Decision Support Strategy

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Purpose of the Decision Support Strategy

The strategy focuses on modelling for decision support, and the underpinning data activities that support modelling

Aims to strengthen the impact of modelling and data analysis across the next programme.

Grounded in the principles of evidence-based decision-making, innovation, and alignment with national guidance and standards

Supports better integration and collaboration of research, data and modelling

Covers modelling and data activities in the Strategic Research Programme.

Guiding Principles

Working for the Public Good

Data and models are treated as shared public assets that inform policy, maximise societal benefit and ensure ethical use of emerging technologies.

Co-Design and Collaboration

Solutions are co-created through active engagement with researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders via workshops and consultation.

Delivering Impact

Ensure that analysis, data and modelling outputs support better policy outcomes and deliver cross-programme impact.

Desired Outcomes

Ensuring traceability and transparency in how data, analysis, and models inform decisions.

Enabling timely, evidence-based policy decisions through accessible, high-quality analysis and modelling.

Fostering a culture of reuse, collaboration and active engagement across research and policy communities.

The Three Pillars of Decision Support

Data

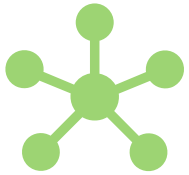
Establish integrated, high-quality, and accessible data systems that underpin modelling and analysis.

Enabling transparency, interoperability, and reuse across the programme.

Modelling & Analysis

Strengthen the use of models and analytical tools, grounded in robust data, to deliver timely, evidence-based decisions.

With a focus on innovation, collaboration, and policy relevance.



Governance

Support effective, proportionate governance by embedding data and modelling at the heart of decision-making.

Enabling coordination, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Insights from SEFARI Fellowship Report

Data – Widespread use of spatial and non-spatial datasets across the programme, but challenges remain around data curation, consistency, and linkage. Improving traceability and interoperability is a key priority.

Modelling – Most models are used for decision-making and policy support, but many are technically complex or require specialist knowledge. Improving usability, traceability and supporting methodological development are key priorities.

Governance – Many models are developed and maintained by research teams, requiring collaboration for effective use. Governance should focus on improving communication, visibility of key datasets, and creating space for feedback and shared learning.

Opportunity – Strengthening these offers an opportunity to improve consistency, usability, and coordination across the programme.

Enablers

Skills and Capacity Development

- Support engagement and knowledge exchange between researchers and government
- Build long-term capacity and alignment
- Foster shared understanding of research lifecycles, analytical best practices, and evidence use contexts

Innovation and Emerging Technologies

- Encourage exploration of forward-looking tools and methods
- Leverage AI and Machine Learning and utilise LiDAR and high-resolution remote sensing

Best Practice for Model and Data Integration

- Establish shared principles for integration
- Promote collaboration across research and stakeholder communities
- Align with international standards and exemplars