural attaché interviewed had not heard of PCD prior to the interview (Interview 2020a)! How might these two notions be reconciled? First of all, it is likely that most discussions of agricultural trade impacts as well as possible compensation measures are first and foremost discussed by development WPs (as their budget is mostly used for such compensations) and by trade WPs (as trade relations fall under their competence). Another possibility is that most PCD discussions associated with agriculture occur within the EC, as the CAP is a community competence. There is no doubt that the EC thinks of CAP changes in terms of PCD; this is made evident in the publication “Towards a More Development Friendly CAP” (Commission 2008). It states, “the EU will continue to adjust the CAP, wherever necessary, to tomorrow's realities, including those reflecting the food security concerns of the developing countries” (Commission 2008) and it includes a section dedicated to PCD. There is thus reason to believe that these changes reflect adherence to the PCD norm, at least as concerns the EC. Nevertheless, the lack of knowledge about PCD on the part of the agricultural attaché indicates that the PCD norm has yet to be fully institutionalized. Moreover, the interview revealed that the agricultural worldview and specific agricultural objectives dominate the discussion in the WPs<sup>23</sup> and that PCD is seen as being an EC responsibility (Interview 2010a). Before we reflect more on these issues, we will now explore the changes made to another policy, namely the CFP.

## 5.2. The Common Fisheries Policy

The CFP is another ‘problem-policy’ in terms of its impact on developing countries. As opposed to the CAP, the CFP has long had an explicit external dimension in the form of its fisheries agreements, concluded between the EC and third countries – of which many were developing countries. In the 1990’s, when the CAP came under heavy fire from NGO’s, so did the CFP. In 1997, a group of NGOs, including Eurostep and the

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<sup>22</sup> An additional transition period was imposed for sugar, but this was abandoned in 2009, effectively allowing duty-free and quota-free exports for all agricultural goods.

<sup>23</sup> It was conceded, however, that some countries pay more attention to development concerns than others. Here, Sweden came up as being most interested in such matters.

Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements, launched a campaign “to promote greater consistency between the policy objectives of EU development co-operation and the actual practice of fisheries agreement” (Brown 2005, p. 4), indicating that incoherencies existed within this area. As was the case with the CAP, we will begin by exploring the incoherence associated with the CFP. The key word here is sustainability – or maybe the lack thereof. The EU has had a long history of demand for fisheries products, and as its own stock slowly became depleted, the EU turned towards external stocks. In 1979, the EU and Senegal concluded the first fisheries access agreement (Brown 2005, p. 3), the first of a series that the EU would pursue. The EU would gain access to Senegalese waters that were not being fully ‘exploited’ due to a lack of capacity, and Senegal would receive payments in return. About 20 years later the picture looked grim, as it was concluded that “the assessment is clearly negative, from both an environmental and social point of view: fish stocks are depleted and the Senegalese artisanal fishery is disrupted” (Kaczynski and Fluharty 2002, cited in Brown 2005). The incoherence thus stemmed from the fact that local livelihoods were threatened and local stocks were slowly depleting, with EU fleets adding to the lack of sustainability. The fisheries agreements were criticized for not building on accurate assessments of stocks, lack of control of the EU fleets, the *de facto* subsidies that EU fleets received by way of payments to third countries, lack of transparency in agreements, causing environmental damage and overall illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing by EU fleets (Brown 2005, p. 5). Seeing as “fish contributes to, or exceeds, 50% of the total animal protein intake in some small island and coastal developing states” (Commission 2007), the depletion of stocks in developing countries is a grave issue.

In 2000, with the above as a backdrop, the EC submitted a communication to the Council entitled *Fisheries and Poverty Reduction* (Commission 2000b). Here, the EC points out the link between fisheries policy and development policy and recognizes that stocks are being depleted, that monitoring is lacking and that financial compensation paid to third countries has not resulted in development of local fisheries industries. It refers to the ‘coherence-article’ and suggests synergies between development objectives and fisheries objectives, to be taken account of in the next CFP reform. In 2001, the EC followed up with the *Green Paper on the Future of the CFP* (Commission 2001), in which the EC recognized that, inter alia, “the Community external fisheries policy is often attacked in international fora and therefore there is a need to improve both its credibility and image vis-à-vis international public opinion” (p. 18). In 2002, the EC published the document *On an Integrated Framework for Fisheries Partnership Agreements with Third Countries* (Commission 2002), which advocated moving beyond the ‘cash for access’ agreements towards Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) negotiated with third countries (Brown 2005, p. 7). In 2004, after lengthy negotiations, the Council accepted the idea of negotiating FPAs, recalling the need to take account of Community instruments in the context of development cooperation and scientific and technical cooperation (Council 2004, p. 5). Since then, 16 FPAs have been negotiated, 15 of which are with developing countries. The question remains of how the FPAs have made the CFP more development friendly. According to the EC,

“Under an FPA, the two parties engage in a policy dialogue on fisheries. At the same time, a percentage of the financial contribution attached to the agreement is set aside to support the sectoral fisheries policy in the third country with a view to introducing responsible and sustainable fishing” (Commission 2009).

What has changed is the emphasis on partnership and on sustainability, as well as the specific designation of a part of the financial compensation to the development of the fisheries sector. In that sense, the FPAs bring added value because they increase the amount of development funding to the developing country in question (i.e. not from the development budget). In some countries, the financial compensation represents a significant part of the national economy, such as in Guinea Bissau, where it represents almost 40 percent of the country’s total budget (ibid). Furthermore, the FPAs do not allow the EU fleet to compete with the national fleet of partner countries (ibid, p. 148). Synergies clearly exist between the CFP objective of maintaining external fishing rights and development policy objectives. However, as the EC also recognizes, significant issues do remain under the FPAs. It is widely recognized that IUU fishing still occurs, and there is speculation that unreliable data on stocks continue to hamper the sustainability of EU fishing. This results in the further depletion of these countries resources; resources that are crucial to the population. PCD in the CFP is thus still an issue to be grappled with, although the FPAs clearly provide an example of how the EC has attempted to bring development concerns to the agenda of the CFP.

As was the case for the CAP, it is hard to establish whether or not the PCD norm caused these changes. Again, an interview with a fisheries attaché revealed a very low level of knowledge of PCD, and again, the issue had not been brought to the agenda while the interviewee had been a member of the WPs (Interview 2010b). As was true for the CAP, the CFP is a community competence, which puts the policy formulation and initiative in the hands of the EC. The interview revealed the sentiment that the responsibility for upholding the PCD norm with regards to the CFP is also in the hands of the EC, and that the responsibility of the fisheries attachés should be restricted to the CFP objectives (Ibid). Whereas this indicates that the PCD norm has not been institutionalized to any great extent at this level of the Council structure, it does not necessarily mean that the PCD norm has not had an effect on policy. Reflecting on the EC and Council communications and publications since the early 2000’s, and thus after PCD had been introduced into treaty law; we clearly see a new development focus in relation to the CFP (e.g. Commission 2000b, Commission 2002 and Council 2004). Since the FPAs are still relatively recent, it remains uncertain whether they will have the intended effect of developing local fisheries and halting the depletion of stocks in third countries, although some have claimed that they will have only a modest effect (cf. Bretherton and Vogler 2008). Regardless of the effect, the FPAs still constitute an illustration of how a policy *has* been changed to be more in line with development objectives. The ensuing section will revisit the topic of ideational causation in relation to the cases and will further elaborate on the status of the PCD norm.

### **5.3. The Evolutionary State of the PCD norm**

This section will serve two purposes. First, it will revisit the concept of ideational causality in relation to what the cases have revealed about the CAP and CFP. Second, it will reflect on the current state of the PCD norm according to the 'norm life cycle'. The cases revealed that significant changes have been made to both policies in question and that these changes do exemplify efforts on the part of the EC to modify policy according to the PCD norm. In the case of the CAP, export subsidies have been scaled down, budgetary payments are increasingly decoupled and developing countries enjoy preferable trading terms under the EBA. For the CFP, a new framework with considerable financial compensation and an emphasis on partnership and sustainability has been adopted with the FPAs. The interviews on the other hand, revealed a severe lack of knowledge on the part of the relevant attachés, a heavy emphasis on sectoral objectives and an expectation that the EC would deal with PCD. Whereas this indicates that the PCD norm has yet to be institutionalized in the Council structure, it does not preclude the ideational causality of PCD, seeing as both cases are community competence. The EC, drawing up a policy proposal, would have already engaged in ISCs before the proposal is forwarded to the Council. In light of the fact that both the CAP and the CFP are associated with strong national interests and powerful lobbies, it might even be commendable that changes that take development concerns into account have occurred at all. With regard to the causality involved, we know that the policies investigated paid scant attention to their external impacts up until the 1990's. Something then must have happened to change this outlook, and not surprisingly, this newfound (albeit slowly appearing) awareness coincided with the birth of and gradual work towards institutionalizing the PCD norm. It is possible that WTO pressures for further liberalizing trade contributed to the changes we see in the CAP, as well as it is possible that strictly rational explanations exist for negotiating FPAs. On the other hand, why spend so much energy and time trying to identify synergies and pointing out benefits to developing countries, if you are not acting according to the PCD norm? A possible theory is that actors are engaging in 'rhetorical action', where they use norm-based arguments strategically in pursuit of their self-interest (see Schimmelfennig 2001). The EC would then support their arguments for reform (that is necessitated by e.g. WTO pressures) with arguments linked to PCD to enhance legitimacy. However, if this were the case, it would indicate that the PCD norm is widely accepted; otherwise it would not add legitimacy to the argument. Regardless, rhetorical action can be seen as an act in itself and would add to the understanding that PCD is causing change. Finally, it would theoretically be possible for actors to argue for development friendly solutions, while being persuaded by a more general pro-development norm (and perhaps never having heard of PCD). This distinction would be very hard to make in practice (and is outside the realistic scope of this paper), because outcomes would reflect the motivations embodied in the PCD norm. In the end, the PCD norm encourages the search for synergetic relationships between the objectives of development policies and non-aid policies, as well as between those and external pressures. This makes it hard to separate the potential multiple causes, whereas the fact that the PCD norm has caused change is well supported by the above.



Regarding the state of the PCD norm according to the norm life cycle, we already know that the norm began cascading (2<sup>nd</sup> stage) with the adoption of the ECD in 2005. We also investigated the efforts made to institutionalize the PCD norm at EU level, both in the EC, the EP and the Council, and observed that there was still some way to go in terms of properly institutionalizing the norm and reaching the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage: internalization. This third stage is characterized by conformity; the norm is taken for granted. The cases would imply that the norm still has not been institutionalized in the Council, given that PCD is foreign to WP members and that known incoherencies remain. It can be concluded then, that the norm has yet to progress to internalization at EU level, given that a significant portion of actors have not accepted nor institutionalized the norm<sup>24</sup>. It is not the purpose, nor is it within the scope of this assignment, to predict how the norm will progress or when, indeed if, the norm will reach the stage of internalization. Nevertheless, some stakeholders do express concern that the norm might be altered to a state of just ‘policy coherence’ (i.e. without development), or even fail due to the lack of checks and balances in its institutional set-up (Interview 2010c and d). In the current climate of overall post-Lisbon institutional uncertainty, however, much remains to be seen.

## 6. Conclusion

This study has had as its overarching purpose to illustrate how change in the EU can be propelled by ideations. Specifically, the study has showed how changes to the policy-making structure and to actual policy have been caused by the gradual adoption of the PCD norm. In attempting to accomplish the above, the study has been structured around three research questions, that all sought to reveal the nature of the PCD norm. First, the norm was traced from its invention in the OECD DAC in 1991 to its introduction into the EU system and the ensuing years, with the goal of answering the first research question, namely *how did PCD emerge in the EU?* The tracing of the norm at this point in time revealed a number of things. First, PCD was initially advanced using both normative and rational arguments, making its adoption both a rational and a moral act. The combination of these two motivations served the PCD norm up as a necessity in terms of moral obligations and effective policy, and as such, the norm was introduced into EU Treaty law shortly after (Maastricht Treaty). Second, in promoting the norm, the DAC has acted as a norm entrepreneur, and has continued to support its adaption through its publications. Third, although PCD was introduced into treaty law early in the process, it would not cascade and no substantial work on its institutionalization would be carried out for over a decade. It cascaded with the adoption of the ECD in 2005, and the intensification of work on PCD was revealed to have coincided with the adoption of the MDGs. It was argued that MDGs and the PCD norm became linked in the sense that the MDGs provided a normative fit for PCD to begin cascading, whereas PCD became

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<sup>24</sup> However, given the consistent work on improving PCD mechanisms and an increasing amount of documents mentioning PCD in the EC (across DGs), it cannot be ruled out that the PCD norm has in fact reached internalization here. Unfortunately, due to the lack of EC interviews, it cannot be confirmed either.

part of the solution to reaching the MDGs (the successful completion of which is very much in the trenches at the time of writing). Thus, by 2005 the PCD norm had begun cascading, yet whether it would reach the third stage of the 'norm life cycle' would depend on its institutionalization.

The degree of institutionalization of the PCD norm was explored in relation to research question two, namely *how has PCD affected the way policy-making is undertaken in the EU?* It was made painfully clear that the EU as a polity does not invite the easy institutionalization of PCD, given its heavily compartmentalized structure and its web of interests to be accommodated. However, with regard to the EC and the EP, it was found that many mechanisms had been identified to further the implementation of the norm. These included, *inter alia*, ISCs, IAs (reformed for the purposes of PCD), PCD reports, a PCD unit and an informal work programme. On the other hand, it was found that PCD mechanisms in the Council were still lacking, although efforts had been made to establish them, such as the Rolling Work Programme. Regardless of the situation in the Council, it was argued that the PCD norm had caused changes to the policy-making structure, based on the identification and creation of the mechanisms listed above. Regarding the life cycle of the PCD norm, it was suggested that the norm had yet to progress to stage three (internalization), given the lack of institutionalization in the Council structure and outstanding problems with the effectiveness of models in the EC and EP.

By way of examining changes made to the CFP and the CAP, an answer was sought for research question three, namely *how have policies been reformed according to PCD?* For both policies it was found that changes had been made since the introduction of PCD, to move them in a more development friendly direction in line with PCD. For the CAP, this included scaling down the amount of funds going to export subsidies and the increase of decoupled payments. For the CFP, FPAs had been introduced with a view to increasing partnership and strengthening the sustainability of EU fishing practices in third countries' waters. Interestingly, the interviews carried out revealed a comprehensive lack of knowledge of the PCD norm on the part of Council actors in these policy areas. The troubling question that emerged challenged the possibility that PCD was behind these changes, because how could it have, when the actors did not know of it? Obviously, this would indicate that the norm has some way to go yet in reaching the internalization stage. Nevertheless, EC communications providing the background for the reforms refer explicitly to PCD and to the possible effects of policy on developing countries. Given that both policies are Community competence, the motivations given by the EC should be taken seriously, as well its should be noted that the EC would have screened for PCD internally every time it comes up with a new proposal. Therefore, changes to policies can be said to have occurred because of the PCD norm. Nevertheless, that other factors, such as WTO demands, played a part in the reforms cannot be ruled out<sup>25</sup>. That such other factors could have *contributed* to the outcomes is,

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<sup>25</sup> This may have been a possibility, had I managed to obtain an interview with EC officials. Unfortunately, this was not a possibility in the current case.

however, compatible with the argument advanced here, which holds that rational as well as normative factors drive actions and change in the EU.

It can hence be concluded that the PCD norm does provide an example of ideational causation in the EU. However, how strong of a causal factor it is (e.g. on policy reforms) cannot be determined and it remains to be seen whether or not the norm will in fact reach stage three of its life cycle. That we see an effect at all may indeed be a strong argument for ideational causation, given that the PCD norm finds itself in the middle of its life cycle (i.e. has not yet been institutionalized or reached stage 3). That the norm has not been fully adopted yet, makes it that much harder to establish its full effect, which is something that further research could focus on. At this point in time, analysis of the PCD norm is an analysis of an ongoing process, and while the argument advanced and the causality revealed are still valid, the findings would stand stronger if the process had been completed. Further research is therefore necessary. Another suggestion for further research would be exploring the effect of the PCD norm on other policy areas that are not as heavily politicized and which are not associated with such strong lobby networks, as it may be that other policy areas have made further progress on PCD.

## **Executive Summary**

Throughout the 1990's, European NGOs lobbied against a series of incoherencies of EU policies. In particular, NGOs campaigned against the *de facto* dumping of subsidized European beef in West Africa, which wiped out the local sector – a sector that was simultaneously receiving development aid from the European Commission. It was made perfectly clear that the EU lacked policy coherence, meaning that its policies were sometimes at odds with each other. This lack of coherence can be seen as a problem in terms of wasted resources as well in more humane terms as a challenge to the development perspectives of developing countries. A solution to this problem would emerge with the invention of a new concept, namely that of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), defined as “ensuring that the EU shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in all policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries, and that these policies support development objectives” (ECD 2005). This thesis explores the concept of PCD in the EU, while attempting to answer the following three research question: 1) how did PCD emerge in the EU, 2) how has PCD affected the way policy-making is undertaken in the EU, and 3) how have policies been reformed according to PCD? Moreover, in this thesis, PCD is understood and treated as a norm, because it essentially stipulates how to prioritize between different policy options, often in situations where objectives are not necessarily compatible with one another. As such, the overarching purpose of the thesis is to provide an example of ideational causation in the EU.

An ideation (sometimes simply referred to as an idea) is an overarching term, which includes such concepts as norms, cultures, doctrines, paradigms, etc. Ideational causation explains action as a result of people interpreting their world through certain ideational elements (Parsons 2007). An ideational argument is thus based on the assumption that certain ideational elements, in our case the PCD norm, cause action because people interpret their world through these elements. This does not preclude rational actions,

rather it means that what is rational is defined through preexisting ideations. Exploring the causal effect of a norm, rather than that of a structure or an institution, places this research firmly within the constructivist camp. Constructivism emphasizes the notion that actors' preferences and interests should not be taken for granted and that they act according to a *logic of appropriateness*, rather than the rational *logic of consequences*. Constructivists do not deny the possibility that actor's attempt to act rationally, but they argue that what is rational is defined according to a context influenced by ideations. PCD, at the very least, would contribute to this context if it were adopted as a norm. Anchored within the constructivist camp and motivated by the attempt to illustrate ideational causation, the thesis relies on the case study method and on process tracing. The case study is that of the PCD norm in the EU, which is mapped out by the process tracing of the PCD norm's evolution from creation to its 2010 status.

The process tracing begins with the first official discussion of PCD at the High Level Meeting of the OECD Development Assistant Committee (DAC) in December 1991. The DAC is identified as a norm entrepreneur for the PCD norm, not just because it provided the venue for the initial discussion, but also because it has continued to support and advance the norm through its publications ever since. Norm entrepreneurs are especially important in the first stage of a norms' life cycle (called norm emergence), before it hits its tipping point and begins cascading. The norm life cycle consists of three stages, beginning with *norm emergence*, then *norm cascade* (which begins when the norm is adopted by a sufficient amount of actors) and ending in *internalization*. Not all norms go through this life cycle, as some perish along the way, but if they reach stage three they can be considered fully adopted and are taken for granted (see Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). The first step in the norm emergence of PCD happened quickly after the DAC meeting, when it was written into the Maastricht Treaty only a week later. However, due to hesitance on the part of the Commission and reluctance by some Member States, the norm would not begin cascading for another 14 years, when a proper commitment was made in the first ever European Consensus on Development. What finally catalyzed the cascade of the PCD norm was the adoption of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which had initially been advocated in tandem with PCD by the DAC. The MDGs and the PCD norm became linked, because consistent application of PCD was seen as the way to achieve the MDGs whereas the MDGs added renewed urgency to the spread of the PCD norm. It is argued that the MDGs provided the *normative fit*, meaning that norms are more likely to cascade if they fit well with the existing normative context, that PCD needed to be able to reach stage two of its evolution.

When PCD began to really cascade with its inclusion in the European Consensus on Development, several mechanisms were identified and created to facilitate its institutionalization. These mechanisms are seen as being strongest in the Commission, and weaker in the Council. In the Commission, PCD mechanisms include (but are not limited to) the Impact Assessments, the Inter Service Consultations, the biannual PCD reports, the PCD unit in the Directorate General for Development and the Country Strategy Papers produced for the purposes of the European Development Fund. All of these mechanisms are used to ensure that cases of incoherence do not occur, by

identifying possible impacts of non-aid policies on developing countries. In the Council, PCD mechanisms in place are limited, with the most promising one being the Presidency Rolling Work Programme. This programme should be created by each Presidency in advance of their term and should be a screening exercise to identify possible discussions where the PCD norm would be important. However, not all Presidencies have actually prepared this programme, leading to the conclusion that the PCD norm has yet to reach its internalization stage in the Council (and therefore also EU-wide). Nevertheless, as regards the effect of the PCD norm on policy-making, it is argued that a definite effect can be seen, given the new mechanisms created in the Commission and those existing ones that have been reformed to better accommodate PCD (e.g. the Impact Assessments). As an example, and although obvious, we would hardly have a PCD unit in the Directorate General for Development if it had not been for the existence of the PCD norm.

To provide an answer to research question three, namely the question of how policies have been reformed according to PCD, the thesis provides two small case studies of well-established EU policies, namely the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Both policies have frequently been criticized for the lack of attention they pay to the effects they have on developing countries and both policies were originally targeted by the NGO campaigns of the 1990's. However, both policies have undergone significant changes since these heavy criticisms were made and it can be argued that they are now much more in line with PCD. The CAP has been in the line of NGO fire due to its market distorting export subsidies and its large budgetary payments. The export subsidies especially have been seen as damaging to developing countries, because they have allowed European agricultural producers to compete unfairly (as well as they have sometimes amounted to *de facto* dumping as previously mentioned). Today, the export subsidies have been heavily decreased and the EU has even offered, in the context of the Doha Development Agenda, to completely phase out its use of export subsidies. In addition, a new emphasis has been put on decoupled payments to farmers (not tied to production) that reduce the risk of overproduction in the EU. It is argued that the EU has moved its agricultural policy in a much more development friendly direction, although it continues to distort trade. The CFP has been heavily criticized for its external dimension, because EU fishing fleets in third countries' waters have jeopardized the sustainability of stocks by overfishing and by engaging in illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. Not only were stocks being depleted, but local fishing sectors in developing countries were also suffering as a result. A reform of the CFP in 2004 changed the way fishing agreements are concluded with third countries by introducing the new Fisheries Partnership Agreements. These would put an increased emphasis on partnership, on scientific evaluation of stocks and would designate considerable funds to the development of local fishing industries. These new partnerships have made the CFP more compatible with PCD, although as was the case for the CAP, some way remains to go before it can be said to be coherent. The fact is, that overfishing and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing still take place and this further jeopardizes the sustainability of fish stocks and threatens the livelihoods of local communities.

With regard to both the CFP and the CAP, it is clear that an effort is being made to make them more compatible with the goals of PCD. The Commission has used both PCD and more general references to development-friendliness in its argumentation for the reforms and changes carried out, which makes it likely that the PCD norm caused these changes, although alternative explanations do exist. Curiously, interviews with members of the Council Working Parties have revealed a striking lack of knowledge and application of the PCD norm, which indicates that the norm still has not come far in its second stage, at least in the Council. This does not preclude the fact that PCD caused the changes, as both policies investigated are examples of Community competence. Given this, the Commission is not only responsible for implementation but it also has the right of initiative in drafting the policies. As such, screening for coherence could easily have occurred within the Commission before the Council was presented with the relevant proposals. Regardless, it is clear that PCD has not reached internalization on an EU-wide scale, which means the norm is still evolving. Further research could plausibly uncover an even greater effect of the PCD norm on policy, once and indeed if, the norm reaches its internalization stage. It is finally concluded, based on the changes made to policy-making and in part on the changes made to policy, that the PCD norm does provide an example of ideational causality in the EU. However, how strong of a causal factor is it cannot be determined.

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## Appendix 1: Interviews

As part of the research carried out during the writing of this study, a number of semi-structured interviews were conducted. What follows are, first, some notes and reflections on the interviews and their utility, and second, a list of questions posed to the people that were interviewed.

First of all, the purpose of conducting interviews for this study should be mentioned. The study has undertaken to both investigate the process of PCD in the EU as well as the outcome. The process could probably have been investigated without conducting interviews, as documents describing this do exist. However, without knowledge of how the actors involved in policy-making in the EU understand PCD, the study would fall short of adding depth to the understanding of this process. More importantly, the case studies of the CAP and the CFP would not be useful without an enquiry into the role PCD has played in the negotiations on their reforms. Information about the role of PCD in these situations is not readily available, and if it were, it would not likely reflect the perceptions of the policy-makers. Given the overall purpose of this study, namely showing that ideations, and more specifically the PCD norm, influence policy-making in the EU, the interviews become crucial for the argument to stand. To put it simply, without information about the arguments used during negotiations, and the possible alternatives considered, it would be extremely difficult to establish a correlation between PCD and the change in policies. Having said this, we shall now turn to some considerations of interviewing as a method.

While preparing for the interviews, I relied on the volume *Qualitative Methods in Social Science* by Kristin Esterberg (Esterberg 2002). The purpose of semi-structured interviews is as follows: “the goal is to explore a topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words” (Esterberg 2002, p. 87). What we are seeking in this study is not only practical knowledge, which is not available in public documents, but also knowledge about the perceptions of the actors involved. Therefore, a more structured interview would have been inappropriate. On deciding whom to interview, I have followed what is termed a purposive strategy, meaning that I have chosen the interviewees for the specific qualities they can bring to the research, those who could give me the greatest possible insight into the topic<sup>26</sup> (see Ibid, p. 93). In doing so, I have tried to balance the perspectives and have attempted to set up interviews with as many different stakeholders as possible. Moreover, as Esterberg cautions, we need to

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<sup>26</sup> The identities of the interviewees are not disclosed in the thesis. In stead, their comments and contributions are associated with their profession. A complete list of the interviewees’ identities will be available for the examiner and opponents at the thesis defense.

consider those who refuse to participate in an interview and what we may not learn because of their refusal. Indeed, “qualitative researchers need to think carefully about how the choices they make in soliciting research participants may shape the conclusions they come to” (Esterberg 2002, p. 94 - citing Groger, Mayberry and Straker 1999). Thus, given that I too had to do without important stakeholders, some reflections on what was not learned will be included in the analysis. The table below illustrates the desired interviewees, their specific contribution and whether or not they agreed to participate.

Function/Profession	Contribution	Participant?
Government attaché with responsibility for the CAP	Inside knowledge of negotiations on policy change and perceptions of PCD	Yes
Government attaché with responsibility for the CFP	Inside knowledge of negotiations on policy change and perceptions of PCD	Yes
MEP from EP Committee of Development	Inside knowledge of perceptions on PCD in the EP, across groups and committees	Yes
NGO representative <sup>27</sup>	Perception of PCD in the NGO community and own perspective of PCD in the EU	Yes
EC official from DG Development	Inside knowledge of negotiations on policy change and perceptions of PCD	No
Government representative to the OECD	Inside knowledge of the birth of PCD and motivations of the DAC and MS	No

It will be important to note that all government officials that participated are Danish and that they therefore may have some common perceptions of PCD, given the national traditions associated with development cooperation. Nevertheless, their contributions also speak of their peers’ attitudes and of the process in general. Gaining access to the interviewees is not necessarily an easy task, and those contacted therefore share the nationality of the researcher. Here, it would be pertinent to note that I am currently employed in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and that the officials are therefore in some sense colleagues. However, as these individuals are stationed in Brussels and as the office in which I work does not deal with PCD, I have had no previous connection with them, nor can I be considered a participant. In this instance my own ideas and attitude will be no more influential and important than otherwise during interviews.

Moving on to crafting the questions for the interview, Esterberg advocates constructing an interview guide, to focus the questions and to guide the interview (Esterberg 2002, p. 94). What follows is the general guide used for the interviews, which has served as a template for each interview. Nonetheless, all interviews were adapted to the interviewee and ran their course according to the information given<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> The interview was conducted in a studio and can be viewed at: <http://www.tveuropa.dk/>

<sup>28</sup> Some interviews were conducted in Danish and few were transcribed, given that some were conducted over the phone and could not be recorded.

### *General Interview Guide*

- Could you describe your work and your areas of responsibility?
- How have you come into contact with PCD in your work?
- What is your perception of PCD? Do you think you share that with your peers?
- What do you think is the most important contribution of PCD?
- Why do you think the EU, or the EC, promotes PCD?
- Do you think that PCD in the EU is improving? Why or why not?
- Have you observed any changes that have occurred due to PCD?
- More specific question for those involved in negotiation of policy changes.

In crafting these questions, I have followed the guidelines proposed by Esterberg (2002, chapter 5). As such, I have tried to phrase the questions in an open-ended manner, tried to avoid leading questions (such as: don't you think that PCD in the EU is improving?), and I have sought to avoid dichotomies. Unfortunately, as time is restricted with regard to the writing of this thesis, I have not had time to do trial interviews or to gain experience, as suggested by Weiss (1998). There is no way of knowing how the interviews would have turned out, had I been a more experienced researcher. There is little else left to say than that I conducted the interviews to the best of my abilities.