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Transforming the Economy:  
Sustaining Food, Water, Energy and Justice

Theme: Public Policy for Local and Global and Sustainability

Trends in Non-State Actor Influence  
on Environmental Policy

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- As professional and activist, I have seen world progress and errors.
- We all want to work for a just, sustainable anthropocene.
- We wish to share our understanding of the trend in the power of non-state actors, at the UN and in Brazil, resulting in:
  - Reduced prospects for better earth system governance.
  - Weaker environmental justice movements.

# Neoliberal and Ecological Economics?

Symbols & Concepts	World view	Policies	Consequences
Neoliberal Economics: Washington Consensus, 1989. substitutable resources. GNP	Free competition -> productive economy. The state is the problem	Structural reforms: deregulation, privatization and free trade	Disregard for the earth's limits, lower salaries, income concentration
Ecological Economics: The Limits to Growth (Club of Rome), 1972. Resources not substitutable. Carbon footprint.	Reduce emissions by decoupling or degrowing the economy. Strong ecological movements and state.	Carbon tax, enforced environmental regulations, agroecology	Reduced emissions, good earth system governance and income distribution



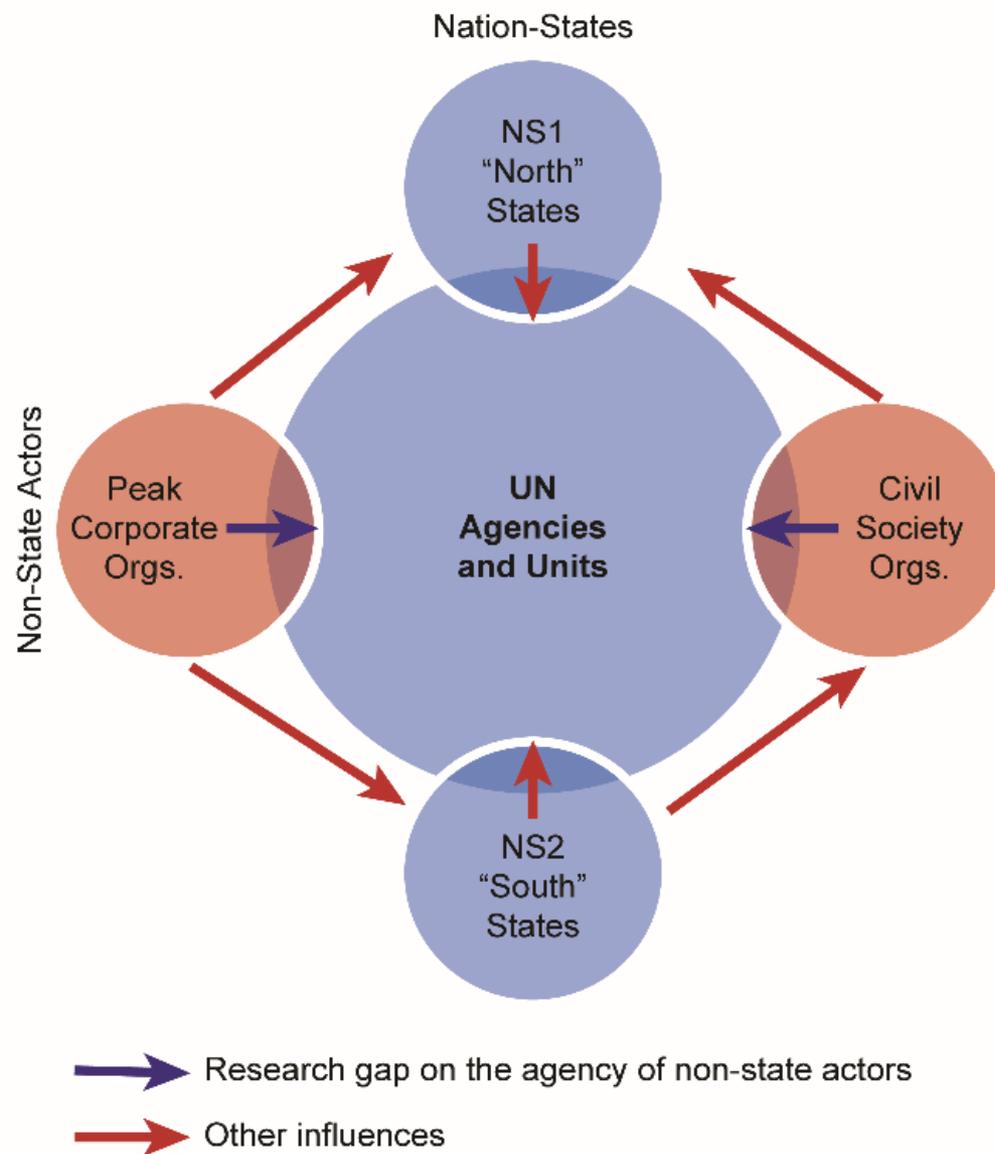
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# **I. CONFLICT ON THE ROLE OF THE STATE AT THE U.N.**

We analyse long-term trends in the roles of non-state actors at the UN and with:

- A simplified stakeholder subsystem typology
- A UN architecture timeline
- Relative stakeholder influence categories
- Non-conclusive evidence on relative stakeholder influence
- A comparison of UN and corporate narratives

# UN Political Subsystems

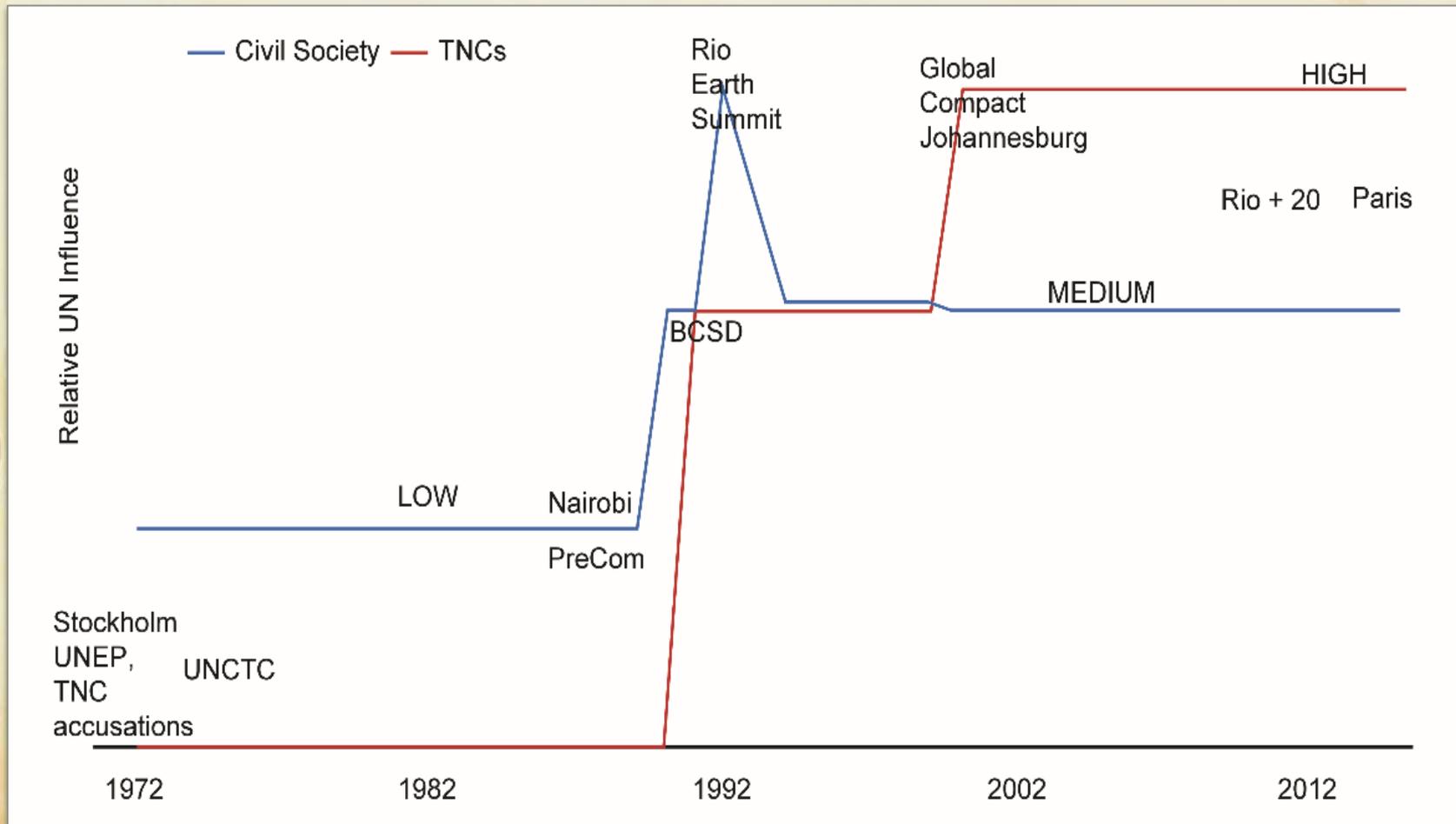


# Long-Term Trends in UN Architecture

PERIOD	EVENTS	CONTEXT
1972-1985	<b>NIEO, Code of Ethics proposal</b>	70 new NS2 members TNCs Criticized-Bhopal
1990-1993	Rio Summit	Sust. Dev., CSO Access, Binding Agreements
1993 - 2000	<b>WBCSD</b>	TNCs wake up to UN relevance, green economy
1997-2000	<b>Global Compact</b>	Corporate participation
2012-2015	Rio+20, COP-21	Voluntary commitments and green economy

Inspired by Sagafi-Nejad and Dunning, 2008.

# Trends in Relative Non-State Actor Influence at the UN



Based on influence categories in Betsill M, Corell E, 2008.



# New Corporate Strategy and Frame

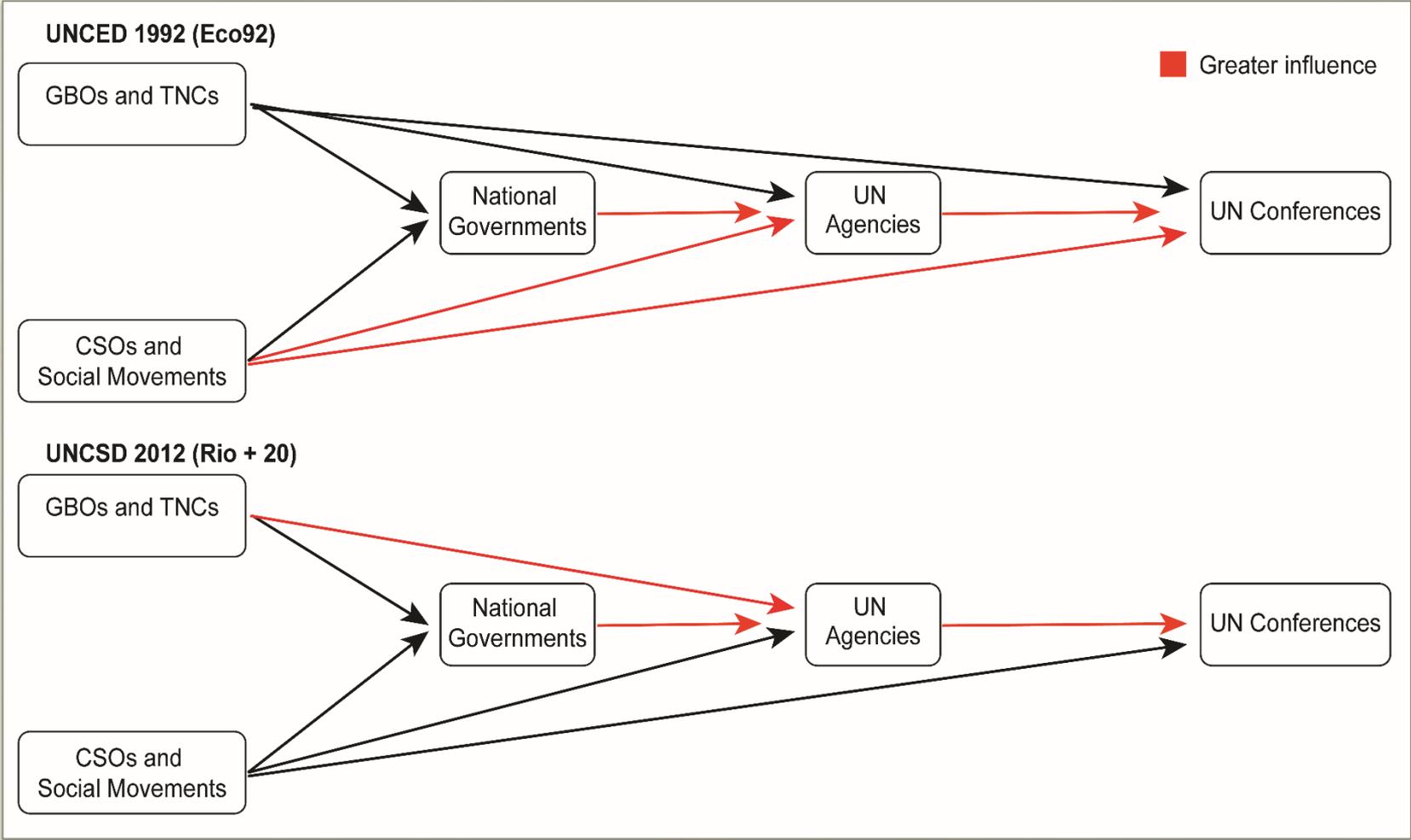
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TNCs had previously denied climate change and disregarded the UN as anti-business.

In the 1990s, they:

- Decided that the UN was important
- Shifted their peak organizations from the ICC to WBCSD, Global Compact, etc.
- To avoid regulation (Holliday, 2002), WBCSD:
  - Promoted a positive green economy frame, based on voluntary business endeavors.
  - Obtained privileged access to governments and UN agencies, including meetings and appointments to key positions.
  - Influenced the Rio+20 agenda-setting to shift away from sustainable development to green economy and to exclude national and local governance.

# Rio92 and Rio+20 Compared: Influence of Non-State Actors





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## **IV. SIMILAR TRENDS IN BRAZIL'S NATIONAL CONFLICTS**



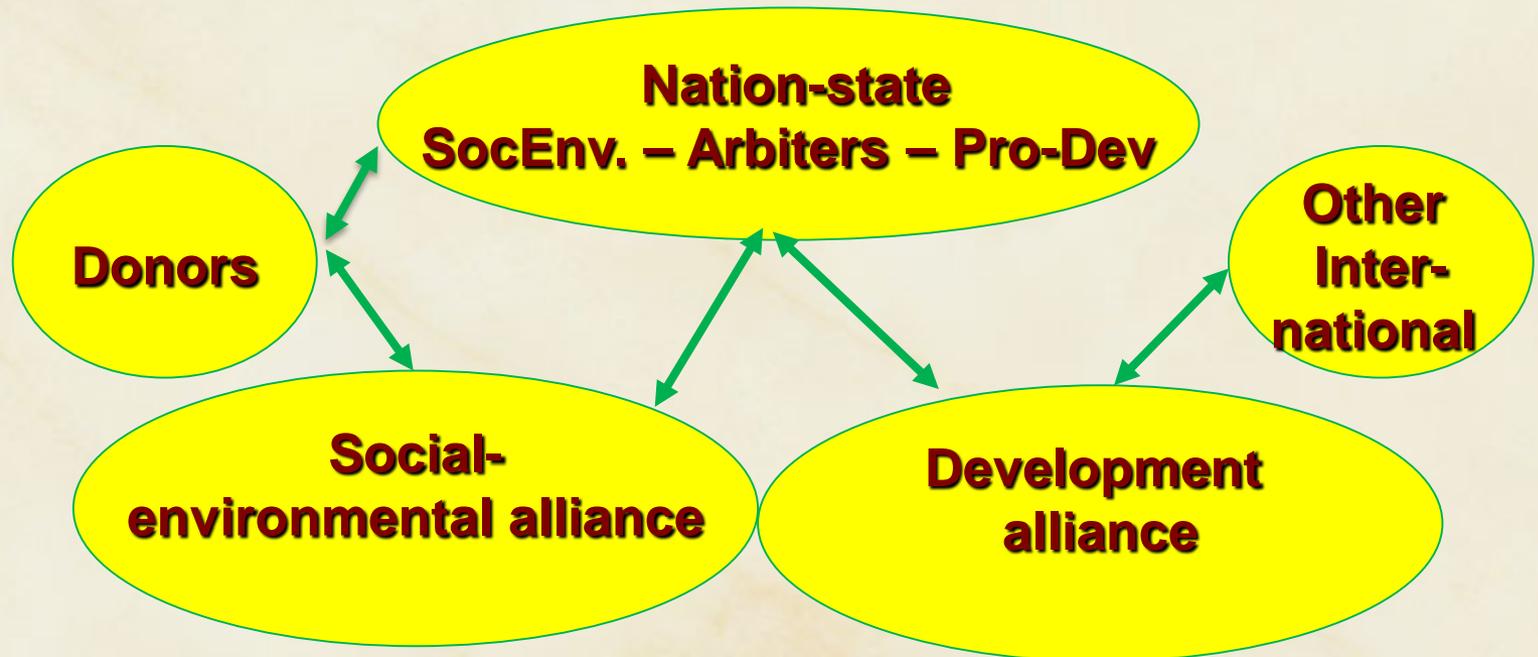
# Conflicting Alliances and Frames

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- For over 30 years, shifting environmentalist and pro-development\* alliances have competed for influence on Brazil's environmental policies.
  - \* with little regard for social and environmental issues
  - Sustainable development narrative vs. green economy frame.

# Simplified Stakeholder Typology

The State has been divided among defenders of the environment and development



Conflicts, tensions or consensus

# Conflicts and anti-deforestation policies

Conflict	Alliances	Policies	National Government Role	Consequences
<i>20<sup>th</sup> century:</i> Acre rubbertapper struggle	Broad world alliance, local opposition	Extractive Reserve Law	Implemented Decree	Sustainable inhabited reserves, some deforestation
///Conser- vation programs I	national and international alliance	Amazon, indigenous lands	Limited role of national government	Some success in protecting forests
///Public forest management law	National alliance including loggers	Native forest concessions	National govt. makes concessions	Low priority, limited funding
<i>21<sup>st</sup> century:</i> Revised Forest Code	Weaker Env. Alliance, Stronger Dev. Alliance	Weakened Forest Code	Delegation to state and Local govts.	Less forest recovery



# How power shifted in this century

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## **Environmental alliance weakened**

- Less mobilized, less alignment with union, small farmer and catholic church frames
- New opportunities, multiple and divergent objectives, less activism
- Reduced international cooperation

## **Development alliance grew**

- Faced with threat to property rights
- Aligned nationalist and landowner frames
- Stronger legislative and pro-development research support



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## **VI. CONCLUSIONS**

- TNC influence has grown stronger around two pillars:
  - The Washington consensus reduced the role of government
  - The green economy frame enhanced the role of business and reduced the strength of Latin American environmental justice movements
- From one who knows Latin America: “global regulatory patterns are needed to impose obligations and avoid unacceptable actions.” (*laudato si* – Francisco)
- Many specialists see market mechanisms allied with enforced regulations as the best policy to avoid destroying the environment.

# What can be done?

To work towards a just, sustainable Anthropocene, we need:

- a balance of power among government, business and civil society leading to a dialogue (Nepstad, 2015) among equals, with:
  - strong Nation-States to provide incentives and enforce regulations
  - civil society soft power through a strong coalition alignment and
  - business commitments to effective green measures.
- At the UN, there is a need for stronger and coordinated civil society organizations, possibly through a UN agency equivalent to the Global Compact.
- Broad campaigns to enhance citizen awareness of the global effects and planetary limits of consumption and production decisions. (Dasgupta, 2011)
- Stronger South-South cooperation along with improved North-South cooperation

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Thank you for your  
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