

**Orchestration:  
Global Governance Through Intermediaries**

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**Abstract**

This paper develops a conceptual framework for analyzing *orchestration*, a mode of governance that is widely used by international organizations (IGOs) and other governance actors, but rarely identified or analyzed. IGOs engage in orchestration when they enlist intermediary actors on a voluntary basis, by providing them with ideational and material support, to address target actors in pursuit of IGO governance goals. Orchestration is thus both indirect (because the IGO acts through intermediaries) and soft (because the IGO lacks control over intermediaries). These features distinguish orchestration from traditional hierarchical governance, which addresses targets directly through hard instruments; from governance through collaboration with targets, which is direct but soft; and from delegation, which is indirect but hard. The paper elaborates the concept of orchestration, identifies patterns and techniques of orchestration, and advances hypotheses regarding the conditions under which governance actors in general and IGOs in particular can be expected to rely on orchestration.

## 1. Introduction: Orchestration and International Organizations

International organizations (IGOs) have ambitious governance goals but moderate governance capacity. IGOs are charged with, among many other tasks, containing the use of violence, facilitating free trade, advancing economic development, fighting organized crime, promoting human rights, asserting labor standards, defending biodiversity, and providing relief after natural disasters and armed conflicts. Yet their ability to govern state and non-state behavior in pursuit of these goals is constrained by restrictive treaty mandates, close member state oversight, and limited financial and administrative resources. In brief, IGOs often lack the capabilities to perform the roles they have been nominally allocated.

IGOs still attempt to pursue traditional modes of governance, such as making, monitoring and adjudicating international law (which we refer to as *hierarchy*). In many instances, however, IGOs respond to their goals/capabilities dilemma by experimenting with alternative modes of governance (Abbott & Snidal 2009a, b, 2010; Reinicke 1998; Zürn 1998; Rosenau 1995; Mathews 1994; Slaughter 2004). Some IGOs enhance their governance capacity by delegating specific tasks to outside parties, as when the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) contracts out the management of refugee camps to private relief organizations (*Delegation*) (Cooley & Ron 2002). Others collaborate directly with target actors to promote voluntary self-regulation (Cutler 1999, 2003; Reinicke 1998; Rosenau 1995), as when the United Nations (UN) persuades private business firms to accept the social and environmental principles of the Global Compact (*Collaboration*) (Ruggie 2007).

In this paper, we focus on a fourth mode of global governance, one that is now used with increasing frequency but rarely identified or analyzed in international relations or international law scholarship. We call it *orchestration*.

In IGO orchestration, an *IGO enlists and supports intermediary actors to address target actors in pursuit of IGO governance goals*. The key to orchestration is that the IGO brings third parties into the governance arrangement to act as intermediaries between itself and the targets, rather than trying to govern the targets directly. More generally, one actor (or set of actors), the Orchestrator, works through a second actor (or set of actors), the Intermediary, to govern a third actor (or set of actors), the Target. We refer to this as the O-I-T model.

Orchestrator → Intermediary → Target

**Figure 1: Indirect Governance through Orchestration**

Because an orchestrator works through intermediaries, orchestration is an *indirect* mode of governance. In addition, because an orchestrator has no firm control over the activities of intermediaries but must mobilize and facilitate their voluntary cooperation in a joint governance effort, orchestration is a *soft* mode of governance. An orchestrator is therefore not a governor in the hierarchical sense; rather, an orchestrator creates, supports and integrates a multi-actor system of soft and indirect governance geared towards shared goals that neither orchestrator nor intermediaries could achieve on their own.

Orchestration is a general governance mode, used in a wide range of settings by different types of orchestrators. For instance, states have long engaged in domestic orchestration, alongside hierarchy and other governance modes (Abbott & Snidal 2009b; Genschel & Zangl 2008). Indeed, we will use the domestic context as a convenient reference point to elaborate the concept. In this paper, however, we focus specifically on orchestration by IGOs.

The *governance goals* of IGOs include the regulation of target actor behavior and/or the provision of public goods. Examples of IGO orchestration, drawn from the papers in this project, include the following:

1. The European Union (EU) created, supports and relies on the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), a transgovernmental network of national regulatory agencies, to prepare normative instruments that elaborate on the EU's broad regulatory framework for an internal market in electronic communications networks and services, and to help implement that framework consistently across member states (Blauberger & Rittberger, this project).
2. The Basel Convention on transboundary movements of hazardous waste, the Whaling Convention, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and other environmental conventions enlist environmental NGOs such as Greenpeace, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Friends of the Earth and TRAFFIC to help them monitor member state compliance (Dai, this project).
3. The United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the UN Global Compact orchestrated the formation of the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and supported PRI as it developed and disseminated global principles that bring environmental, social and governance criteria into investment decision-making, for voluntary use by private investment managers and other actors (Dingwerth & van der Lugt, this project).
4. The World Health Organization (WHO) facilitated the creation and hosted the operation of public-private partnerships – such as Roll Back Malaria and Stop TB – funded *inter alia* by the Gates Foundation, to improve health services on the ground and reduce morbidity and mortality from particular diseases (Hanrieder, this project).

The *intermediaries* in IGO orchestration are often non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but may also include business organizations, public-private partnerships, transgovernmental networks and other IGOs. Intermediaries are crucial to orchestration because they possess governance capabilities – such as local information, technical expertise, enforcement capacity, material resources, legitimacy and direct access to targets – which the IGO lacks.

Intermediaries voluntarily collaborate in IGO orchestration because they share the IGO's basic governance goals and value its material and ideational support.

The *targets* of IGO orchestration may be either states or private entities. In examples 1 and 2 above, orchestration serves to create and enforce common rules for the conduct of states. In the other two examples, orchestration substitutes for or complements state action by promoting regulation of private conduct (example 3) or supplying public goods to private actors (example 4). We therefore distinguish two general forms of IGO orchestration based on the identity of the targets: "managing states" and "bypassing states," respectively.

Our analysis of orchestration by IGOs contributes to international relations (IR) theory in two ways. First, it enhances understanding of IGOs and their role in global governance. Much of the IR literature still denies that IGOs play independent and effective roles in global affairs; it views IGOs as tightly constrained, whether by major powers (Mearsheimer 1994/95), by the structure of international interdependence (Keohane 1984), or by member state oversight (Hawkins et al. 2006). Older IR traditions, in contrast, take IGO independence and effectiveness for granted; they view IGOs either as filling functional needs (Mitrany 1966) or as requisites for peace and human progress (Kegley 2009: 32-39). Both positions are too extreme. We theorize the middle ground, showing how IGOs can enhance their independence from structural constraints by using their formal authority, functional capabilities and other attributes to enlist intermediaries, an approach that scholars and policy-makers have largely overlooked.

Second, our analysis contributes to a better understanding of the ways in which non-state actors contribute to global governance. While the dramatic rise in the number and capabilities of transnational non-state actors has engendered a huge IR literature, much of that literature is split on the issue of non-state agency: neo-realists deny any independent governance role for non-state actors beyond mere lobbying (Krasner 2001), whereas global governance scholars celebrate the expanding independent roles of non-state actors (Rosenau 1995; Mathews 1994). Again, we argue, the truth lies in between. While non-state actors are increasingly important players in global affairs, they rarely constitute self-sufficient, "stand-alone" governance systems. Rather, they depend on external support for viability and effectiveness, and IGO orchestration often supplies that support. In sum, our analysis brings IGOs and non-state actors together, highlighting their symbiotic interactions in global governance.

The paper is structured as follows. We begin by elaborating the concept of orchestration in relation to other modes of global governance, first in general and then with reference to IGOs. We next develop the Orchestrator-Intermediary-Target (O-I-T) model of orchestration to clarify the relationships among the three actors. To highlight the distinctive character of orchestration, we contrast the O-I-T model with the principal-agent (P-A) model widely used to analyze IGOs. We then propose a set of hypotheses, based on the assumptions of our model, that address the conditions under which IGOs and other governance actors are likely to engage in orchestration. We propose both general hypotheses applicable to any governance actor – focusing on the attributes of the orchestrator and the availability of suitable intermediaries – and specific hypotheses applicable to IGOs – focusing on the relations between the IGO and its member states. These hypotheses guide and organize the empirical papers in this project. We conclude with a brief introduction to the empirical papers and a

discussion of some additional issues for future consideration, including the effectiveness and normative implications of orchestration.

## 2. Orchestration as a Mode of Governance

To develop the concept of orchestration in greater detail, we first introduce it as a general mode of governance, juxtaposed against other common modes, and then elaborate on the specific features of IGO orchestration.

### *Orchestration and Other Governance Modes*

A useful starting point for conceptualizing modes of governance is the ideal typical image of the nation state as hierarchical governor of domestic society: the state, acting through the government, defines the rules of the game of the society and enforces them through the state bureaucracy. The rules are mandatory, backed by the state's "monopoly of legitimate physical violence" (Weber [1919] 2004: 33), and directly address the ultimate targets of governance (i.e., individual and corporate citizens). Familiar instances of this top-down, hierarchical approach include taxation, military conscription, compulsory schooling and social transfers. Regulatory examples include environmental command and control regulation, food safety standards and no-smoking legislation. In Table 1, hierarchical governance is represented by the top-left combination of "hard" and "direct" governance. It is hard because the governor promulgates mandatory, enforceable rules; it is direct because the rules apply directly to target actors. Alternative governance modes can be understood in terms of variation along these two dimensions.

	Direct	Indirect
Hard	Hierarchy	Delegation
Soft	Collaboration	Orchestration

**Table 1: Four Modes of Governance**

Governments are not limited to hierarchical governance, but also use additional modes. They engage in governance that is hard but indirect through principal-agent forms of "delegation" (e.g., Majone 1997). Examples include a legislature delegating to an independent regulatory agency the tasks of interpreting and applying legal rules, delegating to an independent central bank the responsibility for managing monetary policy, and authorizing an IGO to deal with a defined trans-boundary issue. Governance by delegation is indirect in that the governor

addresses target actors via a third party, the agent; it is hard because the governor has formal legal control over the agent, invests it with authority vis-à-vis target actors, supervises its activities and can ultimately rescind its authority. The top-right cell of table 1 represents hard-indirect governance through delegation.

National governments also govern by softer means, substituting ideational and material inducements for legal obligation and coercive threat. Thus, in policy fields requiring high levels of technical expertise, governments often collaborate with target actors to promote self-regulation, rather than imposing top-down state regulations (Streeck & Schmitter 1985). Classic examples include quality regulation of medical practice by medical associations, technical standard setting by industry associations, and the traditional (until the 1980s) self-regulation of the British financial sector by “club government” (Morgan 2006). A more recent example is the US Environmental Protection Agency’s National Environmental Performance Track, which allowed firms to substitute adherence to a voluntary self-regulatory regimen for certain features of mandatory state regulation. Such governance is soft because it relies on the voluntary collaboration of target actors; it is direct because the governor addresses targets without third party intermediation. The bottom-left cell of Table 1 represents governance by “collaboration.”

Finally, states engage in governance that is both soft and indirect. The poster example is neocorporatist concertation as practiced by many Western European states in the decades following World War II: governments enlisted the cooperation of national peak industry and labor associations to pursue economic and social policy goals with respect to their members; in return governments offered ideational and material support to the associations and their leaders (Streeck & Kenworthy 2005). This approach corresponds to orchestration: it is indirect because the governor addresses the ultimate targets via intermediaries; it is soft because the governor lacks firm control over the intermediaries. Orchestration is the opposite of hierarchical governance, and so is located in the lower-right cell of Table 1.

For conceptual clarity, we have introduced the four modes of governance – hierarchy, delegation, collaboration and orchestration – as stark ideal types. In practice, however, they are mixed and blended into hybrid forms. Rather than treating the direct-indirect and hard-soft distinctions of Table 1 as categorical, then, they should be regarded as the extreme points of continua. Thus, there are degrees of “(in)directness” in governance. For instance, direct collaboration in professional self-regulation may blend into indirect orchestration when governments promote the creation of professional associations that serve as middlemen between government and targets. Likewise, there are degrees of “hardness.” Orchestration blends into delegation as orchestrators gain stronger control over intermediaries. For example, when peak associations owe their power and sometimes their very existence to the government under neo-corporatism (Streeck & Kenworthy 2005), the government has greater control over them than the associations’ formally private status would suggest. Conversely, delegation blends into orchestration as principals exercise looser control over agents. For instance, when independent central banks enjoy wide freedom from government oversight, governments must rely on moral suasion rather than formal controls. Finally, modes of governance can be linked in chains, between and across cells in Table 1. For example, an intermediary in one O-I-T relationship may enlist (sub-)intermediaries of its own, becoming

an orchestrator. Importantly, states delegate authority to IGOs as agents, which then become orchestrators, as discussed further below.

### ***Orchestration by IGOs***

While states and other governance actors use orchestration, it is of particular value to IGOs, because of their relative disadvantage in pursuing hard and direct modes of governance. In general, IGOs have far less capacity than states to adopt and enforce mandatory, directly applicable rules. States are reluctant to grant authority to IGOs to govern states hierarchically through binding international law or delegation to powerful supranational agents. States are also reluctant to authorize IGOs to hierarchically govern private actors within national territories, even though the activities of such actors (farmers, producers, consumers, financial institutions, travellers, crime suspects, terrorist cells, carriers of disease, etc.) are central to many of the most pressing contemporary international governance issues. Thus, the ability of IGOs to meet their governance objectives through hierarchical governance or delegation is narrowly circumscribed by states. Even soft governance by collaboration is difficult: most IGOs lack direct access to private targets, and their ability to create strong positive or negative incentives for private actors is tightly constrained by states jealous of IGO intervention in domestic governance.

Orchestration enables IGOs to (partially) overcome these limitations, in the two major ways introduced earlier. First, IGOs *manage states* by enlisting intermediaries to shape state preferences, beliefs and behavior in ways that enhance state consent to and compliance with IGO goals, policies and rules. The EU Commission regularly enlists networks of national regulators to help it prepare draft legislation, lobby political decision makers for support and ensure consistent implementation (Blauberger & Rittberger, this project). Especially where effective monitoring requires specific local information, IGOs rely heavily on intermediaries to ensure state compliance. The CITES Secretariat cooperates extensively with the transnational NGO network TRAFFIC to track wildlife trade and report violations of the convention. And the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provides funding, information and training to NGOs to enable them to assist individuals in filing complaints against state human rights violations (Tallberg, this project). As these illustrations demonstrate, orchestration represents a significant reversal in IGO-state relations: instead of operating only as agents controlled by state principals, IGOs as orchestrators can – through intermediaries – enhance their own independent influence and (partially) guide the behavior of states as targets.

Second, IGOs *bypass states* by enlisting intermediaries to influence the conduct of private actors or to supply public goods to private targets without state intermediation. UNEP has gained some (soft and indirect) regulatory control over private actors by joining with the environmental NGO CERES to found, promote and support the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). GRI environmental reporting standards are widely adopted by business firms and other private organizations, enabling UNEP to nudge these actors towards more sustainable practices (Dingwerth 2007). Similarly, the UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) enhances its capacity to provide humanitarian aid in crisis areas by orchestrating the assistance activities of NGOs. OCHA facilitates NGO field operations; arranges logistical support and security for humanitarian workers; channels donor support to

local NGOs for community assistance and capacity-building; involves NGOs in advocacy; and relies on NGOs to cover temporary gaps in the capacity of its own field offices.<sup>1</sup> OCHA and NGO actions are strongly symbiotic. Because it is indirect and soft, moreover, orchestration helps keep IGOs' domestic involvement inconspicuous: IGOs as orchestrators do not directly impinge on the domestic authority of states, but leave such interventions to domestic intermediaries. Such intermediaries also provide a domestic base of support for IGO activities, reducing the likelihood that the bypassed states will block them.

To be sure, states (at least major states) exercise powerful influence over IGOs, placing limits on all their governance activities, including orchestration. However, orchestration need not involve conflicts of interest between IGOs and member states. When states and IGOs agree on governance goals, but separately and jointly lack the capabilities to achieve them, states may encourage orchestration to bridge the gap. Consider, for example, technical barriers to trade. There is broad consensus among WTO member states that national regulations can constitute important trade barriers. The WTO standards code addresses this problem by promoting recognition of international standards as a common basis for national regulations. To improve the code's effectiveness, states decided during the Uruguay Round "to recommend" that the WTO Secretariat enlist the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) as intermediary to establish a global network to manage required notifications (WTO 1994). This example also demonstrates that orchestration is not necessarily second best: since neither the WTO Secretariat nor its member states were well placed to operate such a network, orchestration was the most effective option, and states willingly supported it.

Importantly, orchestration always involves intermediaries, and should not be confused with other soft modes of governance, which do not. Thus, when the UN Global Compact directly calls upon private firms to voluntarily accept the principles of the Compact (Ruggie 2007), this is not orchestration in our terminology, but rather collaboration: if there isn't an intermediary, it's not orchestration!

IGOs as orchestrators can draw on a broad range of potential intermediaries:

- *NGOs and other civil society actors* are perhaps the most likely potential intermediaries. IGOs can often locate NGOs whose goals are closely aligned, which pursue similar substantive agendas, and which share IGOs' institutional concern for independence from state control. In addition, NGOs often control key governance resources that IGOs lack – notably, direct access to local information and private targets – and may be viewed by governments as less threatening and intrusive than IGOs. NGOs frequently serve as intermediaries in issue areas such as human rights, environmental protection and humanitarian assistance.
- *Transgovernmental networks* are created or used by IGOs to manage or bypass the upper political echelons of national governments. These networks are usually composed of policy experts from issue-oriented agencies that identify with IGO governance goals and command crucial governance resources, such as technical expertise, influence on top national decision-makers and control of national

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?page=article\\_s&id\\_article=849](http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?page=article_s&id_article=849)



bureaucracies. This makes them highly attractive intermediaries. As already noted, for instance, the European Commission regularly draws on networks of member state agencies and officials to partly compensate for the “incomplete vertical delegation” of implementation and enforcement powers to EU institutions (Eberlein and Newman 2008: 30; see also Blauberger & Rittberger this project).

- *Business organizations* are most often the targets of IGO orchestration, but sometimes serve as intermediaries. For example, the Basle Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) relies centrally on private credit rating agencies to implement its capital requirements regulation. BCBS lacks the organizational resources to rate the credit risks of individual financial institutions, is wary of leaving this task to national regulators, and fears political repercussions from state governments. Private rating agencies have greater resources, are (potentially) independent of national regulators, and as market actors are less fearful of political repercussions (Kruck 2011).
- *Transnational partnerships*, both public-private and private-private (Reinicke 1998; Abbott & Snidal 2009b; Beisheim, Liese & Ulbert 2008) also act as intermediaries. For example, the UN organized much of the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) around the launching of partnerships for sustainable development, known as “Type II” partnerships. The Bureau of the WSSD, the Secretary-General and other UN bodies strongly encouraged the formation of partnerships “to advance more effective results-oriented implementation of the summit’s agenda” (Andonova & Levy 2003: 21). In addition, IGOs were the leading force in a substantial number of Type II partnerships, thereby gaining some ability to orchestrate from within.
- Finally, *international organizations* may serve as intermediaries to other IGOs. For example, the most important intermediary for WHO has historically been UNICEF. The Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which operates a number of funding mechanisms on climate change and other issues, enlists IGOs including UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank as “implementing agencies,” which handle applications for funding and manage funded projects (Graham & Thompson, this project).

IGOs orchestrate primarily by providing material and ideational support to intermediaries. This strengthens the governance capacities of intermediaries while providing IGOs a channel of influence over their governance aims and activities. By providing *material* support, such as financial or administrative assistance, IGOs strengthen intermediaries’ operational capacities to pursue shared objectives. By providing *ideational* support, such as technical expertise, formal approval or political endorsement, IGOs enhance intermediaries’ legitimacy and social authority vis-à-vis targets. By attaching conditions to their support, IGOs can bring (or keep) intermediaries’ governance goals in line with the IGOs’ own goals. Thus, IGO support both empowers intermediaries and enhances IGOs’ ability to “steer” them.

While analytically distinct, material and ideational support are often joined in practice. We do not offer a comprehensive typology of IGO support, but identify several important forms, which arise at different points throughout the policy cycle:

- *Convening*: IGOs often enjoy privileged access to important actors (state and non-state) within their governance domains. This allows them to empower actors and organizations by putting them in contact with other influential actors, and to steer them by selecting which actors and organizations to convene. IGOs sometimes use their convening power to catalyze the creation of intermediaries, which they can subsequently orchestrate. For example, UNEP and the Global Compact convened the “socially responsible” and conventional investment firms that formed PRI. Similarly, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) convened major banks and encouraged them to adopt the Equator Principles, which adapt IFC Performance Standards for private project finance transactions. IGOs also use their convening power at later stages of the policy cycle. Thus, UN OHCHR field offices serve as important meeting points for local NGOs involved in monitoring human rights abuses.
- *Agenda Setting*: IGO governance agendas such as the Millennium Development Goals, UNAID’s five-year strategic plans or the work plans of OCHR field offices – while often adopted with additional purposes in mind – help IGOs to enlist intermediaries and to facilitate and steer their activities. First, IGO agendas provide cognitive and normative guidance as to pressing governance issues and plausible policy solutions. This influences intermediaries’ priorities and helps them define their strategies. Second, IGO agendas confer legitimacy on intermediary activities that are compatible with them, helping to secure cooperation by targets (Viola, this project). Finally, donors often use IGO agendas as reference points when determining spending priorities, helping intermediaries garner external support.
- *Assistance*: IGOs can offer direct, albeit limited material support to intermediaries using their own financial and administrative resources. For example, the WHO hosted the Gates Foundation in its Geneva headquarters during the Foundation’s early years. UNEP has provided modest financial contributions to GRI and initially helped both it and PRI administer their resources; it also opened doors to other donors, including Ted Turner’s United Nations Foundation (Dingwerth/van der Lugt this project). Beyond its direct contributions, IGO assistance has beneficial indirect effects: most importantly, it provides visible endorsement of the intermediary, increasing its social authority and access to influential actors. Where NGOs or other intermediaries are small, fragile organizations, even limited IGO support – such as the funding of travel expenses or the hosting of events – can have significant impact.
- *Endorsement*: IGOs can empower intermediaries by endorsing them as competent and legitimate actors in a field and by formally recognizing their activities. Endorsement can be political, as in the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions supporting a certification program for conflict diamonds (Haufler, this project). Endorsement can also be legal, as when the WTO accepts consistency with international standards adopted by other organizations as satisfying international trade rules, or when the EU accepts compliance with ISO 14001 standards as satisfying the requirements of its Environmental Management and Audit System (EMAS) (Abbott & Snidal 2009b). Finally, as noted above, endorsement can be material, implicit in IGO assistance. All these forms of endorsement increase the normative and political

pressure that intermediaries can bring to bear on targets to comply with (nominally voluntary) intermediary norms and policies, in part by attracting greater support from consumers and other significant constituencies.

- *Coordination*: Finally, IGOs can increase the impact of intermediaries' policies by synchronizing their activities. For example, one of the principal activities of the G-20 in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis was to limit overlap and increase synergies among the numerous IGOs dealing with the crisis – including the Bretton Woods institutions, Bank for International Settlements, Financial Stability Board and multilateral development banks (Viola, this project). As this example shows, steering may not only serve the goals of the orchestrator, but may also enhance the effectiveness of intermediaries.

While IGO support generally serves the dual purposes of empowering and steering intermediaries, the precise mix varies greatly. Sometimes support is contingent on strict conditions, providing the orchestrator extensive opportunities to shape the activities of intermediaries; at other times any conditions are diffuse, providing little orchestrator control. For example, when the World Bank, in its 2002 sustainable forest management strategy, encouraged governments “to take advantage of growing opportunities to engage independent third-party certification bodies in performance-based monitoring of forest ... operations,” it offered only general ideational support to intermediaries such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and gained little if any influence over them.<sup>2</sup> When, by contrast, the EU Commission provided the three key European standard-setting organizations, CEN, CENELEC and ETSI, with mandates and financial support for specific standards projects, this more focused support allowed the Commission to exert far greater control (Genschel 1995).

### 3. A General Model of Orchestration

In this section we develop a general Orchestrator-Intermediary-Target (O-I-T) model, which will guide our derivation of hypotheses as to the occurrence of orchestration. The O-I-T model specifies the relationships between an Orchestrator, which supports or facilitates the activities of an Intermediary, which in turn influences the behavior of one or more Targets. We briefly contrast O-I-T with the principal-agent (P-A) model, which specifies the relationship between a Principal, which delegates tasks, and an Agent, which carries them out.<sup>3</sup> Later we consider how the two models come together: states are Principals to IGOs as Agents, but IGOs are Orchestrators of Intermediaries who (sometimes) have states as Targets.

The O-I-T model of orchestration is based on four assumptions:

- *Orchestration assumption*: Orchestration involves governance relationships that are both indirect and soft. The O-I-T relationship is indirect because the orchestrator has no immediate link to the target; only the intermediary works directly with the target. The O-I

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<sup>2</sup> See World Bank, *Sustaining Forests: A Development Strategy* (2004: 31-32), available at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTFORESTS/Resources/SustainingForests.pdf>. Together with WWF, the Bank subsequently adopted more detailed criteria for assessing certification bodies, without endorsing any specific schemes. WWF/World Bank Global Forest Alliance, *A Framework for Assessing Credible Forest Certification Systems/Schemes* (July 2006).

<sup>3</sup> For valuable discussions of the application of PA theory to international relations, see Hawkins et al. (2006) and Pollack (2003).

relationship is soft because the orchestrator cannot command or control the intermediary; it depends on enlisting the intermediary's voluntary collaboration.<sup>4</sup>

This assumption provides the strongest contrast with the P-A model. A principal empowers its agent, typically by contract, and may also disempower it; their contract accordingly allows the principal substantial control over the agent's activities. An orchestrator, in contrast, cannot compel an intermediary either to contribute to the joint governance effort or to refrain from contributing independently; as a result, it has far less control over intermediary activities. This is also the major distinction between orchestration and indirect but hard governance through delegation.

- *Goal-seeking assumption:* The orchestrator and intermediary engage in orchestration as a means of achieving their goals. Importantly, in orchestration the actors' goals may be material or ideational, self-seeking or altruistic. However, we do not assume either perfect information or perfect rationality in pursuing goals. Moreover, not all orchestrators and intermediaries can successfully achieve their goals; some are more effective goal-seekers than others. Where the orchestrator is a collective actor, such as an IGO, its goals, the means of achieving them and their effectiveness will depend in significant part on internal organizational characteristics.

This assumption is similar to the P-A model, although orchestration puts greater emphasis on ideational goals; these are compatible with P-A, but rarely emphasized.

- *Complementary capabilities assumption:* An orchestrator enlists intermediaries because it lacks certain capabilities for direct governance: the orchestrator may have insufficient regulatory competence, operational capacity or legitimating authority to unilaterally achieve its objectives. The orchestrator enlists the intermediary to contribute the missing capabilities; in return, the orchestrator uses its (limited) capabilities to enlist, facilitate and support the intermediary's governance activities. Orchestrator and intermediary are mutually dependent, each unable to achieve its goals without the other. The division of governance responsibilities between orchestrator and intermediary, and the resulting gains from specialization, are at the core of the O-I-T model.

This assumption is similar to P-A, but orchestration puts greater emphasis on the existence of complex governance tasks that require joint inputs from orchestrator and intermediary. In P-A, the principal is sometimes unable to perform required tasks without inputs (e.g., expertise) from the agent, but often engages an agent simply to save time or expense.

- *Correlated goals assumption:* The intermediary's voluntary cooperation in orchestration is based on correlated goals: The intermediary shares the orchestrator's basic goals, or at least pursues compatible goals. This does not necessarily imply O-I harmony or the absence of conflict, but only that common interests are sufficient to overcome conflicting interests, e.g., regarding specific governance instruments or approaches. Correlated goals are the cement of the O-I relationship.

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<sup>4</sup> Beyond this bare assumption, we note two empirical possibilities. First, the I-T relationship is frequently soft as well, because many intermediaries lack mandatory governance authority; however, orchestrator support often strengthens intermediary influence, "hardening" the I-T relationship. Second, an orchestrator may gain some leverage over intermediaries by providing material and ideational support.

This assumption stands in contrast to the P-A model. A principal may select agents solely on the basis of complementary capabilities; because the principal has hard means to control agents, including enforceable contracts, it need not be concerned whether agents have correlated goals. In P-A relationships, then, the principal's main challenge is to monitor the agent's behavior, so that it may apply controls in case of shirking. In contrast, because orchestrators enlist intermediaries on a voluntary basis, correlated goals are central to their relationship. The orchestrator's main challenge, then, is to identify a potential intermediary's true goals. To be sure, O-I conflicts can arise. For example, intermediaries also pursue institutional interests, such as maximizing budgets and social standing, which may divert them from IGO goals. In addition, each actor may claim credit (or divert blame) for its own contributions to achieving shared goals. Nonetheless, goal correlation normally outweighs these divisions.

Finally, we note that an "information asymmetry" assumption plays a major role in P-A models, but is not central or essential in O-I-T. If it were not for some lack of information, a principal could simply use its hard powers to contract with and enforce an arrangement with its agent; the P-A problem would then dissolve. The orchestration problem, by contrast, does not depend on any lack of information, but rather is driven by the incentives and capacities of the orchestrator, intermediary and target.

The spare model presented here does not reflect all the complexities of real-world O-I-T relationships. For one thing, when an orchestrator, intermediary and/or target are collective bodies, their memberships may overlap. For example, an IGO (O) may participate in a public-private partnership (I); or business firms (T) may participate in an industry association (I). In a case of "managing states," certain states (T) may be members of an IGO (O); indeed, in a multilateral organization like the WHO, all target states are members of the IGO. These relationships do not undercut the model unless they render a pair of actors (O/I, I/T or O/T) identical, including in their individual and collective roles. In real-world relationships, moreover, the same parties may take on different roles. The orchestrator in one context may be the intermediary in another, and vice versa. And in chains of orchestration, as noted above, intermediaries become orchestrators of sub-intermediaries. Yet these variations are embellishments; the basic O-I-T model represents the core of orchestration.

#### **4. Explaining IGO Orchestration**

Under what conditions do IGOs engage in orchestration rather than alternative modes of governance? In this section we advance several hypotheses to address this question. We first introduce four general hypotheses, which apply to orchestration by any governance actor; these follow from the assumptions of the O-I-T model. We then introduce two hypotheses tailored to IGO orchestration. These reflect the fact that IGOs' incentives and opportunities to engage in orchestration may be constrained by their simultaneous position as agents of member states. Each hypothesis identifies a circumstance that increases the probability that orchestration will occur. Table 2 summarizes our hypotheses.

<b>General Hypotheses:</b>	<b>Governance actors are more likely to orchestrate when:</b>
<i>Orchestrator Capabilities</i>	they lack certain capabilities to achieve their goals through other governance modes.
<i>Intermediary Availability</i>	intermediaries with correlated goals and complementary capabilities are available.
<i>Orchestrator Focality</i>	they are focal within the relevant issue area.
<i>Orchestrator Entrepreneurship</i>	their organizational structure and culture encourage policy entrepreneurship.
<b>IGO-Specific Hypotheses:</b>	<b>IGOs are more likely to orchestrate when:</b>
<i>Goal Divergence</i>	there is divergence of goals i) among their member states or ii) between member states and the IGO.
<i>State Oversight</i>	member states have weak institutional control mechanisms.

**Table 2: Hypotheses on Orchestration**

### **General Hypotheses**

*Orchestrator capabilities hypothesis:* Governance actors are more likely to orchestrate when they lack certain capabilities needed to achieve their goals through other governance modes.

The complementary capabilities assumption implies that potential orchestrators with extensive governance capabilities have little need to enlist intermediaries. More specifically, governance actors will be unlikely to orchestrate when they have extensive rule-making authority in a given domain (regulatory competence), *and* have sufficient operational resources to implement their rules and policies (operational capacity), *and* enjoy taken-for-granted legitimacy vis-à-vis the targets of regulation or public goods production (Genschel & Zangl 2011). Actors with such capabilities can effectively govern unilaterally, with no need for intermediaries. Orchestration becomes more likely to the extent governance actors lack any of these key capabilities.

At the other extreme, governance actors that possess no regulatory competence, operational capacity or legitimacy will be unable to orchestrate, as they have nothing to offer to intermediaries. Most governance actors, however, fall between these extremes: they are deficient in certain capabilities, yet possess sufficient regulatory competence, operational capacity and/or legitimacy to enlist and support intermediaries. In short, governance actors with moderate capabilities both need intermediaries and have something to offer them. The

precise level and mix of the orchestrator's capabilities determines whether orchestration is more or less successful.

In terms of IGOs, the orchestrator capabilities hypothesis helps explain why UNEP, with its important but limited governance capabilities, has been a leader in the use of orchestration (Abbott & Snidal 2010), whereas organizations such as the World Bank or NATO, with much greater capabilities, as well as institutions with very limited capabilities, such as the International Whaling Commission, only occasionally engage in orchestration.

The OHCHR provides an example of a governance actor that offsets a moderate capability deficit through orchestration. Possessing some regulatory competence and considerable legitimacy in the field of human rights, the UN can set human rights standards and criticize states that violate them. Yet OHCHR lacks the operational capability to monitor human rights practices on the ground. Moreover, doing so would bring it into additional conflicts with member states. To bridge this gap, OHCHR relies on information provided by human rights NGOs, such as Amnesty International (Martens 2004); these organizations also build support within member states for subsequent OHCHR action. To facilitate information provision, OHCHR orchestrates NGO monitoring. It established a Civil Society Section as an entry point for NGOs and a platform for advice and assistance. Its "Handbook for Civil Society" provides detailed information on how to submit complaints to human rights treaty bodies. OHCHR field offices facilitate monitoring by local NGOs through training, hosting meetings and financial assistance (see also Tallberg, this project).

*Intermediary availability hypothesis:* Governance actors are more likely to orchestrate when intermediaries with correlated goals and complementary capabilities are available.

This hypothesis follows from the correlated goals and complementary capabilities assumptions. As to goals, it is central to the O-I-T model (in contrast to P-A) that orchestrators have no hard means to force intermediaries to participate in governance. Rather, orchestrators must identify and enlist intermediaries whose basic goals are strongly correlated with their own. It follows that orchestrators will search for potential intermediaries that have demonstrated correlated goals, e.g., by pursuing such goals without external support. As to capabilities, in the O-I-T model (consistent with but not central to P-A) orchestrators lack elements of regulatory competence, operational capacity and/or legitimacy; the availability of intermediaries that can provide those missing capabilities is thus crucial.

Note that "availability" may be either actual or potential. Orchestrators may use their convening power, assistance and other forms of support and steering to create or develop intermediaries with appropriate goals and capabilities, or to modify the goals and capabilities of existing organizations. In addition, some apparently available intermediaries may not be so in fact because of concern for their independence. Amnesty International, for example, strives to maintain "a certain distance" (Martens 2004: 1065) from IGOs to protect its reputation for independence and non-corruptibility.

Actors are more likely to orchestrate when there are multiple suitable intermediaries. If there is only one potential intermediary, an orchestrator will be in a weaker "bargaining position"

and may find it more costly to enlist that actor's support. If there are multiple possible intermediaries, the orchestrator's position will be stronger, making orchestration more attractive. For similar reasons, a potential orchestrator may be wary of enlisting a single powerful intermediary (e.g., WHO enlisting the Gates Foundation) for fear of becoming the orchestratee.

The intermediary availability hypotheses helps explain why IGOs operating in issue areas such as human rights and environmental protection engage more extensively in orchestration than those operating in international security and finance. In human rights and environment, there exist numerous potential intermediaries, especially NGOs such as World Wildlife Fund and Amnesty International, which possess highly correlated goals and complementary capabilities, such as local access and technical expertise. In security and finance, in contrast, such intermediaries are less common; many potential intermediaries, such as financial industry associations, have divergent goals, lack necessary capabilities, or both.

*Orchestrator Focality Hypothesis:* Governance actors are more likely to orchestrate when they are focal within the relevant issue area.

The orchestration assumption implies that an orchestrator is the focal actor in a governance domain, in the sense of being the single and uncontested governance leader; no other actor is recognized as occupying the same position within the issue area. In the real world, however, focality is a matter of degree. Some actors face fewer competitors and less contestation in relevant domains than others. We hypothesize that focal actors can more easily enlist intermediaries than can non-focal actors; they are therefore more likely to engage in orchestration.

Focality may result from a variety of attributes.<sup>5</sup> For example, the IMF may be focal in finance because of its authority; the World Bank in development because of its operational competence and resources; the International Atomic Energy Agency in nuclear affairs because of its expertise; and the UN Secretary-General in international politics because of its widely accepted legitimacy. Historical path-dependency can also increase focality: the first IGO in a domain tends to remain central to it. Thus, the ITU, founded in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union, is still a key institution in the area of technical communication. Even personal characteristics of IGO leaders may contribute to focality. Skillful and charismatic leaders command recognition, allowing them to be effective orchestrators even if their organization is relatively weak (Cox and Jacobson 1973: 20).

However, focality can be lost as such attributes become more widely shared. For example, WHO has long been focal in the field of global health, and has been active in orchestration. Today, however, many governance actors have entered the field of global health, including the World Bank and the Gates Foundation, both with ample resources and expertise. As a consequence, WHO is no longer single and uncontested, and finds orchestration far more difficult (Hanrieder, this project).

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<sup>5</sup> As discussed under the orchestrator capabilities hypothesis, some highly focal actors may not need to orchestrate; this hypothesis emphasizes actors with sufficient capabilities to be focal, but not such complete capabilities that orchestration is unnecessary.



Focality facilitates orchestration in several ways. First, focality makes it easier for an orchestrator to convene potential intermediaries, enlist their support, and initiate orchestration. Successful orchestration, in turn helps the orchestrator maintain or even increase its focality: a mutually supportive dynamic operates between focality and orchestration. It follows that governance actors may pursue orchestration as a strategy to increase their focality. Second, focality provides for consistent orchestration. Because all intermediaries take material and ideational guidance and support from a single orchestrator, their activities are more likely to be coordinated and mutually reinforcing. Third, focality makes clear which governance actor potential intermediaries should turn to for support, reducing transaction costs; this gives the orchestrator greater influence over intermediaries than if they could “shop” among multiple potential orchestrators (Mattli, this project). Finally, focality increases the likelihood that successful orchestration will be attributed to the orchestrator, facilitating credit claiming. This makes orchestration more rewarding for the orchestrator and hence more likely to be used.

In contrast, the presence of multiple orchestrators makes it difficult for each of them to attract intermediaries, orchestrate them effectively, and claim credit for governance successes. It also increases the risk of orchestration failure through competing, uncoordinated initiatives. The provision of health care in Somalia provides an example (Schäferhoff 2011). With virtually no functioning health system, NGOs provide most health services in the country. Yet no IGO is sufficiently focal to orchestrate them. An unwieldy alliance of public and private actors, the so-called “Coordination of International Support to Somalis” (CISS), therefore acts as orchestrator. CISS includes, inter alia, the World Bank, WHO, OCHA, Somali Donor Group and Somalia NGO Consortium. This “compound orchestrator” confuses intermediaries, complicates decision-making and diffuses responsibility – not a recipe for success.

*Orchestrator Entrepreneurship Hypothesis:* governance actors are more likely to engage in orchestration when their organizational structure and culture encourage policy entrepreneurship.

For any level of focality and capability, the willingness and ability of potential orchestrators to enlist, support, promote and otherwise engage with intermediaries will vary with their organizational characteristics. Because orchestration often involves innovative relationships, the relevant characteristics include skill, a willingness to take risks, and creativity. Accordingly, we hypothesize that governance actors will be more likely to orchestrate to the extent their organizational structure and culture encourage policy entrepreneurship.

Orchestration is not yet a routine mode of governance used widely by IGOs; moreover, IGOs vary widely in the degree to which they encourage policy entrepreneurship among their officials. Many organizational and cultural characteristics may stimulate entrepreneurship; we merely suggest some possibilities here. As to organizational structure, orchestration will be facilitated when an IGO enjoys sufficient independence from member states to make policy entrepreneurship possible – as discussed further below – and has an administrative apparatus capable of carrying out the necessary activities (Abbott & Snidal 1998). Characteristics such as administrative decentralization and informal decision-making procedures may give entrepreneurial officials greater opportunities to innovate. As to organizational culture, personnel policies and organizational practices that support and reward initiative,

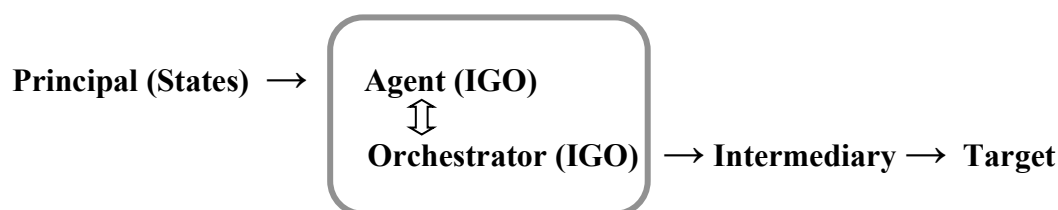
experimentation and risk taking, as well as openness to learning from other IGOs' experience (Barnett & Finnemore 1999), promote entrepreneurship. Successful orchestration may further develop these attributes in a positive feedback loop. Conversely, orchestration is hindered by a culture that prizes closure, continuity and routine, and promotes legalistic rule following.

The entrepreneurship hypothesis helps explain why an IGO such as UNEP is more heavily engaged in orchestration than the ILO. In principle, orchestration of worker and human rights NGOs would be a natural complement to the ILO's traditional labor standards procedures. In practice, however, the ILO has not engaged with such actors and has been reluctant to adopt new techniques, hampered by the vested interests created by its tripartite structure and constrained by bureaucratic routines (Baccaro & Mele 2010; see also Baccaro, this project). By contrast, UNEP is considerably younger; vested interests have had less time to solidify, and organizational routines less time to turn into sacred traditions (Weaver 2008: 37). UNEP has engaged actively with business and civil society as a leader in orchestration (Abbott & Snidal 2010), led by its relatively independent and entrepreneurial Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, located away from headquarters in Paris.

### IGO-Specific Hypotheses

IGOs are fundamentally agents of their member states as (collective) principal. They exist because states found it in their interest to delegate certain tasks and authorities to them, and they operate in the shadow of member state control. However, states may grant IGOs some autonomy from the outset, to increase their ability to achieve member state objectives (Abbott & Snidal 1998), and IGO officials and organs may gain additional autonomy over time – including through orchestration – allowing them to pursue their independent objectives.

IGO orchestration thus brings together the P-A and O-I-T models, delegation and orchestration: IGOs are simultaneously agent and orchestrator, as depicted in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: IGOs as Agents and Orchestrators**

The likelihood of IGOs engaging in orchestration, then, depends crucially on their relationship to member states. We advance two hypotheses relating to this relationship.

*Goal Divergence Hypothesis:* IGOs are more likely to orchestrate when there is a divergence of goals: (i) among their member states, and/or (ii) between member states and the IGO.

The two forms of goal divergence identified in this hypothesis can be characterized as (i) horizontal, among member states, and (ii) vertical, between member states and an IGO. They

affect both an IGO's demand for orchestration as a tool of governance and its ability to engage in or supply orchestration.<sup>6</sup>

First, both horizontal and vertical goal divergence increase IGO demand for orchestration, holding capabilities and other factors constant. When states' goals diverge from one another, states are less likely to reach agreement to grant approval for IGOs to pursue hard modes of governance. Similarly, when member states' goals diverge from those of IGO officials, states are less likely to approve hard governance. In either case, IGO officials will seek alternative, soft modes of governance, such as orchestration, which do not require explicit state consent.

Second, goal divergence among member states increases the ability of IGOs to engage in orchestration. Provided the orchestration activities undertaken by IGO officials and organs are within the mandate of the organization, they are presumptively valid until disapproved by member states. However, goal divergence among member states makes it difficult for them to block the IGO's forays into orchestration. Said another way, IGO officials and organs will be able to engage in orchestration, without explicit state approval, so long as a sufficient number of states accept their actions.<sup>7</sup>

Orchestration under these conditions can be seen as an example of IGO agency slack with respect to state principals, especially if IGO officials pursue narrow organizational interests, distributive benefits or substantive goals outside the organization's mandate. On the other hand, orchestration may allow IGO officials to pursue the organization's mandate when goal divergence or other factors lead states to renege on agreed levels of authority and support; in short, IGO officials can use orchestration to discipline "principal slack."

The goal divergence hypothesis suggests that multilateral IGOs are especially likely to utilize orchestration. Their highly heterogeneous membership limits the ability of multilateral IGOs to engage in hard governance, but enables them to build coalitions with particular states sufficient to allow orchestration. In addition, a large number of members hinders state control over the IGO by increasing costs of inter-state communication and coordination. For example, UN officials and agencies have used orchestration to promote the Millennium Development Goals, enlisting and supporting a range of NGOs and other partners to mobilize public opinion and pressure governments to meet the Goals. Because of the wide goal divergence among them, states could not agree to adopt the Goals as binding commitments; this gave UN officials and organs, committed to the Goals, a strong incentive to engage in orchestration and other soft modes of governance. At the same time, UN officials could use goal divergence to build coalitions in support of its agenda and block member state interference.

*State Oversight Hypothesis:* IGOs are more likely to engage in orchestration when their member states have weak institutional control mechanisms.

Orchestration allows an IGO to pursue governance goals that conflict with those of (some of) its member states. At any level of horizontal and vertical goal divergence, then, the likelihood

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<sup>6</sup> If there were no goal divergence of either kind, states could simply delegate to an IGO sufficient authority to achieve their shared goals; orchestration would be unnecessary, except to remedy an IGO capability deficit.

<sup>7</sup> The degree of support required depends on the decision rules of the particular IGO, as discussed in connection with the following hypothesis. Issue salience may also be relevant: on issues which member states do not regard as significant, an IGO may be able to engage in Orchestration regardless of horizontal goal divergence.

of IGO orchestration depends crucially on the institutional mechanisms by which states exercise oversight and control over IGO officials and organs. IGO orchestration is more likely to the extent that member states have weak mechanisms of oversight and control.

The mechanisms contributing to effective oversight and control are well known from the P-A literature (Hawkins et al. 2006: 20-22). Control mechanisms such as rule-based delegation,<sup>8</sup> sophisticated monitoring arrangements, low cost options for overruling decisions by IGO officials and organs, and costly sanctions all constrain IGOs' room for independent action, reducing the likelihood of orchestration. Conversely, discretion-based delegation, lax monitoring, consensus-based and other deadlock-prone intergovernmental decision-making and voting procedures, and lack of effective sanctions increase IGOs' independence, broadening the scope for orchestration, all else equal.

The degree of autonomy granted to IGO officials and organs is particularly important. For example, an IGO secretariat that has been granted some autonomous decision making authority is more able, and thus more likely, to engage in orchestration than one possessing no discretion. Similarly, a secretariat implementing a broad organizational mandate can more easily orchestrate than one with a narrow mandate that does not specify orchestration.

Institutional control mechanisms may vary across issue areas. States are more likely to impose strict control on IGO independence in core areas of national sovereignty, such as defense or fiscal policy, than in low politics areas such as environmental protection, development assistance or disaster relief. The examples given in this paper suggest that IGOs such as UNEP and WHO turn more often to orchestration than do security IGOs such as the Security Council or NATO, or monetary institutions such as the IMF.

## **5. Preview of the Project**

In addition to the framework paper, this project includes twelve empirical papers, abstracts of which are included as an appendix. Many of the empirical contributions use case study evidence to examine how IGO orchestration unfolds in different issue areas and across time; others use comparative research designs to analyze the conditions under which IGOs prefer orchestration to alternative modes of governance. To ensure coherence and comparability, all empirical contributions follow the unified concept of orchestration developed in this paper and investigate the common hypotheses in Table 2. These papers address a wide range of IGOs, from the supranational institutions of the EU to highly formalized intergovernmental organizations such as the WTO and ILO, to more informal member-driven organizations such as the G20. They also cover issue areas ranging from security to trade, development to finance, and human rights to the environment.

The empirical contribution of the project is partly exploratory and partly hypothesis testing. Because orchestration has not previously been analyzed systematically, one important goal of the project is simply to identify whether and how orchestration is used (or not) in different areas. The case studies also provide evidence on the development and effectiveness (if any) of orchestration over time. Such tasks are underappreciated in contemporary IR scholarship, but

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<sup>8</sup> In rule-based delegation, principals instruct agents exactly how they are to pursue their delegated tasks (Hawkins et al. 2006: 27).

they are an essential precursor to more extensive theoretical and empirical analysis. Of course, the project goes beyond description; our conceptual and theoretical developments are reflected in our hypotheses, which the case studies apply. Although we presented those hypotheses above using examples from the empirical papers, the basic theory was developed and drafted before the case studies were prepared. However, the project has been dynamic, developing through interaction between theory and data. Thus, we have refined the hypotheses in light of the cases; we have also modified the emphasis of the theory. For example, the theory originally focused on bypassing states (i.e., orchestrating to address private actors), but as the project unfolded we found that managing states was also important. Incorporating state management extended the concept of orchestration and its implications for international politics.

Although this approach could be viewed as compromising the testing aspects of the project – because the evidence is not strictly independent of theory development – that risk is more than offset by the wide range of cases used and the greater breadth of the resulting theory. Moreover, the fact that orchestration is relatively new and still developing means that the available evidence is biased against our hypotheses, as IGOs may not yet be using orchestration in areas (and for reasons) where it would be valuable. Nevertheless, our hypotheses should point towards the relative frequency of orchestration across different circumstances, even if orchestration is not used as intensively as the theory predicts. In summary, while we do not want to overstate the extent to which the following cases constitute definitive “tests” of our theoretical argument, they do provide telling information, both in showing the prevalence of orchestration and in explaining it.

Although we leave discussion of the empirical findings to the concluding chapter, we briefly foreshadow two issues here. The first is effectiveness. Even if orchestration is widely used by IGOs, it is possible that orchestration is not effective in terms of achieving the intended policy goal vis-à-vis the targets. For example, an IGO might use orchestration for an organizational purpose without having significant impact on the target’s behavior. Moreover, effectiveness is difficult to evaluate, because one must determine what goals are being pursued and consider the counterfactuals: what might have happened without orchestration and what alternative governance strategies might have achieved. Such factors are easier to evaluate in specific cases, where experts with detailed case knowledge can consider such contextual circumstances. Thus, we expect to address the effectiveness of orchestration in the conclusion, after cumulating the evidence from individual cases.

The question of effectiveness also engages normative issues raised by orchestration. We have presented our analysis in positive, social scientific terms, asking when IGOs are likely to adopt orchestration as an effective tool of governance -- yet our tentative enthusiasm for orchestration implicitly assumes that IGOs will orchestrate to good ends. But this begs questions such as “effective for what?” and “effective for whom?” In addition to the possibility that orchestration might be used for IGOs’ organizational self-interest rather than substantive missions, it might even be used by a nefarious orchestrator working through, e.g., al Qaida. Even where there is general consensus that orchestration is good, major differences often exist among relevant stakeholders (IGOs, states, civil society and even the targets) about what goals to pursue. Moreover, insofar as orchestration enhances the capability of IGOs, it

raises questions about their accountability, as in the “democratic deficit” debate. These issues are made more complex because the indirectness and softness of orchestration renders accountability more difficult to judge and to implement. Of course, any evaluation of accountability should be conducted not only in terms of a democratic ideal, but also in comparison with the realistic alternatives, including traditional IGO operations, the failure of international cooperation or of the imposition of rules by powerful states.

Two other limitations of orchestration should also be noted. First, orchestration is an especially important strategy for IGOs that lack the capabilities for stronger modes of governance. Thus, even if orchestration is potentially quite effective, it may still represent a second-best solution as compared to the traditional (but frequently unavailable) hierarchical ideal. However, there is also no presumption that orchestration is always second-best. Just because orchestration is indirect and soft does not mean that it can never outperform hard, direct governance. Second, orchestration does not change the fundamental fact that states have much greater material capacity than IGOs, as well as ultimate authority over IGOs. Orchestration allows IGOs to pursue collective goals – of states, non-state actors and IGOs – at lower sovereignty costs to states; it also allows IGOs to engage non-state actors in ways that may shift the goals of states or change their domestic political constraints over time. The glue that holds orchestrated arrangements together is the common interests created by globalization and the needs shared by states, IGOs and other actors to cooperate in managing their changing environment. That said, orchestration thus far represents only a modest change in the allocation of authority in the international system.

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## Appendix 2 – Abstracts

### **Orchestration: Global Governance through Intermediaries**

*Kenneth W. Abbott, Philipp Genschel, Duncan Snidal, Bernhard Zangl*

This paper develops a conceptual framework for analyzing Orchestration, a mode of governance that is widely used by international organizations (IGO), but is rarely discussed in the literature. In Orchestration, an IGO enlists and supports one or more intermediary actors to address target actors in pursuit of IGO governance goals. The paper conceptualizes Orchestration as a mode of governance that is both indirect and soft. Orchestration is therefore to be distinguished from governance by hierarchy, which addresses the targets of governance directly through hard governance instruments; from governance by collaboration, which is soft but direct; and from governance by delegation, which is indirect but hard. Based on this conceptualization, the paper develops a framework for analyzing the conditions under which IGOs rely on Orchestration, as well as a related set of hypotheses.

### **From Double-Delegation to Orchestration: Regulatory Networks in the EU**

*Michael Blauburger & Berthold Rittberger*

Governance through EU regulatory networks is a compelling example of a “soft” governance mode, which corresponds to the definition of Orchestration: The European Commission enlists regulatory networks as “intermediaries” to achieve governance goals, rather than pursuing these governance goals by itself through hierarchical steering. Our contribution addresses two key issues central to the orchestration framework: Why does one of the most powerful regulatory authorities in the realm of international politics – the European Commission – opt for Orchestration at all? Why do patterns of Orchestration in the EU vary from very close to rather loose relations between Orchestrator (Commission), intermediary (regulatory networks) and target (national regulatory authorities)? To answer these questions, we employ two illustrative case studies investigating the European Competition Network (ECN) and the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC). The observed patterns of Orchestration will be explained by combining the capability deficit hypothesis and the goal divergence hypothesis. In both cases, Orchestration serves to compensate for the Commission’s lack of capabilities to directly implement EU policies. Persistent goal divergence in the field of telecommunications explains the resistance of EU member states against closer ties of the Commission and BEREC, whereas goal convergence was a precondition for the Commission’s willingness to decentralize EU antitrust enforcement.

### **Orchestrating Private Enforcement: When, How, and Why International Organizations Mobilize Compliance Constituencies**

*Jonas Tallberg*

The most broadly shared conclusion in scholarship on dispute settlement, legalization, and compliance over the past two decades is probably the virtue of granting private individuals and organizations formal access to international courts and tribunals. Yet, for all its virtues, private access is not a universally available and effective institutional design option. While some international treaties provide for formal private access, these procedures neither extend to all international organizations (IGOs) where they would be useful for enforcement

purposes, nor are they typically optimally effective where they exist. This paper demonstrates that IGOs sometimes compensate for these limits in private access by turning to a strategy of Orchestration. Where formal procedures for private access are lacking, Orchestration offers a *substitute*, as when IOs independently create informal mechanisms for compliance complaints. Where such formal procedures are present, but private actors face resource barriers, Orchestration offers a *complement*, as when IGOs provide funding and training to potential litigants. Addressing three central hypotheses about the prevalence of Orchestration, this paper suggests that we are more likely to find orchestration of private enforcement where: (a) IGOs lack sufficient capabilities to effectively enforce compliance themselves; (b) private actors as prospective intermediaries hold privileged information on compliance; and (c) IGOs enjoy a level of institutional autonomy from member states that allow them to act independently. The viability of these hypotheses is demonstrated through four sets of coupled case studies, each contrasting two IGOs within the same policy field.

## **Orchestrating Transparency**

*Xinyuan Dai*

International organizations (IGOs) perform important functions to facilitate cooperation among states. To do so, however, IGOs need information about states' policies and behavior. In particular, they need such information in order to enforce the rules agreed by states. Yet, where and how does information come about? Do IGOs generate this information by themselves? If they do, how do they do it? If they don't, who does? In the latter case, what is IGOs' function? What do IGOs do to improve transparency? As the process to improve transparency involves different tasks such as collect, analyze, verify, and further disseminate information, do IGOs perform any or all of these tasks? Empirically, many IGOs do not do this entirely by themselves. Instead, they orchestrate. This paper examines the variation in the level of Orchestration and the type of intermediaries involved across diverse categories of IGOs. Building on the Orchestration framework as in Abbott et al. (2012), this paper argues that the basic problem structure – especially 1) the availability of intermediaries and 2) the divergence of interests and goals between IGOs and member states – determines the likelihood of IGO Orchestration of non-state intermediaries. A comparative case study of diverse IGOs, including the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Trade Organization, as well as numerous environmental IGOs and human rights IGOs provides an illustrative corroboration of the central argument.

## **Obstacles to Orchestration: The Case of the World Trade Organization**

*Manfred Elsig*

While Orchestration seems to be on the rise in respect to a number of international organizations, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is today largely absent when it comes to applying Orchestration tools. This was not always the case. The paper analyses the low (but varying) degrees of Orchestration across WTO activities and over time. The paper provides an explanation for the existing obstacles to Orchestration and investigates the conditions under which Orchestration may emerge in the WTO. The paper suggests that reluctance to orchestrate is surprising in light of growing demand and with respect to a number of Orchestration hypotheses. It then turns to discuss necessary conditions for (and against) Orchestration in the WTO context and argues that in particular oversight and goal divergence prove pivotal for the low degree of Orchestration. It is shown that WTO Members' control over the Director-General and the Secretariat as well as preference divergence among

powerful WTO Members has increased over time. As a result, Orchestration activities have declined. The paper discusses evidence drawn from Orchestration processes that occurred during the Uruguay Round negotiations in relation to endorsing international norm-setting organizations (e.g., Codex Alimentarius Commission and the International Standardization Organization) and contrasts these findings with a recent case on the so-called Friends of Fish initiative.

## **The G-20 as Orchestrator in International Financial Regulation**

*Lora Anne Viola*

The G20 has emerged as a central player in global financial regulation, but since its creation there has been ongoing discussion about what place the G-20 has in global governance, with characterizations ranging from a “forum for dialogue,” to “global crisis responder,” to “steering committee.” I argue that the G-20 is most usefully understood as the Orchestrator of global financial regulation. First, I show that the G-20’s primary governance mode is to enlist and support third party intermediaries, in the form of major international financial institutions, for the purpose of improving the regulation of targets. The G-20 serves as a focal institution that has the power to convene and coordinate intermediary IGOs, to influence the regulatory agenda, to offer regulatory IFIs resources, and to promote target compliance. Second, I explain why the G-20 engages in orchestration instead of direct or hard forms of governance. The availability of intermediaries and the perceived need for a coordinating body, only moderate convergence of state interests on regulatory goals, and the complementarity of G-20 and IFI capacities explain why the G-20 is likely to engage in Orchestration. Third, I investigate why the G-20, and not the IMF, plays the role of Orchestrator. I argue that the G-20’s informal and weak institutional structure makes it more flexible and responsive to state needs than the IMF, and its inclusion of powerful state decision-makers makes it both more effective and less costly to use. Finally, I consider implications of Orchestration for the effectiveness of international financial regulation.

## **Efficient Orchestration? The Role of the Global Environment Facility in Climate Finance**

*Erin Graham and Alexander Thompson*

International climate change agreements require industrialized countries to channel aid to the developing world for climate-related projects. These transfers are governed by an unusual arrangement whereby the Global Environment Facility (GEF) channels funds through various other IGOs—the World Bank, UNEP, UNDP and other “implementing agencies”—which in turn develop and implement projects on the ground. The concept and techniques of Orchestration outlined by the framework authors helps us understand this complicated governance arrangement. The GEF, as Orchestrator, coordinates and assists various intermediaries (the implementing agencies) to effect change in target states (developing-country recipients). Important aspects of this outcome can be explained in terms of the framework paper’s theoretical conjectures. We investigate four hypotheses: capabilities deficit, intermediary availability, focality, and goal divergence. The first two work well to explain why the GEF and its implementing agencies mutually benefit by taking advantage of each other’s comparative advantages. While the GEF has access to funds, it lacks the knowledge and capacity to implement projects in the developing world and therefore relies on intermediaries better suited to this task. Goal divergence across states also helps us explain why we see Orchestration in this case but the GEF’s preeminent role cannot be explained in

terms of its focality. We extend the analysis to consider the question of effectiveness. We find the relationship between the GEF and implementing agencies, an apparently efficient division of labor on paper, has become politicized in practice and that the GEF now faces competition from other potential Orchestrators, especially the World Bank.

### **Governing Where Focality is Low: How UNEP Uses Orchestration to Expand its Regulatory Frontier**

*Klaus Dingwerth and Cornis van der Lugt*

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is one of the most active Orchestrators among international organizations. The paper argues that most of UNEP's Orchestration in its work program activities with business and industry took place in the late 1990s and 2000s. It zooms in on two examples, namely UNEP's role in the establishment of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the UN-backed Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI). Discussing why UNEP moved towards use of Orchestration in the 1990s and 2000s, we argue that only two variables discussed in the framework paper – namely the availability of intermediaries and the capabilities of UNEP to achieve its goals – are plausible candidates for an explanation. While intermediaries became more readily available as a result of shifts in the normative discourse and advances in information and communication technologies, UNEP's traditional capabilities to achieve its goals with more conventional means were less relevant in that the organization started to focus more on implementation by non-governmental actors and ventured into new issue areas, notably corporate social responsibility. This trend made searching for adequate intermediaries in the sustainability ('environment plus') field strategically important. Other factors such as IGO agency, member state oversight, goal divergence among member states and focality, in contrast, have remained more or less constant since the establishment of UNEP in 1974. In the case of focality, the two cases discussed even suggest a negative relation: UNEP made the most extensive use of orchestration precisely in those areas in which it could less obviously claim focality.

### **Orchestrating a Growing Health Field: The Differential Impact of New Actors on the Authority of the World Health Organization**

*Tine Hanrieder*

This article examines how the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Orchestrating role has been reshaped by the proliferation of actors in the international health field. Lacking the material capabilities to perform its technical functions on its own, the WHO traditionally draws on its formal authority and convening power to mobilize other international organizations and non-governmental associations for research, surveillance and technical assistance activities. Yet as this article demonstrates, the growing density of the health field since the 1980s has played out differently on the WHO's ability to orchestrate. Comparing the domains of epidemiological surveillance and technical assistance, I argue that IGO focality is critical for recruiting new actors as intermediaries. As the WHO's recent empowerment in health surveillance demonstrates, new intermediaries can become powerful allies that allow a focal IGO to engage in Orchestration, and even to gain greater autonomy from member state oversight. By contrast, as the WHO lacks focality in the developmental domain, its attempts to orchestrate health assistance are increasingly frustrated. Additionally, states have used new exit options to strengthen their oversight over the WHO through project-specific contracts. Thus, this within-case comparison not only illuminates the inter-organizational dynamics

underlying Orchestration, but also points out how focality, intermediary availability and state oversight interact to either reinforce or undermine IGO Orchestration.

### **Orchestration *Pianissimo*: A Field Experiment on Global Standards Combating Anonymous Incorporation**

*Michael Findley and Dan Nielson*

In order to fight money laundering and terrorist financing, the international Financial Action Task Force (FATF) employs the Orchestration technique of endorsement: in its extensive country reports it publicly praises governments when their bureaucrats receive certification from a private for-profit intermediary, the Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (ACAMS). ACAMS trains and certifies private incorporation agents based on FATF standards. The FATF is the unchallenged focal body for regulation in the field, and while it combines strong legitimacy and regulatory capacity with an entrepreneurial culture, it has very limited operational capacity relative to its global remit. Proceeding from these observations, we isolate a central question in the Orchestration research program: under what conditions are IGOs motivated to orchestrate? After receiving IRB clearance, we undertook a randomized field experiment, where we sent more than 1,000 emails requesting confidential incorporation to private corporate service providers in 160 countries. The outcome of interest was subjects' demands for notarized identification documents as part of the incorporation process, a requirement of FATF and encouraged by ACAMS. Treatment conditions varied the information provided to firms about international corporate transparency standards, specifically comparing the effects of a placebo condition with no information about standards to treatment conditions with explicit mention of (1) FATF rules, (2) ACAMS standards, and (3) the combination of FATF and ACAMS requirements. The results suggest that incorporation services are significantly more compliant with international law when given information about private ACAMS standards than when informed of FATF standards in conjunction with ACAMS requirements.

### **Orchestrating Peace: The UN Security Council and Resource Wars**

*Virginia Haufler*

The United Nations Security Council is the primary international institution with the responsibility for promoting peace and providing security. It is strictly constrained in what it can do by its mandate, voting structure, and capacity. In response to rising demands for action despite these constraints, the Security Council has sought to achieve its goals through indirect means that mobilize the capabilities of other actors on a voluntary basis—"Orchestrating" a response to conflict. Drawing on the framework paper I explore the plausibility of hypotheses regarding the conditions under which Orchestration is used. I apply these through comparing the Security Council response to resource wars from 1991-2012, specifically its response before, during and after the creation of the Kimberley Process Certification Process for conflict diamonds.

### **The ILO: Orchestration for the 'Social Partners' Only**

*Lucio Baccaro*

Based mainly on archival sources, this paper examines the mixed Orchestration record of the ILO, particularly its limited ability to mobilize the contribution of national and transnational labor NGOs to policies targeting the labor practices of states and multinational companies.



Several factors highlighted in the framework paper by Abbott et al. (2012) would predict an active Orchestrator role for the ILO: a large number of civil society intermediaries; the ILO's focality in the labor field; the lack of command-and-control prerogatives and therefore the need for indirect action; the ILO's legitimacy and technical expertise that make it potentially an attractive partner. Yet the paper argues that these favorable characteristics are trumped by oversight mechanisms that limit secretarial autonomy. The argument is illustrated through case studies of the social labeling and the worst forms of child labor proposals. Both proposals envisaged an institutionalized role for labor NGOs. The two matched-paired case studies feature essentially the same conditions in terms of availability of intermediaries, focality, capabilities, orchestrator agency, and goal divergence. Yet while the former proposal failed to pass, the latter did. The ILO's constituents authorized NGO involvement in the fight against child labor, while they refused to do the same for the social label proposal. The paper examines the internal politics that led to these divergent outcomes. It concludes by arguing that the argument about the primacy of oversight may not be easily generalizable to other IGOs since only in the ILO (some) civil society intermediaries are members of the governing body.

## **Whose Pareto Frontier in Orchestration? Of Winners and Losers in Soft Global Governance**

*Walter Mattli*

My study builds on and complements the Orchestration framework by focusing on the distributional dimension of Orchestration. It accepts that Orchestration is a significant and increasingly widespread phenomenon and asks the question: so what? What are the distributional implications of Orchestration arrangements? The distributional questions are many: For example, where two or more IGOs could potentially lead an Orchestration effort, the question arises of why one particular organization emerges as central Orchestrator. And does it make a difference whether one or the other organization becomes the Orchestrator? Further, Orchestration does not fall into place automatically or easily even after the selection of an Orchestrator. An Orchestrator may include some actors and exclude others. Similarly, intermediaries – be they civil society or private-sector actors - may jostle for position and lobby to be included as (privileged) partners in an Orchestration scheme. The focus of the study is on the relationship between Orchestrator and intermediary and the distributional consequences of this relationship for Orchestrator and intermediaries. The study develops a simple analytical framework that generates four distinct testable conjectures regarding the question of who are the relative winners and losers in Orchestration arrangements and why. These conjectures are tested through a series of hard case studies.

## **Conclusion: Implications for the Theory and Practice of IGOs**

*Kenneth W. Abbott, Philipp Genschel, Duncan Snidal, Bernhard Zangl*

The conclusion is not yet drafted, but we anticipate reviewing and integrating the empirical results in order to comment both on the theoretical arguments and on the practical implications of Orchestration for understanding the role and importance of international organizations. Although we have not made “effectiveness” an explicit focus of the analysis – intentionally so given how difficult it is to find general metrics of effectiveness – we have asked the authors to comment on effectiveness in their individual papers to enable us to cumulate their findings. Having reviewed the draft papers on two separate occasions, we are confident that there are interesting and important implications for both theory and practice.