



The Global Coherence Index

*Transitioning from Vision to Architecture
Toward a Measurable Framework for Global Alignment*



BY QUINN RIANA PASCAL

VERSION 2.0 – OCTOBER 2025




Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Introduction	3
Conceptual Shift & Definitions	4
Indicators & Weighting Variable	6
Table 1: The Policy–Discourse–Action gap triad visualized, weighted by Integrity.	6
Integrity	7
Methodology	8
Table 2. Coherence Gaps / Figure 3. Qualitative Dimensions of Coherence	9
Qualitative Data Considerations	10
Transdisciplinary Invitation: Toward a Science of Coherence	12
Future Development	14
Bibliography	15
Publication, Ethical Standards & Collaboration Protocol	16
The Global Coherence Index	18

Abstract

Incoherence is a multidimensional risk to international security. The Global Coherence Index (GCI) is a developing analytical framework with the goal of identifying and reporting on global weak spots, incoherencies and their causes.

This brief working paper of the GCI clarifies dimensions, definitions, core details, and the future of this work. Most notable, the previously speculated institutional/semantic/spatial focus will be considered relational categories while the core dimensions are now Policy/Discourse/Action. The new approach to the methodology is based on the gaps between said dimensions, ultimately compared against an Integrity metric, additionally considering independent indicators such as theoretical analysis and interpretation.

It has also become clear that what is being developed here is becoming its own theoretical framework of coherence analysis. This realization calls for precision to ensure the Index develops for clarity and utility instead of expansion for its own sake.

Keywords: Global Coherence Index (GCI); coherence metrics; policy–discourse–action gap; policy coherence; systems analysis; integrity index; international relations; global governance; complexity science; transdisciplinary research; ethical frameworks; open science.

Introduction

If the GCI v1 was the conceptual leap, now we're circling back on the path to clear some stones and make sure we don't pull a muscle during the next steps. The methodology previously speculated was heading in the right direction but with limitations, such as institutional bias and broad idealism, that have led to the necessary evolution of the overall approach. To try and qualify all aspects of the world is absurd, and not all international actors are institutional. So, to be able to produce a tangible result of this work, the dimensions have been specified to encompass measurable aspects of the modern world: what is written, what is said, and what is done. Still based in geopolitics and International Relations theories, this project will have to be vastly transdisciplinary... which in itself is a limitation to the current situation that will evolve alongside the project's growth and collaborations.

Conceptual Shift & Definitions

Originally five types of incoherence were outlined along with three speculated dimensions. Arguably, all incoherence leads back to semantics. Temporal and spatial aspects are implicit in the human experience (yes, to be considered but as a more fundamental piece of the puzzle, philosophical and/or literal), and everything can equally be seen as symbolic-psychological. That leaves us with the previous focal triad of institutional-semantic-spatial as descriptors for types of relationships.

Looking at other theoretical-political world-view frameworks, Quincy Wright (1955) proposed twelve dimensions. Those do also fit this framework, but right now the goal is building a coherent base of the Coherence Index concept. Instead of complicating things further, it's necessary to dial back a bit and make sure the base is solid before expanding into all the nuances mentioned in GCI v1.

In favor of clarity, let's dive into the core definitions we're working with:

Concept	Definition
Policy	In this framework, <i>policy</i> refers to formal, institutionalized commitments (laws, treaties, and official directives) that express a government or organization's intended course of action. Policy coherence can be observed through the alignment between enacted frameworks and subsequent discourse or implementation.
Discourse	<i>Discourse</i> refers to the public communication layer (statements, speeches, and narratives) that express institutional commitments into shared meaning. Its coherence is measured by consistency between what is said and what is done, and what is said and what is written.

Action	<i>Action</i> captures tangible implementation: resource allocation, operations, and generally observable change. Coherence arises when actions fulfill what has been promised through policy and discourse.
Integrity	<i>Integrity</i> functions as an ethical weighting variable that moderates coherence scores according to verified scientific and legal sources, the social and ecological benefit. It distinguishes between coherence used for harm or deception and coherence that genuinely sustains life and justice.

Together, these dimensions describe not only *what the world commits to*, but *how it speaks and acts*, and thus how alignment or fragmentation can be observed.

The literature on Policy Coherence (especially in development cooperation) and on policy-integration and implementation gaps establishes the longstanding challenge of aligning intentions and outcomes across sectors (OECD, 2019). For example, the concept of Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) emphasises that non-aid policies should not undermine development objectives.


In this paper, the framework of Policy-Discourse-Action reframes coherence as relational across three observable layers, and introduces Integrity as an essential moderating variable, thereby extending the logic of existing approaches.

Indicators & Weighting Variable

Our primary indicators are the gaps between dimensions. This includes: Policy-Discourse Gap, Discourse-Action Gap, and Policy-Action Gap. All will be defined to reference the same time period and be weighted with the Integrity variable (independent of time, based on most current data).

Each gap represents a divergence between commitment, communication, and implementation; their relative sizes may indicate institutional fragility or adaptive strength.

Table 1: The Policy–Discourse–Action gap triad visualized, weighted by Integrity.



Dimensions:	Policy	Discourse	Action	Integrity
Descriptors	Written, legal, binding	Speech, narrative, representation	Physical change, written change	Benefit/Harm to Humanity/Planet
Primary Evidence Sources	Constitutions, treaties, declarations.	Speeches by leaders or representatives, UN addresses, social media statements.	Investments, policy changes or implementation, material outcomes.	United Nations Delcarations, Scientific consensus, cross-disciplinary validation
Dominant Edge Type	Institutional	Semantic	Spatial	All (meta-layer, applied as weighting factor to overall coherence score)
Conceptual schema by Quinn R. Pascal for the Global Coherence Index v2.0				

Table 1 textual summary (for accessibility and versioning):

“Policy → Written, legal, binding; Evidence: constitutions, treaties, declarations.

Discourse → Speech, narrative, representation; Evidence: leader speeches, UN addresses, social media.

Action → Physical change, implementation; Evidence: investments, policy changes, material outcomes.

(Above the graphic are arrows to mark the gaps between Policy and Discourse, Discourse and Action, and Policy and Action).

Integrity → Benefit/harm to humanity/planet; Evidence: UN declarations, scientific consensus. (Integrity is visually separated to represent its presence as a weighting variable).

Dominant edge types: Institutional (Policy), Semantic (Discourse), Spatial (Action), Meta-layer (Integrity)."

In later quantitative phases, the GCI's relational architecture may be modeled through social network analysis (SNA), where nodes represent actors or institutions and edges capture semantic, institutional, or spatial relationships. This enables coherence mapping at multiple system levels.

Integrity

The meat of it all. Coherence alone only speaks to congruence; if it's said "I will punch you in the face", then I do indeed punch you in the face... that is coherent. The same happens in politics, which is what led to the necessity of a base factor to indicate harm/benefit and scientific alignment. Integrity will function as a dynamic weighting variable applied across the three gaps, modulating coherence scores according to scientific consistency and verified benefit to humanity and the planet. Ethical and theoretical implications are considered in the qualitative variables section.

Methodology

The methodological approach of the Global Coherence Index looks to balance conceptual clarity and applied metrics. It begins with the identification of the three primary dimensions (Policy, Discourse, and Action) as observable aspects of international behavior. Each dimension corresponds to modes of commitment; what is written, said, and done. The GCI analyzes the spaces between these dimensions as “gaps” which serve as diagnostic fields for understanding the coherence or fragmentation of international/social systems. Data are collected from textual and institutional material sources.

Purpose. The GCI aims to operationalize coherence as a comparative and evolving indicator. Rather than outputting static rankings, it measures the degree to which an actor’s institutional, communicative, and behavioral expressions remain aligned across times and contexts. The intent is not to prescribe ideological conformity but to highlight alignment or dissonance as a measurable feature of governance and global interaction.

Scope of Measurement. The current scope of measurement focuses on systemic coherence between Policy, Discourse, and Action within international governance. While this initial range remains limited, it will provide a stable foundation for future quantitative and cross-domain expansion.

Data Sources. The GCI may be applied to nation-states, international organizations, or specific transnational projects. Each case can be analyzed individually or in comparative clusters. At the present stage, the Index remains a conceptual framework intended for testing and refinement; future versions will translate these relationships into formal coherence scores and visual network maps.

Comparative Logic. Coherence is assessed through relational comparison rather than absolute value. The magnitude of each gap—Policy-Discourse, Discourse-Action, and Policy-Action—indicates the strength or weakness of correspondence among the three dimensions. These relationships can be analyzed qualitatively or later modeled quantitatively through network analysis, where actors and commitments are represented as nodes connected by semantic, institutional, or spatial edges.

Integrity Weighting. Integrity functions as a moderating variable across all dimensions. It evaluates whether coherence serves constructive or harmful ends, distinguishing alignment rooted in ethical consistency from alignment used to justify harm. In future computational applications, Integrity may serve as a weighting coefficient within the coherence equation, amplifying or reducing composite scores according to verified social and ecological benefit.

Analytical Workflow. In practice, the GCI encourages a three-step process: (1) collect and classify data under each dimension, (2) identify convergences and divergences between dimensions, and (3) interpret results through the lens of integrity and systemic impact. This flexible workflow allows interdisciplinary teams to apply the framework at varying scales, from national policy reviews to organizational self-assessments or comparative geopolitical studies.

Outlook. While the current version remains qualitative, its design anticipates integration with computational tools and network mapping techniques. These developments will allow for dynamic visualizations of coherence across time and actors, supporting predictive modeling and early-warning analysis of systemic incoherence.

Table 2. Coherence Gaps / Figure 3. Qualitative Dimensions of Coherence

Table 2. Core Coherence Gaps within the GCI Framework.

Policy-Discourse Gap	Difference between what is legally adopted and what is publicly communicated.
Discourse-Action Gap	Difference between official statements and observable implementation.
Policy-Action Gap	Structural incapacity or non-execution of existing law.

Figure 3. Qualitative Dimensions of Coherence.

Qualitative, Humanistic and Theoretical Variables such as:

- Pattern recognition; are we repeating history?
- What is the emotional tone?
- Theoretical lenses;
 - Theories of International Relations (Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, Marxism, Feminism, etc.)
 - Philosophical Frameworks (Kantian, Hegelian, Utilitarianism, Aristotelian virtue ethics, Kairos, etc.)

Table 2 & Figure 3 textual summary (for accessibility and versioning):

“Table 2. Core Coherence Gaps within the GCI Framework.

Policy-Discourse Gap → Difference between what is legally adopted and what is publicly communicated.

Discourse-Action Gap → Difference between official statements and observable implementation.

Policy-Action Gap → Structural incapacity or non-execution of existing law.

Figure 3. Qualitative Dimensions of Coherence.

Qualitative, Humanistic and Theoretical Variables such as:

- *Pattern recognition; are we repeating history?*
- *What is the emotional tone?*
- *Theoretical lenses;*
 - *Theories of International Relations (Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, Marxism, Feminism, etc.)*
 - *Philosophical Frameworks (Kantian, Hegelian, Utilitarianism, Aristotelian virtue ethics, Kairos, etc.)”*

Qualitative Data Considerations

Part of the limitations of the GCI v1 were the blurry lines around what measurable factors can be integrated. With our ‘measurables’ clearly defined, we can explore the conceptual-analytical part of the framework.

Qualitative data in this framework refers to interpretive, discursive, and theoretical variables (including language framing, public narratives, institutional rhetoric, and cross-cultural value systems) which can be analyzed alongside quantitative indicators to reveal deeper coherence patterns.

For example, the question of “...are we repeating history?” plagues the media yet with no tangible/accepted method of analysis. Historians can outline sequences of events, economists can overlay graphs, but they’re still field-specific. Within the GCI, such qualitative questions are contextualized through the triad (Policy–Discourse–Action), allowing cross-field comparisons where narrative or symbolic coherence can be traced alongside institutional performance.

Integrity as an indicator is based on existing scientific data, however, it also implies morals and ethics— a wide topic of debate among thinkers during all known human history. Just because we’ve collectively accepted the murkiness of such core concepts does not mean that lack of alignment with *any* moral framework is acceptable in positions of power.

Future iterations may operationalize the dimensions through text-mining, sentiment mapping, or narrative analysis, enabling systematic evaluation of discourse–action alignment across institutions.

The theories of International Relations, similar to those of philosophy, are known for their contradictions in world views, yet each offers valuable interpretive filters for analysis.

Transdisciplinary Invitation: Toward a Science of Coherence

The human systems on this planet are still in survival mode since before the last century. We can help usher the change from global fight-or-flight to global understanding, working towards recuperation and conscious progress.

The Global Coherence Index is a shared laboratory with open doors. By researchers, for researches; thinkers across fields are invited to test, refine, and expand the measurement of coherence and integrity as planetary variables.

Translating complexity into clarity is only possible with wide integration. Each discipline is holding a piece of the puzzle and we have to work together to assemble the full picture; then, we can unite the fields that rarely speak to each other and work towards something greater than all of us.

Transdisciplinary collaboration opportunities include (but are not limited to):

Social Scientists and Economists can evaluate how structural inequality, resource distribution, and human development indices influence coherence at both institutional and planetary levels.

Internationalists and Political Scientists can test the framework at varying scales of policy, treaties, and governance. The GCI invites them to reinterpret geopolitics not as zero-sum competition but as coherence management across nations.

Historians can trace the genealogies of coherence and collapse. For example, by identifying when civilizations achieved alignment between ethics and power, and when they fractured. Their long-view contextualizes the present state of the world.

Data Scientists and Analysts to build transparency-driven datasets, integrate external indicators (HDI, GPI, CPI, etc.), and experiment with algorithms that detect Policy-Discourse-Action gaps in real time.

Linguists and Communication Scholars can refine discourse-based indicators to quantify semantic integrity and narrative alignment across nations.

Social Network Analysts can model the connective tissue of coherence by mapping influence, information, and trust flows across governments, organizations, and publics. Their graphs give shape to the invisible architecture of interdependence.

Quantum Internationalists: to investigate how entanglement, superposition, and coherence in physics might model the informational coupling between social systems.

Mathematicians to formalize the GCI's logic, testing the behavior of coherence equations, weighting schemes, and feedback loops.

Software Developers to translate theory into interface: designing open-source dashboards, APIs, and visualization tools for institutions and citizens alike.

Physicists and complex-systems researchers could model coherence as a measurable state variable (parallel to entropy) describing how order and meaning emerge in open systems.

Quantum Computing Researchers can explore how advanced technologies can help widen the amount of variables and indicators involved.

Psychologists and Cognitive Scientists can study the micro-foundations of coherence: how perception, trust, and integrity manifest at the level of individual and collective cognition.

Philosophers and Ethicists can continue defining integrity itself, clarifying what moral coherence means in a pluralistic, interdependent world.

Artists, Designers, and Educators can help translate the data of coherence into symbols, interfaces, and learning tools that inspire the public. This way, coherence can be felt, not only measured.

Future Development

The GCI is designed to be future-thinking and solution-driven, but before we enter application, it will have to remain diagnostic until stabilized.

The full vision includes the implementation of quantum computing, existing indices, and transdisciplinary participation. All dimensions and gaps can be applied to all international actors, beginning with nation-states as primary units of analysis. This framework may later extend to organizations, corporations, and communities.

With thorough analysis of history and the application of diverse fields and mathematical frameworks, this could herald a new style of governance; forward-thinking, planet-friendly, and coherent.

Bibliography

1. Der Derian, J., & Wendt, A. (Eds.). (2022). *Quantum International Relations: A Human Science for World Politics*. Oxford University Press.
2. Hale, T., Held, D., & Young, K. (2013). *Gridlock: Why Global Cooperation is Failing When We Need It Most*. Polity Press.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287964220_Gridlock_Why_Global_Cooperation_is_Failing_When_We_Need_It_Most/citations, DOI: 10.20424/2237-7743/bjir.v4n3p694-699
3. Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton University Press.
4. May, P. J., Sapotichne, J., & Workman, S. (2006). Policy coherence and policy domains: An empirical exploration of policy design. *Policy Studies Journal*, 34(3), 381–403.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2006.00178.x>
5. Meadows, D. H. (2008). *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. Chelsea Green Publishing.
<https://research.fit.edu/media/site-specific/researchfitedu/coast-climate-adaptation-library/climate-communications/psychology-amp-behavior/Meadows-2008.-Thinking-in-Systems.pdf>
6. Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. PublicAffairs.
7. OECD. (2019). *Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2019: Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality*. OECD Publishing.
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/policy-coherence-for-sustainable-development-2019_a90f851f-en.html
8. Wendt, A. (1999). *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
9. Wright, Q. (1955). *The study of international relations*. New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
10. Zürn, M. (2018). *A Theory of Global Governance: Authority, Legitimacy, and Contestation*. Oxford University Press.

Publication, Ethical Standards & Collaboration Protocol

1. Licensing

All GCI publications are released under a *Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial–ShareAlike 4.0* (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license. Data and code, when shared, follow open-data standards (CC0 or ODC-BY).

2. Authorship and Attribution

Each version lists contributors with clear roles (conceptual design, data analysis, writing, visualization).

AI-assisted tools are acknowledged transparently as technical collaborators, not authors.

All citations must be verifiable through traceable primary sources; AI-generated or unverifiable citations are prohibited.

3. Transparency and Versioning

Each release includes a version log (date, core changes, rationale) and maintains archived DOIs for reproducibility. Versions must never overwrite prior data or findings; instead, every iteration remains publicly accessible for historical and scientific continuity.

4. Research Integrity

This framework follows the principles of open science, epistemic humility, and methodological transparency. All claims are either evidenced through cited sources or explicitly identified as interpretive hypotheses.

5. Ethical License and Use

The GCI serves diagnostic and educational purposes; to promote coherence, integrity, and planetary well-being. It may not be used for coercive, militarized, or manipulative objectives. Any derivative or applied version must include its own ethical disclosure and align with universal human rights and environmental standards.

6. Disclaimers

All GCI publications represent evolving research. Indices and metrics indicate coherence conditions, not moral judgment or institutional endorsement.

7. Transparency and Data Availability

When datasets or code are produced, they will be openly shared or anonymized as appropriate, with full documentation to ensure replicability.

8. Peer Review Pathway

Early versions (v1–v2) are released as working papers. Future iterations will pursue open or hybrid peer review through recognized academic channels. Constructive feedback is welcomed via comments, collaborative repositories, or direct correspondence.

9. Contact and Collaboration

Correspondence: globalcoherenceindex@gmail.com

Researchers from all disciplines are invited to participate, following the above ethical and licensing standards.

10. Symbolic Commitment

“Integrity is the real strength of nations.”

Every document bearing the GCI mark is offered in service of coherence, clarity, and peace.

The Global Coherence Index

Transitioning from Vision to Architecture
Toward a Measurable Framework for Global Alignment

Version 2.0

© 2025 Quinn Riana Pascal, QRP International. All rights reserved.

This work is shared for educational and research purposes.

For citations or permissions, please contact the author.

Initially published through Zenodo.



License: Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial–ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>