Institutional arrangements for national and community level governance of the SDGs:

A general framework for implementation

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Key Recommendations

• Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require a governance framework applicable at multiple levels (‘multilayers’ – ESGa 2014):
• Means of Implementation (MoI) need to be embedded in each SDG
• SDGs themselves require a ‘governance Goal’ to ensure consistency of implementation and to ensure quality, effectiveness and legitimacy (“‘good’, effective, equitable” ESGc 2014)
• MoI will be largely negotiated at the global level, financed at the national level, and implemented at the community (corporate, organizational ESGc 2014) level, requiring co-ordination and collaboration between levels
Governance and sustainable development

- Agenda 21 acknowledges the need for participation of non-state actors (civil society, business, etc.) [1.3] in decision making and deliberation [3.7, 32.9, 38.41]
- Governance as structure and process [Pierre & Peters, 2000] built around ‘co’ arrangements (collaboration) [Kooiman 1993]
- Interaction between structure and process result in substantive outcomes [Kooiman 1993, 2000]
- ‘Participation as structure’, ‘deliberation as process’ generate outcomes and determine quality, legitimacy (effectiveness) of governance of sustainable development [Cadman 2011]

![Figure 1: Model of Governance Quality (Cadman 2011)](image)

Institutional arrangements for governance quality

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<th>Principle</th>
<th>Criterion</th>
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<td>representation</td>
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<td>Durability</td>
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Table 1: Normative hierarchical framework of PC&I of governance quality (Cadman, 2011 – adapted)
Implementation in the SDGs

- **Implementation** in the sustainability domain is "the process of putting...commitments into practice" [Young and Levy 1999: 3-4].
- There is a relationship between implementation and compliance [Mastenbroek 2005].
  - Compliance results from a process of assessment of agreements made, and can be defined as the degree of consistency between behaviour, and specified rules [Zaehlke et. al. 2005].
- Compliance is consequently often seen as a useful proxy for determining effectiveness.
  - In this context, effectiveness is presented as a measure of the extent to which a policy has been successful in solving the problem it was created to address [Zaehlke et. al. 2005].
- However, it is also important to further comment that governance systems stand little chance of improving situations where:
  - legal requirements and enforcement capacities are weak
  - social, economic and political contexts beyond the initiative itself impede successful implementation [Gulbrandsen 2005].

Implications

- Intergovernmental/international/regional:
  - Efforts should be around negotiating the 'high level/macrol values/principles of/for sustainable development
  - ensuring meaningful participation and productive deliberation around those negotiations
  - Developing effective means of implementation:
    - Will MoI contribute to changing unsustainable behaviour?
    - Will MoI solve the problems the goals were created to address?
    - Will the MoI prove to be durable (flexible, adaptable, resilient, long-lasting)?
  - Finance/capacity building: via GCF, GEF, new mechanism?
- National:
  - Focus on 'mid range/meso' policy processes that enable implementation of the SGDs, i.e.:
    - Interest representation: are all national stakeholders present, balanced and resourced?
    - Are they behaving responsibly to one another (accountable, transparent)?
    - Is decision-making democratic, with rules for reaching agreements, settling disputes?
    - What does implementation mean specifically in terms of behaviour change, problem solving and durability?
  - Finance: who are the funds recipients/implementing agencies?
Implications – contd.

• Local/community/corporate/institutional:
  – Focus on ‘low level’/micro **practices** that enable implementation of the SGDs, i.e.:
    • Context specific means of verification of MoIs, including governance itself (11 indicators of Table 1)
    • Role for the community in implementation, as well as monitoring and reporting
    • Is independent auditing/certification necessary?
  – Finance:
    • What is the benefit to communities, and
    • where is the benefit sharing?
  – Ownership
    • Critical to success of SDGs

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Thank you

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“This study makes a major contribution to governance theory” - Ben Cashore, *Governing Through Markets*


“Cadman’s framework for evaluating the legitimacy of multilateral environmental agreements is one of the best I have seen; it is elegant and sophisticated without being overwhelmingly intricate. He should be commended for this latest effort.” — Peter J. Stoett, Concordia University, Canada