

THE EUROPEAN UNION IN GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE: A
“CRITICAL” ROLE FOR THE CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

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ABSTRACT

THE EUROPEAN UNION IN GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE: A “CRITICAL” ROLE FOR THE CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

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This thesis aims to examine global climate governance and the role of the European Union (EU) throughout the Conference of Parties (COP) negotiations as the main supreme body of the United Nations Convention Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This thesis considers analytical frames introduced in the literature, such as the “norm life cycle” and reinterprets the EU’s role in climate politics within the scope of constructivist arguments. The findings reveal that the EU’s role in global climate governance is related to a normative framework based on its claim of a “leading by example” role given its productive policies and consistent position addressing the significance of climate change during the COP negotiations. The EU’s official discourse is traced during the selected COP negotiations that demonstrate its pledges and commitments reinforcing the legitimacy of the climate regime. These findings highlight the importance of legitimacy and authority in advancing climate governance and in the EU’s role in the process.

Keywords: Global Climate Governance, Negotiations, European Union, Leadership, Conference of Parties (COP)

ÖZ

KÜRESEL İKLİM YÖNETİŞİMİNDE AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ: İKLİM MÜZAKERELERİNDE “KRİTİK” BİR ROL

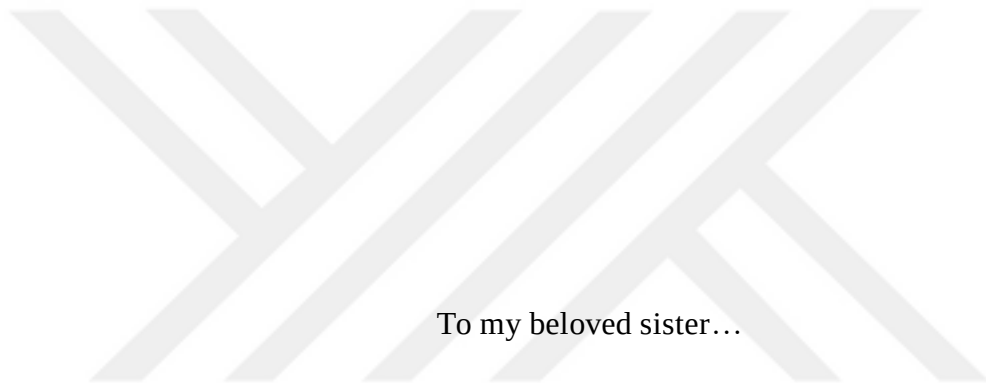
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Bu tez, küresel iklim yönetişimini ve Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) Birleşmiş Milletler İklim Değişikliği Çerçeve Sözleşmesi (BMİDÇS) çerçevesindeki Taraflar Konferansı (COP) müzakerelerindeki rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu tez, "norm yaşam döngüsü" olarak literatüre tanıtılan analitik çerçeveyi göz önünde bulundurarak ve AB'nin iklim politikaları ve COP müzakereleri sırasındaki tutarlı pozisyonlarına bağlı olarak AB'nin iklim politikalarındaki rolünü inşacı argümanlar bağlamında yeniden yorumlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bulgular, AB'nin küresel iklim yönetişimindeki rolünün, üretken politikaları ve COP müzakereleri sırasındaki tutarlı tutumu temelinde "örnek gösteren liderlik" iddiasına dayanan bir normatif çerçeve ile ilişkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Seçilen COP müzakereleri sırasında AB'nin resmi söylemi, iklim rejiminin meşruiyetini güçlendiren taahhütlerini ve bağlılıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bulgular, iklim yönetişimini ilerletmede meşruiyet ve otoritenin önemini ve AB'nin bu süreçteki rolünü vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Küresel İklim Yönetişimi, Müzakereler, Avrupa Birliği, Liderlik, Taraflar Konferansı (COP)



To my beloved sister...

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAT	: Climate Action Tracker
CBDR-RC	: Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities
COP	: Conference of Parties
EIT	: Economies in Transition
ETS	: Emission Trading System
EU	: European Union
GHGs	: Greenhouse Gases
IGOs	: Intergovernmental Organizations
INDCs	: Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
IOs	: International Organizations
IPCC	: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LDCs	: Least Developed Countries
NDC	: Nationally Determined Contributions
NGOs	: Non-governmental Organizations
OECD	: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	: United Nations
UNCED	: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	: United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WMO	: UN World Meteorological Organization
WTO	: World Trade Organization
WWII	: World War II

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In an era marked by great global environmental challenges, addressing climate change has become a chief concern for international organizations and governments. Climate governance, encompassing the policies, institutions, and negotiations has emerged as a notable area of study in international relations. There is no enforcement mechanism within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the umbrella organization of the global climate governance mechanism, and climate actions are based on the commitments of individual governments. Therefore, it is essential to create legitimacy as well as sources of authority in climate governance which is also discussed in the literature.

This thesis examines the EU's role in climate governance and norm socialization, particularly questioning its discursive power on climate negotiations during Conference of Parties (COP) meetings held within the scope of the UNFCCC. In light of the literature on international governance, this study integrates governance literature, and constructivist and liberal perspectives to shed light on the emergence and socialization of the climate norm and the EU's engagement and specific contributions to the climate negotiations. Examining the "leader by example" role of the EU, this thesis recognizes climate governance as part of the "norm life cycle" for the emergence and potential diffusion of the climate norm (Oberthür & Kelly 2008, 36; Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 895). Furthermore, this thesis assumes that the EU as a "critical" actor inspires and motivates international action, thus, its role can be

questioned in climate norms socialization and cascading (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 895).

The prominent international platform for tracking the EU's negotiating role in climate governance is the Conference of Parties (COP) negotiations. The COP is the main decision-making body of the UNFCCC, where negotiations are held and participants from around the world are hosted. By focusing on the particular COP negotiations, the EU's resolutions before and after the COP processes and discursive influence to promote climate policies adopted during the negotiations are examined to question its normative power to internationally address climate change.

In light of my literature review, this thesis seeks to contribute to the understanding of the climate governance processes by focusing on relatively understudied aspects of climate governance that are important for social construction and reinforcement of climate norms. Within the realm of climate change, different theoretical approaches offer insights into how the process has been handled, promoted, and, internalized by actors, such as the EU. While I present my theoretical framework, I pay attention to how liberalism and constructivism with different ontologies examine the subject. Accordingly, this thesis acknowledges that for an in-depth analysis of the international measures against climate change, it is pivotal to draw on the processes and to discern how political legitimacy and authority are incorporated into negotiations.

The research topic of this thesis is shaped by a set of questions that aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue defined above. The following

questions guide the inquiry: (i) How do constructivist studies explain the mechanisms of global climate governance? (ii) In which ways does the EU lead the global climate governance? (iii) How can the role of the EU in global climate governance, particularly in the context of norm cascade during the COP negotiations, be examined?

In addressing these research questions, this thesis keynotes several arguments. First, the analysis delves into the interplay between the EU's engagement in global climate governance and its role in catalyzing "norm life cycle" stages during related COP negotiations (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). Therefore, the global climate governance evolves in a "norm life cycle" and the EU remains at the forefront during the norm cascade processes as a "critical actor" (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). Second, the EU's engagement in COP negotiations contributes norm diffusion because the EU has a robust discourse supporting the "leadership by example" argument of Oberthür and Kelly (2008, 36). Finally, as a result of these implications, the EU leads the global climate governance and negotiations with the concern and emphasis of being a "global leader" in a normative frame.

The EU is considered as the critical actor for the norm life cycle of international climate politics due to several main reasons. First of all, the international action for climate change was firstly dependent on volunteering pledges. The Kyoto Protocol lacked support from most of the developed countries, the ratification was delayed, and the burden-sharing debates between developed, developing, and least-developed countries (LDCs) made consensus on climate issue difficult. While the global results of climate degradation required a global response, the "common but differentiated

responsibilities and respective capabilities” (CBDR-RC) principle tolerated actors with differentiated capabilities and pledges. In such a circumstance, the EU’s leadership in climate governance was conspicuous. The EU has proposed the most ambitious emission reduction targets and demonstrated its willingness to acknowledge the climate norm.

In order to demonstrate the EU’s role in climate negotiations, the methodology adopted in this thesis encompasses a single case study and discourse analysis. Statements of EU officials throughout the COP processes, briefings, Council conclusions, and press releases are obtained from the primary sources, the European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission's official websites. The years of the relevant COP meetings were evaluated in the years shown in Chapter III Table 3.1. The years 2007, 2010, 2015, 2017, and 2022 were selected. The years 2007, 2010, and 2017 contain the highest values compared to the years around them, emission rates of the EU show a decreasing trend after these years. On the other hand, 2015 is the year the Paris Agreement was adopted. Finally, the year 2022 is considered in order to evaluate whether the EU still adopts a robust role in the most recent conjuncture.

Within this framework, the thesis consists of four chapters that seek to clarify the questions listed. Chapter I is the introduction, providing an overview of the research topic, research questions, and the purpose of the study. Chapter II reviews relevant literature on concepts of governance, climate governance in liberal institutionalism, and constructivism consisting of four sections. Chapter II aims to set out the theoretical background for the research questions of the thesis. The first section introduces the concept of global governance in international political economy

studies, the second and third sections review studies related to global governance in liberal institutionalism and constructivism, respectively and the fourth section introduces the global climate regime and its actors.

Chapter III delves more into the UNFCCC regime, the EU's commitment to the Paris Agreement, and its role in UNFCCC climate negotiations. Therefore, it aims to explain the research questions within the framework of a relatively understudied aspect of climate governance which is the importance of legitimacy in social construction, and reinforcement of climate norms argued in my theoretical review in Chapter II. In Chapter III, the discourses of the EU authorities during the COP summits are examined by tracing the press notes/statements on the official website, and the resolutions of the European Council and the European Parliament during the process. Through such a discourse analysis the EU's position in COP summits is presented by selecting 5 summits out of a total of 19 summits between 2005 and 2022, including the 1997 summit. In short, Chapter III focuses on the selected COP negotiations for questioning the EU's negotiating power and assessing the normative commitments of the EU.

Finally, Chapter IV incorporates the findings and the theoretical discussions with concluding remarks, emphasizing the contributions of this research to the existing body of knowledge on climate governance. In addition, Chapter IV as the conclusion part underscores the limitations of the study and gives an overview of the findings that substantiate the argument.



CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The Concept of “Global Governance” in International Political Economy Studies

In this section, I introduce the concept of global governance and define why a particular focus on legitimacy and authority is important for my research. The authority of actors in international relations is important given the lack of a world government. The assumption of “anarchy” at the international level emerges from the absence of a world government with a higher authority since the authority has been largely recognized through sovereign national governments. Here, anarchy does not imply chaos, rather it is more descriptive of international relations without a superior authority (Rosenau & Czempiel 1992, 7). The term “governance” has been used to describe a mechanism consisting of authority over a collectivity. National governments have been known as the traditional actors that are allowed to exercise authority and the existence of a government indicates a hierarchical ruling system consisting of authoritative rules, norms, and institutions within the borders of a state (Ruggie 2014, 5). On the other hand, global governance refers to a similar mechanism but across national borders. There is no single authority at the international level. Rather, there are consensus-based institutions, agreements, and other forms of a network to govern issue areas at the international or global level, including agreed principles and norms. The absence of a world government entails a set of arrangements in an ideally legitimate system within not only states but other actors involved in agenda setting, negotiating, and exercise of authority in the governance of different issue areas. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there is a difference between

global and international governance. While the concept of global governance comprises multiple and differentiated actors, such as states, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), market forces, and civil society, international governance mostly includes governmental institutions (Brühl and Rittberger 2022, 2). In addition, global governance associates subnational, regional, and local levels as well as national and international levels in comparison to international governance (Brühl and Rittberger 2022, 2). Thus, global governance encompasses international governance. In this thesis, the concept of global governance is preferred to the concept of international governance due to the more inclusive structure of the UNFCCC, which will be explained later.

A major driver of global governance has been the increasing flows of capital, information, and goods during the globalization process, defined as “globalism” in the 20th century (Keohane 2012, 193-194). Keohane defines two distinct characteristics of globalism (2012, 194). First, globalism is the interconnections between multiple actors. Secondly, by globalism, it is mentioned that these connections might be long-distance and even multicontinental. Although globalism is mostly used in the context of economic interdependence, it might actually comprise multiple dimensions. These dimensions are especially important to see in which issue areas governance mechanisms are developed. While economic globalism explains the interdependence of markets and other actors in the economy, global governance underlines the need for and emergence of some regulatory mechanisms. In short, according to liberals, globalism and global governance are both cross-border and multi-actor phenomena, and they are interconnected. For instance, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was a part of the Bretton Woods Conference organized in 1944 to build a

post-war economic order. The agreement aimed to create certain behavioral sets seeking principles such as transparency and non-discrimination in the liberal international economic order until it came under the umbrella of the international organization called the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994.

On the other hand, environmental globalism, which Keohane defines as the release of all kinds of materials harmful to human health and well-being into the oceans or the atmosphere, points to the rapid spread of AIDS or other epidemics on a multicontinental scale (2012, 196). In addition to the description, the consequences of climate mitigation are on a global scale. The geological epoch called the Anthropocene describes a world period dominated primarily by human influence. In this age, all kinds of research on humans and nature have been fostered while all kinds of elements that harm the environment have also been developed by human hands (Harrington 2016, 479). As a result, the fight against climate change has been insufficient at the local level, and more than unilateral efforts are required. In this context, the subject has started to be handled by international organizations, broad participation has become compulsory and the subject has become a part of global governance.

There are different presentations of the global governance concept in the literature. While all of the governmental and non-governmental actors within a global governance system are instruments of multilateralism, the core idea is to investigate how the world is governed (Weiss and Wilkinson 2014, 9). Although international organizations (IOs) are institutions where actors can come together and decide on issue areas through forums and meetings, and thus create a behavior pattern, they are

essentially the actors of global governance processes (Barnett and Duvall 2014, 55). Nevertheless, global governance points out networks of relations that are more than formal institutions such as IOs enabling collective decision-making processes about particular issue areas and transnational common goods (Rosenau 1995, 13; Zürn 2012). Krasner uses a different term and states that international regimes are a set of principles, norms, and decision-making procedures (1982, 186). Regimes can target a specific issue area, though they are not just ad hoc arrangements. Keohane (1992, 202) uses the concept of governance and defines it as the formal and informal processes and institutions that manage the collective existence of the entities. All kinds of private, national, international, and nongovernmental formations are meant by institutions and processes.

Ruggie (2014, 5) argues that regardless of the level of governance, it exists within certain authoritative norms and rules hence the concept of governance emerged to regulate the affairs of the communities, which are recognized by their shared norms. Although the concept of governance is multidimensional and embodies different elements, the form of governance depends on several norms. Thus, it is quite expected that some norms and beliefs overarch the order and these norms are privileged (Zürn 2018, 5). The regimes that are formed through shared norms governing an issue area, therefore, are argued to be consistent and long-term. For example, leaving a formal mechanism, which can be considered as an agreement in a given regime, does not destroy the expectations as long as the mechanism is shaped around some shared norms and principles. Indeed, the changes in the monetary and trade regimes in the 1970s were not changes in the normative framework but rather they were changes in technical procedures. Ruggie claims that there should be a change in norms and

principles for regimes to change (Ruggie 1982, 384). Therefore, the liberal order among Western countries continued after World War II (WW II) in an embedded form within the so-called “norm-governed” economic order (Ruggie 1982, 382). At this point, global governance requires some kind of “publicness” to justify itself (Zürn 2018, 4; Bernstein 2014, 125).

In this study, the concept of global governance is important to examine how the climate issue has been governed within the framework of the UNFCCC process and the Paris Agreement which came into force in 2016 as a result. The challenge of climate change as an issue area in global governance has been a concern not only for the UN but also for other international, regional, supranational, and non-governmental organizations, associations, and epistemic communities (Weiss and Wilkinson 2014, 5). In the literature on the concept of global governance, my specific focus is on how political authority and legitimacy are provided given the studies by Ruggie (1982, 2014), Zürn (2018), and Bernstein (2014). Accordingly, the UN’s role in the climate issue area needs to be examined since the UNFCCC offers an international conceptualization of climate change, defines the action against it, and encourages actors. As a result, understanding how action has been taken on climate change requires understanding how political authority and legitimacy are incorporated into governance through the Paris Agreement and different actors.

It would be useful to define political authority and legitimacy. While legitimacy implies something deeper, authority is much more related to the pure exercise of power. Koppell defines authority as “institutionalized power but nothing more” (2008, 178). Moreover, authority is itself a concept that could be considered legitimate or

illegitimate. Legitimacy contains a deeper moral sense in definition and practice. Suchman offers a definition that combines many dimensions (1995). However, a major feature of Suchman's definition of legitimacy highlights that actors must behave appropriately in a system constructed according to certain normative frameworks rather than material incentives offered or coercive power enforced (1995, 574). Bernstein (2005, 142) defines legitimacy as the justification and acceptance of shared rules within a community. Similar to Suchman (1995), Bernstein (2005) also underlines the need for legitimacy in exercising authority. Because if the authority is considered a tool to implement shared rules in a community, there is also legitimate use for it.

Accordingly, the legitimacy of a global authority can be provided when actors involved in a regime accept the rules formed within this regime primarily through shared norms. Thus, legitimacy for governance at the international level is particularly important for two reasons. First, a sovereign state has the authority to set binding rules within its own borders and to use physical force when necessary through relevant institutions. However, the UNFCCC system lacks enforcement capability on sovereign actors. Instead of such an enforcement mechanism, it encourages international action in financial and technical fields through binding treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement for more than twenty-five years. Because climate change has a global characteristic that affects the globe and the communities around it, it has been debated as a collective problem rather than a specific one that requires particular attention from a few actors. This characteristic also turns climate issues into a collective action problem. Since the first initiatives were taken in the 1990s, there has been a dispute between developing and less-developed countries

regarding the responsibilities of actors to mitigate climate change (Özçelik 2020, 193). The developing countries and the Global South emphasized that developed countries are responsible for industrialization and ultimately serious levels of carbon emissions thus despite the global characteristic of the problem, its effects and causes are not equal for all actors. As a result, common but differentiated responsibility emerged as a principle of international environmental law and as a solution to the criticism of inequality in the Rio Declaration (Article 7; Özçelik 2020, 194). This shows that although the current global climate governance process offers the first international agreements and binding solutions regarding the issue, the maturity of legitimacy has not been reached. Despite the criticism of the UN-led climate governance's inability to produce concrete results, many steps have been taken nationally on the climate process. This raises the question of why and how many concepts such as sustainability, green economy, and carbon neutrality continue to be promoted despite the inadequacies of the current climate regime. While stating that climate change policies are a "regulatory failure", Meckling argues that there are two dynamics in this process standing successful: the Paris Agreement of 2015 and the EU's leadership on climate issues (2018, 59).

Moreover, the international environment or conjuncture should also be considered to understand the dynamics in the conceptualization of global governance. It is not only the distribution of capabilities that drives the maintenance of order in international politics (Gilpin 1981, 85). The social structure of the international environment, which contains basic norms of liberal democracy since the end of the Cold War, has made global governance a target in parallel to the process of liberalization of the economy and democratization (Bernstein 2011, 26). Several

theories of international relations and international political economy have tried to explain the transition of governance models into new and much more complex ones after the 1990s with different epistemological and even ontological approaches. In the next section, I review the literature on global governance to present how studies in liberalism and constructivism examine the concept in general and in particular as a variable in the formation process of climate regime with a focus on its formal norms and rules.

2.2. Global Governance From the Point of Liberal Institutionalism

The studies in liberal institutionalism examine the function of international organizations, agenda-setting, and transnational relations. In the most general terms, neoliberal institutionalism argues for global governance as a mechanism by which societal actors participate in world politics and set agendas in a “bottom-up” manner. More specifically, international regimes encourage a pattern of behavior by promoting norms, principles, and rules in several areas of international cooperation. While these are long-term processes with complex instruments to control effectiveness, neoliberals offer an ontology that will undermine the zero-sum game rule which is seen as the inevitable result of international anarchy. At the core of liberal institutionalism lies the hypothesis that a self-regulating market economy is one of the institutions that provide maximum benefit to the states as the main actors. Thus, the liberal market economy is one of the first motivations for international order, transnational interconnectedness, and interdependence. The international economic regime in the post-war era structured by a self-regulating market has been operationalized by Bretton Woods institutions, several other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working at a global scale, and the environmental issues are

the subjects of a serious governance network from the private to the public sectors at the international, transnational and regional levels.

Before understanding any particular pattern in an issue area, such as climate change governance, it is essential to examine the mechanisms that shape the formation and evolution of an order in a given issue area. An “issue area” refers to a particular area of international relations around which principles, norms, and procedures emerge (Rosenau 1992, 8). Further, the ontological premises of liberal institutionalism underlie a rational logic that each actor pursues an optimum gain in a given issue area. For such an optimum gain, international anarchy must be appeased through the observance of the principle of reciprocity among actors in negotiations. Based on these premises, neoliberal institutionalists view international organizations as regulators of issue areas and the mediators between actors (Steven 2001, 191-193). International organizations function beyond national borders and are parts of the allocation of authority. Taken empirically from the concept of order, international organizations are an integral part of the international regimes, as they carry out agenda setting and negotiations about the issue areas. Here, the concepts of “regime” and “governance” are not identical by definition and practice, although they seem like the same notions. As Rosenau fully points out, international regimes are closer to defining sets of arrangements around norms, principles, and rules in reference to a particular issue area (1992, 8-9). While the concept of “governance” embodies an extended form of an order, “regimes” target specialized orders and spheres.

Within this framework, the emergence of international regimes and broader governance processes in a given issue area is embedded in an international order.

Thus, the formation of international regimes contains not only power and capabilities but also requires a “legitimate social purpose” to exist and to sustain internationalized authority (Ruggie 1982, 382). Here, what is meant by authority is different from Koppell’s rigid definition of underlining power stating “institutionalized power but nothing more”. Ruggie emphasizes that political authority becomes legitimate with a social purpose and involves a certain level of consent (Koppell 2008, 178; Ruggie 1982, 382). The social purpose and objective of the international order during the post-WWII in the twentieth century was embedded in a form of liberalism and associated economic regimes have been the mediators of the encompassing order based on multilateralism (Ruggie 1982, 393-402). Therefore, embedded liberalism has been shaping the normative structure of governance practices for more than half a century.

In the post-WWII period, an intense process of international institutionalization began. This international institutionalization brought both empirical and normative orders into pursuit (Rosenau 1992, 11). While normative orders contain normative criteria, empirical orders are the target of parsimonious explanations and point to a more objective reality. Before going into detail about how issue areas are institutionalized within the mechanisms of global governance, it should be remembered how often neoliberal theory refers to concepts such as interdependence and soft power in this institutionalization process. As traditional security concerns began to be replaced by new security issues, concepts such as power and authority began to be revised. The concept of power, which is basically defined in the international relations literature as the ability to get someone else to do what is desired, started to be discussed in different ways while being operationalized. The concept of “soft power”, which was brought to the literature by Joseph Nye, was about

controlling the political environment with non-military tools and the ability to have an impact on the policy choices of other actors (Nye 1990, 155). Power itself is a form of relationship, Keohane and Nye present “interdependence” as one of the most important characteristics of this form of relationship (Keohane and Nye 2011, 9). Soft power and interdependence also affect any issue area to be governed. While the interdependence between actors ensures that the interaction is reciprocal, soft power provides control over others with several tools such as economic capacity and institutional attractiveness. Borrowing Nye’s definition of soft power, the attractiveness of an actor with a co-optive power’s culture, institutions and ideology provides an opportunity to constitute legitimacy regarding a certain issue area (Nye 1990, 166-167).

After the 1990s, the arguments about the insufficiency of the realist theory in explaining the institutionalization process increased, while new security issues have been added to the international agenda. As the explanations of the institutionalization process increased, new security issues began to be added to the agenda. Collective awareness and action increased on issues, such as international humanitarian law, global epidemics, and the environment. Due to the development of science and technology, increased globalization, and the global impact of these issue areas, international institutions have included them in their agenda.

Likewise, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established in 1988 by the UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to support scientific research and knowledge production on climate change and its causes (Bernauer and Schaffer 2012, 418). In addition, the UNFCCC was brought into force

in 1992 which is the parent treaty for the Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Agreement. The main aim of the Paris Agreement is to keep the global average temperature rise this century as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celcius above pre-industrial levels. Thus, the UN IPCC has begun to represent the international efforts to combat climate change and global climate governance under the umbrella of the UN. Not only the body of the UN, but also various institutions ranging from state to non-state actors, are involved in the regulatory process to converge the strategies of technology, science, market, and even ideas in responding to the threat of climate change (Keohane and Victor 2011, 8).

As mentioned above, regimes target more specific issue areas and involve wide arrays of bodies that oversee the management processes compared to governance mechanisms. Governance mechanisms, including the regime complexes, target bringing the actors of a related issue together and supporting them to take decisions and actions. Keohane and Victor conceptualize the complex networks regarding climate change as the “regime complex” which points out the loosely-linked structure of the interaction (2011, 19). The first two elements for a loosely linked enforcement mechanism regarding climate change that Keohane and Victor refer to are “coherence” and “accountability” (2011, 16-17). Indeed, according to liberal institutionalists because the issue area of climate change can be considered as regime complex since it has been governed is itself a public good, the collective work not with a strong enforcement mechanism but with a combination of consent and control (Bernauer and Schaffer 2012, 421).

For a regime to be sustained, it must have some incentive instruments. However, climate change presents a typical collective action problem given the argument of neoliberal institutionalism about the logic of consequence that defines actors' decision-making through rational cost-benefit calculations. Collective action problems mean individuals or communities acting on a problem might avoid sharing the burden or the cost of the action since there might be free riders that would result in action takers having an unproportionate benefit or effect. In 1971, Olson described the collective action problem as the free-ride problem that can be experienced while trying to achieve collective interests which require a collective effort to be reached which makes the provision of a public good problematic (Olson 1971). Thus, neoliberal institutionalists emphasize the role of complex interdependence and policy alignment on regime complexes. Keohane and Victor argue such a diversion of interests might foster the adaptability for the stakeholders and support to construct their own agendas on a given issue (2011, 15). Although the power to politicize issues seems to be in the hands of only a few actors, the norms and principles that support international regimes and organizations permit the creation of "linkage strategies" for weaker ones (Keohane and Nye 2001, 31). Therefore, the consequences of the problem of collective action might be eliminated to some extent with the development of linkage strategies such as policy alignment or norm diffusion.

2.3. The Constructivist Approach to the Global Governance

Different from the rationalist theories which seek to explain agency motivation to form an order provoked by the logic of consequence, constructivist literature emphasizes the logic of appropriateness, which indicates that actors tend to choose socially "right" or "good" patterns of behavior (March and Olsen 2004, 3). In other

words, constructivists do not presume the existence of given interests, conflicts, and an anarchic structure. Rather, the distribution of the knowledge and how the actors process it contributes to the interaction before forming intersubjective inferences against each other (Wendt 1992, 397). Interests are determined by the identities built around certain norms and values by collective entities over time. Therefore, cooperation and conflict may arise as a result of social learning processes during interaction and reasoning. The views that anarchy causes states to seek paradoxical security or inevitable cooperation between them to prevent losses are argued to be reductionist by constructivists. For instance, Hopf (1998, 199) criticizes rationalist theories of international relations because they argue that world politics includes a heterogeneous structure and the structure can be generalized about behavior patterns.

Since constructivists consider actors and networks as part of a constitutive process, most issues in international relations practices are socially constructed as well. While Onuf asks “who decides what a ‘given area’ is”, Barnett and Finnemore point out that the issue areas that international organizations deal with are defined, classified, and constructed (Onuf 1989, 145; Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 31). Furthermore, Kacowicz defines the concept of global governance as a “complex systems of constructing new realities and reconstructing old ones” which includes states, agencies, networks, and international institutions (Kacowicz 2012, 632). It is not expected from the “global governance complex” to function by top-down or bottom-up governance mechanisms. Rather, it is argued that the global governance complex encompasses regulations over common goods consisting of norms, rules, and programs (Zürn 2012, 670). The major difference between Kacowicz’s and Zürn’s definitions lies in Kacowicz’s emphasis that governance might be a constitutive

concept in itself, as opposed to Zürn's promotion of governance as a tool for regulation despite consensus on the role of norms and rules.

According to constructivists, international organizations are the institutionalized form of interaction between agents. Second, once an interaction in which norms and rules are embedded becomes institutionalized, organizations gain autonomy (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 4). Third, international organizations do not only have monitoring instruments; and, they do not only set the rules and observe. They also produce and manipulate knowledge, thus, they construct interests (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 6-9). Therefore, international organizations do not only serve the interests of the states, but also they have the power to transform the interests of the states. Accordingly, states can continue to take an active role in international organizations even if it is not always in line with their interests at that time since actors choose also the right or good pattern of behavior (logic of appropriateness) (March and Olsen 2004, 3).

One of the criteria for appropriateness is norms. March and Olsen indicate that the legitimization practices of contemporary democracies are based on the foundational norms (2004, 6). Katzenstein and other constructivists define norms as "collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity" (Katzenstein 1996, 5; Wiener 2007, 49). In light of a literature review, Finnemore and Sikkink use the concept of norms as behavioral rules that explain appropriate behavior (1998, 891).

Norms are essential because they are one of the founding elements of governance mechanisms. As I mentioned in the previous section in explaining Ruggie's concept of "embedded liberalism", norms are the skeletons of change and order (Ruggie 1998, 393). Because norms are difficult to measure, it is often evaluated as problematic to explain what role they play in the structure. According to Wendt, agents are the identities and the structure comprises institutional norms which means norms are targeted as building blocks (1992, 413). Although what is "good" and what is "bad" has been a field of discussion in moral philosophy for centuries, moral assessment has become clearer with the development of international law in international relations. For instance, in WTO the principles of non-discrimination are well defined; human rights as a concept itself has a universal declaration in the body of the UN, and democracy and the rule of law became an integral part of the EU acquis. Therefore, not only at the international level but also at the domestic level institutions legitimize themselves through norms and gain public trust to maintain their identity.

Finnemore and Sikkink draw a "bottom-up" scheme for the formation of international norms and argue that international norms exist in a cycle starting from the domestic level (1998, 895). According to the argument, the cycle consists of three stages plus a threshold point. First, norms emerge at the domestic level through the promotion of "norm entrepreneurs" (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 893). Once norm entrepreneurs start to advocate a particular attitude toward an issue area, they re-build or build public opinion and corporate behavior at the domestic level. Norms do not arise by themselves, rather they are conceptualized and practiced at related organizations before settling in. Second, the "norm cascade" stage implies the

penetration of the norms locally established into the international interaction (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 898). The socialization processes of agents, or identities, mentioned in this chapter help in the discussion and transfer of norms internationally. During the “cascade” stage, not all international agents are expected to internalize the norm. Internationalization takes place at the final stage. At this stage, the norm becomes more institutionalized and becomes part of international law and wider networks (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, 898). In addition to these three main stages, Finnemore and Sikkink condition a “tipping point” criterion between the first two stages (1998, 895). Before the norm adoption of international organizations and several states, the tipping point refers to a transition. Like a threshold, some critical states are expected to adopt the norm before international institutionalization.

The “norm life cycle” is an important analytical framework to examine how regimes are constituted and how they govern in a given issue area. The climate negotiations under the umbrella of the UN have started with the scientific studies of experts attaching importance to global warming, carbon emissions, and sea levels. Later on, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement provided a set of rules and norms that guide actors for collective countermeasures against climate change. During the UNFCCC negotiations, strong statements were produced on means, such as “clean development”, “transition to renewables”, and “reduction of carbon emissions” (Wu et al. 2021, 12521).

Figure 2.1. Stages of Norms

TABLE 1. *Stages of norms*

	<i>Stage 1 Norm emergence</i>	<i>Stage 2 Norm cascade</i>	<i>Stage 3 Internalization</i>
<i>Actors</i>	Norm entrepreneurs with organizational platforms	States, international organizations, networks	Law, professions, bureaucracy
<i>Motives</i>	Altruism, empathy, ideational, commitment	Legitimacy, reputation, esteem	Conformity
<i>Dominant mechanisms</i>	Persuasion	Socialization, institutionalization, demonstration	Habit, institutionalization

Source: Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 898

Accordingly, I consider Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998) norm life cycle essential in examining my research question for governance mechanism(s) in the given issue of climate change. The "norm cascade" stage includes the establishment of international norms in a concrete setting. Moreover, it was mentioned that each norm could not pass the "cascade" stage and turn into a concrete and collectively binding structure in legal terms. Berliner and Prakash attribute this to the failure of the coexistence of norms and related policies which means the lack of adoption does not always imply the existential crisis of the norm (2012, 150). These crises of coexistence between norm and policy might be important to examine why weaker norms might sometimes be more likely to be adopted by larger groups. At the same time, the coexistence of norms at the international level and different levels of adoption at the domestic level might support Keohane's argument about "loosely linked" regimes that work more effectively than a single regime (Berliner and Prakash 2012, 150; Keohane 2011, 19). When the norm life cycle is considered, the transition from the domestic stage to the norm cascade includes a tipping point in the middle. The critical actors are essential to cross the threshold and help the norm to socialize.

While crossing the threshold within the framework of constructivism, legitimacy gains importance. On the other hand, in liberal institutionalism, authority comes to the fore to overcome collective action problems.

2.4. Global Climate Regime and, Actors: The Importance of the UNFCCC

The issue of climate change marked the twenty-first century and the end of the twentieth century in international politics. While the internationalization of the topic was primarily dependent on scientific knowledge, it later turned into an international field of activism due to the globally adverse effects of climate change. Although changes in the Earth's climate are not limited to this century and could have even been observed in pre-industrial revolution times, anthropocentric contribution to climate change has accelerated and intensified the effects (Bernauer and Schaffer 2010, 2). The global temperature has increased based on the parallel increase in greenhouse gases (GHGs) which in turn resulted in more frequent observations of sea levels' rise, ecosystems' endangerment, and extreme weather events (WWF n.d.). On the other hand, looking at the observable effects of climate change, deterioration does not only take place in the physical environment and ecosystem. As it may vary according to geographical circumstances, it also has serious socio-economic implications. Consequently, the climate crisis has not only been a subject constituted within the framework of scientific knowledge over time but has also entered the political agenda. Therefore, the solution has been considered as establishing a cooperation area that includes knowledge production processes in negotiations, in which actors are obliged to be involved.

The climate governance literature discusses the formation of these collaborative processes. While the literature tries to describe these processes within the historical background, it also emphasizes the inadequacy of international efforts to develop a fully efficient mechanism due to scientific and economic uncertainty (Depledge 2005, 19; Keohane and Victor 2011, 19; Bernauer and Schaffer 2012, 421). Given diverse socio-economic implications due to different geographical circumstances, developing and less-developed countries are more skeptical about the countermeasures. The major reason for their skepticism is the argument that highlights their relatively lower responsibility for fossil-based development compared to that of developed countries (Özçelik 2020, 193). In other words, the fact that the climate crisis is a “common good” issue underlines a collective action problem according to liberal institutionalists, and a norm cascade process in which the tipping point and role of the critical state(s) according to constructivist matter in formation and implementation of an international regime on reducing emissions (Zürn 2012, 671; Bernauer and Schaffer 2012, 421-422).

Nevertheless, developing countries are keen to participate in governance processes and have been investing more in energy efficiency and renewable energy recently (Wu et al. 2021, 12506). This may be related to their interests in interactions with authority sources in climate change regime through linkage strategies or their understanding of “good” or “proper” behavior in light of shared norms about fighting climate change (logic of appropriateness) in the socialization processes of developing countries. Indeed, as argued by constructivists, norms can change institutional behavior and provide actors incentives that institutions do not provide in their pure structural framework. As Bernauer and Schaffer highlight, climate change as a

concept is a construction of the scientific knowledge production processes (2010, 2). Norms might have “constitutive” functions which means they define and justify value-driven behavior (Wiener 2008; Wendt 1999; Winston 2018, 640). At the same time, norms might function as “constraints” in motivations which means norms constitute the legitimacy of a particular behavior, required especially to recognize the authority of that institution (Winston 2018, 640; Zürn 2012, 670). Thus, the IPCC and the UNFCCC addressing climate change and environmental climate-related norms in international politics as an institution and bringing together various actors should be the starting point for my research question.

Remembering the definition of Kacowicz (2012), the climate regime since the 1990s has sought to overthrow the perception that fossil fuels are one of the most integral parts of economic development and tries to construct new realities based on decarbonization, green industries, and sustainability criteria. The UNFCCC attributes Parties to a responsibility to take the lead in combating the adverse effects of climate change and recognizes the drawbacks of fossil fuel production (Article 3/1). Therefore, there has been a paradigm shift in energy production and consumption from the twentieth century to the present. The period which started as an international knowledge production process has become a part of international interaction over time. This interaction accelerated as developed countries started to promote clean energy and turned into a governance mechanism where actors came together and created a set of norms and rules on issues such as GHG emissions under the parent UNFCCC and the 2015 Paris Agreement.

In this thesis, I examine how these norms are specifically promoted by which actors(s) and how their discourse and commitments have been shaped in the process of climate change governance mechanisms. In light of the importance of the UNFCCC as an umbrella institution that brings scientific knowledge, governments, and non-governmental actors together and offers binding solutions to those responsible for the degradation of climate change, it will be useful to consider the governance network consisting of a variety of actors, such as governments, NGOs, IGOs, transnational corporations, and civil society. In fact, liberal institutionalism observing a variety of actors' involvement in the process would argue that governance is privatized and it is a "regime complex" (Keohane and Victor 2011).

The UNFCCC adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit conceptualizes the issue of climate change and formally defines the action that is required to be adopted. Climate change and its adverse effects are clearly defined by Article 1, and the ultimate objective of the Convention is stated as the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere" by Article 2 (UNFCCC Article 1/Article 2). The definition was aimed at a global problem, and the stabilization of GHG concentration also required a global measure. The multi-voice and diversity of the actors was an effort to incorporate a global solution. However, as mentioned before, the effects of climate change were socio-economic as well and its measures were open to discussion in the socio-economic dimension. This is why responsibility over actors has not been considered equal since the UNFCCC was first adopted.

While the term "actors" refers to a multilateral entity, participants in the UNFCCC processes are formally divided into "Party" and "non-Party" stakeholders.

“Parties” are those who actively engage in negotiations, direct the discussions, and create delegates or representatives. Parties are also divided into two by the Convention as “Annex I” and “Non-Annex I” Parties. Annex I Parties refers to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) plus economies in transition (EIT) countries and encompasses Annex II Parties which refers to the OECD countries without the inclusion of EIT Parties (see Appendix A). On the other hand, Non-Annex I Parties involve developing countries and LDCs with special status due to their high levels of vulnerability to the climate crisis. The presence of non-Party stakeholders in UNFCCC processes indicates that agencies functioning within the body of the UN and NGOs (UNFCCC n.d.). Because the UNFCCC regime has been trying to set global norms and rules and embracing multi-level participation, the presence of non-Party stakeholders in UNFCCC is important for the inclusiveness criterion defined by Keohane to define well-established, legitimate global governance according to the six specific criteria he presented (Keohane 2011, 101).

The platform in which decisions are discussed and made by the Parties is the Conference of Parties (COP). The COP is one of the most vital mechanisms of the UNFCCC since it is the decision-making body that creates values against climate change and the action limits are determined. The Conferences which have been held each year since 1995 aim to bring the Parties together, reinforce scientific knowledge, and create consensus-based policy actions. Acknowledging that climate change is a common good problem, the UNFCCC calls for the international community to action. The annual COP meetings allow actors to constitute and constrain policy choices. In this dialogue platform, some values on climate change gain importance through interaction. In particular, developed countries such as the EU set an example and

create incentives both in discourse and in action. One of the first achievements of the COP gatherings was the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in December 1997, after the COP-3. The Protocol governed heavier responsibilities for the developed countries because they were recognized as responsible for the degradation, and most of them made commitments to reduce GHG emissions.

From Kyoto to the present, one of the most important turning points has been the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015 because it set new binding commitments and reviewed the responsibilities between the Parties. As the Kyoto Protocol was drawing to a close, the COP-15 negotiations in 2009 were expected to create a new path for the regime. However, rather than fulfilling the binding commitments of the Kyoto Protocol, the first steps that would result in the Paris Agreement were taken at the COP-17 Durban Conference in 2011 (Aydın Dikmen 2020, e66). Keohane and Oppenheimer wrote about the failure of the COP-15 negotiations and stressed that the Kyoto process had reached a “dead-end” (2016, 146). Although this process will be examined as part of my research question in the next chapter, it is the basis for discussing the international struggle against climate change as a “norm” that is in the cascade stage (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

While consensus was growing on the measures to be taken to counter the adverse effects of climate change and the bureaucratic success of the Paris Agreement was an indication of the practical failure of the Kyoto process, the issue of burden sharing between developed and developing countries has been not over during the post-Paris Agreement process. Since the first adoption of the UNFCCC in 1992, the responsibilities of developing and developed countries have been separated. The

CBDR principle which was acknowledged by the UNFCCC refers to the universal character of climate change but differentiated responsibilities of the nations to take measures against accordingly their economic conditions and capabilities since 1992. Developing Non-Annex I countries and LDCs outside the Annex I and Annex II Parties are expressly exempted from most of the responsibility by the Convention itself until the adoption of the Paris Agreement at COP-21. Therefore, COP-21 also meant the abandonment of CBDR-RC understanding of burden sharing and the birth of the “intended nationally determined contributions” (INDCs) norm instead (Hongyuan 2015, 431). While these two norms are not contradictory, they are seen as complementary in the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement. In Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, there is an understanding that still reflects the CBDR-RC principle despite the INDCs because it mentions non-developed nations’ responsibility to report their national contributions annually.

It would not be wrong to conclude that there has been a paradigm shift in the norms regarding climate change and governance. The shift emerges from the environmental and international context and the direction of critical actors in particular. While the issue was seen as a field of activism, over time it has become a norm that countries consider in their bilateral and multilateral relations. For instance, one of the most important changes from Kyoto to today was the adoption of the Paris Agreement, which was signed in 2015 as a result of the COP-21 negotiations. The Agreement was signed by all the Parties and entered into force in most of the signatories in a short time compared to. Thus, one can argue that actors have recognized the adverse effects of climate change over time, while policy adoption by

developed and developing countries remains a controversial issue, which was underlined as a crisis of coexistence of norms and policy adoption in the literature.

2.4.a. Importance of Authority and Legitimacy in Climate Governance

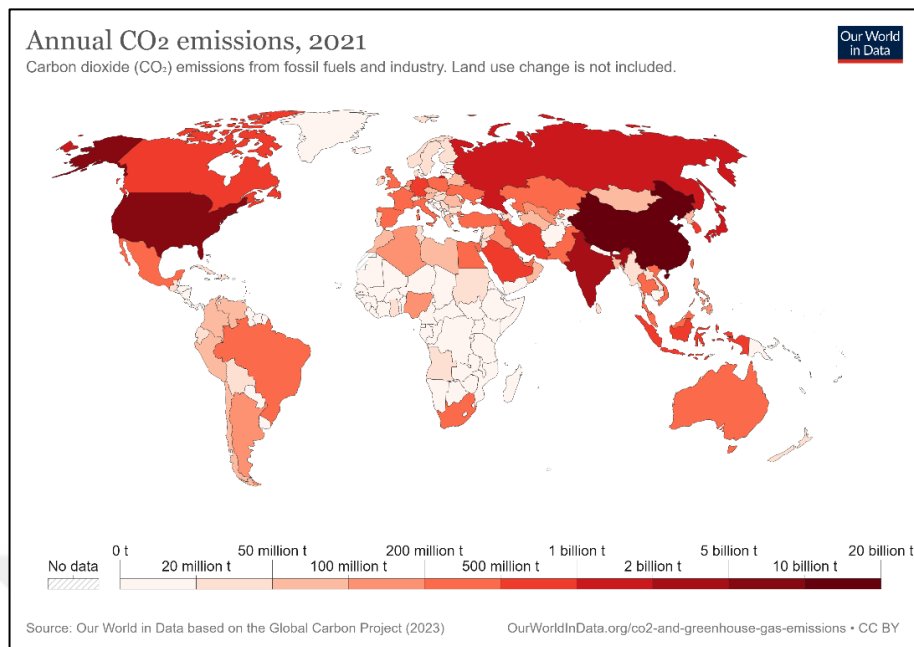
In this chapter, I reviewed the literature on definitions of “governance”, and “regime” concepts and presented the key arguments of neoliberal institutionalism and constructivism, two theoretical frameworks that address governance problems in different issue areas beyond nation-states’ borders. Then, I reviewed the climate governance literature, which reflects two theoretical frameworks to outline origins, dynamics, and discussions on the formation of institutions and governance mechanisms within the issue of climate change.

The literature review underlines the problem of authority in global climate governance. The literature offers a controversial description of the UN-led regime’s authority to regulate the process and to produce an effective response to the climate crisis as a “transnational common good” (Zürn 2012). Due to this controversy, the “single regime” debates have not ended even if the UNFCCC is considered a roof institution or parent convention (Keohane and Victor 2011). Whether the structure is defined as a “global governance complex” or “regime complex”, the crisis of coexistence of norms and policy adoption requires detailed research on how the norm life cycle through the UNFCCC-led process and the 2015 Paris Agreement has evolved through which actors’ discourse and commitments in the process of climate change governance mechanisms.

The UNFCCC regime since the Kyoto Protocol has encouraged voluntary policy implementations rather than binding rules which resulted in sanctions if not pursued, the authority of the procedures such as the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement has always been questioned. Citing Koppell's description of authority, the climate regime is far from institutionalized power but close to institutionalized legitimacy (Koppell 2008, 178). Here, what is meant by institutionalized legitimacy refers to the justification of shared norms which has still been established around pro-environmental policies.

Accordingly, the importance of authority and legitimacy will be questioned in the governance mechanisms. The climate crisis as a "common good" issue underlines a collective action problem in which resources of authority and incentives to reduce uncertainty would be more weighted to establish a regime according to neoliberal institutionalist arguments. On the other hand, the constructivist argument would consider authority necessary but insufficient without legitimacy in light of a norm cascade process in which the tipping point and role of critical state(s) matter in the formation and implementation of an international regime on reducing emissions. Remembering the "norm life cycle" argument of Finnemore and Sikkink, climate governance has strong support from critical countries with high levels of emissions, transition capacity, and motivation for a pro-environmental identity. Figure 2.2. demonstrates that among the developed countries with high emissions, the EU countries have relatively lower emission rates. Therefore, while the EU is a critical actor in the "norm life cycle" in terms of emission rates and level of development, it also provides an image that can be associated with the climate norm.

Figure 2.2. Annual CO₂ Emissions From Fossil Fuels and Industry, 2021



Source: Our World in Data based on the Global Carbon Project (2023)

Consequently, I argue that the EU, which is considered a critical actor in the formation of international climate activism and governance, has been important in the tipping point of the norm cascade process mostly because of its role in legitimizing authority resources for the formation and implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement. Moreover, the EU legitimizes counter-measures against environmental degradation and leads the UNFCCC regime which has experienced authority problems since its formation through pro-environmental policy promotion.

CHAPTER III

THE EUROPEAN UNION IN INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

3.1. Global Climate Regime

3.1.a. The UNFCCC Regime and its Historical Context

It has been argued that international regimes exist around certain sets of principles, norms, and decision-making procedures (Krasner 1982, 186). Moreover, the climate crisis emerges as a “transnational common good” that reaches over the borders and becomes an issue that requires multidirectional and multilateral responses (Zürn 2012). In order to understand the cross-border effects of the climate crisis and how it fosters cross-border cooperation, it is essential to examine what it entails. While climate change refers to the long-term shifts in global temperatures, the drivers since the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch are accepted human causes (United Nations n.d.). Increasing levels of GHGs due to the use of fossil fuels such as carbon dioxide and methane increase the temperature of the planet and result in the rise of extreme weather events, rise of sea levels, deforestation, droughts, and other several impacts. The fact that the main driver is human activities, and not only scientific but also having intense socio-economic consequences, turns the problem into a “common good” issue. Even though GHGs have already raised the temperatures by 1.1 degrees Celcius since the 18th century, it is almost new to treat the climate crisis as a security issue (IPCC Secretariat 2023). Aside from threatening human health and food security, a new dimension of international conflicts may develop depending on the climate crisis in the long run (Dalby 2013, 321-322). While the traditional presentation of security is

more about military predominance, there has been a paradigm shift to new interpretations of security issues focusing on wide arrays of concerns such as environmental change. The climate crisis might also threaten the military infrastructure which can directly affect the criteria evaluated under the traditional security dimensions.

In this context, it is not surprising that multi-level governance structures add these complex concerns to their agenda. Since the late 20th century, the international community has started to address the climate crisis as an issue area. One of the first initiatives to produce scientific knowledge, the WMO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) established the IPCC in 1979. The objective of the Panel was to provide scientific data before evaluating new environmental policies to be introduced (IPCC n.d.). Today the 195 member governments benefit from the assessment reports, which are regularly issued by the IPCC and include the assessments of the current and future impacts of climate change.

In 1985, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was established after the establishment of the IPCC. The Convention recognized the depletion of the ozone layer as an international problem and aimed to propose a field of cooperation (UN environment program ozone secretariat n.d.). In Article 2, it is clearly emphasized that the Parties to the Convention must prevent and control human activities that interfere with the ozone layer following the standards and agreed measures of this Convention (UNEP Ozone Secretariat 2019, 3). The Convention recalls the responsibility of Parties to ensure that the national environmental policies do not cause the modification of the Ozone Layer, and attributes developed countries

to support scientific studies conducted in developing countries under the decision VC I/5 (UNEP Ozone Secretariat 2019, 25). Therefore, the Convention also recognized the capacity gap between developing and developed countries and granted privileges to developing countries both financially and in terms of responsibility. Although this Convention established standards for a specific issue area such as the ozone layer, it was one of the first steps to bring the climate crisis to the international area of responsibility.

In 1987, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was adopted. Today with several partnerships, the agreement aims to protect the Earth's shield and limit global warming. The agreement has achieved great numbers of ratification, and all parties to the Protocol are held accountable for specific targets to achieve (UN environment program n.d.). In 1991, the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of Montreal Protocol was established to support developing countries are stated in Article 5 providing financial and technical assistance (Multilateralfund.Org. 2023).

In 1988, the World Conference on the Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security was held in Toronto, Canada under the umbrella of the UNEP and the WMO. Policymakers, NGOs, UN bodies, and scientists from different regions of the world met and discussed the security dimension of the climate crisis. During the Conference, reference was made to economic growth and sustainable development with the leadership of Canada (WMO/OMM 1989). The Conference was held at a time when Toronto had the hottest temperature ever measured in the last 150 years thus the political and scientific consensus on global warming and atmospheric

depletion was growing, and the complex security issues as well as traditional security concerns began to attract the attention of the actors (UPEI Climate Lab 2013). The Conference was held after the establishment of the IPCC and the adoption of the Montreal Protocol to stop the modification of the ozone layer as a result of the evaluation of scientific data derived from the IPCC.

The climate change as an issue reflected in these international agreements has shown that the international actors have an understanding of a shared norm, which is the responsibility to act on the issue. Scientists all around the world were pointing out the problem that climate patterns of the world are deteriorating, and both states and non-state actors began to acknowledge the requirement for regulations and policies at the global level. In addition, international warnings about the climate crisis were not only self-interest based, they referred to “good” patterns of behavior that the international community “must take the responsibility if the world is a legacy to our children” (WMO/OMM 1989, 47; March and Olsen 2004, 3). In other words, climate crisis cannot be considered as a zero-sum game based on self-interested rational calculations of nation-states.

Accordingly, one can argue that a new reality was being constructed around the climate norm. The UNFCCC was established at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), or the Earth Summit in other words, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. With the climate issue increasingly attracting the attention of both epistemic communities and policymakers, the UNFCCC has placed international effort and cooperation on a framework. The Convention was entered into force in 1994 with the signatures of over 150 representatives. The Convention begins

reaffirming and acknowledging certain principles and standards to Parties that are party to the Convention and continues recalling previous international steps such as the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol. In Article 2, the objectives of the Convention are clearly emphasized as the “stabilization of GHG concentrations in the atmosphere” and to “ensure that economic development proceeds in a sustainable manner” (Article 2). In order to achieve these objectives, Article 3 charges the Parties based on “common but differentiated responsibilities” which means the contributors share common responsibility, but the capability criterion is also taken into account, especially for those who are more fragile to adverse effects of climate change (Article 3).

The UNFCCC is a significant example of international bureaucracy because it acquires some levels of autonomy offering global policymaking agendas regarding environmental politics. The UNFCCC Secretariat annually brings states and non states actors together, such as NGOs, civil society groups, epistemic communities, and governments, allowing them to define the problem and the action. Policies to control climate change should be developed at the national level through specific policy instruments, such as carbon taxes. At this point, the UNFCCC supports a global response to environmental degradation by pushing the states to cooperate with the private sector and civil society (Hickmann et al. 2021, 23-24). In order to support the cooperation between the different levels of institutions, the UNFCCC Secretariat offers several initiatives. Through initiatives, such as the Momentum for Climate Initiative, the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA), and the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA), the UNFCCC interacts with non-state and sub-regional communities as well as states (Hickmann et al. 2021, 23).

The UNFCCC has gone through some transformations since its establishment. This was both a result of the international community's evolving ideas on climate change and environmental security and the institutional transformations the UNFCCC had undergone within itself. After its adoption during the UNCED in 1992, several initiatives took place. First, the main decision-making body of the UNFCCC, the Conference of Parties (COP) started to be annually held with the presence of diverse representatives from all around the world. The main objective of bringing the representatives together is to review progress made by the states and to negotiate new decisions to take and agreements to create new obligations. During the annual COP meetings, parties to the Convention discuss various subtopics addressing climate change and make decisions about new measures to be taken. The Party stakeholders engage in the negotiations, while “non-Party” stakeholders stand for the range of non-state participants. Therefore, a governance mechanism has been created through diverse initiatives. Some authors prefer to address the international interactions concerning climate change as a “global climate governance landscape” referring not only to legal obligations and multilateral agreements within the scope of the Convention but also to complex systems and the creation of a network (Betsill et al. 2015). Borrowing such an understanding, the UNFCCC offers not only binding agreements since its adoption but also a form of bureaucracy that manipulates the interests, sets rules and defines actions in such a landscape (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 6-9). COP meetings serve these counted and facilitate both normative and financial incentives to the actors expected to take measures.

The Annex I “Party” stakeholders consist of the industrialized countries with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) memberships

and countries within transition economies (EITs) while the Annex II Parties consist of the non-EIT Parties but also with the OECD membership (UNFCCC.int n.d.). Annex II Parties provide financial support to developing countries as Non-Annex I Parties taking part in the fight against climate change. Therefore, the UNFCCC follows an open policy towards the Parties, showing awareness of capabilities.

Annex I Parties	Annex II Parties	Non-Annex I Parties	Least Developed Countries (LDCs)
• Industrialized OECD Countries plus countries with economies in transition (EIT)	• Industrialized OECD Countries but not EIT Parties • Responsible for financially promoting development to developing and EIT countries	• Consists of developing countries which are not specified in Annex I	• There are 49 LDCs, and they are given special legal status • LDCs do not have adequate capacity to actively participate

Table 2.1. Annex Parties

While all Parties share the understanding that the environmental security and the climate issue refer to a common good problem and need to be solved through international cooperation, the UNFCCC first adopted the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) in order not to impose obligations that require the same degree of capability considering the structural differences and inequalities between the actors. Moreover, developing countries recalled that developed countries contribute to the largest share of the emissions thus the perception of Global North and South had developed over time which justifies the CBDR-RC principle (Brunnée & Streck 2013, 591). In short, both Annex I and II Parties share a normative responsibility in tackling the climate crisis,

they have differentiated responsibilities in terms of capabilities. The CBDR-RC principle has been superseded by the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) norm as it was mentioned before, but developed countries' leadership responsibility for the climate issue does not seem to be over.

The importance of the COP meetings, thus, is underlined given their role in the emergence of the CBDR-RC and INDC norms through several discussions over the years. Further, the COP meetings are the dialogue platforms where treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Climate Agreement have emerged. At the third COP meeting in December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted as the first important step taken by the UNFCCC landscape. The Protocol had its criticism, due to the delayed ratification until 2005 and the lack of support from developed countries such as the U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Some of these countries did not ratify the Protocol, some withdrew, and some did not participate in the second commitment period and take binding emission reduction targets. On the other hand, the EU as a whole adopted the Protocol, set ambitious targets, and demonstrated a strong political will. The skeptical approach of several developed countries to the Kyoto Protocol and the political will of the EU to be involved in the process was due to the combination of several factors. The collective action dilemma, which can be seen in multiple governance landscapes, was also experienced within the UNFCCC process. The Kyoto Protocol does not remain effective today. Instead, the Paris Climate Agreement was adopted during the COP-21 meeting in 2015 and remains the major normative framework for the global climate regime up to date. In this process, several COP meetings had taken place from Kyoto to Paris in which the

socialization of states and non-state actors continues to adopt the norms regarding climate regime at the national level.

There are significant differences in the way these two agreements found ground in practice. The Paris Agreement offers more binding targets and has been ratified by more countries in a much shorter time compared to the Kyoto Protocol. Both accords aim to create a shared understanding of global warming and climate crisis and to push Parties to fight against mitigation. However, there are some structural differences between the two accords. First, the Kyoto Protocol was less inclusive and more prone to call the developed nations to movement based on the CBDR-RC principle. On the other hand, the Paris Agreement supported the contribution of each Party with five-year national statements and took the climate issue to a more global dimension given the higher number of states ratifying the agreement. Therefore, the time frame was more specifically stated in the Paris Agreement compared to the Kyoto Protocol (Benduski 2020). Finally, the Paris Agreement sets a distinct target to limit global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius while the Kyoto Protocol aimed to reduce the emissions by 5% from 1990 levels (Benduski 2020). Both accords called for a unified action but differed in terms of functioning and understanding.

The field of the UNFCCC is an important governance landscape for my research question within the scope of international climate negotiations and emerging norms in this process. The formation of the norm life cycle as Finnemore and Sikkink mentioned can be observed together with the global climate regime formation and governance process, while the role played by the actors can be examined and the development of counter-measures can be evaluated through the negotiations held

within the bodies of the UNFCCC (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Nearly two decades after the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement sets the framework for today's climate regime. With the signature of the Paris Agreement in 2015 and its entrance into force in 2016, 197 countries recognized the climate norm and showed their will to embrace the necessity of cooperation.

In line with the data presented by the IPCC, the Paris Agreement aims to limit the surface temperature to 2°C and keep it below 1.5 °C as stated in Article 2.1. These restrictions are required to keep climate change under control. One of the biggest culprits of global warming is the use of fossil fuels. Therefore, the norms that emphasize the necessity of transition to renewables and clean development are essential during the negotiations. It is worth remembering that the Paris Agreement does not have a penal sanction mechanism when Parties to the Agreement do not fulfill their commitments. Instead, they acknowledge national contributions prepared by each Party and they are expected to improve these statements every five years. There is an emphasis on legitimacy rather than a circle of authority, each Party is held responsible for emissions reduction commitment.

In the current global climate regime, one of the most influential bodies for studying the changes in climate activism and the attitudes of the Parties from the Kyoto Agreement to the Paris Agreement is the COP. The COP as the decision-making body of the UNFCCC is also an annual dialogue platform held in different countries each year. It can be deduced that the COP meetings are the platforms in which accountability is ensured and awareness is raised. Annual COP meetings are essential to ensure the legitimacy of the regime. As Keohane and Nye once mentioned,

the meetings permit the creation of “linkage strategies” for the vulnerable Parties prone to easily stay out of the regime which means the COP platform ensures the inclusiveness of the regime and constitutes a legitimate governance landscape (2001, 31). Moreover, this platform increases the attractiveness of the climate norm allowing ambitious Parties to encourage and set a good example for each other. In this context, in order to comprehend the negotiating structure, it is essential to examine the structure of the COP first.

3.1.b. The Structure and Function of the Conference of Parties (COP)

First of all, all Parties under Article 4.1. of the UNFCCC are committed to communicating with the COP (UNFCCC Article 4.1.). Each of the Parties is expected to coordinate the economic and administrative instruments to achieve the main objective of the climate movement defined by the UNFCCC (Article 4.2.). The main objective of such a formation is to control the implementation of the Convention and to ensure that each party accords the obligations (Article 7.2.). Every year the COP is held in different regions through a host country. The parties are categorized into five regional groups: African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States, and Western European and Other States (UNFCCC.int n.d.).

The COP is attended by both the Party and non-Party stakeholders. The meetings are open and inclusive because even the non-Party stakeholders such as civil society organizations and accredited observers are allowed to attend the sessions and events even though they are not authorized to be involved in decision-making processes. Therefore, the COP as the supreme decision-making body of the

Convention ensures the representation of each Parties and those having the right to speak in the normative sense. Negotiating groups are diverse, consisting of developing country negotiators and usually come together under the Group of 77 (G-77) (UNFCCC.int n.d.). There are multiple groupings, the African Group of Negotiators, the Arab States, the Environmental Integrity Group (EIG), the Least Developed Countries with 46 Parties, and the EU with its 27 member countries (UNFCCC.int n.d.). The EU representing the 27 member countries has a common negotiating position during the Conference and is itself a Party to the Convention. Under Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), foreign representation of the Union is provided by the European Commission except for the circumstances under the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) (T.C. Başbakanlık Avrupa Birliği Genel Sekreterliği 2011, 11). Moreover, the national representatives of the EU states also participate in the sessions but they do not make any notification that would be contrary to the EU position. Similarly, the African Group of Negotiators with the 54 Parties also had a common position during the Conference. It is not only limited to those listed, but the Parties work together in several formations such as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC) (UNFCCC.int n.d.).

There are several structures that the UNFCCC has established regarding the functioning of the COP processes. Under Article 8 of the Convention, the Secretariat is established to administrate the sessions of the COP and the subsidiary bodies (Article 8.2.). Moreover, the Secretariat is responsible for administrative arrangements such as preparing reports and ensuring coordination within the bodies. Subsequently, a subsidiary body for scientific and technological advice and a

subsidiary body for implementation are established under Article 9 and Article 10 of the Convention. While the body for scientific and technological advice provides scientific assessments and advice on research and development, the body for implementation provides support to administrative processes such as the preparation and implementation of the decisions taken during the Conferences. On the other hand, the Bureau supports the preparation of the COP meetings and supervises the administration and management of the process. Furthermore, the Bureau advises the presidency is in charge of cooperation with the negotiating groups, and works closely with the Secretariat. In addition, the Bureau is in charge of electing the President and nine Vice-Presidents among the representatives thus all the regions have the right to be represented by at least two members (UNCCD.int n.d.). During the COP processes, there are two more governing bodies besides the Conference of Parties. The Conference of the Parties as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) which supervises the implementation of the Protocol and meets annually. On the other hand, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) is in charge of the supervision of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. However, it is the governing body COP itself where decisions are discussed and taken overall and the norm process is maintained.

In this context, there are major successes of the regime and the COP negotiations. With the Kyoto Protocol adopted in 1997 during the first COP summit called COP-3, the framework of international cooperation on climate change has been determined. Second, a substantial consensus has been developed that climate change is caused by anthropogenic emissions and the issue has moved from the scientific line to the political arena. In addition, it was decided with the Protocol that developed

countries are in charge of providing technological and financial assistance to less-developed countries under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) (Gendre 2022). However, there were also criticisms of the Protocol. First of all, the emission reduction targets were aimed at developed countries while non-developed ones were somehow far from the requirements of the regime. Moreover, the fact that leading countries such as the United States did not ratify the Protocol raised concerns about the process. Therefore, although it was decided in the COP-18 to start the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol encompasses the period between 2013 and 2020, consensus had begun on the replacement of the Protocol by a new and more binding international treaty by 2015 (Gendre 2022). As the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol was coming to an end, discussions on the limitation of the global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius which was going to be one of the most essential requirements of the Paris Agreement began at the 15th Conference in Copenhagen in 2009. By the time of the 21st Conference in Paris in 2015, the formation of a new agreement, the Paris Climate Agreement, had ended and the agreement had taken its final form.

Key actors such as the EU had a share in these negotiating processes because they increased expectations about targets and encouraged other actors to embrace the ambitious measures. During the COP-24 negotiations, in which the Katowice Rulebook guiding the implementation of the Paris Agreement was adopted, the EU supported the adoption. Not only during the process leading up to the Paris Climate Agreement but also at other summits such as the 26th Conference in Glasgow in 2021, the EU supported the principles of the Agreement setting ambitious targets. Therefore, the Conference of Parties can be considered a building block for the norm life cycle,

the socialization process between the actors, and the new agreements during the emergence and formation of the global climate regime.

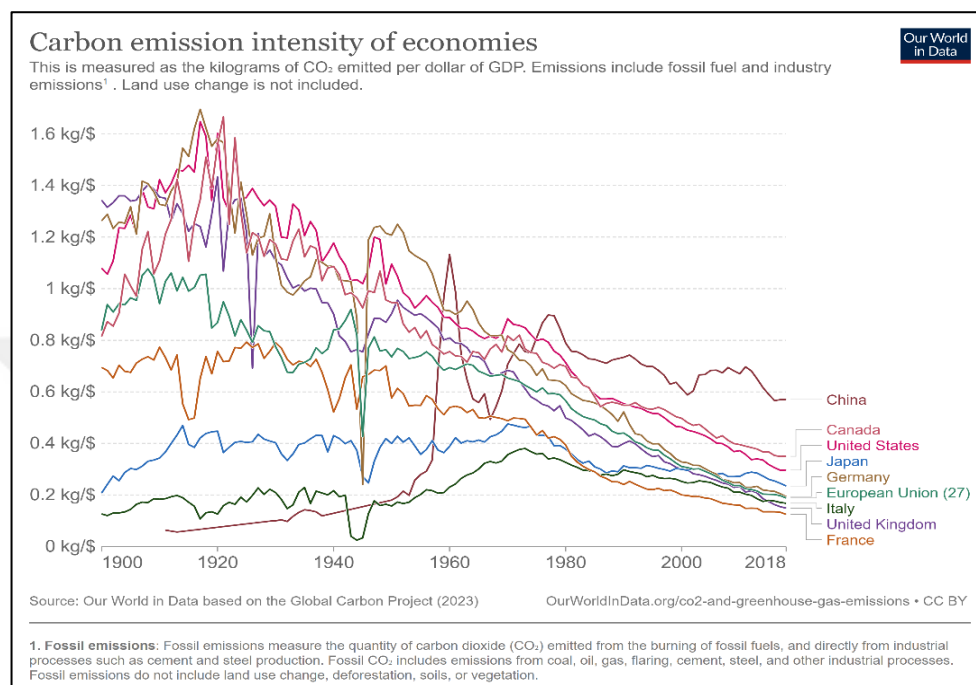
3.2. The EU's Climate Policy and Commitment to the Paris Agreement

The EU's leadership in climate policies has been debated for a long time. Since the introduction of the Maastricht Treaty, formally known as the Treaty on the European Union, and the establishment of the UNFCCC in the early 1990s, the EU has been one of the most visible actors in the global climate regime. The EU proposed the most ambitious targets with the highest emission reduction motivations during the negotiations for the Kyoto Protocol. It was a major supporter of the establishment of the Kyoto Protocol which set the most serious reduction target among the industrialized countries for the first period of the Protocol. However, despite the EU being at the forefront of climate policies, the overall impact of the Protocol was limited because of the Bush Administration's opposition to the Protocol (Oberthür & Kelly 2008, 35). Lacking support from one of the major industrialized countries the U.S., the climate regime continued to be supported by the EU in the 21st century. According to the Climate Action Tracker (CAT), the EU has the highest overall sufficiency among the four criteria examined by the CAT among the developed Annex 1 countries (Climate Action Tracker n.d.).¹ Therefore, the EU becomes a "leadership by example" through its ambitious commitments and actions and establishes a "soft leadership" image with this normative outlook (Oberthür & Kelly 2008, 36). In this

¹ The Climate Action Tracker (CAT) is an independent scientific project which is in collaboration of two organisations, Climate Analytics and New Climate Institute; and examines the climate actions, measures and commitments of the 39 governments. It rates four categories, namely overall rating, policies and actions, unconditional NDC targets, and net zero targets then categorizes these rankings in five categories as critically insufficient, highly insufficient, insufficient, almost sufficient, and 1°5 Paris Agreement compatible (Climate Action Tracker 2023)

section, I present the means by which the EU achieved the “leader by example” profile and which policy initiatives it adopted.

Figure 3.1. Carbon Emission Intensity of G7 Economies, China and the EU

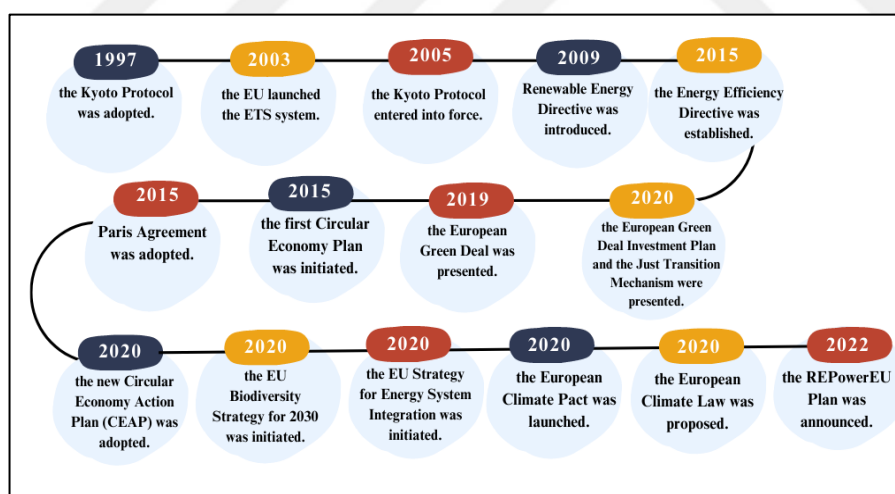


Source: Our World in Data based on the Global Carbon Project

In 1997, with the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, the EU committed to reduce its emissions by 8% from 1990 levels by 2012. The progress has been calculated through the comparison based on the Kyoto base year (eurostat n.d.). The community, which was the EU-15 at the time, considered the year 1990 as its base year. However, the majority of the member countries in the EU-27 took 1995 as the base year (eurostat n.d.). In the following years, the EU started to adapt its internal policies regarding climate regime. For instance, the Emissions Trading System (ETS), which is a policy tool used by governments to reduce GHG emissions, was initiated in 2005 after the EU ETS Directive was launched in 2003 (European Commission n.d.). The system is known for setting an upper limit on emissions so that the emission rates are fixed and

being provided credits that the industries with lower emissions sell these credits, and trade the emissions (OECD.org n.d.). The EU is one of the actors that favored ETS as a policy tool to enforce GHG emission reductions so that the EU could achieve its Kyoto targets. Emission surpluses achieved from the trade have been making significant progress since 2008 (European Environment Agency 2016). Moreover, the total ETS emissions of the EU declined by around 29% between 2005 and 2018 and the system intermediates about 40% of total GHG emissions in the EU (European Environment Agency 2019, Figure I). The ETS system is divided into four periods, the first phase 2005-2007, the second phase 2008-2012, the third phase 2013-2020 and the fourth phase which is currently observed, 2021-2030. These phases also gave clues about the ambitious changes in the EU's climate policies.

Figure 3.2. Timeline of the Policies



Besides the ETS system, the EU has launched other several policy initiatives as well. The EU places great emphasis on energy production from renewable resources rather than fossil fuel consumption which is responsible for emissions. In 2009, the Renewable Energy Directive was launched. In this context, while the EU aims to

increase its renewable share in energy production every year, the Directive was revised in 2018, setting a 32% renewables target for 2030 and becoming legally binding in 2021 (European Commission n.d.). Although increasing the share of renewables in energy production is parallel to the commitment of the EU's Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement, abandoning the use of fossil resources is also an important strategic tactic to reduce foreign dependence on energy. Similarly, the REPowerEU Plan introduced in 2022 was a response to rising energy security concerns and the EU's dependency on Russian energy imports after the invasion of Ukraine (European Commission 2022). Foreign dependency on energy has been on the agenda of the EU for a long time, especially after the 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas dispute that triggered the first natural gas crisis in Europe. Therefore, the REPowerEU has been the latest policy to reduce the dependency through four actions: Acceleration of clean energy transition, diversification of the energy sources, saving energy, and introduction of smart investments and reforms (European Commission 2022). All these actions are in line with the EU's UNFCCC position.

The REPowerEU Plan encompasses both the goal of reducing dependency and avoiding geopolitical threats and the goal of achieving carbon neutrality. Nevertheless, the concern that a geopolitical dispute with Russia could pose a threat to the natural gas supply efforts in Europe raised concerns. Accordingly, storage facilities were established with rapid and successful initiatives, supply stock was maintained and demand remained quite low, which eventually resulted in a decrease of 13.2% in import dependency in 2022 compared to 2021 (Ec.Europea.Eu. 2023). Natural gas also plays a significant role in taxonomy discussions. The discussions are based on labeling the nuclear power plants and natural gas as “green” because

although natural gas causes emissions, it is evaluated as more climate-friendly than coal and other several types of fuel (Abnett 2022). While the main purpose of the EU Taxonomy is to classify economic activities within the EU in accordance with climate objectives, the Climate Delegated Act, which was approved by the Commission in February 2022, includes and recognizes nuclear and natural gas-related activities under specific circumstances such as electricity generation, production of heat, research, and development (EUR-Lex 2022; European Commission, 2021). However, this is not an exception for the use of natural gas in electricity generation that accepts that natural gas does not cause emissions. Instead, it is considered an initiative to eliminate supply threats in circumstances of transition processes and emergencies. In addition, there are quantitative studies that assert that the evolutionary development of natural gas infrastructure can support renewable systems (Gürsan and Gooyert 2021, 17). Further, according to the official statements, applications, such as the Renewable Energy Directive (REDII) were proposed to amend within the scope of the REPowerEU Plan to accelerate the renewable transition and increase energy efficiency (European Commission 2023). Therefore, there is not enough justification to foresee that increasing natural gas supply stocks and including natural gas in taxonomy under certain conditions will harm the green energy transition and climate-friendly vision of the EU.

Still, the REPowerEU Plan and the decisions are in line with the EU's UNFCCC position. Although the processes can be complex, the complexity somehow tries to provide a mechanism that can meet all three criteria in the energy trilemma: "energy security" in case of sufficient resources and availability, "energy equity" in case of appropriate socio-economic affordability of energy in a certain geography, clean and

green energy for the final criteria "environmental sustainability" (Githinji 2021). In short, the REPowerEU may serve as a case that shows one of the infrastructural initiatives, rather than an attempt to damage the EU's "leader by example" profile in the long run.

Prior to the COP meetings, the EU's general position is published annually as a Council conclusion. Therefore, pre-negotiation positions and processes support the EU's effective engagement in the UNFCCC as a unified organization (Damro 2006, 185). Nevertheless, the EU member countries do not have always consensus, especially on energy policies. For instance, the EU failed to present a single proposal at the 4th Conference of the Parties held in Buenos Aires in 1998 (Damro 2006, 186). However, as Damro argues, it is more efficient to consider the EU as a single voice and to think of the COP meetings as a process (2006, 186). From this perspective, the EU appears to have provided internal policy changes towards its active participation in the UNFCCC regime as a "leadership by example," despite disagreements among member states during the policy process till the Council's conclusion before its representation in the COP meetings. There is a large number of policy strategies the Union initiated. While it would be too complicated and confusing to describe all of these initiatives, the following initiatives are prominent examples that demonstrate the EU's evolving policies in line with the UN's climate and sustainability policies.

For instance, during the 15th Conference of Parties in 2009, Copenhagen Climate Conference, the EU endeavored for a legally binding agreement to keep global warming below 2°C and to reduce GHG emissions by at least 50% by 2050 (Council of the European Union 2009). The target was quite progressive long before

the 2015 Paris Agreement and the negotiations leading to it. Furthermore, the 20-20-20 package set for the EU member states launched in 2007 aimed 20% cut in GHG emissions, a 20% improvement in energy efficiency, and a 20% share of renewable sources in energy supply was another progressive step by the EU before its 2009 proposal at the 15th COP meetings (European Commission n.d.). In 2020, the three 20 targets were updated to a 55% reduction of emissions by 2030 under the frame of the Green Deal that are all in line with the obligations of the Paris Agreement adopted in 2015. In fact, the 50% target has also been one of the most ambitious ones put forward among the major economies in the world.

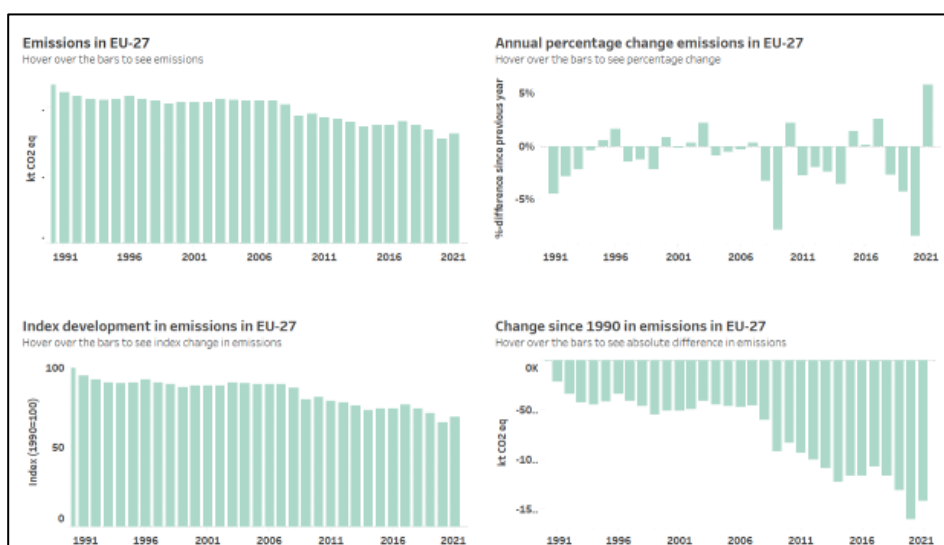
Within this framework, one of the most comprehensive plans launched to foster climate action in the EU was the European Green Deal in 2019. While the main objective of the plan is to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, the target is in line with the obligation of the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5-2°C above pre-industrial levels. The Green Deal has an ambitious aim to make the EU the “first” climate-neutral continent by 2050 (European Commission 2019). Moreover, the President of the European Commission von der Leyen stated that “the EU can convince other countries to move with the Union” which demonstrates the EU’s willingness to come forward as a “leadership by example” on the climate issue (European Commission 2019). The European Green Deal aims to boost the green transition, stop climate change and reduce pollution in almost every sector including agriculture, transportation, and energy. As Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People Valdis Dombrovskis emphasized, this was not an easy objective and required dedication with significant levels of investment (European Commission 2020). In order to achieve such an objective, the investment plan included several

pillars. First, at least €1 trillion of sustainable investments are aimed to be reserved. Second, the EU will be required to support the integration of sustainable finance into the overall financial system. One of the efficient ways to achieve this is to encourage State Aid for just transition. The third pillar is about the awareness that the Commission must cooperate with the public authorities and those planning related sustainable projects (European Commission 2020).

In this context, the Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) was established to support the transition process in a context where all the actors benefit from equal incentives. Together with several funds, the provision of resources to the member states, industries, and investors serve the just transition plans. In 2020, the proposal for the European climate law was offered. The proposal placed the EU's climate targets and the requirements of the Paris Agreement on a legal basis and made the net zero emission target legally binding. As the Executive Vice-President for the European Green Frans Timmermans points out, "the Law is a message to the EU's international partners to raise global ambition in the pursuit of the Paris Agreement goals" (European Commission 2020). While almost all of the G7 countries have developed plans to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, no other legislation as comprehensive as the EU Climate Law has yet offered such legally binding targets. In addition to offering legally binding targets, it acts as a monitoring tool to examine the national processes and encourages investors by eliminating uncertainty (European Commission n.d.). In a way, the EU not only recognized the climate norm but also made the norm a legal commitment with the adoption of the Law.

Moreover, the Circular Economy Action Plan initiated in March 2020 involves reducing waste and increasing economic growth by sustainable means bringing the economy into a “circular” form. The plan also covers the strategy for the EU member states to orientate their own national policies to the strategic requirements of the Commission’s initiative (IEA 2022). In May 2020, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 was put forward in order to protect biodiversity. In July 2020, the EU Strategy for Energy System Integration was initiated to boost the use of green sources which are the subsidy types of fossil fuels, and to reduce waste, especially in the infrastructure industry. Numerous plans and packages, such as the REPowerEU mentioned before were launched (European Commission 2020). Therefore, 2020 was a dedicated and ambitious year for the EU. It should be also noted that the keynote speeches during the introduction of such plans and adoption of the Law highlight that the EU has a way to rise as a global leader on the climate path, along with the actions it has taken.

Figure 3.3. Historical Change in Emissions in the EU



Source: European Environment Agency

The EU has been active in the COP negotiation processes, which is the main focus of this thesis, in line with the internal policy initiatives the Union has launched for its member states. The EU is involved in the negotiation processes in several ways.

First of all, these processes can be divided into pre-negotiation, during-negotiation, and post-negotiation. As already known, the EU is itself a Party to the UNFCCC. As a regional economic integration organization (REIO), the EU proposes a unified position during the summits on behalf of each member state. The member states send representatives to the negotiations, but the EU is represented by a delegation consisting of negotiators from the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), and the Council. Thus, a balance is established among the negotiators because the Commission represents the position and interests of the EU at the supranational level, while the Council represents the member states.

Second, the EU Presidency which is responsible for the lead in the negotiations on behalf of the Community and its Member States rotates every six months (Climate Change Secretariat 2006, 50). Then, as a result of the Commission's cooperation with the Council, the EU's position is determined and the outcome of proceedings is published on the Commission's official website as part of the preparations for the negotiation process. On the other hand, the EU's appointed negotiators and the team participate in the negotiations during the COP process. Because the EU seeks cooperation with other Party and non-Party stakeholders, the negotiators discuss to reach a consensus on agreements and proposals. Meanwhile, the press transmits publicly available information to the citizens of Europe. Similarly, official Member State agencies are also informed of these discussions. Therefore, the EU puts forward

a position in line with the European Climate Law throughout the negotiation process and ultimately evaluates its representative power at the EU level by defending the common position inside. In the post-negotiation process, EU resolutions are published on the official website of the Parliament, and the European press conveys the speeches of the representatives and negotiators.

According to the EU's involvement in the COP negotiations, described above this thesis aims to evaluate how the EU promotes the climate norm and why the EU is critical in the formation and development of the global climate regime, thanks to these resolutions and statements. Within the scope of the EU's Climate Policy described above and the process that demonstrates its commitment to the Paris Agreement during the COP negotiations, this thesis aims to evaluate how the EU promotes the climate norm and why the EU is critical in the formation and development of the global climate regime, thanks to these resolutions and statements.

3.3. The EU's Role in UNFCCC Climate Negotiations

Through the lenses of the constructivist approach, global climate governance can be examined as a "norm life cycle" (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Global climate governance has been practiced through the emergence of the climate norm at the national level and its adoption by especially critical countries. One of the most important platforms to observe this practice is the establishment of the UNFCCC. On the other hand, the role of the EU at the UNFCCC and particularly in the COP meetings is a crucial case to examine how climate-related norms have been promoted and why it has been critical. Because according to the UNFCCC text the EU consists of developed countries with high levels of GHG emissions that would have material

interests and related authority to exercise in the process. Besides, the EU has been considered a roof identity based on normative values that would allow me to question not only authority but also legitimacy concerns in the process (Manner 2002, 241). Moreover, as Aggestam suggests, the EU's development includes representing a "power of attraction" or the vision of a "global common good" (Aggestam 2008, 1). Thus, I question the EU's role labeled as a "leadership by example" in global climate governance as a norm life cycle and through the importance of authority and legitimacy in the process (Oberthür & Kelly 2008, 36).

In this section, I make a discourse analysis to reveal how the EU has promoted norms during the selected COP meetings. I also examine the resolutions put forward by the EU before and after each COP. Table 3.1. below shows the change in emission trends of the EU and matches these trends with the timeline of the COP meetings to select the period or particular COP meetings for my discourse analysis. In Table 3.1 I also present the corresponding EU policies described in section 3.2 to trace the critical role of the EU in the global climate governance process.

Years	COP Meetings	CO2 Emissions of the EU	% Change from the Previous Year	% Change Since the 1990	Policy Initiatives Launched by the EU
1997	COP-3 Kyoto Climate Change Conference	4.253.050 .296	-1,48 %	-8,70%	The Kyoto Protocol was initiated.
2005	COP-11 Montreal Climate Change Conference	4.199.772 .422	-0,45%	-9,84%	The Kyoto Protocol entered into force. The ETS was introduced.
2006	COP-12 Nairobi Climate Change Conference	4.186.742 .650	-0,31%	-10,12%	
2007	COP-13 Bali Climate Change Conference	4.202.150 .365	0,37%	-9,79%	The IPCC's fourth assessment report was released.
2008	COP-14 Poznan Climate Change Conference	4.064.149 .484	-3,28%	-12,75%	The second phase of the Kyoto Protocol started.
2009	COP-15 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference	3.745.936 .961	-7,83%	-19,58%	Renewable Energy Directive was introduced. The gas crisis began.
2010	COP-16 Cancún Climate Change Conference	3.828.151 .482	2,19%	-17,82%	Economic recovery after the Great Recession occurred between 2007 to 2009.
2011	COP-17 Durban Climate Change Conference	3.722.592 .335	-2,76%	-20,09%	
2012	COP-18 Doha Climate Change Conference	3.652.676 .458	-1,88%	-21,59%	The second phase of the Kyoto Protocol ended.
2013	COP-19 Warsaw Climate Change Conference	3.565.971 .852	-2,37%	-23,45%	The third phase of the Kyoto Protocol started.
2014	COP-20 Lima Climate Change Conference	3.439.936 .605	-3,53%	-26,15%	The new goal to cut emissions by at least 55 % by 2030 was announced by the Council. The IPCC's fifth assessment report was released.
2015	COP-21 Paris Climate Change Conference	3.489.991 .787	1,46%	-25,08%	The Paris Agreement was adopted.
2016	COP-22 Marrakech Climate Change Conference	3.496.207 .047	0,18%	-24,95%	The Parliament ratified the Paris Agreement. The Agreement entered into force.
2017	COP-23 UN Climate Change Conference	3.586.270 .555	0,0258	-23,01%	The U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.
2018	COP-24 Katowice Climate Change Conference	3.492.981 .769	-0,026	-25,01%	
2019	COP-25 UN Climate Change Conference	3.343.976 .002	-0,0427	-28,21%	The European Green Deal was presented. Parliament declared a "climate emergency".
2020		3.062.562 .485	-0,0842	-34,25%	The COVID-19 pandemic broke out. The Meeting was postponed until 2021.
2021	COP-26 Glasgow Climate Change Conference	3.241.715 .645	0,0585	-30,41%	The REPowerEU Plan was launched.
2022	COP-27 Sharm el-Sheikh Climate Change Conference				Outbreak of Russia-Ukraine War.

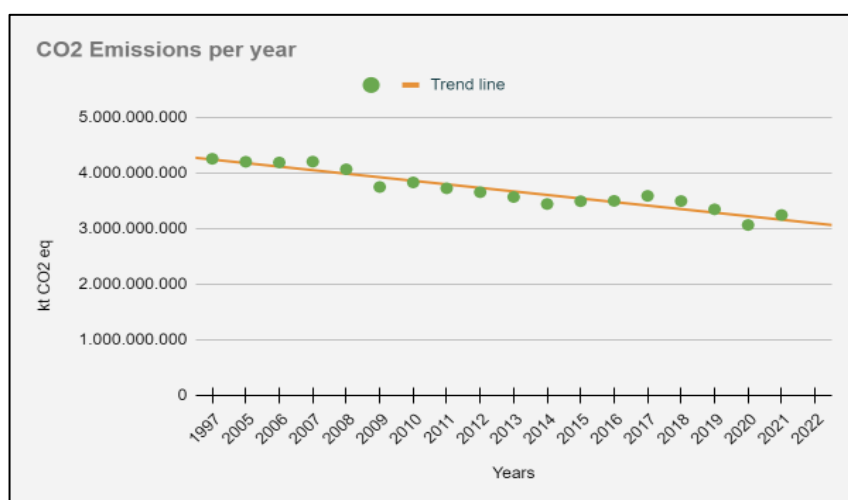
Table 3.1. The Trend in EU Emissions According to COP Processes by Year

Source: EEA 2023

According to table 3.1., the years that are considered the relative maximum in terms of the emission rates are 2007, 2010, and 2017². In these years, higher emissions rates are observed compared to other recent years. After these three years, the emission trend began to decline. Figure 3.4. below demonstrates the regression line of the trend in Table 3.1. While there is a general downward trend relative to the line, the relative maximum years 2007, 2010, and 2017 are also clearly visible.

COP meetings coinciding with these three years are the COP-13 Bali Climate Change Conference, the COP-16 Cancún Climate Change Conference, and the COP-23 UN Climate Change Conference. I will question what kind of discourse the EU developed at the UNFCCC during the meetings through related policy documents that can reveal the EU's "leadership by example" role in the formation and socialization of the climate norm.

Figure 3.4. CO2 Emissions per Year



² A relative or local maximum of the graph is the largest value compared to the values of consecutive years in the graph.

Along with the relative maximum years, the 2015 COP-21 Paris Climate Conference, the year the EU's Paris Climate Agreement was adopted, is also important to understand norm promotion. Moreover, although the emission data for 2022 could not be obtained, questioning whether the EU still committed to a policy that supports the climate norm after the Russia-Ukraine War is important. If the EU's commitment continues, it can be considered that legitimacy concern outweighs authority in the way the EU has been involved during the norm socialization process in global climate governance because the EU energy market has been threatened by the War. Even though the use of renewables is highly supported and financed in the EU, most of the EU countries still import significant levels of gas and oil from Russia. On the other hand, the EU's continued commitment can be a reflection of eliminating energy supply security threats by pushing more for carbon-free energy sources. In other words, rather than pure legitimacy material interests might also be a driving force in the EU's role. Therefore, the EU's position during the COP-27 Sharm el-Sheikh Climate Change Conference held in 2022 is also included in the research to reveal if the EU is consistent with its normative role in climate negotiations.

3.3.a. The EU in COP-13 Bali Climate Change Conference, 2007

As the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol approached (2008-2012), the agenda of the actors in Bali was to initiate a new roadmap. Accordingly, the Bali Road Map was adopted, and countries with the highest levels of emissions have started embracing their role in mitigating climate change. The Bali Road Map which includes the Bali Action Plan defined the frame for the upcoming negotiations until the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference with five comprehensive categories: shared vision, mitigation, adaptation, technology, and financing

(UNFCCC n.d.). On the other hand, since the Kyoto Protocol, not every actor has had the same approach towards these categories. While the Bush administration was still suspicious and rejected emissions reduction targets prior to Bali, the EU demonstrated resistance to U.S. involvement in the negotiations at Bali (Christoff 2008, 467). The EU had an optimistic forecast for the post-2012 period, as President-in-Office of the Council Manuel Lobo Antunes touched upon during the Bali Conference. Antunes stated during the conference: *“The European Union will go to Bali with the same sense of purpose that has guided it over the last 15 years, during which we unhesitatingly and unambiguously took on the role of leader of the international community in this great global challenge.”* (European Parliament 2007). Antunes’ statement highlights overall the claim made by the European politicians that the EU is a leader in climate change and its role in norm promotion. Besides, the statement was also in line with the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol and the EU’s welcoming stance towards carbon-intensive and climate-suspicious actors in Bali. On the other hand, Caroline Lucas, from the European Free Alliance Greens (Verts/ALE), stated:

“Madam President, one of the most effective strategies the EU can employ in Bali is to lead by example. The first piece of new European climate legislation to be decided upon since the March Council is the inclusion of aviation in the Emissions Trading System. So the outcome of that is vitally important, not only in itself but for the signal that it sends to others at the Bali Conference about whether the EU is genuinely serious about its climate change commitments.” (European Parliament 2007).

The Council's strategy for the Bali Conference was quite ambitious, drawing attention to the EU's leadership as well as the urgency for a global movement. From the Group of the European People's Party (PPE), Romana Jordan Cizelj emphasized requirement for the collective action, even if the EU is a "*world leader in combating climate change*". Cizelj states:

"The European Union is a world leader in combating climate change and developing new environmentally friendly technologies. But for how much longer? Awareness of the need to reduce human impact on the natural environment is growing in a large number of countries." (European Parliament 2007).

While the Climate Change Conference was held in Bali between 3 and 14 December 2007, the Council of environment ministers decided on a position on behalf of the EU until 30 October before the Conference in Bali. According to the position put forward by the EU, eight key 'building blocks' should have been included in a post-2012 deal (European Commission 2007). These building blocks contained limiting global warming to 2°C degrees above the pre-industrial ages, strengthening the global carbon market, and enhancing efforts (European Commission 2007). Such content could be thought of as having both legitimacy and authority concerns. A few years before 2007, the EU had initiated one of the largest international emission trading systems and seemed willing to promote it. While Caroline Lucas specifically talked about the EU setting an example, she also cited ETS as an important representation of the EU's commitment.

3.3.b. The EU in COP-16 Cancún Climate Change Conference, 2010

By 2010, the EU had initiated the Renewable Energy Directive and the ETS has been used for a long time. In addition, the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol began in 2008. Between 2007 and 2010, a global downward trend was observed in CO₂ emissions. The series of meetings held in Copenhagen a year ago in 2009 was important in the context of climate diplomacy, but there were still several issues the COP in Copenhagen was not able to fully clarify. The Copenhagen Accord could not come up with a conclusion on the emission targets of industrialized countries and to what extent they would put forward climate finance, which has been discussed since the Bali Action Plan (Vaughan and Adam 2009). Therefore, the Copenhagen meeting failed to establish a new framework mentioned in the Bali Roadmap and to set out binding reduction targets. At this point, the Cancún Agreement was the first document to acknowledge that global warming should be limited below compared to pre-industrial times (EEA 2010). The Cancún Agreement was also comparatively successful in drawing up a Green Climate Fund to provide aid for mostly Non-Annex I developing countries (Januta 2022).

The Agreement was the beginning of a time frame that would end up with the emission reduction target which grounded the year 2050 as a base. Besides, the EU would soon announce its 2050 strategy (EEA 2010). The parallelism also showed that the climate regime and the EU mutually supported each other. The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso stated:

“The EU has set itself ambitious climate and energy targets for 2020 but now we are looking to the long term action. Next spring the European Commission will

present a strategy for completing the transition to a low-carbon economy by 2050.”
(European Commission 2010).

This statement was a statement made throughout the Cancún process and was meant to ensure the EU’s active role in tackling climate change until well into 2050. In the conclusion of the European Council published in November 2010, the EU put forward another univocal position regarding the Cancún Conference (European Council 2010). In the document, it is indicated that the Council preparations include the “*willingness of the European Union to consider a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol*” and “*in parallel with seeking an international agreement*”, “*the EU encourages regional initiatives to promote green growth*” (European Council 2010, 4).

The Copenhagen meeting is considered a failure and although it did not reflect the future projections of the Bali Roadmap, The Cancún meeting was more fruitful in its collaboration for defining and limiting temperatures. Although concrete steps were still not taken to replace the Kyoto Protocol at that time, the EU was seeking an international agreement, and norms such as keeping temperatures below 2°C gave clues to the basic lines of the new agreement to be adopted in 2015. By offering more ambitious targets than other critical actors in the developing climate regime such as the US, China, and India, and claiming to be a “bridge-builder” on the other hand, the EU had been contributing greatly to the relative stability of the regime. Flemish Minister for Environment, Nature and Culture, Joke Schauvliege, who at that time also represented the Belgian presidency, stated: “the EU has worked tirelessly to be a

bridge-builder in Cancún while also advancing its positions” (European Commission 2010).

3.3.c. The EU in COP-21 Paris Climate Change Conference, 2015

Even though the year 2015 does not involve the years of relative maximums, the COP-21 Paris Climate Conference was widely regarded as a turning point in the global climate regime due to several key factors. First of all, the most significant outcome of the negotiations was the adoption of the Paris Agreement. The frames of the Paris Agreements had been debated for years until 2015. There was even legal recognition in the Cancún Agreement that temperatures should be limited to 2°C, and scientific assessments could find a place in policy making. The Paris Agreement was the result of all these discussions with broad participation. Finally, with the adoption of the Paris Agreement, long-term temperature goals aiming to limit global warming were introduced with global momentum and widespread support from both NGOs and governments. In addition, the debate on the contributions of countries with differentiated capabilities, which had been going on for years until the Paris Agreement, was able to find a solution with the principle of NDCs. According to this principle, each government was expected to set its own voluntary long-term targets based on its capabilities and its domestic circumstances.

On the other hand, the EU had been calling for a new and legally binding agreement for a long time and was an essential actor in the adoption of the Paris Agreement with its unified front, putting forward ambitious targets, engaging with NGOs, and supporting financial and technological assistance. In preparations for the COP-21 Paris Climate Conference in the EU, the Council of the EU emphasized the

commitment to the scientific assessments of the IPCC findings and an urgency to agree on a legally binding framework under the UNFCCC applicable to all Parties (European Council 2015). In addition, the Conclusion proposed the Agreement includes long-term pledges in parallel with the keeping the temperatures below 2°C objective and empathizing with the actors with the least capabilities (European Council 2015). The EU was not the only actor committed to reducing GHG emissions, however, it was a unique party to the Convention recognized as a regional economic integration organization with a common position presented for years. Despite its multi-actor structure, the EU was cohesively able to reduce its GHG emissions by 23% from 1990 to 2014, reaching its 2020 pledge (European Parliament 2015, 2). Further, in March 2015, the EU became among the first to submit the INDC of its own (European Parliament 2015, 3; UNFCCC.int n.d.).

In a speech during the COP-21 negotiations by the EU Climate Action and Energy Commissioner, Miguel Arias Cañete, the EU's global leadership was referred to. He said: *"We have already reflected on the historic achievement of Paris and the opportunity the global low carbon transition presents."* and added, *"Our message is clear: the EU needs to continue to show global leadership."* (European Commission 2016). In addition, the statements emphasizing that the EU's policy arrangements were in line with the pledges of the Paris Agreement were in place once more. Cañete said: *"The EU 2030 target is an ambitious contribution to the Paris Agreement, as part of a global effort, and in comparison to other Parties contributions."* and defined the 2030 mitigation target as the most ambitious target ever put forward, even if it would require significant levels of transformation of the European economy including multiple sectors (European Commission 2016). The statement showed the EU's

willingness to be a “leader by example” and a normative leader creating legitimacy for climate action with consistent emphasis.

Another factor that demonstrates that the EU seeks legitimacy while presenting its preferences in climate governance is that the EU has also exhibited a structurally common position. After the empowerment of the European Parliament through the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the EP acquired expanded power at the level of external-policy making and climate diplomacy (Delreux and Burns 2019, 339). According to Delreux and Burns, after this move, the climate change agenda was not politicized as in actors such as the US, and Canada, and even the polarization of the climate issue brought about depoliticization within the EU institutions. Therefore, the Council and the Parliament have traditionally agreed on the climate issue despite the diversity in the parliament (2019, 342).

3.3.d. The EU in COP-23 UN Climate Change Conference, 2017

A year after the Paris Agreement entered into force in 2016, the COP-23 UN Climate Change Conference was held at the headquarters of the UNFCCC Secretariat in Bonn, in 2017. The meeting focused on the progress that would be held within the sCOPE of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The meeting reflected another significant turning point after the formal suggestion of the Paris Agreement. US President Donald Trump announced his intention to withdraw from the Agreement in June, a couple of months before the 23rd Climate Change Conference (McGrath 2020). The move made by the US government meant transferring one of the weaknesses of the Kyoto Protocol to the Paris Agreement, and the EU expressed its regret in the resolution the Parliament published before the Conference:

“Expresses its disappointment with the announcement made by US President Donald Trump of his intention to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement; regrets this decision as representing a step backwards; points out that the formal withdrawal can take effect at the earliest only after the next US presidential election in 2020” (European Parliament 2017).

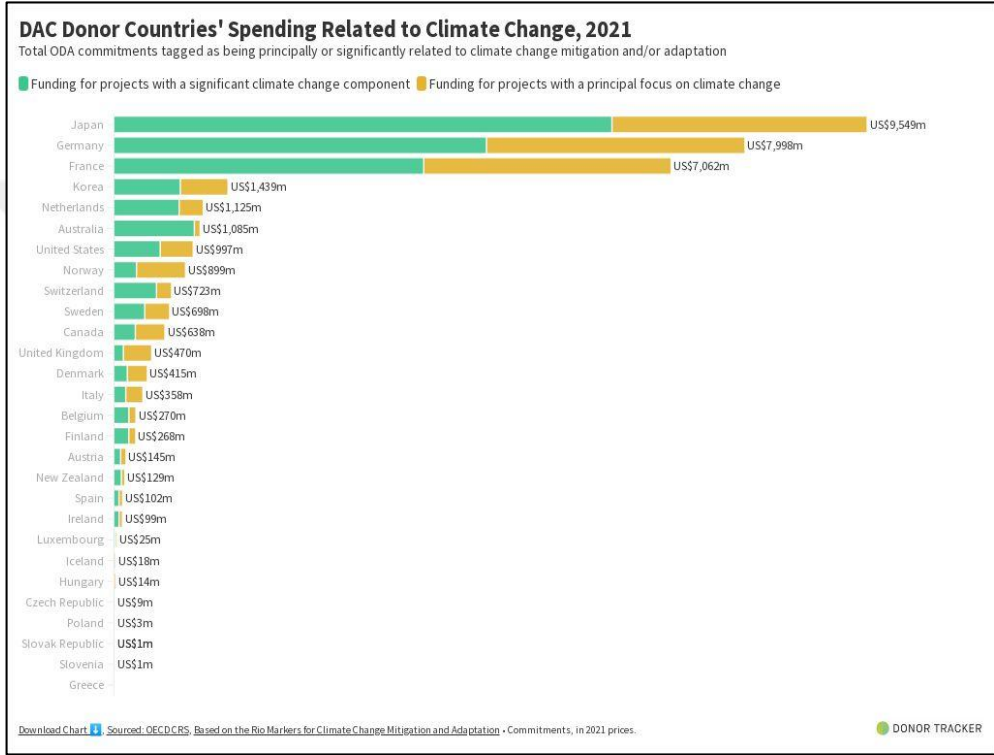
After Trump’s announcement, the leadership claim of the EU did not change. In fact, the EU stated in the resolution that they would take the lead and that the EU stands by the new alliances with the following statements:

“Stresses that Europe must now take the lead in defending the Paris Agreement in order to secure the future of both our environment and our industries; welcomes the fact that the EU will strengthen existing partnerships and seek new alliances” (European Parliament 2017).

Moreover, Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias Cañete stated that the EU must continue to maintain the dynamism of the Paris Agreement agreed upon (Directorate-General for Climate Action 2017). In addition, the EU had already exceeded the 2020 targets by reducing emissions by 23% in 2016. Therefore, the EU has become not only an actor that supports the climate regime but also an actor that embraces the climate norm with concrete steps in practice. Nevertheless, the EU did not perceive the climate issue as a conflict of interest problem, and while the economy grew up to 53% from 1990 to 2016, the EU was able to reduce the emission rates by 23% in the same period (Directorate-General for Climate Action 2017). Further, the EU and its Member States remained influential climate finance donors

since their commitment to Copenhagen in 2009. Today, most of the donors with the largest share are still EU member states, as shown in Figure 3.5. Therefore, while leading through official discourse, both the legitimacy of the discourse and the EU’s authority in the regime overlap with its practices.

Figure 3.5. Donor Countries’ Spending Related to Climate Change, 2021



Source: Donor Tracker 2023

While the Trump administration was making withdrawal discussions, climate issues within the borders of the EU continued to be reflected in the external arena as an unpoliticized topic. What Cañete said when talking about the provisional agreement, which revised the ETS system, was also in line with solid progress such as the European Green Deal, which the EU would launch after the 2017 Conference: “Today’s landmark deal demonstrates that the European Union is turning its Paris

commitment and ambition into concrete action.” (Directorate-General for Climate Action 2017).

3.3.e. The EU in COP-27 Sharm el-Sheikh Climate Change Conference, 2022

Finally, the most recent COP took place in November 2022 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. Until 2022, the EU had played a “leadership by example” role in emission decrease, and became an even more ambitious actor on climate with the European Green Deal initiated in 2019 and the European Climate Law enacted in 2021. In this context, despite the rise of climate-suspicious right-wing parties in several parts of the world including Europe, the EU was still giving a unified response to the climate issue at the Council level.

On the other hand, there was another point that made the meeting significant. The Ukrainian War drastically changed the geopolitical discussions over energy security and made Europe’s dependency on natural gas questioned once again over the last ten years. In addition, high inflation and supply chain disruptions after the COVID-19 pandemic put the sources of energy generation and consumption on the agenda (IEA n.d.). Diversification of the sources was seen as a solution, but the proposals made by the Executive Director of the International Energy Agency, Fatih Birol, suggest that European leaders minimize gas use and demand (Birol 2022). Therefore, the acceleration of energy generation from renewable sources enables the reduction of energy security risks. As a result, International Energy Agency (IEA) member countries released emergency stocks that have not been made so far with 62.7 million barrels of emergency oil stocks and decided to increase further 120 million barrels (IEA n.d.). As a result, any fuel crisis does not seem to appear. Therefore, the

EU's challenge with resource diversifying in energy generation and whether the current political landscape seems to pose a threat to the climate regime and norms should be further examined.

In the statement by President von der Leyen on the outcome of COP-27, von der Leyen mentioned the EU as *“it is already the world's leading contributor of international climate finance”* and *“the EU plays a key role in Sharm el-Sheikh and will not relent on its domestic and international climate action* (European Commission 2022; European Commission, 2022). In addition, during the COP-27 negotiations, the EU signed a new Just Energy Transition Partnership with Indonesia and acknowledged South Africa's new initiatives on Just Transition (European Commission 2022). It is understood from the discourse that the EU does not seem to give up being neither a "bridge-builder" nor a "leader by example". In fact, the EU still calls other developed countries as major emitters to accelerate their efforts in emission cuts, deduced from Timmermans's speech at the COP-27: *“We will be holding ourselves and everyone here accountable under the Paris Agreement.”* (European Commission 2022). Moreover, Timmerman criticized the loss of speed after Glasgow 2021, and calls for momentum: *“We wasted a lot of time already. And our people and planet have no more time to lose. We pledge to pick up speed again, starting now and here. And regain the momentum we had in Glasgow.”* (European Commission 2022). Referring frequently to the reports published by the IPCC, the EU focused on the insufficient commitment to safeguarding the climate measures and called those made pledges but insufficient to robust practical action to pursue 2°C and 1,5°C targets in the European Parliament resolution of 20 October 2022 (European Parliament 2022).

In this context, it is essential to further examine the upcoming position of the EU on climate issues. It seems that the steps taken within the borders of the EU have been in parallel with the foreign policy discourses. The most ambitious pledges have so far belonged to the EU, and it is one of the actors that has been steadily going since the commitments it made.





CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempts to reveal the international normative structure of climate politics and the EU's critical role during the socialization of the norm. In Chapter III, the concept of "global governance" was introduced before the in-depth analysis of the international structure of climate politics and the concept was analyzed comparatively based on two theoretical approaches, liberal institutionalism, and constructivism. Because the main idea of investigating the governance system is to understand how the world is governed, and the international structure consists of multiple and differentiated actors, the decision-making processes and governing the transnational common goods are not linear (Weiss and Wilkinson 2014, 9). Therefore, these two theoretical approaches focus on different sources of governance beyond power, namely through authority and legitimacy.

In light of the literature review, while neoliberal institutionalism argues that the collective action problem could be eliminated through authority, constructivism underlines the importance of legitimacy to make the norm internalized, thus applying normative power through appropriate means beyond rational cost-benefit calculations. Besides, when climate change is considered a problem of collective action, the role of the critical actors and legitimacy throughout the norm cascade process comes into prominence. Because the authority of initiatives such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement has been controversial since their formation, the

role of the critical actors promoting the initiatives and cascading the norm is worth evaluating.

My thesis borrows the “norm life cycle” explanation of Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) in order to conceptualize how norms emerge and diffuse in climate politics at the international level. As demonstrated in Figure 2.1., a life of a norm depends on three stages, namely emergence, cascade, and internalization (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, 896-901). According to the norm life cycle frame, critical states must enhance the practical implementation of the norm before they become cascaded and internalized. In this thesis, the EU as “a critical actor” and selected COP meetings as tipping points for its role are considered in the norm cascade stage in the development of global climate governance.

Drafted in 1992 and entered into force in 1994, the UNFCCC is an umbrella institution leading the development of the global climate regime. The UNFCCC, where decision-making and agenda-setting processes are conducted, and several actors could negotiate, is an ideal international platform to observe the influence of the EU supporting the socialization of the climate norm. Since the establishment of the UNFCCC, several steps have been taken under its roof. Two of the most important ones, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 1997 and the Paris Agreement was agreed upon in 2015. The Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement were important in defining the frame and requirements of the climate regime and were a result of the annual negotiations called the Conference of Parties (COP). In order to analyze the role of the EU during the normative evolution of climate governance, the negotiatory role of

the EU in the COP as the decision-making body and most vital mechanism of the UNFCCC is examined through a discourse analysis in Chapter III.

By evaluating the EU officials' speeches and the Council's resolutions, the general position of the EU throughout the COP processes is analyzed in Chapter III. Out of several COP meetings, five COP meetings were selected. A total of 19 COP summits were held from the year the Kyoto Protocol was entered into force in 2005 until the year 2022, plus the year, 1997 when the Kyoto Protocol was adopted. Between these years, 2007, 2010, and 2017 were the years the emission trend of the EU began to decline. These years were called relative maximum years, which can be observed in Figure 3.4 and Table 3.1. demonstrating the CO₂ emissions of the EU in terms of percentage change from the previous year and the policy initiatives launched by the EU in related years. In addition to the relative maximum years of 2007, 2010, and 2017, the year 2015, when the Paris Agreement was initiated, and the year 2022, the most recent of the COPs, are also included in the analysis. The inclusion of the year 2015 aimed to observe the involvement of the EU in the formation of a new era to replace the Kyoto process in the global climate regime. On the other hand, the purpose of the inclusion of the year 2022 was to observe through discourses whether the EU still seeks leadership in climate issue in the post-Ukrainian War period.

Findings support the EU's "leadership by example" and a "soft leadership" image within the UNFCCC regime (Oberthür & Kelly 2008, 36). Discourses and resolutions reveal that the EU is willing to take the lead in preserving the Paris Agreement and initiating concrete action. This willingness not only increases its authority in climate issue as a strong donor Party for the developing countries but also

creates a legitimate motivation by calling for action and promoting the obligations of the regime. The principles of the regime became clear, and the climate norm was shaped around states' actions such as making efforts to limit global warming and recognizing climate change, particularly after the 2015 Paris Agreement. One of the most important outcomes of the adoption of the Paris Agreement was the formation of international cooperation in order to keep global warming 2°C degrees above the pre-industrial period. In order to make such cooperation attractive, as studies in liberal institutionalism literature argue, authority is important. However, according to the discourse that the EU embraced during the COP processes, I argue that it primarily reinforced the legitimacy of the climate norm by addressing the gravity of global warming. In addition, since there is no enforcement mechanism within the UNFCCC, it can be argued that the EU's consistent position of frequently voicing its ambitious contributions and even not hesitating to compare its contributions with others highlight the EU's role in global climate governance as "leading by example."

In conclusion, the EU's taking a leading role in the climate regime with its "soft leadership" image not only makes low carbon transition initiatives within its borders attractive but also the EU has been trying to increase the legitimacy of climate-friendly norms at the global level. Besides, the EU did not follow a different discourse than it has usually followed and maintained its consistency in being a "bridge-builder" between actors and the climate norm as it deduced from the findings presented in Chapter III, subsection 3.3.e..

The thesis's contribution to the study of climate change governance can be summarized as follows. First, it reveals the formation phases of the climate norm,

since the climate crisis attracted more attention in the 90s, when complex security threats became more of an issue at the international level, borrowing the “norm life cycle” argument from Finnemore and Sikkink (1998). Second, it demonstrated the EU’s role as a “critical actor” internationally in promoting the climate norm. There are a few studies in the literature that examine the importance of authority and legitimacy in climate governance. Rational-choice-oriented explanations generally ignore the legitimacy aspect of climate-friendly policies. Therefore, debates, such as green transition are not examined from a normative point of view or studied limitedly. The climate regime and the developments in the last thirty years have created a normative framework or a “norm life cycle” that is constantly improving, depending on multiple factors such as the deterioration of global warming and the change in the perception of the concept of global warming itself.

This thesis examined the development of the norm at the global level. Therefore, the focus was on the UNFCCC as a platform at the global level, including the EU's leading position. However, as shown in the norm life cycle phases of Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) in Figure 2.1., the domestic dimension of the climate norm is also vital for its development. Therefore, future research can examine the norm entrepreneurs or epistemic communities that facilitate ideational commitment at different institutional platforms within the EU policy-making bodies as well as among the EU Member States at the domestic level and through the future developments in the implementation of the Paris Agreement how the climate change related norms have been internationalized and institutionalized in other states.

In addition, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this thesis. Firstly, the scope of this study was limited to the case of the EU, and the role of other actors such as the non-state actors in policy-making processes was not mentioned. Secondly, this thesis does not consider how other actors in the UNFCCC regime consider the EU's "leading" role throughout the processes. Rather, it was aimed to reveal how the EU approached the legitimacy of the climate regime with a "leading by example" concern. Finally, this research had some data limitations. The relevant COP years were selected according to the decreasing trend in the EU's emission rates. Therefore, the EU's discourse was evaluated in the years when the action was most productive. Nevertheless, the discourses for nearly 20 years could not be followed. Considering all this, uncertainty might still exist. Despite these limitations, the study underscores addressing the subject from different points of view. In addition, this thesis uncovers the ambitious discourse patterns adopted by the EU throughout the key climate negotiations.

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APPENDIX A

ANNEX I			NON-ANNEX I	
EIT Parties	Annex II Parties	Cyprus Liechtenste in Malta Monaco Turkey	Others	LDCs
Belarus Bulgaria Croatia Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Romania Russia Slovakia Slovenia Ukraine	Australia Austria Belarus Belgium Canada Denmark European Union Finland France Germany Greece Iceland Ireland Italy Japan Luxembourg Netherlands New Zealand Norway Portugal Spain Sweden Switzerland United Kingdom United States			Afghanistan Angola Bangladesh Benin Bhutan Burkina Faso Central African Republic Chad Comoros Democratic Republic of the Kongo Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia Gambia Guinea Guinea Bissau Haiti Kiribati Lao People's Democratic Republic Lesotho Liberia Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritania Mozambique Myanmar Nepal Niger Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Sierra Leone Solomon Islands Somalia South Sudan Sudan Timor Leste Togo Tuvalu Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Yemen Zambia