

Preface

During the 1990s, but even stronger after the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (the Rio+10 Summit), partnerships for sustainability emerged as a new phenomenon. These partnerships aim to address the challenges of environmental governance in an increasingly complex, globalized world. This volume discusses the emerging partnership paradigm in governance for sustainable development. Current debates on (global) environmental governance focus on the role and inclusion of private actors in policies for sustainable development, and partnerships are one mode and conceptualization for such non-governmental involvements in initially state-dominated practices. Scientific research on partnerships within the context of governance theory is fairly new, and there is a clear need to systemize our knowledge base to further define the international research agenda on this topic. In addition, there is an urgent demand from governments and international organizations, but also from non-governmental actors, for strategic insights to build upon their activities in this field. This volume is designed to address the questions, debates and agendas related to this new mode of governance.

The book arose out of an international colloquium and PhD master class at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences in Amsterdam in June 2006. The colloquium and master class brought together experts and students in the field of partnerships for sustainable development from many countries and social science disciplines. The lively, stimulating and innovative debates at these academic events have strongly contributed to the final shaping of this volume and the individual contributions in it.

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The colloquium and master class aimed to connect the theoretical insights from research with policy needs. Though focused on academic research, parts of the colloquium were addressed at the discussion of the connection between the science and practice of partnerships that policy-makers are confronted with. We would like to thank representatives of the Dutch Ministry of the Environment, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign

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