Between a Rock and a Hard Place:
Global Environmental Policy
in the Era of Globalisation and Hegemony

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Already a Pretty Difficult Affair:
Globalisation and the Environment

• from Holocene to the “Anthropocene” (Paul Crutzen)
  – man and his civilisation have become a distinct factor of the
    Earth’s systems (climate cycle, nitrate)
• economic globalisation is increasing man’s burden on the Earth’s
  systems directly and indirectly
• global environmental regulation is widely regarded as insufficient
  – lack of strong environmental institutions
  – no integration of Environment/Sust. Dev. in other policy areas
  – lack of compliance mechanisms
  – incoherence of regulations
The New Paradigm: A Hegemonic World Order

- the fall of the Berlin wall preceded the end of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar world
- this was followed by a uni/multipolar world (Huntington)
  - US indispensable (Albright) for tackling global problems
  - US cannot go it alone (Nye)
- leadership by a hegemon is not a precondition for regime building (Young)
- however, some leadership by a strong actor or group of actors is required (sorry, Oran Young again…)

Some Problems of a Hegemonic World Order

- no problems really if the hegemon sets the agenda, takes the lead and the world follows (North Korea)
- problems if the hegemon does not set the agenda, does not lead and the world still acts (Land Mines, Biodiversity)
- big problems if the hegemon sets the agenda and only some countries follow (Iraq)
- even bigger problems if the hegemon does not lead and does not like the world’s agenda (ICC, Kyoto Protocol)
Big Question:
Is it possible to build a regime AGAINST a hegemon ???

The Dilemma:

A unilateralist attitude of the hegemon threatens to destroy the very basis of solutions for global problems - namely rational, co-operative, multilateral approaches.
Multilevel Environmental Governance: A Solution to Some Hegemonic Problems?

influence and interference can take place at many levels:

• state to state level
• state to sub-state level
• sub-state to state level

Multilevel Environmental Governance in a Hegemonic World Order (1)

state to state level

– universalism minus X: Global problems may require global solutions, but they need not be universal
– varying coalitions with other state actors
– reform and strengthen the United Nations system
– strengthen international law
– find areas of co-operation with the hegemon and other states that stay outside a regime
Multilevel Environmental Governance in a Hegemonic World Order (2)

state to sub-state level

– engage political actors below the federal level like states in the US, Länder in Germany or cities (ICCLEI, CCP)
– encourage and support financially non-governmental actors in other countries
– engage and offer opportunities for business actors
– form coalitions with NGOs (examples: International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Coalition of an International Criminal Court)
– explore possibilities to establish hybrid international organisations
– establish “outposts” within the hegemon

Multilevel Environmental Governance in a Hegemonic World Order (3)

sub-state to state level - non-profit civil society, local communities and business

– professionalize - the Greenpeace, WWF model
– form effective alliances - the CAN model
– build large coalitions and support like-minded states (CBL, CICC)
– explore the potential for hybrid international organisations (IUCN)
– support domestic groups in the hegemon to influence internal policy
– form NGO-business and B2B alliances
– encourage use of business solutions
– encourage new alliances between local communities
Some Preliminary Conclusions

- globalisation requires multilateral, co-operative activities
- a unilateralist attitude by the hegemon runs counter this need
- Multilevel Environmental Governance offers a multitude of options for state and non-state actors to build regimes without or even against the hegemon

and, most importantly:

a hegemonic world order might actually foster the process of “political globalisation”

Merci!
Thank you!

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