

Policy Briefs vs. White/Green Papers: Understanding the Difference

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Summary:

Policy Briefs, White Papers and Green Papers serve distinct purposes in the area of research dissemination and decision-making. While all three documents aim to inform readers about specific topics or issues, they differ in their scope, format, and intended audience. Understanding the nuances between Policy Briefs and White/Green Papers is crucial for effectively communicating research findings and advocating for actionable solutions.

COMMENTARY

Policy Briefs

A policy brief is a concise and targeted document that summarizes the key findings and recommendations of a research project, with the primary aim of influencing policy decisions or stimulating action.

It serves as a call to action, urging policymakers, stakeholders, and the general public to address pressing issues or challenges identified in the research.

Standard format of a policy brief:

Executive summary: Provides a succinct overview of the issue or topic, highlighting the main findings and recommendations.

Introduction: Sets the context and significance of the issue, outlining why action is necessary.

Approach and results: Summarizes the research methodology and presents key findings and data analysis.

Conclusion: Interprets the data and findings in the context of the issue, emphasizing the urgency of addressing the problem.

Implications and recommendations: Discusses the potential consequences of inaction and offers actionable recommendations supported by evidence.

White Papers

A white paper is an authoritative document that provides in-depth analysis and insights into a particular topic or issue, with the goal of presenting a well-supported solution or course of action.

Unlike policy briefs, white papers delve into comprehensive research and present a nuanced understanding of the subject matter, often targeting a specialized audience.

Standard format of a white paper:

Abstract: Offers a concise summary of the main points and arguments presented in the paper.

Problem Statement: Clearly articulates the issue or challenge that the paper aims to address, providing context for the subsequent discussion.

Background: Provides detailed information and context about the issue, including relevant historical, theoretical, and empirical perspectives.

Solution: Presents a comprehensive analysis of potential solutions or strategies, supported by evidence and research findings.

Conclusion: Summarizes the major findings and arguments presented in the paper, reiterating the importance of the proposed solution.

Green papers

A green paper is a consultation document issued by a government or organization that outlines preliminary proposals for discussion and public feedback.

It serves as a starting point for policy development, seeking input from stakeholders, experts, and the general public before finalizing policy decisions.

Standard format of a a green paper:

Context and background: Provides background information on the issue or topic under consideration, outlining current challenges and areas for potential policy intervention.

Discussion of proposals: Presents preliminary policy proposals or options for addressing the identified issues, often accompanied by rationale and supporting evidence.

Stakeholder consultation: Encourages feedback and input from stakeholders, experts, and the public through consultations, surveys, and submissions.

Next steps: Outlines the process for further policy development, including timelines for feedback collection, analysis, and decision-making.

Transparency and accountability: Emphasizes transparency in the policymaking process by soliciting public input and ensuring that decisions are informed by diverse perspectives and evidence-based analysis.

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***Agri Policy Lab**

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Mission

To foster the development and implementation of effective agricultural and related policies through rigorous research, collaboration, and advocacy.