

A North American Perspective

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Four Questions

- 1. What are the new or emerging institutions, policies, and practices in the area of climate change governance under development in North America?
- 2. What roles do major public, private, and civil society actors play, and how do they interact to shape policy and governance?
- 3. Through which pathways are climate change policies and initiatives diffused across jurisdictions in North America?
- 4. To what extent can North American climate change action be characterized as existing or emerging multilevel governance, and are local and federal institutions across the continent facilitating or impeding this process of change?

Sets of Policy Choices

- Command/Control Regulation of emission sources, energy production, goods, etc.
- Enacting taxes on emissions, different kinds of energy and goods
- Creating new markets and market based instruments including cap and trade schemes
- Using subsidies to support research and development, renewable energy generation, the purchase of greener products...

Networks and Organizations

- There are a host of important local, regional, national and continental networks (within new and older organizations)
- Regional initiatives (RGGI, WGI, etc.)
- North American economic, political and cultural integration accelerates trans-boundary networking & organization building
- Diffusion of ideas, knowledge, policy models, etc.

Pathways of Policy Change (Q3)

- Climate change networks influence policy developments at various levels of authority through four pathways of policy change:
 - (1) Strategic demonstration of action feasibility
 - (2) Market creation and expansion
 - (3) Policy diffusion and learning
 - (4) Norm creation and promulgation

Importance of Bottom-Up Pressure

- Networked actors exercise influence within and across different levels of political authority
- Local level policy making is likely to have an impact on future federal policy
- RGGI setting important precedents for GHG emissions trading
- California developing a portfolio of policy responses, including for energy and vehicles

Status of Multilevel Governance (Q4)

- Multilevel climate change governance is developing in North America
- Policy making efforts at multiple governance levels are becoming more ambitious in terms of scope and mitigation goals
- Four possible scenarios for developing multilevel governance based on high/low combination of federal and sub-national policy making

Federal policymaking

Low

High

Low

1. Federal inertia

- Federal governments remain passive, or even obstructive, of subnational action
- Subnational policymaking declines, due to a lack of federal support, active federal opposition, or a failure to realize GHG reduction goals

2. Federal resurgence

- Federal governments enact policy ceilings, prohibiting subnational jurisdictions from exceeding federal policy
- Subnational policymaking becomes more reactive due to federal limits, dependent on federal monetary support, or because federal actions are aggressive enough to make additional subnational policy efforts unlikely

3. Bottom-up expansion

- Federal governments remain passive but are not overtly obstructive of local-level action
- Subnational policymaking and implementation accelerates in response to a continued lack of federal leadership
- Subnational authorities work to expand multijurisdictional collaboration and policy diffusion

4. Complex multilevel coordination

- Federal governments set mandatory policy floors of minimum regulations and standards, allowing actors and jurisdictions to exceed federal policies in some areas
- Subnational policymaking continues apace among leaders who exceed federal requirements
- Continental climate change governance is characterized by debates about appropriate levels of policymaking and implementation

High

Subnational policymaking

Complex Multilevel Coordination

- The fourth scenario – complex multilevel coordination – is most likely
- Federal governments set mandatory policy floors of minimum regulations and standards, allowing actors and jurisdictions to exceed federal policies in some areas
- Sub-national policy making continues apace among leaders who exceed federal requirements
- Continental climate change governance is characterized by debates about appropriate levels of policymaking and implementation

THANK YOU

- Q & A
- Stacy.vandever@unh.edu
- Buy the book! ☺
 - *CHANGING CLIMATES IN NORTH AMERICAN POLITICS*, Henrik Selin and Stacy D. VanDeveer, eds. MIT Press, 2009.