

Working Paper: Multilateralism, Models, Membership, and Messiness

Is OGP More Successful at Getting Change Than Other International Initiatives?

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Key Findings

- There is a large gap in the literature on the effectiveness of multilateral initiatives in engendering reform.
- **OGP is a leader in transparency of completion and compliance data.** Few multilateral initiatives make their data on completion available in open data format. This inhibits international comparison. Rates of implementation, where available, vary widely. This paper examines a number of multilateral initiatives covering a variety of subjects. But, because only seven initiatives had available data, this paper did not draw strong conclusions.
- **Comparison is possible, if we had data.** This paper develops a method for comparing completion based on factors external to and internal to a given initiative. Future analyses could take into account the nature of the problem to be solved, the requirements of membership, the actual membership, and the nature of how “success” itself is defined, which should all have some effect on the rates of implementation between initiatives. Even accounting for very different problems and initiatives, without data on completion, success rates are inherently difficult to compare nor can patterns of good design be ascertained.
- **Complex things seem to be harder to do.** For the minority of initiatives where there is data, some seem to be less frequently implemented than others. Complexity or “wickedness” seems to be a major driver. Some issues such as reduction of chlorofluorocarbons or eliminating leaded petroleum products have been wildly successful. By contrast, Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Climate Agreement largely await implementation. Governance and human rights initiatives sit somewhere in between these extremes. Future analysis will need to temper expectations that initiatives tackling simpler issues may be more successful. Nonetheless, complex problems are unlikely to go away any time soon, so international cooperation will still be necessary, if difficult.

Justification

How do multilateral initiatives compare in terms of generating reform? How does the Open Government Partnership (OGP) compare? And should it be a model for other international initiatives?

These questions are central to tackling the biggest challenges of our time. Issues such as climate change across borders and the relative costs of inaction are not shared proportionally between those who pollute most and those who pollute least. Issues such as corruption and attacks on democracy are increasingly transnational and transboundary as well. Other issues, such as promoting and protecting human rights or reducing poverty, can have transboundary effects and address universal values, but primarily require national efforts to address them. These issues demand international attention because nations of the world have agreed to promoting human rights and reducing poverty. What these have in common is the need for domestic action in support of shared, universal goals.

Much debate has centered around how to most effectively solve transboundary and universal problems that require unilateral action. The model that prevailed through most of the second half of the 20th century has been the legally binding international treaty. The United Nations (UN), by its own estimate, is the depository of 560 treaties, the overwhelming majority of which predate 1990.¹ While there is considerable variation in form, the traditional treaty involves signing and implementing the requirements of the treaty.

Yet, alternatives to this model for collective action have risen in prominence over the past several years. They stem from a sense that treaties are difficult to ratify, and often difficult to monitor and enforce. The alternative to “sign-and-implement,” then, has been the “pledge-and-review” mechanism. Most notable among these is The Paris Climate Agreement. (While a legally binding instrument, the specific implementation is left up to individual UN members.) In the field of democracy and governance reform, the Open Government Partnership (our organization) is one of the main exponents of the pledge-and-review approach. In comparison with a treaty, these initiatives have a low bar to joining, relatively few procedural requirements and allow for a good deal of leeway in terms of national priorities.

The line between pledge-and-review and sign-and-implement initiatives is neither dichotomous nor does it vary along only one dimension. The Paris Climate Agreement, for example, exists in a middle ground: countries identify their own “Nationally Determined Contributions,” and yet they are all expected to follow certain legally binding procedural requirements.

Given the variation in design, this paper seeks to evaluate whether OGP, in particular, and pledge-and-review mechanisms, more generally, compare favorably to their more formal counterparts. (See Box: OGP at-a-glance for a summary of OGP.) This paper will not evaluate the political feasibility of “legally binding” versus “politically binding” initiatives; that is a job for historians, international relations experts, and memoirists. What this paper can do, instead, is evaluate the degree to which

¹ <https://treaties.un.org/>

the different initiatives assess “success” and make that information public. It also can provide an approach for explaining why variation might occur - which variables matter and how they might explain OGP’s performance relative to other peers.

Beyond the global concern with developing ever-better models for cooperation, this paper can help to begin to answer questions that are of immediate importance to OGP.

- First, it has implications for the continuing evolution of OGP. If it is not performing better than other, similar initiatives, then it may need to change. Some OGP Steering Committee members have voiced concerns with low rates of implementation, low ambition, and low impact since before the initiative was launched (one of the reasons requirements for ambition were added). The truth is, however, that no one has been able to undertake a serious comparison of OGP with alternative approaches. If such a comparison does show OGP in an unfavorable light, comparison with other initiatives might better illuminate the problems of OGP. This is especially important given that OGP is entering its strategic planning for 2023-2028.
- Second, OGP may increasingly be seen as a destination for other international, domestic, and diplomatic commitments such as those from the ongoing Summit for Democracy. With its built-in multistakeholder public action planning process, its Independent Reporting Mechanism, and its publicly available data and analysis, OGP can save reformers time and effort in terms of providing a relatively robust platform for policy reform.
- Third, OGP can serve as a model - the elements of success may be transferred to other international initiatives which, although they may not deal with open government, may benefit from the “pledge-and-review” process.

Approach

This paper takes a comparative approach between similar multilateral initiatives. As with any comparative analysis, this approach has strengths and weaknesses. A true experimental approach might randomly assign reforms to various countries and randomly assign those to a “treatment group” which were included in OGP action plans and those which were not. Of course, no such random assignment exists, and it is unlikely that a large enough sample of countries across a large number of reforms would agree to such an approach. Even so, it is unlikely that such a random assignment could adequately take into account the large number of other variables likely to explain different rates of success.²

In the absence of an ideal experimental approach, the authors take a more qualitative, comparative approach using the initiative as the unit of comparison (rather than the country or the reform). Each section and a short description of contents follows:

1. **Defining “success”:** This section identifies the major ways in which each of these multilateral initiatives defines “success” of its member countries - from completion to ambition, or, in some cases, according to harder indicators like dollar amounts or scientific measures.
2. **Hypotheses for what drives success:** This section outlines the differences between the different initiatives from the elements of the model, membership, and the nature of the problem they tackle.
3. **Sample of Multilateral Initiatives:** This section identifies a variety of multilateral initiatives that share characteristics in common with OGP, but which differ in other key ways.
4. **Completion and compliance data:** This section gathers the empirical completion data from those initiatives that publish the data in one place and describes that variation.
5. **Explaining variance in outcomes:** This section attempts to identify whether there are any patterns of interest in terms of correlation between models, membership, and problems.
6. **Discussion and implications:** This section outlines the implications of this paper’s findings and lays out the remaining research questions that help to better understand this question.

Box: OGP at-a-glance

The Open Government Partnership brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. To become an OGP member, countries must first endorse a high-level Open Government Declaration and commit to delivering an action plan developed with public consultation, as well as independent reporting on their progress going forward.

The Open Government Partnership formally launched on 20 September 2011 with eight founding governments: Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Since that time, 76 OGP participating countries and a growing number of local governments have made over 5,200 commitments to make governments more open and accountable.³

OGP is overseen by a Steering Committee, including representatives of governments and civil society organizations.

² Importantly, the OGP Support Unit, with the assistance of colleagues at Transparency International Secretariat did attempt a comparison (<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/five-years-later-four-lessons-we-learned-from-the-london-anti-corruption-summit/>) at the reform level, comparing individual reforms included in OGP action plans with those not included in OGP action plans. The results were inconclusive. Ideally, the Summit for Democracy will provide another occasion to compare implementation.

³ For more details on OGP current members and their commitments, see the OGP Data Dashboard: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/data-dashboard/>

1. Dependent Variable: Defining “Success” as Implementation

The core task of this paper is to compare whether certain multilateral initiatives are more successful than others at supporting domestic reform and why that might be. This requires looking at the differing definitions of success first.

Comparing the success rates of different multilateral initiatives is inherently difficult. Different multilateral initiatives vary how they measure success due to some of the following factors:

- **Differing goals:** Some multilateral initiatives deal with issues of human rights. Some deal with environmental performance.
- **Differing standards of success:** While many multilateral initiatives deal with “compliance” or “completion,” what is complied with or what is completed varies. Some look for whether members have completed certain procedural requirements. Others look for hard performance metrics. These might vary from the concrete (e.g. eliminating a particular pollutant from an industry, publishing a data set on employment by gender, or passing a law with certain elements) to the relatively abstract or aspirational (e.g. taking actions to avoid climate change or actions to prevent discrimination).
- **Metrics:** How each organization measures success - even within the bounds of completion will vary by the level of measurement, coding, etc.
- **Reliability:** Different measures will be more or less consistent across individual assessments, dependent upon the subjectivity of the success metric and the consistency between assessors of success. For example, peer review processes, such as the Universal Periodic Review, may involve political considerations in addition to substantive considerations.

For the purposes of this paper, we will look strictly at reporting of completion and compliance: the proportion of requirements, recommendations, or commitments within a given initiative that are fulfilled. From there, the specific variations of how success is measured will vary across initiatives.

How OGP measures success

Given that the primary goal of this paper is to compare OGP with other, similar multilateral initiatives, it is worth describing the particular elements of success in OGP, following the variation above:

- **Goals:** As a condition of membership, OGP promotes the improvement of governance through increased transparency, civic participation, and public accountability.
- **Standards of success:** From most concrete to most aspirational, OGP requires that members meet certain eligibility criteria, carry out a multistakeholder process to develop, implement, and assess concrete ambitious actions, and that each member implements concrete, ambitious commitments.
- **Metrics:** OGP membership success is measured across eligibility, process, and actual commitment performance.
 - **Eligibility.** Eligibility is determined based on having a minimum score from an aggregate of four third-party data sources.⁴
 - **Process.** There are numerous elements for the assessment of OGP procedural standards, mostly focused on “key measures” across five standards. At the heart of this is the co-creation of two-year action plans. One of the five key requirements, for example, is the establishment of a multistakeholder forum.
 - **Substantive reforms.** In terms of completion of commitments, there are five key variables: verifiability, relevance to open government values, potential for results, completion, and early results. While each of these are important, this paper will focus on completion.
- **Reliability:** Procedural and substantive activity is measured by independent national assessors who go through several stages of review according to a standardized set of guidance. While there is variation between individual assessors and no two action plans are the same, qualitative assessments are empirically based, largely standardized, and coded into publicly available data.

The next section will investigate hypotheses for different variables for success. The different definitions of success, however, will be revisited in Oversations section 4a, “Differing Definitions of Success,” after a sample of different initiatives has been defined.

Table 6 in the Annex for reasons of length summarizes, for each element, the primary means of measuring each country’s success within an initiative. “Main area of focus” describes the fields addressed by the initiatives. (OGP’s focus is on improving governance.) “Description of Completion” is how completion is defined within the initiative (with OGP’s being commitment completion and maintaining an OGP process), “Standard of Compliance” is what parties to the initiative are required to accomplish to achieve completion. Compliance that is procedural is defined as when an aspect of compliance is adhering to procedures that are part of the initiative, e.g. meeting reporting requirements or, in OGP’s case this is carrying out the required procedures and implementing commitments. Completion that is substantive is defined as compliance based on substantive implementation and results, e.g. eliminating lead in fuels. “Standards-based” initiatives have across the board standards for each part, “self-determined” ones involve parties in the creation of their own commitments or requirements.

Compliance did not have a procedural element in the majority of initiatives, making it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions about how procedural requirements mediate completion. The majority of initiatives were standards-based as well. Compliance was in most, but not all, cases based to some extent on substantive implementation. See Table 6: “Definitions of Completion and Compliance by Initiative”, in the Annex for a complete list.

⁴ The four eligibility requirements are (1) having a public asset disclosure law (based on the World Bank’s Asset Disclosure law database); (2) having a right to information law (based on right2info.org); (3) civil liberties score from the Economist Intelligence Unit; and (4) publishing executive budgets and audit reports. See opengovpartnership.org/eligibility for more information.

2. Independent Variables: Potential Covariants of Success

Assuming that success can be defined and described (a dubious assumption, as we shall see), we would need to identify variables that can help explain variation between initiatives. OGP itself has many unique characteristics - both in terms of the issues it deals with, as well as the design of the initiative. Having fully fleshed out potential co-variants of success allows us to build a sample set which reflects the variety of global initiatives.

Covariants of compliance and completion could include:

1. **Exogenous variable:** Nature of the problem (uncertainty, complexity, divergence of interests), membership
2. **Endogenous variables:** “Legality” of the initiative, accountability of the initiative, definitions of success (and requirements)

Exogenous Variables

Exogenous variables are characteristics that vary by initiative, but are largely independent of the initiative’s design or implementation. This section outlines the two main categories of exogenous variables in this paper.

H1: “Wickedness” of Problem

Some problems are easier to solve than others. Initiatives that tackle easier problems should see higher rates of compliance. In the simplest terms possible, some problems are more difficult than others, and some solutions are easier to implement. Presumably solutions that require enormous costs, trade offs, and meaningful structural change will be much more difficult to complete than problems that are easily addressed.

One useful way of describing the nature of problems comes from the well-established “wicked problems” literature.⁵ “Wicked” in this context is not making a values-based claim; it is synonymous here with intractable or extremely difficult. This analytical framework is useful for describing the different problems each of the initiatives tries to address. It argues that problems in public policy can be analyzed on a scale of tame to wicked, with tame problems having simple scientific solutions that are largely agreed upon while wicked problems have no clear cut answer. In his 2022 monograph *Wicked Problems in Public Policy*, Professor Brian W. Head, breaks down wicked problems into the following three elements:

- **Uncertainty:** The degree to which a problem is fueled by the level of uncertainty about the nature of the problem and the nature of the solution, as well as with respect to risks, consequences of action and changing patterns.⁶
- **Complexity:** The extent to which the problem’s subsystems, elements, and interdependencies are complex.⁷
- **Divergence:** The extent to which relevant stakeholders diverge “in viewpoints, values, and strategic intentions.”⁸

Problems vary in terms of uncertainty, complexity, or divergence of stakeholders. A problem can have a high level of any one of these elements and not be wicked, but when high levels across each of these elements intersect, a problem is highly likely to be wicked. It is a reasonable hypothesis to assume that some problems are particularly wicked. For example, climate change is a classic wicked problem, with high degrees of uncertainty (about which interventions will work), a high degree of complexity (given the fact that entire economies will need to change to prevent the worst effects of climate change), and divergence (in the sheer number of stakeholders, but also in terms of the different interests such as fossil fuel industries, oil-producing nations, poorer countries that did not cause climate change). We could, therefore, expect that initiatives on climate change are relatively harder to solve and might have a lower rate of implementation than something relatively more straightforward such as trade harmonization.

H2: Membership

Which countries are members of an initiative? The membership of an initiative could affect the overall rate of completion, either accelerating its implementation or hampering it.

There are at least two ways that membership might interact with the completion and compliance rates of an initiative:

- **H2a. State capacity:** Initiatives whose members have stronger state capacity will be better able to implement reforms required by initiatives. Within OGP, this pattern has been shown through other research. The 2021 [OGP Vital Signs](#) report shows how higher income countries complete their commitments more frequently. While there is no direct evidence of causality, it stands to reason that credible implementation could be explained in part by greater state capacity, both upstream (in terms of ensuring that commitments are backed by the force of law and political priorities) and downstream (in terms of having larger budgets and staff). This may not always be the case, however. For example, some have argued that lower- middle-income countries should be able to do a lot to mitigate or avoid the worst effects of climate change because they are not path-dependent on older fossil fuels sources.
- **H2b Issue salience:** Arguably, the populations and political elites of some countries may find certain issues more important than others. For example, small island states may find the issue of climate change to be an existential threat, whereas oil exporters may find less reason for action. Thus, an initiative which had a large membership of small island states might see high rates of completion if the initiative were about climate adaptation. Similarly, issues of corruption reduction may be most salient in upper middle income countries that find growth restricted by issues of corruption. Some have argued that initiatives like OGP or the International Convention Against Corruption are most effective among their middle-income membership.⁹

⁵ Brian Head, *Wicked Problems in Public Policy: Understanding and Responding to Complex Challenges* (SPRINGER NATURE, 2022).

⁶ Brian Head. (2008). Wicked problems in public policy. *Public Policy* 3 (2) 110-118.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Marquette, H. & Peiffer, C. (2015), *Corruption and collective action*, University of Birmingham. <https://research.birmingham.ac.uk/en/publications/corruption-and-collective-action>.

Endogenous Variables

The way in which an initiative is structured may have a significant influence on its success. This section outlines why each of a series of variables may help explain differences in completion and compliance.

H3: Legality of the Initiative

Some multilateral initiatives have the force of law. Some do not. Much effort was put into making the Paris Climate Agreement binding international law, rather than a voluntary initiative. By contrast, OGP does not have a legal basis in international law, and is, instead, a voluntary partnership. Some have questioned whether legality is critical, most notably, in the run-up to climate change agreements¹⁰. Some argued that legally binding agreements are no more successful than voluntary partnerships. (The authors of this paper have not been able to find any papers that support this claim.)

Bodansky (2014) has a more nuanced discussion of how legality of an international agreement can enhance and impede compliance. Legality may be a proxy for higher levels of political commitment (especially where national law requires ratification by the legislature) and can mandate changes in domestic law and can be treated as law by courts. In this sense, legality can strengthen compliance in two regards - by limiting membership and by enlisting more domestic actors. Conversely, initiatives with a strongly legally binding character can deter many actors from joining¹¹. By the former argument, OGP should have a lower rate of implementation. By the latter argument, because OGP is voluntary, one should see higher levels of implementation due to greater national ownership.

H4: Procedural vs. Substantive

Which elements of participation in an initiative are mandatory may also influence completion rates. As numerous authors have explained (Victor et al. 1998; Shelton 1999; Shelton 2000) all international agreements have “hortatory” statements of intent mixed with elements of a more legally binding nature. Similarly, many international processes require their members to follow certain procedures or to put procedures in place. Others measure purely on a matter of performance. Many ISO standards (e.g. 14001 on environmental management systems) are about reporting and control processes, rather than actual performance. On the other hand, others, such as the Partnership for Clean Fuels and vehicles exist solely to eliminate particular streams of pollution.

Many international initiatives are a mixture of procedural and substantive requirements. The Open Government Partnership is largely procedural in its requirements - co-creating an action plan with civil society, undergoing a review by an independent reporting process. It lacks strict requirements on what can go into an action plan as “commitments.” In cases where a country asserts numerous, irrelevant commitments, the consequences are that the IRM will point this out in a publicly available report. Evidence from OGP suggests that governments do improve the relevance of commitments and tend to have fewer commitments over time.

Do initiatives with substantive endpoints have higher or lower completion rates? On the one hand, a substantive goal requires parties to an initiative to accomplish real, measurable outcomes. Given that achieving *something* is by nature more difficult than the absence of achievement, it may be assumed that substantive requirements push completion rates downwards. Alternatively, having a substantive goal of some sort could provide organizations with more direction and better delineated objectives, pushing completion rates upwards.

H5: Self-determined or Standardized Actions and Measurability

Requirements in multilateral initiatives are either standardized or self-determined. That is, requirements are determined by an authoritative body and standardized across initiatives or they are determined with input from parties to the initiative, giving the parties some control over what their requirements are. It is expected that this variable would affect completion rates. What would be the mechanism behind this mediation? Presumably, self-determined goals have more stakeholder buy-in and may have a lower threshold of compliance, and are thus easier to comply with. It is then expected that initiatives that have self-determined commitments have higher compliance rates in general. OGP’s procedural requirements are standardized across membership. The content of OGP action plans, however, is entirely determined by domestic priorities (with inspiration from peers and international processes like EU accession).

Similarly related are the measurability of the solutions. It has been famously argued that, “That which is measured is managed.” Arguably, that means that more monitoring should result in better results in the long term for those initiatives with strong requirements for verifiability and verification (see H6 below). Of course, it does not necessarily follow that those things that are managed are necessarily easier - only that the same problem, measured, is likely to be solved.

H6: Independent Monitoring

Many initiatives call for the independent monitoring and verification of progress and results. Independent monitoring would likely help prevent falsification or inflation of results. This is in contrast to no reporting, self-assessment, peer assessment, or unpublished assessment. Independent monitoring may result in lower *reported* completion rates. On the other hand, the pressure applied by independent monitoring could push completion upwards, as governments realize that they will be held publicly accountable for completing their commitments. The assumption here is that governments would have greater real-world effects, even if the completion rates looked, on paper, to be lower. OGP has a very independent system of monitoring in the Independent Reporting Mechanism, which receives comments and suggestions from assessed governments, but has final say on the contents of any of its evaluations.

¹⁰ https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/UhwhnQEACAAJ?hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwje5dOX-sP3AhWZpnlEHTocCalQ7_IDegQIAhAD

¹¹ <https://voxeu.org/sites/default/files/file/bodansky.pdf>

H7: Consequences for Non-compliance

Do real world consequences for non-compliance have any bearing on completion? Better yet, do any of these initiatives threaten real consequences in the event of non-compliance? Any initiative with at least some semblance of legitimacy will have social consequences in the event of non-compliance. Many initiatives offer positive praise to strong commitments, but little in the way of negative attention for non-completion. (The Clinton Global Initiative, for example, relies entirely on “naming and faming” strong commitments.) Others provide strong negative consequences (such as trade embargoes, in the case of some trade agreements or sanctions for some arms control treaties). OGP sits somewhere in the middle of these approaches, with some benefits of membership removed for those members that violate OGP principles or processes, as well as public accounting of rates of completion.

H8: Multistakeholder Participation

Shelton (1999) argues that some international initiatives are more successful because they bring in non-state actors. Bringing in stakeholders with varied interests can create more buy-in for implementing the initiative. By increasing participatory equity, creating mutual accountability, and increasing transparency, such arrangements give more stakeholders a voice and ownership. With more stakeholders brought into an initiative, this should push completion rates upwards. It is also possible, however, that more participation results in more ambitious actions which may be more difficult to complete or may not be as well harmonized with government budgeting and planning documents. OGP is most likely on the strong end of a spectrum in terms of the role it gives to civil society, given that nearly all active OGP members have some multistakeholder process in place.

3. Sample Set

In order to assess the performance of multilateral initiatives, the authors assembled a database to compare them. The database was built so as to test each of the hypotheses, so initiatives featuring all or some of the factors described above were included in the sample set. That is the database was built so that comparisons could be made between initiatives on the basis of the nature of the problem addressed, the makeup of membership, the initiatives' legal status, the presence of procedural and/or substantive requirements, whether requirements are standardized or self-determined, the independence of monitoring, consequences for non-compliance, and the presence of multi-stakeholder participation. Initiatives with both the presence and a lack of the variables which define each of these hypotheses were chosen. With this information, it is possible to compare initiative efficacy for each hypothesis, examining impacts with or without the relevant mediator.

The initiatives are broken down by their full name, a short name, whether they have some sort of legal basis, or a short description of purpose. Table 5 in the Annex summarizes these multilateral initiatives.

Relevant Aspects of Initiatives Included in the Sample Set

This paper aims to assess how OGP performs relative to initiatives. To answer these questions the authors gathered data on 18 similar initiatives. Initiatives were chosen specifically because they were similar to OGP in one or more key respects, or because they varied along one or more of the explanatory variables above. Below is a justification for inclusion of each of the initiatives. In addition to describing each initiative, each paragraph explains why the authors selected the initiative - whether it had elements in common with OGP or in contrast:

Good governance and anti-corruption initiatives

- **Open Government Partnership:** This is the organization being assessed. It has an independent review process and members self-determine their commitments through a process of co-creation with civil society organizations.
- **Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative:** Often considered an “older sister” to OGP, EITI deals with many of the same issues - control of corruption, fiscal policy - that OGP countries do, but through a standards-based validation process. It also has many procedural requirements, although the “substance” of reforms are universal and standardized for all members.
- **Financial Action Task Force:** Although it was primarily established to combat the finance of terrorism, through limiting money laundering, FATF also deals with issues that overlap with many of the governance issues that OGP members tend to focus on. It differs from OGP in that monitoring largely takes place through “mutual evaluation” or peer review rather than independent processes.
- **Group of States against Corruption (GRECO):** This project of the Council of Europe (CoE), also deals with issues of anti-corruption policy and legislation, but does so largely through peer review. It is different in its makeup in that its membership is *primarily* in Europe.
- **United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC):** This treaty, with 40 ratifying members and 140 signatories, establishes common standards, policies, processes and practices to buttress anti-corruption efforts at the national level. It is similar to OGP in the issues that it deals with. It differs in that it solely targets the issue of corruption, and has a legal basis.
- **Inter-American Convention Against Corruption:** This treaty, administered by the Organization of American States (OAS), also deals with issues of corruption. OAS staff work with colleagues in individual countries to monitor anti-corruption systems of individual countries.
- **Africa Peer Review Mechanism:** The scope of the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is much broader than preceding anti-corruption efforts (with the exception of OGP, to which it has often been compared) as it deals with issues of constitutions, democracy, and human rights. Upon members' invitations, the APRM has an expert review process in which a panel of experts reviews the state of a country's democracy and human rights framework.

Environment and climate initiatives

- **Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles:** This has been one of the most successful multi-stakeholder initiatives. It has worked with a variety of stakeholders to phase out leaded fuels vehicles. After successfully closing down the last leaded petroleum factory in the world, it has recently moved on to reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from vehicles. It is included as a positive example of a very strong voluntary multistakeholder initiative.
- **Paris Agreement:** Perhaps the most widely publicized of all of the initiatives here, the Paris Agreement is a legally binding treaty between states, but the specific ‘Nationally Determined Contributions,’ are established domestically and the contribution of these commitments to addressing climate change are measured through a variety of independent means.
- **Montreal Protocol:** Often considered to be one of the “model” treaties, the Montreal Protocol represents the high-water mark of treaty making, widely credited with reducing dangerous Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) through its Phase-out Management Plan.
- **Aarhus Convention:** This treaty, administered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), is closely related to OGP in that it deals directly with issues related to access to information, public participation, and justice. It differs in that it is legally binding, and focuses on matters affecting the environment.

Trade and environment

- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora:** CITES is recognized as a fairly successful international treaty; national law enforcement and customs officers have undertaken many reforms to enforce the treaty in a number of countries. Of course, as with money laundering, it is hard to measure the strength of those enforcement actions relative to their results.
- **Council for Environmental Cooperation:** As part of the “Environmental Side Agreement” of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and later a chapter of the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), the Council for Environmental Cooperation is part of this trilateral cooperation that seeks to harmonize information on pollution and environmental controls.
- **Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement:** Similar to the Council for Environmental Cooperation, *CAFTA-DR* includes a semi-voluntary coordination mechanism to harmonize member states environmental standards. In addition to specific support and reporting, parties who feel that a member state has violated the principles of the agreement can bring complaints before the Secretariat.

Examples from other categories

- **Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights:** TRIPS, an agreement which accompanies the World Trade Organization (WTO)’s General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, requires WTO member states to establish due process rules for obtaining evidence, for provisional court orders, for injunctions, damages and other remedies, and for measures at the border and criminal sanctions in matters affecting intellectual property. Countries bringing claims of infringement can enforce the rule by curtailing imports from non-complying members. We include this agreement in the study as a point of comparison as an agreement which has a clear financial incentive behind it and which has an established - if not uniformly effective - enforcement mechanism.
- **Universal Periodic Review:** This review of human rights is one of the longest standing international accountability mechanisms. It contains both a peer review element from member states to one another as well as independent reporting by civil society organizations. It touches on many similar aspects of governance to OGP, especially civil and political rights that correspond to the United States.
- **Every Woman Every Child:** This initiative, established to help fulfill the Millennium Development Goals’ commitment to reduce child and maternal mortality shares a number of elements with organizations like OGP, including nationally-determined pledges and independent analysis of those commitments, evaluated on a periodic basis.
- **Development Assistance Committee:** This committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports on national contributions to aid. It differs from other such initiatives in that it is both measurable, in terms of whether countries are meeting their 0.7% of GDP contribution, and has various procedural elements such as transparency of development assistance.
- **Small Arms Trade Treaty:** The ATT sets up a process whereby signatories and observers make pledges to establish a national control list of arms, a legal system for export controls, and an institution to defend these controls. It is similar to a pledge-and-review process in that members may prioritize which elements to move forward with. Export assessments are made by the reporting parties.

4. Observations:

This section looks at what the data assembled tell about key research questions.

- a) **Definitions:** *How do different multilateral initiatives define success and implementation?*
- b) **Reporting:** *How do different multilateral initiatives vary in reporting success and implementation?*
- c) **Completion rates:** *How do implementation rates at multilateral initiatives vary?*
- d) **Predictors:** *Are there patterns of covariance of some of the initiatives?*

4a. Differing Definitions of Success

Across these initiatives, the standards of compliance, variation in goals, and rigidity and specificity of measures has significant variance. At a very broad level, of the 18 initiatives examined, two required procedural reporting only, thirteen measured success based on actual reforms, and three (like OGP or EITI) had both procedural and substantive reforms.

To provide a window into the varied definitions of success across these initiatives, this section will begin by taking a look at three initiatives: *Paris, OGP, and PCFV*.

How does the Paris Agreement define success? Does it succeed within its own parameters of success? In the Paris Agreement, countries work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the aim of limiting global temperature increases. Countries submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) stating what actions they will take to reduce GHG emissions, which they update every five years with the aim of becoming increasingly ambitious. The treaty has four elements, including climate mitigation actions, adaptation actions, finance, and technical transfer. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on climate mitigation. Mitigation is measured relative to how far “nationally determined contributions” will move toward avoiding a 2°C change in average global temperatures. A “Global Stocktake” takes place every five years; here parties to the Agreement meet to assess progress towards their stated aims. Additionally, the Enhanced Transparency Framework requires reporting and expert technical review. However, non-compliance does not result in any legal penalties.¹²

OGP operates under similar conditions. OGP requires both procedural and substantive compliance from its membership. In procedural terms, they must hold a co-creation process with civil society to develop an action plan with concrete commitments. Further, they must undergo an independent review by the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) and address major recommendations of the IRM. Substantively, they are evaluated on ambition, completion, and early results of commitments that advance transparency, civic participation, and accountability. The exact content of these commitments is determined on a member-by-member basis, i.e. they are not standardized.

In the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles, a multi stakeholder process brings together the fuel and vehicle industry, civil society, national governments, international organizations and experts. The Partnership works to remove lead and sulfur from gasoline, as well as promoting the use of cleaner vehicles. While the PCFV has now moved on to climate mitigation, it previously dealt with removing lead from vehicle fuel. In that case compliance was removing lead and sulfur from gas, as well as complying with vehicle emissions standards. Rather than a uniform monitoring process, the methods vary by locality: in some areas government agencies carry out the work, in some NGOs, while in others commercial enterprises do. There is no legal convention or basis for sanctions when states fail to comply.

4b. Differing Rates of Reporting

The most common outcome of research was the absence of completion and compliance reporting. Most notably, the significant majority of the initiatives studied do not publish their completion and compliance data, particularly in a format that is conducive to data analysis. However, most do publish reports that include findings which suggest this data is collected. Inquiries for the source data were largely unsuccessful.¹³

Nearly all of the initiatives are transparent in terms of releasing qualitative reports in some form. In some initiatives these take the shape of annual country by country progress reports, in others annual initiative-wide reports. Interestingly, the majority of these reports rely on data collected that reflect initiative efficacy and completion, yet few initiatives take the step of publishing this data on its own, and even fewer along the lines of completion or compliance. The issue at hand then is not a failure to collect data, but the failure to publish it in an accessible, public format. OGP stands out as one of the more transparent initiatives, publishing completion data, qualitative reports, and the raw data.

For more on the availability of information across initiatives, see Table 7: “Availability of Data,” in the Annex.

4c. Differing Rates of Completion and Compliance

While the small sample size makes it impossible to make any definitive claims about the relationship between outcomes and structure of each initiative, it remains useful to examine each facet of the initiatives and determine whether any characteristics are associated with particular outcomes. See Table 1 for the complete list of completion rates.

- We will begin with the **Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles**, which has the highest completion rate among those found at 99.56% for the lead initiative. Its newer sulfur initiative, which is early in its implementation cycle, has a 64.2% completion rate. Compliance in this initiative is based on standards of unleaded fuel and low sulfur levels in fuel. Thus success is reaching substantive targets related to the presence or non presence of these materials; the initiative does not leave much flexibility as these metrics are not subject to interpretation. This is enabled by the fact that these metrics can be measured and verified; the variables here are quantitative in nature.

¹² <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

¹³ Inquiry emails were sent to all initiatives compiled that did not have publicly available datasets.

- **CITES**, the initiative with the second highest completion rate at 86.5%, is structurally very different from PCFV. Rather than having a specific, defined endpoint, it requires compliance with a nebulous and varied set of measures related to legal and scientific requirements for the trade of flora and fauna. It does not have a substantive endline goal in the way that PCFV does, instead having primarily procedural, qualitative aims. In the terms of this initiative, success is not necessarily achieving a set minimum level of trade or illicit trade, success is implementation and compliance with standardized laws and regulations relevant to said trade.
- **FATF** is highly similar to CITES along a number of variables. It does not have a substantive, quantitative aim; success within the initiative is procedural in nature, as compliance is adherence to FATF’s standards and recommendations. These are largely about having particular rules, institutions, and processes in place. Members are not downgraded for the effectiveness of those institutions. Again, these are standardized rather than self-determined. In this case the completion rate was 75.4%.
- **OGP** has both procedural and substantive aspects. While members are evaluated on procedural aspects, e.g. addressing IRM recommendations, they also are evaluated along substantive lines – the extent to which commitments are ambitious, obtain results, and are completed. These commitments are largely “soft” and qualitative in nature. Notably, OGP commitments are self-determined, presumably resulting in more attainable commitments, as well as a higher level of buy-in. It has a 64% completion rate.
- **EITI** is very similar to OGP in a qualitative sense, with both procedural and substantive aspects, with a broad set of requirements surrounding extractives industry data disclosures. It differs significantly from OGP in that it is based on standardized commitments rather than self-determined ones. It has a 45.2% completion rate.
- The **OECD DAC 0.7% Target** diverges significantly from the other initiatives. It is not a robust initiative with its own secretariat, monitoring arm, and the like. Instead it is solely a commitment by the OECD DAC members to put 0.7% of GNI towards development assistance. It is thus entirely substantive in nature, there are no procedures or rules here, just a commitment to meet a substantive end. It has a 13.3% completion rate.
- **The Paris Climate Agreement** aligns significantly with OGP in many ways, with both procedural and substantive aspects. Additionally, its Nationally Determined Contribution Regime is quite similar to OGP’s self-determined commitments. It does differ in that its primary focus is of a “hard,” scientific nature; the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is a specifically quantifiable metric. Using countries meeting the emissions requirements to keep global warming under 2 degrees centigrade, it has a 0% completion rate. One important note is that the UNFCCC, responsible for administering climate change, does not publish the effect of individual NDCs in disaggregated data. Rather, this completion rate was taken from independent organizations which carry out third-party analysts, and play a major role in accountability for the Paris Climate Agreement.¹⁴

Table 1: Levels of Completion and Compliance Among Multilateral Initiatives Vary Widely

Short Name	Area of Focus	Completion Rate	What is Completion?
PCFV - Lead	Trade and Environment	99.56%	A given country’s fuel is unleaded
CITES	Trade and Environment	86.52%	Conformity with legal and scientific requirements
FATF	Governance	75.4%	Implementation and compliance with FATF standards
OGP	Governance	64%	National created commitments completed and process followed
PCFV - Sulfur	Trade and Environment	64.16%	A given country’s diesel fuel contains no more than 50 PPM of sulfur
EITI	Governance	45.2%	Country meets EITI standard (data published, process followed)
OECD DAC Commitments	Development	13.3%	0.7% of GNI towards development assistance
Paris	Trade and Environment	0%	Adherence to provisions such that emissions causing 2 degrees of warming will be avoided

¹⁴ <https://www.climatewatchdata.org/> and <https://climateactiontracker.org/climate-target-update-tracker>.

4d. Covariants of Completion and Compliance

The prior section showed that there is a high level of variance among those organizations that do publish their data. Half of the completion rates are in excess of 50%, yet two are under 20%.

Why? This section looks at the potential explanations, hypothesis by hypothesis. Readers are encouraged to refer to Table 2, “Reporting Rates by Hypothesis,” for specific data and Table 7, “Summary of Findings by Hypothesis,” for a further attempt at association. Because the sample size is so small, the independent variables are so interactive, and no single-independent variable shows a strong pattern, no reader should interpret this discussion as anything more than suggestive and a framework for future analysis.

Table 2: Reporting Rates by Hypothesis¹⁵

Short Name	PCFV - Lead	CITES	FATF	OGP	PCFV - Sulfur	EITI	OECD DAC Commitments	Paris Climate Agreement
DV: Completion/compliance rate	99.56%	86.52%	75.4%	64%	64.16%	45.2%	13.3%	0%
H1: Problem Wickedness	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	High
H2: Membership	Near universal	Near universal members, with 10 ratifiers	39 members; skews high income	Skews upper middle income	Near universal	Oil, gas, and mineral exporters; skews lower-middle income	High income	Near universal
H3: Legality	Initiative of a treaty organization (UNEP)	Convention	Task force (no int'l legal basis)	Initiative (no int'l legal basis)	UNEP initiative	Initiative (no int'l legal basis)	Committee of a treaty organization (OECD)	Legally binding instrument
H4a: Procedural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
H4b: Substantive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
H5a: Self-determined goals	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
H5b: Measurable & verifiable requirements	Very High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Very High	High	High	Moderate
H6: Independence of monitoring & verification	Moderate	High	High	High	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate
H7: “Hard” compliance measures	Yes	Limited	Limited	Limited	Yes	Limited	Yes	None
H8: Multi-stakeholder approach	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹⁵ Variable Descriptions

Area of focus - the general field the initiative addresses

Completion rate - the proportion of commitments, requirements, etc. carried out

What is completion? - how is successfully carrying out initiative requirements defined.

Procedural - initiative includes a procedural aspect

Substantive - initiative includes a substantive aspect

Self-determined goals - parties to the initiative co-create their goals

Measurable and verifiable - the extent to which compliance and outcomes can be measured.

Independence of monitoring and verification - the extent to which monitoring and verification of progress and compliance is independent.

Hard compliance measures - to what extent does the initiative have specific thresholds for compliance

Table 3: Summary of Findings by Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Direction of Relationship	Strength of Finding	Discussion
H1: Problem Wickedness	Negative	Suggestive	The small sample set suggests that along with having procedural-only requirements, this may be a major driver of compliance.
H2: Membership	--	Low	There is no apparent relationship between this variable and completion/compliance.
H3: Legality	--	Low	There is no apparent relationship between this variable and completion/compliance.
H4a: Procedural	Positive	Low	Where <i>exclusively</i> procedural requirements are measurable and verifiable, there seems to be a somewhat higher rate of completion.
H4b: Substantive	Negative	Low	Where substantive requirements are universal and independently verified, there seems to be a slightly lower rate of completion.
H5a: Self-determined goals	..	..	Given that there are only two initiatives with self-determined goals, no pattern can be established.
H5b: Measurable & verifiable requirements	..	..	Most of the initiatives that report on progress do so with high levels of verification. Given the lack of variability in the sample (as well as the small sample) no conclusions should be reached.
H6: Independence of monitoring and verification	..	..	No indication of a pattern from the sample.
H7: “Hard” compliance measures	..	..	There is no evidence that hard compliance measures (e.g. penalties) have a major effect on completion rates.
H8: Multistakeholder approach	..	..	Those initiatives with a formal multistakeholder approach (with civil society or private sector) seem to have higher rates of completion.

H1. Wickedness of Problems

Just how difficult a problem is seems a likely determining factor of how “successful” an initiative should be. However, the evidence clearly shows that the relationship between a problem’s difficulty and the level of achievement is not purely linear.

- **Uncertainty:** The uncertainty, in the multilateral initiatives, is modulated by the fact that many of the problems have procedural targets. (Readers are reminded that uncertainty is defined as “uncertainty about the nature of the problem and the nature of the solution of a given problem.”) Table 4 shows that while it is unclear whether FATF requirements will solve the issue of money laundering and terrorist finance, in order to be successful in FATF, a member only needs to be successful in terms of implementing the policies and rules required of members. This lessens the degree to which uncertainty plays a binding role. Whether this pattern would hold over a larger sample size, with more data, is unclear.
- **Complexity:** The complexity of a given problem, in this admittedly small sample, seems to play a role. (Readers are reminded that the definition of complexity is, “The extent to which the problem’s subsystems, elements, and interdependencies are complex.”) More straightforward implementation may lead to more straightforward results. This is especially true where individual actions are weighed against an uncertain, dynamic, future event. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of climate change.
- **Divergence:** There are significantly divergent viewpoints among stakeholders with regard to the issues dealt with by the sample set. There are, of course, with many of these issues, differing interests. With the exception of removal of lead from fuel, few of these goals have universal consensus. Many of these issues have *public* consensus, but slow progress shows that verbal commitments by stakeholders do not always translate into action. For example, there are few public testimonies stating that extractive industries revenue should be secret. Yet, despite universal plaudits for the initiative, less than half of EITI countries still meet the standard and private sector EITI board members actively undermine reporting requirements in countries where they are active. Similarly, there is near-universal acceptance of the need for sulfur reduction.¹⁶ Yet, enforcement data from many countries shows just how frequently sulfur emitters shirk their responsibilities to keep controls in place.¹⁷ Finally, of course, there are cases such as climate change, where some major actors seem not to agree with their own positions (such as the world’s leading fossil fuel exporter, the United States).

In conclusion, with all of the caveats due to a small sample size, often comparing apples and oranges, the evidence suggests that “wickedness” does in fact play a major problem. The practical implications of this finding are several. For those making comparisons, it is important to untangle how uncertain the solution is from how uncertain it is that the solution will result in a real-world change. Practically, one should not make unqualified comparisons between those that measure absolute, substantive, external targets (e.g. 2°C global warming or the elimination of lead) with those that are largely procedural (FATF, CITES, or EITI). See Table 4: “‘Wickedness’ of Problems by Rate of Completion” which rates three initiatives by their level of uncertainty, complexity, and divergence.

¹⁶ <https://www.pwypusa.org/global-transparency-initiative-fails-to-hold-exxon-accountable/>

¹⁷ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0176268010000777>

Table 4: “Wickedness” of Problems by Rate of Completion

Initiative	Problem / Goal	Definition of Completion	Completion/ Compliance Rate	Uncertainty	Complexity	Divergence	Summary “Wickedness”
PCFV - Lead	Eliminating lead from fuel	A given country’s fuel is unleaded	99.56%	Low	Low	Low	Low
CITES	Enforcing transboundary endangered species law	Conformity with legal and scientific requirements	86.52%	High	Low	Medium	Medium
FATF	Reducing money laundering and terrorist finance	Implementation and compliance with FATF standards	75.4%	Low	Low	High	Medium
OGP	Improving governance through open government	National created commitments completed and process followed	64%	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Medium
PCFV - Sulfur	Improving refinery technology and/or fuel import standards	A given country’s diesel fuel contains no more than 50 PPM of sulfur	64.16%	Low	Low	Medium	Low
EITI	Improve understanding in the extractive sector	Country meets EITI standard (data published, process followed)	45.2%	Low	Moderate	High	Medium
OECD DAC Commitments	Giving 0.7% of GDP to foreign assistance	0.7% of GNI towards development assistance	13.3%	Low	Low	High	Medium
Paris Climate Agreement - Mitigation	Limiting climate change to 2°C	Adherence to provisions such that emissions causing 2 degrees of warming will be avoided	0%	Moderate	High	High	High

It will be outside of the scope of this paper to break each problem down and to rank them by “wickedness.” Nonetheless, there is significant variation within our cases with data. By looking at three of these cases, we can better assess the degree to which completion may be affected by the problem it tries to solve.

- **Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (lead initiative):** The PCFV tries to solve an important, but, less wicked problem.
 - **Uncertainty:** The objectives and science behind replacing leaded fuels with unleaded fuels is as uncontroversial as nearly anything in environmental health. By this measure, because the costs and benefits are so clear, the problem had a low level of uncertainty.
 - **Complexity:** Similarly, as a point pollution source, there are relatively few producers, facilities, and polluters. This makes direct command-and-control or substitution effects more effective as there are a few choke points where pollution can be controlled and polluters may be coaxed into alternative approaches to development. In this sense, the problem was less *complex*.
 - **Divergence:** Finally, in terms of *divergence* there are fewer actors who are in favor of leaded fuels, usually enterprises running legacy systems. While few in number, they may be highly interested, or, in the case of state-owned enterprises, may be insulated from the pressures of the market, regulatory forces, and public opinion. This may explain while the process, however slow, was ultimately successful in curbing the use of leaded fuels.
- **Open Government Partnership:** The Open Government Partnership addresses governance problems that are fundamentally more difficult to measure.
 - **Uncertainty:** While the evidence generally favors open government policies in terms of promoting economic growth, human rights, etc., these questions largely remain a matter of values; as described by Head, solutions to governance problems are not a matter of true or false but of good or bad¹⁸. There is a moderate level of uncertainty here.
 - **Complexity:** Governance is fundamentally a complex problem; there are multitudes of actors, and in most cases the actors making commitments do not have the authority or agency to carry out those commitments. On the other hand, the existence of procedural requirements in OGP introduces an element that is not very complex; adhering to procedure (regardless of impact) is a straightforward action. On the whole, OGP is addressing problems of moderately high complexity.
 - **Divergence:** Global views on governance issues have notably been increasingly diverging in values recently; e.g. the growing influence of authoritarianism and populism.¹⁹ There is less consensus than there has been in some time that the values of open government are inherently good. Nevertheless, the prevailing view among the educated and politically engaged (at least in the West), who hold many of the levers of power, is that open government is fundamentally good. There is a moderate level of divergence here.

¹⁸ Head. 2022

¹⁹ Indices of democracy have regressed to levels unseen since the beginning of the millennium (The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy Index 2020: <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2020/>). Per the Global State of Democracy Report 2021, the number of countries moving towards authoritarianism is three times the number of countries moving towards democracy (International IDEA: <https://www.idea.int/gsod/>). Currently, one-third of the world’s population, 2.6 billion people, lives in countries undergoing autocratization (Varieties of Democracy: https://www.v-dem.net/static/website/files/vdem_casefordemocracy_report.pdf).

- **The Paris Agreement:** The Paris Agreement seeks to address climate change through creating collective action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions globally, which is perhaps the most wicked problem facing the world.
 - **Uncertainty:** There is little uncertainty about the impact of greenhouse gas emissions on the climate, and what needs to be done to bring them down. However, there is some uncertainty around whether the costs of reducing emissions are worth the benefits.
 - **Complexity:** This is a highly complex problem. There are multiple sources of emissions, and multiple actors responsible. There is no unilateral action that parties to the agreement can take to achieve compliance.
 - **Divergence:** Generally, there is a moderate level of value divergence with respect to the Paris Agreement. Most, but not all, actors agree that some steps need to be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Many, but not all, agree that a pledge-and-review mechanism is the best way to achieve the reduction of carbon emissions.²⁰

These three initiatives occupy three points on a scale from low to high of problem “wickedness,” with PCFV having a relatively low level of wickedness, OGP a moderate level, and Paris a high level. Perhaps unsurprisingly, PCFV has the highest completion rate among these, OGP is in the middle, and Paris is lowest. While three data points are insufficient to make any definitive conclusions about the relationship between completion and “wickedness,” this reinforces the general view that these intractable, wicked problems are more difficult to address.

H2. Membership

There is no apparent relationship between this variable and completion and compliance. Many initiatives with very wealthy membership (e.g. OECD DAC) have low rates of implementation. Meanwhile, initiatives that focus on assisting many of the poorest countries in the world (e.g. the Partnership for Lead Free Fuels and Vehicles) have some of the highest rates of implementation. While state capacity and finance may be associated with higher credibility of commitment in OGP,²¹ this seems to be a secondary explanatory factor after issues such as the nature of the problem.

H3. Legality

Among the small sample in this set, legality does not seem to be a major predictor of completion and compliance. While both CITES and the Paris Agreement are both legally binding instruments they stand at opposite ends of the implementation spectrum. (Note: Only CITES is a *convention* as defined by the *Vienna Convention on Conventions*, although the Paris Agreement is administered by the UNFCCC, a treaty-based organization.).

H4a: Procedural Goals

Many of the procedural requirements demand a minimum level of participation from government and non-governmental organizations. Others require minimum reporting requirements. A number of initiatives use procedural actions as a basis for completion, e.g. submitting to a peer review process.

Currently, as with all other variables analyzed in this paper, because the sample size is low and comparability is difficult, the data is not robust enough to discern any patterns or trends relevant to the relationship between completion and procedural requirements.

However, there does seem to be some pattern. The two initiatives that judge completion solely on actual, real-world effects have much lower rates of compliance and completion. (OGP, which looks at “early results” as well - in terms of actual changes to government reflect this discrepancy: more than half of OGP commitments are significantly complete. By contrast, only one-in-five shows real world results in the assessment period.) Why is this? Of course, it is impossible to generalize from such a small group, but a number of causal mechanisms can be hypothesized.

First, it stands to reason that procedural objectives are vulnerable to “grade inflation” as a result of their subjective nature. When completion is an organizational construct, it can be defined for the purpose of making completion achievable rather than realizing actual success in solving real-world problems (unless the real world problem is the absence of a process). Additionally, this allows for looser enforcement of standards given that they are not based on specific, quantified ends²².

In initiatives with both procedural and substantive requirements, the procedure itself may improve the substantive completion. If parties to the initiative are required to complete procedures which facilitate the completion or achievement of substantive objectives it follows that those parties will have improved rates of substantive completion, conditioned upon successful completion of the procedural requirement.

Procedures are also under the direct control of actors involved, whereas substantive aims are often not. For example, it is much easier to adhere to a regulation that you have committed to and are personally responsible for than it is to get a parliament member who has no relationship with you to pass relevant legislation. Put simply, when those involved with the initiative have direct control over carrying out an initiative's aims, completion is much easier.

H4b: Substantive Goals

Do initiatives with substantive endpoints have higher or lower completion rates? Unfortunately, the dearth of data here prevents any confident interpretation of this relationship. The majority of initiatives whose completion rates were found have a substantive dimension, and span from most to least successful in terms of completion rate. The two initiatives that

²⁰ Keohane, R. and M. Oppenheimer. 2016. Paris: Beyond the Climate Dead End through Pledge and Review? *Politics and Governance* (ISSN: 2183-2463) 2016, Volume 4, Issue 3, Pages 142-151.

²¹ OGP Vital Signs, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-vital-signs-10-years-of-data-in-review/>

²² Arguably another form of “grade inflation” may occur where there are concrete consequences for non-completion and non-compliance. In cases where findings of non-compliance result in suspension of membership, the “median” country will appear to get better, when in fact, it is just that the worst-performing tail of the sample may be removed. A number of OGP members have been moved to “inactive status” due to their inability to follow OGP procedures. They were, however, included in the completion totals in this report.

do not have substantive requirements, CITES and FATF, have the second and third highest completion rates respectively, suggesting that purely procedural initiatives may be completed at higher rates. Yet perhaps substance has no effect.

CITES is entirely technology and regulation-based; compliance is based on governments implementing laws, regulations, etc. that combat the trafficking of flora and fauna. It does not have requirements related to the level of this trafficking. For example, the initiative does not define completion as a change in the amount of ivory illegally trafficked, but by the implementation of rules and regulations thought to reduce this trafficking. Clearly it is easier for authorities to implement a law over which they have direct control than to prevent poachers', who operate outside of the legal system.

FATF sets standards and recommendations related to financial crime. Similarly to CITES, completion is not defined by a reduction in the level of financial crime, but by the implementation of the relevant standards. Again, it is far more achievable to implement a law designed to prevent money laundering than to actually stop the money laundering from happening. The implementation of the law is only the first step in a much broader process.

H5a. Self-determined Goals

OGP is the only initiative with completion data that features self-determined goals. An assumption here is that when stakeholders co-create commitments they will have more buy-in and be reasonably achievable, leading to higher completion rates. Given that OGP has a relatively high completion rate this is possible, but the evidence is by no means conclusive.

H5b. Measurable & Verifiable

The initiatives vary in the extent to which they are measurable and verifiable. Some are based on a specific quantitative threshold and are thus able to be objectively measured and verified. Others are based on softer commitments - can one measure press freedoms in an entirely objective sense? While this question cannot be definitively answered given our small sample size, the data we have does not show a relationship, with minimal tendencies or clustering at any level of objective measurability.

PCFV is an example of an initiative that is completely measurable and verifiable. Gasoline fuel either contains lead or it does not, and this can be measured. In this case, where there is no gray area, it should be easier to achieve compliance. Is the objective met or not? This is the only question that matters.

On the other hand, how measurable is OGP? Governance commitments are inherently more difficult to measure, as they are abstract and "soft" in their nature. For example, the matter of whether a statute has been adopted related to access to justice is not a simple matter of yes or no; implementation, enforcement, and scope all mediate this efficacy and these are outcomes that cannot be easily measured in a specific sense. This could make completion more difficult, as commitments are not black and white objectives that can be "checked off." Yet, it could also make completion easier; on some level completion is open to interpretation.

H6. Independence of Monitoring and Verification

An important intervening variable is the level of independence of monitoring and verification; one would assume that if monitoring is not independent it is easier for members to game the numbers to ensure higher completion rates. Independence does not appear to have a strong effect.

Notably, PCFV is the most successful initiative in terms of compliance and has somewhat weaker monitoring, reporting and verification independence, but this is likely coincidental as there does not appear to be any real pattern in the data. PCFV does not have a significant independent monitoring mechanism, instead countries are responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress. This could allow parties to falsely report data as higher than it is in reality. Alternatively, an independent monitoring mechanism could nudge parties to improve compliance.

Meanwhile, OGP has a highly independent monitoring and evaluation mechanism. It is thus difficult for members to falsify commitment completion data, which may drive down completion rates. Yet, the notion that an institution is actually monitoring progress may incentivize compliance due to social pressure.

Alternatively, the independence of monitoring and verification could have little to no effect. The majority of these initiatives do not administer any real costs for non-compliance; so would independent monitoring of compliance provide a "check" in any way?

H7. Consequences for Non-compliance

This category is highly correlated with the extent to which an initiative is measurable and verifiable. Hard compliance refers to measures of compliance that are specific and quantifiable. If a measure is specific and quantifiable, this could improve completion by creating an exact target for parties to reach. As with every other variable, our sample size is insufficient to make any statistically significant claims. Notably, PCFV has a "hard" measure of compliance and is the most successful initiative. However, OECD DAC commitments, the second least successful, also have a hard measure of compliance.

H8. Multistakeholder Approach

There is some preliminary evidence that suggests that integrating multistakeholder approaches into governance may raise implementation levels. However, the pattern is weak and the independent variable, "multistakeholder approach," as operationalized in this paper does not do justice to the significant differences in power sharing between members. For example, the UN and OECD initiatives are clearly state-centered. But, individual partnerships within such organizations, such as the PCFV, carry out their work in full partnership with private sector and civil society workers. Other initiatives, such as OGP and EITI have shared governance at the center of their structure, all the way to the highest levels. Such differences may have an effect, but the degree to which these structures matter at the international level requires a more precise typology that is beyond the scope of this paper.

5. Practical Considerations

Practical considerations of this review fall into three categories: implications for OGP, implications for future initiative design, and implications for existing initiatives.

What does this mean for OGP? First of all, OGP is well ahead of the curve in terms of releasing its data; all of the relevant information was available and easily accessible online. It is not a coincidence that the data of interest to OGP is available; one can imagine there is alternative data released by other initiatives, but not OGP, as a result of their interests. Meanwhile, OGP's strong performance on difficult issues speaks to the efficacy of the model. The co-creation process, the multi-stakeholder nature of the initiative, the procedural requirements all work in concert to push completion upwards. (For a further discussion of this evidence about OGP itself, please see the other reports, *OGP: Vital Signs*²³ and *OGP at Ten*²⁴.)

In designing initiatives in the future, what should be looked to as drivers of success? Unfortunately, the evidence gathered does not provide a clear answer to this question. However the arguments put forward in our hypotheses were not falsified. Further research into how these mediating variables interact with completion, and thus lead to initiative success, is critical in designing more efficacious multilateral initiatives and institutions going forward. Critically, evidence may suggest that there are certain areas for which multilateral initiatives are not the best manner of achieving progress.

Finally, it is beyond time that multilateral initiatives publish their data on implementation. Clearly, a number of multilateral initiatives are failing to publish data in an accountable and transparent manner. Without publication, a robust accounting of data and full comparison for purposes of learning is not possible. If there is one general recommendation to make to this field, it is that data transparency and publication needs to be prioritized.

²³ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-vital-signs-10-years-of-data-in-review/>

²⁴ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-at-ten-toward-democratic-renewal/>

Annex

Table 5: Summary of Initiatives in Sample

Full name	Short name	Date founded	Legal form?	Short description
Open Government Partnership	OGP	2011	None	Members advance a variety of topics through transparency, civic participation, and public accountability.
Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative	EITI	2002	None*	Members become certified for publishing revenue in extractive industries such as oil, gas, and mining.
Financial Action Task Force	FATF	1989	Project of G7	Global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog. The inter-governmental body sets international standards that aim to prevent these illegal activities and the harm they cause to society.
Group of States against Corruption	GRECO	1999	CoE	Monitor States' compliance with the organization's anti-corruption standards, through a process of mutual evaluation and peer pressure.
United Nations Convention Against Corruption	UNCAC	2003 (in force 2005)	Project of UN	Legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument covering five main areas against corruption: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange.
Inter-American Convention Against Corruption	IACAC	1996 (in force 1997)	Organization of American States	Treaty establishing preventive measures and supporting national legislation for the criminalization of certain acts of corruption, including transnational bribery and illicit enrichment. Strengthens cooperation between parties.
Africa Peer Review Mechanism	APRM	2003	Specialized Agency of the African Union	APRM is a voluntary arrangement amongst African states to systematically assess and review governance at Head of State peer level in order to promote political stability, accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration, economic growth and sustainable development.
Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles	PCFV	2002	Project of UN	Global public-private initiative promoting cleaner fuels and vehicles in developing countries and countries in transition previously focused on lead removal and now working on other global emissions.
Paris Agreement - Mitigation	Paris Climate Agreement - Mitigation section	2016	Project of UN	Legally binding international treaty on climate change, aiming to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius. Countries submit nationally-determined contributions.
Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) Phase-out Management Plan	Montreal Protocol	1987	Project of UN	An international treaty that requires the phase out of substances which deplete the ozone layer.
UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters	Aarhus Convention	2001	Multilateral Agreement, within UN	Establishes environmental rights for the public including access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision making, and access to justice with regard to environmental law.
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora	CITES	1975	Treaty	International agreement which aims to prevent the international trade of wild animals and plants from threatening the survival of the species. Functions by subjecting the trade of specified plant and animal species to controls.
Council for Environmental Cooperation	CEC	1994	Project of NAFTA/USMCA	Compliance with the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation.
Universal Periodic Review	UPR	2006	Project of UN	A universal review of the human rights records of all UN member states. States declare the actions they have taken to fulfill and improve their human rights obligations.
Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights	TRIPS Agreement	Effective 1995	Treaty of WTO	International legal agreement between WTO members on the regulation of intellectual property rights between members. Parties to the agreement must comply with minimum standards it establishes.
Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement	CAFTA-DR	2004	Multilateral Treaty	Free trade agreement between the U.S., Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic.
Every Woman Every Child	EWEC	2010	None	Initiative aiming to advance the health and well-being of women, children, and adolescents. Engages the private sector, governments, and civil society.
Development Assistance Committee	OECD DAC commitments ("0.7%")	1970	Project of OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's forum for discussing development aid and poverty reduction. Members committed to achieving development assistance equivalent to 0.7% of GDP.
Arms Trade Treaty	ATT	2014	Project of UN	International treaty regulating the trade of conventional arms, establishes international standards governing arms transfers.

Table 6: Definitions of Completion and Compliance by Initiative

Main Area of Focus	Short Name	Description of Completion	Standard of Compliance	Compliance is Procedural	Compliance is Based on Substantive Implementation	Standards-based or Self-determined
Governance	OGP	Completion	Commitments completed and process followed	X	X	Self-determined
	EITI	Validation	Country meets EITI standard (data published, process followed)	X	X	Standard
	FATF	Compliance	Implementation and compliance with standards		X	Standard
	GRECO	Compliance	Implementation and compliance with evaluation recommendations		X	Standard
	UNCAC	Compliance	Compliance with provisions of treaty		X	Standard
	IACAC	Compliance	Compliance with provisions of treaty		X	Standard
	APRM	Completion	Compliance with commitments and standards	X		Self-determined
Environment and Climate	PCFV	Compliance	lead/sulfur removal		X	Standard
	Paris Agreement	Compliance	Adherence to provisions		X	Standard
	Montreal Protocol	Compliance	Elimination of treaty controlled substances		X	Standard
	Aarhus Convention	Compliance	Adherence to public rights		X	Standard
Trade and Environment	CITES	Compliance	Requirements (Legal and Scientific)		X	Standard
	CEC	Compliance	Requirements as determined by review by CEC	X	X	Standard
	CAFTA-DR environment and labor chapters	Completion	Promotion of environmental goals		X	Based on legal challenges in the enforcement mechanism
Other	TRIPS	Compliance	Minimum standards of intellectual property protection	X		Standard*
	UPR	Completion	Recommendations		X	Standards
	EWEC	Completion	Commitment		X	Self-determined
	OECD DAC Commitment	Completion	0.7% of GNI towards development assistance		X	Standard
	ATT	Compliance	Annual reporting on imports and exports	X		Both

Table 7: Availability of Data

Main Area of Focus	Short Name	Completion Information Available (Yes, partial, no)	Available as Qualitative Reports (Yes, partial, no)	Completion Available as Structured Data (Yes, partial, no)
Governance	OGP	Yes	Yes	Yes
	EITI	Yes	Yes	Yes
	FATF	Yes	Yes	Yes
	GRECO	Partial	Yes	No
	UNCAC	Partial	Partial	No
	IACAC	Partial	Partial (2005 only)	No
	APRM	Partial	Yes	No
Environment and Climate	PCFV	Partial	Yes	Partial
	Paris Agreement - mitigation	Partial	Yes	Partial
	Montreal Protocol	Partial	Yes	Yes
	Aarhus Convention	No	Yes	No
Trade and Environment	CITES	Yes	Yes	Yes
	CEC	No	Yes	No
	CAFTA-DR environment and labor chapters	No	Yes	No
Other	TRIPS	No	Yes	No
	UPR	No	Yes	No
	EWEC	No	Yes	No
	OECD DAC Commitment	Yes	No	Yes
	ATT	No	Yes	No

Further Discussion of “Standard of Compliance”

A case by case discussion of each initiative’s standard of compliance flesh out, and fully contextualize the manner in which compliance is achieved in each initiative. These standards of compliance are as follows:

Governance

- **OGP:** OGP requires both procedural and substantive compliance from its membership. In procedural terms, they must hold a co-creation process with civil society to develop an action plan with concrete commitments. Further, they must undergo an independent review by the Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) and address major recommendations of the IRM. Substantively, they are evaluated on ambition, completion, and early results of commitments that advance transparency, civic participation, and accountability. The exact content of these commitments is determined on a member-by-member basis, *i.e.* they are not standardized.
- **EITI:** EITI, a standard setting organization has both procedural and substantive requirements. EITI requires oversight, as well as maintenance of a work plan, by a multistakeholder group comprised of civil society, the private sector, and governments. Participants must provide disclosures on how their extractives industry is managed. Disclosures on the extent of exploration and production of extractives are required, as well as of company payments and government revenues. The manner in which this revenue is allocated must be disclosed too. Data and discussion of outcomes must be available to the public.²⁵ The international board validates a process, with support from the EITI Secretariat.
- **FATF:** FATF sets standards and promotes effective implementation of legal, regulatory and other operational measures aimed at stopping terrorist financing, money laundering, and other threats. FATF monitors countries’ progress in implementing FATF recommendations and other relevant measures, while promoting the adoption of FATF measures globally. Compliance is thus adhering to these standards and recommendations. Countries with poor compliance are “greylisted” and must undergo more extensive monitoring; those who fail to comply are “blacklisted,” which results in a high likelihood of sanctions being placed on the country.²⁶
- **GRECO:** Members are monitored through a combination of mutual evaluation and peer pressure, which all members participate in. GRECO conducts evaluation rounds, with each round covering a specific theme, such as the transparency of party funding. Countries are evaluated by a team of experts who provide recommendations and observations. Members must then follow a compliance procedure; the countries are obligated to report on the extent to which recommendations are complied with.²⁷

²⁵ <https://eiti.org/standard/overview>

²⁶ <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/about/whatwedo/>

²⁷ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/greco/about-greco/what-is-greco>

- **UNCAC:** UNCAC covers a broad range of measures related to corruption. Generally, it aims to strengthen and promote anti-corruption measures, facilitate and encourage international cooperation in combating corruption, and to promote integrity and accountability in general with respect to public affairs and public property. Compliance with some measures is mandatory, while with others it is encouraged or optional. Compliance is determined via the Implementation Review Mechanism; parties to the convention are reviewed by two peers in two five year cycles. However, there is no follow up process determining whether any recommendations made in this review process are carried out. UNCAC calls for sanctions on states that are non-compliant²⁸
- **IACAC:** Parties to this treaty are obliged to prohibit various corrupt practices as outlined in the convention. To name a few provisions, the convention calls for parties to adhere to standards of conduct for public functions, establish public income and asset registries for persons performing public functions, create public procurement registries, and establish oversight bodies for the prevention of corruption. When states adopt relevant legislation, they must notify the Secretary General of the Organization of American States. Compliance is then carrying out these obligations. The treaty does not include any sanctioning instruments for non-compliance.²⁹
- **APRM:** Members self monitor all aspects of governance and socioeconomic development. There is an additional 5 stage peer review process, which involves a consultation with the APRM Secretariat, a review mission to the country of review, a draft report, a peer review based upon the APRM's expert panel's findings, and a final report. A National Programme of Action is then created, with its short, mid, and long term goals continuously monitored, as well as any additional commitments made by the countries. While non fulfillment of recommended actions does not result in legal consequences, the Secretariat does continuously monitor progress and apply pressure.³⁰

Environment and Climate

- **PCFV:** A multistakeholder process brings together the fuel and vehicle industry, civil society, national governments, international organizations and experts. The Partnership works to remove lead and sulfur from gasoline, as well as promoting the use of cleaner vehicles. While the PCFV has now moved on to climate mitigation, it previously dealt with removing lead from vehicle fuel. In that case compliance was removing lead and sulfur from gas, as well as complying with vehicle emissions standards. Rather than a uniform monitoring process, the methods vary by locality: in some areas government agencies carry out the work, in some NGOS, while in others commercial enterprises do. There is no legal convention or basis for sanctions when states fail to comply.^{31 32}
- **Paris Agreement:** Countries work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the aim of reducing global temperature increase. Countries submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) stating what actions they will take to reduce GHG emissions, which they update every five years with the aim of becoming increasingly ambitious. The treaty has four elements, including climate mitigation actions, adaptation actions, finance, and technical transfer. For purposes of this paper, we will focus on climate mitigation. Mitigation is measured relative to how far “nationally determined contributions” will move toward avoiding a 2°C change in average global temperatures³³. A “Global Stocktake” takes place every five years; here parties to the Agreement meet to assess progress towards their stated aims. Additionally, the Enhanced Transparency Framework requires reporting and expert technical review. However, non-compliance does not result in any legal penalties.³⁴
- **Montreal Protocol:** The Montreal Protocol steps down the consumption and production of ozone depleting substances (ODS), with different timetables for developing and developed countries. Countries are bound to commitments related to the phase out, trade, data reporting, and licensing rules, among other things, of ODS.³⁵ The Protocol includes a non-compliance procedure for any parties that fail to meet their obligations, which requires the implementation of a plan of action that restores compliance; countries may receive technical assistance in order to achieve this. Failure to follow through with the non-compliance procedure may result in suspension from the treaty.
- **Aarhus Convention:** The Convention establishes public rights: access to environmental information, access to environmental justice, public participation. Parties to the convention must create provisions that will lead to the implementation of these rights at the national, regional, and local levels.³⁶ The Compliance Committee reviews issues related to compliance within the convention; instances of non-compliance can be reported to the Committee by a party on behalf of itself or accusing another, by the public, by the secretariat, or by the committee itself. Non-compliance may result in the suspension of rights and privileges relating to the treaty.

²⁸ <https://www.u4.no/publications/uncac-in-a-nutshell-2019>

²⁹ https://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter_american_treaties_B-58_against_Corruption.asp

³⁰ <https://au.int/en/organs/aprm>

³¹ <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/transport/what-we-do/partnership-clean-fuels-and-vehicles/why-does-partnership-clean>

³² <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/17541/leadphaseoutreport.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

³³ <https://climateactiontracker.org/climate-target-update-tracker/>

³⁴ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

³⁵ <https://www.unep.org/ozonaction/who-we-are/about-montreal-protocol>

³⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/aarhus/>

Trade and Environment

- **CITES:** CITES creates controls for the international trade of specimens of certain species. All trade in these species must be authorized through a licensing system, which must have designated managing authorities, as well as scientific authorities designated by countries that are party to the treaty for their governance. Every two years the Conference of the Parties, which consists of parties to the treaty, meets to determine compliance, review progress, and recommend new measures, among other things.³⁷
- **CEC:** CEC provides a framework for NAFTA/USMCA members to work on environmental issues. Specifically, it is the organization that oversees commitments to enforce environmental laws under the provisions of Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA). Provisions range from natural resource management, to biological conservation, to pollution reduction. Completion here is the enforcement of laws on pollution control and species trafficking, which are commitments within CEC. The CEC Secretariat conducts analysis of convention parties' performance along these measures, while the CEC Council serves as the overall governing body and may act upon the Secretariat's findings in order to improve enforcement/performance.³⁸ If a member of the public suspects that the U.S., Mexico, or Canada is failing to uphold its environmental law they may file a submission with the Secretariat. This sets in motion the Submission on Enforcement Matters process, which leads to the production of an investigative report known as a Factual Record.³⁹
- **CAFTA-DR ECA:** Parties to the treaty are expected to comply with the CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation Agreement, which involves strengthening environmental protections, public participation in environmental decision making, and effective enforcement of environmental decision making rules. Implementation is supervised by an Environmental Cooperation Commission, composed of government officials from relevant agencies.⁴⁰ The Environmental Affairs Council, composed of cabinet level officials, meets annually to review progress. The public can submit any concerns regarding compliance to the Secretariat, which consists of a General Coordinator and a technical assistant.

Other

- **TRIPS:** TRIPS is a WTO treaty that sets out minimum standards for intellectual property/copyright protection for each member. It calls for the enforcement of these standards on the domestic level, and subjects disputes between members to the WTO's dispute settlement procedures. If the procedure finds that a violation did occur there are several dispute settlement mechanisms, including arbitration, mediation and negotiations. Completion here is then meeting these standards to the extent that the dispute settlement mechanism does not become involved.⁴¹
- **UPR:** Working Group (consists of all member states) conducts review, each review conducted by a group of 3 states called a "troika." Each state is reviewed every 4.5 years. The review takes the form of an interactive discussion with the reviewee, assessing the extent to which human rights obligations are being met. This produces an outcome report that includes recommendations. States are responsible for carrying out the recommendations, which constitutes compliance.⁴² The Human Rights Council will decide on measures needed in the case of persistent non-cooperation.
- **EWEC:** Partners (which can be public, private or civil society) make commitments that further EWEC's "Global Strategy," which is centered around improving economic and health outcomes for women, adolescents and children. They can be commitments to fund, create policy or deliver services. Commitment makers are required to report commitment progress, however there does not seem to be any form of enforcement.⁴³ An Independent Accountability Panel monitors and reports on progress across the initiative, while a High-Level Steering Group provides reviews progress and gives recommendations for moving forward.
- **OECD DAC Target:** Members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee commit to spending 0.7% of Gross National Income on development assistance.⁴⁴
- **ATT:** The Arms Trade Treaty sets standards for the international trade of conventional weapons. To achieve compliance, parties to the treaty must meet standards set by the treaty, which include establishing a national control system, designating competent authorities for maintenance of the system, prohibitions on certain arms, and take measure to prevent arms from reaching the illicit market to name a few. Countries are required to submit reports detailing steps they have taken to implement the treaty, with an initial report within 1 year of joining and annual reports thereafter.⁴⁵ Additionally the Treaty includes provision to provide countries with assistance and capacity building in order to reach compliance. However, the Treaty does not create a regime for addressing failure to comply with the Treaty's requirements.

³⁷ <https://cites.org/eng/disc/how.php>

³⁸ <http://www.cec.org/about/>

³⁹ <http://www.cec.org/submissions-on-enforcement/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.caftadr-environment.org/overview/>

⁴¹

https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/intel2_e.htm#:~:text=The%20TRIPS%20Agreement%20is%20a,own%20legal%20system%20and%20practice.

⁴² <https://www.state.gov/universal-periodic-review-process/>

⁴³ <https://www.everywomaneverychild.org/what-is-a-commitment/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/the07odagnitarget-ahistory.htm>

⁴⁵ https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/arms_trade_treaty