00;00;04;05 - 00;00;07;09

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I'm Tanya Heikkila.

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Many of the environmental challenges facing policymakers, regulators, NGOs, the private sector and diverse communities today require us to learn.

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Learning is critical for our capacity to understand and address these challenges.

-And I'm Andrea Gerlak, and we've had the privilege to work together over the past two decades studying learning.

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We are proud of our latest work examining learning in environmental governance.

-The main question we examine in this element is how can people involved in environmental governance learn together intentionally to solve environmental problems? To answer this question, we draw from our own research on learning and the diverse empirical studies on issues ranging from fisheries management in the UK, to urban forestry in Australia, to policy labs in Nepal, and marine mammal protection in the Arctic.

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-We see learning as a process which includes things like trial and error, practice, or exposure to new ideas. But learning is also an outcome, such as a change in understanding or change in behavior. And all learning starts with the individual.

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-But learning in environmental governance is not merely about the summation of individual learning. It's about collective learning. Collective learning is where groups of people acquire, translate, and disseminate innovative ideas about environmental problems or solutions together. That collective knowledge then leads to changes in collective understanding or action.

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The challenge that we face is that learning is hard. People have cognitive biases, issues are complex, and governance institutions are messy.

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-To help researchers and practitioners understand how to overcome some of the barriers to learning, we first lay out what we call the social foundation for learning together. This is the human part. To build out a great learning process, you need to focus on people. Here we illustrate how the social foundations include engaging diverse interests, developing leadership, and fostering dialog.

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-Second, we also lay out the structural foundations, which provide critical support to the social elements.

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Structural features include formal feedback loops to institutionalize learning, dedicated resources to sustain learning, and well connected venues and organizations that can hardwire learning across a network.

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In our element, we provide real world examples to help the reader contextualize how these social and structural features can work in practice.

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-No magic formula exists for learning that works across all environmental governance contexts. Instead, it might be important to infuse learning in a way that allows for continuous adaptation.

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This requires ongoing diagnosis of how well individuals and organizations are learning and what pieces of the learning puzzle might be missing.

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-We encourage people to consider developing a diagnostic approach and building learning systems. We offer strategies to advance intentional learning,

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and we encourage you to join us in learning about learning.

-Read our Element. Test out our recommendations.

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-And help us build stronger, more adaptive environmental governance.