INTRODUCTION

Expert Workshop on Strengthening Environmental and Sustainable Development Governance: Asia-Pacific Perspectives

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Aims of the Workshop

1) Present current research related to regional and global environmental governance;
2) Collect views from participants how to strengthen regional and global environmental governance;
3) Prepare a set of key messages to be presented at the subsequent ISAP Session on Governance for Sustainable Development on 27 July 2011.

Two main sessions with following focus:
1. Strengthening Asia and the Pacific's regional institutions for environment and sustainable development
2. Options for reforming global environmental and sustainable development governance
Definitions of Governance and Institutions

What is governance?
• How society makes decisions, allocates resources, shares power
• Not just “government” but also other stakeholders, civil society
• Not just laws & regulations, but also processes such as elections, public consultations, protests

What are institutions?
• Organizations, networks, processes
• Governmental or non-governmental
• Formal or informal

Overall thinking
• Much of Rio+20 discussion on governance, including official IFSD options on the agenda focus on UN reforms.
• We can’t expect UN to solve all of our problems
• Stronger governance is needed at multiple levels
• In particular, multistakeholder participation needs to be strengthened
• Need stronger action at the regional level, regional institutions
Solutions need to be addressed at all levels: Multilevel Governance

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<tr>
<th>Levels of Governance</th>
<th>Advantages &amp; Disadvantages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Many problems require global cooperation, Global cooperation is cumbersome</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional / Subregional</td>
<td>Cooperation &amp; coordination easier than global</td>
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<td>National</td>
<td>Key powers to tax, spend, regulate</td>
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<td>Subnational</td>
<td>Close to implementation, knows local conditions, Limited power, sometimes problems aren’t local</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-governmental</td>
<td>Individuals and businesses are key actors, Can sometimes act faster than governments, But free rider problems, difficult to coordinate</td>
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- One level can’t solve problems alone; need cooperation between & within levels
- Principle of subsidiarity: delegation to lowest appropriate level

Multistakeholder Participation

Key functions
- Improve coordination
- Improve information input into decisions
- Improve implementation
- Improve legitimacy
- Improve accountability

Consider how to empower stakeholders
- Already progress at the UN, but can strengthen
- Promote greater institutionalization of participation
- More progress on other levels
Implications for Rio+20

• UN cannot solve all of our problems.
• Still Rio+20 is the only place to discuss UN reforms
• Can also discuss what other levels should do, but shouldn’t spend all of the time on that
  – This can be discussed elsewhere
• We can consider how Rio+20 and UN could facilitate actions by other levels
  – In particular regional/national offices, like UNEP, UNESCAP, UNDP
  – How IFSD options (e.g. WEO, ECOSOC, etc.) relate to regions, other levels of governance