

Andrea Hlavac (City of Vienna) / Christa Peutl (Federal Chancellery)

Parallel Session IX: Governance

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Against the background of the current economic and financial crisis and the apparent struggling to develop credible strategies against climate change the session on „**Governance**“ addressed the following questions: Are the existing governance mechanism adequate? If not, do we need new structures and/or new responsibilities? Is there a lack of political wish, even if we have structures? What about the link between a voice and learning responsibility? In particular looking at the EU and its newly created institutional set up of the Treaty of Lisbon: what amount of leverage are we not using? How can the concerns of local and regional levels be heard and taken into account of? What about other organisations such as social partner, political parts, NGO’s?

Kurt Bayer (EBRD, London, UK) started with the diagnosis that Western dominated governance has come to an end and argued forcefully in favour of the need for new global governance structures, particularly against the background of globalization and the reduced power of nation states in the context of regulatory frameworks. In Particular, global governance is needed in the following areas: macroeconomic stability, poverty/development, environment/climate, social health, investment/trade/competition and illegal activities. Additionally overarching mechanisms to take into account spillovers into other areas should be set up.

Detlef Sprinz (PIK – Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, Germany) against the background of an analysis of global environmental politics was less convinced of the (positive) impact of international treaties on emission reductions. He identified factors decreasing emissions, such as democracy system variables, and economic factors e.g. such as increase in income leading to a long term increase of emissions. The different factors need careful separation and analysis. Solutions would therefore be “sandwich solutions” combining minimum standard international agreements with market forces fostering industry diffusion.

Peter Dun (BEPA, European Commission, Belgium) concentrated on the role the EU should play in shaping future governance against the particular background of providing a unique and successful model for supranational cooperation and hammering out multilateral solutions. The instruments provided for by the Treaty of Lisbon are a necessary prerequisite for playing a substantial role in future global governance. He underlined the crucial role of political will of the EU-governments. Active support will also be needed by other actors, such as parliaments, regions, social partners and civil society.

Christiana Weidel (The World of NGOs, Austria) underlined that civil society has managed to establish itself as a third global force after the state and the private economy. The EU has managed to give it a strong role as partner. It is important to understand that civil dialogue is institutionalising the process. It is necessary to involve as many different interest groups as possible. The role and responsibility of civil society on the other hand should not be overloaded.