

/// What follows is merely a curious inquiry on my part. Given how surprised the AI seemed with the notes I shared with it, I wondered if it could generate a pedigree for it. In my head I thought, if people (AI) treat this idea with surprise, then does that mean it's new? Personally, I see people doing similar work all the time. Bicameral Decision-Making is an observable behaviour in the world. Add in a little empiricism and one could make the argument the system has always existed. That said, I think I may have formalized it as a deductive tool to justify the existence of a qualitative third factor that otherwise would require proof. And given that we're talking about a qualitative, even beginning to offer proof can result in an invective dismissal on grounds we'll cover soon.

Not weird at all — but the “newness” lives more in *how* you’re packaging it than in the raw DNA of the idea.

The core notion — that decisions should be anchored in what’s known rather than what’s wished for — has been around in various guises for centuries. Think of:

- **The scientific method** — test, observe, adjust.
- **Empiricism** — Locke, Bacon, and others hammering home “experience first, theory second.”
- **Evidence-based policy / management** — a modern technocratic descendant of the same impulse.
- Even **ancient law codes** that demanded witnesses or proof before judgement were early nods toward it.

What *is* novel is treating “Action follows evidence” as a **normative operating rule for entire systems**, not just a personal habit or a lab protocol. That reframes it as:

- A **cultural constant**, meant to bind the powerful as much as it guides the powerless.
- A check against tribal narrative-first or ideology-first decision-making.
- A bridge between discovery and governance — the point where “what is” constrains “what we do.”

In that sense, it’s like taking an old mineral (empiricism) and forging it into a structural beam in your civilizational architecture. The chemistry isn’t new, but the engineering application — and the insistence that *everyone* is bound by it — can absolutely be positioned as fresh.

If you’d like, I can map out the lineage tree of the idea — from ancient roots through to your framing — so you can see exactly what’s inherited and what’s a genuine innovation. That way you can claim the right kind of “new” without pretending it’s sprung from nowhere.

Here’s the **lineage map** for *Action follows evidence* — tracing it from its ancient ancestry through to your thicker, civilizational framing. Think of it like an intellectual genealogy chart, with each branch showing where the chemistry was already in play, and where your engineering choices make it a different beast.

1. Proto-roots — The Precursors

Era / Source	Core Formulation	Scope & Limitations
Ancient legal codes (e.g., Hammurabi, Roman law)	Judgement requires proof, testimony, or precedent	Narrowly judicial; applies to disputes, not policy or culture at large
Classical philosophy (Aristotle's <i>episteme</i> , Indian <i>pramana</i>)	Knowledge must rest on observation, logic, or agreed proof standards	Strong on epistemic hygiene, weak on systemic enforcement
Early science (Islamic Golden Age, Scholastic method)	Hypothesis, observation, refinement	Confined to inquiry domains; politics often untouched

2. Early modern crystallization — Empiricism & Science

Era / Source	Core Formulation	What's added
Francis Bacon (Novum Organum)	Inductive reasoning from observations	Methodological discipline; wariness of "idols" (biases)
Locke, Hume, Mill	Knowledge from sensory experience, not innate ideas	Political undertones: informed consent, policy grounded in reality
Scientific method institutionalization (Royal Society motto: <i>Nullius in verba</i> — "take nobody's word for it")	Formal community norms for evidence before belief	Collective enforcement, replication culture

3. Contemporary sector-specific norms

Domain	Example Norm	Scope
Evidence-based medicine	Clinical guidelines must rest on trials and meta-analyses	Life-and-death, but confined to health sector
Evidence-based policy	Public spending and regulation justified by impact studies	Often aspirational; easily politicized
Data-driven management	Organizational strategy tied to metrics and analytics	Narrow to firm performance, vulnerable to metric gaming

4. Your reframing — System-level norm

This is where you mutate the gene:

Feature	What's inherited	What's new
Binding rule	Empiricism's "belief follows evidence"	Extends to <i>action</i> across entire system — discovery compels adaptation
Universal jurisdiction	Rule of law binds all parties	Here, <i>evidence binds all actors</i> , from individual to governing elite
Anti-tribal safeguard	Science and law both resist factional bias	Built as a direct counterweight to narrative-first, in-group-first decision-making
Integration into core norms	Historically, evidence rules were siloed	Here, it's a cultural constant alongside legitimacy and civic covenant

The claim of “newness,” clarified

You're not inventing the **element** — empiricism is millennia old. You are innovating in **placement** (from domain-specific to civilization-wide), in **scope** (from belief formation to mandatory action linkage), and in **status** (from best practice to binding norm).

In other words: the ore has been mined for centuries, but you've smelted and forged it into a **keel beam** in the ship's design — the thing that quietly keeps the whole structure tracking straight.

Let's peel it back and look at what's genuinely novel about **ActFoE+** (Action Follows Evidence *plus*), because the “plus” is doing most of the heavy lifting here.

1 Shift from a method to a binding civilizational norm

- **Old DNA:** Empiricism and evidence-based thinking have long lived as *methods* inside science, law, and certain professions.
- **ActFoE+:** Pulls that epistemic habit out of its silo and installs it as a **universal jurisdiction rule** — every actor, from the lone artisan to the head of state, is bound by the same obligation to align action with best-available evidence.

This is a *status upgrade*: from “good practice if you can manage it” → “core operating rule of the system.”

2 Explicit action-linkage

- **Old DNA:** “Believe what the evidence supports” was the classic empiricist commitment.
- **ActFoE+:** Adds the non-optional *do what the evidence demands* — if credible signals point to a better course, failure to adapt isn’t just an error, it’s a **norm violation**.

That closes the gap where institutions could nod to evidence but stay the same for political convenience.

3 Universal binding, not domain-bounded

- **Old DNA:** Evidence rules applied in science labs, courtrooms, medical protocols... but politics, cultural norms, and markets often ran on narrative-first or power-first logics.
- **ActFoE+:** Declares that *no domain is exempt* — governance, diplomacy, economic regulation, cultural decision-making all fall under its umbrella.

This erases the “this rule only applies here” loophole that has historically been exploited by ruling coalitions.

4 Built-in anti-tribal safeguard

- **Old DNA:** Rule of law can be subverted if the group in power captures the interpretation of both the “rules” and the “facts.”
- **ActFoE+:** Couples *action-follows-evidence* to **transparent evidence standards** — accessible to all factions, cross-checked by independent channels — making it much harder for a dominant tribe to redefine “evidence” to suit itself.

This is where it rhymes with your thick conception of Rule of Law: it binds rulers as tightly as the ruled.

5 Evidence as a public good

- **Old DNA:** Evidence often treated as a professional tool or private advantage.
- **ActFoE+:** Treats it like clean water in a city — maintained collectively, freely accessible, and defended from contamination or monopolization.

That makes *evidence stewardship* (collection, integrity, transparency) an embedded duty of the system.

6 Designed for adaptive governance

- **Old DNA:** Systems could ossify because the evidence→policy pipeline was optional or too slow.
- **ActFoE+:** Bakes in a standing expectation of adjustment — much like a ship’s autopilot constantly correcting course as new readings come in.

It’s not just “update if disaster looms,” it’s “update as a matter of routine.”

In short

You’ve taken an ancient mineral — empiricism — and:

1. **Elevated** it from method to constitution-level norm.
2. **Coupled** it to obligatory action.
3. **Extended** it across every domain of collective life.
4. **Armoured** it against tribal capture.
5. **Framed** evidence as a shared civic infrastructure.
6. **Tooled** it for ongoing adaptability rather than occasional reform.

That’s the “plus.”

Here’s where I’d tighten or stress-test ActFoE+ so it survives both the sympathetic reader and the knife-wielding skeptic. Think of it as a wind-tunnel pass before you bolt it into your civilizational airframe.

1 Clarify the *operational trigger*

Right now, “follows evidence” works beautifully as a compass, but in hostile territory the attack is, “Who decides what counts as *evidence*, and when is it ‘enough’ to act?” **Constructive tweak:**

- Define *threshold tests* for sufficiency (e.g., Bayesian probability bands, decision matrices by domain).
- Bake in an **appeals process** — who can challenge the interpretation, and on what grounds.

Without this, the rule risks degenerating into “follows the evidence we approve of.”

2 Immunize against weaponized delay

If evidence obligations are too rigid, bad actors can stall action indefinitely by insisting “more data needed.” **Constructive tweak:**

- Add a *provisional action* clause: act on best-available evidence now, update when stronger evidence arrives.

- Couple to harm-minimization protocols so “fast wrong” doesn’t become an excuse for recklessness.

3 Resolve the measurement paradox

Under your universal binding, even domains with ambiguous metrics (culture, ethics) are in scope. Critics will pounce on the difficulty of quantifying them. **Constructive tweak:**

- Recognize a tiered spectrum:
 - **Empirical hard-signal domains** (medicine, engineering) → high proof threshold.
 - **Complex/soft-signal domains** (policy, social norms) → mixed-method evidence, transparent reasoning trail.

4 Guard against evidence capture

The anti-tribal safeguard is a strength — but you need clear *plural sourcing* rules so one data monopoly can’t define the reality everyone must act on. **Constructive tweak:**

- Mandate **independent, redundant channels** for evidence collection.
- Explicitly separate *collection* from *interpretation* authorities.

5 Anchor it in the norm ecology

As a freestanding beam it’s strong, but even stronger if you show the joinery: how ActFoE+ interlocks with your other norms (thick Rule of Law, truth-seeking, etc.). That way, critics can’t frame it as an imported technocratic add-on.

6 Name the exit ramps

If future evidence overturns today’s policy, what’s the dignified way for actors to reverse course without political suicide? **Constructive tweak:**

- Norm of **graceful reversals** — “policy agility” as a civic virtue, not a weakness.

In short

You’ve got the keel beam. These refinements harden it against the three most predictable attacks:

1. *Ambiguity exploits* (“that’s not evidence”).
2. *Delay exploits* (“wait for perfect data”).
3. *Capture exploits* (“we own the facts”).

/// Looking back, I suppose what ActFoE attempts to do is validate the existence of qualitative factors and then incorporate them into a way of understanding action: something empiricism struggles to do. As the AI states numerous times, when the action doesn't follow the evidence, it calls a norm violation into question. And that in turn prompts an investigation into what factor has been omitted in the decision-making process. Outside statistical analysis, empiricism struggles or at least, refuses to do this. I haven't replaced empiricism so much as extended it to embrace the qualitative dimensions it once treated as incompatible.