Non-State Actors in International Climate Change Negotiations: A Synthesis

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Abstract

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have, over the past decades, come to play a central role in international environmental negotiations. While this growing NGO participation has attracted considerable academic interest, scant attention has to date been paid to the strategic decisions of NGOs before and during actual negotiations: When do they decide to become active in international politics? How do they seek to influence decision making, what strategies and activities do they pursue?

I see NGOs as rational, resource-constrained actors, and analyse their behaviour in international climate change negotiations in four independent papers, using data from interviews, documents, and a survey I conducted in 2011. In the four papers, summarised in this synthesis paper, I first compare the participation of indigenous peoples organisations (IPOs) in the climate change and biodiversity negotiations to understand when NGOs become active in international negotiations. I then turn to the behaviour of NGOs during the climate summits, and examine what advocacy strategies NGOs pursue, differentiating between an insider and an outsider strategy. Finally, I look more closely at one insider strategy—direct contacts with negotiators—and one outsider strategy—press conferences. With regard to the former, I ask which governments NGOs contact, and why. As regards press conferences, I focus on governments and analyse which type of governments communicate to the public through press briefings, and why. With these papers, the dissertation sheds light on the participation of non-governmental actors in multilateral climate negotiations, relating NGO behaviour to factors at the organisational and institutional levels.

1 Introduction

Over the past decades, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have become an integral element of global environmental governance. In particular since the 1992 Rio Summit, multilateral negotiations on the environment have seen an unprecedented growth in NGO participation. The climate change negotiations are a prime example of this trend: hundreds of different NGOs—from environmental groups to business associations, from trade unions to women groups, faith-based organisations, or farmers' associations—attend the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), with NGO representatives in some years even outnumbering government negotiators.

Unsurprisingly, the soaring NGO engagement in global environmental governance has attracted academic interest. Numerous studies analyse why governments open up intergovernmental policy making to non-state actors (e.g. Bernauer and Betzold 2012; Raustiala 1997; Yamin 2001), and whether these non-state actors actually matter for policy making beyond the state: Can and do they influence international environmental politics (e.g. Albin 1999; Arts 1998; Betsill 2006; Betsill and

1 NGOs in global environmental governance are variously referred to as 'non-state actors', 'civil society organisations', etc. For simplicity, I will use the term non-governmental organisations or groups throughout the text.
Corell 2001; 2008)? In contrast, the actual behaviour and strategic decisions of NGOs before and during negotiations has received little attention. Yet, if we are to understand the role and influence of NGOs in international negotiations on the environment, we also need to look at their motivations to participate in these negotiations, and their activities and strategies when attending intergovernmental summits. My thesis research thus contributes to the growing literature on non-state actors in global environmental governance by opening the 'black box' of the intergovernmental policy making process and analysing more closely the behaviour of NGOs at the international level.

In the four papers of my cumulative dissertation, I first compare the participation of indigenous peoples organisations (IPOs) in the climate change and biodiversity negotiations.

While IPOs are active and vocal actors in the latter negotiations, they are underrepresented in climate change politics, despite being particularly vulnerable to climatic changes. How can this difference be explained? More generally, what are factors that help or hinder NGO participation in international policy making? I then turn to the behaviour of NGOs during the climate summits. Although NGOs, as observers, have no official voice in the negotiations, they can pursue a broad range of activities to make their voice heard, including lobbying negotiators directly, organising side events and exhibits, talking to the media, or participating in protests and demonstrations. These activities are usually classified as insider or outsider advocacy, depending on whether they aim at impacting decision making directly, or seek to create pressure from the outside, through the media and the public. Do NGOs specialise in one of these strategies, and if so, who choses which strategy, and why? Do the action repertoires vary with group type, that is, are environmental groups different from business associations, as common wisdom has it? What about other types of groups, and do other group characteristics, such as type of membership or experience, account for variation in advocacy behaviour?

One important element of NGO insider advocacy is lobbying, that is, direct contacts with negotiators. However, with almost 200 parties represented at a typical climate summit, NGOs need to lobby selectively. Whom, then, do NGOs lobby? Are lobbying efforts focused on responsive delegations who are likely to take up NGO input and bring it to the negotiation table? Or, alternatively, are influential delegations whose voice is heard at the negotiation table attractive lobbying targets?

Another actor in international environmental politics is the media. A large number of journalists attend climate change negotiations, and NGOs and governments alike actively reach out to these in press conferences. Due to data availability, I turn to governments, and ask which types of governments uses press conferences, and why. Do governments act under a logic of appropriateness and communicate with the public through press conferences because of normative expectations? Or do press conferences rather serve to signal and gain public support for negotiation positions, and thus as an instrument for increasing leverage?

2 NGOs in international climate change negotiations

2.1 Why participate?2

Since the first climate change summit, COP1 in Berlin in 1995, the number of accredited NGOs that may attend the summits as observers has increased tremendously. As of January 2013, over 1600 organisations are accredited, clustered in so-called 'constituencies', loose groups of broadly like-minded organisations.3 The environmental and business and industry constituencies are the oldest such groups, and with the research and independent NGOs, the largest.4 Other constituencies are much

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2 This section is based on Betzold and Flesken (forthcoming).
4 These three constituencies account for 80 percent of all NGOs. Note that while membership in a constituency is not mandatory, the large majority (almost 90 percent) of NGOs are affiliated with a constituency.
smaller; indigenous peoples organisations, trade unions, farmers, women and gender groups, or youth groups each account for only about two percent of all organisations, or less.\(^5\)

Why are there so few indigenous peoples organisations active in climate change politics? Indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation, as they typically live in sensitive ecosystems, are closely related to, and directly depend on, the natural environment and its resources (e.g. Feldt 2009; Toledo 2001). As a response to environmental pressure, indigenous peoples have organised and gained a voice in environmental policy making on issues such as persistent organic pollutants (Selin and Selin 2008; Tennberg 2010) or biological diversity (Colchester 2003; Oldham 2002). Why, then, the low engagement with climate change politics? When do IPOs, or NGOs more generally, become active in international policy making?

Questions of why and how groups organise have been dealt with extensively in social movement theory. Here, scholars point to the 'political opportunity structure', that is, “consistent—but not necessarily formal or permanent—dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure' (Tarrow 1994: 85; see also Meyer and Staggenborg 1996: 1633). In other words, it helps decision makers, in this case IPOs, assess their prospects of success, that is, whether investing in advocacy in a particular institution seems worthwhile.

The opportunity structure has two main dimensions: opportunities and constraints (see figure 1). These dimensions include organisational capacities, such as expertise in an issue area; and institutional openness, which comprises formal rules of access as well as informal recognition as stakeholder (Kriesi 2004; Meyer and Minkoff 2004); and the behaviour of other actors, including allies and adversaries.\(^6\)

The structure of the political environment itself, however, is insufficient to explain when and where IPOs become active. Our framework thus adds a second component for explaining indigenous mobilisations: 'goals' or 'grievances'. This refers to the degree to which indigenous communities are affected by an issue; or, more concretely, the degree to which indigenous peoples perceive to be affected by an issue, both directly or indirectly by the political responses (Kriesi 2004; Meyer 2004).

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\(^6\) For space constraints, and since the behaviour of other actors was not found to play a role in our analysis, I will exclude other actors in this synthesis paper.
Building on interviews with representatives of IPOs and experts, as well as primary and secondary documents, we use this framework to systematically compare indigenous participation in the climate change and biodiversity negotiations. The comparison highlights important differences, both in how the two environmental problems affect indigenous communities (goals/grievances), as well as in the institutional environment (opportunities/constraints).

Both Conventions, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UNFCCC were negotiated and signed at the Rio Summit in 1992. At this time, it was clear that the loss of biological diversity, and the political response to slow that loss, would directly bear on indigenous communities. Traditional indigenous territories contain many so-called ‘biodiversity hotspots’ (Sobrevila 2008; Toledo 2001). Since the establishment of nature reserves and protected areas were a major element in the implementation of the CBD, it was likely that indigenous lands would be impacted by conservation efforts. Indigenous communities therefore were concerned about their territorial rights and self-determination—and in response became active in CBD negotiations.

Climate change, in contrast, has more mediated effects on indigenous livelihoods, which were recognised relatively late (Green and Raygorodetsky 2010; Salick and Ross 2009). Again, it was the link to indigenous land and land rights that spurred IPOs into action. It was only when forests were put on the agenda as a possible mitigation strategy that indigenous peoples took interest in the issue. Just like protected areas, projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation are prone to be implemented in areas inhabited by indigenous peoples, such that, just as with protected areas, IPOs fear negative impacts on their rights to land and self-determination (e.g. Degawan 2008; Feldt 2009).

Climate change and biological diversity also differ in terms of opportunities and constraints. The CBD is more open toward indigenous participation. Given that the links between biological diversity, indigenous land, and conservation efforts were recognised early on, indigenous peoples were from the start of the negotiations seen as important stakeholders. As a result, the Convention opens up channels for indigenous participation, for instance by allowing indigenous co-chairs in certain working groups (United Nations 1992; CBD 2000; see also Oldham 2002: 26, 35), and also provides some funding opportunities for representatives of indigenous communities (CBD 2006). Interviewees thus emphasise the better inclusion of indigenous peoples in the CBD compared to the relatively closed UNFCCC process.

Funding plays an important role, but so does expertise. International environmental negotiations are inherently complex, and active and informed participation in these processes requires a certain level of familiarity with the issue, the process, and involved actors. Interviewees thus point to differences between participation and meaningful participation. In light of the more recent appearance of climate change as an indigenous problem, awareness of and information on climate change, and in particular, the climate change negotiations, is less wide-spread. The continuing differences in indigenous engagement between the biodiversity and climate change negotiations—in spite of the growing recognition of indigenous peoples as stakeholders in the latter—may thus be a result of path dependence: under resource constraints, IPOs that are acquainted with the biodiversity negotiations are possibly reluctant to extend their activities to the climate change process.

Although climate change is a pressing issue for indigenous communities, and its effects closely related to loss of biological diversity, organisations representing indigenous interests are much less active in the UNFCCC negotiations compared to the CBD process. While this may be surprising, given the greater

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7 The Convention's Voluntary Trust Fund to Facilitate the Participation of Indigenous and Local Communities in the Work of the Convention on Biological Diversity remains the only UN fund for this purpose, yet funding is limited. See http://www.cbd.int/doc/programmes/socio-eco/traditional/tk-vf-en.pdf.
8 E.g. interview, Grace Balawag, Tebtebba, June 3, 2011; interview, Segundo Bueno Quichimbo, Confederation of Indigenous Organisations of the Ecuadorian Amazonian Region (COCARAE), May 12, 2011.
9 E.g. interview, anonymous representative, indigenous people organisation, June 15, 2011.
10 This may also explain why there is little overlap between the two negotiations; as of June 2011, there were only six indigenous organisations that were accredited with both, the CBD and UNFCCC secretariats.
political relevance of the former (cf. FIELD 2008), a systematic comparison of the two negotiations highlights important differences. In particular, the earlier recognition of biodiversity as a problem with direct implications for indigenous communities and specifically indigenous land rights, and the relative institutional openness of the CBD explain why IPOs focus their international activities on biodiversity.

2.2 NGO strategies
While much smaller than other constituencies, IPOs have formally the same status as other NGOs, that of observer organisations. As such, NGOs have no official voice in the negotiating process, yet NGOs have a broad range of activities they can pursue to make their voice heard. Among other things, NGOs may lobby and contact negotiators directly, intervene in the formal debate, talk to media representatives, or participate in protests and demonstrations.

These activities are usually classified as inside advocacy; or as outside advocacy, depending on the channel of influence: While inside activities aim at impacting the negotiations from within, through direct interactions with negotiators, outside activities seek to create pressure from the outside, by mobilising public opinion (e.g. Binderkrantz 2005; Grant 2001). The question of which groups pursue which type of activity has long been an issue in research on interest groups at the domestic level (e.g. Grant 1989; Walker 1991), yet has received little attention at the international level.

In international environmental politics, studies adhere to the inside/outside distinction, and differentiate between insider advisory organisations and activist outsiders (e.g. Betsill 2006; Breitmeier and Ritterberger 1998; Gulbrandsen and Andresen 2004). Theoretically, three explanations for such tactical specialisation are put forward: On the one hand, NGOs differ in the degree to which they have access to decision makers. While it is assumed that inside advocacy is more efficient, and hence the preferred option, lack of access may be compensated by outside advocacy (Beyers 2004; Binderkrantz and Krøyer 2012; Kriesi et al. 2007). A second explanation concerns the potentially conflicting goals of NGO participation, namely, to serve as 'watchdogs' providing accountability and transparency; and to provide input to the negotiation process as 'deliberators' (Steffek and Ferretti 2009). Finally, scholars have also pointed to the different goals of organisations: NGOs seek to influence policy, but also care about organisational survival. When organisational survival hinges on the continued support of a far-flung membership, outside advocacy, being more visible, seems more appropriate to signal activism and secure support (e.g. Dür and Mateo 2012; 2013; Gais and Walker 1991).

Accordingly, it is generally agreed that business groups engage in inside advocacy, while environmental groups tend to rely on outside advocacy; several case studies confirm such a division of labour in the climate change case (e.g. Giorgetti 1999; Vormedal 2008). This distinction is based on the assumption that these groups differ in important respects, such as their membership type, with environmental organisations typically being member-based organisations. However, the effect of group characteristics on advocacy behaviour can be tested directly. I therefore expect that, over and above group type, membership as well as level of expertise affects the choice of advocacy strategy. In particular, a membership consisting of individuals should increase an organisation's propensity to employ an outside strategy, because the more visible outside advocacy is better suited to communicate with a far-flung membership (e.g. Binderkrantz 2005; Gais and Walker 1991). More expertise, in contrast, should have a positive relation to the use of inside strategy, since expertise is a valuable good that can buy access to policy makers (e.g. DeGregorio 1998; Dür and Mateo 2013; Hall and Deardorff 2006). Expertise is related to experience, I argue, and hence expect more experienced groups to pursue more inside advocacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>inside advocacy</th>
<th>outside advocacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>directly contact negotiators</td>
<td>interview with media representatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 This section is based on Betzold (2013a).
supply information to negotiators

draft legal text

intervene during the debate

be member of a government delegation

prepare submissions to the Secretariat

give a press conference

issue a press release

take part in protest actions or demonstrations

inform the public, e.g. via a blog or newsletter

organise or participate in a side event or exhibit

organise or participate in a parallel event

Table 1: Advocacy Activities in the Climate Change Negotiations.

To empirically test these expectations, I conducted a survey among all accredited NGOs\textsuperscript{13} in 2011. I asked respondents for a set of inside and outside activities, listed in Table 1, how often their organisation engages in them on a four-point answering scale ranging from never to very often. Based on the responses to this questionnaire item, I calculate mean frequency of inside and outside advocacy. I can then relate advocacy behaviour to NGO characteristics to determine whether the use of inside/outside advocacy varies systematically with group type and/or other group characteristics.

Table 2 presents the results of an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis; the dependent variables are the mean use of inside advocacy (models 1-3) and the mean use of outside advocacy (models 4-6). Models 1 and 4, respectively, only include the group type as predictor for the use of inside and outside advocacy, respectively. Models 2 and 5, in turn, use group characteristics—expertise and membership type—as predictors, while models 3 and 6 include both types of predictors, as well as control variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>inside advocacy</th>
<th>outside advocacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>env. NGOs</td>
<td>-0.114</td>
<td>-0.451***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.139)</td>
<td>(0.118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other groups</td>
<td>-0.020</td>
<td>-0.211*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.149)</td>
<td>(0.124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td>0.035***</td>
<td>0.038***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual members</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.092)</td>
<td>(0.077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controls no no yes no no yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>1.066***</td>
<td>0.711***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.124)</td>
<td>(0.092)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjusted R²</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coefficients are estimated with with ordinary least squares analysis. Standard errors in parentheses.* p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Insider and Outsider Advocacy. OLS.

Group type alone is unable to explain variation in the use of inside advocacy. Although the coefficients in model 1 have the correct sign, neither coefficient is significant. However, when group characteristics and control variables are included, the differences between group types become significant. Business organisations, as expected, engage in significantly more advocacy than environmental (p < .01) or other (p < .1) groups (model 3). In contrast, group type explains differences in the use of outside advocacy, regardless of other predictors. According to both, model 4 and model 6, environmental groups engage in significantly more outside advocacy than business groups (p < .01); so do other types of groups, although here the difference is not quite as stark (p < .1). The effects are quite large. The difference between environmental and business groups, when other variables are

\textsuperscript{12} Side events and exhibits take place within the conference premises and spots are distributed centrally by the UNFCCC secretariat. Parallel events, in contrast, take place outside the conference premises and are not centrally administered.

\textsuperscript{13} Universities were excluded from the sample because they arguably attend climate change meetings mainly for research purposes.
included, is 40 percentage points, that between other and business groups about 20 percentage points (models 3 and 6). The multivariate analysis thus provides support for my expectations: there is systematic variation in advocacy strategies between different group types.

What about group characteristics other than group type? As expected, experienced groups indeed engage in significantly more inside advocacy, regardless of whether it is an environmental, business, or other organisation \((p < .01, \text{models 2 and 3})\). An additional year of experience with the climate change negotiations increases the mean frequency of inside advocacy by about 4 percentage points. At the same time, at least in model 6, experience significantly decreases the use of outside advocacy \((p < .05, \text{model 6})\).

Membership, in contrast, does not affect groups' choice of advocacy strategy. Contrary to what I expected, organisations whose membership consists of individuals do not pursue more outside advocacy. The coefficients have the wrong sign in three out of four models (models 2, 3 and 6), and are not significant in any of the specifications. The regression results thus do not offer support for my expectation that an individual membership results in more outside advocacy. This is in line with recent research that finds only slight variation in the behaviour of organisations with different types of members (Kotzian and Steffek 2013).

The empirical analysis confirms that NGOs active in international climate politics differ in the advocacy strategies they use. As expected, environmental organisations tend to adopt an outside strategy, while business associations can be described as insiders with privileged access. While experience also increases the use of inside advocacy, the climate negotiations seem to favour business associations, as research has shown for the domestic level (e.g. Dür and Mateo 2010; 2012; Schattschneider 1960). That business associations find it easier to insert their views into the climate change negotiations has normative implications. The value of nonstate participation in intergovernmental negotiations stems from the diversity of views and ideas that different stakeholders can bring to the process; if, however, not all views and ideas have the same chance of being heard, this questions the effectiveness of non-state participation in the climate change negotiations.

### 2.3 Whom to lobby?\(^{14}\)

Group differences notwithstanding, certain activities are widely used by all NGOs. The survey showed that direct contacts with negotiators play an important role for NGOs across the board: over 80 percent of the organisations in the sample indicated that they contact negotiators directly. However, almost 200 governments are present at a typical climate change summit—NGOs thus can only selectively establish contacts with government representatives. Whom, then, do NGOs lobby?

While scant attention has, to date, been paid to the question of whom NGOs contact in international negotiations, it has attracted considerable interest at the domestic level (e.g. Baumgartner et al. 2009; Hall and Deardorff 2006; Hall and Wayman 1990; Hojnacki and Kimball 1998). I rely heavily on this literature, and argue that, from a theoretical viewpoint, two factors play a role for an NGO to have an impact on the negotiation process and its outcome. With the negotiations being intergovernmental in nature, NGOs have no formal place at the negotiating table, but rely on government delegations to bring their views into the negotiations. Yet for the process and outcome to reflect the NGO's views and positions, it is not enough to have a few delegations bring ideas and information into the debate; other, non-targeted, delegations, also need to take up these ideas and information. Lobbying hence has two dimensions: NGOs need to ensure that their preferences are brought into the debate, but also need to ensure that their input is supported by other delegations. In light of this process, NGOs can focus their lobbying on responsive delegations that can be expected to insert NGO input into the negotiations; or they may address influential delegations whose voice is heard in the negotiations.

\(^{14}\) This section is based on Betzold (2013b).
Who among the government delegations, is responsive, and who is influential? Responsiveness, I argue, hinges on two elements, relative position and regime type. On the substantive side, if an NGO advances positions similar to those of a certain government delegation, this delegation should be relatively open to arguments and information by the NGO as it can then use that input to make its case stronger in the negotiations (see Hall and Deardorff 2006). On the procedural side, responsiveness is related to regime type, whereby delegations from democratic countries should be more willing to engage with NGOs. This is because NGOs communicate voter preferences—on which policy makers in democratic systems depend (see e.g. Keck and Sikkink 1998; Yamin 2001).

Influence, in turn, depends on (issue-specific) power resources: financial capacity and—in the case of climate context—greenhouse gas emissions. Any climate agreement will only address the problem effectively if large greenhouse gas emitters cooperate, while financial resources provide means of pressure. Influence, however, can also be obtained from the negotiation structure. Heads of coalitions or negotiation bodies have more opportunities to structure and impact discussions, as they coordinate positions internally and are often included in last minute bargaining (Depledge 2005; Lang 1989; Tallberg 2010).

Whom, then, do NGOs lobby in practice? I use the survey I conducted in 2011 to empirically assess the importance of the above factors in NGO-government interactions at the climate change summits. The questionnaire asks respondents with which governments, if any, their organisation had contacts, either during the last COP they attended, or during the year prior to that COP. I pair each respondent with the almost 200 parties to the UNFCCC; the unit of analysis is thus the NGO-government pair, and the dependent variable a dichotomous variable that takes a value of 1 if NGO $i$ indicated it contacted government $j$ at the last climate change summit or the previous year.

Figure 2 plots the number of contacts for countries whose delegations were contacted by at least five different NGOs. The figure clearly suggests that influence matters: The European Union and the United States are named most often, by 28 and 25 organisations, respectively, out of a sample of 147 organisations. They are followed by other large and powerful countries, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada or Australia, as well as by the presidents of the past COPS: South Africa, Mexico and Denmark. Other countries that were named quite often are more unexpected, such as Bangladesh, Congo (Kinshasa), or Niger.

15 Note that contacts may also have been initiated by government representatives. By also asking whether the organisation was contacted by any government, I exclude such government-initiated contacts.

16 The European Union is party to the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol and thus treated as an individual country in the analysis.
I employ logistic regression with robust standard errors, clustered by the NGO, to test more systematically which factors explain NGOs' choice of lobbying targets. The results are presented in table 3; model 2 uses a binary variable for COP president, rather than an indicator for whether a country chaired negotiation bodies or coalitions, in line with figure 2.

According to the analysis, the odds of being lobbied increase significantly with a delegation's degree of responsiveness, and even more so, its influence. First, and contrary to my expectations, NGOs do not lobby those delegations that advance similar positions significantly more often; however, democracy, my second indicator of responsiveness, matters: delegations from countries rated as free by Freedom House are lobbied significantly more often than delegations from countries rated as not free.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country-level variables</th>
<th>model 1</th>
<th>model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>similar position</td>
<td>1.325 (0.269)</td>
<td>1.325 (0.269)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partly free</td>
<td>1.223 (0.219)</td>
<td>1.217 (0.219)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free</td>
<td>2.063** (0.493)</td>
<td>1.844* (0.451)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>1.228 (0.163)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presidency</td>
<td>4.922*** (1.397)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low per capita income</td>
<td>2.52*** (0.504)</td>
<td>2.294*** (0.518)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high per capita income</td>
<td>1.052 (0.124)</td>
<td>1.120 (0.132)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low CO₂ emissions</td>
<td>0.250*** (0.052)</td>
<td>0.262*** (0.054)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high CO₂ emissions</td>
<td>2.203*** (0.321)</td>
<td>2.142*** (0.306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO presence</td>
<td>10.300*** (1.947)</td>
<td>10.270*** (1.947)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex I</td>
<td>1.585* (0.342)</td>
<td>1.715* (0.365)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO-level variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO experience</td>
<td>1.024 (0.023)</td>
<td>1.024 (0.023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO delegation size</td>
<td>1.004 (0.005)</td>
<td>1.004 (0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>0.004*** (0.001)</td>
<td>0.004***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 3: Logistic regression analysis of NGOs' choice of lobbying targets (robust standard errors adjusted for clustering of observations on NGOs; N= 27,232).

NGOs also strategically contact delegations conditional on their position in the negotiation structure, income level, and greenhouse gas emissions. While I do not find evidence that chairs of coalitions or negotiation bodies are lobbied significantly more often (model 1), there is strong evidence that the president of the climate summit is sought out by NGOs. Compared to all other delegations, the odds of being lobbied for the delegation representing the COP presidency increases about fivefold—an effect that is highly significant (model 2, \( p < .001 \)). This strong effect of the presidency underlines how much leeway the COP president has in leading the negotiations and finding compromise; accordingly, failure to find agreement is often blamed on the president.

Delegations from rich countries, in contrast to my expectations, are not contacted more often; rather, the odds of being lobbied is significantly higher for delegations from poor countries \( (p < .001) \). Possibly, this implies that income level does not measure influence, but negotiation capacity, and thus, indirectly, responsiveness. Since poor countries tend to lack human resources and expertise, they rely to a greater extent on external support, which often is provided by NGOs. Accordingly, they are more willing to engage with NGOs (see Chasek 2001). Greenhouse gas emissions, on the other hand, seem to provide a good measure of influence. Indeed, NGOs seek out large greenhouse gas emitters, while shying away from small emitters—an effect that is quite strong and highly significant \( (p < .001) \).

Finally, I control for whether NGO \( i \) is from country \( j \), since NGO \( i \) may then simply extend its domestic activities to the international level and focus its lobbying on its home government. Indeed, this seems to be the case: If country \( j \) is home to NGO \( i \), the odds of being lobbied by that organisation increases...
almost tenfold. The effect is by far the largest in the analysis, and highly significant ($p < .001$). Although the climate summits gather all the world's governments, NGOs do not seem to make full use of the opportunities such a gathering affords them, but rather continue to focus their lobbying on their respective home government. My other control variable—whether a country is listed in Annex I and has thus legally binding emissions reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol—also has a positive, but weaker effect. An NGO's experience and delegation size, in contrast, does not account for differences in lobbying behaviour.

NGOs have only limited resources, and therefore need to contact government delegations selectively. Theoretically, NGOs can focus their lobbying efforts at responsive delegations that can be expected to bring NGO input to the negotiation table; or they may address influential delegations whose voice is heard at the negotiation table. Empirically, my analysis indicates that both factors, responsiveness and influence, matter. Most importantly, however, NGOs simply extend their domestic activities to the COP: first and foremost, they contact their home delegations, that is, delegations representing the country (or countries) in which the NGO has its headquarters or subsidiary offices.

### 2.4 Press briefings

NGOs not only contact negotiators, they also actively reach out to the media, and through them, to the public, as do government delegations, by inviting journalists to press conferences. At these press conferences, or press briefings, the organiser(s)—a government delegation, an NGO, an intergovernmental organisation (IGO), or a combination of these actors—communicate information about their positions, developments in the negotiations, or other issues, and respond to questions by journalists. Arguably, press conferences thus provide the main link between the negotiations and the general public, a link that has become increasingly important, as the growing number of press conferences across all actors suggests (see figure 3).

![Figure 3: Number of press briefings, by COP and actor type](image)

Because of data availability, we focus on press briefings organised by government delegations. Which governments communicate with the media, and through them, with the public—and why? Theoretically, we argue, government delegations have two primary motivations to invite the press: a logic of appropriateness, and a logic of consequence (cf. March and Olsen 1996; 2004).

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17 This section is based on Betzold et al. (2013).
On the one hand, governments may be led by a logic of appropriateness and seek to act in line with prevailing norms of conduct, that is, ‘to do the right thing’ in a given social context. Global negotiations tend to have a long chain of delegation and to be removed from voters, and are thus often criticised as being intransparent and undemocratic (e.g. Moravcsik 1997; Rieff 1999; Rootes 1999). Such criticism therefore points to a normative ideal of transparent negotiation processes, where the general public (electorates) is informed about the actions of officials and institutions and can therefore hold decision makers to account. Since the public receives this information typically through the media, there is an expectation toward decision makers to interact with the media and allow for more transparency in decision making processes. This should be of particular importance in democratic settings, where press briefings are part of the standard operating procedure. We therefore expect democracies to initiate more press conferences.

On the other hand, according to the logic of consequence, governments may see press conferences as a means to increase their leverage in the negotiations. By publicly committing to their stated positions and by garnering public support for them, governments increase the costs associated with backing down from that position. They hence tie their hands, which, paradoxically, increases their bargaining power (e.g. Moravcsik 1991). Increasing leverage should be of particular importance for governments whose positions deviate strongly from the median; in particular, governments that are at risk from climate change, as well as governments that stand to lose economically from ambitious climate policies, should thus be interested in organising press conferences.

We use data from the Daily Programmes, which the UNFCCC secretariat provides daily during negotiation sessions and which lists press conferences, among other things. We compiled a dataset on the occurrence of press briefings by country and COP; our unit of analysis is the country-COP pair, with the number of press briefings by country $i$ for COP $j$ as the dependent variable.

Figure 4 lists the total number of press briefings for the governments that have been most active in initiating press conferences. Among those, the European Union and the United States have by far organised the largest number of briefings, with 135 and 96 events, respectively. They are followed by other large countries, including Japan, China, Canada, Brazil and Germany; countries that have presided over past COPs such as Mexico, South Africa, Poland, or Indonesia; as well as a number of smaller countries, for example Ecuador, Bangladesh or Costa Rica.

![Figure 4: Number of press briefings by the most active governments](image.png)

Overall, only few countries hold press briefings. Of the 196 countries that are party or observer state to the UNFCCC, 123 countries (63 percent) have never held a press briefing; 31 countries (16 percent)
have held only one briefing, and 17 countries (nine percent) have held ten press briefings or more.\(^{18}\) We use zero-inflated count models to estimate the effect of different factors on the decision to hold a press conference. Given our dependent variable—a count of all press briefings by government and COP—and the large number of zeros in our dataset, this seems to be the appropriate model (Greene 1994). The first stage of zero-inflated models (the inflation equation) uses a binary specification to estimate whether a press briefing is possible (i.e., whether there is a positive probability of a government holding a press briefing). The second stage (the press briefings equation or count model) accounts for variation in the number of press briefings initiated by a country that has a positive probability of holding a press briefing.

To model temporal dependence, we include time as well as its squared and cubic term (\(t, t^2\) and \(t^3\)) in the models, acknowledging that a government’s decision to hold a press briefing today depends strongly on its behaviour in the years before and thus controlling for time effects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of press conferences</th>
<th>Logic of Appropriateness</th>
<th>Logic of Consequence</th>
<th>Logic of Appropriateness and Consequence</th>
<th>Both logics with controls</th>
<th>Full model with EU &amp; USA</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coeff./Std. error</td>
<td>Coeff./Std. error</td>
<td>Coeff./Std. error</td>
<td>Coeff./Std. error</td>
<td>Coeff./Std. error</td>
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<td>0.025</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.033)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
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<td>-0.001</td>
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<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
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<td>0.406****</td>
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<td>0.003</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.353)</td>
<td>(0.209)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.887)</td>
<td>(0.782)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COP participants (total)</td>
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<td>0.000**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
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<td>2.089**</td>
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<td>-0.449</td>
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<td>(0.561)</td>
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<td>-0.024***</td>
<td>-0.016***</td>
<td>-0.010*</td>
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<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
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<td>-22.716***</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.720)</td>
<td>(0.638)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1.569)</td>
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<td>-0.000***</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU (dummy)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(0.486)</td>
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<td>USA (dummy)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-1.140**</td>
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</table>

\(^{18}\) These figures include events co-organised by more than one delegation.
The appropriateness model in the first column supports the argument that democracies are less likely to never hold a press briefing (the inflation equation). The coefficient is negative, as expected, and the effect is statistically highly significant ($p < .01$). The count estimation similarly suggests a positive and significant relationship between democracy and the number of press conferences a government initiates: the more democratic, the more press conferences a government will initiate. However, this relationship loses its significance as soon as other variables are included (models 3 to 5); the relationship in the inflation equation is also insignificant in model 4, and significant at the 10 percent level only in model 5. It seems, thus, that there is no strong relationship between democratic governments and the organisation of press briefings, against our expectations. Democracies, while less likely to never organise a press conference, do not systematically organise more press conferences.

How about the logic of consequences (model 2)? The inflation equation suggests that more vulnerable countries are significantly less likely to never hold a press briefing ($p < .01$), although the significance level decreases when dummies for the European Union and United States are introduced ($p < .1$, model 5). In contrast, according to the count model, there is no relationship between vulnerability to the negative effects of climate change and the number of press conferences organised: governments from more vulnerable countries do not speak to the press in briefings more often. Economically vulnerable countries, measured by logged per capita CO$_2$ emissions, in contrast, are associated with a higher number of press briefings (count estimation). The relationship is positive and significant in models 2 to 4 ($p < .01$), yet the result seems to be driven by the two parties most active in organising press conferences, the United States and the European Union. When these are controlled for, the effect of per capita CO$_2$ emissions loses considerably in size and in significance (model 5).

Turning now to the control variables, we find that countries with large delegations and countries that host the summits are more likely to hold many press briefings. On the other hand, and contrary to our expectation, we did not find any evidence that countries chairing coalitions initiate more press briefings, but rather are associated with a significantly lower number of press conferences. Unsurprisingly, the larger a COP, the more press briefings it witnesses. While the effect size is small, the relationship is highly and robustly significant ($p < .01$). Finally, the time variables also have large and significant effects; having organised a press conference in the past is thus a strong predictor of organising a press conference in the future.

The role of the media in international negotiations has so far received very little academic attention, although journalists attend international negotiations in large numbers. Government negotiators actively interact with these journalists, often, and increasingly so, in the context of press conferences. We put forward to motivations behind organising press conferences, a logic of appropriateness and a logic of consequence. We test these motivations empirically, yet find limited support for these two logics of action. While democracies are less likely to never hold a press conference, the relationship between level of democracy and organisation of press conferences is rather weak. Our analysis also
provides only limited support for the logic of consequence. We find that vulnerable countries—which face severe material and human losses from changing climatic conditions—are similarly less likely to never organise a press conference; and that large CO₂ emitters—which likely suffer economically from ambitious climate policies—are associated with a larger number of press conferences. However, the effects of our main variables are less significant than other factors, including capacity or hosting the climate summit. Our analysis thus is only a first step toward a better understanding of the media in multilateral negotiations, and invites increased scholarly attention to the role of the media, and in particular to the interaction of other actors with the media, in the context of global negotiations.

3 Conclusion and outlook
Climate change is one of the key challenges of the 21st century. Since 1990, the international community regularly meets to address that challenge; these meetings led, after only two years of negotiations, to the 1992 UNFCCC, which entered into force in 1995. Since then, the annual climate summits have become the prime venue to discuss international climate politics, not only for the almost 200 governments party to the Convention, but also for hundreds of NGOs—from environmental groups to business associations to indigenous peoples organisations to youth groups, farmers, or trade unions.

The strong NGO participation in international climate change negotiations has attracted considerable academic interest, yet studies so far mainly focus on one group of actors, mostly environmental organisations, and concentrate on evaluating why governments open up intergovernmental negotiations, as well as the extent to which NGOs can influence decision making (e.g. Betsill and Corell 2001; Giorgetti 1998; 1999; Newell 2008; Orr 2005; 2006; Vormedal 2008). Less attention, in contrast, has been paid to the strategic behaviour of NGOs before and during actual negotiations. The research summarised here therefore sees NGOs as rational actors, and analyses in detail their strategic behaviour, qualitatively and quantitatively.

I first compare the participation of indigenous peoples organisations in biodiversity and climate change negotiations to understand what factors help or hinder NGO participation in international environmental negotiations, using documents and interviews with representatives from IPOs (Betzold and Flesken, forthcoming). I then turn to the ways in which NGOs participate in negotiation sessions. Building on a survey I conducted among NGOs active in the climate change negotiations, I examine NGOs’ action repertoires (Betzold 2013a): Do different types of organisations use different advocacy strategies? Does large-N data confirm the widespread distinction of business insiders and environmental outsiders? What role do group characteristics other than group type play? Finally, I look more closely at one insider activity—lobbying—and at one outsider activity—press conferences. While NGOs across the board indicate that direct contacts with negotiators are important for their organisation, resource constraints require NGOs to lobby selectively among the almost 200 governments present at a climate summit. Whom, then, do they lobby? Do they focus their activities on responsive delegations, or do they rather seek out influential delegations (Betzold 2013b)? Press conferences are another prominent activity for NGOs, as well as for government delegations. We turn to the latter due to data availability, and ask which types of government initiate press conference, as well as what the motivation behind government press conferences is (Betzold et al. 2013).

The PhD project helps us understand how non-governmental actors interact with governments in global climate politics, by relating NGO behaviour to factors at the NGO and the institutional levels. Research has, however, also shown that issue-level factors, such as salience or level of politicisation, explain lobbying behaviour, at least in the domestic context (e.g. Mahoney 2008). Accordingly, the observations made in this project may not easily apply to other issue areas. Future research should thus extend this project and analyse NGO behaviour comparatively across different issues, both environmental and non-environmental. At the same time, the climate agenda by now is quite encompassing. In this project, I analyse NGO participation broadly; comparisons across agenda items, however, if challenging methodologically, promise to shed light on the role of issue characteristics in advocacy behaviour.
The project suffers from further shortcomings. In my analysis of advocacy strategies, I distinguish between environmental, business and other groups. While the size of some constituencies, both in the sample and in the population, make a remainder category necessary, more detailed work on specific constituencies, such as the women and gender, trade union, or farmer constituencies, as well as on groups that have so far no official constituency, for instance faith-based groups or parliamentarians, would improve our understanding of NGO advocacy in climate politics (cf. Muñoz Cabré 2011). A brief anonymous survey can only elicit a certain amount of information. I therefore lack information on the exact nature of contacts with governments: how often were negotiators contacted? What was the content and nature of that contact? What do NGOs expect from this lobbying? Similarly, what are their, and governments', expectations vis-à-vis the media when organising press conferences? What is the content of these briefings, and who are the journalists attending them? More detailed research, including case studies using interviews and surveys, are needed.

The PhD thus is primarily a starting point for further research. It contributes to a growing academic field, and, despite some shortcomings, substantially improves our understanding of NGO participation in global climate politics, from the perspective of the NGO.

References


