

From International Politics to Global Governance

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The study is part of a monograph in which I seek to reconstruct the fundamental shift from international politics to global governance. Broadly speaking, I conceptualise this shift as a two-fold change in (1) the distribution of governance resources among various types of actors and in (2) the procedural norms that guide decision-making beyond the state. During my GARNET mobility fellowship, I will focus on the second shift.

In relation to this shift, my own preliminary research suggest that societal expectations about appropriate international and transnational governance have shifted from a "Westphalian norm" of international governance to a "post-Westphalian" norm of global governance. From the perspective of the Westphalian norm, political rules beyond the state are legitimate *if they result from negotiations among the governments of internationally recognized states and if no direct coercion was exerted on the negotiating parties*. The post-Westphalian norm broadens this understanding in two important ways. First, its definition of legitimate rule-makers is no longer exclusively tied to the state, but also includes non-state actors. Second, the list of procedural conditions that need to be met in order for rule-making to count as legitimate comprises more than the mere absence of coercion. According to the new norm, political rules beyond the state are legitimate *if socially recognized representatives of collective interests have agreed upon them in a decision-making processes that are inclusive, transparent, accountable, and deliberative*.

This change of the general norm of global governance represents a constitutional shift in societies' expectations about 'good' global governance. Its consequences are felt by intergovernmental organizations such as the European Union, the World Trade Organization or the United Nations, all of which are facing severe public challenges in relation to their presumed democratic deficits. But consequences are also visible in the emergence and proliferation of private transnational governance schemes such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). These schemes could not have claimed legitimacy according to the old Westphalian norm of international governance.

While some broad implications of the norm shift have already been described in the global governance literature, the more precise dynamics that unfold as a result of the interaction of general norms of global governance with particular cultures and institutions in world politics have rarely been addressed. In my study, I seek to address this gap by exploring what consequences the changing norm of global governance has for the political practice within particular policy fields. In general, I expect responses to vary in relation to the strength of participatory political cultures and traditions within a given policy area. More precisely, I expect that institutions in policy fields with traditionally strong participatory norms are more inclined to amend their practice to fit the post-Westphalian governance norm (unless, of course, they already live up to that norm). In contrast, policy fields with less participatory cultures and traditions will usually need to make greater efforts to close the gap between normative expectations and actual practice. Since more severe amendments imply that some actors stand to lose previously entertained privileges, adaptation to the new norm is likely to face stronger resistance. In policy fields with less participatory cultures, political contestation and/or cosmetic change are thus more likely than the full and sincere implementation of the spirit of the new governance norm.

During my GARNET mobility fellowship, I will concentrate on the field of global environmental governance. In contrast to fields like financial governance (which will be covered in a second study in the monograph), environmental governance is traditionally characterized by relatively strong participatory norms. In general, I therefore expect that

conflicts between the post-Westphalian norm of global governance and the current practice are less fundamental than in areas such as financial or security governance. In a first part of my study, I will thus seek to identify how the field of global environmental governance as a whole responds to the shifting norms of global governance. This will mainly be achieved through a review of the secondary literature that deals with or allows reconstructing the evolution of global environmental politics as a policy field.

Yet global environmental governance is not necessarily a homogeneous policy field and the participatory strength of political cultures and traditions varies across sub-areas. In a second part, I will therefore explore the responses of different sub-fields of global environmental governance. I plan to conduct two case studies – one in a subfield characterised by traditionally strong participatory norms (the governance of conservation and biological diversity) and the other in a sub-field characterised by weaker participatory norms (the governance of chemical regulation).

Like the study of the field as a whole, the case studies ask how particular institutions respond to the calls for greater inclusiveness, transparency, accountability and deliberativeness. This question is broken down into three smaller questions that will guide the case studies: How do different institutions in the sub-field adapt to the norm shift and what accounts for the variation in their responses? Which actors contest the norm shift and how successful are they in doing so? And how do different actors and institutions adapt elements of the new norm to fit their particular cultures, experiences and needs?