Lecture #7  
16 October 2018  
Copyright: Ronald B. Mitchell, 2018

# Introduction

# Implications of different variables

## DV: difficulty of reaching agreement

### Benign/malign distinction

### How we “measure” (“proxy” or “indicator” of) the DV – how long it will take to reach agreement

## IVs

### Eight questions as ways of distinguishing problem structure

### Focus particularly on problem types: deadlock, PEPI, up/downstream, collaboration, coordination, knowledge, normative

### Inherent transparency; Response incentives and violation tolerance

## Hypotheses

### Hypotheses on main questions (from hardest to negotiate to easiest to negotiate)

#### Deadlock –impossible to get resolution because no states see resolution as better than continued conflict; requires outsider to change incentives of “players”

#### Upstream/downstream problems: engagement problems -- getting upstream state to join

#### Normative problems: engagement problems as well -- getting states one wants to influence to join

#### Collaboration problems: distribution AND enforcement problems -- deciding who must adjust AND how to reassure and ensure compliance. Compared to up/down: in collaboration cases, both/all sides have incentives for action but in upstream/downstream, only downstream has incentives

#### Positive externalities plagued by incapacity: engaging capable states and convincing that benefits of assistance outweigh costs

#### Coordination problems: can involve hard distribution problems -- deciding who must adjust and pay the costs of adjusting. Compared to collaboration – reasoning: no need to create monitoring OR enforcement provisions.

#### Epistemic problems: coordinating and standardizing research efforts. Reasoning: low cost, no requirement to take action.

### Problems with ***low*** violation tolerance will be EASIER to resolve than those with high – reasoning: stronger incentives to address the problem by those who might be harmed

### Problems with ***high*** inherent transparency will be EASIER to resolve than those with low inherent transparency – reasoning: the major problem of monitoring/verification does not exist if there is high transparency

### Problems with ***weak*** response incentives – this one is difficult to make predictions. Why? Because weak incentives to respond may get those states that want to cheat to sign (“they don’t have to worry about sanctions”) BUT strong incentives to respond reassure those who want to action that something will actually get done. Major factor may be “motivation to take action” – if strong motivation for action, then strong response incentives will make it easier to resolve.

# Human Rights and Environment

## Same task as previous classes – sorting real-world problems into theoretical categories.

## Focus on RELATIVE assessment of problem structure, NOT absolute assessment.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Human Rights  Civil/Political, Econ/Soc, Health | Environment |
| Q1: Conflict/harmony/cooperation Do states see non-cooperation as suboptimal? | Definition: Behaviors impose only NON-material costs on other countries and only some countries see these as suboptimal  Often deadlock because of difference of values  Rarely an important priority | Some cases, all countries see outcomes as suboptimal  Other cases, only some see as suboptimal  Rarely is it an important priority |
| Q2: Actors | Normative agenda so ALL countries implicated  For some rights, non-governmental actors are responsible (e.g., FGM) | Problems vary: regional, global, Antarctic and fisheries (different # of “players” in different problems)  Govts often not the culprits |
| Q3: Capacities/power | Econ/social rights AND Health: NOT all countries can provide  Positive Externality Plagued by Incapacity  Powerful countries’ values wield more influence than weak countries’ | Many problems, all countries are capable of engaging or not in problem  For some problems, some countries cannot engage in problem (e.g., nuclear pollution) |
| Q4: Incentives/preferences | Civil/political rights: government incentives to violate to preserve order and retain power (all have capacity of restraint)  Some similarities to Upstream/downstream problem but still better thought of as Normative problem | River pollution and water use, acid rain (all have capacity but perhaps not tech of restraint)  Upstream/downstream problem  Overfishing, agreed-upon pollution problems, climate change, biodiversity loss(all have capacity but perhaps not tech of restraint)  Collaboration problem |
| Q5: Information/knowledge | “Knowledge” plays little role | Some problems well understood scientifically, others not  Often, knowledge of problem develops over time – new knowledge may change “game” from Tragedy of the Commons to harmony |
| Q6: Norms/values | “Values” and how those differ across issues, cultures and time  Stronger norm against civ/pol violations than econ/soc  Govts have normative “right” to preserve order but debate over what means can be used  General norm of HR growing over time | Some areas where norms apply: shouldn’t harm other’s lands, “common heritage”  General norm of environmental protection vs. economy growth |
| Q7: Transparency/ability to cheat | Econ/social relatively transparent and low incentives to keep secret because of weak norms  Civil/political easier to keep secret from other governments but individuals/NGOs can get information out | Depends on problem: some pollution can be done without trace while others cannot (chemical vs. oil ocean pollution)  Even “hideable” acts can often be inferred (must sell fish, sealskins, GHG and pollutant emissions reflect fuel use) |
| Q8: Response incentives | Low priority so low incentives to respond  Genocide: very low tolerance  Major civil/political violations: pretty low tolerance  Econ/social violations: very high tolerance  Rarely seen as warranting military response  Economic response raises concerns about effectiveness and that others may not join in sanctions  Reciprocity won’t work | Low priority so low incentives to respond  Rarely seen as warranting any response  Generally, very high tolerance  Violation tolerance depends on how immediate and large economic costs are (overfishing are high, pollution usually lower)  Reciprocity won’t work |

# Theoretical implications / predictions: What do some of these differences in problem structure suggest for:

## How hard it is to negotiate international institution

## What shape international institution will take and what kind of design it will have

## How effective international institution will be

# Conclusion

## Identifying real-world variation in problem structure

## Value of COMPARING problem structure of different issue areas in a relative way or on a relative scale. Much harder (ineed, TOO hard) to assess problem structure in an absolute way or absolute scale.

## Variation between human rights and environment BUT ALSO variation within each

### Civil/political rights vs. economic/social rights

### Upstream/downstream vs. Tragedy of the Commons problems