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Improving Global Collective Action in a Connected World

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ABSTRACT

Rising interdependence creates a need for greater global cooperation to manage basic policy problems, like providing economic stability and development, maintaining security and ensuring environmental sustainability. But the intergovernmental institutions the world has traditionally relied on to facilitate cooperation are increasingly gridlocked, resulting in a global 'governance gap'. This paper identifies common trends—rising multipolarity, harder problems, institutional inertia and fragmentation—that lead to gridlock across issue areas. It then identifies the vulnerabilities that this gridlock creates with reference to three issue areas: financial stability, human security and climate change. For each, global gridlock generates new impacts on the world's most marginalized populations. Finally, the paper considers the potential of new forms of global governance, many of them involving sub- and nonstate actors, to supplement multilateral processes and help fill some of the 'governance gap'. While such solutions offer no panacea, under certain conditions, they may help to reduce the vulnerabilities associated with a breakdown in multilateral cooperation.

Introduction

Globalization has created unprecedented opportunities for human development. At the same time, it has radically restructured the risks we face, making societies vulnerable in new ways.

Across nearly every sphere of human activity, what happens in one part of the world increasingly affects the lives of distant people and places. Nearly all countries are now deeply enmeshed with each other. Finance, supply chains and communication networks are three examples of how the world has become knit together. We live in a world of overlapping communities of fate, where the fortunes of countries are increasingly intertwined.

These changes have made us mutually dependent. In order to mange economies, governments cannot merely concern themselves with domestic fiscal and monetary issues. They must find a way for their economy to thrive in a competitive, integrated global market. To provide security, it is not enough to keep the peace at home; states must concern themselves with transnational terrorist networks, the diffusion of deadly weaponry or the potential spread of diseases. The meaning of security has also evolved to emphasize not just peace between states, but the protection of each human being, a higher standard that has proven difficult to achieve with institutions of a previous era. And providing a healthy environment for future generations is no longer just a matter of cleaning up a country's air and waterways. Human activities anywhere on the planet now affect the climate in which every other person on the planet—and their descendants—must live.

In such a world, no country, not even the most powerful, can 'go it alone'. This creates a new kind of vulnerability, as societies and individuals, even those following the 'right' policies domestically, may be affected by our collective inability to manage global problems. To realize the benefits of interdependence—and to ameliorate the risks and vulnerabilities it creates—we must act collectively. Yet international cooperation seems increasingly threadbare relative to the magnitude of the problems it confronts.

While these issues are often discussed at the abstract level, the dangers of unmanaged interdependence have enormous consequences for real people all over the world. This paper explores how 'gridlock' at the global level creates new vulnerabilities for specific groups. It also considers emerging signs of resilience in global governance and how these may be strengthened by international organizations.

Section one argues that the barriers to global collective action are systemic, a confluence of trends that results in multilateral gridlock across issue areas. Section two then traces how the inadequacies of global governance create new vulnerabilities for specific populations in three areas: financial regulation, climate and human security.

Section four turns to resilience. Though multilateral institutions are increasingly gridlocked, new arrays of actors are forming innovative networks to manage interdependence. Though these efforts remain partial, and their effectiveness varies by issue, they represent potential ways in which global governance as a whole may eventually become more resilient. The final section outlines ways that international organizations, and particularly the United Nations system, can reinforce these 'green shoots' of resilience in global governance.

Gridlock: Global cooperation is failing as we need it most

The international system today suffers from a general pathology, *gridlock*, which limits international cooperation across issue areas.[1] We use this term to mean a specific constellation of trends that exist in the present international system: growing multipolarity, institutional inertia, harder problems and fragmentation.

It is important to understand gridlock as a systemic and historically contingent process, not an idiosyncratic phenomenon particular to a certain issue area. Global issues are often discussed in 'silos', as if the barrier to effective global governance were unique in each setting. This narrow

[1] This argument draws from Hale, Held and Young 2013.

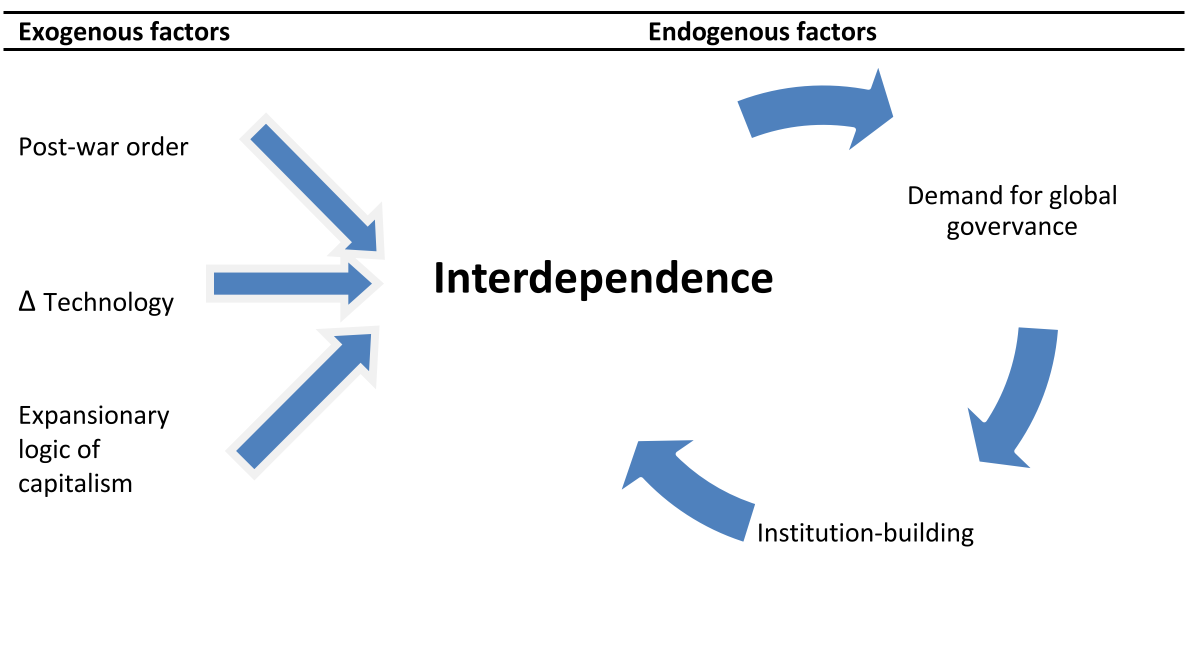
perspective arguably undermines the search for solutions, because it assumes that problems can be solved within their own issue context, for example, with a different institutional design or just another round of negotiations, or with some amorphous appeal to 'political will'. In fact, the gridlock frame suggests that systemic problems will require systemic solutions.

Ironically, gridlock trends have their origins, in part, in the *success* of global governance over the post-war period. International cooperation has never been easy. Yet over the post-war period, contrary to prior eras of human history, countries were able to build a relatively robust system of collective security, at least among the Great Powers, and managed globalization.

International institutions have been the keys to this process. Through institutionalized cooperation—the United Nations and its entities, the Bretton Woods institutions and various security organizations—countries were able to coordinate policies sufficiently to manage interdependence.

Management of interdependence, in turn, allowed globalization to deepen even further, extending beyond simple trade and financial flows to encompass broadening areas of human activity, including the environment. As we see today in finance, supply chains and communication networks, many of our policies and actions have implications for individuals in distant parts of the world, just as their policies and actions have implications for us. This interdependence, in turn, generates more need for global governance. Over the post-war period, interdependence and global governance interacted in a positive cycle called 'self-reinforcing interdependence' (figure 1).

Figure 1: The process of self-reinforcing interdependence



In many ways, this system of managed globalization was an enormous success, raising living standards around the world and allowing countries that had previously remained peripheral to the world economy (particularly in East Asia, but now increasingly broadly) to become more influential.

But this success also generated a number of 'second-order' problems that have made global governance more difficult, breaking the 'supply' of global governance needed to manage interdependence (table 1). As a result, the world now confronts unprecedentedly deep interdependence across a range of issues, yet finds multilateral cooperation increasingly difficult.

Table 1: Pathways to gridlock and their mechanisms

Pathway	Mechanism
Growing multipolarity	1. Increased transaction costs
	2. Exacerbated legitimacy dilemma
	3. Divergence of interests
Institutional inertia	1. Formal lock-in of decision-making authority
	2. Entrenchment of cognitive and organizational focal points
Harder problems	1. Extensity: scope of problems has increased
	2. Intensity: problems penetrate more deeply into societies
Fragmentation	1. Increased transaction costs
	2. Inefficient division of labour, redundancy

Gridlock creates new vulnerabilities for those who can least afford them: finance, climate and human security

With effective governance, interdependence opens unprecedented opportunities for transformative human development. But under conditions of gridlock, it creates global problems that no country can manage effectively, causing vulnerability. Deepening interdependence means that effective global governance is essential to human well-being and life chances across a range of issue areas. This section traces the connection between gridlock and human vulnerabilities across three spheres: finance, climate and human security.

Across issue areas, a consistent and troubling theme emerges: Ineffective global governance affects most acutely populations that *already* experience significant vulnerability. Marginalized individuals within societies, as well as individuals living in countries with poor national and subnational governments, stand to lose most in a gridlocked world.

FINANCIAL GRIDLOCK AND VULNERABILITY

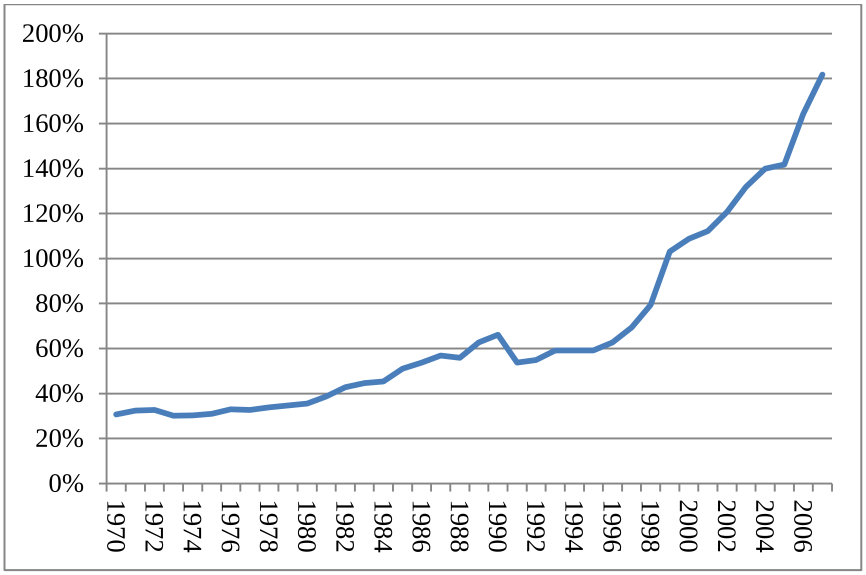
To understand how an inability to govern global finance creates vulnerability today, it is instructive to recall how our present regulatory system evolved from the post-war Bretton Woods order.

At the end of the Second World War, the winning countries met at Bretton Woods to devise a system of global economic governance. The goal was to avoid the kind of unmanaged system that precipitated the Great Depression, in which countries experiencing economic shocks adopted 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policies—competitive devaluations and tariff hikes—plunging the world into years of economic hardship. The countries aimed to create a Keynesian system (Keynes was one of the lead architects) that institutionalized a liberal commitment to cross-border flows of trade and investment, but that also allowed countries sufficient flexibility on monetary policy and financial flows to manage national economies in order to ward off unemployment and inflation. This was to be achieved through a system of fixed exchange rates (all currencies were linked to the US dollar, which was in turn linked to gold) and capital controls under the management of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

This system of managed globalization achieved impressive results in the 1950s and 1960s, as international trade and investment leapt ahead, and most countries in the industrialized world experienced sustained and broad growth.

Ultimately, however, the Bretton Woods system was unable to manage the shifts this economic success precipitated. In 1971, facing an economic downturn and fiscal constraints from the war in Viet Nam, the United States de-linked its currency from gold, effectively ending the system of fixed exchange rates. Financial flows between countries increased dramatically as the constraints of the Bretton Woods system lifted (see figure 2). Financial institutions in wealthy countries increasingly lent money to the capital-hungry countries of the recently decolonized developing world, often for infrastructure programmes.

Figure 2: International financial integration, 1970–2007



Source: Calculations by Hale, Held, and Young 2013 based on summation of all countries' foreign assets plus foreign liabilities, divided by gross domestic product (GDP). Updated and extended version of the External Wealth of Nations Mark II database developed by Lane and Milesi-Ferretti 2007.

This new system of financial interdependence created important new vulnerabilities in the 1970s and 1980s. Perhaps the most important example was the relationship between US banks and Latin American governments in the 1980s. To deal with the pressures of national inflation, US Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker executed a radical plan in which US interest rates rose dramatically to over 20 percent in 1979 and 1980. The effect on those who had taken out loans in the developing world was crushing. Not only did the event trigger recessions across the developed world, thus stifling demand for developing country products, but developing countries' borrowing schedules were dramatically interrupted. Latin America suffered particularly acutely, and beginning in 1982, it became evident that a number of countries were at risk of defaulting on their loans from US banks. The rest of the 1980s became known as the 'lost decade' for Latin America, as its economic progress was stifled on a huge scale. This meant mass unemployment, dramatic cutbacks to public services (often enforced by international institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF) and a dramatic stagnation of living standards. The Latin American debt crisis revealed that rather than enhancing the prospects of developing countries in the global economic system, post-Bretton Woods economic conditions could also make them worse.

This trend continued in the 1990s under the Washington Consensus, as restrictions on financial flows fell and international financial interdependence accelerated. Poor financial regulation in one country became a dangerous risk to other countries. For example, the 1997 East Asian crisis, caused by overheated, speculative investments in places like Malaysia and Thailand, ended up precipitating crises in countries as far away as Argentina, Brazil and the Russian Federation, as global investors sold assets to cover their liabilities and pulled back from emerging markets. Such crises would have been highly unlikely under the Bretton Woods system of managed exchange rates and capital controls.

But instead of developing a comprehensive governance system of that nature, the world's response to growing financial interdependence was ad hoc and piecemeal. A number of 'transgovernmental networks'—quasi-formalized institutions that bring networks of national officials together to coordinate policy—arose to address certain aspects of the problem, such as banking standards, insurance regulation, securities regulation, etc. While some of these wielded significant power because they represented a sizeable portion of the key players—for example, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision—each focused on its own set of issues and interests. As fundamentally technocratic institutions, they have limited mandates to pursue broad regulatory functions, often focusing more on facilitating financial flows than managing their externalities. Indeed, they have only rarely pushed the industries they govern to adopt significant behavioural changes (with the partial exception of the Basel Committee). Some, like the International Accounting Standards Board, include significant industry representation in their governance structures. More problematically, none was explicitly charged with oversight of the global financial system as a whole.

The inadequacies of this system were starkly revealed in the 2008-2009 financial crisis. Again, the crisis began chiefly due to the inadequacy of national regulation, this time regulation of the home mortgage market in the United Kingdom, the United States and other financial centres. Financial institutions created complex instruments to disaggregate risks associated with lending money to homebuyers. But instead of mitigating these risks, the complex financial products disguised them, encouraging irrational lending and building a property bubble. When the crash came, following the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008, it quickly spread through global financial networks.

While the fragmented series of transgovernmental networks that constitute global financial governance were not able to anticipate or prevent the crisis, they did prove minimally adequate to preventing the crash from metastasizing into a prolonged depression. By coordinating a Keynesian stimulus across the world's key economies, the Group of 20 helped countries ensure that their responses to the crisis would reinforce, not undercut, those of other countries, as well as providing political cover to national politicians for adopting expansionary policies.

True to the logic of gridlock, however, the 'success' in solving the first-order problem (preventing another Great Depression) led directly to a much harder second-order challenge, because it left intact the unmanaged system of global financial interdependence. The existing system proved (just) able to pull the crisis back from the precipice. But gridlock trends now prevent a more robust system from being put in place. Some five years after the crisis, global financial regulation remains piecemeal and, in many key countries, insufficient, despite ambitious post-crisis calls for international cooperation. In other words, the world is essentially as vulnerable to financial risks today as it was five years ago.

Who is affected by the inadequacy of global financial regulation? While each crisis produces distinctive impacts, it is indicative to review the effects of the last one in order to see the types of vulnerabilities inadequate global financial regulation creates.

The average annual world economic growth rate in the five years before 2009 was 4.56 percent; in 2009 it was −0.06 percent (Hale, Held et al. 2013). The financial crisis not only lowered levels of world output, but also adversely affected trade flows, which fell over 10 percent following the crisis (ibid.). This is not only because of the decline in demand that follows economic crisis in rich countries, but also because international trade flows depend on secure and highly liquid international financial markets in order to operate effectively. Global commodity markets also suffered from lack of financing and demand (Nissanke 2012).

Despite these various transmission mechanisms, the largest impact was of course on financial markets. It is well appreciated that international stock markets are intimately linked—but when fear and uncertainty spread internationally, particularly pernicious contagion effects set in that generate global spillover effects (Cheung et al. 2010). These can only exist in the context of a highly integrated global financial system. The particular enthusiasm for liberalized capital flows has exacerbated such trends. As Jeong and Kim (2010) point out, as financial firms in the United States began to deleverage, and credit conditions deteriorated, the subsequent 'flight to quality' led investors to seek financial assets in the rich developed world. The magnitude of this global 'swing effect' was colossal: In 2009, net private capital inflow to developing countries of $600 billion quickly turned to an outflow of $180 billion, representing a global swing of $780 billion (ibid.).

Worse, the adverse effects of the global financial crisis have been redistributive, whereby the least culpable countries, regions and individuals often suffer considerably. The financial crisis was initially greeted with expansionary monetary policies designed to prevent the economy from sharply contracting, although, it must be noted, the vast majority of new spending went directly to the banking sector, leading some to deploy the term 'Wall Street Keynesianism' (ILO 2012, p. xviii). After these initial expansionary fiscal policies, which sought to shore up confidence in global capital markets, many countries engaged in fiscal austerity (ibid., pp. 10-12). Such austerity has weakened global demand, putting further downward pressure on the global economic recovery. Just as importantly, it has affected many vulnerable populations, which disproportionately depend more on public services than those who are already well off.

A similar impact was seen vis-à-vis employment. Global growth in real average wages was reduced by half in 2008 and 2009 compared to earlier years. Global unemployment increased significantly, with 29 million more people unemployed in 2009 than in the previous two years (Ibid., pp. 9-10). While most unemployment has occurred in the developed countries, the impact of the crisis in low- and middle-income countries has been marked by a shift towards more insecure forms of employment (ibid., p. xv). It has been estimated that by 2015, 20 million more people in sub-Saharan Africa, and 53 million more people globally, will be in extreme poverty (World Bank 2010). In addition, 1.2 million more children under the age of five are expected to die between 2009 and 2015 as an indirect result of the crisis, and 35,000 more students will not complete primary education by 2015 (ibid.).

In an interdependent world, even the efforts to *fix* the problem produce new vulnerabilities. The after-effects of the 2008 crisis, plus the ongoing weakness of global financial regulation, have led some leading economies—most notably the United States—to pursue unprecedentedly loose monetary policies (including so-called 'quantitative easing', in which the US Federal Reserve purchases US government bonds). As these policies are now being scaled back in the rich world, developing countries are beginning to experience capital flight again, as investors begin to make larger returns in the rich world. Compounding the problem, new regional trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which are themselves a response to multilateral gridlock at the World Trade Organization, are putting pressure on developing countries to loosen the capital controls that help them to manage such market pressures. In other words, a lack of effective global coordination is creating problems for the developing world and simultaneously impeding solutions.

GRIDLOCK AND CLIMATE VULNERABILITY

The diffusion of industrial production in the post-war era has been a tremendous driver of human development, raising living standards for billions of the world's poorest people. This 'Great Acceleration' (figure 3), as ecologists have called it (Steffen, Anderson et al. 2004), has also generated new challenges and externalities. Increased growth has fundamentally transformed the relationship between human societies and the natural world, threatening past development gains. Ecologists have dubbed the present age the Anthropocene because human actions have become the primary drivers of the Earth's natural systems.

This change signifies a major shift in the nature of environmental challenges. Environmental problems have gone from chiefly local concerns (such as clean air and water), to global and systemic issues like climate change and biodiversity loss. The result is a deep and entirely new form of interdependence, in which the actions of every human being on the planet affect the life chances of every other citizen on the planet, as well as those of future generations. Given this stark new reality, resilience requires tools to manage the sum of human impacts on the natural environment. Despite important progress in managing global environmental issues since the 1970s, we are patently failing to address systemic issues like climate change because they are characterized by deep interdependence, which outstrips existing governance capacity.

Climate change will result in a number of physical and biological changes in the natural world, varying significantly by region. These include: increases or decreases in temperature and rainfall, including greater incidences of droughts in arid regions; more frequent and more intense hurricanes, typhoons and other extreme weather phenomena; sea level rise; coastal flooding; water scarcity in key regions; the migration or extinction of plant and animal species; and acidification of oceans (IPCC 2013).

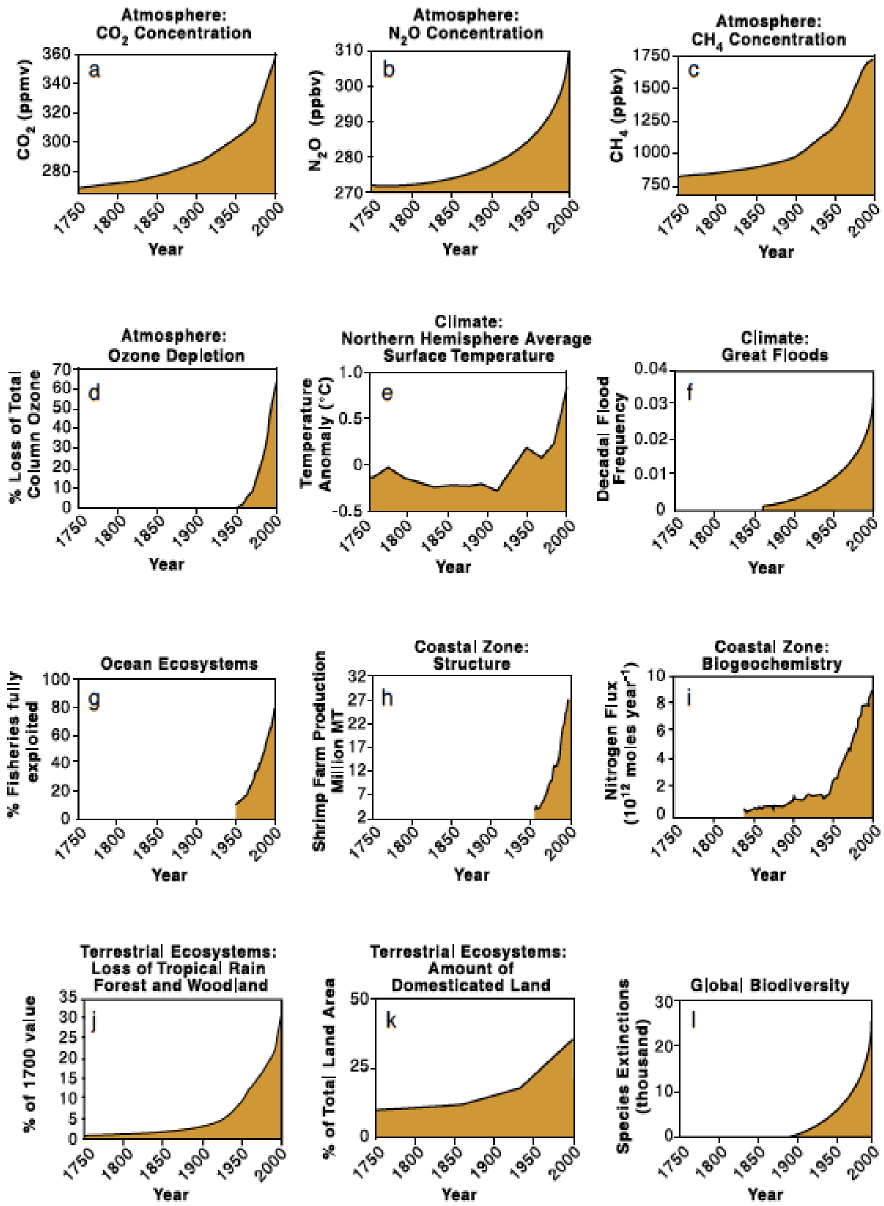
The consequences of these changes for human systems are even more complex, with significant variation across countries, regions, sectors, social groups, and, ultimately, individuals. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines climate vulnerability as the product of three factors: an entity's exposure to climate variability and change, its sensitivity to climate shocks and stresses, and its adaptive capacity (IPCC 2001). While there has been an explosion of research that seeks to understand what impacts we can expect on human systems, given our ever more precise understanding of how climate change affects natural systems, this work remains ongoing (UNEP 2013). However, we can be certain beyond any doubt that climate change poses a current and growing disruption to nearly every person on the planet, as well as to future generations (IPCC 2007, 2012). The rest of this section traces some key ways in which failing to address climate change creates vulnerabilities for specific groups.

2.3.1. RESIDENTS OF LARGE COASTAL CITIES

Some 44 percent of the world's population lives in coastal areas, concentrated in large urban conglomerations (United Nations 2013). Coastal regions are also home to the bulk of most countries' economic activity.

Coastal regions face two major challenges from climate change. First, increased coastal storms pose a present and increasing threat to infrastructure, economic activity and human life. Tropical cyclones killed 250,000 people between 1980 and 2000, and the number and frequency of these events is now increasing (IPCC 2007). Most of these deaths occurred, and will occur, in developing countries where infrastructure is poorer, and advance warning and emergency response capacities are lower. But even in the most developed countries, coastal storms are already devastating cities; hurricanes Katrina and Sandy cost the United States $81 billion and $68 billion, respectively.[2]

Figure 3: Changes in earth systems, 1750–2000



Source: Steffen et al. 2011.

[2] NOAA, Hurricane Sandy Service Assessment: www.nws.noaa.gov/os/assessments/pdfs/Sandy13.pdf.

Second, rising sea levels will change the physical shape of coastal cities and require significant investment to protect existing infrastructure. Some parts of the world will be more affected than others. For example, the projected rise in Southeast Asia is 10 to 15 percent above the global average. This means that seas are likely to rise over 50 centimetres in Manila, Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok by 2060, and over 1 metre by 2090 (Bank 2013).

Compounding these risks, coastal regions and coastal cities in particular are experiencing significant population growth and an expanding range of stresses from human development. As human demands rise and climate change reduces the capacity of coasts to support human life, vulnerability will sharpen significantly.

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS IN TROPICAL AND ARID REGIONS

By changing temperature and rainfall patterns, climate change will affect agriculture all over the world. Not all of these changes will be detrimental. Temperate regions may experience increased crop yields from more rainfall and the expansion of territory fit for cultivation (IPCC 2007). Farmers with access to drought-resistant plant varieties and sophisticated irrigation systems will be relatively well positioned to adapt to negative shifts.

Small-scale farmers in the global South, however—of the 2.5 billion people in poor countries who depend on agriculture, 1.5 billion live on some 500 million small-scale farms (IFAD 2013)—will experience the opposite effect. In Africa, approximately 95 percent of agriculture depends on rain. Under a 4° Celsius warming, rainfall in southern Africa could fall by up to 30 percent (Bank 2013). The overall effect could be to halve food production by 2050 (IPCC 2007).

The reduction in crop yields will have enormous implications for food security in some parts of the world. In Africa and some parts of Asia, smallholder farmers provide up to 80 percent of food (IFAD 2013). Even with no climate change, it is difficult to see how these farmers will be able to increase production to meet the rising demand of a growing population—globally, a 70 percent increase in food demand is predicted by 2050 (ibid.). If crop yields fall while demand grows, developing countries will find it increasingly difficult to feed their populations.

SMALL ISLAND STATES

The world's 41 small island developing states and their 50 million inhabitants face an existential threat from climate change. With most of their populations living less than a metre or two above sea level, small island states may very well become uninhabitable in the face of rising seas.

The impact of climate change is already being felt. With 90 percent of small island states located in the tropics, extreme weather events, particularly Atlantic hurricanes and Pacific typhoons, are already damaging property and infrastructure, and diverting much needed public finances from development. Typhoon Haiyan is only the most recent and vivid example of the extent of these costs.

At the same time, weather events have disrupted the tourism that many islands states rely on, while ocean acidification and coral bleaching undercut traditional fishing lifestyles. It is very likely that all coral reefs in Southeast Asia will experience severe thermal stress by 2050 (Bank 2013).

WOMEN

Because men and women engage, on average, in different tasks, climate change will have different impacts on both groups. These differences mean that climate change could have a sharply negative impact on women's empowerment in a number of poor countries, reinforcing barriers to development (Skinner 2011).

Many poor women in developing countries are principally engaged in subsistence agriculture and water and fuel collection, often because gender barriers mean they have fewer opportunities in commercial or (semi-)formal employment. In Africa, up to 70 percent of agricultural workers are women (IAASTD 2009), and women and girls spend some 40 billion hours collecting water annually (UNDP 2009). To the extent climate change renders resources increasingly scarce and makes farming more labour intensive, women and girls will have to spend more time on these activities, further reducing their ability to study or develop alternative income sources.

Worse, research has shown that drought and food insecurity tends to affect women, and particularly young girls, more than males. Cultural norms and gender bias can lead families forced to ration food to withhold food from girls in order to better nourish boys (Stern 2006).

Finally, women tend to have less adaptive capacity than men. Their ability to switch sectors is constrained by social norms and barriers to education and skills acquisition. A lack of formal property rights reduces the liquidity of their assets. And because women are often engaged in childcare, agriculture or other less mobile activities, their ability to migrate to less climate-impacted regions is lower than that of men.

CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY

People with reduced physical capacities, such as children and the elderly, will likely suffer more from climate change than able-bodied adults. Climate impacts will create increased vulnerabilities for these groups in three ways.

First, more frequent occurrences of heat waves will likely continue to present a major threat to elderly individuals who live alone. Such deaths are more likely in temperate regions than warmer ones, where individuals are better prepared to deal with extreme heat. The results can be severe. A European heatwave in 2003 is estimated to have killed up to 70,000 people over a few weeks, far more than are typically lost to storms, cold or other weather events (Robine, Cheung et al. 2008). The rate of mortality associated with this event increased with age, doubling with each decade over 55 compared to the baseline mortality for that age group (ibid.).

Second, increased flooding presents a special threat for elderly people and children, who have less capacity to escape from flooded areas. For example, a 2003 Bangladeshi survey of 171,000 households found that drowning was the leading cause of death among children aged 1 to 18 (Merchant 2003). A study in Nepal found that flooding produced fatalities in girls at three times the rate it did for adult men (IRIN 2006).

Third, the infectious diseases likely to spread under climate change, such as malaria, as well as the health impacts of water scarcity and reduced nutrition target children most acutely (UNICEF 2008).

SOCIOECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

Finally, climate change stands to affect most individuals who are most socially and economically marginalized. While the differential is particularly pronounced for individuals in poor countries, even in wealthy nations, the disadvantaged will bear the brunt of climate effects.

Disadvantaged groups are particularly at risk chiefly because of where they live, and their lack of resources to adapt. Priced out of more desirable locations, poor people tend to live in more flood-prone areas (NCVO 2013). Their houses are often of relatively low quality, making them vulnerable to flooding and extreme weather events. They are also less positioned to adapt to these threats, as they often lack the means to move houses or even to purchase disaster insurance.

For example, the damage of Hurricane Katrina was borne principally by the poor and African-American population (UN-HABITAT 2007). Neighbourhoods like the 9th Ward, where one-third of the population lived in poverty, were built on low-lying reclaimed land prone to flooding. Lacking a strong political voice, residents of such areas were less able to obtain public investment in infrastructure improvements to protect their neighbourhoods (for example, levee reinforcement), even though the dangers were well known.

GRIDLOCK, HUMAN SECURITY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

Gridlock characterizes a number of security issues, generating new vulnerabilities. First, globalization has increased the risks presented by transnational threats, including from extremist groups that attack civilians, organized crime syndicates and pandemic diseases. Like financial networks, these types of threats require strong domestic regulation that can be globally coordinated. But unlike in finance, in some cases, countries and global institutions have responded relatively effectively to these challenges. For example, the World Health Organization works closely with national agencies to monitor and track outbreaks of deadly diseases around the world, such as bird or swine flus. This tracking is essential if emergent diseases are to be stopped before they become pandemic. That said, true to the logic of gridlock, the harder nature of these problems means that even with relatively successful global governance, we are unable to fully mitigate this threat because we cannot track disease in countries where governments are unwilling to collaborate (as China was during the first phase of the SARS crisis) or lack the capacity to do so.

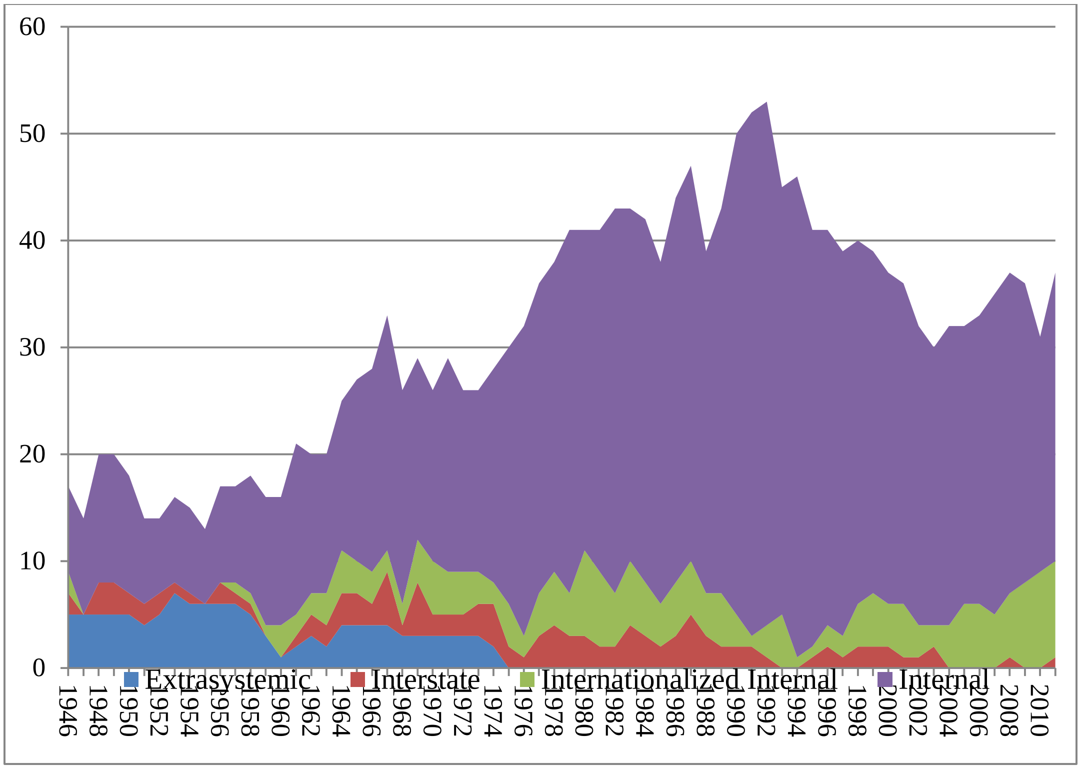
Second, it is difficult to regulate new technologies that have emerged in a gridlocked world. Cyber-warfare and unmanned drones provide two salient examples. These new weapons give states capacities to harm each other and individuals, but the world has yet to reach a common understanding of when and how they should be used. Countries disagree about how international law defines what constitutes an act of war online, or whether drone attacks on extremist groups within a country's national boundaries can be justified. Unsurprisingly, disagreement tends to cleave between the countries that possess these new technologies and those that do not. International cooperation is sorely needed to define when and how these new weapons can be used (or, indeed, whether they should be used at all), as it has been for other forms of violence (chemical and biological weapons, landmines, etc.). But gridlock makes consensus over these issues, much less binding treaty commitments, less likely.

This paper will focus, however, on a third way in which gridlock damages security: how a lack of international cooperation degrades *human security* by preventing a full realization of the 'responsibility to protect'. Following the logic of gridlock, these new ways of conceptualizing security and sovereignty only emerged through successful international cooperation. But because implementing them requires far more robust and effective global governance than gridlock allows, the world has proven unable to rise to the challenge. Worse, gridlock has led to an incomplete application of the concepts strongly influenced by the interests of powerful countries, creating new forms of vulnerability and putting the legitimacy of the concepts themselves in question.

Again, the origins of the problem can be traced to the successful cooperation of the post-war order. Following the Second World War, the United Nations was founded explicitly around the reigning ideas of collective security for sovereign states. Protection against foreign invasion was guaranteed to all Member States, and the Security Council was given a mandate under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to take measures, including the use of force, against countries that threatened peace in this way.

This system, combined with the bipolar structure of the Cold War and US hegemony thereafter, proved largely successful at its core objective: preventing war between the Great Powers. Because of this success, the nature of security challenges shifted, with numerous proxy conflicts emerging in the global South, resulting in a dramatic increase in civil wars (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Number and type of armed conflicts, 1946–2011



Note: Extrasystemic conflict refers to armed conflict between a state and a nonstate group outside its own territory, such as in colonial wars. For obvious reasons, this has declined significantly since the period of decolonization.

Source: Data from UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset v.4-2012, collapsed by year by Hale, Held, and Young 2013; see also Gleditsch et al. 2002, Lacina and Gleditsch 2005.

Alongside this shift in the nature of security threats, international cooperation fostered a fundamental transformation in our understanding of sovereignty. The United Nations system was created explicitly around a traditional concept of sovereignty as state autonomy. But it also carried with it the seeds of a far broader notion, with the Charter preamble promising “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person.” This idea expanded progressively over the post-war decades, evolving into the modern human rights regime, in which states commit to uphold the rights of their citizens under a number of treaties, held to account by various regional and global bodies.

These two trends—the turn from interstate conflict to internal conflict, and the emergence of the modern human rights regime—combined to produce a radical shift in the nature of sovereignty and the collective security promised under the Charter. In 2005, at the largest ever meeting of United

Nations Member States, countries agreed unanimously to endorse a national and international 'responsibility to protect' every human being on the planet. This responsibility applied to four types of mass atrocity crimes: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. It created three obligations: a national obligation for countries to protect their citizens from these crimes; an obligation of the international community to help countries provide protection; and a further obligation of the international community to act, potentially via military intervention, when states manifestly fail to fulfill their responsibilities (United Nations 2005). This was the first time states' sovereign autonomy was fundamentally circumscribed by the recognition of human security.

However, the striking consensus countries showed in adopting this principle has been matched by their sharp disagreement over how to implement it. The dynamics of gridlock are at play. Cooperation has succeeded in raising the goals of international cooperation, but the gridlock trends—particularly multipolarity, harder problems and institutional inertia—block the new institutions or reforms that would allow these new goals to be met. The resulting 'governance gap' instead creates new vulnerabilities.

The key organ for upholding human security via the responsibility to protect remains the Security Council. But this institution was designed to uphold *state* security, and retains a 1945 governance structure that relies on consensus among the Great Powers. This arrangement means that decisions over the responsibility to protect will inevitably be influenced by the national interests of the world's most powerful states. Numerous problems therefore emerge.

First, where governments in violation of the responsibility to protect enjoy the backing of the Great Powers, or are otherwise strategically useful to them, it is unlikely the international community will hold them to account.

Second, and conversely, governments that are at odds with the Great Powers may be accused of manifestly failing to uphold the responsibility to protect even when they are not. This may put countries at risk of military conflict even when human security challenges do not justify intervention.

Third, and more commonly, when there is disagreement among the Great Powers, no action is likely to be taken to implement the international community's responsibility to protect. Institutional inertia ensures that every veto-holding member may block action, and increasing multipolarity means that very different kinds of states, some with conflicting security interests, must agree before action can be taken. The chances for consensus are therefore rare.

Fourth, even when a decision can be made in the Security Council, it falls to particular military powers to implement the Council's mandate. This gives the Great Powers additional opportunities to compromise the responsibility to protect with their own security interests. For example, following the Security Council's authorization to act in Libya in 2011, France, the United Kingdom and the

United States were criticized by countries like Brazil, China, the Russian Federation and Turkey for overstepping the bounds of the resolution and pursuing their own national objectives.

Fifth, the inability of the Security Council to act in most cases means that countries wishing to uphold the responsibility to protect may seek authorization from other international bodies (including regional bodies such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Kosovo or the Arab League in Libya), or claim the mantle of responsible protection as a justification for self-interested unilateral action. In cases where gridlock on the Security Council prevents it from adequately implementing the responsibility to protect, these non-multilateral actions may indeed promote human security, although there is no guarantee that they will. They may thus make sense in the context of a single case. For example, the Kosovo intervention has been declared legitimate by some observers despite the lack of UN authorization. In aggregate, however, even justifiable unilateral actions risk damaging the ability of global institutions to manage conflict by reducing institutional checks on unilateral/regional military action, and eroding the legitimacy of multilateral constraints.

This failure to uphold the responsibility to protect in an effective and impartial way creates new vulnerabilities. These burdens fall, in the first instance, on populations whose governments are unable to fulfill their national obligations, or which are actively committing mass atrocity crimes against their own populations. These groups are unlikely to be able to rely on the international community for aid, especially when their countries are of strategic value to powerful countries represented on the Security Council. Individuals in strategically unimportant countries will be more likely to avoid the negative consequences of gridlock on the responsibility to protect, but these nations of course struggle with a different problem: attracting the interest and attention of the world.

Gridlock around the responsibility to protect also creates dangers for citizens in countries that are not experiencing mass atrocity crimes. To the extent incomplete, inadequate institutions for implementation allow the Great Powers to intervene without the appropriate institutional checks, they put more populations at risk of the negative effects of military interventions. Even individuals in ostensibly stable countries may experience greater human insecurity if irresponsible military interventions proliferate.

Finally, there is a danger that all of the problems listed above will lead to broader normative and conceptual changes that in fact undermine the very concepts of human security and the responsibility to protect, undermining the progressive agenda from which they emerge. Already, the intervention in Libya has provoked a backlash, at least on a rhetorical level, against future responsibility to protect actions (for example, with regard to Syria).

New approaches: a partial solution (so far)

Though multilateral efforts seem increasingly weak compared to the scope of the challenges, we live in a period of enormous innovation in global governance, with sub- and nonstate actors as well as states and intergovernmental organizations developing new ways to manage interdependence. Are these the green shoots of resilient governance arising from the failure of old methods?

Some of these innovations in the three areas discussed above—finance, climate and human security—are briefly reviewed here. In some areas, for example, the environment, new forms of global governance offer significant promise. In others, such as the security realm, their potential is more limited. And sometimes they solve one problem while raising new ones. For example, transgovernmental networks for financial regulation manage certain aspects of the issue while also increasing fragmentation, and therefore making more comprehensive regulation more difficult. The section concludes by reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of these new methods.

CLIMATE INNOVATIONS

Noting the inadequacies of the multilateral process to manage climate change, the late Nobel prize winner Elinor Ostrom has called for a system of polycentric climate governance in which a plurality of 'bottom-up' actions are used address the problem (Ostrom 2009). Can such a system offer a new model? A vast number of cities, companies and civil society groups are indeed taking voluntary action to move ahead where the multilateral process has not.

These initiatives have extraordinary mitigation potential. Globally, cities account for 70 percent of total emissions (UN-HABITAT 2011), and many are taking action to reduce emissions. Even in countries like the United States, where Congress has blocked national action, city and state commitments cover nearly half of US emissions (Lutsey and Sperling 2008). The world's largest 500 companies produce 3.6 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year (Carbon Disclosure Project 2013).

Consider a few examples:[3]

- The C40, a network of 58 megacities that account for 18 percent of global GDP and 1 in 12 people in the world, are taking a variety of actions to address climate change.

- The Carbon Disclosure Project is a voluntary reporting protocol for companies to track and disclose their carbon footprint to investors. While this merely brings transparency

[3] For more complete lists, see Hoffmann 2011, and Hale and Roger 2013.

to companies' operations, the project represents institutional investors worth nearly $87 trillion and so wields significant influence.

- The Global Gas Flaring Reduction Initiative, sponsored by the World Bank, helps oil companies to reduce the methane gas flaring produced by oil drilling. Companies participate on a voluntary basis, but benefit from the technical expertise and economies of the World Bank and its corporate partners.

- The United Nations Global Compact's 'Caring for Climate' initiative asks companies to make voluntary pledges to reduce carbon emissions and to report on their progress towards achieving those reductions.

Efforts by scholars to track these initiatives have revealed about 75 different programmes at the transnational level, including thousands of participants (Hale and Roger 2013). But there are no doubt thousands of purely domestic initiatives that complement these transnational efforts. A key challenge is therefore to map the current extent of these initiatives, as a first step to assessing their potential to reach a higher level of scope and ambition.

FINANCE INNOVATIONS

As noted above, in the realm of finance there has also been an expansion of so-called transgovernmental networks. These have evolved in an ad hoc fashion to respond to various elements of global financial regulation. They include:

- The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, a network of central bankers who agree on common, though technically non-binding, standards for banking regulation;

- The International Organization of Securities Commissions, a network of national stock market regulation entities;

- The International Accounting Standards Board, a network of national accounting regulators that includes strong representation from the private sector;

- The International Association of Insurance Supervisors, a network of national and subnational insurance industry regulators; and

- The Financial Stability Board, an umbrella network that brings together national financial regulators (for instance, central banks and finance ministries), international organizations and transgovernmental networks like those cited above.

As technocratic bodies composed primarily of regulators and, in some cases, representatives of industry, these bodies provide useful functions to facilitate the smooth operation of global finance. But only the last of them, the Financial Stability Board, has a mandate to oversee the global financial system as a whole. As in other areas of governance, however, the boldness of the mandate is matched by the weakness of the body's institutional capacity and regulatory power. While the Financial Stability Board was strengthened with an expanded membership and a more permanent secretariat in the wake of the 2008 crisis (replacing the weaker Financial Stability Forum), it remains chiefly a 'network of networks', a forum mainly for discussion and joint monitoring. This is certainly a useful addition to global economic governance, but it is far short of the strong regulatory authority needed to prevent another crisis (Helleiner 2010).

SECURITY INNOVATIONS

Security touches the core interest of the sovereign state, which has famously been defined by Weber as an entity with a monopoly over the use of force within its borders. It is therefore unsurprising that in this most crucial area of states' concerns, new forms of governance, especially those involving sub- and nonstate actors, have taken least hold.

That said, two forms of innovation are of note. As in finance, new forms of interdependence have spurred national authorities to cooperate with peers in other countries in new, more horizontal and flexible transgovernmental networks. For example, after the 11 September 2001 attacks, countries created the Financial Action Task Force as a way to track and block transnational financial flows that supported extremist groups. Involving financial regulators from a number of countries, the network has proven relatively effective in blocking financial flows to terrorist groups and organized crime syndicates (Roberge 2011).

New forms of governance have also arisen around human security, particularly around tracking humanitarian crises as they emerge through innovative technology. For example, the Digital Humanitarian Network and the International Network of Crisis Mappers are consortia of organizations and volunteers that use crowd-sourcing and mobile technology to record, measure and map humanitarian needs as they emerge.

A network called Ushahidi arose to map the violence that followed the 2008 elections in Kenya. By aggregating reports from social and news media through a collaborative crowd-sourced effort, Ushahidi was able to capture the violence more precisely than any governmental agency or international organization. The information collected by the network has helped provide evidence to hold those responsible to account, including via the International Criminal Court. Now Ushahidi has grown into a global platform, and is currently working to track violence in Syria, among other places.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Thus far, 'bottom-up' solutions have remained distinctly partial, and there are important reasons to expect them to remain so in the short- to medium-term. Like any institution, they have both strengths and weaknesses.

First, the new institutions expand the spectrum of formality along which actors can create rules and organizations. Intergovernmental organizations typically offer two forms of commitment: 'hard' agreements enshrined in international law, and aspirational statements and declarations (Raustiala 2005). Formal treaty law represents a high level of commitment. In many countries, it is directly applicable within domestic legal systems. Even when this is not the case, formal treaty obligations may be backed by various enforcement mechanisms, all the way up to coercive military force such as that authorized by the Security Council. And even when enforcement is weak, the fact that a commitment has been given the status of 'law' may increase its power to bind. International law, then, represents a strong tool of global governance.

Sometimes, indeed, it can be too strong. Given the binding nature of the institution, states may be less willing to undertake substantive commitments they may not be able to fulfil. If all agreements had to be strong binding ones, a number of worthwhile deals might never be made. Moreover, 'hard law' requires precise standards against which compliance can be defined. It thus removes scope for vaguer commitments, even though these might prove more palatable to actors concerned about strong and clear commitments.

Consider, instead, the rule-making processes of some of the new governance institutions. The Basel Committee, for example, sets precise, technical guidelines for banking regulation. But these are not legally binding. If they were, countries might find it more difficult to delegate such extensive rule-making power to an international technocratic body.

Or consider an initiative like the United Nations Global Compact. Hard rules regulating the social and environmental behaviour of multinational corporations at the international level are not politically feasible. Instead, the Global Compact takes a 'managerial' approach to compliance (Chayes and Chayes 1995), setting broad, aspirational standards, and then trying to inspire companies to strive toward them through learning, developing and sharing best practices, and dialogue with non-governmental organizations and labour groups.

That is not to say that the new institutions always lack enforcement power. For example, many of the private, voluntary regulatory schemes rely on market mechanisms—for example, socially minded consumers or investors—to coerce corporations into complying with voluntary rules. Such enforcement tools may be less certain than state regulation, but, when state regulation cannot be achieved, private, market-based mechanisms offer a possible alternative.

By making rules that are not formal law, the new institutions also offer a way to sidestep the domestic ratification procedures that limit the ability of many countries to engage in international institutions—the United States most of all. Here climate again offers a vivid example, where the US Congress made clear in 1997 (in a vote of 95 to 0) its opposition to a global climate treaty, a constraint that continues to hobble US participation in global climate governance. The United States is somewhat of an outlier in the extent of control over foreign policy it gives to domestic veto players, but given the county's centrality to most global problems, this dynamic has a significant effect on global governance generally.

Second, traditional international organizations may under some conditions also have higher basic transaction costs than the new kinds of institutions. Treaty-making can be a long and expensive affair, with delegates meeting several times around the world to negotiate. Other types of institution, in contrast, can be developed and deployed more quickly. Many of the transgovernmental networks mentioned above, for instance, operate with a very small secretariat. Furthermore, when decision-making requires technical expertise, new kinds of institutions like the financial networks may bring relevant knowledge together far more effectively than traditional diplomacy.

The cost-benefit analysis does not always favour the newcomers, however. For example, requiring consumers to make educated choices about the sustainability of the forest products they purchase requires individuals to expend time and money to help the environment, a task they may prefer their governments to handle for them. Also, informal institutions, especially private ones, may have to spend significant resources to assert their authority (based in market power, expertise or moral legitimacy) over other actors, whereas traditional institutions can simply compel compliance.

Third, the new kinds of institutions may offer representational advantages by allowing (or disallowing) different kinds of actors to participate. States have long restricted or expanded the membership of different international organizations in order to gain certain benefits. For some governance challenges, small clubs provide benefits. For example, by restricting membership to a small group of relevant nations, international bodies like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development are able to achieve deeper cooperation among their members. For other kinds of problems, such as for monitoring infectious disease, globally inclusive institutions are necessary. Many of the transgovernmental networks around financial governance, for example, are explicitly designed only to include the most important financial actors.

The new institutions also show how club-building can extend beyond states. Intergovernmental organizations can only choose between the 192 sovereign states that exist today. Other kinds of transborder institutions can select not only among states, but also from the enormous range of subnational and nonstate actors. This allows a much broader range of club-making and coalition-building. For example, many of the initiatives in climate change seek to add the resources of large subnational governments and firms to mitigation efforts. The C40, for example, attempts to bring major cities to the forefront of global climate governance. These actors are not typically active in world politics, but, given that cities account for some 80 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, it is difficult to see how a solution to climate change could be imagined without them.

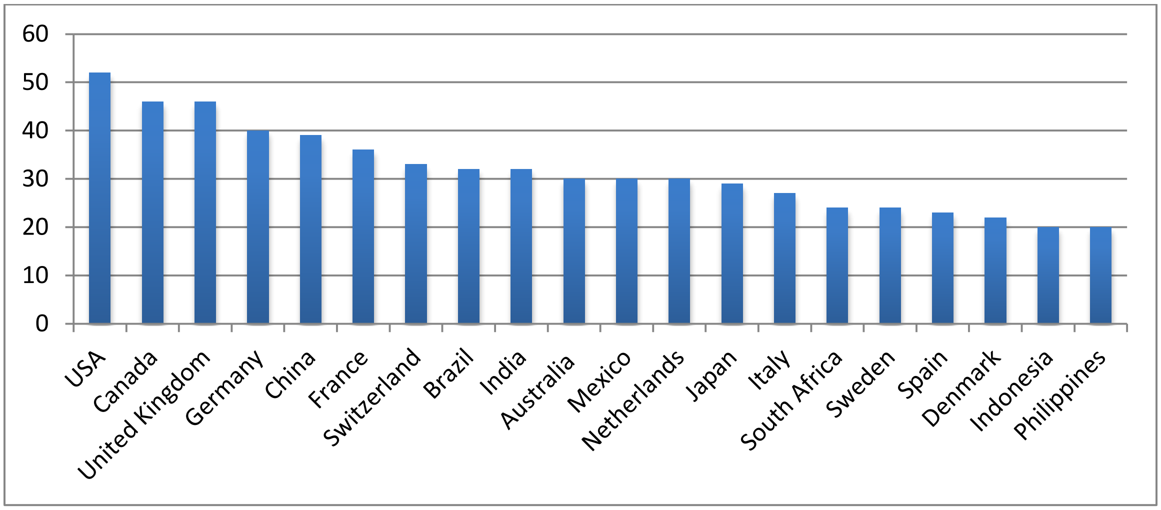
Sometimes a non- or substate approach is not just about adding the capacity of other actors, but rather designed to prevent states from influencing the process. On global forest governance, for example, the shift to private mechanisms was largely a result of the refusal of some developing countries with large timber industries to accept firm intergovernmental regulations. By turning to an informal mechanism, actors interested in protecting forests did not need formally to ask the consent of these countries to regulate how forests are governed. But this, of course, cuts both ways. At the same time, weaker private regulations—promoted by companies not interested in sustainability—were used to give the illusion of regulation, and thus stave off future regulatory efforts.

In a similar vein, many of the benefits outlined above entail parallel costs. First, as the cases demonstrate, the new kinds of institutions have no power to bind states or other actors that do not wish to be bound by them. Freeriding can be widespread. Second, the flexibility of the new institutions means they typically do not have the kind of hard enforcement tools at their disposal that intergovernmental institutions frequently enjoy. This reduces the credibility of commitments made under these institutions. When actors require certainty, they are thus unlikely to be reassured by them.

It is important to remember, however, that many of these problems also plague traditional intergovernmental organizations. Countries regularly freeride on the commitments of others, and international law can be flaunted when national interest demands it. This comparison raises a key point: the effectiveness of the new institutions should be judged not against some ideal standard, but against actually existing intergovernmental institutions.

Looking more specifically at participation in transnational climate governance, the evidence is similarly mixed. Though a broad range of countries are involved, participation is skewed towards countries with extensive civil liberties, effective domestic bureaucracies and pro-environmental policies (figure 5). In other words, transnational climate governance can be expected to face some limitations in scope.

Figure 5: Countries whose sub- and nonstate actors participate in the greatest number of transnational climate governance initiatives



Source: Author's research, forthcoming.

Finally, it is very important to note that non-multilateral approaches to climate change can have the effect of de-linking the adaptation and mitigation aspects of the debate. A key outcome of the hoped-for 'global deal' is a stream of funding from rich countries to poor countries to help the latter adapt to a warming climate (for example, via infrastructure, food security, water projects, etc.). Nominally, such flows have been set at $100 billion per year, including private financing, though few expect this target to be met, and many worry that it would come at the expense of other development funding. Nonetheless, the least developed countries have made adaptation funding a key demand for any global climate treaty, conditioning their support for mitigation activities on adequate adaptation resources.

Many of the non-multilateral approaches to climate change, because they focus on specific sub-sets of emitters, do not offer scope for such a 'grand bargain'. To the extent they are effective in mitigating emissions, they therefore leave many populations in the least developed countries additionally vulnerable because they include no additional resources for adaptation. This does not mean they are not worthwhile, because every ton of carbon mitigated means there is less adaptation required. This conundrum highlights the 'partial' and 'second-best' nature of non-multilateral initiatives, however. By preventing an effective global treaty, gridlock thus creates additional impacts on the most climate-vulnerable populations.

A role for the United Nations and its organizations

Cognizant of these limitations, the United Nations and its organizations can nonetheless play a significant role in expanding the scope and ambition of 'bottom-up' governance. By strengthening such systems, and linking them more closely to multilateral processes, global governance of the environment can be strengthened more generally.

Two strategies are of particular interest: orchestration and linkage.

ORCHESTRATION:

Orchestration is "a mode of governance in which one actor (the orchestrator) enlists an intermediary actor or set of actors (the intermediaries) to govern a third actor or set of actors (the target) in line with the orchestrator's goals, rather than attempting to govern the target directly" (Abbot and Snidal 2010; see figure 6).

Figure 6: The orchestration process

Typically, orchestrators are international organizations or nation states. Orchestration represents a way for such actors to achieve their objectives when the traditional tools of diplomacy, treaty-making or programme operations are inadequate or gridlocked. By harnessing and channelling the capacities of sub- and nonstate actors, orchestration allows traditional actors in world politics to make progress towards their objectives when the traditional means of doing so are not viable.

Orchestration can take several forms:

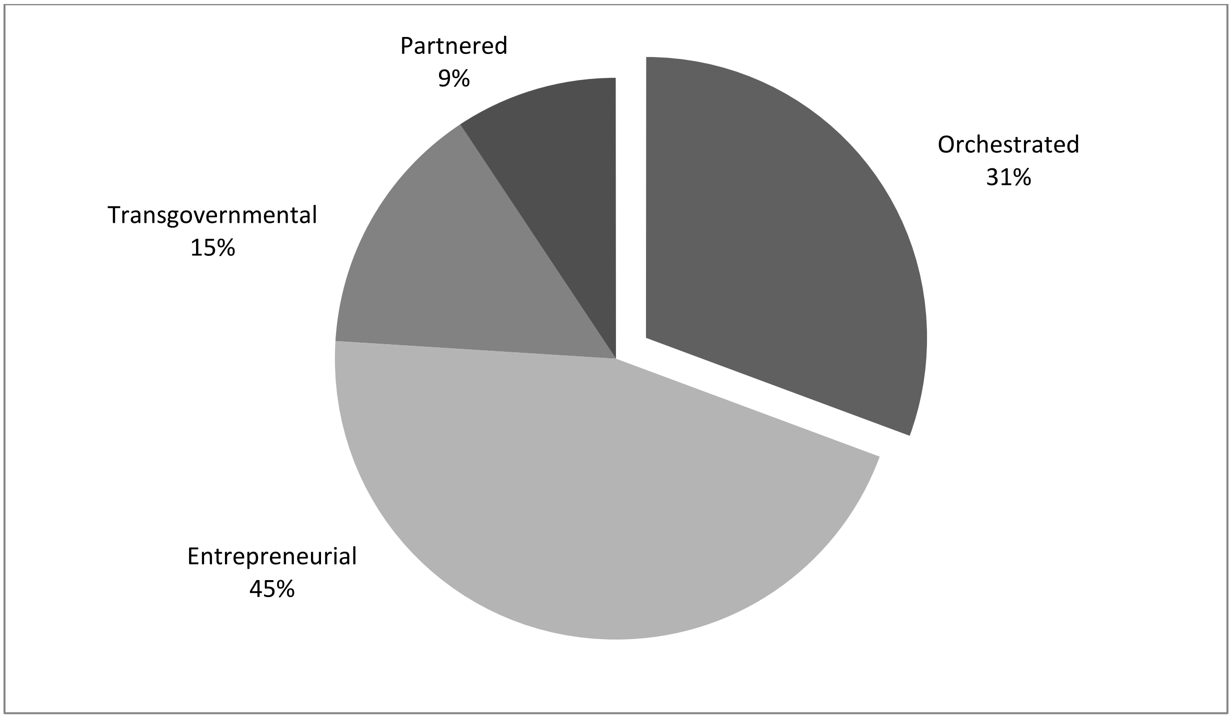
Initiating: Perhaps the most common form of orchestration is to launch a transnational governance initiative. Because orchestrators have no formal authority to order relevant actors to join an initiative, they play a more catalytic role by conceptualizing the project and convening actors to engage in it. While the idea for the programme may be developed from a range of stakeholders, it is typically the orchestrator that formulates the core design for the governance initiative. The orchestrator then uses its convening power to propose the initiative to the relevant intermediaries.

Supporting: An orchestrator can take an existing transnational governance initiative and support it with the provision of material, technical, administrative, or reputational resources. It is easy to see how the provision of money or technical expertise can strengthen transnational governance. Another very common form of support, however, is when international organizations or government agencies take on administrative functions for transnational governance initiatives. Official public endorsement of a project can also lend 'reputational resources' to transnational governance initiatives.

Shaping: Orchestrators may seek to shape existing transnational governance initiatives in order to align them more closely with the orchestrator's goals. The attributes of the orchestrator and its relationships with intermediaries give it a modest degree of leverage to shape individual intermediaries and to steer their activities. Shaping can be used to achieve several objectives. Beyond bringing the policy outcomes of the governance initiative into line with the orchestrator's preferences, shaping can be used to promote other goals, like the inclusion of developing country groups or other key stakeholders, or more democratic or efficient internal procedural rules. A potentially powerful purpose for orchestration via shaping is to bring coherence to a diverse set of overlapping transnational governance initiatives.

While it is common to think about transnational governance as separate from 'traditional' modes of global governance, the two are in fact intimately linked. In the climate realm, orchestration accounts for approximately a third of governance initiatives (figure 7).

Figure 7: Transnational climate governance by form, total 1990-2010



Source: Hale and Roger 2013.

Scholars have identified several key capacities for successful orchestration.

First, orchestrators require legitimacy in the eyes of the sub- and nonstate actors with whom they wish to engage. This legitimacy may be moral, or based on expertise or performance.

Second, orchestrators require sufficient 'focality' within a certain issue area to have the convening power needed to bring together a critical mass of actors.

Third, orchestrators must have the material and/or informational resources to enable sub- and nonstate actors to take on governance functions. A conducive organizational culture is an important element of this.

Fourth, and most crucial, the issue to be addressed must be one for which suitable intermediaries exist. That is, the sub- and nonstate actors with the power and capacity to address the issue must have goals that overlap at least partially with those of the orchestrator.

In many issue areas, though not all, the United Nations and its organizations possess these resources. The implication is that these could rely more heavily on orchestration to enhance the resilience and effectiveness of global governance.

LINKAGE

Another way for international organizations to innovate around gridlock, and therefore increase resilience, is to link themselves to the actions being taken by sub- and nonstate actors. In the climate realm, linkage can play a useful role in bringing the dynamism of 'bottom-up' action into the multilateral process, helping to build the political conditions needed to reach a global treaty.

In December 2011, under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, countries agreed to negotiate a new, legally binding treaty by 2015 that would go into effect in 2020. But it is far from clear how countries will manage in the next 2 years to conclude the global deal that has eluded them for the last 20. Fortunately, the Durban framework includes a second work stream on concrete, short- to medium-term mitigation activities that can raise ambition in the lead-up to 2020 (UNFCCC 2011). While this area, 'Work Stream 2', has attracted less attention than the treaty negotiations, it is, in fact, crucial to their success.

The reason is simple. A global deal will be reached only if political conditions allow countries to make far more ambitious commitments than they have in the past. By broadening and enhancing the pledge-and-review system initiated after the Copenhagen climate summit, Work Stream 2 has the potential to build such conditions.

To do so, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process could link Work Stream 2 to the most dynamic mitigation actions taking place today. Some nations have demonstrated significant leadership, but, as noted above, equally impressive is the range of actions by cities and regions, private companies, civil society groups and other international organizations, often linked together in transborder networks.

A significant opportunity exists to turn the convention process into a powerful catalyst for ambition in countries, as well as in cities, companies and civil society organizations via cooperative initiatives. To seize this opportunity, countries could build a system to *record, review, reinforce and recruit* ambitious mitigation activities that will pave the way to an effective 2020 treaty. This would entail:

- *Recording* the pledges of countries and, through linked initiatives, those of other intergovernmental fora, cities and regions, companies and civil society groups;
- *Reviewing* pledges to clarify and enhance ambition;
- *Reinforcing* pledges through capacity-building, finance and other tools; and
- *Recruiting* more countries, cities and regions, companies, and civil society groups to take advantage of unexploited mitigation opportunities.

Conclusion: achieving resilience through institutional innovation

In an interdependent world, multilateral gridlock is a major cause of vulnerability. Our inability to manage problems like climate change or financial integration via the traditional mechanisms of global policy-making creates real dangers for people all over the world.

Unfortunately, the present difficulties facing international cooperation are systemic in nature. Four trends driving gridlock—increasing multipolarity, harder problems, institutional inertia and fragmentation—are unlikely to dissipate soon.

It is therefore essential to think creatively and rigorously about how international cooperation might be strengthened under these adverse conditions. Fortunately, there are signs of resilience in global governance, as new kinds of institutions and networks arise to fill some of the gaps left in the system thus far. But these measures are partial. Multilateral organizations can help them reach a higher level of scale and ambition through strategies of orchestration and linkage, which combine 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches.

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