

Multilevel Governance Architecture for the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals: Regional Institutions in Asia

Mark Elder

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

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Background & Focus

- Rio+20: Called for the development of Sustainable Development Goals
- Rio+20: Governance for Sustainable Development (Institutional Framework)
 - Global Level: High Level Political Forum
 - National Level: Main responsibility
 - Called for contributions by regional institutions
- Focus of this paper:
 - Consider the roles of regional institutions in governance and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals
 - Survey existing regional institutions
 - Linkages between regional institutions and other levels of governance and stakeholders



Regional Level in Context: Multilevel Governance

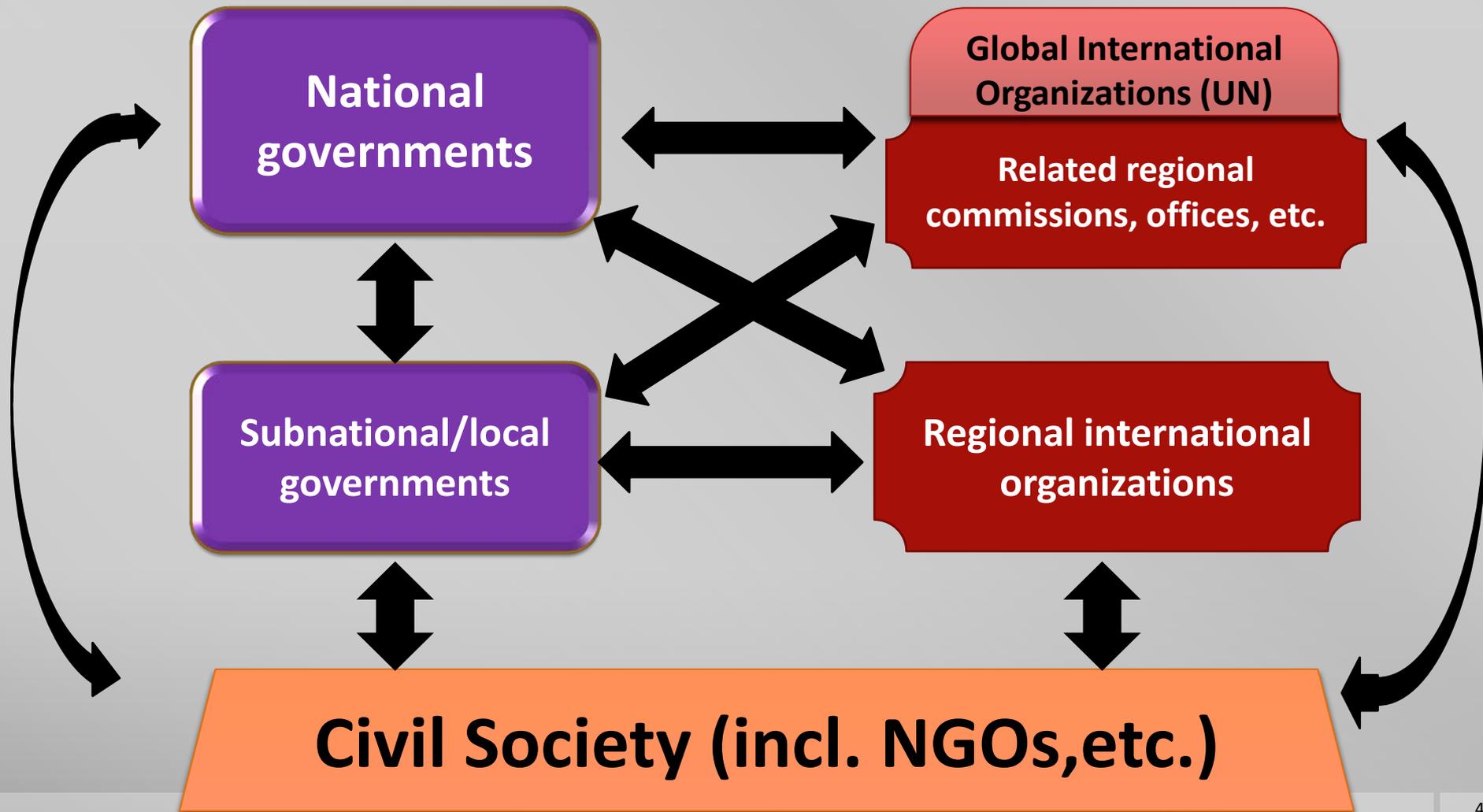
Levels	Advantages & Disadvantages	Roles
<input type="checkbox"/> Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global cooperation often needed • Global cooperation is cumbersome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set overarching goals • Assist implementation, capacity bldg
<input type="checkbox"/> Regional / Subregional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation & coordination easier than global 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist implementation • Assist capacity building • Information sharing
<input type="checkbox"/> National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key powers to tax, spend, regulate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set national goals and targets • Regulation, taxing, spending • Responsible for implementation
<input type="checkbox"/> Subnational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of local conditions • Limited power, sometimes problems not local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop local goals • Implementation • Greener local infrastructure
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-gov't (Bus, NGO, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key actors: Individuals & businesses • Sometimes faster than gov't • Sometimes difficult to coordinate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced/greener consumption • Reduced/greener production • Influence on governments

- **One level can't solve problems alone**
- **Need cooperation between & within levels**
- **Principle of subsidiarity: delegation to lowest appropriate level**

Regional Level:

- Not key, but plays important coordinating role (UN)
- More important in the case of regional integration

Complex interlinkages between governments, international global & regional organizations, and civil society



Variety of Regional Institutions in Asia Pacific

CATEGORIES	MAJOR EXAMPLES
UN regional & country offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEP, UNESCAP, UNDP, WHO, FAO
Dev. banks & funding agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Bank, Asian Dev. Bank (ADB), Global Env. Facility (GEF)
Regional & sub-reg. integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASEAN (+3, etc.), Econ. Rsch. Inst. for ASEAN & E. Asia (ERIA)
Sub-regional, general environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE Asian Subregional Prog. on Environmental Coop. (NEASPEC) • Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Env. Programme (SPREP) • South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) • Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) • COBSEA, PEMSEA, NOWPAP, NARBO
Environment ministers meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA Summit (EAS EMM), Tripartite EMM (JPN, CHN, KOR: (TEMM)), (MCED)
Multi-lateral Env. Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EANET, ASEAN Haze, Male Declaration
Bilateral cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National development/aid agencies • China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Center (CAEC)
International intercity networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICLEI, Kitakyushu Initiative, CITYNET, C40
UN Type II Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Air Asia (formerly CAI-Asia) etc.
Regional networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asia 3R Forum, Asia Co-benefits Partnership, Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) • Asian Env. Enforcement & Compliance Network (AECEN) • Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) • East & Southeast Asia Biodiversity Info. Initiative (ESABII)
Regional groups/ NGO offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Business Council for Sust. Dev. (WBCSD), CSR Asia, WWF
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI)

Observations on Existing Regional Institutions in Asia Pacific

- There are many regional institutions
- Wide variety of kinds of institutions
 - Including with mixed membership of governments, NGOs, stakeholders
- Some overlap, duplication, competition
- Mostly voluntary
- Overall, not very strong politically, underfunded
- No supranational institutions (like EU)

Regional SD institutions illustrate key ESG concepts

- Complex architecture, multiple levels of governance
- Complex actors
- Linkage of actors and architecture

Areas to Improve Regional SD Governance



Significant overlaps & fragmentation among mechanisms

Gaps – some issues not well addressed by existing mechanisms

Need for better coordination among mechanisms

Need more emphasis on capacity building

Need to strengthen science policy interface; cooperative scientific research

Weak funding

Effectiveness is mixed

➤ SDGs could help improve regional institutions

Regional UN Bodies

- May play a facilitating role in the development of SDGs (regional / stakeholder consultations)
- Already working on many areas of SD
 - Coordination, capacity building, data collection, etc.
 - Covers range of 3 dimensions of SD
 - Already involved in MDGs (UNDP)
- SDGs may give clearer direction, mandates, attract some additional funding
- High Level Political Forum (replacement of CSD) may enhance coordination including regional UN bodies
- Some multistakeholder participation, though room to strengthen
- Overall: May be more incremental change; potential enhanced focus & effectiveness



Main functions

- Implementation
- Information sharing
- Capacity building
- Facilitate actions of governments & stakeholders

Subregional Intergovernmental Bodies

- Often very small. They make big efforts with limited resources
- Dependent on funding from countries, development agencies, other donors
- SDGs may raise the priority of some issues, some shift in focus (depending on funding trends)
- Not clear how much additional funding might result
- Analysis somewhat similar to regional UN bodies



Main functions

- Implementation
- Information sharing
- Capacity building
- Facilitate actions of governments & stakeholders

Regional & Subregional Networks

- There are many
- Often led by NGOs, research institutes, but have mixed membership including other stakeholders and sometimes governments
- Varied financial support, often governments or other donors.
- Often many limitations and modest effectiveness
- But may have significant potential, may benefit significantly from SDGs, and may follow SDGs closely
- May focus on implementing bottom up SDGs and promote more multistakeholder participation

Main functions

- Coordination among governments & stakeholders
- Promote bottom up action
- Information sharing
- Capacity building
- Promote multistakeholder participation
- Awareness raising



Multilateral Development Banks (Focus on ADB)

- Already significant engagement with Millennium Development Goals
- Key role in Asia: financing
- Already moved broadly in the direction of SD
 - Established [SD division]
 - More operations are shifted in the direction of SD
- ADB already engaged in SDG discussions
 - Review of MDG effectiveness
 - “ZEN” Proposal for organizing SDGs
- Generally, MDGs face pressure to shift to SD in the long run, due to “graduation” of emerging economies with less need for ADB loans
- However, sustainability is still not at the core of ADB’s operations officially
- Recommendation: Put sustainability at the heart of regional integration, development



Main functions

- Financing
- Incentivize policies, governance
- Implementation
- Capacity building

ADB’s “ZEN” Proposal for Post 2015/SDG

- Z=Zero Poverty floor
- E=“Epsilon” additional progress on individual country goals
- N=Environmental sustainability

Civil Society Participation: Overview of Selected Examples

CATEGORIES	MAJOR EXAMPLES
UN regional & country offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use UN civil society participation mechanisms
Dev. banks & funding agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not very significant
Regional & sub-reg. integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• APEC – business, univ. etc. participates in projects, but not significant participation in decision making• ASEAN – minimal civil society participation
Sub-regional, general environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More extensive civil society participation, esp. in projects
Environment ministers meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil society participation in projects, but no much in decision making
UN Type II Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CAA: extensive multistakeholder participation
Regional networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often includes multistakeholder participation

Conclusion:

- Civil society participation is appropriate focus for regional bodies
- Some have foundation of basic experience, others have room to improve

Prospects of Regional Integration in East Asia

- Regional integration is expected to progress in the future
- Center of integration may be ASEAN & others (+3, +x?)
- Already some institutionalization
 - East Asian Summit, various ministers meetings
 - Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) (some focus on energy and environment)
- ASEAN Community by 2015 (3 parts)
 - Political-Security Community
 - Economic Community (environment not here)
 - Socio-Cultural Community (includes Environment)
- ASEAN and Sustainable Development
 - ASEAN activities cover 3 dimensions of SD
 - But SD is not officially the main organizing principle
 - ASEAN countries work on SD individually



ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTHEAST
ASIAN NATIONS



Regional Integration & Sustainable Development

Economic Integration/ Trade Liberalisation

Sustainable Development/ Environment

Make sure progress & institutionalization of SD keeps pace with trade & investment liberalization!

- SD should be at the center of regional integration
 - Including green economy / green growth
 - Ok to include trade & investment liberalization, but put SD at the center
- Prioritize sustainability oriented institutions should be prioritized
- This will help promote new metrics (e.g. beyond GDP)
- Linkage of SD and regional integration will reduce worries about losing trade competitiveness due to SD policies (because they are implemented jointly)



Sustainable development could become the leading area of Asian integration
(Europe: leading area of cold war détente in 1970s)

APEC & Sustainable Development

- APEC Has a comprehensive perspective, should lead SD
- At their 1998 meeting in Malaysia, Leaders reiterated their commitment, "... to advance sustainable development across the entire spectrum of our workplan..."
- However, main focus still on trade & investment liberalization, not SD
- Focus on "sustainable growth" (what does this mean?)
- Environment ministers met in 2012; previous meeting was 1997
 - "since sustainable development is a cross-cutting issue, implementation of the related initiatives have been carried out by the relevant sectoral fora"
- Groups relating to SD areas
 - Agriculture/food, energy, health, human resources, illegal logging, oceans, transportation women, mining (But not SD or environment)



APEC & Sustainable Development

- Some positive elements in various declarations & statements
 - Some emphasis on social inclusion
 - Occasional mention of green growth, environment (but not prominent)
 - Trade in environmental goods & services
 - Energy: some emphasis on renewable energy, efficiency, energy intensity
 - Increasing emphasis on resilience
 - Mentioned greener supply chains, health,
- But SD is still not the main focus (e.g. “APEC Growth Strategy”)
 - No discussion of economic transformation, “beyond GDP”
 - Frequent references to “economic growth,” “growth”
 - Natural resource as foundation for growth (not planetary boundaries)
 - Agriculture/food security focus on trade liberalization, not sustainability
 - Energy: still emphasizes fossil fuels, no energy transformation



Conclusions



- Key ESG concepts can be observed in Asia
 - Complex architecture, multiple levels
 - Complex actors
- ADB will play a very important role, especially in implementation. Needs to accelerate refocusing of operations, explicitly adopt SD as the main goal.
- UN Bodies play an important supporting and catalyzing role
- More funding would be needed for these bodies to do more
- Expand multistakeholder participation (but how?)
 - ASEAN++ could follow European Example; APEC could do more
 - UN bodies already leading on this point (but shortcomings); also informal networks.

- Key importance of regional integration (non-UN regional institutions, ASEAN, APEC)
 - SD should be at the center – leading trade & investment liberalization
 - This will help to mainstream SD