

**15th Annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference
July 5-8, 2009**

***"Taking up the Global Challenge: Analysing the implementation of
innovations and governance for Sustainable Development"***

CALL FOR PAPERS

(Provisional Version)

Track nr 5C: *Institutional arrangements and multi-stakeholder cooperation for sustainable development*

Track chair: Prof. Pieter Glasbergen (Utrecht University, the Netherlands), dr. Ralph Hamman (University of Cape Town, South-Africa)

Partnerships have become vital elements of many governance systems around environmental issues and changed the ontology of the systems. Partnerships can be defined as collaborative arrangements in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and civil society) are involved in a non-hierarchical process through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal. Underlying is a new governance theory: From sustainable development as a government responsibility to sustainable development as a shared responsibility with private actors. The track will discuss the origin, characteristics and consequences of the partnership paradigm from three perspectives.

a) Partnerships as arrangements on their own right.

From the first perspective, partnerships are studied as single collaborative arrangements. Core questions are: How do they function internally? How do they develop their objectives, strategies and funding? How do they bridge the differences between the participants?

b) Partnerships as societal change mechanisms.

From the second perspective, attention is turned to the external effects of partnerships. Partnership arrangements are seen as tools for deliberate societal change. The question is how a reform agenda develops because of increased collaboration between the partners. Attention focuses on the interactive structures and processes in which partnerships operate, and the impacts of partnership activities on sustainability issues therein.

c) Partnerships as part of the ecological modernization process.

The third perspective takes a broader view on the societal governance system. Attention is focused on the consequences of partnerships becoming parts of the configuration of societal decision-making structures. One of the main questions here is in how far and in what way they represent a more fundamental shift in the pattern of governance in liberal-democratic societies, and are able to institutionalize a new sense of collective responsibility for sustainable development.

Please look at the detailed instructions and deadlines for submitting your abstract and paper, using the Submission & guidelines button at the left side.