

# COMMUNICATING RESEARCH:

Impactful written communication  
for DeSIRA projects

19/10/2023



**DeSIRA**  
PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR INNOVATION



# Let's get started



# Overview of the training program

Policy briefs

Research briefs

Stories of  
change

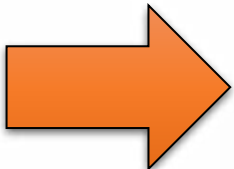
Writing  
workshops

19/10/2023

26/10/2023

9/11/2023  
16/11/2023

7/12/2023  
14/12/2023

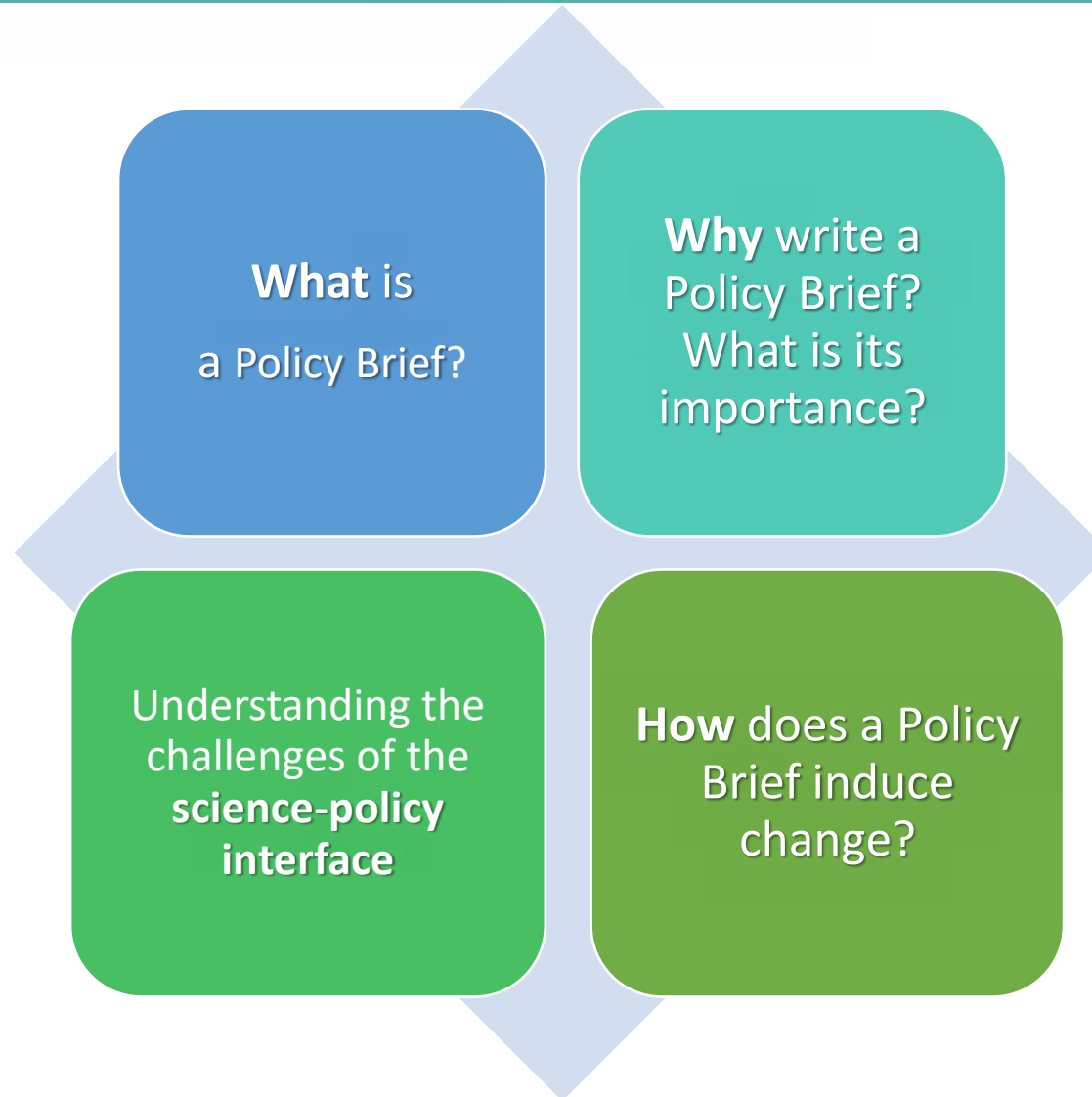


**Save the dates!**  
**Thursdays from 10h to 11h30 CEST (Paris time)**

# Working principles of the training program



# Introduction of the session



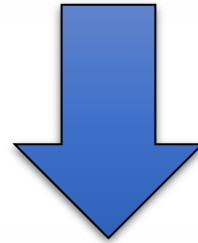
# What is a Policy Brief?

- **Your contributions**



# What is a Policy Brief?

- There is no **STANDARD** definition of the term **Policy Brief**



- What are its main features?



# What is a Policy Brief?

**Concise**

**Easy to read**

**Well argued**

**Provides  
guidance**

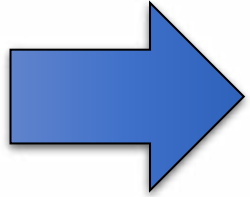
**Brings a  
strategic vision  
on a subject**

# What is a Policy Brief?

- **What is a Policy brief meant for? What is its end goal?**



# What is a Policy Brief?



## • 2 main types of Policy Brief

***“Neutral”***  
Informative

- Provides unbiased information
- Presents various ways of approaching the problem

***“Interventionist”***  
Advocacy

- Argumentation to support a certain orientation for handling the problem
- There is a chosen position for handling the problem

# Why write a Policy Brief?

- **What would be your motivation for writing a Policy brief?**



# Why write a Policy Brief?

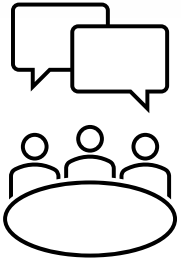


- **Contribute to policy dialogue:** Researchers can play an active role in policy dialogue by providing evidence-based recommendations and solutions to social problems.

- **Promote research:** Policy briefs can help promote research by drawing attention to important issues, showcasing the expertise of researchers, and broadening the scope of research.



# Why write a Policy Brief?



- **Contribute to policy dialogue:** Researchers can play an active role in policy dialogue by providing evidence-based recommendations and solutions to social problems.



- **Social responsibility:** Some researchers view writing policy briefs as a social responsibility by helping to solve social problems and improve the quality of life.

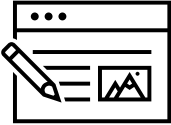
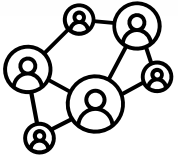


- **Influencing public policy:** Researchers write these papers to present evidence, recommendations, and analyzes that can inform the formulation of new policies.

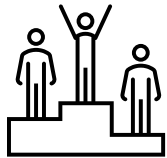


- **Meet specific needs / Inform decision-making:** Decision-makers often need relevant and rapid information to make informed decisions. Policy briefs are designed to meet these needs by providing relevant and well-organized information.

# Why write a Policy Brief?



- **Promote research:** Policy briefs can help promote research by drawing attention to important issues, showcasing the expertise of researchers, and broadening the scope of research.



- **Strengthen credibility:** Writing quality policy briefs can strengthen the credibility of a researcher or research institution by demonstrating their ability to effectively communicate complex information.



- **Mobilize support:** Researchers can write policy briefs to mobilize support for their projects, initiatives or areas of research. This can help attract the attention of funders, partners and other stakeholders.

# Time to practice



# Getting ready to write a Policy Brief

## Checklist

- What **change** do you want to bring forward?
- Who is your target **audience**?
- What **message** do you want to pass?
  
- What do they **already know** about your topic?
- What **information** does your target audience need to receive?
- What **data** do you have that will better **engage** your audience?

One example: Imagine you are working on research/development project on agricultural innovation about water management



# Understanding the challenges of the science-policy interface

You start writing  
your Policy Brief

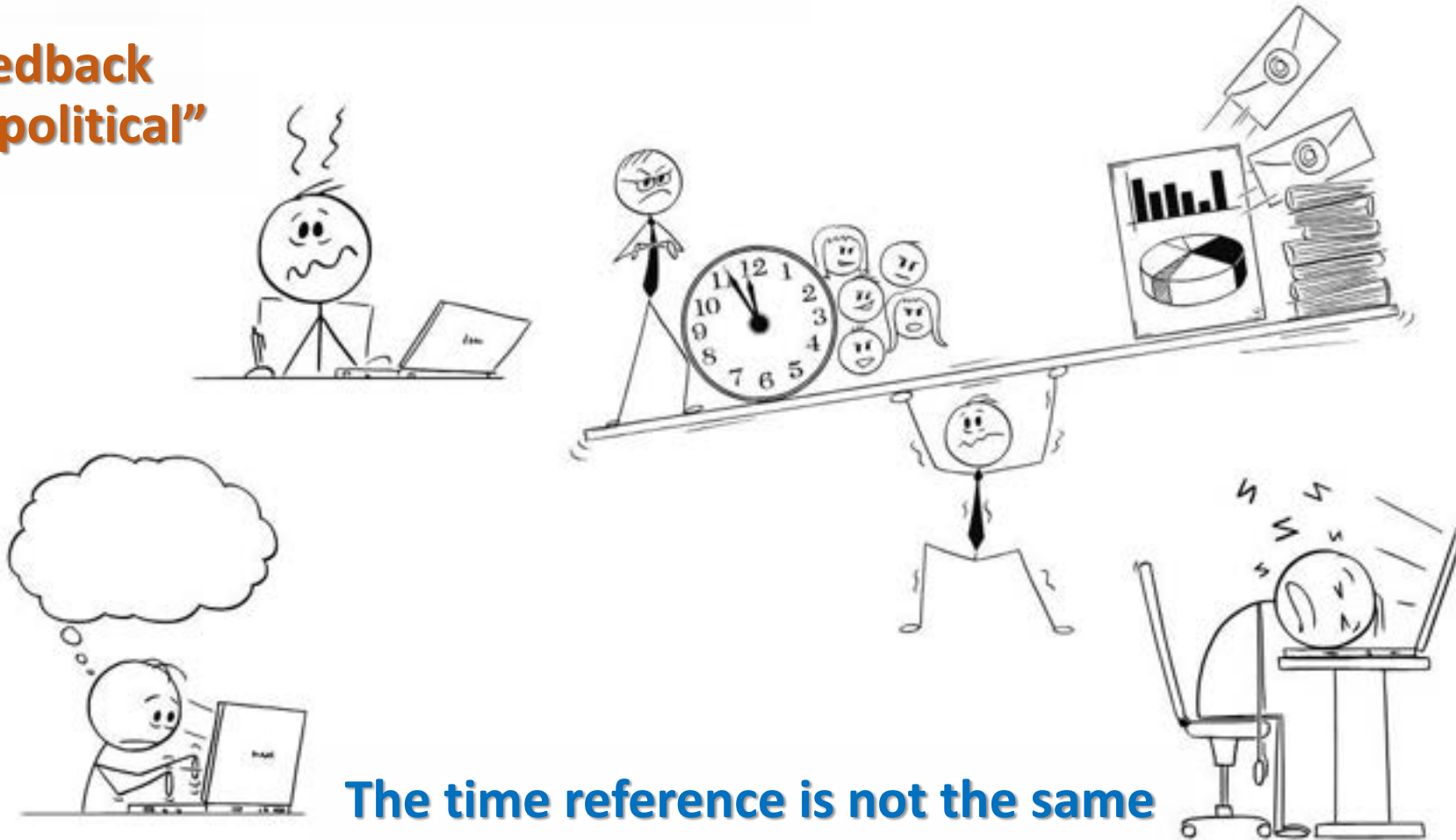


You get feedback from  
the “political” side.

The time reference is not the same

# Understanding the challenges of the science-policy interface

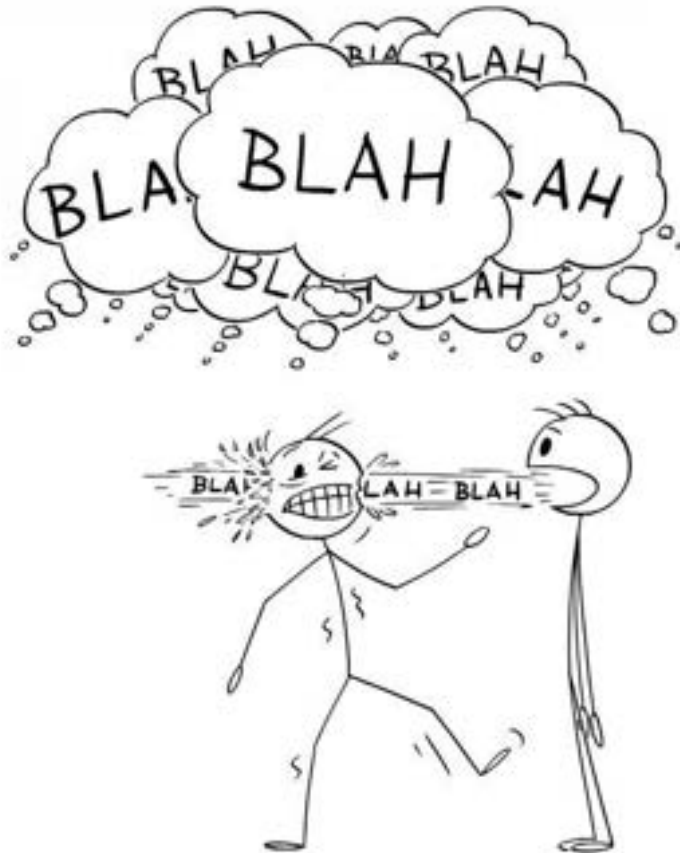
**You get feedback from the “political” side.**



**The time reference is not the same**

# Understanding the challenges of the science-policy interface

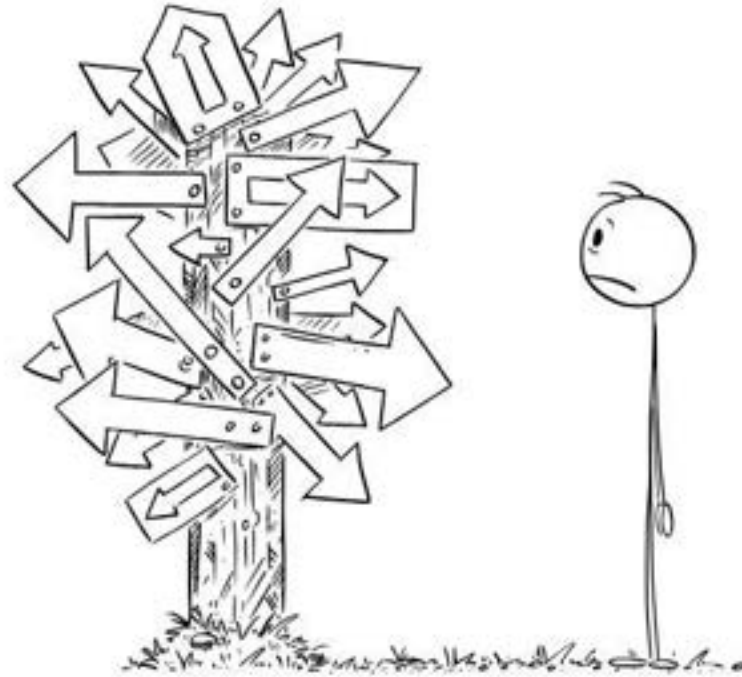
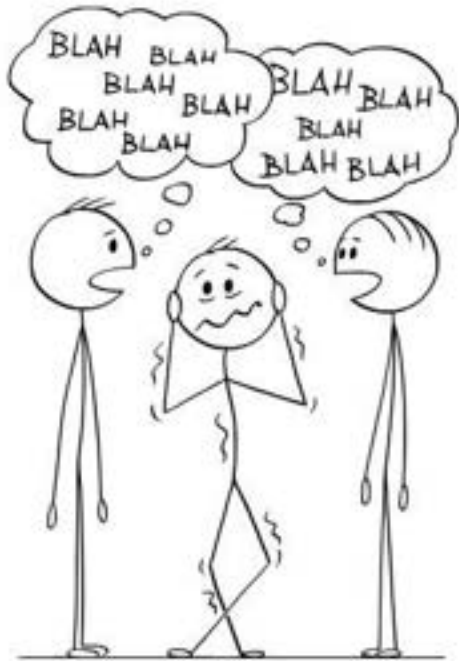
**You get feedback from the “political” side.**



**The dialogue can be overwhelming...**

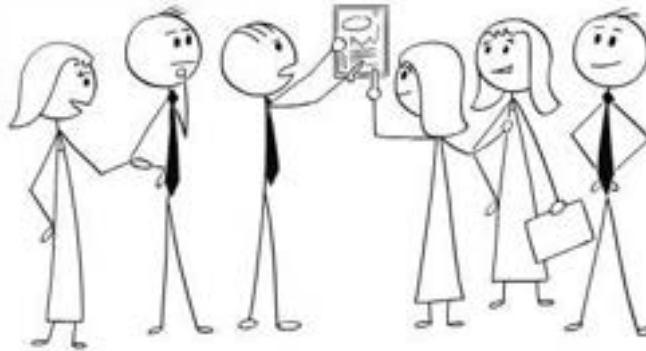
# Understanding the challenges of the science-policy interface

**The dialogue can be overwhelming... also for your “political” contact person**



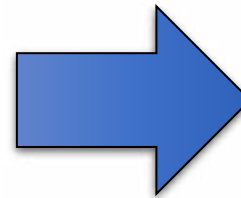
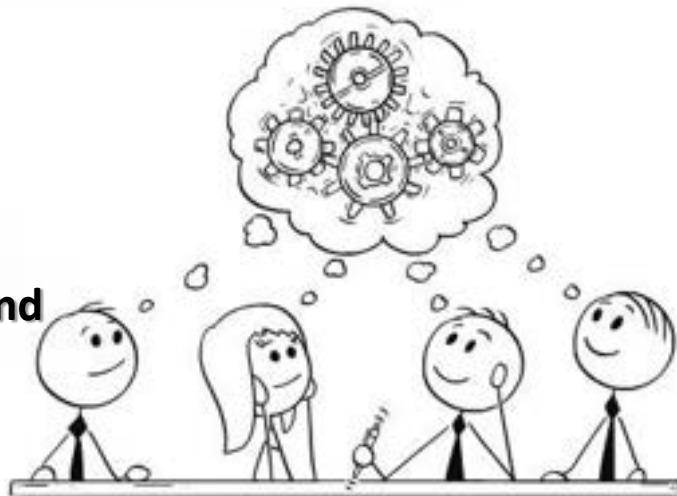
# Understanding the challenges of the science-policy interface

**Collaborative and iterative writing process**



**Establish the way you will work together**

**Identify needs and expectations beforehand**



# Understand the target audience

- **Clearly identify needs, expectations and interests**

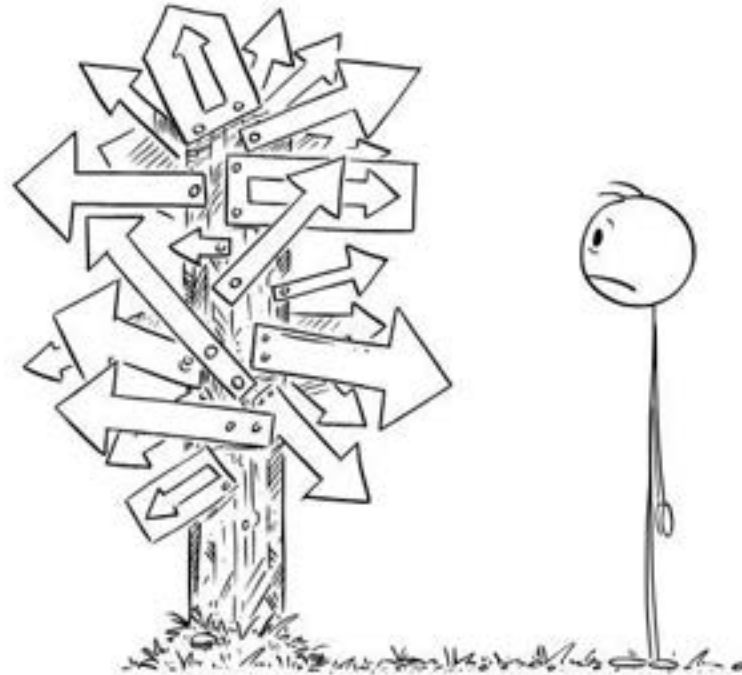
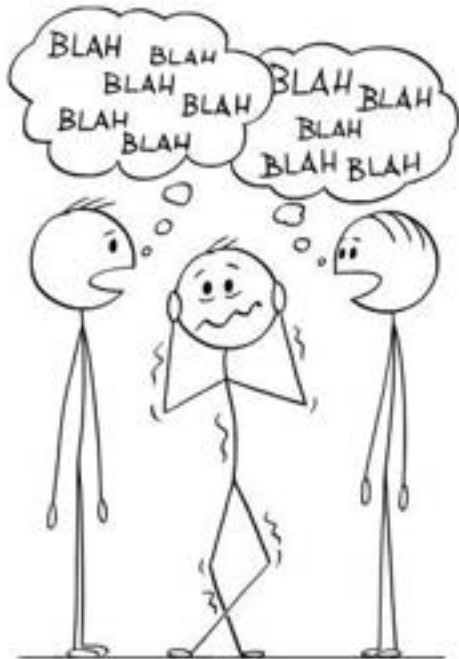
Audience	Needs	Expectations	Interests
Local authorities	Local authorities need information to make informed policy decisions on agriculture, environment and rural development.	They expect analyzes of field practices, reports on the socio-economic impact of decisions and practical recommendations to support agricultural development in their region.	Their interest lies in improving the quality of life of citizens, stimulating the local economy and preserving the environment.

# Customizing of the message

Local authorities	Farmers organizations	NGOs	Local research Institutions
“Invest in local agriculture to boost the regional economy. Support farmers by putting in place policies favorable to agricultural innovation.” “Encourage research and development to strengthen food security and rural development.”	“Support your members to adopt innovative agricultural practices. Work collaboratively with researchers to improve farm sustainability.”	“Let’s improve food security and poverty reduction through agricultural innovation. Invest in projects that support the adoption of new agricultural practices and improve the livelihoods of local communities. »	“Share your knowledge and research with the agricultural community. Your discoveries can guide agricultural innovation. Work collaboratively with other stakeholders to translate science into useful and sustainable practices.”

# How to clearly define the problem or policy question

**Often researchers ask more questions than they answer them...**



# How to clearly define the problem or policy question

<b>WHAT?</b>	Low agricultural productivity due to over-reliance on rainfall makes farmers vulnerable to droughts.
<b>WHY ?</b>	Dependence on rainfall can lead to crop losses, food insecurity, and population migration out of rural areas.
<b>WHO ?</b>	Factors contributing to the problem are farmers' lack of knowledge about water conservation techniques, the high initial cost of implementing these techniques, and lack of support from local authorities.
<b>HOW ? In line with your message</b>	How can we encourage and facilitate the widespread adoption of water conservation techniques by local farmers to reduce their vulnerability to adverse weather conditions and increase agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner?



# Examples of “Policy Brief” for discussion

- The use of graphic and visual elements
  - [11-social-equity.-the-need-for-an-integrated-approach-2012.pdf \(gwp.org\)](#)
  - [Banking on groundwater in times of change \(cgiar.org\)](#)
- Good reflexes for writing



# References to go deeper

- [CANVA Writing-Disseminating-Policy-Briefs.pdf \(uiowa.edu\)](#)
- [How to write a policy brief | IDRC - International Development Research Centre \(idrc-crdi.ca\)](#)
- [i2195e03.pdf \(fao.org\)](#)
- [3 PB INTO2021.pdf \(queensu.ca\)](#)