

GLOBAL SOLUTION NETWORKS

A Literature Review

Don Tapscott
Executive Director
Global Solution Networks

and

Thomas Gegenhuber
doctoral candidate
Johannes Kepler University

Prior to the Global Solution Networks Program there has been no systematic study of global problem

solving networks or any attempt to understand the potential of multi-stakeholder networks to improve the state of the world. Little has been done to evaluate what makes these networks tick, how they succeed or fail, what impact they have or how they address the tough issues of legitimacy, accountability, representation and transparency.

The goal of this literature review is not to assess all the work in the field, but rather to review selected work that has had considerable impact on the global policy community, including exploration of conceptual frameworks that highlight the growing role of non-state actors in global governance, various definitions for Global Solution Networks (GSNs) and an assessment of how different thinkers categorize the actors in the global policy arena. We conclude with a synthesis of the literature into a comprehensive taxonomy.



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Fragmented Global Policy Arena	1
Public “Bads” vs. Public Goods	2
Rosenau’s Spheres of Authority	4
Hampson, Hay and Rischard on Global Public Goods, Bads and Other Challenges	5
Defining Multi-Stakeholder Networks	6
Multi-Stakeholder Networks	7
Steve Waddell’s Global Action Networks	8
Multi-Stakeholder Processes	10
Transnational NGO Networks	11
Multi-Stakeholder Network Taxonomies	11
Transnational Policy Networks	12
Transnational Climate Governance	13
Multi-Stakeholder Platforms in the Water Policy Community	14
Taxonomy of NGOs	15
Accountability Taxonomy	15
Political Responsibility Taxonomy	16
Functional View of Global Action Networks	18
Conclusion	19
About the Authors	21
Endnotes	22
Global Solution Networks	23



Introduction

Prior to the Global Solution Networks Program there has been no systematic study of global problem solving networks or any attempt to understand the potential of multi-stakeholder networks to improve the state of the world. Little has been done to evaluate what makes these networks tick, how they succeed or fail, what impact they have or how they address the tough issues of legitimacy, accountability, representation and transparency. This paper reviews some of the most important work done to date.

We conducted a literature review to understand how scholars, eminent thinkers and experts conceive and categorize multi-stakeholder networks. Because of the limited amount of work in this area we cast a broad net, at times looking at civil society organizations. But to be clear, non-government organizations (NGOs) and civil society combine to form only one of the four stakeholder classes that constitute these networks.

The goal of the literature review was not to review all the work in the field, but rather to review selected work that has had considerable impact on the global policy community. In Section 1, we discuss the arguments of scholars who explored conceptual frameworks that highlight the growing role of non-state actors in global governance and shift the attention away from the state as the sole or most significant unit in global public policymaking. In Section 2, we review various definitions for Global Solution Networks (GSNs). In Section 3 we assess how different thinkers categorize the actors in the global policy arena. In Section 4, we examine the different types of GSNs. We conclude the paper by synthesizing the literature into a comprehensive taxonomy in Section 5.

Fragmented Global Policy Arena

Numerous scholars have dedicated their attention to the increasing levels of global interconnectedness and reflected on how this connectivity impacts global policy making. For instance, Alberto Martinelli, professor of Political Science and Sociology at the University of Milan, argues that the worldwide interdependence of social entities is eroding the sovereignty of governments. He defines globalization as “a set of related processes that interconnect individuals, groups, communities, states, markets, corporations and international and non-governmental organizations in complex webs of social relations; and, more synthetically, as the growth of networks of worldwide interdependence.”¹



Several writers have developed similar definitions of new networks in the globalized world. Diane Stone, professor of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick, coined the term “global agora.” She defines this as a “growing global space of fluid, dynamic and intermeshed relations of politics, markets, culture and society. This public space is shaped by the interactions of its actors—that is, multiple publics and plural institutions.”²

James N. Rosenau, who served as a Professor of International Affairs at George Washington University’s Elliot School of International Affairs until his death in 2011, published more than 35 books and numerous articles. Foreign Policy magazine listed him as one of the most influential thinkers in the field of international politics. Rosenau developed the concept of “spheres of authority.” He argued that states should be seen as simply significant actors in a world marked by an increasing diffusion of authority to non-state actors.³

Below is a brief review of Stone’s global agora and Rosenau’s spheres of authority:

Stone’s Global Agora

Professor Stone’s “global agora” consists of states, international organizations and NGOs and multi-stakeholder networks. The actors are heterogeneous regarding their power, visibility and influence. Additionally, the global agora has no central authority and no developed institutions, therefore it is subject to high uncertainty, disorder and dispersed decision-making. Agenda setting occurs through multiple actors.

Networks in the global agora can be either: 1) gateways for democratization and a voice for stakeholders, or 2) gatekeepers. “Gatekeepers” refers to a global policy that is exclusive and managed by an elite transnational policy community. Stone believes that the current state of the global agora has something in common with the ancient Greek agora: it is elitist. Institutions are dispersed in the global arena, such as Washington or Geneva.⁴

Because of the high barriers to entry, the majority of citizens are uninformed about these policy venues and face obstacles to raising their voices.

But because there is no central authority, there is also no central ownership of problems. Stone identifies three types of problems suited to the global agora: *transboundary problems* (e.g. cross-border drug trafficking, pollution); *common property problems* (e.g. oceans, Antarctica, the atmosphere); and *simultaneous problems* (i.e. nations experiencing similar problems in health care, welfare or urbanization).⁵



Public “Bads” vs. Public Goods

Professor Stone pinpoints three types of global problems (transboundary problems, common property problems and simultaneous problems) that a single government cannot solve alone. Many of these issues are linked to “public bads,” the solutions to which require international coordination and the participation and/or consent of other actors in society.

Public “bads” such as air pollution are caused everywhere around the globe and do not need any coordination to exist. They are the externalities or harmful side effects of modern industrial societies. The provision of public goods, on the other hand, requires collective action. International organizations and non-state actors must agree to cooperate to create global public goods or seek to regulate the adverse effects of global public bads.⁶ In other words, while it is often all-too-easy to create public “bads,” it is often very difficult and complex to create public goods because there is no central ownership of the problem.

Professor Stone’s insight that global public goods require collective action deserves a more detailed investigation, since the production of global public goods is often critical to the process of solving global problems. Professor of Sociology Pamela Oliver refers to the seminal work of the economist Mancur Olson who laid the ground for thinking about collective action. Olson defines a collective good (i.e. a public good) as “one which, if provided to one member of a group, cannot be withheld from any other member.”⁷ In other words, the key characteristic of a collective good is non-excludability.

Collective actions are any activities that aim to provide a collective good. Due to the non-excludability of public goods, free riding can occur. Olson assumes that if collective goods were divided among a large group, one person’s contribution (or the lack of contribution) would not make a noticeable difference to the outcome. As a result, collective action requires incentives that reward contributors and punishes defectors.

Oliver builds on previous thinkers and identifies three types of incentives that may spark collective action: *material incentives* (salaries, insurance programs, economic retaliation), *solidarity incentives* (praise, respect, friendship, shame) and *purposive incentives* (internalized norms and values). Oliver also highlights that a small group can create collective goods by interdependently coordinating their action to make a large contribution through an appropriate technology (e.g. lobbying Congress).⁸



“ States retain their sovereign rights, however the realms within which these rights can be exercised have diminished as the world becomes even more interdependent and as state boundaries become ever more porous ”

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP),⁹ the World Bank¹⁰ and the academic community agree that the global public goods are currently under-supplied. Because there is no exclusivity of global goods, the private sector has few incentives to provide them. Additionally, national governments cannot agree on which global public goods should be provided and how to share the financial burden of financing them.¹¹ A multi-stakeholder network is one instrument to create public goods if the network is able to create the right incentive structure for its members and stakeholders.

Rosenau's Spheres of Authority

With his concept of “spheres of authority,” Rosenau argues for fundamental rethinking with respect to global policy making.¹² The boundaries and powers are shifting: weakened states are experiencing competition from non-governmental organizations at the local, provincial, national, transnational, international and global levels.

Most thinking about global policy is still based on the nation state. Some see governments in a peripheral role, while others see governments as central.¹³ Professor Rosenau argues that governments should “not be posited as first among equals, but simply as significant actors in a world marked by an increasing diffusion of authority and a corresponding diminution of hierarchy. States retain their sovereign rights, however the realms within which these rights can be exercised have diminished as the world becomes even more interdependent and as state boundaries become ever more porous.”¹⁴

We can observe the weakening of the state and the subsequent creation of authority vacuums and a vast growth in the number of spheres into which authority has moved. Rosenau says, “Global-seeking entities will have supplemented, perhaps even supplanted, states as the prime sources of governance on a global scale.”¹⁵

In Rosenau's spheres of authority framework, focus lies on those political actors, structures, processes and institutions that initiate, sustain or respond to globalizing forces as they propel boundary-spanning activities and foster boundary-contracting reactions. In this view, states are one of many sources of authority. “The world is comprised of spheres of authority that are not necessarily consistent with the divisions of territorial space and are subject to considerable flux.”¹⁶ Authority is relational, one actor directs another, and the effectiveness of authority can only be measured by examining how the other one responds. There are two types of authority: implicit (persuasion through expertise, influence, informal) or explicit (formal, bureaucratic authority).

An example for a non-territorial sphere of authority is the field of bonds and stocks and the role of rating agencies. By rating risk, agencies determine the cost of governments obtaining loans. There are hierarchies within the spheres. “Some credit rating agencies may be more influential than others, but there is no necessary basis for presuming that the most high-status credit agency can achieve compliance from actors outside its sphere or that its



“Governance refers to mechanisms for steering social systems toward their goals, a conception which is far more amenable to understanding a world in which old boundaries are becoming obscure, in which new identities are becoming commonplace, in which the scale of political thought has become global in scope”

compliance can be achieved by actors in other spheres.”¹⁷ In this view, a state has to compete over the authority with the rating agencies in this sphere. Very likely, a single government cannot enforce rules on the rating agencies. In this case, authority through sovereignty is not sufficient; a government must build coalitions to impose regulations. Consequently, Rosenau (1999) defines global governance as follows: “Governance refers to mechanisms for steering social systems toward their goals, a conception which is far more amenable to understanding a world in which old boundaries are becoming obscure, in which new identities are becoming commonplace, in which the scale of political thought has become global in scope.”¹⁸

Hampson, Hay and Rischard on Global Public Goods, Bads and Other Challenges

Scholars Fen Osler Hampson and John B. Hay argue that the institutions that shape global policy have a democratic deficit. This deficit “emerges in the systematic exclusion of people—especially the poor and otherwise marginalized—from participation in the big institutions of domestic and international governance.”¹⁹ Goods such as individual security, tolerable minimums of economic well-being and the essentials of sustainable and democratic development are unequally consumed. To provide a solution, Hampson and Hay review key works in the human security literature. Human security, they conclude, consists of two elements: first, if people are threatened by events beyond their control, they need to be protected; second, people and their communities must be empowered to address and solve problems locally. In other words, a combination of self-empowerment and protection by the state is the key to human security.

Hampson and Hay also find that growing rates of globalization and interdependence demand new approaches to providing global public goods and eliminating or mitigating public bads. Public goods have three characteristics: they are non-excludable, non-rival and all their benefits are universal. Nevertheless, Hay and Hampson argue that the explanatory power of public goods theory is limited. “Not every under-supplied good is a public good. As well, some things are in short supply not because they are public goods, but because some people use their market power, political power, or sheer force to keep them in short supply.”²⁰ The scholars suggest that we need to institutionalize systems that reward producers and consumers of real public goods such as healthy fisheries.

Hay and Hampson also highlight the work of Jean-Francois Rischard. As a former executive director of the World Bank, Rischard has also written about these issues in a more popular vein in his book *High Noon: 20 Global Problems, 20 Years to Solve Them*.²¹ Rischard argues that two big forces of global change “are running ahead of humanity’s ability to solve them—the population explosion and the new world economy.”²² He maintains that the democratic deficit requires an institutional innovation that erases the separation between the public, the private and civil society spheres. Rischard



believes that this innovation will not take place in the near future. As a result he suggests a focus on global issues networks (GINs) “that are forging vigorous and innovative new partnerships among public, private and civil society actors.”²³ These networks should pressure national governments to act, to take practical action to tackle problems such as global warming. Rischard also emphasizes the role of technology, such as in the form of global electronic town hall meetings that can gather participants from around the globe.

Although Hay and Hampson have a positive view of such networks, they also highlight their challenges. First, in the light of the pressing problems we face, they ask whether it is sufficient to “rely on such accidental collaborations.”²⁴ Second, they suggest that these networks can only provide a limited remedy to the democratic deficit in global policy if the most powerful international actors are not sufficiently engaged. Without the US, for example, systemic provision of public goods (e.g. Marshall Plan, Bretton Woods Institutions) would not have been possible. With the rise of other superpowers like China, their focus on the US arguably falls short. But Hay and Hampson make a valid point that, at some point, multi-stakeholder networks must convince powerful players to join their cause. Otherwise a tipping point towards a better future may not be achieved.

Defining Multi-Stakeholder Networks

Diane Stone argues that informal networks of stakeholders are emerging because of the notable absence of formal global public policy bodies that invite broader stakeholder participation. Global public-private partnerships, international agreements, private regimes, multi-stakeholder networks and transnational NGO networks are filling the gap, she argues, and help compensate for the lack of infrastructure for effective global decision making.

According to Stone, the imperative to foster more partnerships between corporations, NGOs and other civil society actors has its origins in international environmental and sustainability policy. The Rio Declaration (UNCED 1992), the Millennium Development Goals (UN 2000) and the WSSD Plan of Implementation (UN 2002) highlighted the importance of multi-stakeholder processes.²⁵ Recall the previous section that provides a rationale for multi-stakeholder networks: geographic scope of sovereign governments is limited and transnational and global institutions are not yet fully developed. Solving global problems requires a large number of actors. Corporations, NGOs and governments cannot address problems on a global scale by acting alone. Consequently, governments, business and NGOs need to cooperate.²⁶



“Actors build consensus, pool their authority, engage in collective decision making, and share policy responsibilities and program funding.”

Ann C. Svendson and Myriam Laberge from the Centre for Sustainable Community Development (Canada) posit that we live in a world of highly interconnected people and ecosystems. Problems are increasingly complex, and no single organization has the capacity to address them. An example of a complex problem was the global health crisis triggered by SARS. This crisis would not have been resolved without the cooperation of businesses, civil society organizations and governments.²⁷

Below is a brief review of how different scholars define multi-stakeholder networks and processes. We will also examine transnational NGO networks. Although the latter networks are not the same as multi-stakeholder networks, they share a similar problem: how can two different organizations that operate in a different arena work together to solve a pressing problem?

Multi-Stakeholder Networks

Julia Roloff, associate professor at ESC Rennes School of Business, and an expert in stakeholder management, says, “In multi-stakeholder networks, actors from civil society, business and governmental institutions come together to find a common solution that affects all of them.”²⁸ Diane Stone uses the term global policy networks, in which “actors build consensus, pool their authority, engage in collective decision making, and share policy responsibilities and program funding, that is ‘soft’ authority.”²⁹ Fanny Calder, associate fellow of the Sustainable Development Programme of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in the UK, defines multi-stakeholder networks as “groupings of governmental, intergovernmental, civil society and private sector stakeholders who come together to create change.”³⁰ In many cases, single actors initiate networks (e.g. civil society or the UN) and in other cases networks are entirely self-organizing with no single organization “in charge.” Multi-stakeholder networks can be active on a global, regional, national or local level or on different levels at the same time (e.g. the Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development initiative).³¹

How can individual stakeholders of a multi-stakeholder network be identified? Roloff defines “stakeholders within multi-stakeholder networks as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the solution of the problem addressed by the network.”³² According to this definition, “the network’s active participants and persons who are affected by the participants’ actions are considered to be stakeholders.”³³ The activities of multi-stakeholder networks should be transparent. Decisions should be made together (consensus). The network requires a high degree of communication amongst stakeholders. Actors have a self-obligation to deliver results.³⁴ The main goal is to establish trust within the network.

Multi-stakeholder networks differ substantially from other types of global cooperation between governments or international organizations and NGOs and/or corporations. In public-private partnerships (PPPs), there is a formal relationship between government and business. The contractual relationships



specify how a project should be completed. Additionally, in PPP projects, the interests of both parties are met.³⁵

Steve Waddell's Global Action Networks

Steve Waddell coined the term Global Action Networks (GANs). Waddell believes that the complexity and collective action problem inherent in the creation of public goods requires networks that provide humankind with the capacity to act collectively to create a global future together. Examples for such networks include the Forest Stewardship Council and the Fair Labour Association. According to Waddell, other scholars have called these networks multi-actor regimes, earth governance, issue networks, collaborative governance or global governance organizations. Waddell defines Global Action Networks as entities that “mobilize multi-stakeholder resources, bridge divides among people, and promote the long-term deep change and innovation work that is needed to address global challenges.”³⁶ In a nutshell, Global Action Networks are systemic change agents, which attempt to tackle complex problems.

Waddell describes Global Action Networks as having seven characteristics.³⁷

Global Action Networks are active globally and on multiple levels. The aim is a “local-to-global” presence. Waddell calls this concept “glocal,” wherein multiple action levels (local, national, regional, global) and sectoral geographic frames (nations, markets, interest communities) come together.³⁸

1. Global Action Networks embrace diversity and engage in boundary spanning. The challenge is to integrate resources across organizational sectors and to overcome the traditional ethnic, linguistic, geographical, political and business-government-civil society division in a collaborative fashion.³⁹
2. Global Action Networks are inter-organizational networks. The key membership groups are organizational stakeholders, not individuals. Furthermore, Global Action Networks are inter-organizational networks composed of many inter-organizational partnerships. “These partnerships comprise modest numbers of the network’s participants working together around a specific task often bounded by geography and sub-issue.”⁴⁰
3. Global Action Networks are systemic change agents. They are one element of the system, which attempts to influence other elements in order to achieve its vision. The goal is to reach a tipping point, where the vision becomes a legitimized standard that all members of the system are normatively required to follow. Whereas other organizations aim for incremental change or reform,



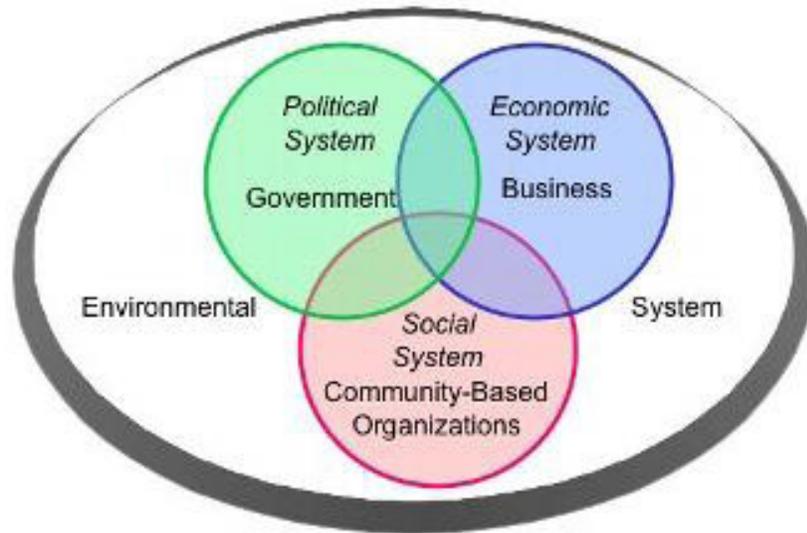
Global Action Networks attempt to transform the world that we live in.

4. Global Action Networks are entrepreneurial action learners. These networks often engage in action, but also need to learn the lessons of their errors. Complex problems cannot be solved by following a path of rollout processes associated with business scaling-up. Global Action Networks issues “require an approach of planting many seeds and nurturing their development, rather than promoting one or two big solutions as ‘the answer.’ The latter will produce results that might be inappropriate in other contexts or quickly be bypassed by new developments.”⁴¹
5. Global Action Networks are voluntary leaders. These networks create coalitions of the willing. They lack the coercive instruments of governments (taxation, fines, laws) but they use social pressure. Nevertheless, Global Action Networks should influence governments to deploy regulation, if it is feasible.
6. Global Action Networks are producers of global public goods. Global Action Networks attempt to produce goods that are non-excludable and non-rival. Examples are dealing with the negative externalities of globalization, creating a more environmentally sustainable future, ensuring greater social cohesion or developing sustainable wealth generation.

To Waddell the origins of Global Action Networks can be traced to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (1963) and the International Labour Organization (1919). The Cold War split the world into two camps and hampered the creation of truly global goods. Since the end of the Cold War, the world has become more complex and dynamic. The current institutional system can address the creation of global public goods in two ways. First, one could privatize the public good (i.e., sell the rights to pollute). Second, governments could provide or protect public good by taxing polluters, using government ownership to protect forests or using regulation to prevent harmful behavior. The third approach is the Global Action Network. A Global Action Network brings together “stakeholders in a resource or issue to establish rules through which mutual agreement and collective enforcement”⁴² can occur.

Waddell postulates that solving problems requires the collaboration of the three systems—government, business and community-based organizations. The environmental system has an impact on all three sectors; consequently, it is not sufficient that the WTO focus only on economic decision-making. Each sector must integrate an environmentally sustainable imperative. In other words, for all the pressing issues it is necessary to aim for a holistic approach.





Source: Waddell (2010)⁴³

Multi-Stakeholder Processes

Minu Hemmati, an expert in sustainable development and multi-stakeholder processes, wrote a book on multi-stakeholder processes for the Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future (former name of the forum was UNED - United Nations Environment and Development).⁴⁴ In contrast to Julia Roloff, who has an actor view, Minu Hemmati deploys a process view and coined the term multi-stakeholder processes. She uses the term to describe processes which:⁴⁵

- aim to bring together all major stakeholders in a new form of decision-finding (and possibly decision-making) on a particular issue;
- are based on recognition of the importance of achieving equity and accountability in communication between stakeholders;
- involve equitable representation of three or more stakeholder groups and their views;
- are based on democratic principles of transparency and participation; and
- aim to develop partnerships and strengthen networks between and among stakeholders.

For her, multi-stakeholder processes can be used to build consensus, decision-making and implementation. They can also range from single events to multi-year processes.



“ Although NGOs like the Red Cross deliver services, the primary activity of many NGOs is advocacy, the “act of organizing the strategic use of information to democratize unequal power relations ”

Transnational NGO Networks

For the purposes of this project, Global Problem Solving Networks are not simply NGOs. However they are pertinent to this study as many transnational networks are NGO networks. As such we surveyed the vast literature on NGOs, although the full results are not reported here.

Adil Najam of the Lahore University of Management argues NGOs are “concerned with the articulation and actualization of particular social visions.”⁴⁶ Anna C. Vakil, Professor at University of Windsor, defines NGOs as “self-governing, private, not-for-profit organizations that are geared toward improving the quality of life of disadvantaged people.”⁴⁷ “NGOs have come to mobilize, articulate and represent people’s interests or concerns at different levels of decision-making: locally, nationally and internationally.”⁴⁸

Although NGOs like the Red Cross deliver services, the primary activity of many NGOs is advocacy, the “act of organizing the strategic use of information to democratize unequal power relations.”⁴⁹ Advocacy’s goal is to empower the disenfranchised members of society by providing information and helping them organize in order to influence political or corporate decision-making. Additionally, advocacy can help improve self-confidence within a community. To build transnational networks or influence global decision-making, NGOs often establish transnational relationships with like-minded NGOs and other organizations that share similar concerns. Transnational NGO networks pursue activities within different political arenas around the world. A political arena is the sphere where decisions are made. A political arena can be either defined geographically (e.g. local, regional, national, global) or institutionally (field of key actors that are involved in the process of establishing a convention). A transnational NGO network can be defined as a network of multiple non-governmental organizations and stakeholders that attempt to solve a pressing problem by coordinating their work in different political arenas.

Multi-Stakeholder Network Taxonomies

So far we have learned that numerous non-actors coexist along with the states in the global arena and attempt to shape global policy. We have also defined what constitutes a multi-stakeholder network. This section examines how other thinkers have categorized the various types of transnational networks and multi-stakeholder networks that operate at the global level.



Transnational Policy Networks

Many academics have attempted to classify the diverse actors that participate in global governance. Rosenau, for example, has argued that the actors in world politics are NGOs, non-state actors, sovereignty actors, issue networks, policy networks, social movements, global civil society, transnational coalitions, transnational lobbies and epistemic communities.⁵⁰ Diane Stone advances a similar taxonomy that distinguishes between six types of transnational policy networks that participate in global policy processes:⁵¹

1. *TANs: Transnational Advocacy Coalitions:* These coalitions defend causes or advocate for political change. The coalition's main goal is agenda setting and to drive change through information revelation and social mobilization. Generally, TANs have fewer connections to the government.
2. *Business Related Networks* (e.g. European Table of industrialists, Transatlantic Business Dialogue): Business related networks advocate on behalf of industry and often have a closer connection to government. Similar to TANs, business related networks put their emphasis on influencing other actors through agenda setting.
3. *Private Regimes:* Private actors that perform global roles of accreditation, coordination and standard setting. For instance bond rating agencies or the International Standards Organization (ISO).
4. *Transnational Executive Networks:* Diane Stone mentions that transnational executive networks are similar to what Princeton Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter describes as horizontal intergovernmental networks. Slaughter argues that the state is not disappearing but becomes integrated into horizontal networks. Officials in these networks are often legitimized by their state-based affiliations (e.g. Basle Committee).⁵²
5. *Global Policy Networks:* Global Policy Networks are multi-stakeholder networks that focus on policy making (e.g. Global Water Partnership). As noted earlier, in these networks "actors build consensus, pool their authority, engage in collective decision making, and share policy responsibilities and program funding, that is 'soft' authority."⁵³ These networks are considered quasi-public or semiprivate.
6. *Knowledge Networks and Epistemic Communities:* Such communities include international think tanks and science networks (e.g. Asian Fisheries Social Science Network). These networks gain access to decision making by providing expert knowledge (e.g. Network of Democratic Research Institutes).



Transnational Climate Governance

Other scholars such as Liliana Andonova and her colleagues have introduced issue-specific taxonomies, including a typology for transnational climate governance.⁵⁴ According to Andonova, there are three types of actors: *public transnational networks* (horizontal intergovernmental networks), *private transnational governance networks* (non-state actors that establish governance systems, for instance coffee certifications or voluntary standards for chemical safety and environmental protection) and *hybrid transnational governance networks* (multi-stakeholder networks). These networks perform three primary governance functions: *information sharing* (creating and sharing knowledge), *capacity building and implementation* (enabling action) and *rule setting* (creating norms and rules to guide and constrain network members).⁵⁵

Typology of Transnational Climate-Change Governance Networks			
Type of Actors:			
Function	Public	Hybrid	Private
Information Sharing	UK-California initiative	The Climate Group (TCG)	Pew Business Environmental Leadership Council (BELC)
Capacity building and implementation	Cities for Climate Protection (CCP)	Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP)	World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)
Rule Setting	Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative	Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX)	The Gold Standard

Source: Andonova (2009)⁵⁶

In a similar vein, Benjamin Cashore of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies has identified three sources of authority in environmental issues:⁵⁷

1. *Traditional Government*: the government has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Within the state, government may impose regulation or pass laws.
2. *Shared Private/Public Governance*: Government shares its policy-making authority with private actors.
3. *Non-State Market-Driven Governance Systems (NSMD)*: “Governance systems that derive their policy making authority not from the state, but from the manipulation



of global markets and attention to customer preferences.”⁵⁸ Examples are Fair Trade Coffee or forestry (Forest Stewardship Council, 1996). External audiences, including those it seeks to regulate, often evaluate this type of governance system.

Multi-Stakeholder Platforms in the Water Policy Community

Jeroen F. Warner from the Irrigation and Water Engineering Group of the Wageningen University and Research Centre examines the role of multi-stakeholder platforms in the water policy community.⁵⁹ He states that:

“A Multi-Stakeholder Platform is like a roundtable where people with very different perspectives are gathered; a decision-making body (voluntary or statutory) comprising different stakeholders who perceive the same resource management problem, realize their interdependence for solving it, and come together to agree on action strategies for solving the problem.”⁶⁰

Warner identifies six types of multi-stakeholder platforms:⁶¹

1. *Social Network*: a group of people working in different organizations that enthusiastically pursue social change but have weak links to their constituencies. They struggle to have any influence at all.
2. *Focus Group*: interested citizens and organizations giving feedback to proposals, providing information, voicing their concerns and needs, at the invitation of the government. Thus they influence the problem or solution definition only indirectly.
3. *Service or Mediation Organization*: the platform raises money or support for joint projects for improving water supply or disposal.
4. *Crisis Management Platform*: the platform tackles difficult political issues or crisis coordination issues in a non-threatening environment.
5. *Social Movement*: an alliance for protesting a project (for example, a dam) by staging mass protests; can negotiate better amenities or changes in the project when they manage to co-opt their adversary into negotiation.



6. *River Basin (Co-)Management Organization*: devolving decision and management tasks to stakeholders (co-management).

Taxonomy of NGOs

University of Windsor professor Anna Vakil created a framework for understanding NGOs, based on four attributes: orientations, level of operation, sectoral focus and evaluation attributes.⁶² Orientation can range from welfare and development through to advocacy and education. The level of NGO operation can be international, national, regional and/or community based. Sectoral focus is the field in which the NGO is active. For example an NGO may focus on providing shelter. In addition, Vakil proposed four attributes to evaluate NGOs: accountability, transparency, efficiency and the degree of participation. The degree of participation can be described along a continuum from participatory (including consumer, clients and community members) to elitist (output is managed by specialists and professionals).

Accountability Taxonomy

Alnoor Ebrahim, founding co-director of the Centre for Global Accountabilities identified three NGO types based on different accountability mechanisms and relationships:⁶³

Membership organizations are oriented towards serving the needs of their own members. Examples are agricultural cooperatives or interest-based associations, such as the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Actions.

Service organizations have no profit motive and provide a variety of services (e.g. housing, rural development, health) to their clients.

Network organizations operate on a regional, national or transnational level. Many network organizations are advocacy networks. There are two subtypes: one type consists mainly of organizational members, such as the Global Anti-Dam movement. Networks within this subtype are normally formalized. Networks of the other subtype consist mainly of individuals and are often organized as fluid coalitions, like the anti-war movement, for example. Single organizations may join these movements or gather themselves to pursue a cause (e.g. Amnesty International).



Accountability Among NGO Types				
NGO Type	Orientation	Accountability to Whom? (Principal)	Mechanisms of Accountability	Key Accountability Characteristics
Membership organization	Self-help development	Member or self	Franchise, reform (voice); dues (exit)	Member centered
Service organization	Charitable development	Funder, sector regulators, clients	Future funding, reporting, evaluation, and performance assessment; laws and disclosures; codes of conduct; stakeholder authority (voice); refusal of services (exit)	Contingent, multiple, weak toward clients
Network organization	Issue-based policy change	Individual members, organizational members	Lobbying, litigation, protest, fact finding, transparency; coordination	Collective and negotiated.

Source: Ebrahim (2003)⁶⁴

Political Responsibility Taxonomy

Another way to parse the crowded NGO landscape is to examine how NGOs cope with issues of accountability and political responsibility. With decision-making increasingly dispersed across national borders, political responsibility among non-state actors like NGOs has become nebulous in many instances, particularly as transnational advocacy networks gather around global campaigns. Lisa Jordan from the Bank Information Center in Washington DC and Peter van Tuijl, from the Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB) describe global campaigns as “the pursuit of loosely linked political objectives carried out by transnational advocacy networks.”⁶⁵ To better understand these networks, the two experts propose a taxonomy based on the concept of political responsibility. They define political responsibility as “a commitment to embrace not only goals in a campaign but to conduct the campaign with democratic principles foremost in the process.”⁶⁶ Political responsibility manifests itself in seven areas:

- *Dividing political arenas:* understanding that a grassroots NGO in India likely does not know a lot about the political



process in Washington, while an NGO in Washington may not know enough about the local problems in India.

- *Agenda setting and strategy building*: establishing the objectives of each NGO and developing a strategy with transparent goals.
- *Raising and allocating financial resources*: recognizing that financial resources create power relationships. NGOs in affluent countries often have more resources than NGOs from low income countries.
- *Information flow*: ensuring that all participants have equal access to information, as information flows are a crucial point for achieving political responsibility.
- *Information frequency and format*: determining the appropriate frequency or regularity of information exchange as required to build trust.
- *Information translation into useful forms*: requiring information be translated into forms that are useful for each arena.
- *Formalization of relationships*: formalizing political campaigns and networks, particularly in enduring campaigns where such formalization supports transparency and accountability.

In addition to the parameters of political responsibility, the researchers identified four types of campaign, listed by their degree of political responsibility:

- *Cooperative campaign*: there is a “close consultation with the groups who are supposed to benefit from the campaign and risks are assumed only in regard to the burden that can be borne by the most vulnerable.”
- *Concurrent campaign*: participating NGOs have different but compatible objectives. A high level of political responsibility is not achieved, because the goals in various political arenas differ.
- *Disassociated campaign*: the relationships between the NGOs are not as interwoven as in the cooperative and the concurrent campaign. In this type of campaign, the objectives put forward by various NGOs differ substantially and conflicts can arise.
- *Competitive campaign*: advocacy in one political arena creates a counterproductive effect for another.



Functional View of Global Action Networks

Although Steve Waddell does not develop a comprehensive taxonomy, he develops a list of functional roles that global action networks perform and discusses the various forms of trust that are essential to making such networks perform effectively. Referring to the sociologist Walter Powell, Waddell argues that trust in networks develops as network members pursue actions that create indebtedness and reliance over the long haul. In contrast to markets, the exchange value of networks cannot be easily determined. Waddell therefore concludes that “Reciprocity is central; participants in the network must be willing to contribute and give, as well as take and receive.”⁶⁷ Consequently networks require trust. Drawing from the sociologist Luhmann, Waddell lists three types of trust: trust of intent (same goal), trust in competence (ability to achieve the goals) and trust of understanding (members have the same understanding). Networks that embody trust are able to achieve numerous outcomes, such as speeding the spread of knowledge, realizing the benefits of scale, delivering innovation, improving coordination of actors and integrating resources, knowledge and skills towards a common goal.⁶⁸ The following table summarizes what Global Action Networks can do. Note that Global Action Networks can fulfil several functions simultaneously. Nevertheless, this list can serve as a taxonomy to the extent that most networks focus on one particular function, such as advocating.

FUNCTION	GOAL
Shared Visioning	Creating events and interactions that generate shared understanding and vision
System Organizing	Bringing together an emerging global system of diverse stakeholders to generate coherence in strategies
Learning/Research	Developing and disseminating new knowledge and tools with research, piloting new approaches, and training
Measuring/ Certifying	Developing indices, assessments and/or certification processes
Financing	Combining forces to aggregate impact and create a more efficient funding vehicle than anyone could do individually
Advocating	Mobilizing voice and increasing pressure upon specific stakeholders who are blocking (actively or inactively) change



Conclusion

We conclude this literature review with two observations. First, all scholars agree that the global policy arena is fragmented and that we need new instruments to improve the state of this world. Multi-stakeholder networks are key to achieving this goal. Second, there is little consensus on how to categorize these networks. To get a better understanding of how these networks can excel in global problem solving, we need a new taxonomy. We synthesized the perspectives of the aforementioned scholars into one comprehensive taxonomy that consists of 10 categories of networks. Note that while some networks may overlap with others, it can be said that they all fall primarily in one of the categories.

1. Knowledge Networks develop new thinking, research, ideas and policies that can be helpful in solving global problems. Their emphasis is on the creation of new ideas not their advocacy.
2. Operational and Delivery Networks actually deliver the change they seek, supplementing or even bypassing the efforts of traditional institutions.
3. Policy Networks create government policy even though they are not networks of government policy makers.
4. Advocacy Networks seek to change the agenda or policies of governments, corporations or other institutions.
5. Networked Institutions provide a wide range of capabilities, even similar to state-based institutions, but with a very different modus-operandi.
6. Watchdog Networks scrutinize institutions to ensure they behave appropriately.
7. Platforms create the capability for other networks to organize.
8. Global Standards Networks are non-state based organizations that develop technical specifications or standards.
9. Governance Networks have achieved or been granted the right and responsibility of non-institutional global governance.

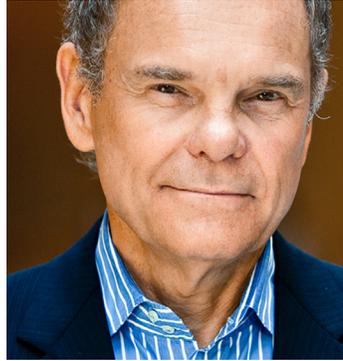


10. Diaspora Networks pursue problem solving through kinship or ethnicity connections.

Our future research will explore how each of these networks functions, what challenges they face, and how they are able to contribute to the creation of public goods.



About the Authors



Don Tapscott is Executive Director of the Global Solution Networks program. As one of the world's leading authorities on innovation, media and the economic and social impact of technology, he advises business and government leaders around the world. He is CEO of the think tank The Tapscott Group and has authored or co-authored 14 widely read books. In 2011, the Thinkers50 organization, in partnership with the Harvard Business Review, named him as the 9th most important living business thinker. He is Adjunct Professor of Management for the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto and the Inaugural Fellow of the Martin Prosperity Institute at U of T.



Thomas Gegenhuber is currently a doctoral student and recipient of a fellowship (DOC-team) from the Austrian Academy of Sciences at the Institute for Organization and Global Management Studies at Johannes Kepler University, Linz (Austria). His research interests are crowdsourcing, (open) innovation and creativity. Thomas has written chapters for books, published articles in academic journals and presented his work at international conferences. Furthermore he is an open government advocate and contributes to such projects in Linz.



Endnotes

- 1 Alberto Martinelli, "Markets, Governments, Communities and Global Governance," *International Sociology* 18, no. 2 (June 1, 2003): 291-323.
- 2 Diane Stone, "Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities, and Their Networks," *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol.36 (No.1). pp. 19-38.
- 3 James N. Rosenau, "Toward an Ontology for Global Governance," in *Approaches to Global Governance Theory* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Stone, "Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities, and Their Networks."
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Pamela E. Oliver, "Formal Models of Collective Action," *Annual Review of Sociology* 19 (January 1, 1993): 271-300.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 "United Nations Development Programme," n.d., <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home.html>.
- 10 "World Bank Group," n.d., <http://www.worldbank.org/>.
- 11 Anders Hjorth Agerskov, "Global Public Goods and Development – A Guide for Policy Makers." (Presented at the Seminar No. 6: Global Development Challenges Facing Humanity. World Bank Seminar Series, Kobe and Hiroshima Universities, 2005).
- 12 Rosenau, "Toward an Ontology for Global Governance.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Fen Osler Hampson and John B. Hay, "Viva vox populi," *Global Governance* 10, no. 2 (2004): 247.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 J. F. Rischard, *High Noon: Twenty Global Problems, Twenty Years to Solve Them* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).
- 22 Hampson and Hay, "Viva vox populi."
- 23 Rischard, "High Noon: Twenty Global Problems."
- 24 Hampson and Hay, "Viva vox populi."



- 25 Nancy Vallejo and Pierre Hauselmann, *Governance and Multi-stakeholder Processes* (Winnipeg, MB: International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2004), <http://site.ebrary.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/lib/utoronto/docDetail.action?docID=10087419>.
- 26 Julia Roloff, "A Life Cycle Model of Multi-stakeholder Networks," *Business Ethics: A European Review* 17, no. 3 (2008): 311-325.
- 27 Ann C. Svendsen and Myriam Laberge, "Convening Stakeholder Networks," *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, no. 19 (Fall 2005): 91-104.
- 28 Julia Roloff, "Deliberative Multistakeholder netzwerke: Informelle Kooperationen Zwischen Unternehmen, Zivilgesellschaft Und Staat," *FORUM Wirtschaftsethik* 3, (2005): 6-18.
- 29 Stone, "Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities, and Their Networks."
- 30 Fanny Calder, "The Potential for Using the Multi-Stakeholder Network Model to Develop and Deliver Partnerships for Implementation ('Type Two Outcomes') for the World Summit on Sustainable Development," *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, UK (2002).
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Roloff, "A Life Cycle Model of Multi-stakeholder Networks."
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Roloff, "Deliberative Multistakeholdernetzwerke: Informelle Kooperationen Zwischen Unternehmen, Zivilgesellschaft Und Staat."
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Steve Waddell, *Global Action Networks: Creating Our Future Together* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Steve Waddell, "Design Guidelines to Address Global Challenges: Lessons from Global Action Network," *Journal of Organizational Design*1, no. 3 (2012): 1-19.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Waddell, *Global Action Networks: Creating Our Future Together*.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 M. Hemmati, F. Dodds, and J. Enayati, *Multi-stakeholder Processes for Governance and Sustainability: Beyond Deadlock and Conflict* (Earthscan, 2002).
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Adil Najam, *Citizen Organizations as Policy Entrepreneurs*, vol. 14 (Sustainable Development Policy Institute, 2000).



- 47 A. C. Vakil, "Confronting the Classification Problem: Toward a Taxonomy of NGOs," *World Development* 25, no. 12 (1997): 2057–2070.
- 48 L. Jordan and P. Van Tuijl, "Political Responsibility in Transnational NGO Advocacy," *World Development* 28, no. 12 (2000): 2051–2065.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Rosenau, "Toward an Ontology for Global Governance."
- 51 Stone, "Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities, and Their Networks."
- 52 Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton University Press, 2005).
- 53 Stone, "Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities, and Their Networks."
- 54 Liliana B. Andonova, Michele M. Betsill, and Harriet Bulkeley, "Transnational Climate Governance," *Global Environmental Politics* 9, no. 2 (2009): 52–73.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Ibid., p. 60
- 57 Benjamin Cashore, "Legitimacy and the Privatization of Environmental Governance: How Non-State Market-Driven (NSMD) Governance Systems Gain Rule-Making Authority," *Governance* 15, no. 4 (2002): 503–529.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 J. F. Warner, "More Sustainable Participation? Multi-stakeholder Platforms for Integrated Catchment Management," *Water Resources Development* 22, no. 1 (2006): 15–35.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Vakil, "Confronting the Classification Problem: Toward a Taxonomy of NGOs."
- 63 Alnoor Ebrahim, "Making Sense of Accountability: Conceptual Perspectives for Northern and Southern Nonprofits," *Nonprofit Management and Leadership* 14, no. 2 (2003): 191–212.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Jordan and Van Tuijl, "Political Responsibility in Transnational NGO Advocacy."
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Waddell, *Global Action Networks: Creating Our Future Together*.
- 68 Ibid.



Global Solution Networks is a landmark study of the potential of global web-based and mobile networks for cooperation, problem solving and governance. This project is a deliverable of the research program, offered through the Martin Prosperity Institute at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto.

Program Management

Don Tapscott, Executive Director
Dr. Joan Bigham, Managing Director
Anthony Williams, Executive Editor

Program Membership offers unlimited access to gsnetworks.org program deliverables including project plans, research publications and multi-media presentations, all posted for member use, review and feedback. Webinars on current research are held quarterly. Please visit our web site at www.gsnetworks.org or contact info@gsnetworks.org for information on participation.



Ten Types of Global Solution Networks