

Panel: Governing the Global Commons

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The environment has been at the center of the global governance discourse from its early beginnings. Climate change, the protection of the ozone layer, the loss of biodiversity, and the negative environmental implications of globalization are all global challenges that demand some sort of global consensus - if not an effective worldwide regime. On the other hand, any global agreement has to be implemented locally, which makes the contribution of a variety of societal actors indispensable. In the midst of this vertical range of political spheres, regional collaboration has proven to be a valuable component in successfully governing the global commons. Regional trading systems have been established in different parts of the world to cope with greenhouse gas emissions or the pollutants linked to acid rain; the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism sets the basis for cooperation between industrialized and developing countries in combating climate change; and transatlantic negotiations are under way to harmonize export credit agencies' environmental standards.

During our session, we will explore global environmental challenges with a particular emphasis on climate change. We will also examine local and regional initiatives that have been developed to address these challenges from both a theoretical and practical perspective.

Topics we will address include:

- Environment as a global governance challenge. Climate change, destruction of the ozone layer, loss of biodiversity, and negative environmental implications of globalization: Which issues are truly global?
- Global discourse and global public in the field of environment. Do these actually exist?
- Conflict of global activity with regional, national, and local interests and activities. Where can we observe such conflicts?
- Climate change as a prime example for the necessity of global governance. Does climate change necessitate some form of global governance, and, if so, why? Are the reasons that climate change requires (or does not require) global governance applicable to other issues?
- Climate change and global governance in practice. Can climate change only be tackled by universal participation in an international treaty? Or is a global consensus on the problem and a patchwork of national policies and measures sufficient? Do other feasible options exist?
- Climate change: A test case for global governance. What measures to implement global governance have been tried? What lessons can be learned from these experiences that can be transferred to other fields?
- Global agreements and local defiance. Global agreements must be implemented locally, which makes compliance by a variety of social actors indispensable: Where are the limits to the ability of national governments to enforce compliance among private actors? What strategies do such private actors pursue to evade the control of national governments?
- Regional cooperation. Which examples of regional environmental cooperation exist (NAFTA side agreements, European Emissions Trading Scheme, bilateral CDM projects)? Have these mechanisms been successful? If so, what has made them successful? If not, what has contributed to their lack of success?

- Climate regime formation: The Mexican experience. What is the Mexico's stance on international climate regime formation? How is this perspective shared regionally, in the South? How does Mexico's stance differ from that other countries? Which
- Contribution of local government to environmental governance. How have states such as Nueva Leon contributed to environmental governance in Mexico and on an international level? What are limitations to such contributions?
- CDM in Mexico. What has been the experience in Mexico with CDM? How could CDM be improved in the case of Mexico?
- Transatlantic climate policy harmonization. How are attempts to harmonize climate policy on a transatlantic basis viewed in Mexico? How could Mexico contribute to such a harmonization? How could other countries assist Mexico in the harmonization process? What is Mexico's stance towards the special case of environmental reform of export credit agencies?