
Addressing Antibiotic Resistance Requires Robust International Accountability Mechanisms

Steven J. Hoffman and Trygve Ottersen

Introduction

Most proposals for new international agreements aim to address important global challenges. If the goal is to solve problems, then the value of these agreements depends on their ability to influence the world — to shape norms, constrain behavior, facilitate cooperation, and mobilize action. A recent review of empirical studies has suggested that many international agreements fail to achieve their aspirations.¹ The review indicates that the form in which states make commitments to each other — through an international legal agreement or through other means — may not be as important as commonly thought. It is the content of the commitments and how these are supported by mechanisms to encourage implementation that matter the most. When developing proposals for new international agreements, like the one that has recently been proposed to address antibiotic resistance (ABR),² attention to implementation mechanisms should therefore be equal to if not greater than the attention paid to its form.

The key to implementation is *accountability*.³ To avoid purely symbolic agreements and to achieve real-world impact, accountability must be at the core of agreements and their development. This is as true for an agreement on ABR as it is for any other international agreement.

Definitions of “accountability” vary widely. In the present context, accountability best refers to a relationship involving answerability and enforceability.⁴ According to one leading definition in this vein, accountability “implies that some actors have the right to hold other actors to a set of standards, to judge whether they have fulfilled their responsibilities in light of these standards, and to impose sanctions if they determine that these responsibilities have not been met.”⁵ Another much-cited definition describes accountability as “a relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgement, and the actor may face consequences.”⁶

An accountability relationship can be characterized along three dimensions and by answering three basic questions. *Among whom* is accountability owed? *For what* are the actors accountable? And *how* are accountability relationships built and secured?

This article examines these questions and explores opportunities to strengthen accountability in the context of international agreements, with specific reference to the proposed international agreement on ABR. We provide a menu of accountability mechanisms addressing transparency, oversight, complaint, and enforcement, describe how these mechanisms can

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promote compliance, and identify key considerations for an ABR agreement.

Parties to Accountability Relationships (“Among Whom?”)

Accountability can be difficult to understand, partly because in most settings there are multiple relevant accountability relationships. These form an interconnected network among different actors. State parties

access to appropriate antibiotics, adopt regulations banning inappropriate use of antibiotics in livestock, or provide funding for research and development relevant to ABR. With regard to process, state parties may be expected to ensure that all districts, hospitals, and pharmacies have adequate reporting systems for the sale and use of antibiotics. For outcomes, states may be expected to achieve a particular level of affordability for antibiotics (e.g., course of treatment not

to exceed one day’s wage of lowest-paid government worker), usage in animals (e.g., less than a certain amount per livestock raised), or investment in antibiotic innovation (e.g., more than a certain percentage of public health expenditures).⁸

Less frequently discussed, but no less important, is accountability for fair process. As part of an international agreement, state parties may be held accountable for ensuring processes for public participation and engagement at the national level, as well as for

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to an international agreement are accountable to each other, but also to their domestic constituencies and often to one or more supra- or transnational entities. Four types of entities are particularly important in this context (see Appendix). One is collective bodies of the state parties to the agreement, such as a governing council, conference, or assembly. Another type is independent oversight bodies whose mandate is specifically linked to the agreement in question. Examples include designated committees, panels, courts, and secretariats. A third type of entity is general fora whose broad mandate covers matters pertaining to the agreement. These entities may include the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, the World Health Assembly, and, for its members, the G7, G20, and G77.⁷ Fourth, there are entities such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) that represent different constituencies, interests, and perspectives.

Object of Accountability Relationships (“For What?”)

The objects for which actors in accountability relationships are answerable vary across relationships. These can include taking certain actions, instituting certain processes, or achieving certain outcomes. For example, state parties to an international ABR agreement may be expected to enact policies that promote

facilitating inclusive processes at the international level. State parties could also be expected to systematically measure inequalities — including inequalities in access to antibiotics — and to systematically assess whether these are addressed in a fair and effective way.

Mechanisms for Building and Securing Accountability Relationships (“How?”)

Accountability relationships depend on formal or informal mechanisms for their establishment and for being sustained over time. Four types of accountability mechanisms are particularly important in the context of international agreements: (1) transparency mechanisms, (2) oversight mechanisms, (3) complaint mechanisms, and (4) enforcement mechanisms (see Table 1).

1) Transparency Mechanisms

Transparency mechanisms make information about actors available to observers.⁹ In the context of an international agreement, the key actors are state parties, and the key observers are other state parties, plus supra- and transnational entities and the general public. For an international agreement on ABR, relevant information pertains to the epidemiology of infectious diseases, data on resistance, indicators of access to antibiotics, sales and use of antibiotics, financial flows, and government action to improve access, conserva-

Table 1

Mechanisms for Promoting Accountability

1. Transparency mechanisms
a. Information aggregation
b. Publicity
c. Regular reporting
d. Access-to-information requests
2. Oversight mechanisms
a. Standard-setting
b. Data collection
c. Implementation review
d. Impact assessment
3. Complaint mechanisms
a. State complaints
b. Secretariat complaints
c. Non-state-actor complaints
d. Appeals of decisions
4. Enforcement mechanisms
a. Public disapproval
b. Loss of privileges
c. Economic punishment
d. Military intervention

tion, and innovation. To be effective, transparency mechanisms must make it possible for observers to easily understand and verify the information provided.

Many existing international agreements incorporate transparency mechanisms, including mechanisms that promote and make possible (a) information aggregation, (b) publicity, (c) regular reporting, and/or (d) access-to-information requests (see Appendix). One example is the Minamata Convention on Mercury. It requires each state party to report on the measures it has taken to implement the Convention and on the effectiveness of those measures.

The benefits from more transparency are potentially transformative. Transparency is considered a prerequisite for accountability and is expected to improve legitimacy, compliance, and learning — thereby enhancing the real-world impact of agreements. Although these expectations have not yet been matched by empirical evidence, as impact evaluations of transparency mechanisms in international agreements appear to be non-existent.¹⁰

2) Oversight Mechanisms

Oversight mechanisms involve active monitoring and evaluation of actors, actions, inputs, processes, outputs, or outcomes.¹¹ These mechanisms build on transparency, but go further by involving active col-

lection and processing of information and comparison of findings against some normative or technical standard. In the context of ABR, potential oversight bodies include designated committees, panels, courts, and secretariats, and the other supra- or transnational entities described above can also have an oversight role. Oversight mechanisms can monitor and assess the extent to which state parties comply with the agreement, as well as the situation with regard to access, conservation, and innovation of antibiotics at global and national levels. Even basic monitoring of antibiotics sales and use would be a major step forward, as indicated by how even the United States does not yet systematically collect such data.¹² Oversight mechanisms can also track state parties' compliance with decisions made through complaint mechanisms.

Many different oversight mechanisms are embedded in existing agreements, and these mechanisms involve to various degrees (a) standard-setting, (b) data collection, (c) implementation review, and/or (d) impact assessment (see Appendix). For example, the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change requires that its 43 “Annex 1” state parties, those with industrialized or transitioning economies, report a national inventory of greenhouse gas emissions and sinks, and convey information on their implementation of the Protocol. Each report is assessed by an international expert review team, which forwards its own assessment of these reports to the Compliance Committee for consideration.

The potential benefits from oversight mechanisms are similar to those from transparency mechanisms. These benefits include improvements in legitimacy, compliance, and learning. However, as for transparency mechanisms, little empirical evidence is available to directly evaluate this widely held belief in their benefits.¹³

3) Complaint Mechanisms

Complaint mechanisms process and adjudicate grievances about actions, inputs, processes, outputs, or outcomes attributable to an actor.¹⁴ In the context of international agreements, the impugned actors are typically state parties. Complainants are usually other state parties, sometimes oversight bodies created by the agreements, and less often individuals, NGOs/CSOs, or corporations. For an ABR agreement, non-fulfillment of the agreement's obligations is likely to be the most common complaint. These mechanisms can be institutionalized as separate bodies or be incorporated as part of existing entities, such as an existing international court, tribunal, or organization.

Complaint mechanisms are usefully categorized according to whether they are available to (a) states, (b) secretariats, (c) non-state actors without international legal personality (e.g., individuals, NGOs/CSOs, corporations), and/or for (d) appeals of decisions (see Appendix). The International Health Regulations (IHR) provides an example of a compliant mechanism that is open to states; an example that also illustrates how these mechanisms can be designed as multi-step processes. In the IHR's ideal process, state parties "shall seek in the first instance to settle the dispute through negotiation or any other peaceful means of their own choice, including good offices, mediation or conciliation." If not resolved, the state parties may agree to refer the dispute to the World Health Organization's Director-General for mediation. If the issue is still unresolved, binding arbitration is theoretically possible if the dispute is among states that have voluntarily accepted arbitration "as compulsory with regard to all disputes concerning the interpretation or application of these Regulations" (although no state has voluntarily accepted binding arbitration to date). Ultimately, states can refer the matter to the International Court of Justice.

Other agreements allow non-state actors to access complaint mechanisms (see Appendix). One example is the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters ("Aarhus Convention"). This Convention grants individuals "access to a review procedure before a court of law or another independent and impartial body established by law" when they believe their requests for information have not been adequately addressed by state parties. On the basis of this provision, a Compliance Committee has been established, and one of the ways a review can be triggered is by communications from individuals or NGOs/CSOs.

Complaint mechanisms can improve the effectiveness of agreements when they encourage or compel state parties to confront, explain, and resolve their non-compliance. There is some empirical evidence to support this widely held view.¹⁵

4) Enforcement Mechanisms

Enforcement mechanisms impose sanctions on non-compliant actors.¹⁶ These sanctions can be formal or informal, real or reputational. They include (a) public disapproval, (b) loss of privileges, (c) economic punishment, and/or (d) military intervention (although this last sub-category is not appropriate for addressing ABR). The non-provision of benefits that otherwise would have been provided can be a form of sanction. Sanctions thus relate to both applying "sticks" and withdrawing "carrots."

Transparency, oversight, and complaint mechanisms can facilitate some enforcement on their own. They can identify and publicize non-compliant behavior and thus facilitate "naming and shaming" of non-compliant actors. They are also important for more specific enforcement mechanisms, as they can help determine whether sanctions are appropriate. In the context of international legal agreements, this decision will most often be made by a conference of parties, a separate supranational assembly (like the UN Security Council), or a dispute resolution body. Conversely, enforcement mechanisms can help strengthen transparency, oversight, and complaint mechanisms. Even where agreements include clear provisions for such mechanisms, realization of their full potential usually requires ancillary enforcement mechanisms. The weakness of the theoretically robust IHR complaint mechanism, for example, is that every step is voluntary without pre-acceptance of binding arbitration, and no party has accepted binding arbitration to date.¹⁷

A dearth of formal enforcement mechanisms is often seen as a hallmark of international agreements, including international law.¹⁸ However, negotiators of an international agreement addressing ABR can learn from notable exceptions (see Appendix). One example is the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO). Under this agreement, a state party can request authorization of countermeasures from WTO's Dispute Settlement Body if WTO rules are breached and if other steps have been unsuccessful. If granted, the winning state party is authorized to impose trade sanctions vis-à-vis the losing state party. The UN Charter provides several other examples, including how failure to pay UN membership fees results in loss of voting privileges in UN assemblies.

Enforcement mechanisms promote effective implementation by incentivizing compliance, disincentivizing non-compliance, and strengthening other accountability mechanisms. Many studies have found sanctions to be effective in promoting implementation.¹⁹

Discussion

This article has reviewed the central aspects of accountability relationships and outlined ways to build and secure these relationships in the context of international agreements. Specifically, the article provided a menu of accountability mechanisms from which negotiators of international agreements can mix-and-match to facilitate transparency, oversight, complaint, and enforcement. It is clear that there are many options available for strengthening accountability and ensuring that international agreements

have a fighting chance of achieving their progenitors' aspirations.

No international agreement should incorporate every accountability mechanism described in this article, but most — if not all — agreements should incorporate at least one mechanism from each category. States that are serious about addressing global challenges through international legal agreements should particularly insist on including effective transparency, oversight, complaint, and enforcement mechanisms. This is plausibly the best way of ensuring that negotiated legal texts have the effects they are intended to procure.

Accountability is often championed as an unequivocal good, but more is not always better. A shift in accountability can alter power dynamics in undesir-

forces, and armies — and the public consternation that even international legal agreements “aren't really binding” or “don't matter.”²³ However, this does not mean that much more cannot be done internationally. Experience from certain regimes like the international trade sector shows there is potential for stronger international agreements and more effective institutions.

Governmental capacity is another challenge for accountability and for compliance with international agreements — even in the presence of strong institutional mechanisms. While dissemination of data and documents that governments have readily available may sound quite simple, in reality, most of the mechanisms described require significant bureaucratic capacity. For example, some oversight mechanisms require sophisticated data collection systems and technical expertise for conducting data analyses.

This capacity varies tremendously across countries. In response, international agreements can differentiate accountability requirements according to capacity or require that high-capacity countries assist countries with lower capacity. Again, weak institutions and limited governmental capacity do not mean that much more cannot be done.

Formal accountability mechanisms are neither necessary nor sufficient for building and securing accountability relationships. Actors can also hold each other accountable through informal mechanisms. For example, the United States unilaterally reviews countries' compliance with the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and sometimes imposes sanctions on countries it judges to be non-compliant.²⁴ Formal accountability mechanisms also do not automatically translate into real-world changes, although institutionalizing them may be the best way to strengthen accountability in the short term and to promote a culture of accountability in the longer term.

The issues raised here are all important areas for future inquiry, especially given how empirical evidence is scant across the board. This research agenda should be pursued alongside efforts to intelligently craft new international agreements so that theory and practice can learn from each other.

Conclusion

International agreements without accountability do not work. To promote accountability, mechanisms for transparency, oversight, complaint, and enforcement should all be considered when agreements are sought. As available evidence cannot single out an optimal set of mechanisms for each context, this article has pro-

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able ways, especially in undemocratic settings.²⁰ In all settings, strengthening one accountability relationship can weaken another. The balance between different accountability relationships is also important. It has been argued, for example, that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria fails to hold donors accountable for delivering their promised financial contributions in the way it holds recipients accountable for achieving results.²¹

The Appendix shows considerable variation in the specific mechanisms utilized by existing international legal agreements, which are themselves only one type of international agreement. The optimal mechanism in each category and the optimal combination of mechanisms for an agreement are likely to vary across settings. For future agreements, it is important to evaluate each set as a whole, since individual mechanisms interact in multiple ways and can be mutually synergistic or antagonistic. These sets should also be carefully assessed against widely shared values, including those pertaining to effectiveness, fairness, and legitimacy.²²

Today, most international agreements lack effective mechanisms for transparency, oversight, complaint, and enforcement. Enforcement mechanisms are in particular short supply. This reflects the general incapacity for enforcement at the global level — compared with the national level that has powerful courts, police

Agreement	Transparency Mechanisms	Oversight Mechanisms	Complaint Mechanisms	Enforcement Mechanisms
<p>Health</p> <p>1) International Health Regulations</p>	<p>State Parties and the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) are to report to the World Health Assembly (WHA) on the implementations of the Regulations.</p>	<p>WHO is to periodically conduct studies to review and evaluate the Regulations, particularly provisions regarding health surveillance, and submit its findings to the WHA.</p> <p>The WHA is to periodically review implementation of the Regulations and can request the advice of a Review Committee; an expert committee appointed by the Director-General.</p> <p>The Review Committee is to meet periodically to make recommendations to the Director-General about the functioning of the Regulations. The Director-General is then to communicate the recommendations to the WHA.</p>	<p>Disputes between Parties about the interpretation or application of the Regulations are to be settled first through negotiation or any other peaceful means of their choice, including good offices, mediation, or conciliation.</p> <p>Unresolved disputes can be mediated by the Director-General, or adjudicated through binding arbitration if among states that have voluntarily accepted arbitration as compulsory with regard to all disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Regulations.</p> <p>Parties may refer intractable disputes to the International Court of Justice.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>2) WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control</p>	<p>Each Party is required to submit to the Conference of the Parties periodic reports on its implementation of the Convention, which are to include information on: legislative, executive, administrative, or other measures taken to implement the Convention; any constraints or barriers encountered, and measures taken to overcome these barriers; financial and technical assistance provided or received for tobacco control; tobacco research and surveillance; tobacco taxation rates; tobacco consumption trends; data on tobacco trade, storage, and distribution.</p>	<p>The Conference of the Parties is to consider reports submitted by the Parties and adopt regular reports on the overall implementation of the Convention.</p>	<p>Disputes between Parties regarding the interpretation or application of the Convention are first to be settled through negotiation or any other peaceful means of their choice, including good offices, mediation, or conciliation.</p> <p>Unresolved disputes can be resolved through ad hoc arbitration in accordance to procedures adopted by the Conference of the Parties.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Agreement	Transparency Mechanisms	Oversight Mechanisms	Complaint Mechanisms	Enforcement Mechanisms
<p>Human Rights</p> <p>3) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</p>	<p>State Parties are to report to the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General on the measures adopted and progress made in achieving the observance of the rights described in the Covenant. The Secretary-General is then to transmit the reports to the UN Economic and Social Council and other specialized agencies.</p>	<p>The UN Economic and Social Council is to review reports from State Parties and can submit reports to the UN General Assembly with a summary of the information received and general recommendations.</p> <p>UN specialized agencies may report to the Economic and Social Council about progress made in achieving the observance of the provisions falling within the scope of their activities and may provide recommendations.</p> <p>The UN Economic and Social Council may transmit the reports from the State Parties and specialized agencies to the Human Rights Council.</p> <p>Under the Optional Protocol, if the Committee receives reliable information indicating grave or systematic violations by a State Party of any of the rights set forth in the Covenant, the Committee shall invite that State Party to cooperate in the examination of the information. The Committee may designate one or more of its Members to conduct an inquiry and to report urgently to the Committee. After examining the findings of such an inquiry, the Committee shall transmit these findings to the State Party concerned together with any comments and recommendations. The State Party concerned shall, within six months, submit its observations to the Committee.</p>	<p>Under the Optional Protocol, communications may be submitted by or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals claiming to be victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in the Covenant. The Committee is to bring the communication to the attention of the State Party concerned. Within six months, the receiving State Party is to explain or clarify the matter and the remedy, if any. The Committee is to make available its good offices to the Parties concerned with a view to reaching a friendly settlement of the matter. If unsuccessful, the Committee shall continue to examine the communications received and shall transmit its views on the communication, together with its recommendations, if any, to the Parties concerned. The State Party shall give due consideration to the views and recommendations of the Committee and shall submit to the Committee, within six months, a written response, including information on any action taken in the light of the views and recommendations of the Committee.</p> <p>Under the Optional Protocol, a State Party that considers that another State Party is not fulfilling its obligations can initiate a process resembling the process described above.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Agreement	Transparency Mechanisms	Oversight Mechanisms	Complaint Mechanisms	Enforcement Mechanisms
<p>4) Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</p>	<p>State Parties are to report to the Committee against Torture on measures taken to implement the Convention at least every four years. The Committee consists of ten experts. The UN Secretary-General shall transmit the report to all State Parties.</p>	<p>Reports from State Parties are to be reviewed by the Committee against Torture, which can make comments and suggestions to the State Parties. The Committee is to submit an annual report on its activities to the State Parties and the UN General Assembly. If the Committee has evidence suggesting that torture is being systematically practiced in the territory of a State Party, the Committee can designate its Members to make an inquiry into the issue. The Committee is then to report its findings and suggestions to the State Party concerned. The process is to be confidential, but after consultations with the State Party, a summary account can be included in the Committee's annual report.</p>	<p>If a State Party notifies another State Party that the former considers that the latter is not giving effect to the provisions of the Convention, the receiving State is to reply with an explanation or clarification. If the matter is not settled within six months, either State can refer the matter to the Committee against Torture. The Committee is to make available its good offices to the State Parties concerned with a view to a friendly solution of the matter. The Committee is to submit a report to the State Parties summarizing the facts and any solution reached within 12 months. Communications from or behalf of individuals can be submitted to the Committee against Torture about alleged violation of any provision of the Convention. The Committee is to bring this communication to the attention of the State Party concerned, and the receiving State is to submit an explanation or clarification to the Committee within six months. The Committee is to examine the matter and forward its views to the individual and State Party concerned. Disputes between State Parties about the interpretation or application of the Convention are first to be sought settled through negotiation and then arbitration. If no agreement is reached on the organization of the arbitration, any one of the Parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice.</p>	<p>None.</p>

Agreement	Transparency Mechanisms	Oversight Mechanisms	Complaint Mechanisms	Enforcement Mechanisms
<p>5) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</p>	<p>Each State Party is to collect statistics and research data to help implement and policies related to the Convention, and to disseminate this to the public and ensure accessibility to persons with disabilities and others.</p> <p>Each State Party is to submit to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities a comprehensive report on measures taken and progress made at least every four years or whenever the Committee requests.</p> <p>Each report is to be made widely available to the public and all State Parties.</p>	<p>The Committee is to consider reports from each State Party, make suggestions and recommendations, and can request further information.</p> <p>The Committee can itself examine a State Party's implementation of the Convention if submission of a report is significantly overdue.</p> <p>The Committee is to report every two years to the UN General Assembly and the UN Economic and Social Council and make suggestions and recommendations based on the State Parties' reports.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Environment</p> <p>6) UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (including the Kyoto Protocol)</p>	<p>Each Party is to periodically communicate to the Conference of the Parties a national inventory of anthropogenic emissions and removals. The 43 "Annex I" State Parties, those with industrialized or transitioning economies, are to submit annual inventories. Each Party is also to communicate the measures taken to implement the Convention. Parties to the Kyoto Protocol are to include information related to its implementation.</p> <p>The Secretariat is to make communications publicly available.</p>	<p>National communications and greenhouse gas inventories from Annex I Parties are to be reviewed by international teams of independent experts. The results of their work are to be made publicly available. For Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, each Parties' report is to be reviewed by an expert review team. All review reports are to be forwarded to the Compliance Committee for consideration. Expert review teams are also to prepare a report for the Conference of Parties.</p> <p>The Conference of Parties is to regularly review implementation by the Parties and the overall effects of the measures taken. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol has a similar role with regard to that Protocol.</p>	<p>The Compliance Committee of the Kyoto Protocol is to consider questions of implementation, which can be raised by expert review teams or a Party to the Protocol. The Facilitative Branch is to provide advice and facilitation to Parties in implementing requirements. Disputes concerning interpretation or application of the Convention is first to be settled through negotiation or other peaceful means. Unsettled disputes can be referred to the International Court of Justice or arbitration if the Parties have declared one or both of these means as compulsory. If unsuccessful, the dispute is to be submitted to a conciliation commission. The Kyoto Protocol contains similar provisions.</p>	<p>The Enforcement Branch of the Kyoto Protocol's Compliance Committee is responsible for overseeing a Party's implementation of its reporting requirements where its accounting of emissions is concerned. The Branch has the authority to suspend and reinstate a Party's eligibility to participate in the Kyoto mechanisms.</p> <p>The Enforcement Branch is also to determine whether a Party is non-compliant with its emissions commitment. If a Party's emissions exceed its holdings of Kyoto Protocol units at the end of the commitment period, it must make up the difference, plus a penalty of 30% in the next commitment period. The Party must also develop a compliance action plan, and its eligibility to "sell" credits under emissions trading will be suspended.</p>

Agreement	Transparency Mechanisms	Oversight Mechanisms	Complaint Mechanisms	Enforcement Mechanisms
<p>7) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (“Aarhus Convention”)</p>	<p>Each Party is to report regularly to the Meeting of the Parties on their achievements.</p>	<p>The Compliance Committee is to prepare, at the request of the Meeting of Parties, a report on compliance with or implementation of the Convention.</p> <p>The Compliance Committee is to monitor, assess, and facilitate the implementation of and compliance with the Parties’ reporting requirements.</p> <p>The Meeting of the Parties is to keep under continuous review the implementation of the Convention.</p> <p>The Meeting of the Parties is to review the policies for and legal and methodological approaches to access to information, public participation in decision-making, and access to justice, with a view of further improving them.</p>	<p>The Compliance Committee can review a Party’s compliance, and this process can be triggered by a Party to the Convention, the Secretariat, members of the public or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or the Committee’s own initiative. The Committee can make recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties or directly to individual Parties.</p> <p>Disputes between Parties on the interpretation or application of the Convention are first to be solved through negotiation or by any other means acceptable to the Parties. Unresolved disputes are to be submitted to either the International Court of Justice or an arbitration tribunal.</p>	<p>The Meeting of the Parties can, upon consideration of a report and any recommendations of the Compliance Committee, decide upon appropriate measures to bring about full compliance with the Convention. These measures may include to provide advice and facilitate assistance, issue declarations of non-compliance, issue cautions, or suspend special rights and privileges accorded to the Party under the Convention.</p>
<p>8) Minamata Convention on Mercury</p>	<p>Each Party is to facilitate the exchange of information, including epidemiological information concerning health impacts associated with exposure to mercury and mercury compounds.</p> <p>Each Party is to provide public information on epidemiology, results of monitoring activities, and activities to meet the obligations under the Convention.</p> <p>Each Party is to report to the Conference of the Parties on the measures it has taken to implement the Convention, the effectiveness of those measures, and possible challenges.</p>	<p>The Implementation and Compliance Committee is to review compliance with the Convention.</p> <p>The Conference of the Parties is to keep under continuous review and evaluation the implementation of the Convention and to consider any recommendations from the Committee.</p> <p>The Conference of the Parties is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Convention periodically, based on reports from the Parties and other available information.</p>	<p>Disputes concerning interpretation or application of the Convention is first to be sought settled through negotiation or other peaceful means. If unsuccessful, the dispute can be sought settled through arbitration or the International Court of Justice if the Parties have declared one or both of these means as compulsory. If unsuccessful or if the Parties have not accepted the same means of dispute settlement, the dispute is to be submitted to a conciliation commission.</p>	<p>None.</p>

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<p>Trade</p> <p>9) Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization</p>	<p>Each Member is to notify other Members, through the appropriate body, of changes in relevant laws, regulations, policy statements, and public notices. A consolidated notification is to be provided to the Secretariat annually.</p> <p>Each Member is to periodically report to the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB) on their trade policies and practices. The Secretariat is also to provide a report to the TPRB on the trade policies and practices of Members under review.</p> <p>The Secretariat is to periodically report to the TPRB on the implementation of the Agreement.</p> <p>The reports by the Member under review and by the Secretariat, together with the TPRB meeting minutes, are to be published and forwarded to the Ministerial Conference.</p>	<p>Based on reports from Members and the Secretariat, the TPRB is to periodically review the trade policies and practices of Members.</p> <p>Following adoption of a panel or Appellate Body report, the Party is to notify its intentions on implementation of the recommendations. The Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) is to keep the intended implementation under regular surveillance by keeping it in its meeting agenda until the issue is resolved. The Member concerned is to provide DSB with a status report on its implementation of the recommendations or rulings at least 10 days before each DSB meeting.</p>	<p>In the event of a dispute, the complaining Member can request another Member to enter into consultations. The Member to which the request is made shall do so within 30 days.</p> <p>If the consultations fail to settle the dispute within 60 days, the complaining Party may request the DSB to establish a panel. The panel is to be composed of three or five well-qualified individuals. Panel reports are to be completed within three or six months, depending on urgency of the matter. Panel reports are to be adopted within 60 days of issuance, unless the DSB decides against it or a Party decides to appeal.</p> <p>During all stages, the Parties can request other means of dispute settlement, such as good offices, conciliation, mediation, and arbitration.</p> <p>If one or both Parties appeal to the panel's decision, the Appellate Body is to conduct a review within 60 or 90 days. The resulting report is to be unconditionally accepted by the Parties to the dispute within 30 days, unless the DSB decides otherwise.</p> <p>If the DSB authorizes the complaining Party to suspend application of concessions or other obligations, disagreements on the level of suspension or principles of retaliation can be referred to arbitration.</p>	<p>If the Member concerned fails to bring the measure found to be inconsistent with a covered agreement into compliance therewith or otherwise comply with the recommendations and rulings within the reasonable period of time, the Member shall, if so requested, enter into negotiations with any Party having invoked the dispute settlement procedures, with a view to developing mutually acceptable compensation.</p> <p>If no satisfactory compensation is agreed upon within 20 days, any Party having invoked the dispute settlement procedures may request from the DSB authorization to suspend application of concessions or other obligations (i.e., to impose trade sanctions).</p>

vided a menu of options and highlighted key considerations for choosing among them. This can be useful for bringing about the revolutionary changes that new international agreements aspire to achieve.

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