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Assessing Chances of Success for State and NGOs in Rural-Environmental Policy Networks through Quantitative Network Analysis — A Typology of Success Factors

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Abstract

Development requires success and success requires political power. The aim of this analysis is to present a typology of factors that improve the chance of success (power development) for state- or NGO-actors during their policy-making in rural networks. The theoretical basis is the New Institutionalism and power theory. Policy networks are systems of interactions (cooperation or conflicts) expressed through exchange relations like (mis) trust, commitment, and information etc., concerning specific policy issues. A general factors' typology is the result of quantitative network and statistical analysis based on data from 12 policy networks in 8 countries. This will be illustrated using selected country cases and specific features of rural policies. Considering this typology, one can advise an actor to join a network or not. These factors are *actors'* and *network characteristics* combined. This typology includes 5 types: 1) the “lawful” type: An actor with a multidisciplinary team that is lawful but not state-controlled has its optimal chance in “non-crowded” and mono-sectoral networks with intensive state contacts and low importance of state. 2) The “trustworthy” type: A trustworthy actor with multidisciplinary team and various financing resources has its optimal chance in a “non-crowded” network with intensive state contacts and low importance of state. 3) The “minor brother” type: An actor with powerful partners and various financing resources has its optimal chance in a mono-sectoral network with “equal chances” where many possible contacts are still unexplored. 4) The “omniscient” type: An actor who already possesses power can impose its general and scientific information as “important” and control the distribution of general information in a network with no needs of resources. 5) The “re-constructor” type: an actor who already possesses power can impose its general and scientific information as “important” in a network with no scientific links, if this actor receives occasional general information from others and redistributes it.

Keywords: New institutionalism, power factors, rural policy networks