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Transnational multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development: Building blocks for success

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Description / Abstract

Multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development – institutionalized transboundary interactions between public and private actors aiming at the provision of collective goods – are a central element of contemporary sustainability governance, in particular since the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). They have been credited with closing the participation and implementation gap in sustainable development but also accused of privileging powerful interests and thereby consolidating the privatization of governance and dominant neo-liberal modes of globalisation. This report has surveyed recent scholarship to provide an evidence-based assessment of the performance of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development with a view towards identifying the building blocks for successful and effective partnerships across a number of concrete implementation contexts and specific functions. While the overall aggregate performance of partnerships as a governance instrument is mixed at best, we identify and discuss nine building blocks that increase the likelihood for success: leadership, partners, goal-setting, funding, management, monitoring, meta-governance, problem-structure and socio-political context.

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