

# The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development: Fostering Transformative Partnerships?

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## The HLPF:

# Fostering Transformative Partnerships by means of orchestration?

## Partnering with(in) the UN: a challenge?

ACUNS Annual Meeting - UN@75: The future of partnership and multilateralism  
 June 27<sup>th</sup> 2020, 14:10-15:10 (UTC+1)

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
 Deutsches Institut für  
 Internationale Politik und Sicherheit

# 1) The HLPF's mandate

Building on the CSD and the Rio+20 outcome document >>

UNGA 2013, A/RES/67/290:

- Provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations
- Follow up and review progress on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs
- **Provide a platform for partnerships**



**RIO+20**  
United Nations Conference  
on Sustainable Development



## PARTNERSHIPS FOR SDGs

[sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships)

REGISTER YOUR INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF THE  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Commit to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
PARTNERSHIPS PLATFORM

SWP

## 2) Research findings on partnerships

- Effectiveness and legitimacy of partnerships vary and are controversial
- Situation before 2015: many did not deliver or only improved over time (see Pattberg et al. 2012; Beisheim & Liese 2014)
- After 2030 Agenda: Set-up meta-governance to enable and foster partnerships & ensure their effectiveness?
- No consensus among actors on necessity, function and form of UN meta-governance & existing one (Partnership Exchange, Partnerships for SDG platform, learning tools) has been rather weak, fragmented and contested (see Beisheim & Simon 2015, 2018)



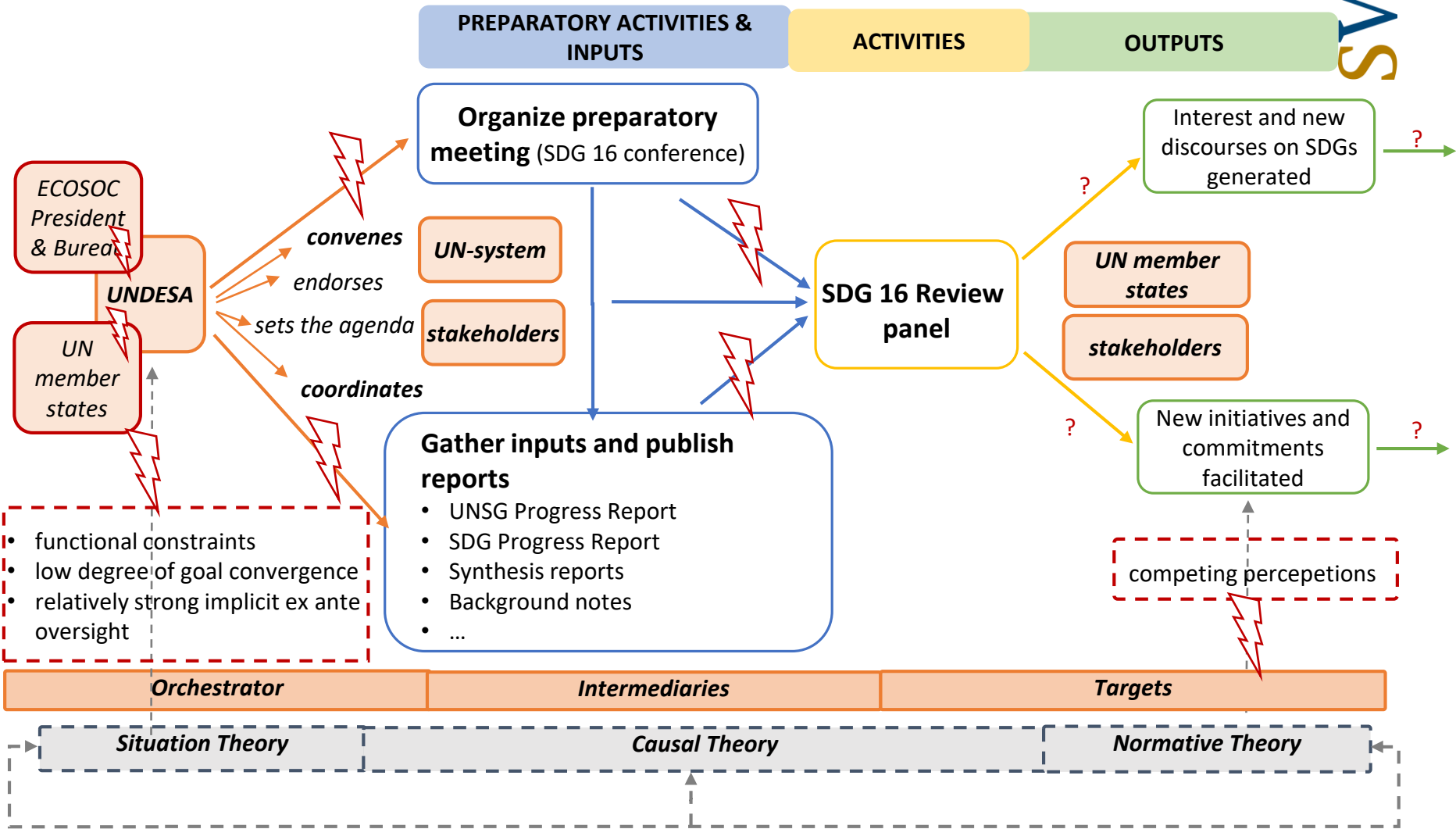
# HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



## 3) The HLPF: orchestrator of partnerships?

- At the time of its creation scholars suggested that the HLPF must orchestrate “by default and design” (see Bernstein 2013; Abbott & Bernstein 2015)
- Orchestration is a soft and indirect governance mode, where one actor, the orchestrator, enlists the voluntary assistance of a second actor, the intermediary, to govern a third actor, the target, in line with the orchestrator’s goals (see Abbott et al 2015, p. 349)
- Case selection: SDG Reviews & SDG 16 Review
- Combined with evaluation studies (see Hansen & Vedung 2010; as applied by Widerberg 2017)

# 4) Who orchestrates how and what?



## 5) Results and Implications

### Preliminary Results:

- HLPF is constrained by institutional and functional limiting factors when trying to orchestrate partnerships
- The role of the HLPF as an orchestrator for partnerships is ambiguous and contested

### Implications for HLPF Review:

- Link between reviews conducted at HLPF and partnerships should be strengthened (> mandate)
- One option: ECOSOC Integration Segment/Partnership Forum



# Thank you!

For SWP publications on sustainable development governance:  
<https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/dossiers/sustainability-climate-and-energy/>

For on-going project work on the HLPF Review:  
<https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/projects/high-level-political-forum-on-sustainable-development-hlpf/>

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