



maastricht utrecht nijmegen
program on partnerships

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Dear Colleagues

The highlight of the year was December 18, when Luli Pesqueira defended her doctoral thesis. This dissertation explores how NGOs manage and leverage collaboration with the private sector as a strategy to accomplish their mission. Her study was based on a few years action research with Oxfam Novib. This methodology, as well as the very personal style of writing, make this thesis an enjoyable read and a landmark in our research program. The full text we have put on our website.



Luli currently works as Director Executive Studies at EGADE Business School in her home town Mexico City. Good to be home after all these years in the Netherlands!

But there was much more going on in 2014. [Read more](#)

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Thesis defense Luli Pesqueira



On December 18th Luli Pesqueira defended her thesis entitled "Friendly outsider or critical insider? An action research account of Oxfam's private sector engagement".

Luli explored the increased engagement between NGOs and businesses around the creation of sustainability standards. In particular, she analyzed how an international



From left to right Johan Verburg (Oxfam-Novib), Dr. Luli Pesqueira, Prof. Pieter Leroy (Radboud University), Prof. Pieter Glasbergen (Maastricht University).

NGO – Oxfam – manages and leverages private sector engagement as a change strategy, including the inherent tensions and limitations that come with it. Part 1 of her thesis is largely dedicated to defining the boundaries of the research project; namely,

the increased intersectoral collaboration in the context of sustainability and the introduction of certification as an instrument for private regulation. Furthermore, Parts 1 and 2 of the book explore the reasons why this study was conceived using an action research design. Action research is a research approach that allows researchers to work with others in generating new knowledge that is actionable, and which can be used to solve social problems or create opportunities for mutual reflection and learning. Her thesis can be downloaded [here](#).

Publications

Bitzer, V. , Glasbergen, P, 2015, Business-NGO partnerships in global value chains: part of the solution or part of the problem of sustainable change? *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 12: 35-40. DOI: 10.1016/j.cosust.2014.08.012

Offermans, A. & Glasbergen, P. 2015, Boundary work in sustainability partnerships: an exploration of the round table on sustainable palm oil. *Environmental Science and Policy*. 50:34-45 DOI: 10.1016/j.envsci.2015.01.016

Derx B, Glasbergen P, 2014, Elaborating global private meta-governance: An inventory in the realm of voluntary sustainability standards, *Global Environmental Change*, 27, 41–50.

Pesqueira L, Glasbergen P, 2014, How sustainability partnerships manage complex social issues; The case of child labor in the cocoa sector. In: Bohórquez, E, Etxaniz, N, Williams, Ph. (eds.), *A New Generation of Public Control: Citizens and Markets*, A Transparencia Mexicana Initiative, México, pp. 125-135.

Offermans, A., Cörvers, R. 2014, Hebben Indonesische boeren profijt van koffie- en palmoliecertificering? *Milieu*. 8:42-44

For a full list of MUNPOP publications, click [here](#).

Workshops on public-private partnerships (Maastricht) and Certification projects (Yogyakarta)



Prof. Rob van Tulder (Erasmus University, Rotterdam) in discussion with PhD students.



Spin project meeting in Yogyakarta with our Indonesian supervisors in the front: Bustanul Arifin and Ari Darmastuti from Lampung University

On May 15th and 16th, ICIS and MUNPOP organized a PhD Workshop regarding public-private partnerships. During this workshop we discussed the relationship between certification, sustainable agriculture and development from different methodological perspectives. The program consisted of highly interesting keynote speeches from Prof. Pieter Glasbergen, Dr. Axel Marx, Prof. Rob van Tulder, Prof. Leo de Haan, Dr. Verena Bitzer, Luli Pesqueira and Dr. Greetje Schouten. On the basis of these lectures and the book “ways of knowing” (Moses and Knutsen, 2012), the participants were invited to reflect on their methodological choices and the implications for their own research.

Pieter Glasbergen and Astrid Offermans organized a productive workshop in Yogyakarta on November 15th, 16th and 18th with the presence of all SPIN PhDs, our Indonesian partners Bustanul Arifin, Purwo Santoso and Ari Darmastuti, and Verena Bitzer. We discussed the progress of the PhD projects and the research plans for the second fieldwork. All PhDs will be performing their second fieldwork between January and April 2015. [Read more about these projects.](#)

Workshop on Governance in the Indonesian context

On 17-19 November 2014 MUNPOP joined the mid-term workshop of the Indonesia- Netherlands collaborative research program “Governance, Markets, and Citizenship”. The main goal of this workshop was to discuss the concept of Governance and its meaning/ relevance in relation to Indonesia. Pieter Glasbergen gave a presentation entitled: “Understanding Governance for sustainable development”.

News from ongoing projects

1. Global Sustainable Change: Partnerships Between Fragmentation and Cohesion - Ceren Pekdemir

In her latest research inquiry, Ceren looked into the potential of private metagovernance to bring coherence to global sustainable supply chain governance. On the basis of three case studies in the coffee, cocoa, and fisheries sectors she assessed what the opportunities and limitations are of metagovernance organisations. The tentative results indicate that private metagovernance can make policy domains more cohesive particularly in enhancing process management strategies, activating actors and resources, and in arranging and facilitating interactions amongst relevant stakeholders. Limitations seemingly lie with the absence of stringent regulatory frameworks and a strong focus on industry interests. Her next project will focus on another issue field for governance for sustainable development in which she will integrate social network analysis with a governance system perspective. [Read more about this project.](#)



2. Governance of religious diversity in Western society – Laura Kurth

Governance of religious diversity is becoming a hot topic in Western Europe especially when religious claims clash with secular values. Laura studied one of these clashes more in detail: the debate about non-stunned ritual slaughter in the Dutch parliament. She analyzed contradicting frames used in the debate and concluded that many political actors find it difficult to position themselves amidst contradicting values. They search for certainty in legal and institutional arrangements, science, economy and history. In the next year, Laura will focus on private governance efforts regarding religious food standards. [Read more about this project.](#)



3. Joint knowledge production in certifying partnerships - Astrid Offermans

Astrid Offermans and Pieter Glasbergen published an article in the journal "Environmental Science and Policy" in which they offer a new perspective on partnerships as boundary organizations. They argue that sustainability partnerships have the potential to function as boundary organizations that intertwine stakeholders from different domains of society to jointly produce knowledge linked to action. However, little is known about the practice of knowledge production in such arrangements. In their paper they develop an analytical framework, based on attributes of the nature of knowledge, the process of knowledge production, and the organization of that process, to analyze the extent to which knowledge processes in partnerships can be understood as joint knowledge production (JKP). The application of the framework to the exemplary case of the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) shows that science and scientific knowledge do not necessarily play a dominant role in such a boundary organization. [Read more.](#)

4. Farmers' preferences for coffee certification schemes - Ibnu Muhammad

Ibnu found that Indonesian coffee farmers are rather comparable in terms of their preferences for certification schemes, independent from the scheme they are part of. The presence of a price premium is the most preferred attribute level followed by conservation, a price differential against uncertified coffee, farmer groups or cooperatives as target, emphasis on fairness, price differentials based on coffee bean sizes, and no contract and no pre-finance but cash payment at the transaction stage. In his article, that is currently under its second review, Ibnu also provides an explanation -based on interviews- that underly these preferences. Currently, Ibnu tries to understand how, and to what extent, different attitudes play a role in farmers' (non)-participation in certification. [Read more about this project.](#)



5. The roles of Southern NGOs in certification - Sani Kosasih

NGOs may play a role in strengthening the farmer's bargaining position towards companies, or reducing their vulnerability for price fluctuations in the context of certification. Sani studied 26 Southern NGOs working all over Indonesia to find out what their opinion and role regarding certification is. She identified 4 different roles adopted by Indonesian NGOs and found that these roles can be explained by two dimensions: an NGO's orientation and their attitude towards change. An NGO's orientation refers to their definition of who is responsible for solving problems resulting from certification. This orientation can be inward (e.g. they see themselves as being responsible for it), or outward (e.g. they frame other actors as being responsible and expected to take action). The response towards change may be conservative or receptive. Sani is currently finishing her paper. [Read more about this project.](#)

6. Impact of certification on palm oil smallholder's livelihood - Nia Kurniawati Hidayat

Research still shows uncertainty about the implications of sustainability certifications for the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Nia therefore explored the potential of certifications to improve the livelihoods of palmoil smallholder farmers. She developed an amended livelihood framework and applied this to Indonesian smallholders participating in the Round Table on



Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). Nia found that the smallholder's access to the market and vulnerability are not improved through certification, although indirect effects through organizational changes increase the farmer's productivity. Nia's article is currently under its second review. Now she is doing fieldwork for her second paper focusing on (alternatives for) profitable premium prices for palm oil. [Read more about this project.](#)



7. Certification and economic performance of Southern actors - Esther sri Astuti

In her first fieldwork, Esther found that certified Indonesian coffee farmers receive higher prices for their coffee compared to conventional farmers, independent from the scheme they are participating in. This difference is however rather small (USD 0.03- USD 0.14 per kilogram), depending on the coffee brand (Robusta or Arabica), and mainly results from the better quality of the certified coffee beans rather than the certificate. She also found that it is not the Indonesian coffee farmer who benefits most from the higher price paid by the consumers, but the roasters that take the largest absolute gross margin in the value chain. Her article is under review. Currently, Esther is investigating the role of the existence of so many different coffee channels in the Indonesian coffee supply chain. [Read more about this project.](#)

8. Private Certification and the Response of Southern Governments - Atika Wijaya

Atika investigated the Indonesian government's response to the private certification of palm oil through the RSPO. Through literature studies and interviews she was able to explain how the government's response evolved from a non-responsive position towards the RSPO, to involvement in it as an expert, and the development of its own public system for sustainability standards. Particular attention is paid to explaining the reasons underlying the decision to develop a national, public standard (ISPO). The experiences with the ISPO inspired the Indonesian government to also develop national sustainability standards for coffee and cocoa. Atika's first article is currently under review. [Read more about this project.](#)



Presentations

Pieter Glasbergen - Invited speaker seminar Governance, markets, and citizenship, Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta, 17-19 November, 2014. Presentation: Governance for Sustainable Development: key areas for improvement.

Pieter Glasbergen - Invited speaker ESF workshop The effectiveness of voluntary sustainability standards, Leuven, 1-3 October, 2014. Presentation: Smallholders do not eat certificates.

Pieter Glasbergen - workshop collaborating in alliances, De Beuk, Utrecht, 20 may, 2014. Presentation: Alliances.

Pieter Glasbergen - Chair International workshop Global certifying partnerships and development, Maastricht University, the Netherlands, 15-16 May, 2014. Presentation about Ways of knowing.

Ceren Pekdemir- On the Transformative Capacity of Private Fair Labour Arrangements. ESF workshop Leuven, 1-3 October, 2014.

Ceren Pekdemir - Handling Fragmentation in Global Governance: A Valuation of the Role of Private Sustainability Metagovernors. Policy & Politics Conference 2014. Bristol.

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