


DIJMS:
**Dinasti International Journal of
Management Science**

E-ISSN: 2686-522X
P-ISSN: 2686-5211

<https://dinastipub.org/DIJMS> dinasti.info@gmail.com +62 811 7404 455

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijms.v8i1>
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Implementation of Foreign Official Travel Policy in the Formulation of Regional Regulations at the Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives

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Abstract: Foreign official travel is expected to provide knowledge, experience, and policy practices that can contribute to regional policy development. However, the results of such travel are not always transformed into concrete policy inputs, creating a gap between administrative implementation and policy utilization. This study aims to examine the implementation of foreign official travel policy in supporting the formulation of Regional Regulations at the Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives, identify the factors that hinder its implementation, and formulate efforts to optimize its contribution to regional regulation. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation and analyzed using four dimensions of policy implementation: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The findings indicate that foreign official travel has been administratively implemented and has generated information and experiences with potential policy value, but its follow-up remains suboptimal. The main obstacles involve unsystematic communication, limited post-travel resources, insufficient institutional commitment, and the absence of a clear mechanism linking travel outcomes to the formulation of Regional Regulations. The study highlights the need for an integrated post-travel policy-learning mechanism to transform travel outcomes into relevant and applicable regional policy inputs.

Keyword: Policy Implementation, Foreign Official Travel, Regional Regulation Formulation, Policy Learning, Regional Government.

INTRODUCTION

Foreign official travel is an activity that requires public attention because of its implications for effectiveness, transparency, and accountability in the use of public funds. Such travel is financed through regional budgets and therefore must be accountable not only administratively but also substantively. Regional financial management requires the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability in the use of public funds (Republik Indonesia, 2003; Republik Indonesia, 2004). Public policy itself consists of purposive actions undertaken by government actors to address public problems (Anderson, 2011). Therefore, foreign official travel should not be viewed merely as an administrative

activity but also as an instrument that can support government functions and regional development objectives.

The value of foreign official travel depends not only on the implementation of the trip but also on how the information, experiences, and policy practices obtained during the activity are processed, communicated, and followed up. Without an adequate post-travel process, knowledge obtained from official travel may remain as individual experience and may not be transformed into concrete policy inputs. From a policy implementation perspective, implementation does not end with the existence of a policy or program but involves concrete actions undertaken by implementing actors to achieve predetermined policy objectives (Edwards III, 1980). Edwards III identifies communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure as four important factors influencing policy implementation. Previous studies applying this framework have also demonstrated that limitations in communication, resources, and task distribution can affect the effectiveness of policy implementation (Amarani & Purnamasari, 2026; Rupiarsieh, 2018; Saputri, 2018). Recent evidence from Indonesian public-sector implementation further demonstrates that these four dimensions jointly shape implementation outcomes, reinforcing the relevance of the Edwards III framework in examining institutional policy implementation (Habsana et al., 2026).

The implementation of foreign official travel is also closely related to regional government administration and public financial management. Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government establishes the framework of authority for regional governments in administering governmental affairs based on regional autonomy (Republik Indonesia, 2014). Meanwhile, the use of official travel budgets must comply with the principles of state financial management stipulated in Law Number 17 of 2003 concerning State Finance and Law Number 1 of 2004 concerning State Treasury (Republik Indonesia, 2003; Republik Indonesia, 2004). More specifically, Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 59 of 2019 regulates foreign official travel within the Ministry of Home Affairs and regional governments, including planning, licensing, implementation, and accountability procedures. This regulation indicates that foreign official travel encompasses not only the departure and implementation stages but also accountability after the activity has been completed.

At the regional level, Badung Regency has established Regent Regulation Number 76 of 2015 concerning Official Travel, which regulates official travel undertaken by regional government officials and employees as well as the chairperson and members of the Regional House of Representatives of Badung Regency (Pemerintah Kabupaten Badung, 2015). In addition, Bali Governor Regulation Number 55 of 2023, as the fourth amendment to Bali Governor Regulation Number 62 of 2020 concerning Official Travel, provides provisions concerning the implementation and accountability of official travel. Official travel is intended to support the duties and functions of officials, including meetings, seminars, coordination, consultation, education and training, and human resource capacity development. Its implementation must also be supported by administrative documents and activity reports (Pemerintah Provinsi Bali, 2023).

Data from the Secretariat of the Regional House of Representatives of Badung Regency show that foreign official travel during 2023-2025 varied in terms of the number of activities, participants, destinations, and estimated budgets. In 2023, there were nine activities involving approximately 36 participants, with an estimated total budget of IDR 3,096,833,300. In 2024, four activities were conducted with approximately 37 participants and an estimated budget of IDR 2,982,537,400. In 2025, two activities involved approximately 20 participants, with an estimated budget of IDR 2,110,000,000 (Sekretariat DPRD Kabupaten Badung, 2025). Although the number of foreign official travel activities decreased from nine in 2023 to four in 2024 and two in 2025, the number of activities and the amount of expenditure alone cannot be used to determine policy effectiveness. Effectiveness should instead be assessed based on the

achievement of objectives, benefits generated, and contributions to government administration and public services (Anderson, 2011; Edwards III, 1980).

The urgency of examining foreign official travel becomes more evident when it is positioned as part of policy learning. Policy learning allows experiences and information obtained from one policy context to become inputs for improving or developing subsequent policies. Consequently, information obtained through foreign official travel needs to be processed and adapted to local legal requirements and regional characteristics before being considered as a policy input. This is particularly relevant to the formulation of Regional Regulations, which involves planning, drafting, deliberation, enactment, and promulgation and therefore requires systematic and well-planned policy and legal inputs (Suwandi, 2018; Telaumbanua, 2018). The Regional House of Representatives plays an important legislative role in the formulation of Regional Regulations together with the regional head. This function requires adequate information, policy analysis, and institutional capacity to identify regional regulatory needs (Marwan, 2019). Previous research has also shown that the development of regional regulation programs can be influenced by factors such as budget, time, public participation, and the availability of legal drafting personnel (Lasatu, 2020).

However, a gap remains between the implementation of foreign official travel and the utilization of its outcomes in regional policy formulation. Data from the Secretariat of the Regional House of Representatives of Badung Regency indicate that, of the nine foreign official travel activities conducted in 2023, only approximately three produced identifiable concrete follow-up activities, while the remaining six did not demonstrate measurable policy outputs (Sekretariat DPRD Kabupaten Badung, 2025). One identifiable follow-up involved a reciprocal visit by K-Eco from South Korea concerning waste management systems and the development of an Integrated Waste Processing Facility concept. Nevertheless, the ideas, recommendations, and experiences obtained through foreign official travel have not all been transformed into regional policies or measurable programs. This condition indicates the need for a mechanism that connects travel outcomes with policy review and the formulation of Regional Regulations.

The research gap therefore lies in the limited examination of foreign official travel not merely as an administrative and accountability activity, but as a policy implementation process whose outcomes can contribute to regional regulatory development. Existing discussions of policy implementation emphasize communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure, while studies of legislative functions generally focus on institutional capacity and the formal process of Regional Regulation formulation. The present study connects these perspectives by examining how the four dimensions of Edwards III's policy implementation model influence the utilization of foreign official travel outcomes in the formulation of Regional Regulations at the Regional House of Representatives of Badung Regency. The state of the art of this study is consequently its focus on the post-travel policy-learning process and the institutional mechanism required to transform foreign official travel outcomes into relevant regional policy inputs.

Based on this research gap, this study aims to analyze why the implementation of foreign official travel policy has not been optimally followed up in the formulation of Regional Regulations at the Regional House of Representatives of Badung Regency, identify the factors that hinder the implementation and utilization of travel outcomes, and formulate efforts to optimize the contribution of foreign official travel to the formulation of Regional Regulations. The analysis applies Edwards III's four dimensions of policy implementation communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure to explain the gap between the implementation of foreign official travel and its policy outcomes (Edwards III, 1980). Through this approach, the study seeks to demonstrate how foreign official travel can be strengthened from an administratively completed activity into a structured mechanism of policy learning that contributes more concretely to regional regulatory development.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to examine the implementation of foreign official travel policy in supporting the formulation of Regional Regulations at the Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives. The descriptive design was used to provide an in-depth description of the implementation process, the utilization of information and experiences obtained through foreign official travel, and their potential contribution to regional policy formulation.

A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on understanding institutional processes, experiences, perceptions, and views concerning the implementation and follow-up of foreign official travel. The approach enabled the researcher to examine the phenomenon within its institutional context and to interpret how travel outcomes were communicated, assessed, and potentially utilized as inputs for Regional Regulation formulation. In accordance with the qualitative approach, the researcher served as the key research instrument, while the analysis emphasized meaning, context, and institutional processes rather than statistical generalization (Sugiyono, 2023).

The research focused on the implementation of foreign official travel policy at the Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives and its relationship with the formulation of Regional Regulations. Specifically, the study examined how information, experiences, recommendations, and policy practices obtained through foreign official travel were communicated, reviewed, and followed up as potential inputs for regional policy formulation. The analysis also considered the factors that hindered the transformation of foreign official travel outcomes into institutional policy inputs.

Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were used to obtain information concerning the experiences, perceptions, and views of relevant informants regarding the implementation of foreign official travel and the follow-up of its outcomes. Observations were conducted to examine institutional practices associated with the implementation and utilization of foreign official travel outcomes. Documentation was used to examine relevant administrative and policy documents, including foreign official travel reports and documents related to the follow-up of travel activities. The use of these complementary data collection techniques enabled the researcher to compare information obtained from different sources and to apply data triangulation to strengthen the credibility of the findings.

The data were analyzed using George C. Edwards III's policy implementation framework, which consists of four dimensions: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure (Edwards III, 1980). The communication dimension was examined in terms of how information and findings from foreign official travel were conveyed to relevant institutional actors and whether such information was directed toward potential policy follow-up. The resources dimension concerned the availability of human resources, information, analytical capacity, facilities, and other supporting resources required to process travel outcomes into potential policy inputs. The disposition dimension focused on the commitment and willingness of relevant actors to utilize and follow up information and experiences obtained through foreign official travel. The bureaucratic structure dimension examined institutional procedures, division of responsibilities, coordination, and mechanisms connecting foreign official travel reports with the process of Regional Regulation formulation.

The data analysis was conducted through several sequential stages. First, information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents was organized according to the research focus. Second, relevant information was identified and classified according to the four dimensions of the Edwards III framework. Third, the relationships among the identified findings were interpreted to explain the conditions, constraints, and institutional processes associated with the implementation of foreign official travel policy. Finally, conclusions were formulated concerning the factors that hindered the utilization of foreign official travel outcomes and the institutional mechanisms required to optimize their contribution to Regional

Regulation formulation. This analytical process was directed toward explaining the gap between the administrative implementation of foreign official travel and the utilization of its outcomes as institutional policy inputs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Foreign Official Travel Policy in the Formulation of Regional Regulations

The findings indicate that the implementation of foreign official travel policy at the Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives has been administratively conducted, but its contribution to the formulation of Regional Regulations has not been optimally realized. The implementation cannot therefore be assessed solely from the completion of foreign official travel, the preparation of accountability reports, or compliance with administrative procedures. More importantly, implementation needs to be assessed based on the extent to which information, experience, recommendations, and knowledge obtained through foreign official travel are transformed into inputs that support the legislative function of the Regional House of Representatives. This perspective is consistent with Edwards III (1980), who emphasizes that policy implementation concerns the actions of implementing actors in translating policy objectives into concrete outcomes.

The research findings show that foreign official travel has generated information and experience concerning government administration, public services, and policies implemented in destination countries. Nevertheless, these outcomes have not consistently been followed up through the formulation of Regional Regulations. There is consequently a gap between the implementation of foreign official travel as an administrative activity and the utilization of its outcomes as part of the regional policy process. This gap can also be understood from a policy-learning perspective, in which information and experience generated through policy-related activities need to be systematically processed, communicated, and translated into institutional knowledge and subsequent policy action (Hasnita & Salomo, 2025). This finding is relevant to previous studies concerning the legislative function of regional representative institutions, which indicate that institutional capacity and the capability of legislative members influence the effectiveness and productivity of Regional Regulation formulation (Junaenah et al., 2013; Marwan, 2019).

The condition can be explained through the four dimensions of Edwards III's policy implementation framework: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. These dimensions demonstrate that the problem does not originate from a single weakness but from the interaction of several factors affecting the transition from foreign official travel outcomes to regional policy inputs (Edwards III, 1980; Saputri, 2018).

Communication is important because the information obtained by members who participate in foreign official travel must be transmitted to other members, relevant institutional bodies, and actors who possess the authority to assess and follow up the information. Although travel reports and internal communication have been used to convey the results of activities, the findings indicate that communication remains predominantly administrative rather than policy-oriented. The report functions as an accountability document, but it has not consistently become the starting point for identifying relevant policy issues, conducting further assessment, and directing information toward Regional Regulation formulation. From the perspective of Edwards III (1980), communication is effective when information is not only transmitted but also clearly understood and translated into appropriate action. This finding is consistent with Samson et al. (2019), who identify information management and institutional capacity as relevant factors in the implementation of the legislative function.

Resources constitute another important dimension. The implementation of foreign official travel has been supported by budgetary and administrative resources that enable the activities to be conducted. However, the findings indicate that resources are also required after the travel

has been completed. Information obtained from destination countries cannot automatically be incorporated into Regional Regulations because it must first be analyzed in relation to the Indonesian legal system, regional governmental authority, local social and economic conditions, and the needs of Badung Regency. This process requires adequate human resources, information management, analytical capacity, and supporting facilities. Therefore, the resource problem identified in this study is not primarily the availability of funds for travel, but the limited support for processing and analyzing the outcomes after the travel. This finding corresponds with previous research showing that human resources, operational support, facilities, and institutional capacity influence the implementation of the legislative function of regional representative institutions (Aulia et al., 2016; Samson et al., 2019). This finding is also consistent with recent research indicating that human resources and institutional capacity are important in supporting the legislative function of regional representative institutions in the preparation of regional regulations (Sarjiyati et al., 2024).

The disposition dimension further explains why information obtained from foreign official travel has not consistently developed into institutional policy outputs. The findings indicate that members of the Regional House of Representatives recognize that foreign official travel should provide benefits for the institution and the region. They also recognize that practices and policies observed abroad may provide useful references for government administration and public policy. However, individual willingness to utilize such information has not always been transformed into concrete institutional action. This condition should not be interpreted as a complete absence of commitment. Not every foreign official travel activity is intended to produce a Regional Regulation, and not every practice observed abroad is relevant to regional authority or local needs. The central issue is therefore the limited transformation of individual willingness into an institutional process through which relevant findings are presented, reviewed, recommended, and followed up. This finding is consistent with recent research showing that the commitment of regional representative institutions is an important factor in strengthening the legislative function and the formulation of regional regulations (Hosim et al., 2025). In Edwards III's perspective, positive disposition needs to be supported by institutional arrangements that enable commitment to be translated into action (Edwards III, 1980).

The bureaucratic structure dimension reveals a similar problem. The Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives already possesses an institutional structure and internal bodies with their respective responsibilities. The Regional Regulation Establishment Body, for example, has a role in the Regional Regulation formulation process. However, the findings indicate that there is no sufficiently clear and specific pathway connecting foreign official travel reports with policy review and the formulation of Regional Regulations. A travel report can therefore be completed as an administrative document without necessarily being processed into a policy study. This creates a gap between the accountability structure of official travel and the institutional structure of regional policy formulation. From the perspective of Edwards III (1980), a formal organizational structure is insufficient when procedures and coordination mechanisms do not ensure continuity between one stage and another. Previous research on the legislative function of regional representative institutions similarly emphasizes the importance of institutional coordination and capacity in supporting Regional Regulation formulation (Aulia et al., 2016).

The interaction among these four dimensions explains why the implementation of foreign official travel has not produced an optimal contribution to Regional Regulation formulation. The main problem occurs particularly at the post-travel stage. Once the trip has been completed, the information obtained needs to move through a process of communication, assessment, institutional consideration, and policy formulation. When communication remains administrative, post-travel analytical resources are limited, individual commitment is not converted into institutional action, and no clear bureaucratic pathway exists, the results of

foreign official travel tend to remain as reports, knowledge, and references rather than becoming concrete policy inputs. Thus, the effectiveness of foreign official travel should be assessed not only through administrative compliance but also through the institutional capacity to transform its outcomes into policy learning.

Factors Hindering the Implementation of Foreign Official Travel Policy

The findings indicate that the suboptimal follow-up of foreign official travel is primarily associated with the post-travel stage. The main difficulties arise when travel outcomes must be communicated, reviewed, coordinated, and translated into regional policy materials. The four dimensions of Edwards III provide a framework for identifying these constraints.

Communication becomes a constraint because the results of foreign official travel need to move from the individual members who participated in the trip toward the institution and actors with authority to follow them up. Although travel reports serve as a medium for communicating the results of activities, they have not fully functioned as policy-communication instruments. The information obtained has not consistently been classified according to its relevance to Regional Regulation needs, and not all results have been presented through a mechanism specifically oriented toward policy follow-up. Communication therefore remains predominantly administrative rather than substantive (Edwards III, 1980).

The second constraint concerns resources for post-travel processing. Although the budget and administrative support have enabled foreign official travel to be conducted, additional resources are necessary to analyze the information generated by the activity. Foreign practices cannot be directly transferred into Regional Regulations because they must be assessed against Indonesian legislation, regional governmental authority, local social conditions, and community needs. Such assessment requires analytical human resources and adequate information management. The quality of the travel report is also important because a report that only records the itinerary and administrative details has limited value as a policy input. This finding is consistent with the importance of human resources, facilities, and institutional capacity in supporting legislative functions (Aulia et al., 2016; Samson et al., 2019).

The disposition constraint concerns the limited transformation of individual willingness into sustained institutional action. The findings indicate that members of the Regional House of Representatives understand that foreign official travel should provide benefits for the institution and the region. However, such understanding does not consistently lead to concrete institutional follow-up. This does not mean that members lack commitment. Some foreign official travel activities may have objectives unrelated to the formulation of Regional Regulations, and not all foreign practices are relevant to local regulatory needs. The problem instead concerns the absence of a sufficiently strong institutional mechanism that converts individual willingness to share and utilize information into a structured policy process (Edwards III, 1980).

The fourth constraint is the absence of a sufficiently clear and operational bureaucratic pathway for processing foreign official travel outcomes. The Regional House of Representatives already possesses formal institutional structures and internal bodies, including the Regional Regulation Establishment Body. However, the existence of these structures does not automatically create a follow-up process. A clear mechanism is required to connect travel implementation, report preparation, presentation of findings, identification of relevant issues, policy review, submission to the relevant institutional body, and possible use in Regional Regulation formulation. Without such a mechanism, the continuity of the process depends heavily on individual initiative. This finding reinforces the importance of institutional coordination and organizational capacity in the legislative process (Aulia et al., 2016).

Optimization of Foreign Official Travel Policy Implementation

The optimization of foreign official travel policy is necessary to ensure that official travel does not stop at the completion of the trip and preparation of administrative reports. Instead, its outcomes should contribute to the performance of the Regional House of Representatives, particularly its legislative function. The findings show that foreign official travel provides opportunities for members to obtain information, experience, and knowledge concerning government administration and policies implemented in destination countries. The challenge is to transform these outcomes into relevant and applicable inputs for regional policy formulation.

Communication should be strengthened from simple report submission into substantive policy communication. Each travel outcome should be identified according to its substance and relevance to the needs of Badung Regency. Findings relevant to regional governmental authority and regulatory needs should then be communicated to the appropriate institutional bodies. One practical mechanism is a post-travel presentation forum through which members explain the policies studied, practices observed, problems identified, and their potential relevance to Badung Regency. The results that have potential relevance to regional regulatory needs can subsequently be communicated to the Regional Regulation Establishment Body for further consideration. This would transform communication from simple information transmission into a process of policy information exchange and institutional learning.

Resource optimization should focus particularly on the processing of travel outcomes. The institution may strengthen analytical capacity through the involvement of supporting personnel or experts with relevant competencies in law, public policy, government administration, and legislative drafting. Travel reports should also contain substantive information concerning the policies observed, their strengths and limitations, potential applicability to Badung Regency, legal considerations, and recommended follow-up. In this way, the travel report can develop from an administrative accountability document into a policy-learning document that can be used as a reference for subsequent institutional assessment.

Optimization of disposition requires strengthening the understanding that foreign official travel is part of the institutional responsibilities of the Regional House of Representatives. Members who participate in foreign official travel need to be encouraged to bring the knowledge and experience obtained abroad back to the institution and identify its relevance to regional needs. The objective is not to require every foreign official travel activity to result in a Regional Regulation, but to ensure that every relevant finding has an opportunity to undergo institutional assessment. This approach transforms individual learning into institutional learning and strengthens the relationship between official travel and the legislative function.

The most important institutional improvement concerns bureaucratic structure. A clear follow-up mechanism is required to connect the stages of foreign official travel with policy formulation. The mechanism can begin with the implementation of the travel, followed by preparation of the report, presentation of the findings, identification of relevant outcomes, policy review, submission to the relevant institutional body, and consideration of the results as one of the inputs in Regional Regulation formulation. Such a mechanism would provide a clear institutional pathway and reduce dependence on individual initiative. Coordination with relevant regional government agencies can also be conducted when the findings concern specific governmental sectors, allowing the institution to assess legal authority, regional conditions, and implementation feasibility before considering foreign practices as policy references.

Overall, the study demonstrates that the central challenge is not the absence of foreign official travel or the absence of administrative accountability, but the weak institutionalization of the post-travel policy-learning process. Foreign official travel has generated information and experience with potential value for the Regional House of Representatives, but the institutional mechanism for converting those outcomes into policy inputs remains insufficient. From a

policy-learning perspective, implementation limitations can become a source of institutional learning when experiences are systematically assessed and translated into improvements in subsequent policy processes (Leong & Howlett, 2022). The findings therefore extend the application of Edwards III's policy implementation framework by demonstrating that communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure should be considered not only in relation to policy execution but also in relation to the institutional processing of policy-generated knowledge. In the context of Badung Regency, strengthening these four dimensions can help transform foreign official travel from an administratively completed activity into a structured mechanism of policy learning that contributes more effectively to Regional Regulation formulation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of foreign official travel policy at the Badung Regency Regional House of Representatives has been administratively conducted but has not been optimally connected to the formulation of Regional Regulations. Foreign official travel has generated information, knowledge, and experience with potential value for regional policy development; however, continuity between the implementation and reporting stages and the subsequent processes of policy review, recommendation development, and utilization in Regional Regulation formulation remains limited.

The findings indicate that the constraints affecting implementation can be explained through the four dimensions of Edwards III's policy implementation framework: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. Communication of foreign official travel outcomes remains predominantly administrative and has not consistently been directed toward policy follow-up. Resources for post-travel assessment and processing remain limited, particularly in terms of analytical capacity and information management. Although members of the Regional House of Representatives generally recognize the potential benefits of foreign official travel, individual commitment has not consistently been transformed into sustained institutional action. In addition, the existing bureaucratic structure has not yet provided a sufficiently clear and systematic mechanism connecting travel reports with the Regional Regulation formulation process.

The study recommends strengthening the post-travel policy-learning mechanism by establishing a systematic process for presenting, assessing, and following up foreign official travel outcomes. Relevant findings should be identified based on regional needs, governmental authority, and the applicable legal framework, and subsequently communicated to the Regional Regulation Establishment Body or other relevant institutional bodies for further consideration. Such a mechanism would strengthen communication, improve the utilization of post-travel resources, transform individual commitment into institutional action, and establish a clearer pathway from foreign official travel to regional policy formulation. The value of foreign official travel should therefore be assessed not only through administrative compliance but also through its contribution to institutional learning and evidence-informed Regional Regulation development.

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