

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: DO INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATIONS DRIVE THE GROWTH  
OF VOLUNTARY COOPERATION ON  
CLIMATE CHANGE?

Poorti Sapatnekar, Doctor of Philosophy, 2020

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Voluntary cooperation on climate change has grown rapidly since 2000, and presents a potential pathway to achieve the Paris Agreement goals. Many intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) seek to cultivate such multi-stakeholder partnerships or international cooperative initiatives in greenhouse gas-emitting sectors. But are IGOs an effective class of actors to do so? Evidence has lagged behind practice.

This study fills three gaps in empirical knowledge: (1) Have large-scale efforts by IGOs (such as summits) to promote voluntary cooperation *caused* the growth of cooperation? If so, how? (2) By participating in partnerships within specific sectors, to what degree have IGOs influenced the growth of voluntary cooperation in those sectors? (3) How do large-scale IGO efforts interact with IGOs working within initiatives, and what is their combined effect on the quality of initiatives?

This study analyses large-scale efforts during 2000-2015, and conducts three case studies, in forests, short-lived climate pollutants, and land transport. Two methods are

employed: qualitative process tracing (including 71 interviews) and dynamic social network analysis of a dataset comprising 252 initiatives and their participants. Community detection and node centrality measures probe for influence over time.

This study finds that: (1) Cooperative initiatives form sectoral ecosystems among inter-connected entities. New initiatives represent evolutionary changes to the strength—or quality—of cooperation within sectors. Thus, the quality of cooperation must be assessed at the sectoral level in addition to the initiative level; (2) Many IGOs participate in partnerships, but a select few have become central community-builders and these few wield strong influence over the evolution of the sectoral ecosystems; (3) IGOs (and governments) that have convening power and autonomy can choreograph a surge in the growth of voluntary cooperation. Of all IGOs, having established a ‘good offices’ role on climate change, the office of the UN Secretary-General is uniquely able to do so; (4) The surge requires six organizational attributes, which together characterize “collective choreography of cooperation”: strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments; subsidiarity, and leadership with centralized decision-making; and (5) Sustained and adequate institutional support is necessary for the gains of collective choreography to be impactful.

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VOLUNTARY COOPERATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE?

by

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## List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADP	Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action
ADP1	Work stream one of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action
ADP2	Work stream two of Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action
BASD	Business Action for Sustainable Development
C4C	Caring for Climate – in the text there is a typo
CCAC	Climate and Clean Air Coalition
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CEM	Clean Energy Ministerial
CEB	Chief Executives Board
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIFF	Children’s Investment Fund Foundation
COP	Conference of Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change
COP20	Twentieth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
COP21	Twenty-First Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development



EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G20	Group of Twenty
GCAS	Global Climate Action Summit
GCEC	Global Commission for the Economy and Climate
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GTZ	German Development Cooperation Agency
GWP	Global Warming Potential
HFC	Hydrofluorocarbon
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
IDDDRI	Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations
IEA	International Energy Agency
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
IGSD	Institute for Global Sustainable Development
IGWEL	Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders
IPIECA	International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
ITDP	Institute for Transportation and Development Policy
LPAA	Lima-Paris Action Agenda
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
NAZCA	Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	Non-Governmental organization
NICFI	Norway International Climate and Finance Initiative
NYDF	New York Declaration on Forests
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OGMP	Oil and Gas Methane Partnership
PCFV	Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles
PPMC	Paris Process on Mobility and Climate
Rio+20	World Conference on Sustainable Development
SD	Sustainable Development
SLCF	Short-Lived Climate Forcer
SLCP	Short-Lived Climate Pollutant
SLoCaT	Partnership for Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport
TEM	Technical Examination Meeting
TFA2020	Tropical Forest Alliance 2020
TRL	Transport Research Laboratory
UIC	International Union of Railways
UITP	International Association of Public Transport
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WEF	World Economic Forum – not defined at first appearance
WEHAB	Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity
WHO	World Health Organization
WRI	World Resources Institute
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

# 1 Introduction: The Roles of Intergovernmental Organizations in Voluntary Cooperation on Climate Change

On November 30<sup>th</sup> 2015, one hundred and fifty world leaders met in an airplane hangar on the outskirts of Paris.<sup>1</sup> Comprising the largest gathering of heads of state and government outside the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to date, they had convened at the start of the highly anticipated twenty-first conference of parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or “the climate convention” henceforth).<sup>2</sup> The French government, host and president of COP21, had invited the leaders in the hope that their presence and speeches would publicly signal joint support for a global agreement on climate change, which was the intended outcome of the intergovernmental conference.

The official family photos of this gathering are all curiously cropped, with several leaders at the edges not fully captured in the frame. It is perhaps a fitting tribute to the size of the assembly that even after deploying their widest-angle lenses and creatively positioning their cameras to the side, the hundreds of media

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<sup>1</sup> UNFCCC, ‘COP21 Leaders and High-Level Segment’.

<sup>2</sup> While the UNFCCC and the French government reported the presence of 150 leaders, the number of plenary speakers was 143, as some countries were represented by more than one leader. This was the case for the UK, for example, with the participation of David Cameron and Prince Charles. Likewise, former heads of government were also present. Considering the then-current heads of state or government only, this gathering was surpassed by only two others in history, the Millennium Summit in 2000 and its follow-up in 2005, both held in New York during the annual opening of the General Assembly.

photographers present were not able to fit all the leaders standing shoulder to shoulder and three rows deep within one shot. The hall was simply not big enough.

But while the photo fails to capture the total number of national government leaders in the hall, it also omits the thousands of other leaders, including CEOs, mayors, governors, religious leaders and heads of NGOs, gathered at COP21 to show their support and make voluntary commitments themselves to mitigate and adapt to climate change.<sup>3</sup> Many participated in the ‘Fourth Pillar’ of COP21, the multi-stakeholder series of events alongside the negotiations, devised by the French government specifically for the announcement of voluntary commitments.

This phenomenon of voluntary cooperation and the roles played by intergovernmental organizations in its evolution form the subject of this study.

## **1.1 Voluntary Cooperation on Climate Change: From Caboose to Engine**

By December 12<sup>th</sup> 2015, the two streams of activity at COP21—intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder—had resulted in two outcomes, primary and secondary. The primary outcome was the Paris Agreement, the accord reached by the 197 Parties to the UNFCCC (196 national governments and the European Union), which experts hailed for its ambition, universality, national ownership and dynamism.<sup>4</sup> *Ambition*, because the Paris Agreement commits the world for the first

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<sup>3</sup> While no official tally of these leaders exists, accreditation data alone indicates some 330 CEOs, over 100 mayors and over 80 governors were given badges to enter the COP21 venue. This does not include the many who attended side events in Paris but not within the COP venue.

<sup>4</sup> For succinct overviews of the salient features of the Paris Agreement, see Rajamani, ‘Ambition and Differentiation in the Paris Agreement’; and Falkner, ‘The Paris Agreement and the New Logic of International Climate Politics’; For an analysis of the implications of the Paris Agreement for a variety of actors, see Hovi et al., ‘Climate Governance and the Paris Agreement’.

time to the science-based goal of limiting global temperature rise to “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and ideally below 1.5°C, as well as to achieving carbon neutrality before 2100.<sup>5</sup> *Universality*, because unlike its predecessor the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement applies to greenhouse gas emissions from all Parties, whether developed or developing. *National ownership*, because the greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets of any given Party are not imposed by the supranational authority of the Agreement, but rather are determined by the Party through a domestic process run by its national government. Parties therefore bring their own pledges (“nationally determined contributions” or NDCs) as contributions to the Paris Agreement. *Dynamism*, because the Paris Agreement allows Parties time to make the massive economic shifts needed through an ambition cycle or “ratchet-up” mechanism, whereby all Parties commit themselves to determining increasingly ambitious national contributions every five years, with the aim of eventually closing the ambition gap while concurrently implementing their pledges to reach the Paris goals.

The secondary outcome was the magnitude of voluntary commitments made by stakeholders, whether individually or in cooperation with each other, which were recorded on a web portal called the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA). According to the secretariat to the climate convention, almost 100,000 individual commitments were registered on NAZCA by the end of COP21, “including 2,250 cities and 150 regions covering 1.25 billion inhabitants; 2,025 companies, 424

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<sup>5</sup> UNFCCC, ‘Paris Agreement’, 2.

investors, and 235 civil society organizations.”<sup>6</sup> Not only that, many of these actors had entered into partnerships with each other and with national governments, resulting in the announcement of seventy *cooperative* initiatives, which showed high potential to reduce greenhouse emissions.<sup>7</sup> While scholarship had argued for some years that carefully devised cooperative actions by stakeholders within greenhouse gas-emitting sectors could significantly reduce emissions and help achieve sustainable development, and indeed, such cooperative action had been on the rise since the early 2000s, the sheer number of such partnerships announced in Paris and during the previous year in the run up to the Paris Agreement dwarfed the growth seen during the previous decades.<sup>8</sup> The significance of voluntary cooperation for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement were not lost on the Parties, which committed to promoting the growth of such voluntary action in the same Decision in which they adopted the Paris Agreement itself.<sup>9</sup>

Four years on, with the Agreement having entered into force in November 2016, the task of ensuring compliance with the Agreement to reach the goals set is paramount. Therein rises a mountainous challenge. Current NDCs are evidently insufficient to meet these goals; their sum puts the world on a trajectory of 3°C rise in global temperature.<sup>10</sup> In other words, there exists a gap between the commitments

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<sup>6</sup> UNFCCC, ‘Massive Mobilization by Non-State Stakeholders Summarized at COP21’.

<sup>7</sup> See GGCA, ‘Lima-Paris Action Agenda Independent Assessment Report’ for an assessment of these cooperative initiatives.

<sup>8</sup> For examples of scholarship on the potential of cooperative initiatives and their increasing prevalence, see Hale and Mauzerall, ‘Thinking Globally and Acting Locally’; Andonova, Betsill, and Bulkeley, ‘Transnational Climate Governance’; Blok et al., ‘Bridging the Greenhouse-Gas Emissions Gap’; Deng et al., ‘Wedging the Gap: Defining the next Steps to Implementation’; and Abbott, ‘The Transnational Regime Complex for Climate Change’.

<sup>9</sup> UNFCCC, ‘Decision 1/CP.20’.

<sup>10</sup> UNEP, ‘The Emissions Gap Report 2016’.

necessary to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, and the commitments that have thus far been made by Parties—an “emissions gap”. Although the ratchet-up mechanism is designed to address this gap, Parties show little evidence that they are willing to make significant improvements to their existing commitments. This is especially true for those Parties with the largest economies—that is, those that contribute most to global greenhouse gas emissions. At the 2019 climate summit hosted by the UN Secretary-General, almost no G20 countries pledged to increase their existing NDCs, resulting in the observation that, “a key aim of the Summit was to secure commitment from countries to enhance their NDCs, which was met to some extent, but largely by smaller economies. With most of the G20 members visibly absent, the likely impact on the emissions gap will be limited.”<sup>11</sup> This reticence has been attributed by many to the U-turn in climate policy announced by the United States government on 1 June 2017, when President Trump stated his government’s intent to withdraw from the Paris Agreement.

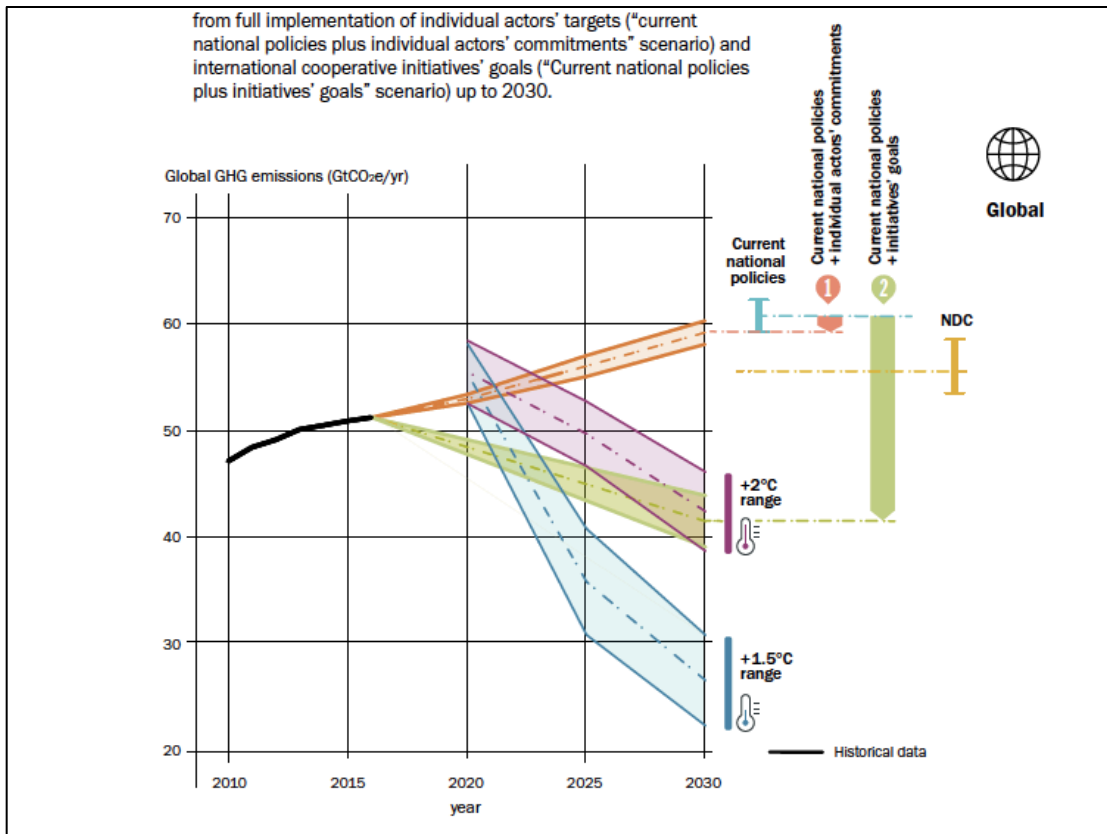
In this context, attention to the potential of voluntary commitments to bridge the emissions gap has soared among practitioners and scholars alike, for two primary reasons. One, it is hoped that the voluntary commitments would help reverse the loss of intergovernmental momentum. Two, as figure 1.1 illustrates, the commitments are inherently valuable for climate change mitigation. Recent estimates suggest that, if fully implemented, existing commitments may reduce emissions by up to nineteen gigatons of carbon dioxide-equivalent (19GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr)—a game-changing amount, when current national contributions by countries under the Paris Agreement only add

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<sup>11</sup> UNEP, ‘The Emissions Gap Report 2019’, xiv.



up to 6GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr and when the total remaining gap to bend the emissions trajectory to a two degree-compatible world by 2030 is 12GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr.<sup>12</sup>



**Figure 1.1 The emissions reductions potential of voluntary cooperation.** Voluntary cooperative initiatives show potential to move global temperature trajectory to +2°C range by 2030 (i.e. in keeping with Paris Agreement goals), while voluntary commitments by individual actors show significantly less potential to bend the trajectory within the same time frame.

Source: NewClimate Institute et al., 'Global Climate Action from Cities, Regions and Businesses', 41.

Yet, for full implementation of these voluntary commitments, “a great diversity of institutions and stakeholders from different countries, levels of governance, sectors, and branches of civil society must collaborate and coordinate willingly and effectively.”<sup>13</sup> Scholarship on the effectiveness of the initiatives has

<sup>12</sup> See UNEP, 'The Emissions Gap Report 2019' for estimates of national contributions and the emissions gap; and NewClimate Institute et al., 'Global Climate Action from Cities, Regions and Businesses' for estimates of the potential of cooperative initiatives. Note that values for 'conditional' NDCs are taken here.

<sup>13</sup> NewClimate Institute et al., 'Global Climate Action from Cities, Regions and Businesses', 41.

found that they show significant variation.<sup>14</sup> The quality of the commitments and their implementation is therefore paramount, and investing in more and high-quality voluntary cooperation could inject momentum in the ratchet-up mechanism as well as directly contribute to greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

## **1.2 What Roles for Intergovernmental Organizations?**

Subsequent to COP21, for the past four years many different actors have been accelerating their pursuit of the growth of such cooperation. These actors include national governments, subnational authorities, civil society organizations such as NGOs or professional associations, research institutes, intergovernmental organizations, and businesses (whether financial institutions or otherwise) and industry associations.

Among these actors, intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, or the multilateral development banks, have been making highly visible and purposive efforts to cultivate voluntary cooperation. Most obviously, this has occurred under the aegis of the climate convention, following the decision by Parties at COP21 to promote such cooperation going forward. Recognizing the significance and potential of voluntary commitments to enhance ambition by Parties for their own nationally determined contributions, Parties institutionalized the role of so-called “non-Party stakeholders” (that is, the variety of actors such as civil society organizations, businesses and so on, enumerated above, excluding national governments which are Parties to the convention) and their

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<sup>14</sup> Chan et al., ‘Reinvigorating International Climate Policy’.

commitments, and put in place measures to promote such commitments. Specifically, they established: i) rotating high-level champions under the presidencies of the COP to cultivate greater voluntary commitments by non-Party stakeholders; ii) annual high-level meetings at each COP to assess progress; iii) technical examination meetings to raise awareness of options and solutions within greenhouse gas-emitting sectors; and iv) an online platform hosted by the secretariat that showcases these voluntary commitments.<sup>15</sup> Thus, having been tasked by the Parties, the UNFCCC secretariat and the high-level champions have convened non-Party stakeholders annually, seeking to cultivate more commitments.<sup>16</sup> To support these efforts, the UNFCCC secretariat has invested in the development of a climate action team.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, however, intergovernmental organizations have been attempting to cultivate voluntary cooperation outside of the institutional framework set out by the UNFCCC Parties. In 2018, when Governor Jerry Brown of California hosted the Global Climate Action Summit, which aimed to spur cooperative action, the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC Secretariat acted as co-chair. Under the United Nations, the UN Ocean Conference in 2017 and the Global Sustainable Transport Conference in 2016 both heavily focused on developing cooperative partnerships.<sup>18</sup> In 2019, the UN Secretary-General hosted a summit to mobilize political will and catalyze voluntary cooperation ahead of 2020, the first ratchet-up deadline of national

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<sup>15</sup> UNFCCC, ‘Report of the Conference of the Parties on Its Twenty-First Session’, 17–19.

<sup>16</sup> For an overview of the focus and achievements of these efforts, see Tubiana and El Haïte, ‘Global Climate Action: High Level Champions’ Reflections on the Way Forward’.

<sup>17</sup> these efforts are reflected in an annual yearbook. For example, UNFCCC, ‘Yearbook of Global Climate Action 2019’.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations, ‘The Ocean Conference, 5-9 June, 2017 - United Nations, New York’; United Nations, ‘Global Sustainable Transport Conference Press Release’.

ambition under the Paris Agreement. In short, a variety of intergovernmental organizations with varying mandates and membership have been attempting to cultivate the phenomenon of voluntary cooperation on climate change.

If voluntary cooperation on climate change is a priority, are intergovernmental organizations an effective class of actors to cultivate and accelerate its growth? The answer to this must be informed by an examination of the roles that such organizations have played in the past, and the differentiated effects of these roles on the phenomenon. Indeed, purposive efforts by intergovernmental organizations to increase voluntary cooperation on climate change have been undertaken primary at two different levels since the 1970s.

Intergovernmental organizations have supported the growth of voluntary cooperation at the *system-wide* level, that is, across all the different sectors that pertain to greenhouse gas emissions, at major multilateral conferences, such as the conferences on sustainable development; conferences of parties to the framework convention on climate change; and summits hosted by the Secretary-General.<sup>19</sup> The launch of new initiatives has been hailed as a significant outcome at each of these events, and the IGOs making these system-wide efforts typically do not participate within initiatives themselves (that is, system-wide efforts are undertaken from the ‘outside’). Intergovernmental organizations have also played specific roles at the *initiative* level, within particular cooperative initiatives, most notably as secretariats,

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<sup>19</sup> For example, see Hale and Roger, ‘Orchestration and Transnational Climate Governance’ and ; Jordan et al., *Governing Climate Change*, chaps 4, 11.

but also as ordinary participants and lead entities and occasionally as funders.<sup>20</sup> These levels of engagement, while distinct, have not always been separate. Nor has the engagement of organizations been consistent over time. The growth pattern of the commitments themselves has been highly variable, with the quantity of commitments being made spiking in some years while waning in others, and the quality of commitments showing significant variation.

Of course, the efforts of intergovernmental organizations in voluntary cooperation are not in themselves evidence of their effectiveness in advancing it. Assessing their effectiveness needs one to grapple with the counterfactual statement: had intergovernmental organizations not made efforts to advance voluntary cooperation on climate change, the growth of such cooperation would be significantly less than that seen today. This leads to the formulation of the central research question that this dissertation seeks to answer: **Did intergovernmental organizations drive the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change?**

### 1.3 The Gap in Current Knowledge

Answering the research question requires an understanding of existing knowledge on the drivers of partnership and the roles of IGOs therein. A consideration of existing knowledge on these topics is in order before the precise gaps can be identified for this study to fill.

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<sup>20</sup> For a summary of the roles played by intergovernmental organizations within initiatives, see UNEP, 'The Emissions Gap Report 2016'; For case studies on specific intergovernmental organizations, see Andonova, *Governance Entrepreneurs*.

*Why do actors cooperate with each other?* Scholarship on public goods and climate governance has highlighted many drivers for partnerships or voluntary cooperation among states and non-state actors. Cooperation is a functional response to the prisoner's dilemma of optimizing a joint result among rationally motivated actors. In the context of providing public goods that cannot be delivered by one actor alone or the management of common-pool resources, and the need to avoid the "tragedy of the commons", such cooperation can optimally take place among governments, private entities (whether firms or NGOs), or a combination, depending on the specific context of the problem.<sup>21</sup>

Within the context of this macro functional driver, different types of actors experience localized and varied motivations to partner on specific problems that confront them and to which they may be contributing. For example, in the case of climate change, civil society organizations with specific priorities (such as indigenous groups seeking preservation of their lands and property rights, or environmental NGOs seeking stronger regulation), and which may hold limited influence over their national governments, cooperate with one another transnationally by forming advocacy networks to increase international pressure for domestic action.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, with the rise of consumer awareness and increased preferences of consumers for corporate social responsibility and Environmental and Social Governance (ESG), private firms pertinent to the climate problem (such as consumer goods companies that contribute to deforestation, one of the major causes of

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<sup>21</sup> Hardin, 'The Tragedy of the Commons'; Ostrom, 'Beyond Markets and States'; For an overview of different types of public goods and their appropriate responses, see Barrett, *Why Cooperate?*

<sup>22</sup> Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; Keck and Sikkink, 'Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics'.

greenhouse gas emissions) are often motivated to make voluntary commitments to protect their reputations, but also wish to avoid loss of market share if they are the only ones committing, which compels them to engage in cooperation with each other to set standards and make incremental changes to operations.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, they may be seeking a first mover advantage in new technologies or markets. Complementary capacities among different types of actors can compel cooperation across constituency types. For example, firms may gain legitimacy by partnering with NGOs, which in turn may gain access to capacities and expertise to solve the problem.<sup>24</sup>

One strand of scholarship has conceptualized the three types of actors involved in cooperation—the states, NGOs and firms—as three points of a “Governance Triangle”, with each cooperative initiative appearing within the triangle, its placement determined by the ratio of its membership or governance actors among the three actor types at the vertices of the triangle.<sup>25</sup> Based on this, typologies of partnerships have been developed, distinguishing between the groupings of constituencies. Another strand of scholarship develops typologies of partnerships based on their immediate functional purpose for cooperation, such as information-sharing, capacity-building, standard-setting, and so on.<sup>26</sup>

*What drove the growth of voluntary cooperation over the past few decades, in particular the increasing prevalence of multi-stakeholder partnerships or initiatives?*

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<sup>23</sup> Cashore, ‘Legitimacy and the Privatization of Environmental Governance’; Haufler, *A Public Role for the Private Sector*; Sasser et al., ‘Direct Targeting as an NGO Political Strategy’.

<sup>24</sup> Abbott and Snidal, ‘International Regulation without International Government’.

<sup>25</sup> Abbott and Snidal, ‘Strengthening International Regulation through Transmittal New Governance’.

<sup>26</sup> Abbott and Snidal, ‘International Regulation without International Government’; Kaul and Conceição, *The New Public Finance*.

Scholarship identifies several political and economic drivers. Following the end of the Cold War and lessons learned from the early decades of the application of the neoliberal paradigm, a policy space that encourages closer engagement between the public and private domains has driven the growth of partnerships (instead of solely governmental or private actions) particularly at the national level.<sup>27</sup> This has diffused to the global level in the context of globalization since the late twentieth century. In addition, at the global level, while intergovernmental agreement among sovereign nation states followed by compliance has traditionally been the instrument of cooperation to deliver global public goods, frustration with the inability of this instrument to deliver the goods in cases such as climate change has caused pertinent non-state actors as well as states to increasingly turn towards voluntary cooperation, in effect resulting in a “transnational regime complex” or fragmentation of governance.<sup>28</sup>

*Finally, given these drivers of the growth of voluntary cooperation, what roles do intergovernmental organizations play vis-a-vis this phenomenon?* For the specific phenomenon of voluntary cooperation on *climate change*, the question of IGO influence has begun to receive scholarly attention in recent years, but has not been answered satisfactorily. Two areas of focus in the scholarship on this topic are

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<sup>27</sup> Kaul, ‘Providing Global Public Goods’.

<sup>28</sup> For the centrality of states in global cooperation, see Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*; For challenges in the climate negotiations and the rise of alternative, voluntary arrangements as a result, see Hoffmann, *Climate Governance at the Crossroads*; Visseren-Hamakers and Glasbergen, ‘Partnerships in Forest Governance’; Keohane and Victor, ‘The Regime Complex for Climate Change’; and Abbott, ‘The Transnational Regime Complex for Climate Change’.



discernible (although they are not always distinguished as such in the literature), as follows.

The first concerns the roles that IGOs play *within* initiatives or partnerships, in particular how they contribute to their formation, quality, effectiveness or legitimacy. Case studies on specific initiatives as well as large-n studies suggest that particular IGOs (notably UNEP and the World Bank) with focality in specific issue areas (that is, with the convening power, autonomy, authority and technical capacity) are important influencers, instigating and supporting many cooperative initiatives.<sup>29</sup> Their convening power, technical expertise, perceived legitimacy and relative autonomy make them particularly valuable in the formation and sustainment of multi-stakeholder cooperation, enabling them to lower barriers for cooperation that actors are not able to themselves. The second concerns the efforts taken by IGOs from the ‘outside’—that is, without participating in initiatives themselves. Such ‘system-wide’ efforts of IGOs to promote climate-focused voluntary cooperation include the promotion of Type-II Partnerships under the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 (WSSD or “Johannesburg Summit” hereafter); similar efforts under its follow-up summit in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, and efforts undertaken by the UN Secretary-General and the UNFCCC Secretariat in the 2014 Climate Summit and the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) in 2014 and 2015. Scholarship on such efforts has remained largely descriptive and analytically has

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<sup>29</sup> Abbott and Snidal, ‘International Regulation without International Government’; Andonova, *Governance Entrepreneurs*.

focused on their consequences rather than uncovering the causal mechanism by which such efforts may have given rise to voluntary cooperation.<sup>30</sup>

In recent years, both strands areas of focus have begun to increasingly use “orchestration theory”, which describes a pervasive behavior of IGOs. Orchestration theory submits that when IGOs lack sufficient authority to direct changes in behaviour of other actors in order to achieve their mandates, they resort to using intermediaries with sufficient authority to do so. Thus, as orchestrators (O), intergovernmental organizations use intermediaries (I) to influence the behaviour of their targets (T).<sup>31</sup> In the context of voluntary cooperation, scholars argue that there exists an “orchestration deficit”, which can be overcome by IGOs or states, to improve voluntary cooperation as a part of “transnational new governance” and contribute to effective delivery of global public goods.

In the context of climate change, empirical description of system-wide efforts suggest that an orchestration role may have been utilized by these IGOs to cause actors to launch new initiatives in 2014 and 2015.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, by participating in initiatives, scholars argue that IGOs have “orchestrated” voluntary cooperation by lowering barriers to cooperation and enabling partnerships to form, as well as by lending legitimacy and capacity to existing initiatives to sustain them.<sup>33</sup>

Despite these steps towards discerning the influence of IGOs in the growth of climate-focused voluntary cooperation, three notable gaps remain, which currently

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<sup>30</sup> Hale, “‘All Hands on Deck’: The Paris Agreement and Non-State Climate Action”; Hale, ‘A Climate Coalition of the Willing’; Widerberg, ‘The “Black Box” Problem of Orchestration’.

<sup>31</sup> Abbott et al., *International Organizations as Orchestrators*; Abbott, ‘Orchestrating Experimentation in Non-State Environmental Commitments’.

<sup>32</sup> Abbott, ‘Orchestration: Strategic Ordering in Polycentric Governance’.

<sup>33</sup> Hale and Roger, ‘Orchestration and Transnational Climate Governance’.

limit our understanding of whether and how IGOs may have driven the growth of this phenomenon over time.

**The first gap is a system-wide analysis.** There has been no empirical analysis to investigate the purported causal link between the growth in the number of climate-focused voluntary initiatives over time and the system-wide efforts of IGOs to spur the growth of this growth (that is, efforts taken by IGOs on the ‘outside’—to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change without participating in initiatives themselves). Existing studies establish correlation and intent, but not causation, either by focusing on the IGO-side of the equation without tracing the effect of these efforts on the formation of partnerships, or by considering only the subset of partnerships that were a result of the IGO efforts. This empirical gap has been noted in the literature, and a framework based on orchestration theory proposed to assess the influence of IGOs in the context of efforts under COP21 (the LPAA).<sup>34</sup> To answer the question posed by this dissertation however, a review of *all* pertinent system-wide efforts by IGOs to promote voluntary cooperation over the years in which this phenomenon has been observed must be conducted. Were some efforts more successful than others? If so, why? Under what conditions have IGOs successfully spurred the launch of new initiatives by states, private firms and NGOs? How did these efforts by IGOs affect the existing driving motivations of these actors to cooperate?

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<sup>34</sup> For the empirical gap, see Hale, “‘All Hands on Deck’: The Paris Agreement and Non-State Climate Action”; and Chan, Brandi, and Bauer, ‘Aligning Transnational Climate Action with International Climate Governance’; For the framework to assess the effectiveness of the LPAA, see Widerberg, ‘The “Black Box” Problem of Orchestration’.

**The second gap is a sector-wide analysis.** No empirical analysis exists of how the involvement of IGOs in particular initiatives affects the capabilities and propensity for voluntary cooperation *beyond* the initiative—that is, among actors in the wider sector in which the IGO is focal. While the importance of the context of initiatives has been highlighted in the literature, if the initiative is considered the micro level, then at the meso-level the context has frequently been assumed to consist of the domestic policy and economic environment in which the initiative is being implemented, and at the macro level, the international arena.<sup>35</sup> However, for voluntary initiatives that are by definition transnational in nature, situating them within the context of other initiatives within their sector, such as renewable energy, or aviation, is another, novel and pertinent way of contextualizing them, and this need has been recognized in recent years.<sup>36</sup> Since initiatives are known to interact with each other, with both negative and positive effects, and since particular IGOs focal within a sector are known to engage in multiple initiatives in the sector, understanding what effects, if any, these IGOs have had over time on shaping the growth of cooperation within their respective areas of focality is key to answering the research question.

**The third gap is a multilevel analysis.** There is no empirical analysis of the ways in which different IGOs working at different levels interact with each other in the growth of voluntary cooperation, although scholars have noted that that multilevel management, convening and leadership is needed by intergovernmental organizations

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<sup>35</sup> Stringer et al., ‘Advancing Climate Compatible Development: Lessons from Southern Africa’; Bleisham and Liese, *Transnational Partnerships: Effectively Providing for Sustainable Development?*

<sup>36</sup> Bulkeley et al., ‘Transnational Governance: Charting New Directions Post-Paris’.

if partnerships are to fulfil their potential.<sup>37</sup> In particular, how do the efforts of IGOs at the system-wide level interact with the efforts of those participating within initiatives themselves, and what is the combined effect of these efforts on the growth of voluntary cooperation? Given that IGOs do engage in both ways, such a multilevel analysis is necessary if a comprehensive answer to the question is to be obtained.

This study therefore seeks to fill these existing lacunae in knowledge and answer the research question posed, by: (1) conducting an empirical investigation into the various system-wide efforts by IGOs over time to promote climate-focused voluntary cooperation, and assessing whether and how these efforts were successful; (2) assessing the level of influence that IGOs participating in initiatives wield in shaping or steering the growth of cooperation within their focal sectors over time; and (3) conducting a multilevel analysis to understand the interactive effect of IGOs working at the system-wide and initiative levels to advance voluntary cooperation on climate change, on the growth of such cooperation.

In filling these gaps and answering the question, this study will make use of insights and concepts from existing literature on IGOs, but refrains from entering a theory-testing mode. The most commonly used theory today, that of orchestration, seems inadequate by design. First, this study aims to understand a complex phenomenon in which many different actors are engaging with each other in many different ways. There is no single orchestrator (O), since the multi-level, sector-wide and system-wide investigations all demand a consideration of the multiple actors acting together or over time and their combined effects. The differentiated abilities,

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<sup>37</sup> Ivanova, 'Partnerships, International Organizations, and Global Environmental Governance'.

preferences and actions of the various actors involved will need to be described to illuminate the causal mechanisms at work. As well, this study does not presuppose that the efforts by IGOs to promote voluntary cooperation are always or necessarily to influence the behavior of a particular target, nor that there is only one target. This study therefore adopts an inductive approach while using insights from current theories as and when they appear applicable.

## **1.4 Definitions**

To answer the research question, the terms “intergovernmental organization”, “voluntary cooperation on climate change”, “drive” and “growth” demand definition in the context of this study.

### ***1.4.1 Intergovernmental Organizations***

This study considers an intergovernmental organization as having been established by and among national governments, who remain the organization’s only full members. This definition does not preclude the admittance of other actors as observers or special members, as is common for many intergovernmental organizations, but such actors do not have the same deliberative and voting rights within the organization as do the member states. Examples of such organizations include the United Nations and its many specialized agencies, funds and programmes, as well as multilateral development banks, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), among many others. As such, the term corresponds to ‘international organizations’ as commonly used in international relations theory. However, with the emergence of entities such as the World

Economic Forum, which consider themselves ‘international organizations’, and may be given such a title under Swiss law but are not established by national governments, this study will deliberately use the term ‘intergovernmental organizations’ to maintain clarity on the type of actor meant. In addition, this study demarcates between types of intergovernmental organizations and focuses on a specific subset. Some intergovernmental organizations, such as the European Union, are designed with an explicit delegation of national sovereignty by member states. These regional supra-national entities will not be the focus of this study.

Within this definition, the conceptual framework afforded by the Principal-Agent (PA) or First UN-Second UN distinctions provides further clarity for this analysis. Inis Claude’s categorization of the United Nations as consisting of a First UN and a Second UN provides a useful distinction between venues of power within the United Nations and, more generally, within intergovernmental organizations.<sup>38</sup> The First UN (or, generalized, a ‘First IGO’) refers to the member states that comprise the organization and that are its primary decision makers. The Second UN (or, generalized, a ‘Second IGO’) consists of the staff members that make up the secretariats or bureaucracies of the organization. In theories of intergovernmental organizations, this demarcation is also commonly characterized as the Principal-Agent (PA) relationship, whereby as rational actors, states, the principals, delegate responsibilities to IGOs as their agents.

The conventional PA model assumes that agents do not act independently of, nor in contradiction to, the wishes of the states. Contrary to conventional wisdom,

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<sup>38</sup> Claude, ‘Peace and Security’.

however, scholarship has highlighted the proactive, autonomous and influential roles that agents can have over the decision-making of the IGOs they serve.<sup>39</sup> For example, in the context of peace and security, the influence of the UN Secretary-General has been the focus. Good offices and the mediation role of the Secretary-General demonstrate a degree of autonomy and influence that is significantly greater than simply being an agent of the principals, but more akin to being an independent actor.<sup>40</sup> In the context of development assistance and peacekeeping, IGO bureaucracies have been known to act with agency, with both positive and negative effects for the achievement of their mandates.<sup>41</sup> Autonomy and capacities of Second IGOs may vary based on their bureaucratic culture, governance structures, leadership, and over time. The secretariats to treaty bodies, such as the climate convention, for example, are significantly more constrained in their autonomy than an organization such as UNEP. The agents are therefore differentially autonomous from their Principals. Likewise, different groupings of member states can be more or less effective in purpose. In answering the research question, this study makes a distinction between efforts led primarily by the principal(s) or the agent(s) of an IGO—that is, whether efforts are led by the First IGO or the second IGO. The question of the autonomy, influence and convening power available to the particular IGO in question is therefore highly pertinent in this study.

One final distinction that provides clarity on the definition of intergovernmental organizations as used in this study is the notion of a “Third UN” or

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<sup>39</sup> Haas, *Saving the Mediterranean*; Barnett and Finnemore, ‘The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations’.

<sup>40</sup> Chesterman, ‘Article 99’; Johnstone, ‘The Role of the UN Secretary-General’.

<sup>41</sup> Barnett and Finnemore, *Rules for the World*.



“Third IGO”, which is considered to include actors not employed by the secretariats or member states of the United Nations, but engaged with either or both in efforts to influence the agendas or outcomes of multilateral deliberations.<sup>42</sup> Such actors could include academia and think tanks, civil society organizations, business organizations, businesses, and commissions of eminent persons.<sup>43</sup> Enjoying an “insider-outsider” status with respect to the IGO in question, this group wields uneven but palpable influence over the principals and agents. This study specifically *excludes* this group of actors from the definition of intergovernmental organizations. Rather, the different types of entities that form a Third IGO are treated as external influencers of the organization.

#### 1.4.2 Voluntary Cooperation on Climate Change

This study defines voluntary cooperation on climate change as all identifiable examples of cooperative initiatives on climate change, commonly seen as “commitments to action that are being undertaken collectively by a variety of companies, cities, subnational regions, investors and civil society organizations – often in partnership with countries”.<sup>44</sup> Other than being focused specifically on climate change, these initiatives can be considered the same phenomenon as “multi-stakeholder partnerships” or “partnerships” more generally, which have generated significant interest in recent decades as a mode of governance. Several important features of such cooperative initiatives or partnerships are highlighted in the

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<sup>42</sup> Weiss, Carayannis, and Jolly, ‘The “Third” United Nations’.

<sup>43</sup> While in his original formulation, Weiss excluded the possibility of businesses as part of the third UN, his stance has softened in recent years and the definition of the Third UN expanded to include businesses as well.

<sup>44</sup> UNFCCC, ‘NAZCA - Climate Action’.

literature.<sup>45</sup> Cooperative initiatives are often *Transnational*, which entails groups that are not solely national governments transcending national boundaries to form alliances and forge roles for themselves as actors in global governance.<sup>46</sup> In addition, partnerships are *voluntary*, that is, they are not specifically mandated by national governments through regulation or legislation, nor by intergovernmental treaty. Rather, entities are acting out of self-interested motivations by engaging in partnerships and not out of a legal obligation.<sup>47</sup> Initiatives are also cooperative and participatory—that is, they are *partnerships*, or *networks*. They do not consist of commitments made by single entities, such as targets set by an individual company or city. Rather, they involve joint commitments made by a group of entities, whether public (such as cities of regional governments), private (such as businesses or civil society organizations) or hybrid. Finally, some scholars distinguish between partnerships that are *horizontal* rather than vertical.<sup>48</sup> Vertical partnerships involve commercial, contractual relationships, in which partners exist in a hierarchy. A typical example is when a private sector company supplements public investment for an infrastructure project in return for future dividends such as toll revenues. By contrast, a horizontal partnership entails no contractual arrangement, and no loss in autonomy of the partners engaged.

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<sup>45</sup> Andonova, Hale, and Roger, ‘National Policy and Transnational Governance of Climate Change’; Bulkeley et al., ‘Governing Climate Change Transnationally: Assessing the Evidence from a Database of Sixty Initiatives’; Abbott, ‘The Transnational Regime Complex for Climate Change’.

<sup>46</sup> Avant, Finnemore, and Sell, *Who Governs the Globe?*; Keck and Sikkink, ‘Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics’; Slaughter, *A New World Order*.

<sup>47</sup> Kaul and Conceição, *The New Public Finance*.

<sup>48</sup> Kaul and Conceição.

While there is general agreement on the nature of partnerships, full consensus does not exist—whether among academics or practitioners. The various datasets and studies that gather information on such climate initiatives define their parameters in slightly different ways. This laxness in definition is partly a function of the nebulous nature of voluntary cooperation. Unlike an intergovernmental organization, the constitution of a cooperative initiative may evolve quite rapidly. What may be accepted as a novel initiative at the time of formation may concretize into an NGO or business association over time. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is an illustrative example. At the time of its formation, the WBCSD could arguable be defined as a cooperative initiative. It consists of companies voluntarily committing to sustainable practices. However, today the WBCSD is established as a business organization, which cultivates and hosts cooperative initiatives itself. Another example is the International Solar Alliance, an initiative launched by the Government of India, which consists of only national governments as its members. As such, it bears the hallmarks of being an intergovernmental organization, with no members that are non-state actors. Nevertheless, it is viewed as an example of a cooperative initiative, even being featured as such on the climate action portal of the UNFCCC.

This study accepts that definitional imprecision is an inherent feature of the evolving phenomenon. As such, it employs a flexible approach to defining initiatives. First, the following six guidelines, adapted from the literature, are used: initiatives must be voluntary, horizontal and participatory; they may consist of multiple types of actors or a single type (e.g. just businesses or businesses, civil society and

governments together); they must aim at large-scale systemic change, which can cause them to be global in scope or subnational with very high ambition; and they must have a significant focus on climate change. Second, existing academic and practitioner consensus on whether particular initiatives are to be defined as such are taken into consideration, thus allowing some flexibility in this definition.

Furthermore, this study draws on insights from theories of networked governance and in keeping with recent scholarship on voluntary cooperation on climate change, views the phenomenon as a network of actors interacting with each other, through co-membership of cooperative initiatives. Thus, not only are individual initiatives treated as networks of actors, but also the various initiatives together, which have some overlap in actors, are conceptualized and treated as a network of these networks. This network of initiatives and their members is considered at the system-wide level, which includes all initiatives across sectors, as well as at the sectoral level, which includes the specific subset of initiatives and their members that are focused on the particular sector in question.

Finally, in considering the universe of cooperative initiatives, this study maintains an agnostic view regarding the context in which initiatives were formed. The literature on voluntary cooperation and intergovernmental organizations traces two threads of activity. On the one hand, scholars have examined the so-called Type-II partnerships arising in the context of the conferences on sustainable development in 2002 and 2012. These analyses are limited to only those partnerships officially announced in these conferences, which cover the range of issues under sustainable development. On the other hand, literature on international cooperative initiatives on

climate change considers the partnerships arising in the context of the intergovernmental negotiations on climate change, some of which overlap with the Type-II partnerships. In this study, care is taken to consider all relevant initiatives, no matter their institutional origins or association.

#### *1.4.3 Growth*

Conceptualized as a network of initiatives and their members, the growth of voluntary cooperation is understood first as the rise in the *quantity* of initiatives in existence. The quantity can be measured for the entire network, or sectoral subnetworks, with the latter yielding insights into the differential growth of cooperation in various sectors pertinent to greenhouse gas emissions. The quantity of initiatives is relatively easy to measure and capture, which has led to a particular focus among practitioners on the number of initiatives in existence as a litmus test for the strength of cooperation.<sup>49</sup> This may or may not be a good assumption.

The *quality* of cooperation is another way to consider the strength of cooperation, and therefore the growth of cooperation. In this regard, the best measure of the quality of a cooperative initiative is the extent to which it achieved its goal(s). Due to the long-term nature of efforts to curb climate change, such *ex-post* information is as yet largely unavailable to us, even for those initiatives that may aim to build capacity rather than directly implement emissions-mitigating measures. Nevertheless, it is possible to indirectly measure the quality of an initiative, by

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<sup>49</sup> For example, the following accounts: United Nations, ‘Rio+20 Voluntary Commitments’; United Nations, ‘Lima-Paris Action Agenda Matures into Major Force Driving Climate Action’.

understanding and tracking conditions that are likely to enable an initiative to achieve its goals, and by assessing the ambition level of the goals set.

This approach has been prolifically applied in the study of multi-stakeholder partnerships, of which cooperative initiatives on climate change are a subset. Many case studies as well as large-n studies have attempted to create a typology of enabling conditions of success for partnerships.<sup>50</sup> A summary of this extant literature points to conditions for success within such partnerships, spanning three categories of ‘actor’, ‘process’ and ‘context’.<sup>51</sup> In this study, I explicitly use these conditions of success as a proxy measure of the quality of an initiative, focusing in particular on the groupings of actor and process.

Under the ‘actor’ category, these conditions include an optimal partner mix (having all the necessary partners at the table) and effective leadership (specifically, an effective ‘broker’, ‘convener’ or ‘orchestrator’). Under the ‘process’ category, conditions include stringent goal-setting (goals that are both, ambitious and precise); sustained funding for the initiative to achieve its stated goals; professional process management (for example, an adequately staffed and permanent secretariat and a clear governance structure); and regular monitoring, reporting and evaluation to support organizational learning.

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<sup>50</sup> CISL and Ecofys, ‘Better Partnerships: Understanding and Increasing the Impact of Private Sector Cooperative Initiatives’; Graichen et al., ‘International Climate Initiatives - A Way Forward to Close the Emissions Gap? Initiatives’ Potential and Role under the Paris Agreement’; Hale and Roger, ‘Orchestration and Transnational Climate Governance’; Michaelowa and Michaelowa, ‘Transnational Climate Governance Initiatives’.

<sup>51</sup> Pattberg and Widerberg, ‘Transnational Multistakeholder Partnerships for Sustainable Development’.

#### 1.4.4 Drive

The research question is concerned with the causal influence of the actions of intergovernmental organizations on the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change. As such, the Oxford English Dictionary offers the following definition of the verb drive: *To impel forcibly to action, or into some state; to constrain, compel.*<sup>52</sup>

This study distinguishes between an indirect and a direct sense of the word as applied to actions of intergovernmental organizations.

In the indirect sense, for an intergovernmental organization to drive something might mean for it to create an enabling environment, such as by providing a platform for stakeholders. Or, it might mean compelling stakeholders to act by failing to fulfil a necessary function, thus creating an incentive due to lack of action. The literature recognizes, for instance, that the lack of progress in the intergovernmental negotiations on climate change have driven actors to engage in voluntary cooperation. In the direct sense, an intergovernmental organization might drive a process or to a result through a variety of functions it proactively fulfils, such as purposive information sharing, funding, organizing, convening, and so on.

The two senses of the word imply quite different roles of intergovernmental organizations, and although both will be considered, it is the ‘direct’ sense that is the primary focus of this study.

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<sup>52</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, ‘Drive’.

## 1.5 Key Findings

The key findings of this study are presented in an argument of five parts, as follows.

**Cooperative initiatives on climate change form ecosystems among inter-connected entities within sectors that emit greenhouse gases. New initiatives are best understood as evolutionary changes to the strength—or quality—of cooperation in these sectors. Given this, the quality of cooperation must be understood at the sectoral level in addition to the initiative level.**

Thus, rather than treating the quality and effectiveness of an initiative as intrinsic attributes, as is currently the case, it is more apt to consider how an initiative may have improved the quality of cooperation that already existed within the *sector*, such as the optimality of the partners engaged vis-à-vis the problem and the ambition of goals articulated, as well as how it may have led to the formation of new initiatives within the sector.

**As members of voluntary cooperative initiatives, technical IGOs can have a significant, positive and often decisive effect on the quality of cooperation over time in the wider sector, in addition to the initiatives in which they participate, and are among the most central drivers of evolutionary growth of the sectoral ecosystems.** By taking up secretariat and funding roles consistently and deploying their convening, organizational and knowledge-generation functions, IGOs such as UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank and others have mediated among governments, private sector entities, civil society organizations and subnational authorities to forge partnerships. But by doing so more prolifically and strategically than most other



entities in the network (that is, by engaging in many, consequential initiatives), a core group of IGOs have positioned themselves very strongly as bridge-builders, conveners and preferred partners (especially of businesses) in their sectoral networks. As such, by virtue of their strategic participation in initiatives, these IGOs have become central and relied-upon community-builders for the wider network.

**IGOs that have convening power and autonomy can catalyse a surge in the growth of voluntary cooperation, effectively acting as choreographers of participants in the network. Governments that possess the convening power, autonomy and internationally-sanctioned legitimacy are also able to perform this role.** Having established a good offices role on climate change, the office of the UN Secretary-General currently stands unique among intergovernmental organizations in possessing the convening power and autonomy sufficient to choreograph surges in the growth of voluntary cooperation. This is particularly relevant given that the only other entities with similar convening power and high autonomy are national governments, whose motivations to undertake such a choreographic effort to advance the climate agenda are vulnerable to the vagaries of domestic political contexts.

**The catalytic surge in cooperation depends on the presence of six enabling organizational attributes, which together characterize the collective choreography that accelerates the growth of cooperation.** The conditions include: strategic timing vis-à-vis the intergovernmental process; sectoral rather than constituency-based orientation of the preparatory efforts; high visibility and potential for kudos for actors making commitments; an emphasis on ambitious cooperative

commitments as the measure of success; empowerment of already influential actors within the network as conveners, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity; and the exercise of leadership with central decision-making by the organizer.

Together, these six organizational attributes create a strong imperative for motivated entities to expand and deepen partnerships within sectors, in effect creating a ‘pipeline’ of cooperative commitments. Critically, while the process requires lead organizers with high convening power and autonomy, it builds on existing motivations of entities in the network, has their enthusiastic support, and benefits from their inputs, since doing so enables them to overcome existing barriers to cooperation and accelerate their voluntary efforts. In short, if the entities in the network are the performers in a modern dance, then this catalytic approach is its collective choreography—an act of mutual creation that generates the dance.

**Sustained and adequate institutional support over time is necessary for the gains resulting from the collective choreography to be impactful. Conversely, efforts that don’t receive this sustained support, often fail to be sustained, or to grow and deliver on their initial promise.** In contexts as diverse as forests, short-lived climate pollutants and land transport, the importance of sustained catalytic engagement and follow-up for the effective implementation of voluntary cooperation has been clear. In short, given the dominance of intergovernmental organizations as choreographer as well as dancer, the combined efforts of intergovernmental organizations from both outside and within the network of voluntary cooperation must be *maintained* to ensure the effectiveness of voluntary cooperation.

## 1.6 Dissertation Outline

**Chapter two** presents the research design and the selection of case studies.

The research design consists of a mixture of qualitative process tracing and dynamic social network analysis. Relying on elite interviews of 71 individuals from a range of institutions including governments, business, industry associations, civil society organizations and intergovernmental organizations, as well as archival material sourced from each of these institutions, the study traces the causal mechanisms that connect the efforts of intergovernmental organizations with the quantity and quality of voluntary cooperation on climate change. The qualitative data and analysis are layered with social network analysis, which reveals actor types and actors that have been influential in the network of initiatives over time. This analysis benefits from an original network dataset of cooperative initiatives on climate change developed for this study, taking as a primary base the crowd-sourced Climate Initiatives Platform maintained via a partnership between UNEP and the government of Norway, while adding data from internet-based searches and other datasets. The use of social network analysis in this study represents a methodological innovation in the study of voluntary cooperation on climate change as well as on intergovernmental organizations.

The analytical organization of the study consists of a review of system-wide efforts by intergovernmental organizations in the context of efforts by other stakeholders, and three case-studies that fill the sector-wide and multilevel knowledge gaps. The review of system-wide efforts primarily traces the effects of IGOs on the *quantity* of cooperative initiatives and serves to fill the first knowledge gap

identified—that of an empirical investigation establishing causal connection between system-wide IGO efforts and the growth of cooperative initiatives over time. The three case studies are designed to trace the effects of IGOs on the *quality* of initiatives, and serve to fill the second and third knowledge gaps identified: how the involvement of IGOs in particular initiatives affects the capabilities and propensity for voluntary cooperation among actors in the wider sector or issue area in which the IGO is focal (that is, beyond the initiative(s) in which the IGO participates); and multi-level analysis that considers the combined effects of different IGOs together on the quality of cooperation.

This chapter also presents the rationale for the three sectors and initiatives chosen as case studies, which include short-lived climate pollutants (focusing on the Climate and Clean Air Coalition), forests (focusing on the New York Declaration on Forests), and land transport (focusing on the Partnership for Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport).

**Chapter three** conducts the system-wide analysis, and assesses whether and how the various system-wide efforts of IGOs to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change have been successful. It primarily tackles the *quantity* aspect of the growth

First observing that the growth in number of cooperative initiatives has occurred in three distinct phases, with significant differences between each phase in the rate of growth, the connectivity among initiatives in the network, and the primary stakeholders driving the growth, this chapter focuses on phases two and three (that is, the period from 2000 to 2010, followed by 2011-2015), which show steady growth

and accelerated growth respectively. This chapter then identifies the most central and influential actors that were members of the network of voluntary cooperation during these phases. These include a core group of governments, IGOs, businesses and civil society organizations. Next, the main system-wide IGO efforts to spur cooperation are identified, with several First IGO-led and Second-IGO led efforts in both phases, and a mixed approach in phase three. This chapter then uses archives and interviews to trace whether the efforts of the IGOs had any impact on the decisions of the actors most central in the network to form new initiatives.

This chapter finds that the growth trajectory of the number of initiatives has been positively influenced by IGOs' system-wide efforts only when these efforts adhered to six organizations principles: strategic timing; high visibility; sectoral orientation; emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments; subsidiarity;<sup>53</sup> and leadership with central decision-making. This has occurred in phase three, but not in phase two. Further, only those IGOs (and national governments) with very high convening power and autonomy are able to ensure these six organizational principles. Among IGOs, the office of the UN Secretary-General stands unique in possessing this convening power and autonomy on the climate change issue—the latter having been developed over decades, a process not dissimilar to the development of the “good offices” role of the Secretary-General in peace and security.

**Chapter four** focuses on the network of initiatives related to the forests sector and in particular the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF), and conducts a sector-wide analysis to understand the influence of IGOs in the growth of the forest

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<sup>53</sup> That is, empowerment of and dependence on existing influencers within sectors.

network of voluntary cooperation, and a multilevel analysis to understand the interactive effects of system-wide and initiative-level IGO efforts on the formation and growth of the NYDF, which also tests the findings of chapter three.

For the sector-wide analysis, this chapter finds that by participating in initiatives, IGOs have strongly influenced the growth of cooperation in the forests sector. In particular, UNEP, UNDP, FAO, UNFCCC and the World Bank are among the most prolific entities, most relied-upon connectors and highly valued partners in the network. For the multilevel analysis, this chapter finds that the formation and quality of the NYDF depended on the joint efforts of a range of governments, businesses and civil society organizations that were already influential in the network of initiatives on forests, but that the combined system-wide and initiative-level efforts by EOSG and UNDP in enabling these efforts were determinant in the formation and several aspects of quality of the NYDF, particularly in its range of partners, its leadership and its ambition level. This strongly supports the findings of chapter three of six organizational elements that are necessary for a surge in the growth of the network. This chapter also finds evidence to suggest defining quality of cooperation at the initiative level may be too limiting; that the notion of quality of voluntary cooperation may be aptly applied at the sectoral level; and that particular instances of cooperation—i.e. individual initiatives—may aptly be considered attempts to improve quality of cooperation within the wider sector.

**Chapter five** turns to the network of initiatives on short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), tracing in particular the formation and growth of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC). This chapter conducts a sector-wide analysis to

understand the influence of IGOs in the growth of the SLCP network of voluntary cooperation, and a multilevel analysis to understand the interactive effects of system-wide and initiative-level IGO efforts on the formation and growth of the CCAC, which also tests the findings of chapter three.

Through the sector-wide analysis, this chapter finds that by being among the most prolific actors in the network and consistently taking up secretariat and funding roles from the early 2000s, UNEP has positioned itself as a convener and bridge-builder among disparate entities as well as being seen as the partner of choice by other influential entities in the network, notably governments. As such, UNEP, has played a highly influential role in shaping the growth trajectory of the SLCPs network of voluntary cooperation. Through the multilevel analysis, this chapter finds that the interactive effects of system-wide and initiative-level IGO efforts can be such that they spur a growth in cooperation--whether as more ambitious and stringent goals, or new partners, or both. This effect is seen when the six organizational attributes of effective system-wide IGO efforts are present. At the same time, this analysis shows a strong interactive effect between UNEP and the United States Government on the formation of the CCAC and its growth in early years. This chapter therefore provides strong support for the findings of chapter three while nuancing them: well-positioned lead governments are evidently able to choreograph the growth of cooperation, since they possess the convening power and autonomy to do so. Finally, this case study illustrates the fluidity of the network of SLCP initiatives and finds that the quantity of initiatives has often increased as a direct result of efforts to improve the quality of cooperation in the sector. It would be appropriate to consider at least some aspects of

the quality of cooperation at the sectoral level rather than only at the initiative level. These include the mix of partners and the goal-setting.

**Chapter six** examines the network of initiatives on land transport, and pays particular attention to the formation and growth of the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT). This chapter conducts a sector-wide analysis to understand the influence of IGOs in the growth of the land transport network of voluntary cooperation, and a multilevel analysis to understand the interactive effects of system-wide and initiative-level IGO efforts on the formation and growth of SLoCaT, which also tests the findings of chapter three.

Although land transport is a sector with no lead focal intergovernmental organization, through the sector-wide analysis this chapter finds that IGOs, in particular UNEP and the World Bank, have consistently positioned themselves as essential connectors for different entity types, as well as becoming the preferred partner for businesses seeking to make voluntary cooperative commitments in transport. In short, IGOs have significantly influenced in the composition and topology of the network over time. The multilevel analysis provides strong and nuanced support to the six organizational attributes for successful promotion of voluntary cooperation. This analysis underlines that in the subsidiarity-leadership relationship, the initiative-level lead actor need not be an IGO in order for the results to be strong. This chapter also provides the strongest evidence of all three case studies that an essential concept in understanding the growth of the network is that these improvements in partner mix and goal-setting have occurred at the sectoral level, with new initiatives being formed by amalgamating existing initiatives while adding



additional partners or new targets. Quality of cooperation is best understood at the sectoral level.

**Chapter seven** synthesizes the key findings of chapters three to six, considering together the system-wide analysis of chapter three and the multi-level and sector-wide analyses of the case studies. The contributions made to existing knowledge are summarized, and the implications for future research and policy are outlined.

## 2 Methodology

This dissertation seeks to answer the question: “did intergovernmental organizations drive the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change?” This question demands an examination of processes and interaction among various types of actors in order to describe and infer roles that intergovernmental organizations played, if any, in causing changes to the quantity and quality of cooperative initiatives over time. In other words, the study intends to open the black box of the influence of intergovernmental organizations on voluntary cooperation on climate change.

More specifically, as identified in chapter one, this study seeks to fill three knowledge gaps in answering the research question: an empirical understanding of the causal connection between system-wide efforts of IGOs to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change, and the growth of such cooperation over time; an understanding of the effects of IGO participation within initiatives on the growth of voluntary cooperation in their wider focal issue area over time; and an understanding of the interactive effect of IGOs at the system-wide and initiative levels on the growth of voluntary cooperation. The research design and methods therefore need to be optimized appropriately.

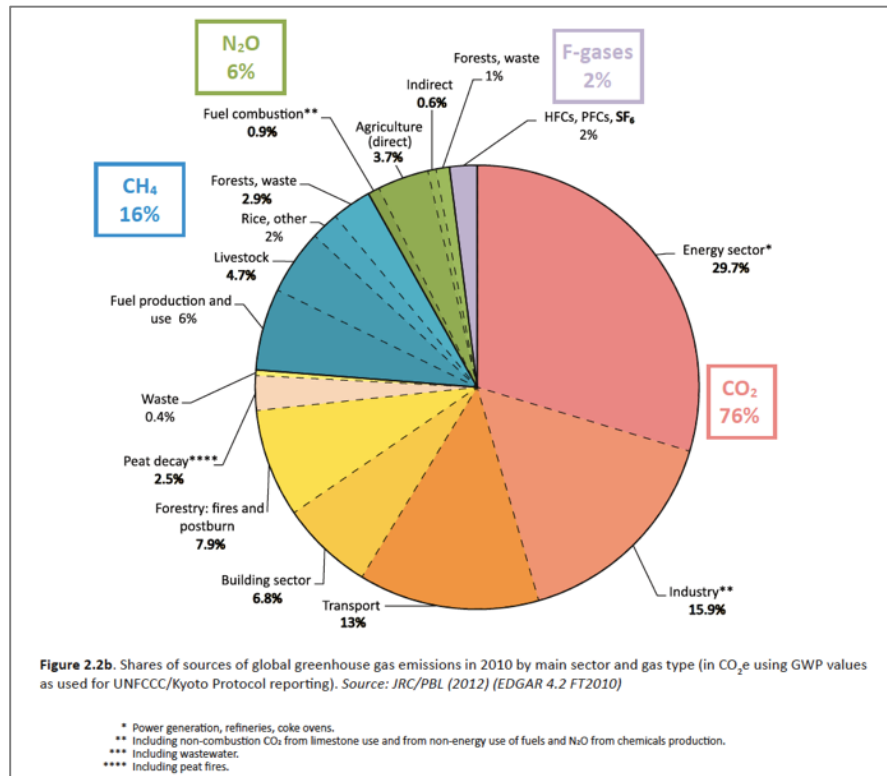
In addition, the sector-oriented structure of the climate problem itself is pertinent to the design of this study. As figure 2.1 illustrates, different economic sectors are responsible for different amounts of greenhouse gas. Since greenhouse gas emissions are a result of economic activity that is organized into sectors that produce

specific gases, many attempts at voluntary solutions by actors in these sectors have been similarly oriented. At the same time, many attempts have been primarily oriented around actor types (for example, cooperation among municipal authorities to reduce emissions related to cities such as from urban transport, buildings and waste management) while others have focused on specific geographic areas.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, these efforts can be categorized by the sector(s) within which their efforts aim to bear fruit and the gases (or particulate matter) they aim to curb. While boundaries between sectors are porous and individual cooperative initiatives can and do aim to reduce emissions from multiple sectors, nevertheless the self-organization and categorization of voluntary cooperation along sectoral lines creates natural fault lines of the phenomenon along which the study can be oriented.

This chapter provides an overview of the research design of this study and how it responds to the question asked as well as the gaps in knowledge identified; the two methods employed to answer the question most effectively (qualitative process tracing and dynamic social network analysis); and data used for each method.

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<sup>54</sup> Chan et al., 'Effective and Geographically Balanced? An Output-Based Assessment of Non-State Climate Actions'.



**Figure 2.1 Greenhouse gas emissions are linked to a variety of economic sectors.**  
 Source: UNEP 2012.

## 2.1 Research Design

This study consists of one system-wide investigation that addresses the first knowledge gap, and three case studies that address the remaining two knowledge gaps.

### 2.1.1 A System-Wide Investigation

The system-wide analysis primarily considers the growth in *quantity* of voluntary cooperation on climate change over time and pertinent system-wide IGO efforts to promote it. As such, it addresses the knowledge gap of whether and how system-wide efforts of IGOs may have influenced the growth of initiatives. This requires a dataset of climate-focused initiatives and their launch dates, as well as the identification of the pertinent system-wide efforts by IGOs. As described later in this

chapter, the Climate Initiatives Platform (CIP) maintained by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides the base for the dataset used in this study, with a large amount of data supplemented through a web search and the database on partnerships for sustainable development maintained by UN DESA. A review of extant literature on partnerships and climate change suggests that the primary venues for the promotion of climate-focused cooperation by IGOs were the United Nations General Assembly or Economic and Social Council, and the climate convention, with their associated secretariats. These form the object of inquiry of this investigation.

This analysis is time-bound, from 2000 to 2015. Bounding the investigation appropriately was necessary to ensure its manageability (to ensure it is not too long and demanding) while providing adequate material for insights. The 2000-2015 period covers a diversity of efforts by IGOs, while also being the period in which voluntary cooperation became a noticeable phenomenon. This study ends the system-wide analysis at the end of 2015, when voluntary cooperation became codified in the intergovernmental climate negotiations. This was deemed a natural cut-off point for the historical analysis, the results of which could then be tested in future studies on the post-2015 period. As well, since the study was being conducted during 2018 and 2019, when some significant system-wide efforts were being undertaken by IGOs, an in-situ analysis was not deemed feasible.

### *2.1.2 Three Case Studies*

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to examine every initiative in every greenhouse gas-emitting sector to assess how IGOs contribute to the growth of voluntary cooperation in a sector or how the interaction of IGOs are multiple levels

contributes to the growth of particular initiatives. A case study approach is used instead, to fill the two remaining knowledge gaps: an understanding of the sector-level impacts on voluntary cooperation when focal IGOs engage in initiatives, and an understanding of the interactive effects of different IGOs at the system-wide and initiative levels, on the growth of voluntary cooperation. In these case studies, the emphasis is on the both the *quality* and *quantity* aspects of the growth of cooperation.

The time span for the specific initiatives in these case studies, given their specific histories, is necessarily shorter than that for the system-wide study, and for each will begin at around the formation of the initiative and consider significant moments in the evolution of the initiative and sector. By being multilevel, the case studies “meet” the system-wide investigation at specific moments in time, while providing in-depth analysis in specific sectors and in specific initiatives, which is not possible in the system-wide study. In doing so, they address the knowledge gap on the interactive effects of IGOs at multiple levels. In additions, by considering the roles played by IGOs within the wider sector (and in particular considering how the IGOs’ engagement in initiatives influences cooperation within the wider sector), the case studies also address the knowledge gap on the influence of focal IGOs on the growth of voluntary cooperation within their sector. For this, the years 2000-2015 remain the bounds for the analysis.

The selection of case studies is guided by four central concerns. First, the sectors chosen must be relevant and significant for the climate problem. For example, as figure 2.1 illustrates, sectors identified as dominant in causing greenhouse gas emissions include industry, transport, energy, land use such as forests and agriculture,

and buildings, among others. Some of these sectors contribute to carbon dioxide levels, while others contribute to other greenhouse gases, such as methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases. It is important to select from these sectors, and choose those that contribute to significant greenhouse gas emissions. If treated as self-contained investigations, the case studies would then be relevant and valuable for actors working within the sectors and can thus maximize this study's contribution to the climate mitigation problem, even if it were to transpire that no generalizable conclusions may be drawn regarding the influence of intergovernmental organizations across sectors. Second, it is important to maximize the variation of the engagement of intergovernmental organizations across these case studies, to enable a higher probability of generalization. Since the engagement of intergovernmental organizations can occur at the initiative and system-wide level, and can vary over time (e.g. engagement may be high at the conceptualization and formation stage, but may reduce in the growth and implementation phase, or vice versa), this needs to be considered when assessing the degree of variation. Third, it is important to maximize variation of the quality of the initiatives selected to ensure robustness of results. Fourth, the variation in the sectoral contexts should be maximized to support generalizability. For example, a sector that may be seen as contentious among entities engaged in cooperation may be contrasted with a sector in which there is less disagreement, with differing roles for IGOs. With these criteria in mind, the case studies were chosen as follows.

### *2.1.3 Case Study 1: Forests*

Case study one focuses on the network on voluntary initiatives related to forests, and specifically considers the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF) launched in 2014. The potential of forests to limit global GHG emissions is extremely high, as they are carbon sinks as well as a source of direct emissions through deforestation (for commodities such as palm oil, soy, cocoa, coffee, timber, and pulp and paper) and degradation. Mitigation action in the forestry sector could contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 4.2 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr by 2030, or about 12% of total emissions (see Figure 2.1).<sup>55</sup>

The NYDF demonstrates high involvement of intergovernmental organizations at all three levels. It was launched at the 2014 Climate Summit hosted by the UN Secretary-general, which aimed to “catalyze action” across sectors. The secretariat for the NYDF is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In addition, various intergovernmental organizations, including UNDP, UNEP, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Bank are active in the governance of forests at the sectoral level, through programmes such as the UN-REDD and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility.<sup>56</sup>

The quality of the NYDF was deemed to be high when it was launched. Scholars estimated that if fully implemented, the NYDF could contribute to emissions reductions of 2.2 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/y by 2030.<sup>57</sup> In terms of the conditions for success for partnerships identified in the literature and noted in chapter one, the initiative appears

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<sup>55</sup> IPCC, ‘Climate Change 2007’, 16.

<sup>56</sup> Chan and Pattberg, ‘Private Rule-Making and the Politics of Accountability’.

<sup>57</sup> Graichen et al., ‘International Climate Initiatives - A Way Forward to Close the Emissions Gap? Initiatives’ Potential and Role under the Paris Agreement’.



to have a wide range of actors involved, a permanent secretariat established, and an independent monitoring and reporting system in place and running. However, the monitoring and reporting system was not established at the time of the launch, but two years after it. This provides some temporal variation in at least part of the quality of the initiative that can be investigated.

Finally, the governance of forests has the hallmarks of being among the knottiest of wicked problems. A sector consisting of a range of actors with competing interests--commodities growers and producers (palm oil, cocoa, soy, coffee), indigenous peoples, local and national governments with significant differences in views on the appropriate use of forests--means issues of land tenure, economic and development rights, and sovereignty are at the centre of forest governance. As a result, forests have long been an under-served and contested issue area in the climate negotiations, and the difficulty with ensuring additionality and permanence of efforts to reduce deforestation and degradation, as well as issues such as leakage and challenges with monitoring, reporting and verification have meant that other than for conservation and afforestation, efforts under land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) have not been included in the financing mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol (and their inclusion under the Paris Agreement remains in doubt). Efforts by the full range of actors on emissions reductions in the forests sector have therefore occurred largely outside the remit of formal treaty compliance. This makes the forests sector an especially rich one for analysis for this study.

#### *2.1.4 Case Study 2: Short-Lived Climate Pollutants*

Case study two focuses on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCPs), and specifically considers the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) initiative launched in 2012. SLCPs are a category of greenhouse gases and particulate matter that, while lasting a relatively small period of time in the atmosphere compared to carbon dioxide (from a few days to about a decade), are mostly of high Global Warming Potential (GWP), which makes them particularly potent contributors to climate change.<sup>58</sup> SLCPs include methane, black carbon (soot), tropospheric ozone and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). With the exception of Ozone, SLCPs are the result of a range of industries. For example, Methane emissions result from agriculture (in particular, livestock and rice cultivation), the oil and gas industry (gas flaring practices), wastewater management and coal mines. Black carbon, a component of soot, is produced from burning of biomass, wood, and coal (most commonly practiced in residential contexts), and from diesel engines. SLCPs comprise about 24% of all global greenhouse gas emissions (see figure 2.1) but curbing is estimated to have an outsized effect due to their high GWP, with potential to reduce global warming by 0.5°C by 2040.<sup>59</sup> In addition to the climate benefits of curbing SLCPs, there are also short-term co-benefits, such as in the case of black carbon, which causes respiratory disease. The high emissions reductions potential, accompanied by co-benefits and the short-term results associated with curbing SLCPs has made this sector politically attractive for climate action, especially for developing countries. As the former

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<sup>58</sup> UNEP & WMO, 'Integrated Assessment of Black Carbon and Tropospheric Ozone'.

<sup>59</sup> UNEP & WMO.

Environment minister of one Latin American country put it, “It is very difficult to convince the leader of a developing country to focus on climate change. Any political leader wants results in the short term. So SLCPs really stood out, because they can provide results within an election cycle, on air quality and health. And they can have a mitigating effect on global temperature.”<sup>60</sup> The generally strong agreement among actor types on pathways to mitigate SLCPs provides a contrast with the Forests case study.

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition is a dominant initiative on SLCPs, and was launched in 2012 by six governments and UNEP to curb SLCPs on an urgent basis. UNEP plays a secretariat role in this initiative, and has also been active at the sectoral level by promoting attention to SLCPs as a cohesive category. However, the CCAC does not appear to have had much engagement with intergovernmental system-wide efforts at the time of its formation and launch. The initiative was launched at the U.S. State Department by then-Secretary of State Hilary Clinton. In subsequent years, however, engagement of intergovernmental organizations at the system-wide level have addressed SLCPs and also engaged the CCAC with regard to forming new initiatives within the sector. The involvement and efforts of intergovernmental organizations in the formation and sustainment of the CCAC therefore varies across the three levels.

The CCAC appears to have several elements of high quality and likelihood of success. Together, the various sub-initiatives of the CCAC have quantifiable

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<sup>60</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

commitments that are estimated to contribute to reduce GHG emissions by at least 1500 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr by 2030 if implemented fully.<sup>61</sup> As well, the initiative has a wide range of partners, a strong donor base and a robust governance structure.<sup>62</sup>

#### *2.1.5 Case Study 3: Land Transport*

Case study three focuses on the land transport sector, and in particular pays attention to the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) launched in 2009. The transport sector is conventionally taken to include both passenger and freight transport, within and across countries. A variety of industries therefore comprise this sector, including road and rail. Mitigation action in the transport sector could contribute to reducing GHG emissions by up to 2.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr by 2030, or about 13% of total emissions (See figure 2.1).<sup>63</sup>

SLoCaT is an umbrella initiative for the coordination of voluntary cooperation on transport. SLoCaT was launched in 2009 with very limited involvement of intergovernmental organizations, which do not play any secretariat role in the initiative. Furthermore, in comparison to other sectors, there is limited engagement of intergovernmental organizations in land transport, with no one organization holding the mandate for the sector. Neither were the system-wide efforts by intergovernmental organizations relevant for the launch of SLoCaT. However, in the years after its launch, there was greater engagement with intergovernmental organizations at the system-wide level, in efforts to expand the work of SLoCaT. This

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<sup>61</sup> Graichen et al., 'International Climate Initiatives - A Way Forward to Close the Emissions Gap? Initiatives' Potential and Role under the Paris Agreement'.

<sup>62</sup> CCAC, 'CCAC Annual Report 2015-2016'; 'CCAC Governance'.

<sup>63</sup> IPCC, 'Climate Change 2007'.

case study therefore sees low to medium engagement of intergovernmental organizations across the three levels over time, and with important temporal variation which provides opportunity for within-case comparison.

Based on information available on its website, SLoCaT demonstrates some markers of likelihood of success within an initiative. It has a robust governance structure including a secretariat, conducts regular monitoring and reporting, has a wide range of actors as partners and evidently a strong donor base. SLoCaT does not have a quantitative target on emission reductions itself, but has helped form and sustain several initiatives with quantitative targets.

## **2.2 Methods Employed**

This study employs a mixed methods approach in answering the research question, relying on qualitative process tracing and dynamic social network analysis. The two methods are used in complementary and iterative ways to obtain insights into the roles and influences of intergovernmental organizations at all three levels.

### ***2.2.1 Qualitative Process Tracing***

As a method that enables the researcher to empirically uncover causal dynamics within a case and also make comparisons between cases, process tracing is an excellent tool to use for answering the research question. The literature on process tracing is mired in debates on the nature of causal mechanisms, with two dominant modes of thought. On the one hand, drawing on the Humean tradition, scholars contend that evidence for event A causing event B must include several observed instances of B following A, with no confounding factors. On the other hand, some

scholars argue for a mechanistic understanding of causal mechanism that “unpacks the black box” of causation and allows for within-case tracing of events and actions that logically connect the cause to the effect, without the need for comparison between cases.<sup>64</sup>

This study uses both types of process tracing. Within the case studies identified and for the system-wide analysis, the mechanistic form of process tracing is primarily used to link (or not) the actions of intergovernmental organizations and other actors to the quality and quantity of initiatives. Due to the changes in the roles of the various actors over time and at different levels, it is also possible to assess whether the observed or expected link between the intergovernmental organization and the growth of the initiative(s) occurs repeatedly within a case. For example, as intergovernmental organizations have made several efforts to promote voluntary cooperation by convening conferences and summits for this purpose, the relative success at the various events can be compared with each other. But the specific ways by which the existence of such events compelled different actors to make voluntary commitments and engage in partnerships are traced mechanistically. The absence or presence of given mechanistic evidence across events can then be used to fine-tune the argument concerning the driving effect (if any) of intergovernmental organizations on voluntary cooperation.

The method of process tracing falls into three functional categories: theory testing, theory building and outcome-explaining.<sup>65</sup> Theory-testing and theory-building

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<sup>64</sup> See Beach 2017 for a synopsis of the two approaches.

<sup>65</sup> Beach and Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods*.

are both theory-oriented processes, relying on deductive and inductive inference respectively. This study, being case-centric rather than theory-centric, uses the outcome-explaining variant of process tracing, simultaneously deploying both, deductive and inductive logics, to provide a causal account for the growth of voluntary cooperation that captures the roles of intergovernmental organizations at multiple levels and their effects.

In doing so, this study heeds three pieces of advice that scholarship provides on addressing the particular challenges of process tracing in environmental governance.<sup>66</sup> As many scholars have noted, there is a tendency among those using process tracing to ignore the issue of equifinality, that is, various different explanations for an effect. In environmental governance, these alternative explanations may operate at different levels than the outcome under consideration. This study therefore actively seeks out contrary explanations at multiple levels, rather than looking for additional positivistic evidence. As well, the potential for bias among sources is particularly high in environmental governance, given the range of highly and differently motivated actors involved. This is especially so for the phenomenon of voluntary cooperation, which engages a range of actors. Claims by actors on their own roles are therefore treated with scepticism and require verification. This is done, for example, by actively seeking interviewees that may offer alternative views. Finally, the pertinent time frame when considering cause and effect in environmental governance can be quite long, and it is important to keep an appropriate start and end

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<sup>66</sup> See Vanhala, 'Process Tracing in the Study of Environmental Politics' for a salient review of process tracing in environmental governance.

date for the investigation. This consideration has been incorporated into the research design by maintaining a 15-year horizon for the system-wide analysis and not hesitating to increase this if evidence calls for it.

### 2.2.2 *Dynamic Social Network Analysis*

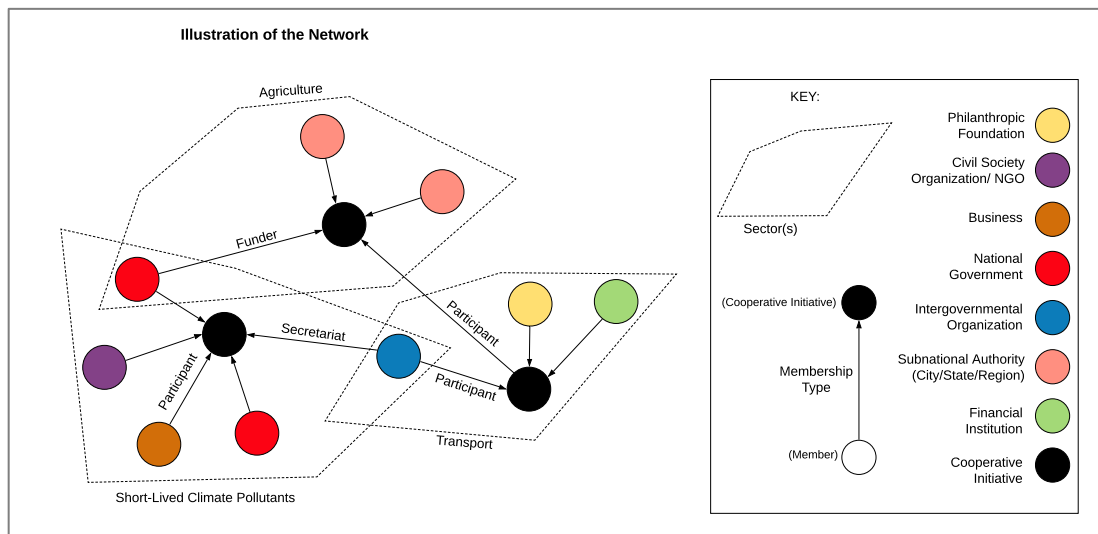
Social network analysis based on formal Graph Theory has been used in the Natural Sciences as well as the Social Sciences over the past two decades to obtain insights into the form of such a network as well as the varying “importance” of actors within it.<sup>67</sup> Dynamic social network analysis allows the researcher to consider changes in the network over time, including changes to the importance of specific actors as new relationships form or existing ones end. This makes it a particularly useful tool for the present study, as the actors engaged in the cooperative initiatives form a network consisting of initiatives and their members, with some members being part of multiple initiatives, thereby imposing structural relationships in the network that can be probed to assess relative importance of actors in the network. In other words, the initiatives and their members can be considered nodes (or vertices) which are connected to each other by virtue of the type of membership that connects each member to an initiative. For example, an actor can be an ordinary participant in an initiative, a funder, or act as the secretariat of the initiative. Additional information (“attributes”) such as the entity type of the member and the sectors(s) in which the initiative operates add to the descriptive power of the network configuration. As

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<sup>67</sup> See Borgatti et al., ‘Network Analysis in the Social Sciences’ for an overview.



figure 2.2 illustrates, conceived in this way, the network of initiatives has connections (“edges”) only between members and the initiatives, with data on attributes included.



**Figure 2.2 Network conceptualization.** The network of cooperative initiatives is conceptualized as initiatives connected to their respective members, and contains data on attributes such as entity type of initiatives and members, and the sector(s) of the initiative. Note that a given entity can be a member of multiple initiatives, and initiatives can be members of other initiatives.

This study constructs a dynamic network dataset of cooperative initiatives on climate change and uses it in three ways, primarily to respond to the second gap this study aims to fill, namely the influence of participating IGOs on the growth of voluntary cooperation in their sector. First, using the various attributes illustrated in Figure 2.2, it describes and visualizes the growth of the network, to understand how different types of actors have engaged in the network in different capacities over time. Second, it uses the network analysis tool of ‘community detection’, which reveals groups of nodes that are more densely connected to each other than they are to the rest of the network. This allows insights into the network organization and relationships among entities that may not be discernible from membership information alone. For example, in the network of initiatives on forests, if five distinct communities are detected, four of which show initiatives with a variety of different

entity types, but one of which consists of initiatives dominated by businesses, and if most of the businesses in the forests network are found in this community, then we could infer that businesses have grouped together in this network, and that businesses have engaged in cooperation in an isolated manner to the rest of the entity types.

While a variety of community detection algorithms are available, this study uses the standard algorithm available in Gephi, a specialized software for network analysis, which is in line with consensus on the appropriate for a network of this size.<sup>68</sup> Third, it seeks to gain insights into the ‘importance’ of different actors in the network over time, using three measures of node centrality that are commonly used in network analysis, and which are of relevance to ascertaining the driving roles of actors in the network: degree centrality, betweenness centrality, and eigenvector centrality.

*Degree centrality* is simply the number of nodes to which a particular node is directly connected. In practical terms, for the network of cooperative initiatives, measuring the degree of a cooperative initiative in the network therefore is a measure of the membership size of the initiative. Conversely, measuring the degree of an actor in the network that is not a cooperative initiative is a measurement of the number of initiatives in which that actor is a member. Degree centrality therefore allows us to assess which initiatives attract more members, and which actors are engaging prolifically in the network by becoming members of many initiatives, or which actors are picky. Combined with knowledge about the attributes of the actors, such as

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<sup>68</sup> Bastian, Heymann, and Jacomy, ‘Gephi: An Open Source Software for Exploring and Manipulating Networks’; For the algorithm used in Gephi, see Blondel et al., ‘Fast Unfolding of Communities in Large Networks’; For a review of available algorithms and their appropriateness for different network types, see Yang, Algesheimer, and Tessone, ‘A Comparative Analysis of Community Detection Algorithms on Artificial Networks’.

whether they are a government or intergovernmental organization, and what role(s) they play in each initiative (e.g. funder, secretariat), degree centrality of actors can provide clues and insights about influence wielded through prolific engagement via specific roles. For instance, a specific government that has taken up funding roles in many initiatives may, have been influential and played a driving role in the development of the network.

Formally, for a network  $G = (V, E)$  in which  $V$  and  $E$  denote the sets of vertices (or nodes),  $v$ , and edges,  $e$ , respectively, the degree centrality  $C_D(v)$  of a vertex or node  $v$  is given as the number of edges,  $|E(v)|$  at  $v$ , which is also equivalent to the number of neighbours of  $v$ :

$$C_D(v) = |E(v)|$$

*Betweenness centrality* is defined in terms of flows of information in the network. In practical terms, for the network of cooperative initiatives on climate change, the betweenness centrality of an actors that is not an initiative reflects the extent to which the actor could be thought of as playing an information-sharing, connecting (bridge-building), or convening role upon which other actors in the network depend. If an intergovernmental organization has high betweenness centrality, it may be connecting disparate parts of the network consisting of actors that would otherwise not be engaging with each other much, since a large number of entities depend on this organization to help form their shortest connecting paths. This potentially implies the deployment of a convening power. In short, actors with high betweenness centrality play a glue-like function in the network while those with low betweenness centrality are on the periphery.

The formal definition of betweenness centrality is given thus. For a given network, for every possible pair of nodes  $s$  and  $t$ , there exist a number of “paths” of different lengths which connect them, via other nodes. Of these, there exists a shortest path,  $\sigma_{st}$ , between each pair. The betweenness centrality of a node,  $C_B(v)$ , is a score that is higher if the node lies on a greater number of such shortest paths in the network. Formally:

$$C_B(v) = \sum_{s \neq v \neq t \in V} \frac{\sigma_{st}(v)}{\sigma_{st}}$$

*Eigenvector centrality* can be considered a nuanced version of degree centrality. Whereas degree centrality counts the number of neighbours of a node, eigenvector centrality takes into consideration both, the number of neighbours, and the importance of each of those neighbours, creating a ranking score of relative importance among the nodes in a network. In practical terms, in the network of cooperative initiatives on climate change, if a member of an initiative has high eigenvector centrality, then it is a sought-after entity, with many connections to entities who themselves are sought-after as partners in the network. A group of actors with high eigenvector centrality is then indicative of prestige within the network—the equivalent of the popular clique in a high school or an old boys’ club. Combined with information on entity types, this can reveal, for example, if particular types of actors have strong preferences to partner with the same or other particular types. If an entity has low eigenvector centrality, this can be interpreted as the entity is not prioritized by important entities in the network. In other words, it is “unattractive”.

Eigenvector centrality is defined by first creating a score of relative ranking among vertices. For the set of vertices  $V$ , an adjacency matrix  $A$  is defined such that

$A = (a_{v,t})$  and  $a_{v,t} = 1$  if the vertices  $v$  and  $t$  are connected, and  $a_{v,t} = 0$  if they are not connected. Then, the relative centrality of vertex  $v$  in relation to vertex  $t$  is:

$$x_v = \frac{1}{\lambda} \sum_{t \in G} a_{v,t} x_t$$

in which  $\lambda$  is a constant. This equation is rearranged as the eigenvector equation and solved, with the resulting greatest eigenvalue  $\lambda$  being the eigenvector centrality score.

While each of the centrality measures yields insights by themselves, considered together, even more inferences may be possible, particularly when a high score in one centrality measure is accompanied by a low score in another. Table 2.1 provides an overview of the indicative insights associated with various high-low combinations of node centralities.<sup>69</sup>

**Table 2.1 Interpretations of Node Centrality Measures**

	<b>High Degree Centrality ("prolific")</b>	<b>High Betweenness Centrality ("connective")</b>	<b>High Eigenvector Centrality ("sought-after")</b>
<b>Low Degree Centrality ("picky")</b>	N/A	Actor has few connections, but these play a very important role in connecting disparate parts of the network	A picky actor—has few connections, but these are with only well-connected/prestigious actors
<b>Low Betweenness Centrality ("peripheral")</b>	Actor is prolific but does not play valuable bridge-building or convening role	N/A	Actor is picky but also redundant for information flow or bridge-building with peripheral parts of the network
<b>Low Eigenvector Centrality ("unattractive")</b>	Actor is prolific but either does not place high value on the prestige of partners or is not prioritized by prestigious actors	Actor plays a critical connecting/convening role between peripheral parts of the network or between peripheral and central parts	N/A

<sup>69</sup> Adapted from Du, 'Social Network Analysis: Centrality Measures'.

The above centrality measures, combined with information on the roles that actors play in initiatives, can provide powerful clues regarding the driving roles that actors may have played in the network over time, particularly if there is a temporal pattern to these measures. For instance, if a certain group of actors has been highly central in all measures of centrality, by providing funding, and has remained so over time, this would be compelling evidence for a driving role for the group. Such evidence would be used in combination with insights from the qualitative process tracing.

The use of network analysis in this study reflects a methodological contribution to the study of intergovernmental organizations as well as environmental politics. Within the field of international relations, networked governance and the notion of transnational actors engaging as networks of actors connected in various ways has gained momentum in recent years as a way of understanding how influence is wielded.<sup>70</sup> While the tools of network analysis provide ways to measure and trace centres of power and influence within a network of actors, this method has not been applied significantly in international relations, although its application is now increasing and is being recognized as potentially valuable in international relations.<sup>71</sup> In environmental governance, civil society actors and the interactions between them have been analyzed formally as networks to reveal an ideational contagion effect that

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<sup>70</sup> Slaughter, *A New World Order*; Keck and Sikkink, 'Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics'.

<sup>71</sup> See Hafner-Burton, Kahler, and Montgomery, 'Network Analysis for International Relations' for a discussion of the applications of network analysis in international relations; See Weiss, Carayannis, and Jolly, 'The "Third" United Nations' for a discussion on the potential use of social network analysis for tracing influence at the United Nations.

is spread through the network, using data on their social media interactions.<sup>72</sup> Public actors and institutions active in environmental governance have been mapped using network analysis.<sup>73</sup> The application of network analysis to the study of cooperative initiatives has been limited, however. An approach based on referential linkage has been explored in the context of voluntary carbon certification schemes and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol.<sup>74</sup> Another approach based on membership of initiatives and the potential to identify influential actors has been explored and suggested.<sup>75</sup> The present study builds on this membership approach pioneered by Widerberg and improves it in three ways. First, this study draws on a much wider pool of initiatives and applies a more rigorous definition of partnerships, to more accurately reflect the universe of voluntary cooperation on climate change. Second, while the Widerberg study imposes a bipartite or two-mode structure to the network, whereby initiatives cannot be members of other initiatives, this study does not make such an imposition. This allows the observation of the network as it exists, and enables inferences to be drawn on the nature of interactions among initiatives, which would not be possible if a bipartite structure were imposed on the network. Third, this study creates a *dynamic* network dataset, with information on when initiatives are launched and when entities stop being members of initiatives (if such information is available). This allows us to trace the evolution of the network over time and observe trends.

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<sup>72</sup> Hadden, *Networks in Contention*.

<sup>73</sup> Widerberg, 'Making the Connections', chap. 3.

<sup>74</sup> Green, 'Order out of Chaos'.

<sup>75</sup> Widerberg, 'Making the Connections'.

Finally, practitioners have recognized the need to better understand the ecosystem of cooperative initiatives and for new cooperation to build on existing cooperation in productive ways: “Any instigator of a new initiative should assess the landscape before beginning something new. In issue areas with a high number of existing initiatives, a consolidation of efforts could be considered.”<sup>76</sup> This study therefore builds upon the conceptual and methodological innovations in scholarship on global governance and environmental governance in recent years, and fills a noted methodological gap, in addition to creating a means for practitioners to better understand the ecosystem of the network of initiatives.

## **2.3 Data Used**

This study draws on a variety of evidence, in keeping with its mixed methods design. These include interviews with individuals who have engaged in the formation and sustainment of these initiatives from a variety of contexts; archival information available on website and digital archives as well as traditional archives of governments and IGOs; and a network dataset containing information on all identifiable cooperative initiatives on climate change and their attributes. Descriptions of each of these sources follow.

### ***2.3.1 Interviews***

Seventy-one semi-structured interviews have been conducted to gather qualitative data for this dissertation. Approximately ten individuals were initially identified on the basis of their specific involvement in initiatives, through

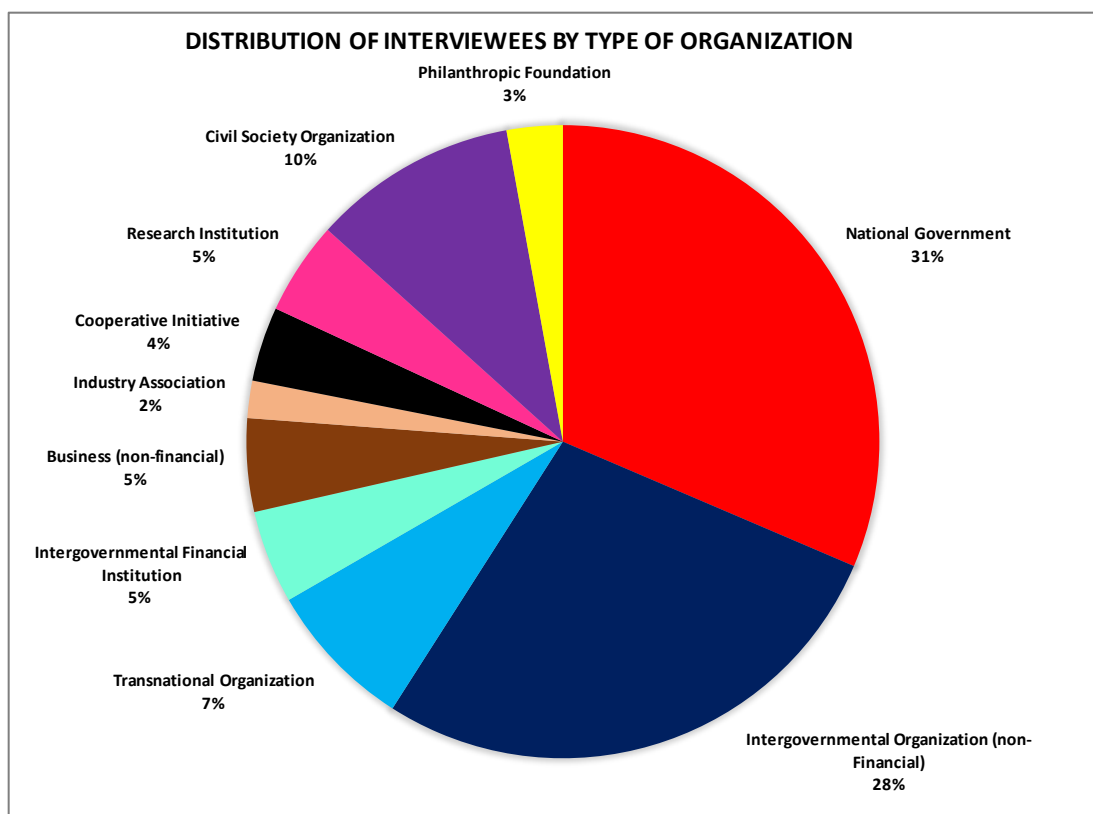
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<sup>76</sup> UNEP, ‘The Emissions Gap Report 2013’, 32.



examination of websites, press releases and media accounts. Additional individuals were identified based on the recommendations of those individuals already interviewed, and through this “snowballing” technique, interviews were conducted until saturation was reached (that is, new interviewees provided no significant additional insights). Each interviewee was targeted to maximize the amount of additional information that could be gleaned from them. Thus, for example, individuals that played decision-making or strategic roles within ICIs were prioritized above those engaged at the staff level only. Individuals that had engaged in relevant processes from a variety of organizational settings over the years were likewise prioritized. While maximization of information was a principle adopted, a degree of flexibility was necessary to adapt to the availability of interviewees. In keeping with requirements of the Institutional Review Board, interviewees gave informed consent to the interviews and their identities have been protected unless otherwise instructed by the interviewee. Thirty interviews were audio-recorded following permission from the interviewees; the rest were recorded as written notes only.

Figure 2.3 provides an overview of the entity types covered by the interviewees and table 2.2 summarizes the functional level of the interviewees in their respective organizations (it must be noted since some interviewees had extensive experience in multiple organizations, they are reflected in the tallies of multiple organization, resulting in a total count higher than the distinct number of individuals interviewed. Only those interviewees who provided insights during the interviews from multiple roles they had held are reflected in this way).



**Figure 2.3 Distribution of interviewees by type of organization.** Interviewees came from a variety of entity types, with high representation from national governments and intergovernmental organizations.

**Table 2.2 Distribution of interviewees by organization and level of seniority.**

Functional Level	Entity Type									
	National Government	Intergovernmental Organization (non-financial)	Transnational Organization	Intergovernmental Financial Organization	Business (non-financial)	Industry Association	Cooperative Initiative	Research Institution	Civil Society Organization	Philanthropic Foundation
Decision-Maker	3	9	2	1	0	0	4	2	5	2
Senior Advisor/Managerial	19	11	2	2	5	2	1	3	6	1
Senior Staff	10	8	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

### 2.3.2 Archives and Documents

In addition to interviews, qualitative data sources used in this study include institutional archives (electronic, print and video footage); institutional reports; agendas, preparatory documents and records of meetings not recorded in official archives; and related media reports.

Institutional archives include those of the United States government (electronic archives of the Obama administration and George W. Bush administration), United Kingdom government, government of Norway, government of France, the United Nations and the UNFCCC. Institutional reports include those of companies, business organizations, NGOs, and those of cooperative initiatives. Several interviewees shared documents with the author that were otherwise not available in archives or in the public domain. These mainly included agendas and records of meetings, presentations, concept notes and correspondence. This study also relied heavily on the Earth Negotiations Bulletin, an independent newsletter that has covered major meetings in environmental governance since the early 1990s.

### 2.3.3 Network Dataset

For the dynamic social network analysis, this study uses a network dataset consisting of 6914 entities, including 252 cooperative initiatives and 6662 various entities of other types that are members of the cooperative initiatives. The network dataset has been prepared in the format of an edge list and a node list, in keeping with the requirements for network analysis. The edge list contains the member-cooperative initiative pairings for each member of each cooperative initiative and the relevant attributes of each pairing, including the sector(s) to which the initiative belongs; the

role(s) played by the member in the initiative; the start year of the pairing; and the end year of the pairing (if applicable). The roles identified include secretariat, funder and participant and there are eleven sectoral categories. The node list contains the identities of all members and cooperative initiatives (i.e. all entities) found in the edge list and their relevant attributes, including the name of the entity and the entity type. The entity type of each node has been allocated from a list of fourteen mutually exclusive categories developed by the author including, among others, cooperative initiative, national government, intergovernmental organization (non-financial), subnational authority, corporate (non-financial), private finance, civil society organization, and philanthropic foundation. Annex 1 provides a list of all sectors and entity types and their definitions. In addition to the full network, three subnetworks were generated for the case studies, which contain only those initiatives and their members that belong to the Transport, Forests and Short-Lived Climate Pollutants sectors respectively (notably, there is some overlap among these thematic sub-networks, as a single initiative can be active in multiple sectors).

The network dataset was developed using the Climate Initiatives Platform (CIP) dataset as a base.<sup>77</sup> Originally developed by Ecofys, the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) and the World Resources Institute (WRI), the CIP is now housed under UNEP. The CIP contains information on an initiative's start and end dates (if applicable), the thematic areas in which the ICI operates; the members of the initiative (whether as lead, secretariat, funder or participant); the functions of the initiative; its geographic scope; the geographic

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<sup>77</sup> UNEP, 'Climate Initiatives Platform' Accessed on 6 June 2019.

location of the members of the initiative; the type of entity that an ICI's participants is (for example, a company or a civil society organization). However, in its current state, the CIP is not conducive to network analysis, primarily for three reasons. First, members of initiatives are represented inconsistently, with the result that there are numerous instances of a single member appearing as multiple distinct members. Second, the definitions of entity types are vague, inconsistently applied, and not mutually exclusive, which undermines attempts to track how different entity types may have different levels of influence in the network. Third, the dataset is incomplete, with many initiatives having no information on partners, and many known ICIs missing.

The network dataset presented in this dissertation reflects an improvement over the CIP dataset in the following ways: (i) 13 additional ICIs have been added while 15 were removed as they were far from meeting the criteria for partnerships used in this study; (ii) All entity names have been harmonized such that each entity has only one designation in the dataset (this has reduced the number of nodes from over 14,000 to 6914, ensuring that each node is a distinct entity and thereby allowing the valid calculation of centrality measures); (iii) a mutually exclusive categorization of entity types, with precise definitions for all categories has been applied; and (iv) for over 100 cooperative initiatives in the CIP dataset, missing data has been filled in on their members and the relevant attributes (although it has not been possible to obtain membership information for all initiatives due to unavailability of data in the public domain, this is nevertheless a significant improvement).

The centrality scores were all calculated using R and its relevant packages (Igraph and Network).<sup>78</sup> Cleaning of the CIP dataset and its transformation into a network dataset was conducted using Stata and Excel.

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<sup>78</sup> R Core Team, *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*; Csardi and Nepusz, 'The Igraph Software Package for Complex Network Research'; Butts, 'Network: A Package for Managing Relational Data in R.'; Butts, 'Network: Classes for Relational Data'.

### 3 The Effects of System-Wide Efforts by Intergovernmental Organizations on the Number of Cooperative Initiatives on Climate Change

Intergovernmental organizations have been known to engage in voluntary cooperation on climate change in two broad ways, internal and external: first, internally, by participating in specific initiatives themselves and helping overcome barriers to cooperation; and second, externally, by promoting the growth of such cooperation write large (that is, across sectors, or system-wide) without necessarily participating in such initiatives themselves. The external, system-wide engagement of IGOs is the focus on this chapter. In particular, this chapter focuses on the growth in the number of cooperative initiatives on climate change over time; the system-wide efforts of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) to promote this growth; and the causal influence of the latter on the former.

The key findings of the chapter are twofold. First, system-wide IGO efforts have successfully accelerated the growth of the number of cooperative initiatives observed, but they have only done so when their efforts displayed six organizing attributes, which together created highly conducive conditions for actors to make cooperative commitments. The six attributes are: *strategic timing*, *high visibility*, *sectoral orientation*, *emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments*, *subsidiarity*, and *leadership with central decision-making*. Thus, while there have been many

efforts by IGOs to promote such cooperation, many did not succeed due to the absence of one or more of these attributes in the organization of these efforts. Second, high convening power and autonomy are both necessary to ensure that the six organizational attributes are present. Among IGOs, the UN Secretary-General alone currently possesses both, which uniquely situates this office to accelerate voluntary cooperation. This autonomy of the Secretary-General is the result of a highly path-dependent trajectory of the Secretary-General's engagement on climate change and partnerships over several decades, and as such is an extension of the range of these "good offices" from peace and security to climate change and their breadth from the UN's member states to the full range of actors in the global economy.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows. The first section sets the stage, by: (a) identifying three distinct phases in the growth of the network over time, with a formational 'phase one' occurring before 2000, a 'phase two' of steady growth in the 2000s, and 'phase three' of accelerated growth in the 2011-2015 period; (b) identifying the major efforts undertaken by IGOs to promote the growth of voluntary cooperation during phases two and three, categorizing them into seven 'streams' of activity over the two phases; and (c) identifying the most influential actors engaged in the initiatives themselves, to guide the prioritization of the process tracing analysis. Then, with these parameters set, the next two sections consider the streams of IGO system-wide activity in phases two and three respectively, and trace their effects on the growth of the network during those years, in particular focusing on the actions and decision-making of the most influential actors in the network which were identified in the previous section. The analysis finds that in phase two, none of the



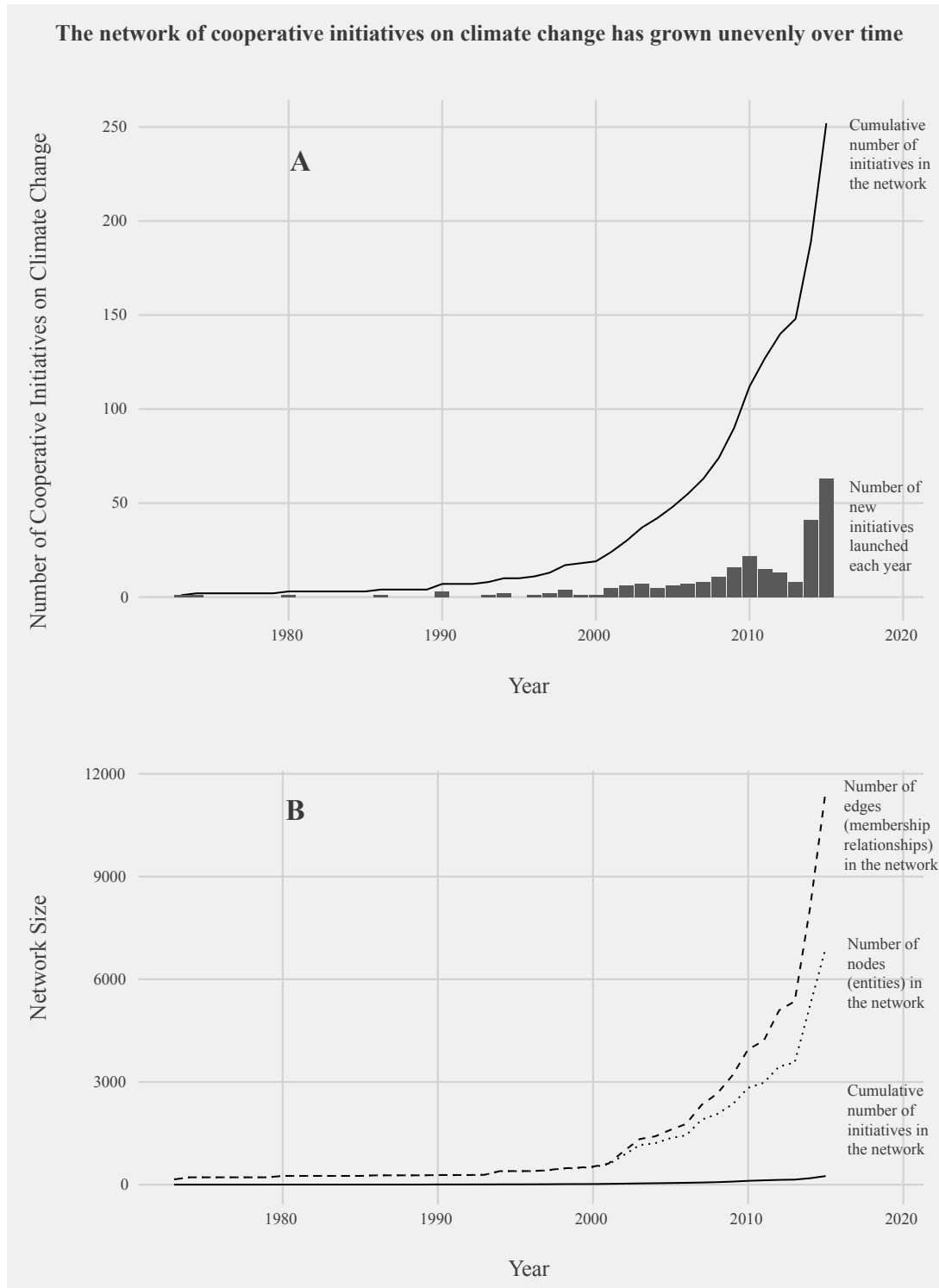
IGO activities spurred the actors to engage in voluntary cooperation any more than they would have. Instead, these actors were acting of their own volition and motivations. By contrast, the analysis finds that in phase three, the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA both succeeded in accelerating the efforts of the actors most influential in the network, in effect catalyzing a surge in cooperation. The final section synthesizes these findings, discusses their implications, and concludes.

### **3.1 Setting the Parameters for the Investigation**

To understand whether and how IGOs played any causal driving roles in the growth of this network, the interaction between the central actors in the network and each of the system-wide efforts must be described, understood and compared, which is the focus of the following two sections. This section sets the parameters to enable that analysis, in effect providing a map to guide and focus the exploratory study of the following two sections. In particular, it provides an overview of the contours of the network growth; an identification of the main system-wide efforts made by IGOs from 2000 to 2015 to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change; and an understanding of the likely “important” or “driving” actors *within* the network of cooperation (that is, entities participating in initiatives). This final identification of central actors serves to make this chapter’s investigation manageable, as it is beyond the scope of this study to trace the motivations and actions of every entity engaged in the network over time.

### *3.1.1 The Phased Evolution of the Network*

The network of cooperative initiatives on climate change has grown from zero to 252 known and documented initiatives from 1972 to 2015. The number of initiatives has grown unevenly over time, with the pattern of growth suggesting three distinct phases (Figure 3.1A). While the earliest initiative on record dates back to 1973, the formation of new initiatives was minimal and sporadic up to the mid 1990s, when ten initiatives were in existence. Since the late 1990s, each year has seen the launch of at least one new initiative. The period 2000 to 2010 shows steady growth, when about a hundred new initiatives were formed, with an average of 6.3 initiatives launched each year. The greatest growth in the number of initiatives has occurred since 2010, with 139 initiatives formed. The years 2010, 2014, and 2015 stand out as having the highest number of new initiatives form (20, 41, and 62 respectively).

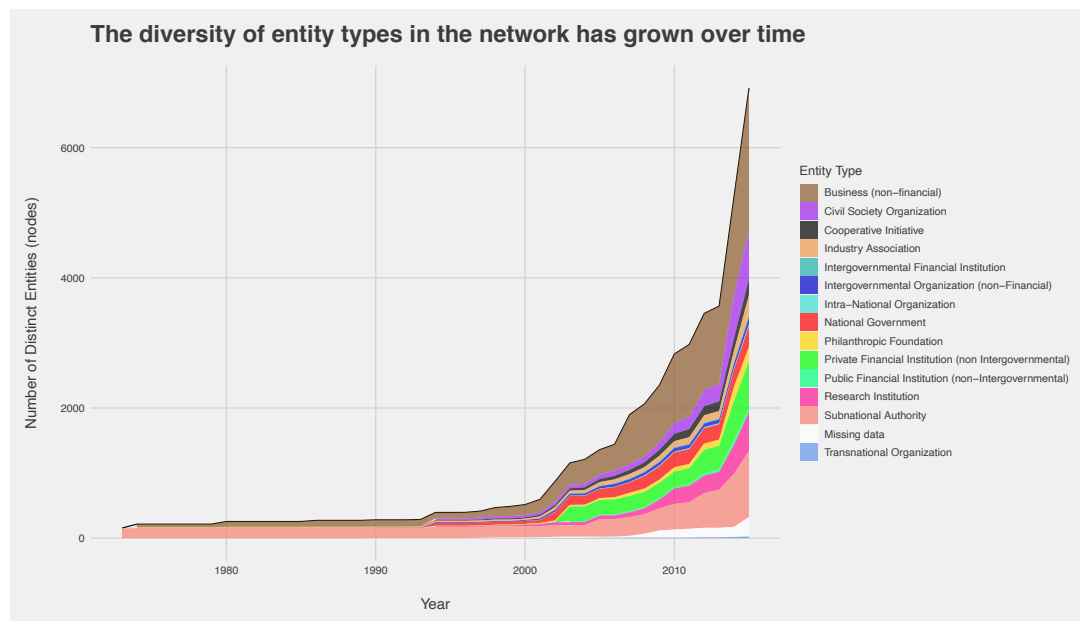


**Figure 3.1 The quantitative growth of the cooperative initiatives on climate change.** 3.1A: The network has grown unevenly over time, with the number of initiatives increasing most in 2015, 2014 and 2010. 3.1B: The total number of nodes in the network is significantly higher than the number of initiatives, but their growth pattern has largely echoed that of the initiatives. Edges connecting nodes have outpaced the number of nodes since the early 2000s, and their growth pattern has also echoed that of the initiatives. *Source: This study's dataset.*

In addition, as figure 3.1B illustrates, the wider network, which includes members of initiatives in addition to the initiatives themselves, has grown in parallel to the number of initiatives. This is most noticeable in the sharp increases in the number of nodes in 2010, 2014 and 2015, which is similar to the increases in the number of initiatives in those years. The total number of entities in the network (that is, the number of initiatives plus the number of distinct members of all initiatives) had grown to 6,914 by the end of 2015—about twenty-seven times the number of initiatives. The launch of new initiatives is therefore strongly associated with the introduction of new entities to the network. It is also associated with greater connectivity among existing entities in the network, as evidenced by the increase in the number of edges over time and the increasing difference between the number of edges and nodes over time. Notably, the number of edges started to outpace the number of nodes in the late 1990s, with the ratio of edges to nodes steadily increasing from 1 in 1992 to 1.6 in 2015, when there were 11,518 edges. In other words, in 2015, on average, each entity was a member of 1.6 initiatives in the network.

The types of entities engaged in the network as members of initiatives has varied over time (figure 3.2). Up to the mid-nineties, the network consisted largely of businesses, business organizations and subnational governments as members of initiatives, with a very few national governments and intergovernmental organizations. National governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations began to make up an increasingly large percentage of the membership of initiatives from the mid-nineties onwards, while the diversity of entity

types increased significantly during the 2000s, with reduced (but still significant) dominance of businesses and subnational governments.



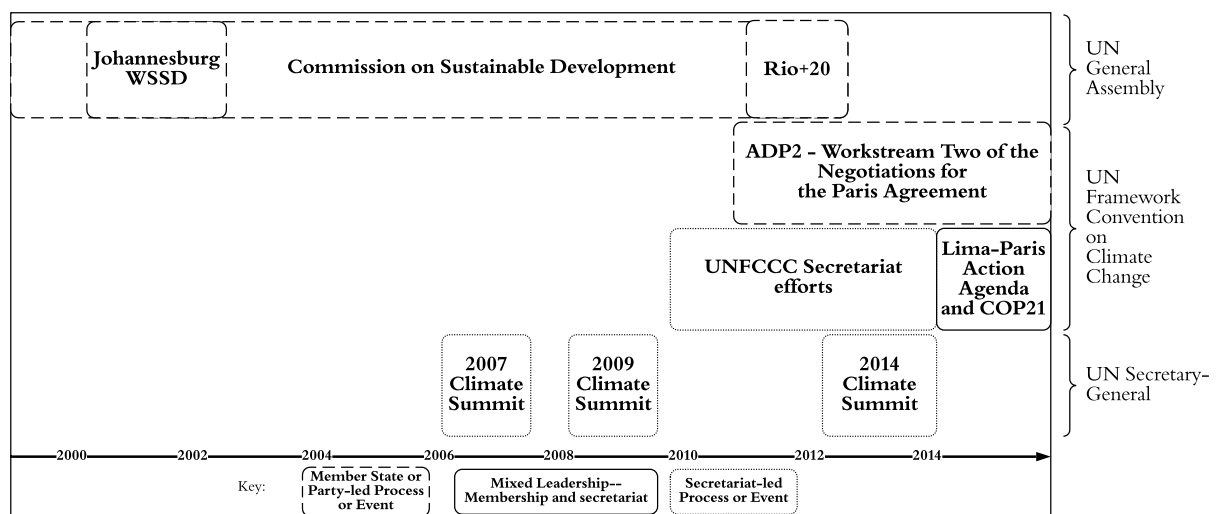
**Figure 3.2 Evolution of entity types comprising the network of cooperative initiatives.** The network began with participation dominated by subnational actors and businesses. The diversity of actors began to grow in the 1990s, increasing significantly during the 2000s. *Source: This study's dataset.*

### 3.1.2 Major System-Wide Efforts by Intergovernmental Organizations.

Intergovernmental organizations have also made significant efforts to advance cooperative initiatives without directly taking part in the initiatives themselves—efforts that are not captured within the network data. The efforts have tended to be dominated in their decision-making and organization either by the member states of IGOs or by the secretariats. Occasionally, they were a mixture of the two.

In the first phase, up to the year 2000, IGO efforts at the system-wide level to cultivate voluntary cooperation were limited and informal. Although the Stockholm conference in 1972 and the Rio conference in 1992 both prioritized the participation of “stakeholders” and the latter ushered in the era of “Major Groups” in the United Nations, they did not formally aim to promote voluntary cooperation independently of

the intergovernmental process. There was still sufficient enthusiasm for and faith in the intergovernmental process to deliver on its purpose and promise. However, in his capacities as Secretary-General of the Stockholm and Rio conferences, as well as in his role as the first Executive Director of UNEP, Maurice Strong collaborated closely with local authorities, civil society organizations and businesses and industry to develop organized constituencies to help advance his mandates such as the formulation of Agenda 21 at the Rio conference.<sup>79</sup> In this, his office acted as “the catalyst of work done mainly by others.”<sup>80</sup>



**Figure 3.3 System-wide efforts by intergovernmental organizations to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change, 2000-2015.** In the 2000s, these included member state-led efforts on sustainable development, and climate summits by the UN Secretary-General. In the 2011-2015 period, additional activity streams included efforts by Parties to the climate convention; the secretariat to the climate convention; and a mixed stream of activity with governments and secretariats together forming the Lima-Paris Action Agenda and culminating at COP21. *Source: Author's own chart.*

The next two phases, which are the focus of this study, saw more overt, purposive efforts by intergovernmental organizations to promote voluntary cooperation. As figure 3.5 illustrates, in the second phase, the 2000s, the purposive system-wide activity by intergovernmental organizations to increase the number of

<sup>79</sup> Dodds, *Stakeholder Democracy*.

<sup>80</sup> Strong, ‘One Year After Stockholm’, 705.

cooperative initiatives fell into two clear categories: UN member state-led efforts and those of the UN secretaries-general. The former consisted of the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) mandated by the UN General Assembly, in which “Type II Partnerships” were promoted as an official outcome, and, relatedly, the Commission on Sustainable Development, which oversaw the preparation for the summit and its follow-up. The latter stream of activity consisted of two summits on climate change convened and hosted by the UN secretary general, the 2007 high level event on climate change and the 2009 climate summit. Although not visualized in figure 3.5, these two summits built upon a series of autonomy-enhancing efforts of the Secretary-General in previous years, including the UN Global Compact, the UN Fund for International Partnerships, and the Millennium Summit as well as its follow-up in 2005.

In the third phase, the 2011 to 2015 period, the streams of IGO activity to promote voluntary cooperation can once again be categorized as member state-led or secretariat-led, but in addition, some activities have a clearly mixed leadership. In the member state-led category lie the Rio+20 conference held in 2012, and the negotiations for the Paris Agreement, specifically those under Ad-Hoc Durban Platform (ADP) Working Group Two (“ADP2”). Thus, the member state-led activities expanded during this period to span two intergovernmental settings—the negotiations under the climate convention and the negotiations under the UN General Assembly. In the secretariat-led category lie the 2014 climate summit hosted by the UN Secretary-General and the efforts of the UNFCCC Secretariat to promote voluntary cooperation. In the “mixed leadership” category is the Lima-Paris Action

Agenda (LPAA), led by the Government of France together with the Government of Peru, the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General (EOSG) and the UNFCCC Secretariat. This process was bookended by COP20 in November 2014, which was presided over by Peru, and COP21, which was presided over by France.

In light of these efforts in phases two and three, the data on the “moments” of launch or formation of initiatives during these years are instructive. Overall, in the 2000-2015 period, of all the known initiatives, the launches of [60] were at IGO events designed to spur voluntary cooperation. There is, however, significant temporal variation in this. In the 2000s (that is, during the second phase), few initiatives were launched at, or in association with, the IGO-led system wide efforts identified (that is, the Johannesburg summit and the CSD follow-up process; and the 2007 and 2009 summits of the Secretary-General Ban). Indeed, none were launched at the Secretary-General’s summits, and only four were launched at the Johannesburg summit or in association with the CSD. While more initiatives are officially registered as Type II partnerships (i.e. associated with the WSSD and CSD process), their launch moments are separate from these processes, often occurring at events hosted by national governments, industry association events, or at special events designed specifically for the launch, and in many cases occurring after the WSSD. There were no data readily available for [22] initiatives launched during this period, but it may be assumed with reasonable confidence that they were not launched under the aegis of the two IGO threads of activity in this decade, since no reference to them was found in the relevant IGO archives. In the 2011-2015 period, of the 139 initiatives launched, 103 were in 2014 and 2015. Of these, 56 were officially featured



at the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA sessions of COP21, with a further [30] being launched at side events hosted in the margins of these events.

While no causal inference is possible based on these patterns alone, any explanation of the effects of system-wide IGO efforts on the existence of initiatives must address these patterns. These patterns are therefore used as a basis for investigation later in this chapter.

### 3.1.3 *“Important” Actors Within the Network*

Network centrality measures yield insights into which entities may have potentially driven the growth of the network through their participation. In particular, the centrality measures of degree and betweenness are two pertinent ways to probe “driving” influence: Degree centrality measures how prolific an entity is in a network, with out-degree measuring how many edges start at an entity, and in-degree measuring how many edges end at an entity. The more initiatives in which an entity counts itself a member, the higher its out-degree centrality. Betweenness centrality measures the extent to which an entity plays a connecting role vis-à-vis other entities in the network. The higher the betweenness centrality score, the more likely an entity plays an information-sharing, convening or bridging role in the network.<sup>81</sup>

These scores indicate that in the years up to the mid to late 1990s, there were no dominantly central actors within the network, due to all initiatives being disconnected from each other. If an actor was present in the network, it was engaged in one initiative only. However, as figure 3.4 illustrates, from 2000 onwards, a clear

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<sup>81</sup> See chapter 2 for a more in-depth review of the centrality measures used in this study.

cadre of leaders emerged in terms of those engaged in the highest number of initiatives in the network (that is, those with highest out-degree centrality scores), with particular governments dominant, and some intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations also a part of this prolific group. In addition, a core group of actors, predominantly intergovernmental organizations, national governments, civil society organizations and businesses also emerged as the connectors of the network, with high betweenness centrality, suggesting potential convening or bridge-building roles played by these actors. After 2010, the influence of a very small group of intergovernmental organizations, governments and civil society organizations increased significantly. Further, the group of actors most central to the network has grown over time, but has also not shown much attrition. Those actors that were central in the early 2000s generally maintained high centrality over the years, as other actors joined the ranks of high centrality.

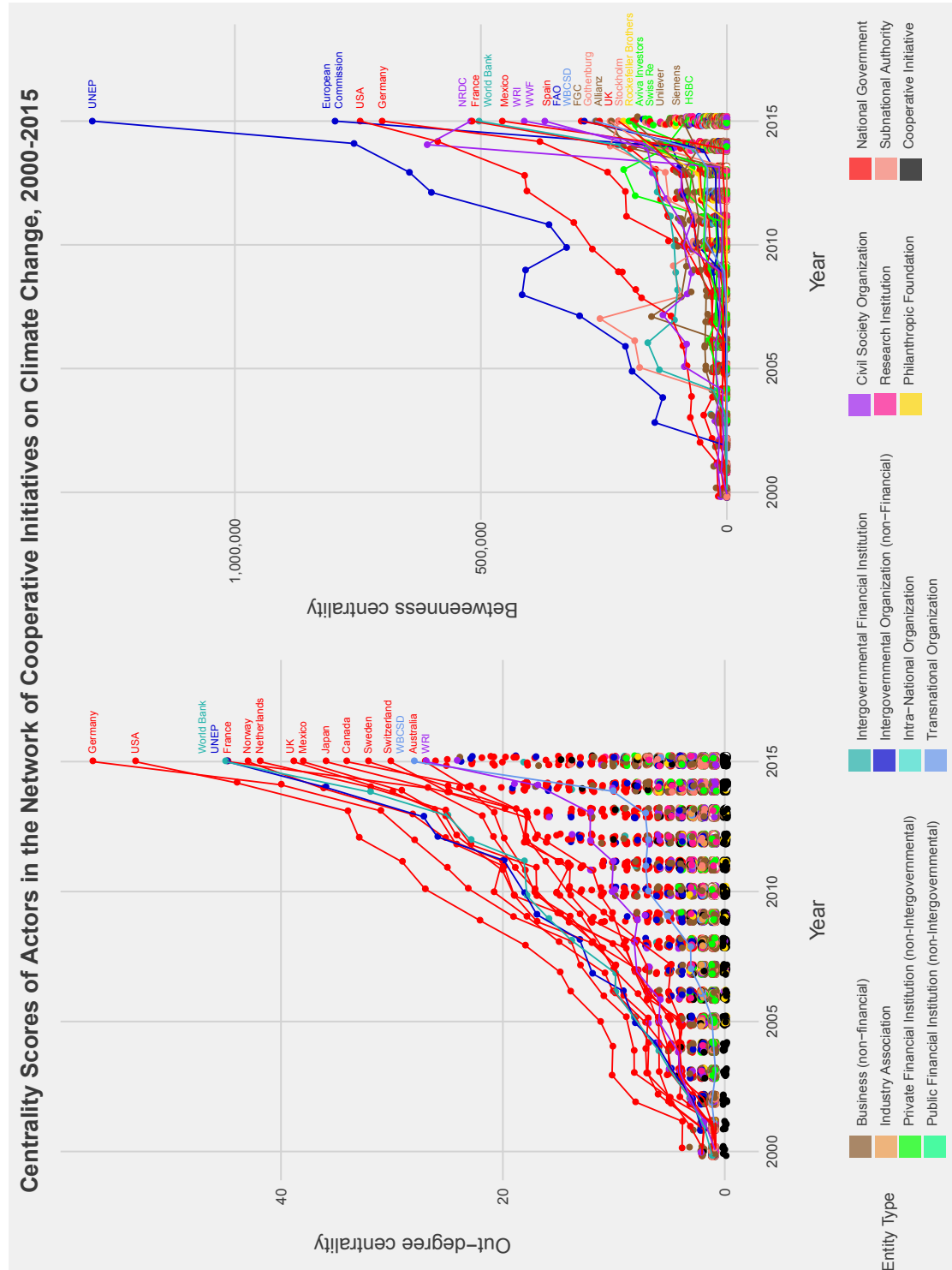
Among those with highest centrality measures, governments include the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia and Japan. Businesses include Siemens AG, Unilever, Coca Cola, Danfoss Group, and Nestle. Civil society organizations include the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and World Resources Institute (WRI). Intergovernmental organizations include UNEP and the World Bank, with UNEP leading on betweenness centrality among all actors.

The motivations of actors from this core group to make cooperative commitments, and an understanding of how they were influenced by, if at all, the efforts IGOs to promote such cooperation, is an important focus for the remainder of this chapter. Further, the fact that UNEP and the World Bank both show among the

highest centrality scores consistently over time points to a high likelihood that their engagement in initiatives results in them wielding influence at the network level over time. Existing scholarship has highlighted the leading roles that UNEP and the World Bank have both played in the partnerships in which they participate, drawing on their technical capacities and funding mandates respectively, and exercising uncommon autonomy is doing so.<sup>82</sup> These data suggest that by participating in their initiatives, these IGOs may have significantly shaped the wider network of cooperative action, in particular through connecting actors and communities. This will be further explored in the case studies, at the sectoral level, in keeping with the research design.

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<sup>82</sup> See Andonova, *Governance Entrepreneurs* for case studies on partnerships of UNEP and the World Bank.



**Figure 3.4. Centrality measures for members of cooperative initiatives on climate change.** These measures indicate that a core group of governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses and civil society organizations have been highly central in the network over time. NB: betweenness centrality measures of cooperative initiatives are omitted in this chart for clarity (due to their significantly greater value compared to other entities—an artefact of network construction). *Source: This study's dataset.*

### **3.2 Correlation but no Causation in the 2000s**

During the 2000s, the two main streams of system-wide IGOs efforts to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change were: the Johannesburg summit in 2002 and its associated follow-up under the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the summits of the UN Secretary-General. Did either of these streams of activity spur actors to make cooperative commitments on climate change that they otherwise would not have? If yes, what added value did these efforts provide to the actors to cause them to make cooperative commitments? If not, in what ways were these efforts suboptimal, and what were drivers of cooperation during this time? These questions focus this section, which first examines the motivations of actors that were central to initiative-formation, followed by a consideration of the two streams of IGO activity are considered in turn.

This section argues that the overall growth in the network during this time *cannot* be attributed to the purposive system-wide efforts by intergovernmental organizations to increase such cooperation writ large. Rather, actors engaged in the network were primarily motivated to cooperate for the reasons identified in the literature: overcoming intergovernmental gridlock; promoting national interests; a desire to reap reputational rewards and maintain competitiveness; and so on. Against this context, the system-wide efforts of IGOs failed to appreciably accelerate or further motivate these actors due to limitations in the way these IGO efforts were organized. These include, variously, inadequate convening power; diffuse decision-making; low visibility for stakeholders; insufficient engagement with the influential

actors in the network; adherence to constituency-based organizations rather than sectoral; and poor timing.

Importantly, however, this section argues that while the overall causal effect by intergovernmental organizations during this time was not commensurate with their efforts at the system-wide level, these efforts served to lay the institutional groundwork to accelerate growth seen after 2010, most notably by establishing a norm of ‘good offices’ on climate change by the UN Secretary-General and enhancing the autonomy of the Secretary-General vis-à-vis member states in this regard. This autonomy was an essential element for the success of IGO efforts in 2014 and 2015.

### *3.2.1 Dancing to their Own Music: Motivations of Central Actors in the Network*

As the network data indicated, governments of several developed countries, and some intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, companies and philanthropic foundations have been highly central to the growth of the network. Among these central actors, those showing consistently high centrality as funders and secretariats, and as prolific and connective entities in the network, are the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Norway, UNEP and the World Bank. In addition, civil society organizations such as the WWF, WRI and NRDC, transnational organizations such as the WBCSD, as well as companies such as Coca-Cola, Mars, Danone, Unilever and Ikea, also had consistently high centralities during these years, although not as high as the national governments.

Archives of, and interviews with, these actors central to the network of initiatives during the 2000s reveal that the increasing gridlock and widespread dissatisfaction in the progress of the intergovernmental process on climate change was a significant *indirect* driver for voluntary cooperation. The United States' exit from the Kyoto Protocol, the first treaty under the climate convention and which required developed countries to limit greenhouse gas emissions, meant that the intergovernmental process was seen by many as insufficient and evidently not able to deliver robust consensus and results on climate mitigation. Conversely, progress in the intergovernmental process, such as the Kyoto Protocol coming into force in 2005 and activating the Clean Development Mechanism, Joint Implementation and Emissions Trading also created a space for voluntary cooperation, for example in the context of standard-setting, around these market mechanisms. However, from the perspectives of these actors, the system-wide, purposive efforts made by IGOs during this decade to promote voluntary cooperation did not have any appreciable effect on the decisions of these actors to make cooperative commitments. The motivations of some of these lead actors in the network, including the United States Government, the United Kingdom government, and Unilever, as well as others that don't appear in the network but were critical for the network formation, including the World Economic Forum, illustrate as follows.

Voluntary cooperation was a strategic priority for the Bush Administration, apparently in stark contrast to its unconstructive intergovernmental stance and purported support to climate scepticism. While a strong commitment to climate mitigation was evidently not the driving motivator for the Bush Administration,

undertaking voluntary cooperation did provide a means to effective expression of the Administration's neoconservative turn away from multilateralism and the supranational imposition of authority on domestic jurisdiction that the Kyoto Protocol symbolized, and towards market-driven provision of public goods.<sup>83</sup> Importantly, it was seen as a pathway with lower transaction costs. As a senior State Department official from the Bush Administration put it, "In the UN, you have to pay people to play. You have to set up funds for countries to come and participate. But when you have a coalition of the willing, why bother playing the UN game?"<sup>84</sup> In addition, however, the pursuit of voluntary cooperation was an intentional strategy to try to mitigate the significant international criticism over its decision on the Kyoto Protocol: "We were seen as a pariah. Really, what we needed to do was to build credibility internationally by undertaking these initiatives."<sup>85</sup> These partnerships, which would "leverage resources to achieve tangible results" and also "promote further cooperation on climate change with our partners in the Western Hemisphere and beyond", had the significant advantage of being received positively by both sides of the domestic political aisle.

Thus, as early as July 2001, a full year before the intergovernmental push on Type II partnerships under the Johannesburg Summit, President Bush announced the launch of three international cooperative initiatives, and stated that his "Administration's climate change policy will...take advantage of the power of

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<sup>83</sup> Hale, 'Managing the Disaggregation of Development: How the Johannesburg "Type II" Partnerships Can Be Made Effective'.

<sup>84</sup> Interviewee 39 (senior official of the United States Government), in discussion with author, 28 May 2019.

<sup>85</sup> Interviewee 39



markets. It will encourage global participation and will pursue actions that will help ensure continued economic growth and prosperity for our citizens and for citizens throughout the world.”<sup>86</sup> While the Type II partnerships were being promoted under the Johannesburg Summit at the same time, and the State Department was vocal in its support to, and promotion of, the concept due to its alignment with domestic priorities, according to a senior State Department official at the time, “there was no cross pollination whatsoever”<sup>87</sup> between the two processes. Rather, the United States government became a vocal proponent of partnerships at the Johannesburg summit, as it served to advance its own existing national priorities.<sup>88</sup>

The government of the United Kingdom, another one of the entities with highest centrality measures in the network during these years, had likewise prioritized voluntary cooperation as part of its environment strategy during this decade, albeit from a philosophical motivation diametrically opposed to that of the United States. As one plenipotentiary official of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office recalled, their environmental aims at the time were “not in making sure Britain could do what was possible in the limits of the possible, but in expanding the limits of the possible.” The question was how to “use the resources of UK diplomacy, the convening power, to nourish the forces in different societies to push up the level of ambition” in the climate negotiations. This was explicitly defined as a political project “with two faces. One pointing at the world, and another one reaching back into the UK. [They]

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<sup>86</sup> Bush, ‘President’s Statement on Climate Change’.

<sup>87</sup> Interviewee 39

<sup>88</sup> For an example of US government support to the partnerships agenda during the preparatory meetings for the Johannesburg summit, see IISD, ‘Partnerships at Prepcom IV - Johannesburg 2002’; In addition, see Pattberg et al., *Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Development*, chap. 2.

took the view that none of it made any sense unless [they] were walking the talk. [Others] had to be able to look at Britain and see that there was a foment going on.”<sup>89</sup> Cultivating global voluntary cooperative commitments was thus part of a wider strategy of the UK government on climate change, which included, for example, defining climate change as an issue of global security and bringing it under the purview of the UN Security Council, and strong domestic legislation such as the Climate Change Act of 2008.<sup>90</sup>

In addition to participating in many initiatives during this decade, the UK government sought to convince others to embrace this agenda by using its leadership and convening roles in the international arena. For example, in 2005, London surged its efforts to accelerate voluntary cooperation in the context of its leadership of the G8 at the Gleneagles Summit, for which the UK government chose to focus discussions heavily on climate change, energy and sustainable development. The Gleneagles Plan of Action, the outcome document of this summit, reveals a commitment by the G8 countries to undertake cooperative initiatives in addition to other measures such as national legislation and multilateral agreement. For instance, on industry, the G8 committed to “develop partnerships, including sectoral and cross-border partnerships, with industry to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions intensity of the major industrial sectors of our economies”.<sup>91</sup>

At the same time, large businesses within the sectors that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions were becoming increasingly motivated to make voluntary

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<sup>89</sup> Interviewee 69 (senior official of the UK Government), in discussion with author, 23 July 2019.

<sup>90</sup> For a succinct overview of climate change debates in the UN Security Council and the UK’s involvement, see CSEN, ‘Short History of UNSC Engagement on Climate-Related Security Risks’.

<sup>91</sup> Group of Eight, ‘Gleneagles Plan of Action’.

commitments, and in particular *cooperative* voluntary commitments. In keeping with expectations on the motivations for companies to engage in voluntary cooperation and self-regulation, central actors such as Unilever, a major consumer goods company, were seeking to do so for rational, self-interested reasons, for instance to protect and enhance their reputations and market shares.<sup>92</sup> Rising consumer awareness and expectations were re-orienting business calculus on the importance of sustainability in the supply chains of many consumer goods companies. For example, as is well established, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, environmental groups, in concert with Media, had led campaigns against companies in the forest commodities supply chain.<sup>93</sup> This caused companies to want to act, but presented the dilemma of becoming uncompetitive if they were to take significant actions only on their own. As a senior executive at one of the companies central in the network during this period put it, “Your company is part of a broader sector. You can't move the full sector. And if you move yourself, you become uncompetitive.”<sup>94</sup> Consumer goods companies were also starting to face looming deadlines to their business survival if unsustainable practices continued. The need to take risks of losing competitiveness and instigate cooperation became paramount. The Marine Stewardship Council, a cooperative initiative formed when the leading business producing fish products in the UK started facing the issue of rapidly depleting fish stocks, is an instructive example. As a then-senior executive of Unilever recalled, “We were told that we had ten years of fish

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<sup>92</sup> For example, see Haufler, *A Public Role for the Private Sector*.

<sup>93</sup> For an overview of the history of environmental campaigns on this issue and their effect on businesses, see Cashore, ‘Legitimacy and the Privatization of Environmental Governance’.

<sup>94</sup> Interviewee 56 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 25 September 2019.

stocks left... That kicked off a whole conversation. We needed Science; we needed to incentivize fishers not to fish at certain times or in certain waters; we needed to create safe zones so governments would agree to protecting those zones; we needed to incentivize other buyers of fish to purchase that stock; and we needed to convince consumers to buy our products. Who pays for this? For a long time, our company bore the cost. Then stakeholders started engaging.”<sup>95</sup> Thus, a class of business champions or pioneers for voluntary cooperation on sustainable development began to emerge, motivated to cooperate in order to protect and eventually expand their own market shares. This included companies which already had significant amounts of market share, and which were in a position to absorb some of the initial costs associated with cooperation.

Various motivated governments and businesses were therefore seeking to form partnerships with each other during the 2000s. The formation of such cooperative initiatives required facilitation and brokering by trusted organizations, to enable companies—usually competitors—to cooperate with each other, and to enable the public and private sectors to engage in frank dialogue as a prerequisite to such partnerships. Business organizations such as the World Economic Forum (WEF) and WBCSD were ideally positioned to facilitate and lead those discussions, both within the business community and between business and the public sector. Many of the cooperative initiatives launched during this decade were a result of their facilitation. As one senior executive of a WBCSD member company observed, “If Unilever came

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<sup>95</sup> Interviewee 56 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 25 September 2019.

and said we are going to do all this work, other companies will perceive it as a Unilever programme and will assume that Unilever will get the credit. So they will not join. The process needs to be facilitated, managed, brokered, negotiated, convened and financed. The source of capital needs to be trusted and independent.”<sup>96</sup> Visibility and kudos for the pioneering companies in these endeavours was therefore a critical factor for the successful formation of cooperative initiatives. These business organizations were especially attuned to this need and the transformative potential of commitments by companies with large market share. The high profile that organizations such as the WEF, with its annual meeting in Davos, could give these companies and initiatives, was a significant enabling factor in the formation of the initiatives. A former senior executive of the WEF and WBCSD shared, “We talk about the twenty percent rule. If we can get twenty percent of the market to move, then the rest will come along. So it's important to get some of the big leaders to move. They get the credit. Then the small ones move.”<sup>97</sup>

The annual meeting of the WEF in Davos and its workstreams proved a particularly useful venue for the initial conversations among governments leaders and companies needed to coalesce the initiatives, namely the session known as the Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders (IGWEL), which attracts the highest profile participants. “We turned the IGWEL from a cocktail session to a two-day programme. There was a real appetite for closed-door, off the record discussions on challenging topics. They began to hold discussions that we thought were happening

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<sup>96</sup> Interviewee 56 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 25 September 2019.

<sup>97</sup> Interviewee 57 (senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 24 September 2019.

already, but weren't. A trust-building happens here, between the public and private sectors.”<sup>98</sup>

The comparative advantage of the business organizations in this respect was recognized and encouraged by governments and businesses, both, and they partnered closely with the organizations to bring about the partnerships they desired. For example, to follow-up on the G8 summit in 2005 and the plan of action that emerged from it, the UK set in motion the ministerial Gleneagles Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development.<sup>99</sup> In this, it cooperated closely with a number of business organizations, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations, often relying on them to convene and initiate partnerships within greenhouse gas-emitting sectors, and to bring the perspectives of business into the discussion. Prominent among these organizations were the WEF and WBCSD. For example, in 2005, the UK helped the World Economic Forum set up the G8 Climate Change Roundtable at their annual meeting in Davos, as a means for business to proactively engage on the challenge of climate change and be part of the solution. “The idea was to shift the conversation from ‘you are the bad guys, you fix it’ to ‘we need to find a way that's going to work for all of us, that will allow businesses to continue making a profit’”.<sup>100</sup> Using this roundtable, over a period of two years the WEF, WBCSD, the Pew Center and others convened a group of CEOs to mobilize

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<sup>98</sup> Interviewee 57 (senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 24 September 2019.

<sup>99</sup> This dialogue included the formulation of G8+5 countries as well as Indonesia, Australia, Spain, Poland, Nigeria, South Korea, with the UNFCCC Secretariat and the International Energy Agency participating

<sup>100</sup> Interviewee 70 (senior officer on climate change at the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 20 June 2018.

viewpoints and prepare a set of recommendations for the Gleneagles Dialogue, which were presented to the Japanese Presidency of the G8 in 2008.<sup>101</sup> Using the intergovernmental meetings (such as the UNFCCC conferences of parties) as touch points and convening in their margins “tiny, stupid side events to which nobody would come, but to which [they] would be bringing CEOs”,<sup>102</sup> these business organizations facilitated a number of sectoral cooperative initiatives during this period.

By the end of the decade, then, an ecosystem of stakeholders had emerged and formed a network of voluntary cooperative initiatives on climate change. In 2009, this network of actors experienced a renewed jolt of motivation to respond to the failure of governments in reaching a comprehensive climate change agreement in Copenhagen. Those central to the network recall that the failure was a significant turning point and that this spurred existing actors to cooperate even more. A typical observation among civil society organizations and companies is, “After Copenhagen, many non-state actors thought that the intergovernmental process could not get it done. So we started to focus on private governance.”<sup>103</sup> They were joined by some governments as well, particularly several western governments that sought to elevate the climate issue to the leaders’ level, including the UK, Germany and the United States. For example, Germany launched the Petersburg Climate Dialogue in 2010, which has become a mainstay in the climate calendar each year to allow a subset of

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<sup>101</sup> WEF and WBCSD, ‘CEO Climate Policy Recommendations G8 Leaders’.

<sup>102</sup> Interviewee 40 (senior executive of the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 23 September 2018.

<sup>103</sup> Interviewee 31 (senior advisor to the UK Government and to the New Climate Economy), in discussion with author, 27 May 2019.

countries to constructively discuss strategies and approaches for the COP. In the margins of this dialogue, Germany, together with other countries and non-state actors, has launched a series of cooperative initiatives to maintain momentum. Similarly, President Obama launched the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) in 2010 following Copenhagen, to broaden the climate portfolio's ownership to beyond ministers of environment. Under the CEM, several initiatives were launched in 2010 and 2011. Interestingly, the Obama administration continued aspects of the Bush administration's policy on voluntary cooperation 2009 onwards, albeit in a less aggressive manner, and from a desire to re-engage in multilateralism. They chose to continue several existing initiatives, even if repackaged. For example, the Methane to Markets Partnership launched by President Bush continued as the Global Methane Initiative under President Obama. Although they appear as two separate initiatives in the network, contributing to the increased quantity of initiatives, this is due to political imperatives arising from the change in Administration. As one former Obama and Bush Administration official observed, "In some ways, U.S. policy is never an abrupt shift from one direction to another. Strands of policy from previous administrations are adopted by new administrations."<sup>104</sup>

From the perspectives of the actors most central or "important" within the network of cooperation, therefore, the system-wide efforts of IGOs did not play a driving role in their efforts to cooperate. What then, did the system-wide efforts achieve, and what explains this disconnect? The analysis now turns to this question,

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<sup>104</sup> Interviewee 68 (senior official of the United States Government and senior executive at a philanthropic foundation), in discussion with author, 13 June 2019.



considering first the efforts led by UN member states, and then those led by the UN Secretary-General.

### 3.2.2 The Type II “Non” Partnerships of Johannesburg and the CSD

The WSSD was mandated as a follow-up to the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, which had yielded intergovernmental legal instruments such as the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification as well as some non-legally binding agreements, notably Agenda 21, which committed governments and “Major Groups” of non-state actors to sustainable development and describes roles for each in its implementation.<sup>105</sup> Occurring just two years after the Millennium Summit, when the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had been adopted, expectations for any new legally binding agreements were low and implementation of Agenda 21 was the focus of the Johannesburg summit. Partly as a natural consequence of the focus on implementation of an agenda owned by many stakeholders and partly out of “desperation” to demonstrate success given the anticipated underwhelming intergovernmental outcomes of the summit, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), a 53-member body under the Economic and Social Council and the organizer for the summit, declared that “Type II Partnerships” would be an official outcome of the summit, to complement the Type I intergovernmental agreement that would be the primary outcome.<sup>106</sup> Over 200 Type II partnerships were

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<sup>105</sup> the Major Groups, include NGOs, Youth, Women, Indigenous Peoples, Business and Industry, Local Authorities, Workers and Trade Unions, Scientific and Technological Community, and Farmers.

<sup>106</sup> Andonova and Levy, ‘Franchising Global Governance: Making Sense of the Johannesburg Type II Partnerships’.

registered with the UN Secretariat at the time of the Johannesburg Summit, with sixty announced at the summit.<sup>107</sup> In other words, Type II partnerships were seen by the WSSD organizers as ‘Plan B’ outcomes that would allow the summit to be seen as a success even if the intergovernmental negotiations did not yield significant outcomes.

This conference has spurred a rich academic discourse on partnerships, one that considers, variously, the thematic and geographic scope, effectiveness, legitimacy, and institutional implications of the Type II Partnerships.<sup>108</sup> In particular, their limited implementation, effectiveness and follow-up is a recurring theme.<sup>109</sup> Indeed, few of the partnerships that were featured as official Type II outcomes resulting from the Johannesburg summit can be defined as cooperative initiatives as understood in this study.<sup>110</sup> Many were existing or new programmes of intergovernmental organizations or bilateral aid programmes of donor countries, which included vertical public-private partnerships, but not horizontal.<sup>111</sup> Others lacked any partners. Many were internal Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of companies. As such, only 16 initiatives overlap in the dataset used in this study and the list of Type II partnerships for the period the years 2000 to 2010 inclusive (there are 85 initiatives in this study’s database in total for those years).

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<sup>107</sup> Schechter, *United Nations Global Conferences*.

<sup>108</sup> See Pattberg et al., *Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Development* for a concise overview of these considerations; for the question of democratic legitimacy, see Bäckstrand, ‘Democratizing Global Environmental Governance?’; and Bäckstrand and Kylsäter, ‘Old Wine in New Bottles?’

<sup>109</sup> For example, La Vina, Hoff, and DeRose, ‘The Outcomes of Johannesburg’; and Hale and Mauzerall, ‘Thinking Globally and Acting Locally’.

<sup>110</sup> Pattberg et al., *Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Development*, 178.

<sup>111</sup> Stevenson, *Global Environmental Politics*.

One obvious explanation for this is that some Type II partnerships may not be focused on issues related to climate change. Even accounting for this, however, the discrepancy is large. A more insightful path is that at the same time, almost unnoticed in the literature, partnerships were announced *informally* at the summit, many of which were not featured in the official list of Type II partnerships, but which form part of this study's dataset, and which include the central actors discussed in the previous sub-section. Notably, a Business Day was organized by the Business Action for Sustainable Development (BASD), a network set up by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) specifically for the Johannesburg Summit, in close coordination with and at the behest of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), which acted as the secretariat to the summit.<sup>112</sup> The Business Day saw the presentation of several major cooperative initiatives on climate change, such as the Global e-Sustainability Initiative and Marine Stewardship Council, which were not featured as outcomes of the summit.

The official Type II partnerships of the Johannesburg summit therefore obfuscate the picture of voluntary cooperation during this decade in two, opposing ways. On the one hand, many are not cooperative initiatives, which inflates the count of initiatives. On the other hand, by their absence in the official list, some initiatives that were brought about as a result of engagement with the Johannesburg summit are not seen as Johannesburg initiatives, which may underestimate the causal impact of the summit. Understanding the conditions under which the Johannesburg partnerships

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<sup>112</sup> Stuart, 'Power of Partnerships'.

arose is key to explaining why the conference was not successful in yielding a significant number of cooperative initiatives on sustainable development, even as these initiatives were being launched by actors independently as described in the previous subsection.

Archives of the conference, interviews and extant literature reveal three structural issues that prevented the Johannesburg summit preparatory and follow-up processes from galvanizing a large number of cooperative initiatives. For the summit, these include: consensus decision-making; constituency-based organization; and limited visibility for showcasing partnerships. For the CSD, consensus decision-making and constituency-based organization remained challenging, and an additional issue was its low convening power.

Being an event mandated by the UN General Assembly, decision-making at the WSSD was fully decentralized among member states, in keeping with the prevailing norm. There was little substantive or process autonomy from member states on the part of the host or organizer (i.e., government of South Africa, the CSD or the Secretary-General of the conference anchored in UN DESA). As a result, by virtue of the fact that Type II partnerships were to be an official outcome of the summit and therefore under the purview of the membership, the notion was subject to debate. There was much disagreement and tension among member states on what constitutes such a partnership, and in particular on the appropriateness of involving corporations in such partnerships and how they and others might be monitored. For while some countries had embraced the concept of cooperation with the private sector to deliver sustainable development goals and started engaging in partnerships, many

others—notably developing countries—were deeply uncomfortable with the concept and saw it as a potential threat to sovereignty; introducing undue corporate influence at the UN; and a means of sidestepping responsibilities by donor governments.<sup>113</sup>

Unable to agree on the concept, member states debated the issue and treated partnerships the definition of partnerships was extraordinarily vague, and examples provided by the CSD during the preparatory process encompassed everything from commercial public-private partnerships to Official Development Assistance (ODA) programmes of donor governments, to projects of intergovernmental organizations.<sup>114</sup> The dominance of ODA projects and commercial public-private partnerships in the resulting list of Type II partnerships is then unsurprising.

In addition, the discomfort expressed by member states over the notion of partnerships and in particular the involvement of the private sector, was echoed and amplified by certain constituencies of stakeholders that were invited to engage in deliberations on the partnerships during the preparatory process. Major Groups, the institutional legacy of the Rio earth summit of 1992, had by 2002 become an established principle for organizing non-state actors at the UN. In fact, in recognizing these Major Groups, Agenda 21 had ushered in a norm of stakeholder participation at the intergovernmental deliberations under the UN and its subsidiary processes, that encourages groupings within constituency type (for example, subnational authorities vs. environmental organizations vs. youth).<sup>115</sup> This constituency-based convening,

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<sup>113</sup> See Pattberg et al 2012 for an insightful account of the tensions among governments on the notion of partnerships.

<sup>114</sup> UN DESA, 'A Guide for Potential Partnerships on Energy for Sustainable Development'.

<sup>115</sup> For a detailed account of how the Major Groups have evolved into a core part of deliberations at the UN, see Dodds, *Stakeholder Democracy*.

enshrined by international agreement and therefore ‘sacrosanct’, reinforced existing animosity between constituencies, notably between environmental organizations and business (NGOs held an anti-partnership stance and Business and Industry held a firm pro-partnership stance).<sup>116</sup> With environmental organizations taking a hard stance against the engagement of business in Type II partnerships, and given the reservations of many governments on the issue, the enthusiasm of the private sector to be included in the list of Type II partnerships cooled somewhat, as they saw potential reputational risk in doing so, and caused business organizations such as the WBCSD, which while overall supportive of the Type II partnerships, to declare that the “label is not important”.<sup>117</sup> Thus, while businesses had self-organized (at the informal encouragement of the UN Secretariat<sup>118</sup>) under the banner of the BASD specifically for the purpose of supporting the summit, most of the initiatives featured by BASD were not included in the list of Type II partnerships, and by the time of the summit itself, the business community had quietly eschewed the official process. Although many of these were existing partnerships anyway, and were being presented to showcase the cooperation underway, some had specifically been established in time for the summit. For example, the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative, which Unilever had been seeking to develop as a cooperative endeavour for some years, was launched just a few months before Johannesburg, with the participation of Danone and Nestlé, in anticipation of the summit.<sup>119</sup><sup>120</sup> The disconnect between the summit and ongoing

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<sup>116</sup> IUCN, ‘Report on Partnership Consultations’; IISD, ‘Partnerships at Prepcom IV - Johannesburg 2002’.

<sup>117</sup> Stigson, ‘A Business Perspective on Partnerships’.

<sup>118</sup> Interviewee 43 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 9 May 2020.

<sup>119</sup> Unilever, ‘Cultivating Sustainable Agriculture’.

<sup>120</sup> Press Release on SAI launch

activity was reflected in the press release by the BASD at the time: “Thousands of practical on-the-ground partnerships already exist. Some new initiatives will end up as Type 2, UN approved, but, whether they do or not, business is determined to extend the partnership concept as its way of contributing to the Johannesburg and the Millennium goals.”<sup>121</sup>

Further, for those actors central to the network of cooperative initiatives, even if the tension over the notion of partnerships and the role of the private sector were not insurmountable, the constituency-based organization meant that the summit did not offer any particular incentives to create new cooperative initiatives—whether carrots or sticks—in the short time available. Certainly, the summit organizers had recognized the importance of sectoral orientation for the development of partnerships. By adopting and promoting the five thematic areas proposed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan (water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity: “WEHAB”), the summit had a clear orientation around specific sectors. In addition, detailed guidance on the type of partnerships that could be pursued was provided on some of these themes, notably energy. Yet, the preparatory meetings and the summit itself continued to be held along constituency lines, consisting of Major Groups and member states, rather than the range of actors interested in and influential around each of the specific themes, which may have consisted of various subsets of the major groups and member states, and which might have enabled discussions around concrete partnerships. The strong divisions between Major Groups on the notion of partnerships meant that the secretariat also took a risk-averse route in the official

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<sup>121</sup> BASD, ‘Get the Business Reaction’.

proceedings, even as they encouraged businesses to convene under BASD, with the summit's Secretary-General, Nitin Desai (who headed UN DESA) going to far as to attend the preparatory meetings of BASD. As one of the senior-most UN officials responsible for the conference preparation acknowledges: "We were a little guarded. There was still hostility, such as between Greenpeace and corporates, and we could not be seen as favouring one side or the other."<sup>122</sup> Neither was the agenda of the summit designed in a way to provide high visibility to the partnerships being announced. The sessions on partnerships were dialogues with limited participation of non-state actors, which prevented any real showcasing of partnerships being announced. The lack of emphasis on visibility alongside government leaders during the summit itself meant that there was no particular attraction for non-state actors to compete to engage in partnerships and participate in the dialogue.

The follow-up to WSSD was the responsibility of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), which was tasked by the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to facilitate the development of new partnerships. Given this specific mandate, the CSD placed a premium on high visibility for partnerships, through the establishment of a partnerships fair, the purpose of which was to develop and showcase partnerships on specific sectors. Yet, due to other structural challenges, the CSD was not successful in developing new partnerships. Instead, as Pattberg et al have noted, the Partnership Fairs at the CSD attracted stakeholders mainly for the

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<sup>122</sup> Interviewee 43 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 9 May 2020.



purposes of networking and gaining access to the UN rather than to build partnerships.<sup>123</sup>

Similar to the WSSD, being a forum mandated by the membership of the UN, the CSD faced some of the same structural weaknesses it had in the run-up to the summit. Although the virtue of partnerships was less contested under the CSD, since its mandate was to specifically develop them, it had little decision-making authority. As a review of the commission observed, since the CSD “was a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, and its decisions depended on additional deliberations both in the Council and the General Assembly, their authority and impact was limited.”

In addition, the Major Groups continued to be the organizing principle for non-state actors at the CSD, even as the commission prioritized specific sectors every two years. The sectoral prioritization structured around constituency lines prevented across-constituency collaboration and entrenched within-constituency linkages. In other words, the organization did not serve to increase bridging political capital among stakeholders, which is arguably needed for multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnership.

Furthermore, the CSD also had low convening power, in contrast to the WSSD, which had attracted heads of state and government. A 2012 review of the CSD found that while it “provided for multi-stakeholder participation and interactive dialogue, including at the ministerial level, and through its work the importance and value of voluntary, multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development were

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<sup>123</sup> [xx] in Pattberg et al 2012

recognized”, efforts to advance partnerships were stymied by the fact that the CSD “attracted, chiefly, members of the environmental community, and it was thus largely perceived as an “environmental commission”.<sup>124</sup> Without the presence of representatives of various economic sectors, efforts to build partnerships could not be successful.

In sum, given the abundance of motivation among governments and non-state actors to engage in voluntary cooperation, it was reasonable to expect that the system-wide efforts of IGOs to promote voluntary cooperation during these years may have capitalized on these motivations and served to accelerate their efforts. However, the evidence does not support this assumption for those IGO efforts that were led by the member states, namely the Johannesburg summit and its associated Commission for Sustainable Development. To the contrary, at worst, they served to inject some doubt among businesses in particular about the wisdom and viability of engaging with governments in the multilateral context to make voluntary commitments. As some have observed, the proceedings of the Johannesburg conference lacked in leadership, and represented a combination of poorly executed tactics as well as a step in the evolution of a well-developed strategic imperative for voluntary cooperation on sustainable development.<sup>125</sup> As this analysis has shown, the overriding reason for the disconnect between the strategic rationale and the tactics of the Johannesburg conference was the lack of central decision-making power of the organizers, resulting in: a highly political space that contested the value and notion of partnerships;

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<sup>124</sup> UNSG, ‘Lessons Learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development’.

<sup>125</sup> Andonova and Levy, ‘Franchising Global Governance: Making Sense of the Johannesburg Type II Partnerships’.

suboptimal organization of the summit to spur additional growth of the network of voluntary cooperation, including poor timing; and Type II partnerships that obfuscate the level and locus of voluntary cooperation during this decade. Being a member state-driven process, the decision-making for the summit was not autonomous from the member state configuration that birthed it. The follow-up mechanism under the CSD faced the same problem, with the additional challenge of low convening power, which further depressed the potential of creating partnerships. While it would be incorrect to say that the summit did not cause any new cooperative initiatives, it is nevertheless appropriate to conclude that it was not a significant causal driver in the formation of the initiatives during this period. At best, the efforts of IGOs succeeded in reflecting the cooperation already underway, and their processes and events were used as a convenient moment to showcase these efforts, but did not act as propellants for the actors already motivated. As one business executive whose company was an active participant in the BASD put it, “There were very few people acting because they were being asked to by an [intergovernmental organization]”<sup>126</sup>

### *3.2.3 Summits of the UN Secretary-General: Partnership Rhetoric, not Reality*

The second stream of purposive system-wide activity by IGOs to drive voluntary cooperation in the 2000s was led by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in the form of two summits convened in 2007 and 2009. Similar to the member state-led efforts of the Johannesburg summit and the CSD, however, these efforts were also

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<sup>126</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

not effective and did not accelerate the voluntary cooperation already underway during the 2000s, as this analysis will show.

The primary purpose of the 2007 and 2009 summits was for the Secretary-General to mediate among countries at a leaders' level and to inject political will towards breakthroughs in the climate negotiations. A secondary purpose was the promotion of voluntary cooperation. Although not as an explicitly targeted official outcome, the 2007 and 2009 summits both highlighted the importance of partnerships and sought to promote them as part of their communications during the preparatory processes. In his opening remarks, the Secretary-General said, "Addressing these shortcomings requires contributions from all countries and all sectors of society, from civil society and business, to regional and local governments. That is why I have invited their representatives to join us today, and to share their ideas and experiences. All sectors will need to be engaged if global emissions are to peak in the next ten to fifteen years, and be significantly reduced in the years thereafter, as indicated by the IPCC."<sup>127</sup>

While some of the structural challenges that variously dogged the member state-led efforts were not present for the secretariat-led efforts, other challenges nevertheless posed significant impediments to effective partnership-making. Specifically, unlike the Johannesburg summit or the CSD, there were no issues with consensus decision making or low convening power, since the summits enjoyed centralized decision-making, being under the aegis of the Secretary-General only, and very high convening power since the Secretary-General had convened them at

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<sup>127</sup> UNSG, 'Secretary-General's Address to High-Level Event on Climate Change'.

leaders' level. However, challenges included lack of engagement with actors central to the network, and poor timing.

For both summits of the Secretary-General, the biggest impediment to galvanizing cooperative initiatives was the lack of engagement with the actors that were emerging as leaders in the network of voluntary cooperation. In 2007, only twelve representatives of business, subnational governments and civil society were invited to speak.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, while the list of actors included those holding the levers on the climate problem (e.g. DuPont, the Governor of California, the Mayor of New Delhi), this list of speakers was missing many of the actors that were influential in the network of cooperative action during this time. With the exception of the Governor of California, The Climate Group and Swiss Re (each of which had degree and/or betweenness centralities in the top 10 percent of entities in the network in 2007), the invited actors were not yet major influencers in voluntary cooperation according to the network data. Indeed, even though UN entities such as UNEP had by 2007 established themselves as highly central actors within the network of cooperative initiatives, the summits did not engage them in any significant way for the purpose of promoting the growth of such initiatives. Existing coordination mechanisms for the UN system, such as the Chief Executives Board (CEB), were not utilized by the Secretary-General (as chair of the CEB) to galvanize support for the summits, although they were for conferences mandated by the membership, such as COP15.<sup>129</sup> In the context of this summit, there was therefore limited engagement with

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<sup>128</sup> United Nations, 'Note from Richard Kinley to Vijay Nambiar'.

<sup>129</sup> UN ECOSOC, 'Annual Overview CEB 2002'; UN ECOSOC, 'Annual Review CEB 2007/2008'; UN ECOSOC, 'Annual Overview CEB 2009/2010'.

the actors influential in the network of cooperative initiatives at the sectoral level, which in turn meant that there were no effective levers available to the summit organizers with which to generate new initiatives.

One could argue that by engaging those actors that are important to the climate problem but not yet engaged in the network, the Secretary-General was perhaps encouraging an expansion of the network of cooperative initiatives. However, there is no evidence that as a result of participating in the 2007 summit, these actors began to engage in cooperative initiatives. There was no follow-up engagement by the Secretary-General's team among these actors, nor is there an attendant surge in activity by these actors in the network following the summit. Likewise, the 2009 summit, although on a larger scale, did not specifically target the participation of central actors in the network.

During these years, the UN Secretariat was aware of the specific efforts being taken by governments and non-state actors to make voluntary commitments. For example, the UNFCCC secretariat specifically tracked the Gleneagles Dialogues and reported on the convenings to the Secretary-General.<sup>130</sup> However, the ability of the Secretary-General's team to harness this knowledge effectively and use the Secretary-General's convening power and autonomy to accelerate it (for example, by giving the first-mover companies the credit they craved) was as yet underdeveloped. This entailed small budgets and a team that was insufficiently equipped and oriented to engage effectively with actors central in the network. A gap therefore remained

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<sup>130</sup> For example, just a few months before the summit, a note from the UNFCCC executive secretary to the secretary-general outlined developments under the Gleneagles Dialogue and underlined the constructive roles being played by the private sector. See UNFCCC, 'Note from Yvo de Boer to Ban Ki-Moon'.

between the growing network of cooperative initiatives and the system-wide efforts to nurture them. As one senior WEF official lamented, “We had no real interaction with the UN... things got tangled up in the secretariats, among mid-level bureaucrats. So, this was a big learning—that at the time, there was no post box for us in the international public process. In the meantime, we had been using our spaces and meetings in Davos to develop these models.”<sup>131</sup>

Evidently, in retrospect, the organization of these summits should have used a principle of engagement with the central actors in the network, which would have drawn on their abilities and capacities to convene stakeholders while maintaining the central decision-making authority that the Johannesburg summit and CSD had lacked. In other words, the summits should have been organized by the principle of subsidiarity, much like the organizing principle of the European Union “What individuals can accomplish by their own initiative and efforts should not be taken from them by a higher authority. A greater and higher social institution must not take over the duties of subordinate organizations and deprive it of its competence. Its purpose, rather, is to intervene in a subsidiary fashion (thus offering help) when individuals or smaller institutions find that a task is beyond them.”<sup>132</sup> In the context of national government, federalism is the practical manifestation of this principle. In the context of IGO system-wide efforts to promote voluntary cooperation, subsidiarity entails the empowerment of already influential and capable actors to convene and form initiatives. This principle was in fact at work in the Johannesburg summit and

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<sup>131</sup> Interviewee 40 (senior executive of the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 23 September 2018.

<sup>132</sup> Schönborn, *Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para. 323.

the CSD, through engagement of the Major Groups and encouragement of platforms such as the BASD.

In addition, the timing for both the summits was a challenge. Although the organizers of the summits had deliberately timed them to take place just a few months before highly consequential intergovernmental events, in the hope of supporting their success, in fact the short time between the summits and the COPs, and the even shorter preparatory phases for each of the summits undermined the possibility of the establishment of cooperative initiatives, whether in time for the summit or in time for the COPs a few months later. For the summit in 2007, the announcement was made only in June, and invitations to stakeholders other than governments sent in early September, just a few short weeks before the summit on 24 September 2007.<sup>133</sup> For the 2009 summit, the earliest public announcement on record was in early September.<sup>134</sup> In contrast, the WSSD has a preparatory phase of over one year, during which deliberations on the partnerships to be developed took place. Admittedly, the Secretary-General did not emphasize the announcement of initiatives for either of these two summits, so the preparation was not oriented around them as a matter of priority. However, therein lies the problem. In calling for their formation and continuation, but by not prioritising them through an adequate preparatory or follow-up phase, the organization of the summit could not engender the formation of initiatives. Further, since the summits were held so close in time to the relevant COPs themselves, the attention of governments were entirely on the intergovernmental

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<sup>133</sup> United Nations, 'Note from Robert Orr to Ban Ki-Moon'; United Nations, 'Note from Richard Kinley to Vijay Nambiar'.

<sup>134</sup> United Nations, 'UN Official Voices Hope That Upcoming Climate Talks Spur Action at Highest Levels'.



negotiations, and it was not feasible to develop partnerships in addition. This was especially so in 2009 because there was significant hope among developed countries that an agreement could be reached in Copenhagen, with the new Obama administration significantly more inclined to reach multilateral agreement.

In summary, for the 2007 and 2009 climate summits hosted by the UN Secretary-General, the main impediments to the growth of voluntary cooperation were poor timing and lack of engagement with the central actors in the network who were convening and forming initiatives. Unlike the member state-led efforts of the WSSD and the CSD, the Secretary-General enjoyed both, unparalleled convening power and autonomy. This would prove to be essential for successful promotion of cooperation in 2014, as the next section will argue.

Before leaving this decade, however, it is important to ask: how did the UN Secretary-General, an agent of 193 principals, obtain the autonomy necessary to convene the principals of the organization on his terms? An examination of this development follows.

#### 3.2.4 “Good Offices” for Climate Change: A Subversive Seed for Success

Although the system-wide efforts by IGOs during the 2000s were not significant drivers of the growth of the network seen during this decade, the efforts by the Secretary-General caused and represented one major development that would prove determinant in the growth of the network in the 2011-2015 period: the establishment of the norm of a ‘good offices’ role for the Secretary-General on climate change, and the attendant autonomy for this office vis-à-vis member states.

The 2007 and 2009 summit meetings on climate change was convened and hosted by the secretary general in the margins of the UN General Assembly. In an unprecedented move, these summits were not mandated by the UN membership and marked only the first two times in the history of the United Nations that a Secretary-General had invited the full membership at a leaders' level on any issue without being explicitly asked to do so by the membership.<sup>135</sup>

A key rationale for Secretary-General Ban to engage on climate change, even when the framework convention clearly had the mandate to do so, was to help extract the issue from ministerial silos in countries, and among negotiators at the international level—something that was beyond the capacity of the UNFCCC Secretariat, as it was bound to support the negotiators. As one Indian government official put it, “The people who come for [climate] negotiations are a breed unto themselves. They have nothing do with implementation or the real economy. They come from ministries of foreign affairs, environment or the MET department.”<sup>136</sup> Although flippant, this observation is not inaccurate. The participation records of the UNFCCC COPs show that until 2009, national delegations were almost entirely composed of civil servants from ministries of foreign affairs and environment. Ban believed that by elevating the issue to the leaders' level, wider swaths of government, such as sectoral ministries that were responsible for the decisions affecting their

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<sup>135</sup> This study reviewed all available data on UN conferences and summits, including the annual yearbooks of the organization; academic literature on UN conferences; and media accounts, in addition to consulting with leading academic experts on the subject matter; UN staff members with institutional memory as well as the librarians at the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. No evidence of a precedent for such a summit was found. To the contrary, all known previous summits were found to have been preceded by member state resolutions that authorized their convening.

<sup>136</sup> Interviewee 20 (senior civil servant of the Government of India), in discussion with author, 5 August 2019.

economies and GHG emissions, as well as the private sector would be forced to get engaged, thereby leading to more constructive discussions, which he took upon himself to facilitate.

In other words, Secretary-General Ban extended the traditional ‘good offices’ role from the peace and security arena to sustainable development and climate change was a conscious strategy deployed by his strategic planning unit.<sup>137</sup> It was a perspective shared by many government officials engaged in the process. A former lead climate negotiator from Mexico observed, “If you do not have a high-level meeting or opportunity to get leaders in the room, you may not be able to go far.”<sup>138</sup> To this end, in a stark departure from secretaries-general before him, Ban started attending COPs and began to raise the issue in his meetings with Heads of State and Government.<sup>139</sup>

In 2007, while several states had suggested that mandating a world summit, special meeting or session under the General Assembly or Economic and Social Council might be advisable given the difficulties in the COP, the membership had reached no such agreement, although some states had also welcomed the Secretary-General’s active involvement and leadership on the climate change issue and even encouraged the Secretary-General to convene leaders himself.<sup>140</sup> Using these openings, the Secretary-General took the initiative to invite heads of state or

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<sup>137</sup> For example, see United Nations, ‘Note from Janos Pasztor to Ban Ki-Moon’; and United Nations, ‘Note from Shashi Tharoor to Vijay Nambiar’.

<sup>138</sup> Interviewee 50 (senior official of the Government of Mexico and senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 16 October 2019.

<sup>139</sup> Prior to this, the only Secretary-General to attend a climate COP was Kofi Annan in 2005, during his last year as Secretary-General and as a symbolic gesture for the first COP to be held on African soil.

<sup>140</sup> United Nations, ‘Security Council Holds First-Ever Debate on Impact of Climate Change on Peace, Security, Hearing over 50 Speakers’.

governments of all member states to a meeting he would host, *with no accompanying resolution of the membership authorizing or requesting him to do so*. The elevation of the issue to heads of state and governments was appreciated as an important move in the ability of Parties to reach agreement on the Bali Action Plan a few months later.<sup>141</sup> In repeating the move in 2009, two months before the ill-fated COP in Copenhagen, Ban firmly established the autonomous good offices role of the Secretary-General in the climate change arena.

The decisions to convene these summits were not without risk. A classic tension prevails in whether the Secretary-General should offer Good Offices or should wait until asked to do so, that is, whether he should seek to enlarge or minimize his role in world affairs.<sup>142</sup> A similar tension seems to have applied in this case. A former lead climate negotiator noted, “If the Secretary-General jumps in without being asked, the result may be chaotic. But we have also had passive secretaries-general who have done nothing in the face of a crisis because nobody asked them. The capacity to take some risk is very important in a Secretary-General.”<sup>143</sup> Both summits demonstrated this capacity to take risk. Though notion of such an event led by the Secretary-General had not been easily accepted, both were well-attended by leaders (the 2007 summit attracted over eighty heads of state and

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<sup>141</sup> For an account of Ban’s role in ending gridlock in the Bali negotiations, see Christoff, ‘The Bali Roadmap’.

<sup>142</sup> Former secretary-general Perez de Cuellar described this as a tension between the Scylla of “vanity and wishful thinking” and the Charybdis of “succumbing to modesty” and argued that “no secretary-general should give way to either of them. See Vinuales, ‘Can the UN Secretary-General Say “No”: Revisiting the “Peking Formula”’.

<sup>143</sup> Interviewee 50 (senior official of the Government of Mexico and senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 16 October 2019.

government, while the 2009 summit attracted over 100).<sup>144</sup> The Secretary-General had to earn the participation of leaders in the 2007 summit in particular, through open engagement in the planning of the summit and by providing frequent briefings to member states on all aspects of the summit, thereby building trust with member states in order to secure his autonomy. In the end, “Acquiescence was earned through transparency”.<sup>145</sup>

On the one hand, the 2007 and 2009 summits were unprecedented, unmandated convenings by the Secretary-General. On the other hand, they had antecedents in previous summits as well as initiatives of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Ban’s predecessor, all of which were deliberate institutional efforts to increase the relevance and influence of the Secretary-General and contribute to UN reform.

Several scholars have observed that Annan’s reform efforts included the creation of a Strategic Planning Unit within his office.<sup>146</sup> As a former senior official responsible for the functioning of this unit observed, “member states were not pleased with this. They felt they were the strategic planners of the UN. My job was to not only help the Secretary-General strategize about the issues, but also on how to approach them and get better results.”<sup>147</sup> Efforts to expand the Secretary-General’s autonomy vis-à-vis the membership were evidently a key element of the strategy to

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<sup>144</sup> United Nations, ‘Transcript of Joint Press Conference Following High-Level Event on Climate Change at United Nations Headquarters’; United Nations, “‘Opportunity to Avoid Catastrophic Climate Change Is in Your Hands,’ Secretary-General Tells World Leaders at Climate Summit’.

<sup>145</sup> Interviewee 14 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 18 May 2020.

<sup>146</sup> For example, see Williams, ‘Strategic Planning in the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General’.

<sup>147</sup> Interviewee 14 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 18 May 2020.

get better results, including by convening summits and spearheading initiatives such as the Global Compact and the UN Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP); first through “reverse institutionalization” and later, under Secretary-General Ban, by bypassing the need for any explicit mandate from the membership altogether.

Annan’s focus on reforming the United Nations and making it fit for purpose entailed a strong emphasis on UN partnerships with the private sector and civil society. Thus, scholars have noted that at the start of the decade Annan launched the Global Compact as the UN’s office to engage with the private sector and also established the UN Fund for International Partnerships (UN FIP) in his office.<sup>148</sup> The former created a system-wide platform for the UN to collaborate with the private sector, while the latter created a mechanism for the UN secretariat to accept funding from non-governmental sources—an innovation born out of necessity to channel Ted Turner’s unprecedented \$1 billion gift to the UN when the dues owed by the United States were in severe arrears. These innovations within the UN, while raising awareness on and support for collaborative governance, in addition to creating an enabling environment and enhancing the UN’s capacity to partner with the private sector, did not lead to a significant number of cooperative initiatives on climate change during this decade. The focus of UNFIP was explicitly to channel funds to UN entities for projects, many of which were traditional (vertical) public private partnerships. The Global Compact focused largely on the promotion of corporate social responsibility and individual commitments by companies. Although the Global Compact did convene companies, during these years it largely avoided brokering

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<sup>148</sup> Andonova, *Governance Entrepreneurs*.

partnerships. Indeed, this was a lack felt by companies, which were looking for neutral parties to fill convening roles.<sup>149</sup> The greater pertinence of these efforts lies in the incremental increase in the autonomy of the Secretary-General vis-à-vis member states. When Annan launched the Global Compact, it was over the objections and criticism of many member states as well as civil society observers.<sup>150</sup> Eventually, however, by demonstrating project implementation in developing countries through UNFIP, and by propagating local networks of the Global Compact in developing countries, the Global Compact was accepted and institutionalized by the membership through General Assembly resolutions, in what Liliana Andonova describes as a process of “reverse institutionalization”.<sup>151</sup>

This reverse institutionalization approach was also adopted for two summits during Annan’s tenure: the 2000 Millennium Summit and the 2005 follow-up. But more than simply suggesting the idea of these summits to the membership, Annan played a strong steering role in determining their outcomes. For the Millennium Summit, it is well established that Annan poured significant resources into the conference secretariat function and maintained a close-hold approach in the development of the content of the outcome, the Millennium Declaration and the eight goals therein.<sup>152</sup> This unconventional approach was successful, with the summit seeing the largest gathering of world leaders in history; the unanimous adoption of the Millennium Development Goals; and with many governments recognizing the importance of the discipline imposed by the Secretary-General. As a former

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<sup>149</sup> UN Global Compact, ‘The Global Compact Leaders Summit Final Report’.

<sup>150</sup> Andonova, *Governance Entrepreneurs*.

<sup>151</sup> Andonova, 86,101.

<sup>152</sup> Schechter, *United Nations Global Conferences*, 156–57.

ambassador of Mexico observed, “The most useless summit I remember was the 50th anniversary of the UN in 1995. The outcome was a long document that nobody read. In 2000, we had the Millennium Summit. The whole process was different, because we recognized the failure of the 1995 summit. In 2000, it was not an intergovernmental process. The Secretary-General prepared a draft of the MDGs using academia and people outside the system. The first proposal was not given to member states for input; we were told, ‘take it or leave it’...The 2005 summit was a similar process.”<sup>153</sup>

In trying to repeat the process for the 2005 summit, however, Annan’s efforts were contested. Although Annan had proposed major substantive outcomes for the summit via his report *In Larger Freedom*, the outcome document of the summit reflected watered-down versions of these proposals due to strong resistance by the United States, which, under the Bush Administration, held an avowedly anti-multilateralism stance. This had the effect of making member states appreciate an autonomous role for the Secretary-General and made them more amenable to the autonomy-seeking initiatives of Secretary-General Ban on climate change in subsequent years. A senior UN official and advisor to Ban shared, “I think all member states learned from that experience that if there was a high-profile agenda item that needed consideration at the leaders’ level, then using standard methodologies would lead to standard results.”<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Interviewee 50 (senior official of the Government of Mexico and senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 16 October 2019.

<sup>154</sup> Interviewee 14 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 18 May 2020.



These developments represented significant movements towards autonomy by the Secretary-General, and positioned Ban well to be able to convene the 2007 and 2009 summits without an explicit mandate from the membership—that is, by bypassing the need for reverse institutionalization. The continuity of a strategic planning unit in the Secretary-General’s office enabled this autonomy to be developed over successive administrations. As a senior advisor to both secretaries-general observed, bypassing the mandate by the membership was a deliberate manoeuvre: “We overtly sought to avoid the deal-making, ‘lowest common denominator’ dynamic of full legislative modalities. It was to avoid the stasis of those procedures that the secretaries-general created this space.”<sup>155</sup>

Building on the autonomy-enhancing efforts of his predecessor, the 2007 and 2009 climate summits were therefore used by the Secretary-General to ascertain and exercise his autonomy from member states in convening and raising an issue at the leaders’ level—a significant move in itself—but were not effectively used to steer and galvanize the network of voluntary cooperation, even though rhetoric by the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of such cooperation. In other words, the Secretary-General had sought a Good Offices role on climate change at the leaders’ level and been granted it, but had not yet expanded the role to include the litany of leaders outside national governments.

This expansion would occur during the next phase. The failure of governments to reach a comprehensive agreement in Copenhagen caused the groups of central actors in the network of voluntary cooperation to come to the realization

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<sup>155</sup> Interviewee 14 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 18 May 2020.

that there was a need for a coherent strategy and alignment of efforts if there was to be a better outcome in 2015. “After Copenhagen there was a lot of reflection on what went wrong, with many conversations happening among different constituencies. A common thread in these conversations was that there had been no strategic alignment among different constituencies. There was a lack of cohesion. So there was a realization that we need a single coherent strategy to reach an outcome.”<sup>156</sup>

As the next section argues, building on the autonomy and ‘good offices’ norm established during the 2000s, intergovernmental organizations would prove to be central in forging this strategic alignment among all stakeholders, by creating that “post box” to build on the ecosystem that had developed over the previous decade, and resulting in a massive acceleration in the growth of cooperative initiatives in the run-up to the Paris Agreement.

### **3.3 Acceleration in the 2010s: (Some) IGOs Learn to Choreograph**

This section focuses on the years 2011-2015, the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change, and the system-wide efforts of IGOs to promote voluntary cooperation. Five streams of system-wide activity by IGOs are discernible for this period: the Rio+20 conference; work stream two of the negotiations for the Paris Agreement (ADP2); efforts by the UNFCCC Secretariat; the 2014 Climate Summit; and the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) culminating in the Fourth Pillar of COP21. These years are marked by massive increases in the number of initiatives, which are concentrated in 2014 and 2015 and closely associated with the 2014

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<sup>156</sup> Interviewee 9 (senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat), in discussion with author, 31 July 2019.

Climate Summit and COP21. This section argues that while many of the same motivations that had caused actors to cooperate in the previous decade continued to shape their actions, and while many of the same actors remained “central” in the network (per figure 3.3), in 2014 and 2015 system-wide efforts by intergovernmental organizations arguably played a highly influential role in the growth trajectory of cooperative initiatives. In other words, two of the streams of activity were successful in spurring the formation of new cooperative initiatives in a significant way, while the others were not. These two are the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA.

What enabled these two efforts to succeed? Building on the challenges identified for efforts in the previous decade, this section considers the organization of each of the efforts made in this phase, and identifies six organizational attributes that must be present if the system-wide efforts of an IGO to spur voluntary cooperation are to be successful. Together these organizational attributes act on existing motivations of stakeholders to lower barriers to cooperation and spur a surge in the growth of cooperation. These attributes are: strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments, subsidiarity, and leadership with central decision-making. Furthermore, this section argues that the presence of these six organizational attributes depends on the IGO’s ability to convene at a leaders’ level and act with a high degree of autonomy. As such, only the 2014 Climate Summit and LPAA (culminating in COP21) had all six of these attributes as well as the convening power and autonomy of the organizers. The absence of one or more of these attributes in all other system-wide efforts in this

phase as well as in the 2000s explains their inability to accelerate the growth of voluntary cooperation. This finding is summarized in Table 3.1.

The following subsections examine each of the five system-wide activities, tracing the actions taken and their effects.

Table 3.1 System-Wide IGO Efforts and the Six Organizational Attributes to Accelerate Growth of Voluntary Cooperation.

System-Wide Efforts by Intergovernmental Organizations to Promote Voluntary Cooperation on Climate Change									
Key: Presence of Attribute Absence of Attribute Mixed Record	2001-2010				2011-2015				Lima-Paris Action Agenda
	Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002	Commission on Sustainable Development	Summits hosted by the UN Secretary-General – 2007 and 2009	Rio+20 Conference 2012	Workstream 2 of Negotiations for the Paris Agreement (ADP2)	UNFCCC Secretariat Efforts	2014 Climate Summit		
Organizational Attributes of System-Wide Effort (Event and/or Process)	Strategic Timing	Mixed – adequate preparatory period, but occurred on the heels of the Millennium Summit	No – Partnership Fair pursued over a decade	Mixed – in the run-up to major COPs, but inadequate preparatory period and too close to the COPs	Yes – Following Copenhagen and in the run-up to the Paris Agreement; adequate preparatory period	Yes – Following Copenhagen and in the run-up to the Paris Agreement	Yes – in the run-up to the Paris Agreement; long preparatory period	Yes – in the run-up to the Paris Agreement; long preparatory period	
	High Visibility	Yes – Media interest and participation of Heads of State and Government, although a limited number	No – delegates at sub-Minister level; confined to specific ministries; no media interest	Yes – media interest and participation of Heads of State and Government	Yes – Intense media interest and participation of Heads of State and Government	No – Low media interest and government participation limited to negotiators; overshadowed by negotiations	Yes – Intense media interest and participation of Heads of State and Government; Leaders among non-state actors	Yes – Very intense media interest and participation of Heads of State and Government; Leaders among non-state actors	
	Sectoral Orientation	No -- Constituency-based convening only	Mixed -- sectors or thematic issues were a biannual focus, but deliberations were organized around constituencies	Mixed -- Thematic dialogues on sectors, but limited participation of stakeholders	No -- Conference oriented by constituencies	Mixed -- Engagements with Major Groups as well as sector-relevant actors	Yes -- sessions and preparatory work streams focused on sectors, but also some based on constituencies	Yes -- sessions and preparatory work streams focused on sectors, but also some based on constituencies	
	Emphasis on Ambitious Cooperative Commitments	Yes – partnerships prioritized as official outcome of the summit	Mixed – raison d'être was to develop partnerships but little emphasis on ambition	No – Multi-stakeholder partnerships were encouraged but not prioritized	No – Commitments encouraged, but not specifically cooperative; commitments not official outcome of conference	Mixed – Ambitious commitments encouraged, but not specifically cooperative	Yes – Speech Acts of voluntary cooperation set as price for participation in Action Day	Yes – Speech Acts of voluntary cooperation set as price for participation in Action Day	
	Subsidiarity	Mixed – Major Groups and lead conveners encouraged to contribute commitments; political impediments for	Yes – Major Groups and member states encouraged to showcase and develop partnerships	No – limited engagement with actors central to the network	Yes – Major Groups and lead conveners welcomed to contribute commitments	Yes – Central actors in the network invited to contribute inputs	Yes – Central actors in the network tasked with developing initiatives	Yes – Central actors in the network tasked with developing initiatives	
	Leadership with Centralized Decision-Making	No - diffuse, consensus-based process among UN member states	No - diffuse, consensus-based process among UN member states	Yes - UN Secretary-General as leader and decision maker	No – diffuse, consensus-based process among UN member states	No – diffuse, consensus-based process among UNFCCC Parties	Yes – UN Secretary-General as leader and decision maker	Yes – France as leader and decision-maker, but with high influence of the UN Secretary-General, Peru and UNFCCC secretariat	
Attributes of Host/Lead	High Convening Power	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	
	High Autonomy	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	

### *3.3.1 Voluntary Commitments but not Cooperation at Rio+20*

The World Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), a continuation of the UN General Assembly activity on sustainable development and the work under the WSSD and the CSD, took place in 2012 and prioritized and welcomed voluntary commitments by all stakeholders. The negotiated outcome document of Rio+20, the Future We Want, makes twenty-five references to partnerships, acknowledging their importance for achieving the aims of sustainable development and encouraging their promotion by all stakeholders. Indeed, this negotiated language was the result of the preparatory process, in which many governments strongly emphasized the importance of partnerships in ensuring the implementation of the Rio+20 outcome.<sup>157</sup> Rio+20 was noteworthy for being “the most participatory conference in history”, with over 44,000 participants (that is, badge-holders, both governments and non-governmental), the attendance of 79 heads of state and governments, and over 500 side events held in the margins of the conference, organized by the full range of stakeholders, including civil society groups and businesses.<sup>158</sup> Arguably, the most visible outcome of Rio+20 was the show of strength by the private sector and civil society in making voluntary commitments and demanding governments to create enabling environments for an effective partnership for sustainable development, with 700 commitments made and registered in an online depository by the close of the conference.<sup>159</sup> In addition to the emphasis on voluntary commitments, several factors were in favour of Rio+20 being able to spur a large number of cooperative initiatives. The conference had a strong

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<sup>157</sup> IISD, ‘Earth Negotiations Bulletin UNCS-D-ISM Final’.

<sup>158</sup> IISD, ‘Earth Negotiations Bulletin UNCS-D-ISM Final’.

<sup>159</sup> UN DESA, ‘Voluntary Commitments and Partnerships for Sustainable Development’.

focus on the low-carbon transition<sup>160</sup> and enjoyed high convening power as well as extremely high media attention and visibility. It had a long lead-up preparatory phase, starting over two years prior to the conference, in May 2010. And its preparation, including the voluntary commitments, had taken inputs from a wide range of stakeholders including governments, all Major Groups and intergovernmental organizations. Yet, the vast majority of these commitments were individual, not cooperative. Existing initiatives or entities, such the Sustainability for All, or the Global Compact, encouraged their own partners to make individual commitments under their banners. 74% of the commitments made were obtained in this way.<sup>161</sup> Two key limitations in the organization of the conference resulted in the relatively few cooperative initiatives announced at Rio+20: inattention to *cooperative* commitments, and constituency-based organization.

Despite appearances to the contrary, the Rio+20 organizers did not place emphasis on voluntary cooperative initiatives. In contrast with the WSSD, the organizing committee of Rio+20 chose to encourage *all* types of voluntary commitments, including commitments by individual entities, rather than focusing on partnerships among entities. Ensuring a high *number* of commitments that would be seen as impressive by media was a priority for the Secretary-General of the conference. In discussions with entities such as the Global Compact, it became clear that the way to ensure such a high number was to welcome individual commitments.

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<sup>160</sup> Two themes were the focus of Rio+20: the green economy and the UN institutional framework to support sustainable development. Within this context, the preparatory process highlighted seven priority areas for the conference, including energy, water, oceans, decent jobs, sustainable cities, food security and sustainable agriculture, and disaster readiness.

<sup>161</sup> Ramstein, 'Rio+20 Voluntary Commitments: Delivering Promises on Sustainable Development?', 11.

Little resources were put into promoting or partnerships. In fact, in the outcome document of Rio+20, the article recognizing the value of the voluntary commitments, does not mention the word “partnership” or “coalition” at all.<sup>162</sup> Indeed, the distinction between individual commitments and cooperative initiatives was not one to which the organizers or the UN Secretariat –UN DESA -- paid much attention at the time. Indeed, DESA frequently referred to the two types of commitments interchangeably. Just a year after the conference, DESA reported that “The number of *voluntary commitments and partnerships* in the ‘Sustainable Development (SD) in Action Registry’ has grown to over 1,400 valued at around US\$ 636 billion. *These multi-stakeholder initiatives* voluntarily undertaken by Governments, intergovernmental organizations, major groups and other stakeholders are important contributions to the implementation of sustainable development goals and commitments agreed at the intergovernmental level.”<sup>163</sup> In addition, unlike the WSSD ten years prior, Rio+20 was anticipated to produce some intergovernmental outcomes, including on the institutional framework for sustainable development and the future of UNEP, so while the voluntary commitments were still deemed important by the UN Secretariat as a “Plan B” in case the intergovernmental process did not deliver any agreement, governments were less “desperate” to include them as an official outcome. Thus, the voluntary commitments were not promoted or prioritized as official outcomes of the conference, but were instead only strongly encouraged by the conference organizers, as a useful device that would help in the implementation of the

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<sup>162</sup> United Nations, ‘Future We Want - Outcome Document .’, para. 283.

<sup>163</sup> Seth, ‘Foreword’.



conference outcomes. The conference Secretary-General (a senior UN official and head of UN DESA) noted that “the voluntary commitments are a major part of the legacy of this Conference. They complement the official outcome of the Conference.”<sup>164</sup>

Even if cooperation had been emphasized, the traditional, constituency-based organization of the conference remained a challenge to sectoral cooperation. The conference was organized along the format of statements by governments in plenary and parallel high-level roundtables to discuss the way forward for the implementation of the outcomes agreed upon in Rio. Statements were made by Major Groups for two minutes each on the first day, per the norm by then established. Neither the plenary nor the roundtables were organized sectorally, thereby providing no particular incentives for different stakeholders to make *cooperative* commitments on particular sectors as part of the official conference. The bulk of the activity by non-state actors was therefore outside of the official conference, which created a significant disconnect between the national government leaders and the real economy leaders. While many side events did feature both types of leaders and had a sectoral organization, they were on the whole not designed to proactively produce cooperative commitments (as opposed to the easier individual commitments), but rather to maximize visibility and prestige. The organization of the conference and its preparatory process therefore did not actively drive cooperation among actors within a sector by creating corrals of actors and did not introduce significant competitive fears within businesses.

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<sup>164</sup> United Nations, ‘Rio+20 Voluntary Commitments’.

The non-sectoral organization combined with diffuse emphasis on all types of commitments meant that cooperative initiatives launched at the conference (or rather, at side events in its margins) were largely a result of the combined motivations of the governments, NGOs, businesses and others in the post-Copenhagen context. The high profile and visibility of the conference and its timing made it an attractive venue for these actors to participate and be seen, thus bringing together many of the actors in the network, but not significantly galvanizing them to cooperate in new ways. As one business leader put it, “At Rio+20 everyone saw that the side events really mattered. This is where the real stuff was happening. Suddenly we no longer cared as much what was happening in the negotiations.”

Nevertheless, the very large presence of business and civil society at Rio+20 did serve to create an appreciation in the office of the UN Secretary-general and the UNFCCC Secretariat for the potential to tap into and steer this motivation ahead of COP21. For example, the WEF had created the Friends of Rio+20 group, consisting of Nestlé, ICRC and others, explicitly calling on governments to “enable multi-country and multi-stakeholder coalitions of willing and able actors (including interested national and sub-national governments) to undertake explicit sets of actions now and in the near term to help achieve these goals.”<sup>165</sup> They provided a list of thirty existing coalitions that were working and proving to be effective, as models for how this could be done. This group attracted significant interest in the media as well in governments.<sup>166</sup> It also caught the attention of those UN entities working on climate

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<sup>165</sup> WEF, ‘A Message from the Friends of Rio+20’.

<sup>166</sup> For example, see Confino, ‘Rio+20: “Extraordinary” Coalition Warns Governments Can’t Go It Alone’.

change, including the UNFCCC Secretariat and the office of the Secretary-General. They would build a strong relationship with the WEF to continue the coalition-building work through to Paris.

### *3.3.2 Partnerships Lost in Consensus: Ad-Hoc Working Group Two*

The Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) was mandated by COP decisions in 2011 to drive the process of realizing a new global agreement on climate change by 2015. While non-state actors had been actively engaged in the COPs since 1994 and a veritable festival of side events and meetings has been taking place in the margins of the COP each year, it wasn't until after COP15 in Copenhagen that Parties began to consider the value of voluntary cooperation among “non-Party stakeholders”.<sup>167</sup> The ADP was organized into two workstreams, with workstream one (“ADP1”) focused on the content of the 2015 agreement, while workstream two (“ADP2”) focused on pre-2020 ambition. The creation of two workstreams was the result of a breakdown in negotiations in Durban, between the Durban alliance led by the Most Vulnerable Group, and the major emitters including BASIC, the United States and the Umbrella Group. The settlement between them was that the new agreement would not come into effect until 2020. Island nations felt they were losing a decade because of this, which led, in part, to the establishment of ADP2,<sup>168</sup> which took up the question of voluntary cooperation as a

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<sup>167</sup> “non-Party Stakeholders” is the UNFCCC parlance for any actor not a Party to the Convention. This includes all the Major Groups, including businesses, subnational governments, and civil society organizations among others.

<sup>168</sup> Interviewee 9 (senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat), in discussion with author, 31 July 2019.

means of enhancing pre-2020 ambition and the ambition of the Paris Agreement to be reached in 2015.

In this context, the ADP2 workshops and roundtables were an opportunity for governments as well as academics, civil society actors and private sector to provide inputs for options on pre-2020 ambition, as Parties maintained an open process in which they recognized the expertise of actors already engaged in voluntary cooperation, and welcomed their inputs. The UNFCCC Secretariat proactively channeled these inputs to the Parties, often highlighting the value of cooperative initiatives.<sup>169</sup> Actors and sectoral conveners that were central in the existing network of initiatives, such as the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport, UNEP, the World Bank, and others participated in these sessions to build awareness and understanding among negotiators on the experiences, opportunities and challenges on the ground.<sup>170</sup> During 2013, submissions by Parties under the ADP workstream two began to increasingly reference “international cooperative initiatives” and Parties elevated the issue by mandating two ministerial level events and Technical Examination Meetings (TEMs) in 2014 to identify concrete opportunities for enhancing cooperative initiatives. With the support of the UNFCCC Secretariat, these events were organized sectorally, rather than by constituency, with emphasis on the mitigation potential of action within sectors or thematic areas, such as energy, transport and short-lived climate pollutants. Yet, no new initiatives were created via this negotiating workstream—a state of affairs that can be traced to two limiting

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<sup>169</sup> UNFCCC, ‘Technical Paper Secretariat Workstream2 ADP2.1’.

<sup>170</sup> For summaries of ADP2 sessions which included presentations by these actors, see UNFCCC, ‘Summary Report on the Workshop on Low-Emission Development Opportunities’; and Nafo, ‘Workshop on Pre-2020 Ambition ADP2.2’.

factors in the organization of the ADP2 process: decentralized decision-making and low convening power.

First, being a pre-eminently member state-driven forum, there was little authority on the part of the co-chairs to make decisions such as to rely on or partner with influencers in the network of cooperative initiatives to ask them to develop new initiatives. While the co-chairs could and did certainly steer and shape the discussions, they were beholden to the Parties for ultimate decision-making, and the Parties were not of one mind on whether and how to proceed on incentivizing cooperative initiatives, especially given the fast pace of evolution of ADP1. To the contrary, there was a strong division among Parties on whether they should encourage cooperative initiatives. Although the Durban Decision that birthed the ADP clearly mandated two workstreams, it transpired during 2012 that Parties did not have a clear understanding of the scope of ADP2 or indeed what they hoped to achieve out of it. One the one hand, the workstream was supposed to consider options for increasing pre-2020 ambition. On the other hand, it wasn't clear to Parties whether it was supposed to *enhance* pre-2020 ambition during its tenure. Over the course of 2012 and 2013, Parties began to increasingly vocalize a theory of change that increased pre-2020 ambition would be important for securing high post-2020 ambition, and therefore it was necessary for ADP2 to enhance pre-2020 ambition to the extent possible.<sup>171</sup> However, even though Parties increasingly recognized the importance of cooperative initiatives for post-2020 ambition, they did not reach a joint position to

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<sup>171</sup> See UNFCCC, 'Reflections on Progress Made at the Third Part of the Second Session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action and on Its Work in 2014', para. 25.

ask partners to make commitments at the workshops or even at the ministerial level meetings. Rather, the meetings were designed as traditional dialogues. Discussions did not reach a point where new initiatives could be designed.

Second, similar to the CSD in the previous decade, the ADP2 had low visibility, a direct result of its low convening power. The participants attending the meetings were members of the negotiating delegations of parties, mostly from ministries of foreign affairs or ministries of environment. Whereas the necessary governmental actors that would be able to help develop initiatives in specific sectors were not present, namely representatives of sectoral ministries such as those on transport, agriculture, power and so on. This was a direct consequence of the limited convening power and mandate of the COP. Over the course of 2014 and 2015, the ADP2 process began to increasingly recognize the need to engage political leaders, but the thinking remained confined to the contours of the UNFCCC process, and no strategy emerged to actively engage political and non-political leaders to raise visibility and accelerate the pre-2020 ambition at the level needed. Added to that, one unfortunate logistical circumstance was that the workstream two discussions often happened at the same time as workstream one, forcing many delegations to pick. As one senior official from the Government of India observed, “A lot of private companies realized that their future is tied to the negotiations. Workstream two provided them with a platform where they could engage. But it didn't improve the negotiations very much. A cynical view would be that some countries wanted to have workstream two and others let them have it without expecting it would change anything. A less cynical view would be that the negotiations were evolving as such a

rapid pace that it was very difficult to triangulate and have one workstream feed the other. Also, Parties don't really have large enough delegations to service both workstreams.”<sup>172</sup>

In summary, while both streams of member state-led activity to promote voluntary cooperation had some positive enabling factors, each also had significant drawbacks, which were seen in processes during the 2000s, and which mitigated their ability to galvanize new initiatives at scale. Overcoming these challenges would require a participatory choreography, which was pioneered at the 2014 Climate Summit and adopted by the Government of France for the LPAA and COP21.

### *3.3.3 UNFCCC Secretariat: A Valiant Paper Tiger*

While the discussions under the ADP2 were underway, the UNFCCC Secretariat itself was also making efforts to advance cooperative action. Following Copenhagen and a change in leadership of the UNFCCC Secretariat, a new dynamism was injected into the work of the secretariat, and the intention to use non-state actors to lobby outcomes became an explicit strategy in 2013. An “implementation coordination committee” was established in the secretariat with the purpose of using NSAs to drive ambition among governments. As one senior officer at the UNFCCC Secretariat put it, “The strict focus on national governments started to become less and less useful.”<sup>173</sup>

The Secretariat implemented this strategy on two fronts. Directing efforts internally, the secretariat sought to influence the negotiations, in particular ADP

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<sup>172</sup> Interviewee 20 (senior civil servant of the Government of India), in discussion with author, 5 August 2019.

<sup>173</sup> Interviewee 51 (senior officer at the UNFCCC Secretariat), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

workstream two. As a senior member of the UNFCCC Secretariat observed, “If you're a government official in Capital, all you know is what the media is saying and what your person on the ground is reporting to you. There is an incentive for the person on the ground to blame everything else. We were trying to change the psychology around the negotiations by pumping out good news and changing the mindsets of those receiving the vibes in capitals. From this perspective, the ADP workstream two was about changing the perception of the UNFCCC process.”<sup>174</sup>

Externally, the Secretariat sought to engage directly with non-state actors and encourage them to undertake cooperative initiatives. This was a rallying cry taken up forcefully by the Executive Secretary. A large number of her speeches since 2011, for example, are peppered with appeals to stakeholders to take action: “Whether you represent government, business or civil society, take the unambiguous low-carbon policy signals from Durban, and help us increase action through new partnerships... Help us make the revolution real. Help us achieve the change we need.”<sup>175</sup> In addition, a dedicated team within the secretariat was set up in 2014 to engage with “non-Party stakeholders”. The secretariat itself also became a partner in several initiatives during this time, instigating two.

However, these efforts did not directly result in a large number of initiatives being launched, primarily for three reasons: they did not provide high visibility; they did not benefit from centralized decision-making authority; and they were overshadowed by the efforts for the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA. These

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<sup>174</sup> Interviewee 9 (senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat), in discussion with author, 31 July 2019.

<sup>175</sup> Figueres, ‘Barbara Ward Lecture’.



limitations are rooted in the low convening power and low autonomy of the UNFCCC Secretariat.

Efforts of the secretariat to launch new initiatives necessarily took place in the context and margins of the negotiations under the climate convention. Since these negotiations are the purview of specific sections of national governments—largely ministries of foreign affairs and environment—the level of government participation is generally no higher than ambassador or director, with only the “high level segments” at the annual COPs attracting ministers and sometimes heads of state. The breadth of governmental participation is usually limited to one or two specific ministries. Thus, other than during highly consequential COPs when major agreements are due to be reached, government participation is not at leaders’ level, which in turn lowers the overall visibility of the process compared to events such as summits under the General Assembly. The visibility of initiatives being launched in the margins of the negotiations in 2012 and 2013 was therefore quite low compared to that available in high-profile events such as Rio+20 happening concurrently.

Further, as a treaty secretariat, the UNFCCC has a very specific role oriented around supporting Parties to the convention. As such, engaging in any significant way outside of the strictly prescribed role of facilitating the negotiations through conference services faced significant institutional challenges. The new focus on non-Party stakeholders by the executive-secretary faced obstacles even within the secretariat, with the idea of non-state actors being integrated into the process being anathema to most staffers, who were lawyers and accountants that consider a treaty to

be among sovereign nation-states only.<sup>176</sup> The ability of the secretariat to even hire staff members to attend to the non-Party stakeholder agenda depended entirely on the leadership and charisma of the Executive Secretary, and was severely limited by the executive secretary's official role.<sup>177</sup> Unlike the Secretary-General, who could draw on decades of Good Offices precedent as well as his high convening power, the UNFCCC Secretariat has extremely limited potential to generate autonomy, and as such lacked the central decision-making necessary to aggressively and openly pursue the formation of many new initiatives using its institutional authority. Rather, these efforts remained largely under the radar.

Recognizing the structural institutional challenges it faced and the limits to its ability to advance voluntary cooperation on its own, support to the 2014 Climate Summit followed by a partnership in the Lima-Paris Action Agenda was the natural progression for the UNFCCC Secretariat. Although it is difficult to conjecture on its role had there been no such attempt by the French and Peruvian presidencies, it is reasonable to assume that based on the experience of the member state-led processes of the sustainable development conferences in 2002 and 2012, in which the UN Secretariats faced significant challenges due to limited autonomy and/or convening power, the UNFCCC Secretariat may have faced similar constraints.

### *3.3.4 The 2014 Climate Summit: Dancing Together*

Following the inability of governments to “seal the deal” in Copenhagen, and their subsequent agreement two years later to reach a new universal agreement in

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<sup>176</sup> Interviewee 51 (senior officer at the UNFCCC Secretariat), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

<sup>177</sup> Interviewee 9 (senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat), in discussion with author, 31 July 2019.

2015, the decision by the Secretary-General to host a summit meeting in 2014 was motivated by a desire to support and overcome the limitations of the intergovernmental negotiations—a tactic with which he had experimented in 2007 and 2009. As a former negotiator in the UNFCCC and senior advisor to the Secretary-General recalled, “We needed a new pathway. We needed to do something over and beyond what had been done in the previous twenty years.”<sup>178</sup> This new pathway would be to “broaden the responsibility, and use the convening power of the Secretary-General's office to make the case for this co-responsibility of all stakeholders.”<sup>179</sup> An alternative, complementary view was that this was an attempt to right an existing wrong: “One could argue that the premise of the UNFCCC negotiations was wrong from the beginning. Climate change is an economy-wide issue. Only by bringing in the wider community that holds the economic levers are we able to find the right solutions.”<sup>180</sup>

Grounded in this rationale, it is clear that significant efforts were undertaken by the Secretary-General to enable the formation of many new initiatives. For example, as scholars have observed, a dedicated team in the executive office of the Secretary-General was created in order to shepherd initiatives into existence.<sup>181</sup> This team was supported through funds provided by a core group of governments and philanthropic foundations.<sup>182</sup> Communications about the summit articulated a clear

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<sup>178</sup> Interviewee 10 (senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Barbados), in discussion with author, 22 May 2019.

<sup>179</sup> Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

<sup>180</sup> Interviewee 7 (senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Denmark), in discussion with author, 11 June 2018.

<sup>181</sup> Hale, “‘All Hands on Deck’: The Paris Agreement and Non-State Climate Action’.

<sup>182</sup> Based on information shared by interviewees, this included, among others, the governments of Norway, Qatar and the United Kingdom, and the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation and the Rasmussen Foundation.

theory of change: to showcase demand and willingness from various parts of the economy to make the transition to low carbon. This, it was argued, would encourage governments to reach an ambitious agreement by December 2015. In other words, the “plan B” mentality of the Type II outcomes pursued in the previous decade was replaced with the hypothesis that demonstrating such real-world action could *encourage* governments to make progress in the intergovernmental sphere.

A theory of change armed with financial and human resources were insufficient on their own to spur the additional voluntary cooperation desired, however. Building upon the autonomy generated by the Secretary-General and the lessons learned in the previous decade, careful organization of the summit made the 2014 Climate Summit particularly effective at accelerating the formation and launch of cooperative initiatives on climate change. This was the result of six organizational attributes of the summit: its strategic timing; high visibility; sectoral orientation; emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments; subsidiarity; and leadership with centralized decision-making.

#### *3.3.4.1 Strategic Timing*

With a deadline imposed by the intergovernmental process, there was a strong incentive for many stakeholders who were already motivated to make voluntary commitments, to be and be seen as leaders in the low-carbon transition. The *timing* of the summit, occurring in the lead up to 2015, took advantage of this, and lent greater motivation to both, states and non-state actors. As an executive of the WBCSD observed, “There was a feeling that there was a countdown. Everyone wanted to make sure you were delivering against that. Because if you're not delivering, you're

not going to be able to influence policies. You need to be a first mover for that.”<sup>183</sup>

Moreover, unlike the summits in 2007 and 2009, which occurred just two months before the climate negotiations they were meant to impact, the 2014 summit was held a full fourteen months before the negotiations in Paris. The aim was to convene leaders and demonstrate will with enough lead time for negotiators to act on it constructively before the deadline. Not only that, the preparation for the 2014 summit itself occurred over a long period. Unlike the hasty convening that characterized the summits in 2007 and 2009, the 2014 summit was announced by the Secretary-General in November 2012, and preparations begun in early 2013. This long preparatory period of eighteen months allowed for extensive engagement with stakeholders and adequate preparatory meetings in relevant fora, as well as course-correction when needed. This was particularly appreciated by businesses and business organizations: “There was a long build up period to the summit. That was a good thing. We knew there was a possibility of our sector to come around a single core issue and tell the world what it is doing and what it intends to do in the future. So, we were able to engage CEOs in the lead-up time.”<sup>184</sup>

#### *3.3.4.2 High Visibility*

In keeping with his previous efforts in 2007 and 2009, the Secretary-General targeted leaders level participation in this summit, for both, the private and public sectors. Attuned to the fact that “businesses want a lot of visibility on the initiatives

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<sup>183</sup> Interviewee 33 (senior advisor to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 24 May 2019.

<sup>184</sup> Interviewee 47 (senior executive of a transport business association), in discussion with author, 24 May 2019.

they launch”<sup>185</sup> and “it means a lot to be acknowledged by the UN—it still has a status”,<sup>186</sup> access to this leaders’ level pulpit and public recognition via official press releases, press conferences and media attention were sold as an incentive for actors to make commitments. The team of the Secretary-General worked with the explicit understanding that the *convening power* of their leader was one of their strongest cards in trying to generate commitments, as it enabled them to capitalize on the desires of various actors to enhance their own reputations among their stakeholders. As a senior staffer observed, “The basic question was, how do we move the needle? We knew we couldn't control the private sector. We were bargaining with them and asking them if they could commit to the specific deadline of 2015 to do something that they wouldn't otherwise do. In return, we gave them the world's biggest platform and showed them that the mileage they can get with their shareholders is something they can't get anywhere else. In essence, we created a race to the top. This only worked because we were the office of the Secretary-General. Had the invitation gone from the Under Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, or the World Bank, nobody would have been interested.”<sup>187</sup>

### 3.3.4.3 *Sectoral Orientation*

Summit sessions were explicitly structured around eight greenhouse gas-emitting sectors, based on the UNEP Emissions Gap report and the academic

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<sup>185</sup> Interviewee 65 (senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development), in discussion with author, 4 October 2019.

<sup>186</sup> Interviewee 57 (senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 24 September 2019.

<sup>187</sup> Interviewee 35 (senior negotiator of the Government of Pakistan and senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

literature on “wedging the gap” that had arisen in prior years.<sup>188</sup> The sectoral orientation meant that stakeholders within a sector were grouped together rather than split by constituency type. Thus, for example, within the forests sector, indigenous peoples and business were able to, and encouraged to, interact together to develop common initiatives to be presented together in one session (see chapter four for a detailed exposition on this process). Their preparatory meetings therefore required them to engage together, in contrast with the closed door strategizing of Major Groups, which prevents inter-group collaboration. Since businesses, civil society and governments had been organizing themselves within these sectors in the previous decade in developing cooperative initiatives, the user-friendly design of the summit fostered both, competition between them to be included in the summit, and cooperation among them to develop new initiatives. The simple effectiveness of this approach was underlined by one leading business executive, who observed, “The last thing you need is a press release that says you're not in.”<sup>189</sup> While the “WEHAB”<sup>190</sup> focus of the Johannesburg summit and the thematic sessions of the 2007 and 2009 climate summits provided some antecedents for this approach, the organizers of the 2014 Climate Summit explicitly identified the sectors under which commitments were most needed to provide a political signal as well as practical benefits for climate mitigation and adaptation. Importantly, the identification of these select sectors was informed also by lead conveners in those sectors, at times causing the organizers to

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<sup>188</sup> and Blok et al., ‘Bridging the Greenhouse-Gas Emissions Gap’; Deng et al., ‘Wedging the Gap: Defining the next Steps to Implementation’.

<sup>189</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

<sup>190</sup> The five themes identified for partnerships under the WSSD: Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity. They were proposed by Secretary-General Annan.

revise plans. For example, Transport, Forests and Short-Lived Climate Pollutants were all included at the behest of the entities that were central in these respective networks.<sup>191</sup>

Departing from the constituency-based organization in the UN General Assembly, whereby member states have an elevated status over other actors, and the Major Groups are largely isolated from each, was not a move that all member states were comfortable with at the time. Similar to the 2007 and 2009 summits, providing regular briefings to member states remained an important and necessary condition for the Secretary-General to claim this space (four separate briefings were given in plenary in addition to information notes and bilateral meetings with delegations). Nevertheless, not all member states were convinced. As an advisor to the Secretary-General noted, “President Paul Kagame walked out of the finance session. He was surprised that the floor was given to CEOs before him, and didn't accept it. But now such a practice has become so established that heads of state and government don't question it. We wanted to break this taboo. We wanted to show that everyone is engaged, and on this issue, everyone is equal; everyone has to contribute. It was hard for many to swallow at that time.”<sup>192</sup>

#### 3.3.4.4 *Emphasis on Cooperative Commitments*

The summit was designed to elicit not just speeches, but *speech acts*. That is, rather than welcoming dialogue and deliberation as had been the case in the past summits in 2007 and 2009, and as was the norm in summits of the General Assembly,

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<sup>191</sup> Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.; Interviewee 8 (head of a prominent think tank), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

<sup>192</sup> Interviewee 35 (senior negotiator of the Government of Pakistan and senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.



the Secretary-General demanded promises and commitments by participants as a price for admission to the sectoral sessions. This applied to both governments and non-governmental actors. In 2007, the Secretary-General's invitation had informed leaders that the summit was “an opportunity to exchange views”.<sup>193</sup> In contrast, the 2014 invitation asks leaders to “bring bold commitments and announcements”, with no reference to exchanging views or engaging in dialogue.<sup>194</sup> This emphasis on commitments was publicized widely in the run-up to the summit, with briefings to member states, the press and civil society organizations making clear that the purpose of the summit was to foster bold action, and that speaking slots would be determined by the strength of commitments being made. This, combined with the prominence of the sectoral sessions—comprising over half of the summit—meant that pressure was high on would-be participants to make commitments.

This approach represented a significant difference from the standard format of a multilateral conference, which is oriented around dialogue and debate, such as the Johannesburg Summit. While it is now common to see such action summits (for example, the format was taken up by Governor Brown for the Global Climate Action Summit in 2018 and by President Macron for his One Planet summits, among others), this was a new concept in 2014. It drew on learning from the experiments of the Secretary-General in convening summits in 2007 and 2009, as well as from the action-oriented aspirations of the Johannesburg Summit and Rio+20.

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<sup>193</sup> Ban, ‘Invitation to the 2007 High Level Event on Climate Change’, 23 June 2007.

<sup>194</sup> Ban, ‘Invitation to 2014 Climate Summit’, January 2014.

#### 3.3.4.5 *Subsidiarity*

Providing an efficient way to steer actors incentivized by the timing and convening level was the principle of *subsidiarity*. In a major departure from the 2007 and 2009 summits, the organizing team selectively partnered with those entities that were already influential in the growing network of initiatives and who could use their influence to generate additional cooperation. Thus, rather than trying to develop capacities to convene and organize actors within sectors themselves, the team depended on those that had the comparative advantage and were already influential in the network. In essence, this created an efficient pipeline for initiatives. The Secretary-General's team entered into partnership with these sectoral conveners and depended on them to ramp up their efforts in time for the summit. This entailed significant changes to “business as usual” for these partners.

For example, the World Economic Forum has an undisputed comparative advantage in convening CEOs in a variety of sectors; a fact even acknowledged by a representative of its competitor, the WBCSD: “The Forum has a lot of ability to bring businesses to the table that others don't have. So it made sense for them to drive and be part of this action.”<sup>195</sup> In an unprecedented move that allowed an external actor to shape their agenda, the WEF planned a Climate Day in their 2014 annual meeting in Davos, the purpose of which was to start galvanizing the initiatives that would be featured at the climate summit later in the year.<sup>196</sup> This Climate Day was planned together with the summit organizers as well as the UNFCCC Secretariat, and was entirely structured for the benefit of the summit and COP21. A senior WEF executive

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<sup>195</sup> Interviewee 33 (senior advisor to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 24 May 2019.

<sup>196</sup> WEF, ‘Annual Report 2013-2014’, 13.

underlined, “Davos is not a tent full of people talking about climate action. This was very different to how we had used Davos before. The purpose of it was to create a movement; to give confidence to the CEOs.”<sup>197</sup>

In addition to the WEF, other strategic partners were asked to play convening roles within the sectors of their mandates, to develop cooperative initiatives specifically for the summit. These included transnational organizations such as WBCSD, but also intergovernmental organizations that had evidently been playing highly central roles in the network by participating in initiatives, for instance UNEP, the World Bank, and UNDP. This created for the first time a strategic link between intergovernmental organizations working at multiple levels of the network—system-wide, sectoral and initiative—in the purposive development of the network of initiatives (the implications of this link are discussed in detail in chapters four, five and six). In addition, intergovernmental organizations with appropriate mandates, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) were also given roles to act as conveners within their sectors.

The decision to partner so closely with sectoral influencers by the principle of subsidiarity was not uncontroversial. For example, while the WEF and the UN signed an MOU in 2019 to engage collaboratively and putting each other’s platforms to effective use, there was no MOU in place in 2014 and this kind of engagement was experimental and innovative, with the expected attendant discomfort. This close collaboration was contested in the WEF's board.<sup>198</sup> It was also greeted with

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<sup>197</sup> Interviewee 40 (senior executive of the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 23 September 2018.

<sup>198</sup> Interviewee 7 (senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Denmark), in discussion with author, 11 June 2018.

scepticism within the Secretary-General's team among those concerned about working with corporations driven by a profit motive and the optics around that.<sup>199</sup> Nevertheless, this approach was fruitful. As a senior operative within the Secretary-General's team for the planning of the summit shared, "In the end, quite a few of the initiatives announced at the summit came from the WEF process. Others from different parts of the system, such as IRENA. We ended up taking the lead on finance ourselves. Each initiative had a different textuality."<sup>200</sup> This subsidiarity approach was also appreciated and encouraged by several of the governments that funded the summit. As one senior official from the Government of Norway put it, "If the UN is unwilling to empower coalitions that in turn have the ability to bring about progress and valuable commitments, nothing happens. If the UN system sees their role as an effective facilitator, then a lot gets done."<sup>201</sup>

Beyond developing specific initiatives, strategic partners were also essential for a broader purpose, such as designing the summit and its impact. For example, the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) and the Global Commission for the Economy and Climate (GCEC), together with the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) were early collaborators with the office of the Secretary-General and were instrumental in the design of the summit, including the sectoral focus, seeing it as an important step in steering global discourse in the right direction for securing an agreement in Paris.<sup>202</sup> The influential report on

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<sup>199</sup> Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

<sup>200</sup> Interviewee 7 (senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Denmark), in discussion with author, 11 June 2018.

<sup>201</sup> Interviewee 4 (senior official of the Government of Norway), in discussion with author, 19 May 2019.

<sup>202</sup> CIFF, 'Deadline 2015: Towards a Global Strategy to Close the Emissions Gap'.

the New Climate Economy produced by the GCEC in 2014, which made the case for climate change as an opportunity for economic growth, was developed in close alignment with the summit.<sup>203</sup> This was to maximize the impact of both and to ensure that the report and the outcomes of the summit echoed each other to argue that economic growth and climate action are mutually reaffirming goals. As one senior advisor to the Secretary-General observed, “they gave us early drafts of the report and based a significant part of it on the summit action areas. We were scouring the world for what are the best actions for impact. We eventually placed them in touch with the various action areas.”<sup>204</sup> A senior GCEC advisor and principal architect of the report underlined, “the timing was important. We decided to launch the report at the summit, but wanted it to be ready by the summer of 2014. We wanted to influence the speeches at the summit.”<sup>205</sup>

#### *3.3.4.6 Leadership with centralized decision-making*

Critically, counterbalancing and complementing the principle of subsidiarity, was leadership with centralized decision-making by the Secretary-General over all aspects of the summit. This meant that the Secretary-General and his team could and did intervene in the development of initiatives if the sectoral leads assigned needed assistance. For example, in the case of the finance sector, limited progress was being made by the World Bank in convening private sector financiers and obtaining new commitments from them. This required the Secretary-General's team to step in and use their neutral convening authority. “On Finance, we asked the investors to think of

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<sup>203</sup> New Climate Economy, ‘Better Growth, Better Climate: The New Climate Economy Report’.

<sup>204</sup> Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

<sup>205</sup> Interviewee 31 (senior advisor to the UK Government and to the New Climate Economy), in discussion with author, 27 May 2019.

themselves as friends of the Secretary-General. In that frame of mind, we asked them for the best possible advice from their sector on what they could deliver for the summit. We modelled this as a theoretical exercise with them and wrote out the announcements in theory. Then we spent two months on the phone with each of the investors and groups hammering out what exactly they could deliver and how.”<sup>206</sup>

Indeed, to ensure that the various partners were progressing sufficiently in delivering on their responsibilities, and different levels of interventions were being made as necessary, a continuous dialogue was necessary between the office of the Secretary-General and the various strategic partners core to the preparatory effort. To this end, the office of the Secretary-General expanded by thirty individuals to ensure that a technical team existed to work hand in glove with the lead conveners and organizers of each sectoral session and initiative. Notably, the organizing team became deeply involved in assessing and improving proposed initiatives. Yet, the balance between the principle of subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making was a learning process. Partners have observed that at times the office of the Secretary-General took a heavy-handed approach, with too much bureaucracy and emphasis on process.

The leadership with centralized decision-making was only possible because of the autonomy from member states that the Secretary-General had created and wielded in convening a summit without a General Assembly mandate. In fact, this autonomy was a necessary tool in the deployment of all other enabling factors

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<sup>206</sup> Interviewee 7 (senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Denmark), in discussion with author, 11 June 2018.

identified above. For example, the Secretary-General could choose the timing of the summit as needed; had the liberty to organize summit sessions by sectors without needing to reach consensus among member states; could enter into partnership with any stakeholders without undue pressure from member states; and could withhold speaking slots in the sectoral sessions from member states and non-state actors if their commitments were not robust. As described in the previous section, this autonomy was hard-won in a series of incremental steps since the late 1990s, with the 2007 and 2009 summits setting the precedents in a summit setting.

The combination of these elements proved a compelling causal mechanism for a variety of actors to engage in cooperative initiatives within their respective and pertinent greenhouse gas-emitting sectors. Klaus Schwab, Director of the WEF, said that this experience demonstrated that with “well-structured global public-private cooperation, change can happen relatively fast and at a meaningful scale. Seemingly intractable agendas can be reshaped.”<sup>207</sup> It also proved an especially effective way to attract the attention and commitments of businesses that had not been deeply engaged in voluntary cooperation up until then, but whose participation would be consequential. Two examples are Cargill and Saudi Aramco.

The CEO of Cargill, David McLennan, was invited to participate in a press conference with the Secretary-General on the day of the summit. According to the network dataset of cooperative initiatives, Cargill had not been a particularly influential actor in voluntary cooperation up until then, with a low degree and betweenness centralities. Yet, the company, as a global behemoth in agriculture

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<sup>207</sup> Schwab and Waughray, ‘Profiles of Paris’.

commodity trading, had been specifically targeted for the impact that its announcement could cause in the sector. As one of the summit team members put it, “We ideally wanted to get the four big grain traders—Archer Daniels Midland, Bunge, Cargill and Dryfus—to agree together on sustainability benchmarks. We weren’t able to make that happen but we got some commitments from Cargill.”<sup>208</sup> The nature of the commitment being made by Cargill had been carefully negotiated in the preceding months, and the senior executives at Cargill had approved a commitment to ensuring deforestation-free palm oil in their supply chains. On the day of the summit, however, Mr. McLennan chose to go beyond what his own staff had advised him, and in the press conference said that Cargill will undertake efforts to ensure *all* its commodities will be free of deforestation. The powerful motivation provided by the summit is perhaps best encapsulated in the following observation made by Mr. McLennan: “When they write the history book about Cargill in another 150 years, this day will be in it. It’s a special moment in our long history to say that we’re not just going to be in the middle of the pack on this issue, we want to be a leader.”<sup>209</sup>

The intervention made by the then-CEO of Saudi Aramco, Khalid Al-Falih is another example. Over the course of 2014, the summit organizers and partners, notably the WEF and the UNFCCC Secretariat, had worked with Saudi Aramco in order to secure the participation of Saudi Aramco in initiatives of the oil and gas industry to signal that the biggest oil and gas company in the world recognizes the

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<sup>208</sup> Interviewee 60 (senior officer at the FAO), in discussion with author, 4 April 2018.

<sup>209</sup> Cargill, ‘Cargill’s U.N. Deforestation Pledge’.



challenge of climate change and is committed to help make the transition to a low-carbon economy. Until 2014, Saudi Aramco had not been an active entity in voluntary cooperation on climate change, participating only in industry associations and not in any initiatives that caused it to make commitments in favour of climate mitigation. By 2014, however, Saudi Aramco was significantly increasing its investment in renewable energy, which was Saudi Arabia beginning to consider as a potential national interest. Securing the participation of Mr. Al-Falih in the summit and that of Saudi Aramco in at least one initiative was seen as paramount by the summit organizers and partners. Following discussions under the WEF banner for a year, and engagement by the UNFCCC Secretariat, the participation of Saudi Aramco in the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative had been secured, but not yet the participation of Al Falih in the summit. A higher level of shuttle diplomacy was needed; one provided by Secretary-General Ban, who dispatched his assistant Secretary-General for strategic planning to personally convince Mr. Al Falih to attend the summit. This shuttle diplomacy was successful, and resulting in Saudi Aramco not only agreed to engage as part of the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative, but also acting as the spokesperson for the initiative, delivering two speeches in the summit and arguing that the company's future lay in ensuring that the goals of providing cheap and reliable energy for economic development and low-carbon economy "are not mutually exclusive".<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Al-Falih, 'Remarks by Khalid A. Al-Falih, President & CEO of Saudi Aramco in the UN Climate Summit 2014'.

In summary: six design elements in the organization of the 2014 summit had an accelerating effect on the number of cooperative initiatives launched: strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, emphasis on cooperative commitments, subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making. These elements were made possible due to the high convening power and autonomy of the summit host.

### 3.3.5 *The Lima-Paris Action Agenda: A Second Performance*

The launch of cooperative initiatives at COP21 was the stated aim of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA), a partnership between the French Presidency with the Government of Peru (the President of COP20), the office of the Secretary-General and the UNFCCC Secretariat.<sup>211</sup> The French Presidency incorporated the “action agenda” (i.e. voluntary cooperation) as a core part of its strategy for COP21, designating it the fourth pillar of the COP, in addition to the three pillars focused directly on the intergovernmental negotiations. The communications strategy for the LPAA defined the action agenda as “a counter narrative to insufficiency of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions or lack of progress in the negotiations... climate action before 2020 can help ensure the success of the Paris Agreement and catalyse ever higher ambition post 2020.”<sup>212</sup> Thus, the integration of the action agenda into the strategy of the COP Presidency internalized both the “plan B” approach of Type II partnerships in the previous decade, and the “race to the top” theory of change used by the 2014 Climate Summit: “The LPAA was a strategy to put pressure on governments to get an agreement. This was explicit. It was also a back-up strategy--in

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<sup>211</sup> UNFCCC, ‘The Lima-Paris Action Agenda: Promoting Transformational Climate Action’.

<sup>212</sup> LPAA, ‘Lima-Paris Action Agenda Communications Strategy’.

case there was no agreement in Paris, we could still show the world that something came up for sure. This was more implicit.”<sup>213</sup>

Both the Peruvian and French presidencies of the COPs had their own internal motivations to promote voluntary cooperation. In the case of Peru, the Minister of Environment, who responsible for the COP, Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, had roots in civil society organizations and instinctively felt the need to include the voices and actions of non-state actors as part of the solution to climate change. In the case of France, President Hollande had been convinced to take up the task of hosting COP21 partly on the basis of a domestic argument, that contrary to the doomsday view that was presented at Copenhagen in 2009, the French presidency of COP21 could be oriented around an *agenda positif*, which could be presented to the French public as well as the world, thus earning much political capital for President Hollande. In addition, however, the French bureaucracy, famously pro-multilateralism, was aware of the history of stakeholder engagement at the UN. As one senior advisor to the COP Presidency put it, “This was Kofi Annan's legacy.”<sup>214</sup> The positive political narrative and the bureaucracy's sympathies with the UN's history of stakeholder engagement merged well.

In addition to these motivations, the decision to establish the LPAA and the design of the Fourth Pillar at COP21 was strongly influenced by previous efforts undertaken by intergovernmental organizations. While the importance of voluntary cooperation was being recognized in several venues of intergovernmental activity on

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<sup>213</sup> Interviewee 26 (senior advisor to the COP20 President), in discussion with author, 22 October 2018.

<sup>214</sup> Interviewee 34 (senior advisor to the COP21 President), in discussion with author, 9 October 2018.

climate change, including the ADP2 deliberations of the COP and purposive efforts being made by the UNFCCC Secretariat through initiatives such as Momentum for Change, it was the organization and success of the 2014 summit in galvanizing cooperative initiatives that opened the imagination for the Peruvians and French COP presidencies on what might be possible at COP21. Indeed, the Governments of Peru and France were partly motivated to launch the LPAA *because* of the success of the Secretary-General's summit. As a cabinet minister from the Government of Peru noted, “Three things helped us realize that we need to do the Lima-Paris Action Agenda. First, after Copenhagen, it was clear that we should have a bottom-up process. It was also clear that the world was pushing towards an agreement in 2015... Second, at the COP in Warsaw in 2013, many NGOs left the room because it was seen as the ‘coal’ summit. Many businesses organized meetings outside the venue. So, we thought, what if we were able to bring non-state actors into the venue? Third, the Secretary-General's climate summit. It really demonstrated the importance of the non-state actors in pushing to an agreement in 2015.”<sup>215</sup> This last motivation was strongly underlined by a senior advisor to the President of COP21: “[the 2014 Climate Summit] became a template of how it could be done. The idea was not to reproduce everything exactly, but the template gave us a lot of ideas. Even the French Action Day followed this template. It was also a first filter of the coalitions, so we were grateful for that because the difficulty was in how to choose the right actors. So, having that first filter was extremely important. Plus, it gave us the political cover to

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<sup>215</sup> Interviewee 19 (cabinet minister of the Government of Peru), in discussion with author, 9 October 2018.

do it. Once you have a summit organized by the Secretary-General, it immediately gives the political legitimacy to have such an event. Once the Secretary-General does that, it automatically becomes legitimate for a country to do something similar.”<sup>216</sup>

COP21 took place over two weeks, with many different events in support of the Fourth Pillar taking place over the first week. This included an Action Day at the beginning of the COP, which featured the most high-profile commitments and announcements of cooperative action, as well as focus events on specific thematic issues held throughout the first week of the COP and on day one of the second week. While this distributed approach to the action agenda appears in stark contrast to the one-day summit held by the Secretary-General, the LPAA drew on many of the organizational design elements identified as conditions of success in the 2014 Climate Summit, to similar effect. These included, as before, high visibility; strategic timing; using cooperative commitments as the price of admission; sectoral organization; subsidiarity; and leadership with centralized decision-making.

#### *3.3.5.1 High Visibility*

The French government decided from the outset that COP21 would be a leaders-level summit, similar to Copenhagen, but with a twist: rather than inviting leaders at the end of the conference, the French asked leaders to attend at the beginning. This was in response to a long-held criticism of UN conferences and COPs (particularly COP15 in Copenhagen), which traditionally see leaders attend at the end, which limits the positive influence they have on the proceedings of the conference. As Greenpeace had argued in the context of the Johannesburg summit,

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<sup>216</sup> Interviewee 34 (senior advisor to the COP21 President), in discussion with author, 9 October 2018.

“inviting Heads of State and Government to speak first and negotiators to act in conformity with what their bosses said would make a lot of sense. After all, aren’t they our leaders?”<sup>217</sup> This decision meant that the Action Day of the COP, when the most ambitious voluntary commitments would be featured, coincided with the presence of the national leaders, and could benefit from their participation, resulting in high visibility. Even without this coincidence of national leaders and the Action Day, the anticipation and media momentum around COP21 also meant that the assurance of high visibility was clear to all stakeholders. As high visibility and positive media coverage was a key prize for many of the stakeholders attending, ensuring that the *agenda positif* was toiled during the first week was a strategic, win-win manoeuvre by the French government, which was able to reap positive stories about the COP during the first negotiating week.

In addition, similar to the 2014 Summit, the LPAA work was conducted with a long lead time—a full year of planning and engagement with the sectoral conveners to design the commitments and announcements to be made. The timing of the LPAA events therefore took good advantage of the motivation felt by many of the central actors in the network, particularly businesses and civil society: “in Paris, there was a clear milestone. Everybody was aligned to that and wanted to show their best face and positioning. Having important milestones generates voluntary initiatives.”<sup>218</sup>

### 3.3.5.2 *Emphasis on Cooperative Commitments*

Further, the French Presidency also prioritized commitments rather than the traditional speeches made by the “Major Groups” at COPs, and the LPAA team

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<sup>217</sup> Parmentier, ‘Lessons from Johannesburg: What Is the Future for UN Summits?’

<sup>218</sup> Interviewee 65 (senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development), in discussion with author, 4 October 2019.

worked together with sectoral conveners to identify and secure promising and credible pledges, with the working principle that speaking slots should only be offered in exchange for commitments. The invitation letters to speakers for the sectoral sessions thus referred to the LPAA as an effort that built on the 2014 Climate Summit, to “incentivize promising, innovative and collaborative climate action initiatives”<sup>219</sup> This was made clear to all partners, from technical to political levels. For instance, in a briefing to member states just a month before COP21, the LPAA team emphasized that speakers were being “invited to present cooperative initiatives and their role/ motivation in participating.”<sup>220</sup> At the political level, COP President Fabius and French President Hollande regularly raised the importance of the LPAA. The talking points for Minister Fabius for each of his meetings with ministers and leaders from various Parties always included particular notes on the Action Agenda and the LPAA and the Minister invariably requested his counterparts to engage on the LPAA and to bring commitments to COP21 to be featured at the Action Day. This personal level of involvement by the minister gave the LPAA significant profile among political leadership of Parties, contributing to, for example, the launches of several initiatives with the participation of heads of state and governments. This included Mission Innovation, an initiative led by the United States and for which much legwork had been conducted by the Philanthropist Bill Gates, and the International Solar Alliance, the first major international climate initiative led by India.

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<sup>219</sup> LPAA, ‘Invitation to Speakers at LPAA Focus Events’.

<sup>220</sup> LPAA, ‘LPAA Briefing on the Occasion of ADP 2.11’.

### 3.3.5.3 *Sectoral Orientation*

The LPAA expanded on the list of sectors that the 2014 Summit had prioritized by adding buildings, business, innovation, and water, for a total of twelve sectors featured under the Action Agenda at COP21. The Action Day was designed to feature the best announcements from each sector, while additional announcements were made and discussions on future steps held at focus events for each sector over the course of one week. This sectoral approach was a departure from the official norm of engaging non-state actors via Major Groups at COPs, but a continuation of the approach developed for the 2014 Climate Summit, as well as somewhat a continuation of the culture that had developed in the ecosystem of side events at the COPs. For example, “Sector Days” such as Forests Day and Transport Day had become staples among COP side events, and due to limited space and time for side events, many of these central actors had gotten used to having to cooperate with each other to hold joint side events at the behest of the UNFCCC Secretariat.<sup>221</sup> Importantly, the split organization of the Action Day and focused sector days served the purpose of fostering competition between actors in a sector to be granted a speaking slot at the Action Day, while also enabling them to cooperate across constituency lines. Draft agendas of the Action Day indicate that the speaking slots were highly sought after by stakeholders, with much bargaining on the commitments that could be made.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Interviewee 1 (head of a prominent philanthropic foundation), in discussion with author, 29 August 2019.; Interviewee 47 (senior executive of a transport business association), in discussion with author, 24 May 2019.

<sup>222</sup> LPAA, ‘Consolidated Comments on Proposal for Action Day’.



#### 3.3.5.4 *Subsidiarity*

Critically, the LPAA attempted to maintain the principle of subsidiarity in the organization of the fourth pillar. For instance, similar to the 2014 Summit, the WEF partnered with the Government of France to engage in planning for the COP during the WEF's annual meeting in Davos, in January 2015.<sup>223</sup> Indeed, from the WEF's perspective, this was simply one long engagement with different parts of the intergovernmental system, in the run-up to COP21.<sup>224</sup> Many of the same actors that had been central to the network up until then were asked to continue their roles in obtaining additional commitments within their sectors. This included, for example, UNDP, WEF, the governments of Norway, UK and Germany, and Climate Advisors, as the central conveners in the Forests sector, which had led the work for the launch of the New York Declaration on Forests in the run-up to the 2014 Climate Summit. The government of Peru took on the overall responsibility for the Forests sector under the LPAA, but depended on these actors for much of the legwork. Likewise, the secretariat to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition was asked to lead the work on obtaining commitments on Short Lived Climate Pollutants. This continuity—in big part a result of close collaboration and institutional memory-sharing between the team of the Secretary-General and the entire LPAA—meant that new commitments could build on existing networks of actors.

Subsidiarity also applied to the LPAA organizers themselves. The LPAA quartet divided up sectoral responsibilities among themselves to shepherd the different sectors and help develop the coalitions that would be announced in Paris. In

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<sup>223</sup> WEF, 'Annual Report 2014-2015', 20.

<sup>224</sup> Interviewee 40 (senior executive of the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 23 September 2018.

addition, different members of the Quartet were called upon to respond to different political needs. For example, the government of Peru, as a developing country, enabled France to secure the support of G77 countries more easily. A senior staff member of the LPAA from the government of Peru noted, “The French needed a partnership with a developing country to make their legitimacy more robust. The relationship between France and Peru was probably the most honest and open you can imagine.”<sup>225</sup> The office of the Secretary-General provided know-how on the organization of the sectors and the development of coalitions, as well as lending political legitimacy through the voice of the Secretary-General.

#### *3.3.5.5 Leadership with centralized decision-making*

Balancing this subsidiarity, and similar to the 2014 Summit, the LPAA quartet, led by France, maintained a firm hold on centralized decision making and leadership even while empowering the sectoral conveners. This was in part enabled by the existing degree of autonomy that COP Presidents enjoy. Unlike the sustainable development conferences under the General Assembly, the COPs of the climate convention in effect combine the roles of the Secretary-General of the conference and the host of the conference in the role of the Presidency, and minimize the role of the bureau to questions of process, resulting in a relative concentration of authority in the Presidency. In the negotiations, this is particularly evident towards the end of the COP as the President proposes negotiating texts in order to move past gridlock that often occurs. Indeed, the need to have an authoritative and diplomatically skilled President able to manage the complexities of the negotiations and bring about a

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<sup>225</sup> Interviewee 26 (senior advisor to the COP20 President), in discussion with author, 22 October 2018.

solution is a necessity recognized by Parties, based on the culture of negotiations that had evolved over the previous two decades.<sup>226</sup> The COP Presidency therefore enjoys some degree of autonomy, which had enabled the Peruvian COP Presidency to take the initiative to hold an Action Day in Lima, outside the remit of the negotiations, building on the goodwill arising from the 2014 Climate Summit just a few months prior. Nevertheless, while the Action Day in Lima had been organized without much comment by Parties, the large-scale effort that the Peru and France COP Presidents were planning for the LPAA meant that they felt more comfortable with obtaining some form of “blessing” from Parties to engage in the action agenda (that is, engineering a “reverse institutionalization” and expanding the autonomy they had). In contrast to the Type II partnerships, which were conceived as an official outcome of the Johannesburg summit and therefore attracted intense scrutiny by the membership, the LPAA was presented to Parties as an additional element of work that the French Presidency was undertaking to feature at the high-level event mandated by the Parties, but that did not impinge on the negotiations and therefore a stream of activity that Parties could choose to ignore if they so wished. Thus presented, Parties gave their “blessing” in the form of carefully-worded, inoffensive language in the Decision at COP20, which states that the COP “welcomes the Lima Climate Action High-level Meeting convened by the President of the Conference of the Parties on 11 December 2014 and encourages the Executive Secretary and the President of the Conference of the Parties to convene an annual high level event on enhancing implementation of

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<sup>226</sup> For an overview of the functions of the COP Presidency, see Chan, ‘French Diplomacy, the Paris Agreement, and the Structural Power of the COP President’.

climate action”.<sup>227</sup> The LPAA therefore gained the acquiescence of the Parties without being beholden to the Parties in any of the particulars of the action agenda and while maintaining a firewall between the LPAA and the negotiations. In other words, the French presidency struck a delicate balance of “formal but informal”<sup>228</sup> and secured a political space in which it enjoyed autonomy from the Parties as well as centralized decision-making as President of the COP, to develop the work of the LPAA and launch initiatives at COP21. Also helpful was the fact that with the overwhelming attention of Parties on the negotiations and content of the agreement itself, there was little, if any, resistance to the fourth pillar and France's efforts to advance the action agenda at the same time.

The combination of the timing, high level convening, emphasis on commitments, sectoral organization, subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making meant that the LPAA and the fourth Pillar of COP21 succeeded in maintaining the high-pressure on a pipeline of initiatives. A senior advisor to the Minister Fabius recalled, “Businesses were very welcoming of this approach. They wanted to be in the big room with the leaders.”<sup>229</sup> A former executive at WBCSD, which facilitated the launch of half a dozen initiatives at COP21 agreed with this effect: “The summits make us collaborate. Consider ‘We Mean Business’. The fact that we had fifteen companies cooperating, that would normally compete, is

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<sup>227</sup> UNFCCC, ‘Decision 1/CP.20’.

<sup>228</sup> Interviewee 19 (cabinet minister of the Government of Peru), in discussion with author, 9 October 2018.

<sup>229</sup> Interviewee 34 (senior advisor to the COP21 President), in discussion with author, 9 October 2018.

significant. The UNFCCC Secretariat told us exactly what was needed in the run-up to Paris.”<sup>230</sup>

### **3.4 Conclusions**

This chapter sought to understand the causal links, if any, between system-wide IGO efforts to promote voluntary cooperation on climate change, and the growth of such cooperation between 2000 and 2015. As such, this chapter was designed to fill the empirical gap in the literature on whether and how (that is, under what conditions) IGOs have spurred the formation of new voluntary initiatives on climate change. It did so by identifying the relevant IGO efforts and the most influential actors in the network of initiatives during these years, and tracing their motivations, processes and actions to establish whether a causal mechanism can be said to exist.

This chapter found that two streams of IGO activity, the 2014 Climate Summit and the Lima-Paris Action Agenda, have been causally determinant in the acceleration of the launch of initiatives in 2014 and 2015, and have lowered barriers to compel actors with existing motivations to make new commitments and form new initiatives. The presence of six attributes in the organization of the two activities were necessary for this: strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, emphasis on cooperative commitments, subsidiarity, and leadership with central decision making. The absence of one or more of these enabling factors in the other streams of activity

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<sup>230</sup> Interviewee 57 (senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum), in discussion with author, 24 September 2019.

explains their inability to accelerate the growth of the network. Table 3.1 summarizes the state of each of the six organizational attributes in the various activity streams.

When all six of these attributes are present, a pipeline for new commitments is in effect ‘turned on’. The high visibility and strategic timing capitalize on the existing motivations of actors, and promise a reputational reward. The emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments serves to focus the efforts of the motivated actors and encourage them to cooperate with each other rather than making individual commitments, which are easier, and also injects a competitive dynamic among actors to raise their ambition levels. The sectoral orientation encourages multi-stakeholder engagement over within-constituency cooperation, in effect corralling actors together rather than apart. Critically, subsidiarity ensures that the actors best able to convene and galvanize stakeholders at the sectoral level are empowered to do so, while leadership with central decision-making by the organizer maintains the control and agility to choreograph the organization and actors to maximum effect. Thus, while known drivers of cooperation remain necessary, these findings show that they alone do not account for the surge in growth seen in 2014 and 2015.

This analysis further found that each of the organizational attributes depend on the IGO in question having two characteristics: high convening power and autonomy. High convening power means the IGO should be able to convene at leaders’ level, *and* across sectors. Thus, for example, the UN General Assembly has higher convening power than the UNFCCC, which convenes ministries of environment and foreign affairs, but largely not sectoral line ministries. Autonomy means the IGO can make decision independently of its member states. Thus, the UN

General Assembly and the UNFCCC have low autonomy. Surprisingly, the UN Secretary-General was found to have high autonomy on climate change, and is in fact the only UN office to have both, the convening power and the autonomy to ensure the six organizational attributes needed to catalyze high growth in voluntary cooperation. This chapter has shown that this autonomy of the Secretary-General was incrementally developed by the UN secretaries-general over the 2000s, in effect expanding the range of their “good offices” from the issue of peace and security to sustainable development and climate change in particular, and the breadth of their good offices on climate change from member states to member states and non-state actors.

This chapter’s findings also have several implications for the subsequent case studies. Three of the six organizational attributes necessary for the acceleration in the growth of voluntary cooperation relate directly to the research design of the case studies of this dissertation. The importance of sectoral orientation underlines the relevance of the sector-wide analysis that is one of the aims of the case studies. In addition, the combined requirements of subsidiarity and leadership with central decision-making imply that the interaction between central actors in the network (the ‘subsidiary’) and external IGOs (the ‘leader’ with central decision-making) is extremely important for the success of growth in voluntary cooperation, which underlines the importance of multilevel analysis that is also one of the aims of the case studies. The following chapters will therefore serve as illuminating cases or tests for these findings, in three diverse contexts of forests, short-lived climate pollutants and land transport, and various combinations of IGOs.

## 4 Forests

This chapter considers the cooperative initiatives that address greenhouse gas emissions arising from the forests sector, and the roles of IGOs therein. In doing so, this chapter seeks to fill two gaps in knowledge on how IGOs may have contributed to the growth of the network of cooperative initiatives on forests. First, an exploratory sector-wide analysis examines whether, by participating in initiatives, IGOs had any significant influence on the growth of cooperation at the sectoral level. By participating in initiatives, how much of the network of voluntary cooperation are IGOs influencing? What influence have IGOs had on the variety of actors seeking to cooperate on this issue? How has this influence been significant for the growth trajectory of the network over time? Second, this chapter conducts a multi-level analysis of IGOs engaged in one initiative, the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF), to understand the interactive effects of different IGOs working at the system-wide and initiative-levels, on the formation and quality of the initiative. This multilevel analysis serves to test the findings of chapter three.

The forest sector is highly pertinent for this study, given its importance to the climate problem, as well as its governance structure and challenges. Being carbon sinks as well as sources of direct emissions through land degradation and deforestation (for commodities such as palm oil, soy, cocoa, coffee, timber, and pulp and paper), the potential of forests to limit global GHG emissions is extremely high. Mitigation action in the forestry sector could contribute to reducing greenhouse gas



emissions by up to 4.2 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/y by 2030,<sup>231</sup> or about 12% of total emissions. A given forest also falls under many different jurisdictions, such as national government, subnational government, forest-dwelling and indigenous peoples, and private ownership, among others, which means the functional need for cooperation is high. Precisely because of their economic value and competing interests over them, forests have long been an under-served and contested issue area in the intergovernmental arena. Following the failure of governments to reach a legally binding treaty on forests in 1992, and given increasing awareness and demands for accountability by consumers of forests commodities, the governance of forests has been characterized by significant informal arrangements with high dominance of non-state actors in addition to a mix of non-legally binding intergovernmental agreements and measures.<sup>232</sup> The network of cooperative initiatives on forests therefore forms a large part of the global forest governance architecture.<sup>233</sup>

This chapter is organized in four sections. The first section uses the network dataset to understand the influence of IGOs in the network at the sector level. Using techniques of visualization, community detection and centrality measurement, this section places IGOs in the context of the evolution of the network on forests, and assesses their influence in its growth, in particular comparing their influence to other actors in the network to identify the value-added of IGOs, if any, in the growth of the network. The second section turns to the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF)

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<sup>231</sup> IPCC, 'Climate Change 2007'.

<sup>232</sup>For an overview of this literature, see Chan and Pattberg, 'Private Rule-Making and the Politics of Accountability'.

<sup>233</sup>For a mapping of the state-led, hybrid and private governance institutions pertinent to the global forests governance architecture, see Guerra et al., 'Mapping the Institutional Architecture of Global Forest Governance'.

and presents an assessment of the quality of this initiative within the categories of “actor” and “process” and their respective sub-categories, as identified in chapter one. This forms the ‘set-up’ for the third section, which examines the interactive effects of the system-wide efforts by the UN Secretary-General and the initiative-level efforts by UNDP on the formation and quality of the NYDF. This multilevel analysis forms a test case for the findings from chapter three (that is, the six organizational attributes needed for IGOs to spur the growth of cooperation and their two enabling conditions). Some insights from this section also complement the sector-wide analysis conducted with the network dataset. The final section concludes, presenting the key findings of this chapter.

#### **4.1 IGOs and the Network of Cooperative Initiatives on Forests**

This section relies on network analysis to understand salient characteristics of the evolution of voluntary cooperative initiatives on climate change and the influence of IGOs in this evolution. Three techniques are used. Visualizations of the network in five-year increments illustrate its growth over time, including the diversity of actors and their linkages to each other. The application of a community detection algorithm for the network in 2015 shows the presence of sub-communities in the network—that is, actors that are linked much more densely to each other than to others in the network. Centrality measures of out-degree, betweenness and eigenvector are used to then probe the influence of different types of actors in the network over time. Out-degree centrality provides a measure of how prolific an entity is. The higher the score, the more initiatives of which it is a member. Betweenness centrality measures the information-sharing, bridge-building or convening roles played by an entity. The

higher this score, the more an entity is depended upon by others to connect them to other parts of the network and/or to share information. Eigenvector centrality measures how many sought-after entities a given entity is connected to. In other words, it's a measure of prestige. The higher this score, the more an entity sought-after or connected to others who are also highly-sought after.

#### 4.1.1 The Evolution of a Fragmented Network

The network of cooperative initiatives on forests, as a subset of this study's network dataset, consists of 35 initiatives, which vary significantly in terms of size and type of actors as members (annex 3 provides a list of the initiatives in the forests network, their acronyms and date of launch). Most initiatives have fewer than a hundred members, and there is no correlation between the year of the initiative's launch and the number of members. In other words, new initiatives have not necessarily attracted more members than previous initiatives. As figure 4.2 A-D illustrates, the network began with isolated initiatives involving businesses, civil society actors, philanthropic organizations and some governments before 2000, but the initiatives became interconnected over time as new initiatives resulted in co-membership of actors. The network has seen most significant growth in numbers of initiatives as well as members since the mid 2000s. While the interconnectedness of the network has grown over time, there are clear pockets of higher and lower connectivity.

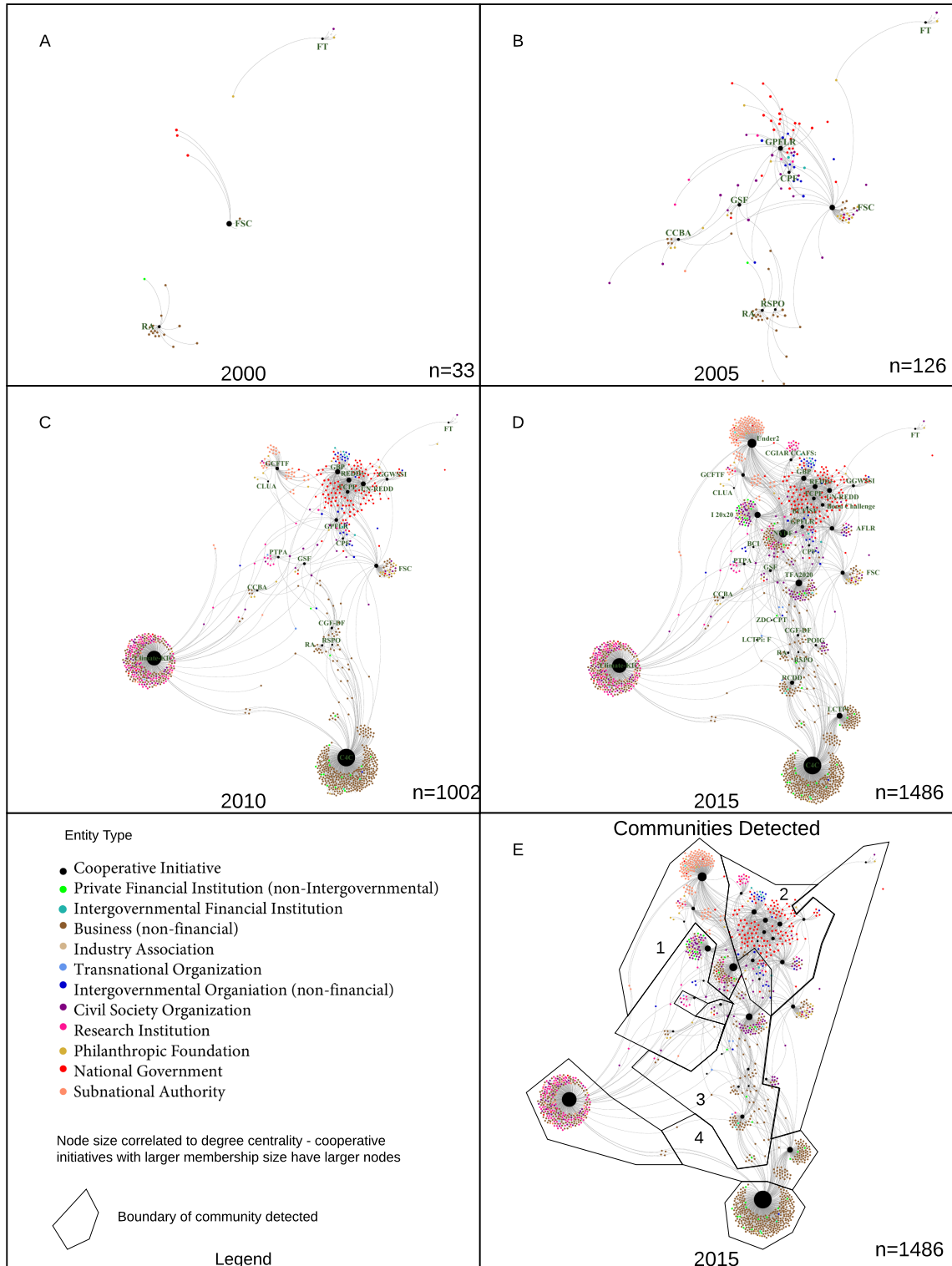
As well, many initiatives appear to have low diversity of entity types as members, and are dominated by one or two particular entity types. In particular, the network consists of many initiatives dominated by businesses, subnational authorities

and national governments, respectively, which may reflect a level of fragmentation and insularity in the development of various parts of the forests network of cooperative initiatives and possibly the wider governance architecture on forests. By contrast, a few initiatives including Climate-KIC, Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 (TFA2020), Initiative 20x20 (I 20x20) and the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF) have a more multi-stakeholder constitution.

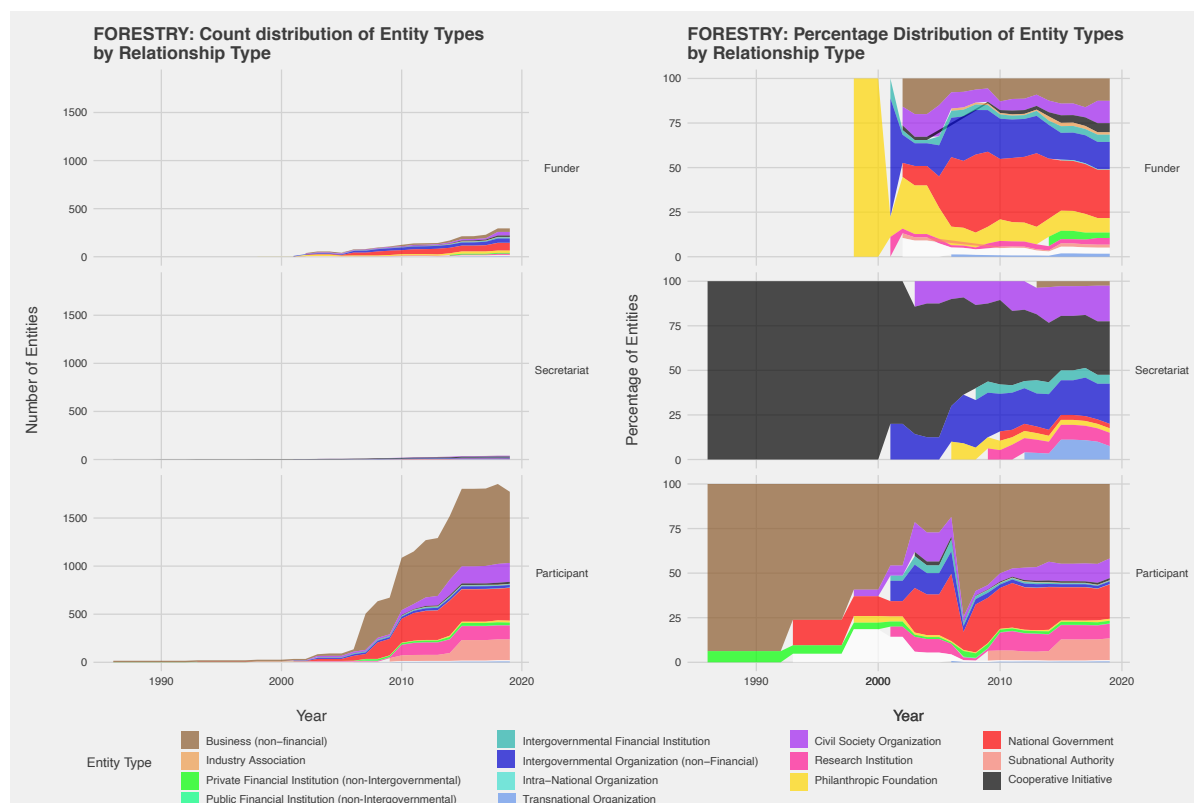
The apparent fragmentation of the network of initiatives by entity type is given credence by figure 4.2E, which shows the communities detected in the network, which are defined as groups of nodes, or entities, that have more dense connections among each other (i.e. among nodes within the community) than with nodes outside the community. Several of the communities detected in the forests network occur with high dominance of particular types of actors. In other words, constituency-based initiatives are clustered together to form communities. This is especially evident in communities with business and private finance actors (see communities 3 and 4 in figure 4.2E); and subnational authorities such as cities and states (see community 1 in figure 4.2E). Notably, most of the national governments in the network are found within one community in the network, albeit not always within one initiative (see community 2 in figure 4.2E).

*What does this visualization and clustering of communities tell us about how IGOs have engaged in the network on forests, and their relative influence?* IGOs are not among the members of the earliest initiatives formed, which suggests that at the initiative level, did not play an influential or driving role in the formation of the network in the 1990s or the early 2000s (this does not preclude the possibility of

influential system-wide efforts by IGOs in the 1990s, such as under the Rio Summit in 1992, however that is beyond the scope of this study). By mid 2005, a figure 4.2B illustrates, IGOs had begun to participate in the network, primarily engaging with national governments—an unsurprising finding, given the principal-agent relationship. As the network grew in the 2000s, many more IGOs began to participate in new initiatives, however, there is a remarkable lack of engagement in those communities that are dominated by subnational authorities and businesses. This suggests that during the growth of the network, IGOs did not particularly position themselves to connect different constituencies within the network. By 2015, IGOs are mainly found in the most densely connected parts of the network, rather than the peripheries, which indicates a high level of centrality of IGOs to the network. One significant exception is the UN Global Compact, which forms a community on its own at the edge of the network with the Caring for (C4C) Climate initiative—an indication that the membership of this initiative is potentially under-utilized in the network.



An alternative visualization of the growth of the network is presented in figure 4.2, which categorizes entities by the roles played in the initiatives—those of participant, secretariat and funder. In the forests network, the majority of entities have taken on general participant roles, followed by funders, and the secretariat role has been taken on by very few entities. In this network, businesses have dominated the role of participants, while national governments, NGOs, research institutions, financial institutions and cities make up the bulk of the remaining participants. Although a small percentage of participants are made up of intergovernmental organizations (both, financial and otherwise), they comprise an outsize ratio of entities taking up secretariat roles and, to a lesser extent, funding roles, in the network of cooperative initiatives on forests. Consistently taking up about twenty percent of secretariat roles in the network, IGOs are second to cooperative initiatives themselves in this role, closely followed by NGOs and then transnational organizations and research institutions. In terms of funding, while the current data suggests that philanthropic foundations provided all the funding before 2001 and that IGOs dominated the funding role in 2001, the limited funding data available prior to 2002 means this should be treated with caution. Instead, the information presented 2002 onwards is more appropriate for surmising divisions of labour in funding. National governments have clearly taken a lead role as funders in this arena, comprising 30 to 35 percent of all funders over the years. Coming second to national governments in this role, IGOs have comprised around fifteen to twenty percent of funders to cooperative initiatives on forests. Notably, philanthropic foundations, NGOs and businesses have also been active as funders.



**Figure 4.2 Distribution of entity types by their function in the network on forests over time.** The count distribution of entity types, left, according to the roles they play in initiatives shows no particular dominance of intergovernmental organizations. The percentage distribution of the same data, right, shows that intergovernmental organizations take up a large ratio of the secretariat roles and also significant funding roles. *Source: This study's dataset.*

#### 4.1.2 IGOs: Among the Most “Important” Entities in the Network Over Time

As figure 4.3 shows, sixty-three distinct actors have been highly central in the network at various points in its evolution, according to the three different measures of centrality. The high diversity of actors in this group is in keeping with the constituency- or entity type-based fragmented view of the network presented in figure 4.1, whereby communities of actors dominated by particular entity types have formed. The centrality measures provide some important insights into the influence wielded by different groups of actors over time, as follows.

**Governments**, both developed and developing, are among the most prolific entities in the network, engaging as funders and participants, which suggests they



wield significant influence in the governance decisions of a large portion of the network. These governments include the United States, Norway and Germany among developed countries, and Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mexico and Nigeria among developing countries. A few governments have also become important ‘connectors’ in the network, given their high betweenness centrality scores, which indicates their ability and likely propensity to connect disparate parts of the fragmented network. Germany alone scores highly on all three measures—the eigenvector score indicating it is engaged the most discerningly in partnerships while also engaging prolifically. Further, as a funder as well as secretariat, it wields uncommon influence in decision-making in the network. Given its long presence as central in the network, it has likely shaped the membership and topology of the network (that is, its community formation).

**Businesses** dominate the high scores in eigenvector centrality, and most as participants only (except Ikea and AkzoNobel, who have also been funders). This, combined with the large number of businesses in this group, and given that most of them are consumer goods companies, indicates that businesses, more than any other entity in the network, have prioritized engaging in the network with each other. This is suggestive of risk-averse behavior and supports existing knowledge that businesses choose to commit together with their competitors in order to avoid losing their competitiveness in the market. Yet, some businesses also show high betweenness centrality, notably EDF Renewables, General Mills, Nestlé, EON SE, Veolia, Engie, Suez, Danone, EcoAct, Mars, Unilever and Ikea (again, mainly as participants, except Ikea which is also central as a funder). Given their pickiness in engaging in initiatives

(since they don't have high degree centrality) but high betweenness nonetheless, and high preference for co-participating with other companies, these businesses are likely to have been the leaders among their peers, playing some convening or recruiting roles with the other companies in the network and engaging with other entity types in pioneering or pilot schemes.

**Civil society and/or research institutions** are a minority in this group of influential actors, with the World Wildlife Fund alone showing high centrality in all three measure. Notably, it does so in the early years of the network, which indicates a highly influential role in the formation of the network. Its appearance in the top eigenvector centrality scores along with the businesses indicates it has been prioritized as a partner of choice by these businesses, and has therefore likely influenced the formation of the business community within the network.

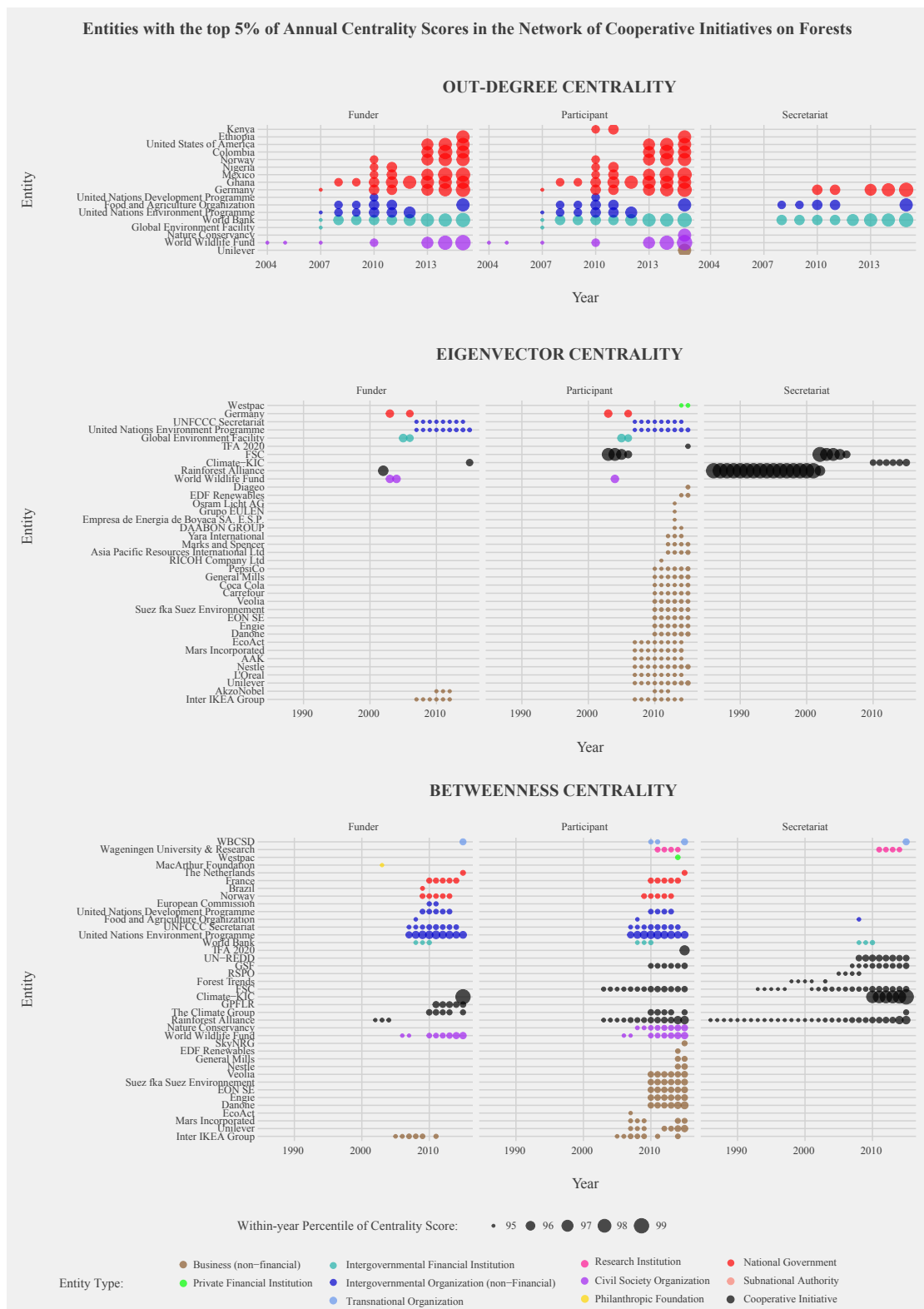
**Cooperative initiatives** themselves score highly in centrality measures in this network. Unsurprisingly, as there are relatively few initiatives that participate in other initiatives, this entity type does not feature in the high scores of out-degree centrality. That is, they are not known as prolific participants of initiatives. In addition, their high scores on betweenness centrality as secretariats simply reflects the large sizes of their membership, and the fact that a given initiative connects its members to each other, which does not provide much insight. However, their high scores on betweenness and eigenvector centralities as funders and participants is surprising and highly revealing of the nature of the network: If initiatives are funding and participating in other initiatives and over time, then there is an evolutionary logic to the network. If it is assumed that the actions taken by initiatives (to fund and

participate in other initiatives) is driven by a desire to fulfil their own goals, then new initiatives can be seen as a purposeful attempt to build on existing initiatives, perhaps overcome their limitations and improve the strength of cooperation in the sector over time. The locus of activity may therefore be shifting among initiatives over time. It may then become reasonable to view the task of assessing the quality of cooperation at the sectoral level, rather than just at the initiative level.

**Intergovernmental organizations**, by their inclusion in this group of highly central actors, have evidently been important to the growth trajectory of the network of cooperation on forests and have not been simply engaged in the peripheries. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UNFCCC, UNEP and the World Bank are all among this group. As the most prolific IGOs, FAO, UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank have acted as funders and participants as well as secretariats, which indicates they have played highly influential roles in decision-making around the allocation of funds and governance of cooperative initiatives on forests since the mid-2000s. Their high betweenness centrality as well is indicative of these agencies having played at least a strong information-sharing, if not convening and bridge-building role among the communities in the network. Finally, the high eigenvector scores of UNEP and the UNFCCC Secretariat during the same years that a large number of businesses have high eigenvector scores is highly indicative that these IGOs were prioritized as the partner of choice by these businesses (and vice versa). In keeping with knowledge on the legitimacy that IGOs lend to actors engaged in partnerships, it is understandable that businesses who are seeking to be risk-averse and reputation-enhancing prioritize

their relationships with reputable IGOs. This then positions these IGOs with very high influence on the engagement of businesses in the network. With their high betweenness centrality, they have been shapers in the community formation of the network over time as well, by acting as good connectors.

This analysis therefore makes clear that a core group of IGOs wields and has wielded significant influence over the growth of the network of voluntary cooperation in the forests sector. This does not indicate that all IGOs have this influence. To the contrary, out of the forty-one IGOs that are part of the network of cooperative initiatives on forests, only six score in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of any of the centrality scores. This does not indicate that the other thirty-five IGOs are not influential at all, but points to much more localized effects of their engagement. If IGOs are to be deployed as accelerators of the growth of voluntary cooperation on forests, then the six featured in figure 4.3 are best positioned to do so.



**Figure 4.3 Entities with the top 5% of centrality measures in the forest network from 2000 to 2015.** 63 actors have been highly central in the growth of the network, but only five show high centrality scores across the three measures, including UNEP and the World Bank. Source: This study's dataset.

## 4.2 The New York Declaration on Forests: One Tree, Many Roots

This section considers the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF), which was launched at the 2014 Climate Summit hosted by the UN Secretary-General. Following its launch, the NYDF was heavily featured in the media and among governments and civil society. A self-described “non-legally binding political declaration that grew out of dialogue among governments, companies and civil society, spurred by the Secretary-General's Climate Summit”,<sup>234</sup> the NYDF, among the initiatives launched in 2014, was on the one hand regarded as a partnership with perhaps the highest potential to bend the emissions trajectory, if fully implemented.<sup>235</sup> On the other hand, critics doubted its ability to deliver, decrying it “a smokescreen for Norway’s oil industry”.<sup>236</sup>

Taking the high ambition of the NYDF as a given, this section assesses the overall quality of the NYDF, using the categories of “actor” and “process” as highlighted in the literature. This section provides a basis for the multilevel analysis that is performed in the next section.

### 4.2.1 *A Highly Multi-Stakeholder Initiative with Strong Leadership*

In terms of partner mix, the initiative counted thirty-six national governments, twenty subnational governments, fifty companies, and sixty-eight non-governmental organizations including sixteen indigenous peoples’ organizations among its members at the time of its launch in 2014. At the time of writing in 2020, the initiative's membership had grown to forty-one national governments, twenty-one subnational

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<sup>234</sup> NYDF, ‘New York Declaration on Forests - Declaration and Action Agenda’.

<sup>235</sup> Hsu et al., ‘Towards a New Climate Diplomacy’.

<sup>236</sup> Lang, ‘The New York Declaration on Forests: An Agreement to Continue Deforestation until 2030’.

governments, sixty-one companies, and eighty-eight non-governmental organizations including twenty-two indigenous peoples' organizations. The diversity of actors combined with their number sets the NYDF apart from most other initiatives in the forests network prior to 2014. Few initiatives in the forest network combine a high number of partners with high diversity, particularly with national governments, subnational authorities, businesses and civil society organizations together.

In addition, the actors in the NYDF include those that are highly relevant and influential to the forest governance equation, such as forest-rich nations, donor countries that are committed to the forests agenda (as evidenced, for example, by the list of funders with high centrality in the network of cooperative initiatives per figure 4.3), companies that deal with forest-based commodities and have large market shares; indigenous peoples across the world who have stakes in their forests; and subnational governments under whose jurisdictions forests lie. Yet, this is not quite an optimal mix of partners. Key countries, such as Brazil and the United States (both highly important as forest-rich nations and funders of cooperative initiatives on forests themselves), were not part of the NYDF at its launch. Although the United States has joined since then, Brazil has not. In addition, the NYDF has very little participation by private finance actors—a problem for an initiative that needs to leverage or steer significant amounts of funding for successful implementation.

Not only are the partners influential to the forests governance agenda, but among them were those already highly influential in the network of cooperative initiatives on forests before the launch of the NYDF. Indeed, 17 of the founding members of NYDF were among the most influential in the network on forests in the

years preceding the launch of the NYDF (per figure 4.3). The NYDF thus builds upon the ecosystem of actors that were already leading in informal forests governance and had been influencing the development of the network of cooperative initiatives on forests. As a senior official of the Government of Norway put it, “The whole agenda had been building up over many years. We had the Tropical Forest Alliance. Countries like Norway, Germany and the UK had been really committed donors. There was company leadership by Unilever and others like Wilmar. There was a long history by then of pushing the issue of indigenous rights. And of course, the various pay-for-performance partnerships.”<sup>237</sup>

If the majority of actors in NYDF were already active in the network of initiatives, what added value does the NYDF provide? Interviews with actors engaged in forests governance reveal that, in fact, the mix of partners represents a major and much-needed development of breaking the siloes of within-constituency initiatives that had formed in the network. While many of these actors had been active and influential in the network, they had not worked *together* in a cooperative initiative. The NYDF therefore represents a thickening of the network of cooperative initiatives of forests. This responds to a growing belief among actors in forest governance since the late 2000s that in order to fulfil commitments within their respective constituencies (for example, among governments or companies or indigenous peoples' organizations), they would need to rely on action by other constituencies. This had become clear to companies in the Consumer Goods Forum in particular. In 2010,

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<sup>237</sup> Interviewee 4 (senior official of the Government of Norway), in discussion with author, 19 May 2019.



these companies had made promises to achieve zero-net deforestation by 2020 in the five commodity sectors that contribute to 40% of deforestation: soy, palm oil, pulp and paper, beef and timber. Focusing on their own supply chains and relying on the theory that the use of certification schemes would enable these commitments to come to fruition, these companies had not recognized the importance of other levers of influence, anchored at jurisdictional levels, such as governments and indigenous peoples. These constituencies proved necessary to address problems such as leakage, whereby the locus of deforestation shifts to other areas when specific areas are brought under certification schemes or regulatory measures. This had stilted their ability to progress in a measurable and impactful way. The current website of the Consumer Goods Forum traces this evolution in their theory of change: “Ten years ago, our strategy was rooted in remediating our individual company supply chains, often through certification... we have learned that certification plays a critical role, but it is not the only answer... we should have moved faster in broadening our work beyond narrow supply chain interventions. We are doing so now...”<sup>238</sup> Other actors such as governments and civil society organizations were also reaching the same realization and beginning to emphasize “jurisdictional approaches” in forests governance. It was therefore necessary, by design, that the NYDF comprises those actors that were influential in the network of cooperative initiative, within their own constituency-based initiatives, prior to the formation of the NYDF.

Notably, the NYDF was preceded by the formation of one major global multi-stakeholder coalition. In 2012, at the Rio+20 conference, the United States

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<sup>238</sup> Consumer Goods Forum, ‘Forest Positive Coalition’.

government partnered with the World Economic Forum and the Consumer Goods Forum to form the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020, which aimed to bring different stakeholders together and support the companies of the Consumer Goods Forum in reaching the target of net zero deforestation in tropical forests by 2020. However, the NYDF significantly exceeds the Tropical Forests Alliance 2020 in its range of partners, particularly with regard to civil society organizations and subnational and national governments, as well as in its ambition.

The leadership of the NYDF during its formation stage was both a centralized and a shared arrangement, to strong effect. The roles of broker and convener among different constituencies were played by UNDP, the WEF, Unilever, Climate Advisors, and the governments of Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom according to their respective comparative advantages.

For example, the governments of Germany, Norway and the UK—already close collaborators in the funding of forest governance—led the process of obtaining buy-in from forest nations. The Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, for instance, undertook the task of sharing draft versions of the declaration with other missions to obtain their approval. Norway engaged with developing countries that it was already funding on REDD+, to form an initial group of countries that were ready to sign up to the partnership, and that would then be relied upon to convince others to join. Among businesses, Unilever undertook the task of onboarding consumer goods companies, given its existing leadership on the issue through the Consumer Goods Forum. At the same time, among businesses, there was a strong incentive to avoid the convener being a business. A senior executive of one

of the founding companies of NYDF shared, “This is a competitive environment. If Nestlé doesn't want to sign up to the Mars initiative, then the only way to get critical mass is for the convener to not be one of the companies.”<sup>239</sup> Thus, although Unilever played an important rallying role among businesses, the WEF acted as a neutral convening platform to attract the range of businesses and build trust, in keeping with the role that it had played in previous years to facilitate cooperative initiatives, such as the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020. The WEF and Unilever therefore took on the task of onboarding businesses, as did some NGOs that been active in this sector. UNDP led the engagement with civil society and indigenous peoples’ organizations. This distributed leadership arrangement was a direct contributor to the diversity of partners in the NYDF.

In addition to this distributed brokering and convening system, UNDP maintained a central role as the authority responsible for convening the different types of actors together, in an exercise of trust-building. This proved important for ensuring the multi-stakeholder nature of the partnership, as will be elaborated in the following section. As one UNDP staffer put it, “ours was a task of trusted coordination. This is what we do best--putting aside corporate agendas and being trusted to being committed to the common agenda. Anybody orchestrating such an effort needs to have that trust. If you can get the issue of trust off the table, then real collaboration can happen.”<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

<sup>240</sup> Interviewee 18 (senior official of UNDP), in discussion with author, 3 May 2019.

Interestingly, while these actors played convening and brokering roles in the formation of the NYDF, not all of them appear as highly central in the network of forest initiatives before 2014, and some of them are surpassed by other actors that may have been better positioned to convene, according to the network data. In some cases, this is explained because the high centrality scores in figure 4.3 arbitrarily use the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile as the cut-off mark. The United Kingdom has betweenness and degree centrality scores as a funder in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile throughout the late 2000s and up to 2015. As well, as discussed in chapter three, the WEF officially participates in few cooperative initiatives, hence does not feature in the network dataset as an influential actor despite being so (as chapter three showed, the neutral convening role of the WEF among businesses was well appreciated and necessary). In the case of UNDP, however, while this agency does appear in the top 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of the degree centrality scores, it is superseded by UNEP and FAO in the network of initiatives on forests. The choice of UNDP as opposed to, for example, UNEP to play the central convening role in the NYDF had both positive and negative effects on the quality of the initiative, as discussed in the next section.

The reliance on influential actors in the network to play a leadership role in the formation of the initiative supports the findings in chapter three for the need for subsidiarity (that is, the empowerment of capable actors in the network) if the system-wide efforts of IGOs to promote the growth of voluntary cooperation are to be successful (in this case, the IGO making system-wide efforts was the UN Secretary-General). This is further discussed in the next section.

#### 4.2.2 *Stringent and Ambitious Goal-Setting*

The NYDF places high emphasis on *goal-setting*, with ten clear goals that are specific, measurable and ambitious. For goal one, which can be considered the primary, overarching goal, the partnership aims to “cut natural forest loss in half by 2020, and strive to end it by 2030”.<sup>241</sup> In addition, the partnership has articulated disaggregated goals that can be considered supportive of goal one. Their typology has been defined as consisting of: quantitative or qualitative output goals, which together contribute to the overarching goal; support goals that can be considered as inputs to achieving the outputs; policy goals that aim to ensure that forests are adequately addressed in international agreements; and reward goals that aim to ensure jurisdictions get payment for achievements in reducing deforestation and land degradation.<sup>242</sup>

Notably, the primary goal (that is, goal one) of the NYDF was not conceptually new, but based on existing research and recommendations that defined high ambition in the sector. It was called for, almost verbatim, in a review commissioned by the UK Prime Minister in 2008: “This Review believes that an ambitious international climate change deal should aim to halve deforestation emissions by 2020 and make the forest sector carbon neutral by 2030--with emissions from forest loss balanced by new forest growth.”<sup>243</sup> Several of the subsidiary output goals are based on existing constituency-based goals that had been articulated in this network in prior years. For example, as noted earlier, the Consumer Goods Forum

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<sup>241</sup> NYDF, ‘New York Declaration on Forests - Declaration and Action Agenda’.

<sup>242</sup> NYDF Assessment Partners, ‘NYDF Progress Report 2015’.

<sup>243</sup> Eliasch, Great Britain, and Office of Climate Change, ‘Climate Change’.

had made a commitment to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains of commodities including soy, beef, palm oil and paper by 2020.<sup>244</sup> The NYDF goal two draws explicit attention to this existing goal and aims to achieve it.<sup>245</sup> Likewise, the Bonn Challenge of 2011 seeks to “bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030”.<sup>246</sup> This goal is integrated into goal three of the NYDF.<sup>247</sup> In addition, however, the other secondary goals that aim to draw in greater finance, political support and governance improvements that would enable the quantitative targets to cohere and be achievable, are not explicit goals of existing initiatives. The overall ambition level of the NYDF is therefore made possible by amalgamating existing, disparate targets that were not achievable by the constituencies on their own, as well as additional measures and targets to improve the political and financial enabling environment to realize the ambition. This supports the finding in section 4.1, that initiatives build on each other and follow an evolutionary logic.

#### 4.2.3 Variable Process Management

The professionalism of the *process management* of the NYDF has varied significantly over the years. During the formation stage there was a high degree of professionalism, with Climate Advisers and the Meridien Institute hired and tasked with doing the daily work of consulting with all stakeholders to draft and fine-tune the language in the declaration. The professionals in this drafting team included a

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<sup>244</sup> Consumer Goods Forum, ‘Forest Positive Coalition’.

<sup>245</sup> NYDF, ‘New York Declaration on Forests - Declaration and Action Agenda’.

<sup>246</sup> Government of Germany and IUCN, ‘The Bonn Challenge’.

<sup>247</sup> NYDF, ‘New York Declaration on Forests - Declaration and Action Agenda’.

former treaty negotiator with the experience, knowledge and ability to understand the varied interests and concerns of the range of actors engaged in the process, and craft the document at a sophisticated enough level to obtain consensus.<sup>248</sup> The close coordination among the core conveners, the engagement of Climate Advisers and the Meridien Institute, and the personal leadership of the UNDP Administrator meant that there was a de-facto secretariat operating before the launch of the NYDF. However, after the launch of the initiative, this changed significantly, with UNDP taking a hands-off approach, and maintaining only an informal secretariat arrangement with a passive role for “managing new endorsements of the NYDF and convening the broad multi-stakeholder coalition of forest actors that are working towards achieving the NYDF goals.”<sup>249</sup> It was only in 2017 that an official secretariat was created for the NYDF, hosted at UNDP, with the active responsibility to “fill an important gap in the multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration necessary to achieve the goals of the NYDF.”<sup>250</sup>

The variable process management is directly related to the *funding* for the partnership, which has been provided primarily by three governments, namely the United Kingdom, Germany and Norway. The government of Norway, in particular, provided funding for the technical work of drafting the declaration and obtaining agreement among partners on its content. A Norwegian government official reasoned, “Without financing it's not going to go far. If you were going to trace the moment, the most important tactical one was when we decided to put a lot of money into staffing

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<sup>248</sup> Interviewee 8 (head of a prominent think tank), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

<sup>249</sup> UNDP, ‘UNDP Submission of Inputs on the Contribution of Forests to Agenda 2030’.

<sup>250</sup> UNDP.

the process. Plus, the staffing by UNDP—they didn't get money from us, but the time spent on it by them mustn't be underestimated.”<sup>251</sup> The government of Germany funds the secretariat for the NYDF, hosted within UNDP, but notably, the secretariat was unfunded in 2015 and 2016.

The *monitoring and evaluation* of the NYDF is the responsibility of a group of fifteen assessment partners, which are independent from the partners of the NYDF, and include respected research institutions, NGOs and think tanks in the forest sector.<sup>252</sup> The assessment partners have produced an assessment framework for the initiative and also produced annual reports focusing on particular goals on the initiative in addition to a five-year comprehensive assessment produce annual reports of the initiative, focusing on progress made on all goals since 2014 to 2019. All reports are available freely online. Notably, the assessment partners are funded by the government of Germany, the Climate and Land Use Alliance (a cooperative initiative in itself), and the Good Energies Foundation, and this arrangement was developed independently of the formation process of the NYDF.

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<sup>251</sup> Interviewee 4 (senior official of the Government of Norway), in discussion with author, 19 May 2019.

<sup>252</sup> The partners include: Environmental Defense Fund, Forest Trends, Imaflora, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Stockholm Environment Institute, The Sustainability Consortium, Zoological Society of London's Sustainability Policy Transparency Toolkit Initiative, CDP, Center for International Forestry Research, Chatham House, Clean Cooking Alliance, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Forest Foundation Philippines, Global Canopy, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, U.S. National Wildlife Federation, Overseas Development Institute, Rainforest Alliance, Rights and Resources Initiative, The International Center for Tropical Agriculture, The Nature Conservancy, Woods Hole Research Center, World Resources Institute and World Wildlife Fund US.



### **4.3 The Interactive Influence of IGOs in Driving the Formation and Quality of the NYDF**

Two intergovernmental organizations—UNDP and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG)—were engaged in the formation of the NYDF. The efforts of the EOSG have been conducted mainly at the system-wide level, while those of UNDP have been at the sectoral and initiative levels. This section considers their *combined* efforts and their effects on the formation and quality of the NYDF as described in the previous section. In other words, given the findings of chapter three, this section considers the relationship between subsidiary (UNDP) and central decision-maker (EOSG) in detail, to understand the mechanism at work. In doing so, this section also tests the veracity and relevance of the four remaining organizational attributes highlighted in chapter three for the success of system-wide IGO efforts (strategic timing, high visibility, emphasis on cooperative commitments and sectoral orientation).

This section finds that the interactive, combined efforts of EOSG and UNDP were essential for the formation and quality of the NYDF, while their individual and combined lack of efforts or failures have also limited the quality of the initiative over the years. This evidence provides strong support for the findings of chapter three.

#### ***4.3.1 Efficiently Breaking Down the Silos***

The distributed yet centrally controlled system of leadership for the formation of the NYDF was a deliberate decision made by the EOSG and UNDP as part of the organization of the 2014 Climate Summit. The ability of the Secretary-General to shape the summit by the organizing principle of subsidiarity and exert leadership with

central decision-making was the result of the autonomy enjoyed by the Secretary-General in this regard. A Government of Norway representative noted the value of this decision: “Both, [the UNDP Administrator] and the Secretary-General's office gave the coalition itself space to do the work. But we should not underestimate the importance of getting clarity and a mandate from the UN system.”<sup>253</sup> At the same time, the central role played by UNDP was the result of a decision by the EOSG to ask UNDP and in particular UNDP’s Administrator, Helen Clark, to steer the process of developing initiatives and commitments on forests in time for the summit.

This leadership arrangement, combined with the high-level convening of the summit, its sectoral organization and emphasis on commitments created a strong incentive structure for companies, governments and civil society actors that were already motivated and engaged in the network, to make an ambitious, joint commitment. The Norwegian official further observes, “The moment we realized there was going to be a climate summit, actors decided to have conversations on how we could leverage that moment.”<sup>254</sup> The system-wide, high-level convening meant that a space was created with the greatest possible visibility and potential for recognition, thereby creating competition within constituencies to secure speaking slots and be seen as leaders. The high credibility of being in the summit was especially attractive for companies, which were guarded in the initiatives in which they would participate and the actors with which they would partner. As a senior executive of one of the founding companies of the NYDF remarked, “The driver was

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<sup>253</sup> Interviewee 4 (senior official of the Government of Norway), in discussion with author, 19 May 2019.

<sup>254</sup> Interviewee 4.

that there is going to be a summit. Our competitors might do something. We want to get there first and stay in front. It's pure corporate ego.”<sup>255</sup> This incentive to be part of the summit was channeled into one to make voluntary commitments, by the strong emphasis on commitments as the price for entry in the summit. This emphasis was determined by the Secretary-General by using his autonomy in hosting this summit without a GA mandate. Further, by organizing the summit in sectoral action tracks to feature high ambition by all types of stakeholders in a given greenhouse gas-emitting sector, the silos that traditionally prevailed among actor types in the network (e.g. cities, businesses) were deliberately broken. This provided pressure among the actors to work together rather than separately to get visibility in the summit—a development that representatives of governments, UNDP, businesses and indigenous peoples’ organizations agreed was positive and essential for the forests sector, given the existing constituency-based communities (figure 4.3). As one senior UNDP official observed, “The key feature of the [NYDF] was... it started to make connections between systems that don't normally talk to each other.”<sup>256</sup>

To be clear, the pressure to create a multi-stakeholder initiative was not antithetical to existing incentives. To the contrary, as noted in the previous section, the rationale for a multi-stakeholder initiative on forests had been building for some time especially among companies and governments. The Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 launched by the United States and the WEF in 2012 was a step in this direction, but it had limited buy-in from subnational authorities and indigenous peoples, and it

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<sup>255</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

<sup>256</sup> Interviewee 27 (senior official of UNDP), in discussion with author, 18 April 2019.

didn't have ambitious goals. There was a need for a neutral convener with sufficient authority and ability to generate trust among all countries, civil society and companies alike, for a large-scale multi-stakeholder effort to form. This is what the convening and organization of the summit provided—a strong push and pull in the right direction. Indeed, this was a strategy deliberately co-designed by the stakeholders with the recognition that the convening power of the Secretary-General and UNDP allowed the stakeholders to overcome prevailing obstacles to making an ambitious, multi-stakeholder commitment. In 2013, when the office of the Secretary-General began discussions with partners on the planning and organization of the summit, they had not yet considered having a separate session on forests, and the preliminary thinking was to have a joint session on land use, which would combine forests and agriculture. The suggestion was put forward by the WEF, Unilever and Climate Advisors to have a dedicated session on forests, which would enable a leapfrogging movement in this sector. This was agreed upon by the office of the Secretary-General. As one of these core instigators explained the rationale, “Sure, there could have been a Unilever Declaration on Forests, but it wouldn't have had all the actors needed.”<sup>257</sup>

The convening level, commitment-focus and sectoral orientation of the summit provided a major incentive for the stakeholders to make a multi-stakeholder commitment, but as described in the previous section, the legwork of engaging with potential partners and convincing them to join the initiative was done under a

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<sup>257</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

combined centralized-distributed leadership model. UNDP played two key roles at the initiative level in this, as follows.

First, UNDP was the entity responsible for engaging indigenous peoples' organizations and obtaining their buy-in for the initiative. Playing the role of a neutral arbiter in the forests sector vis-à-vis indigenous peoples was one that UNDP had honed and developed expertise on over the previous decade. In particular, as the annual reports of UNDP indicate, through the UN-REDD programme with UNEP and FAO, UNDP has been a strong advocate for including the voices of indigenous peoples in the governance of REDD+. An independent evaluation of UN-REDD found, "For [civil society organizations] and [indigenous peoples' organizations], the relevance of UN-REDD primarily rests on the convening authority of the Programme, and the unique platform it has given them to voice the equal rights and interests of their respective constituencies, in local or global decision-making arenas. The implementation of safeguards (including free, prior and informed consent) and related veto rights are regarded as significant contributions to the democratization of the REDD+ regime."<sup>258</sup> While there are numerous on-the-ground challenges with effectively implementing REDD+ in favour of indigenous peoples and UNDP has not consistently advanced participatory governance practices for indigenous peoples' groups in REDD+, these governance efforts by UNDP had at least ensured that a degree of trust had been built by UNDP with indigenous peoples' groups in many

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<sup>258</sup> Frechette, de Bresser, and Hofstede, 'External Evaluation of the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (the UN-REDD Programme', 24.

developing countries over the years.<sup>259</sup> UNDP used this political capital to help create a comfort zone among indigenous peoples, subnational authorities and companies in the development of this initiative. Thus, even though UNDP did not have the high centrality scores as UNEP or FAO in the evolution of the network of initiatives, its deep and broad existing relationships with indigenous peoples' groups situated it extremely well to contribute to coalition-building for the NYDF. Second, UNDP played the role of the central authoritative convener among the distributed leadership actors in brokering an agreement, and acted as the bridge between the technical work of the NYDF formation and the political considerations of the Secretary-General's summit, to ensure recognition and speakers' slots for the appropriate actors from the NYDF were secured. Representatives of government, business and the WEF all concurred that these roles made UNDP a driving force for the formation of the NYDF. One government official summarized, "UNDP played a crucial role. It's not just about the institutions; it's about the people involved. The UNDP team had 30-40 years of experience operating in this space and was well respected by a lot of the actors. And we also needed someone on the inside of the Climate Summit."<sup>260</sup>

The distributed leadership for onboarding partners did not mean, however, that obtaining the maximum number of participants was always the aim. Political considerations tempered the extent of partnership pursued, and UNDP took actions to initially manage and limit the partners, out of need to ensure a partnership was

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<sup>259</sup> Frechette, de Bresser, and Hofstede, 'External Evaluation of the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (the UN-REDD Programme'.

<sup>260</sup> Interviewee 4 (senior official of the Government of Norway), in discussion with author, 19 May 2019.

formed in time for the summit. For example, UNDP, together with the governments of Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom, made a deliberate decision to not pursue the participation of Brazil and the United States in an aggressive manner in time for the launch of the NYDF at the summit, recognizing that the domestic politics of both countries might prevent these countries from signing on, and their international clout on this issue may cause them to sink the partnership even before it was launched. In the case of the United States, the possibility of the initiative drawing the attention of Congress due to possible budget implications in the commitment meant that it would be preferable to agree to the language of the declaration and launch the initiative first and then have the United States join later when there would not be an opening to revise the language. This decision to absorb potential political fallout and to circumvent particular countries in the formation phase was only possible due to central decision-making authority retained by UNDP in the leadership of the NYDF and the autonomy afforded EOSG and, by extension, UNDP, by the summit not being a UN General Assembly-mandated event. “We needed quasi-UN ownership, but not full UN ownership. So, we used the UN convening power and moral authority when it was useful, but were careful to say it was not a formal UN space.”<sup>261</sup>

At the same time, the combined distributed-central leadership arrangement wasn’t successful in attracting some necessary partners. Notably, there are very few (four) private finance institutions in the NYDF. Arguably, this was partly a failing of the organization of the summit. Although the sectoral orientation was the overarching

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<sup>261</sup> Interviewee 18 (senior official of UNDP), in discussion with author, 3 May 2019.

principle, the summit did have two constituency-based sessions—private finance (as part of the wider finance session) and cities. These constituency-based sessions had been deemed important for sending a political signal to national governments in the run-up to the Paris Agreement that subnational governments and leaders in financial markets were committed to and demanding ambitious climate policy. The focus of EOSG in engaging with private financiers for the summit was to secure commitments from them to make changes to their investment portfolios writ large. These actors were therefore corralled separately from those targeted for the forests session. They were not asked to engage on specific initiatives or portfolios in specific sectors. As well, there was a hope and expectation among those leading the formation of the NYDF that there would be significant public finance committed under the Paris Agreement, in particular the \$100 billion a year that has been the holy grail of climate finance since 2009. As one of the members of the NYDF distributed leadership team observed, “the \$100 billion did not materialize. We were expecting that finance will start flowing with Paris Agreement, but this has not happened, to the detriment of the New York Declaration [on Forests]”<sup>262</sup> As a result, during the formation phase in 2014, no entities had been designated as responsible for on-boarding private financial institutions in the NYDF and no attempts were made to integrate private financiers into the membership of the NYDF. Admittedly, this may also have been a function of lack of existing private finance influencers in the forests network. Prior to 2014, the network of initiatives on forests had no private finance entity with high scores in any of the three centrality measures considered in this study.

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<sup>262</sup> Interviewee 8 (head of a prominent think tank), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.



Yet, after 2015, it became clear that private finance would be essential for the effective implementation of the NYDF and for achieving goal 8 in particular. The 2017 annual report of the NYDF provided an analysis of the finance flows in the forests sector and in particular underlined the potential of private finance.<sup>263</sup> However, this did not translate into efforts by EOSG at the system-wide level, nor by UNDP at the initiative level to steer private finance in support to NYDF goals. Indeed, there was almost no system-wide engagement on cooperative initiatives at all by EOSG in the years 2016-2018. In 2019, Secretary-General Guterres hosted a climate summit with a similar aim as his predecessor did in 2014, to mobilize political will and to catalyze action. However, this was a lost opportunity with regard to steering private finance actors towards the NYDF. An EOSG team member for the 2019 summit stated that there was little to no institutional memory from the 2014 summit during the planning for the 2019 summit, and no attempts were made to build on the initiatives that had been launched in 2014: “There was zero evidence of a handover from 2014 to 2019.”<sup>264</sup> The lack of institutional continuity combined with a repeat of organizing private finance by constituency type rather than corralling these actors into sessions for greenhouse gas-emitting sectors meant that the EOSG’s system-wide efforts did not serve to advance the range of partners in the NYDF after its launch.

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<sup>263</sup> Haupt et al., ‘Zero-Deforestation Commodity Supply Chains by 2020: Are We on Track?’

<sup>264</sup> Interviewee 58 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 19 May 2020.

#### 4.3.2 *Creating Pressure for Maximum Ambition*

To spur the actors in reaching agreement on the highly specific, ambitious and time-bound *goals* of the NYDF, the timing, convening level and commitment-focused organization of the summit was significant and necessary. Participants in the formation of the declaration agree that these elements served to create an upward trajectory for the formulation of the goal—something that was lacking in the formation of the Tropical Rainforest Alliance 2020, which is also a multi-stakeholder initiative, but one that does not commit its participants to ambitious, time-bound goals as the NYDF does. The autonomy of the Secretary-General and the desire to maximise the ambition of the commitment meant that several commitment proposals were re-negotiated between the EOSG, UNDP and the distributed leadership team. An EOSG team member recalls, “At first they delivered 30-40 pages of commitments, some of which were just commitments to commit in the future. It took many conversations to whittle them down and get to the concrete ones.”<sup>265</sup> This mechanism of raising collective ambition through a vetting process enabled by the convening power, demand for commitments as a price for entry, and full decision-making authority by the Secretary-General (and by extension UNDP through its leadership team), was necessary for the high level of ambition in the NYDF. A representative of one of the founding companies observed, “It was a very business-friendly set-up. We were invited to think in terms of stretch goals. Could we deliver by September? By 2020? It's an attractive process. Companies were saying we could bring our efforts forward and it would cost this much. Without that summit, nobody

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<sup>265</sup> Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

would have accelerated their efforts.”<sup>266</sup> Even as the content of the declaration was the responsibility of the distributed leadership, the enabling space and pressure placed by UNDP and EOSG working hand-in-glove was seen as essential by many. A representative of the Government of Norway shared, “The declaration would not have happened without the leadership of UNDP getting involved, in particular on the ambition level. They gave us room to develop an agenda and align it early. They made us a key part of the programme early on. This gave us time and energy and enabled us to have a high level of ambition in the declaration.”<sup>267</sup>

#### *4.3.3 Dropping the Ball on Process Management*

On the other hand, neither UNDP nor the EOSG exerted much influence on the *funding* for the initiative, whether for the formation phase or for its implementation. Norway’s decision to make flexible funding available for the formation phase was in keeping with and a continuation of its existing funding strategy on forests via the Norway International Climate and Finance Initiative (NICFI).<sup>268</sup> Although UNDP provided essential human resources during the formation, this mode of working with an unfunded mandate in the run-up to the summit was one adopted by all members of the distributed leadership team. It is also not unreasonable to believe that funding for this may have been provided by one of the governments or by a philanthropic foundation if needed. In the implementation phase, the funding provided by the government of Germany was a decision made

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<sup>266</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

<sup>267</sup> Interviewee 4 (senior official of the Government of Norway), in discussion with author, 19 May 2019.

<sup>268</sup> Government of Norway, ‘Interactive Factsheet’.

after Germany made the suggestion to UNDP, not the other way around.<sup>269</sup> Neither is there any evidence that attention to funding for the NYDF (or any of the initiatives launched) was a priority for the EOSG during the preparation for the summit. To the contrary, the office of the Secretary-General downplayed the importance of funding up front, in stark contrast to the stance of the Rio+20 organizers, in a deliberate move to avoid time spent fundraising and to avoid the perception among donor countries that the purpose of the summit was to extract money from them. It was assumed that if strong partnerships were developed, funding would follow.<sup>270</sup> However, during the efforts under the Lima-Paris Action Agenda, the government of Peru, as the LPAA Quartet member responsible for the forests session at COP21, did emphasize the need to unlock adequate funding for the implementation.<sup>271</sup> The existing intention of the governments of Germany, Norway and the UK to make a commitment in time for COP21 dovetailed with this priority, and no private finance commitments were explicitly pursued.

The necessity for the government of Germany to suggest the creation of a formal secretariat to UNDP reflects the low attention that UNDP gave to the *process management* of the initiative after its launch. This was in contrast to the formation phase, when a high degree of professionalism prevailed, since the NYDF formation was being led by the office of the UNDP Administrator and in the distributed leadership team by the foreign offices of the respective governments, the leadership team of the WEF and the C-Suite executives of companies such as Unilever. In the

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<sup>269</sup> Interviewee 18 (senior official of UNDP), in discussion with author, 3 May 2019.

<sup>270</sup> Interviewee 14 (senior official of the United Nations), in discussion with author, 18 May 2020.

<sup>271</sup> Government of Peru, 'LPAA Focus on Forests'.

case of UNDP, the Administrator herself personally did some of the legwork by engaging in dialogue with governments and civil society organizations as needed to remove bottlenecks and to shepherd the process.<sup>272</sup> Thus, while UNDP was not alone in maintaining professionalism in the process during the formation, it certainly contributed to it, albeit perhaps not as much as Norway, which funded the hiring of Climate Advisors and the Meridien Institute. After the launch, however, UNDP did not “dock” the NYDF within its existing bureaucratic machinery. In fact, this was a direct consequence of UNDP taking on a lead convening role for this partnership: it was treated as a special initiative that the Administrator herself was leading with a select group of staff members. Consequently, the usual UNDP machinery that exists for programmes and projects, with adequate staffing, programme managers, monitoring and evaluation arrangements, reporting, etc. was not activated. Ironically, the very organizational structure that ensured the leadership necessary for the formation of the initiative undermined its effective sustainment. A senior advisor to the then-UNDP Administrator explains, “the NYDF had been orphaned within the UNDP machinery while being embraced by its leadership. Perversely, had it been embraced by the institution, it might not have happened at all. UN staff members are incentivized to not make mistakes more than they are to make a difference. If this were UNDP proper, it would have been seen as too politically risky.”<sup>273</sup>

Interestingly, the EOSG’s decision to allocate leadership on the forests session for the summit to UNDP, which had developed trust among forests actors, in

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<sup>272</sup> Interviewee 18 (senior official of UNDP), in discussion with author, 3 May 2019. and Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

<sup>273</sup> Interviewee 18 (senior official of UNDP), in discussion with author, 3 May 2019.

particular indigenous peoples, meant foregoing the experience of intergovernmental organizations such as FAO, UNEP or the World Bank, each of which had considerably more experience in developing and supporting such partnerships, including in forests. FAO, UNEP and the World Bank both score highly on the degree centrality from 2007, whereas UNDP scored highly only in one year, and not as a secretariat. As others have observed, UNEP's entrepreneurial bureaucratic culture and the Bank's top-down policy on pursuing multi-stakeholder partnerships had made both entities highly experienced in this mode of working.<sup>274</sup> Thus, in stark contrast to the UNEP approach for the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (see Chapter 5), during the formation of which UNEP provided detailed suggestions to the founding governments on what it would take to get the partnership running effectively (based on their experiences with other multi-stakeholder partnerships), UNDP did not have this experience to draw upon and was not proactive in ensuring attention to the process management of the initiative for its implementation.

Nor was there any pressure from the EOSG after the launch of the initiative to set up an adequate secretariat. Betraying the primarily political rationale for pursuing the development of cooperative initiatives at the 2014 Climate Summit and under the LPAA, the EOSG put in place no follow-up mechanism after 2015 to maintain high-level support for the sustainment of the initiatives it had helped birth. This meant UNDP was under no pressure to put in place effective process management for the NYDF until the government of Germany raised this issue as a matter of priority and

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<sup>274</sup> Andonova, *Governance Entrepreneurs*.

offered to fund a robust secretariat housed in UNDP and supported by Climate Advisors and the Meridien Institute.

Due to the same reasons, UNDP did not champion the establishment of *monitoring and evaluation arrangements* for the initiative either. Rather, the assessment framework and independent group of assessment partners were formed with the support of the government of Germany following the launch of the NYDF. While UNDP senior administration lent their support to this project, they cannot be said to have led it.

The experience on process management for the NYDF strongly points to the *continued* interactive engagement of the relevant IGOs, at their respective system-wide and initiative levels.

#### **4.4 Conclusions**

This chapter considered the network of cooperative initiatives on forests, and the roles of IGOs therein. Specifically, this chapter investigated: (1) whether and how IGOs influence the growth of cooperation in the wider sector by participating in initiatives (sector-wide analysis); and (2) the interactive effects of system-wide and initiative-level efforts of IGOs on the formation and quality of the New York Declaration on Forests (multilevel analysis). In conducting the multilevel analysis, this chapter also tested the robustness of the findings from chapter three, namely the six organizational attributes necessary for the success of IGO system-wide efforts to promote voluntary cooperation, along with their two enabling conditions (convening power and autonomy).

For the sector-wide analysis, this chapter found that by participating in initiatives, IGOs have strongly influenced the growth of cooperation in the forests sector. In particular, UNEP, UNDP, FAO UNFCCC and the World Bank are among the most prolific, most relied-upon connectors and highly valued partners in the network. Notably, businesses engaged in the network have prioritized partnerships with IGOs. The qualitative evidence in the multilevel analysis supported this finding, pointing to the legitimacy attraction for businesses as well as the strong desire for businesses to avoid being convened by a competitor. IGOs were therefore found to have played some uniquely valuable roles in the growth of cooperation in the wider sector.

For the multilevel analysis, this chapter found that the formation and quality of the NYDF depended on the joint efforts of a range of governments, businesses and civil society organizations that were already influential in the network of initiatives on forests, but that the combined system-wide and initiative-level efforts by EOSG and UNDP in enabling these efforts were *determinant* in the formation and several aspects of quality of the NYDF, particularly in its range of partners, its leadership and its ambition level. When aspects of the quality dipped, the lack of interaction between EOSG and UNDP were found to be responsible. In other words, the subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making conditions highlighted in chapter three were found to be necessary. But this chapter also found strong support for the importance of the other organizational attributes, including strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation and emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments—they were all necessary ingredients in the formation and quality of the NYDF. This



chapter highlighted the importance of the autonomy of the Secretary-General in regard to these attributes, and especially the value of being able to ‘bypass’ particular member states in order to advance more quickly.

Importantly, the stakeholders engaged *encouraged* UNDP and EOSG to deploy these functions as they saw them to be uniquely placed to enable the stakeholders to achieve an ambitious, joint commitment. This mutually fruitful choreography is perhaps best described by one of the business actors central to the formation of the initiative: “If the Secretary-General hadn't done the summit, none of this would have happened. But it's not a simple cause and effect. It takes two to tango—for forty different types of actors. We are getting better at understanding the system. There is an emerging leadership community which includes people from different types of actors, which is starting to understand how this choreography works. You don't need to explain it to everyone. You can drive most companies by capitalizing on their fear of missing out, rather than making them think more deeply on governance.”<sup>275</sup>

Finally, this chapter found that it may be useful to consider quality of cooperation at the sectoral level, rather than only at the initiative level. At least three elements of quality of the NYDF—the optimality of partner mix, the leadership, and the stringency and ambition of the goals—build upon the actors and goals that were present in the network prior to the formation of the NYDF. These elements of the quality of the NYDF can appropriately be understood as steps, or mutations, in the

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<sup>275</sup> Interviewee 25 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 10 May 2019.

evolution of the partner mix and goal-setting within the wider sector. This is supported by the finding that cooperative initiatives themselves have promoted the formation of new initiatives and become highly central actors in the network by doing so. In other words, initiatives have steered the sector around the formation of newer initiatives in order to achieve their goals. The establishment of the NYDF itself is appropriately understood as an attempt to thicken the existing partnerships and as a result increase the ambition level of actors within the sector. The quantity of the initiatives in the forests sector was therefore increased in an attempt to increase the quality of voluntary cooperation within the forest network that existed before the NYDF. In other words, the notion of quality of voluntary cooperation may be aptly applied at the sectoral level, and particular instances of cooperation—i.e. individual initiatives—may aptly be considered attempts to improve quality of cooperation within the wider sector.

## 5 Short-Lived Climate Pollutants

This chapter focuses on the network of cooperative initiatives on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCPs) and pays particular attention to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), which was launched in 2012. This chapter seeks to fill two gaps in knowledge about the roles of IGOs in the growth of this network. The first is whether and how, by participating in initiatives, IGOs have shaped and influenced the growth trajectory of the wider sector-wide network of voluntary cooperation on SLCPs (that is, a sector-wide analysis). Second, this chapter seeks to understand the interactive effect of initiative-level and system-wide efforts of IGOs on the quality of the CCAC (that is, a multilevel analysis). The multilevel analysis also serves to test the findings of chapter three, namely the six organizational attributes required for successful system-wide efforts to spur growth in cooperation, and their two enabling conditions of convening power and autonomy.

The SLCPs sector is apt for this analysis for several reasons. SLCPs are a category of greenhouse gases and particulate matter that, while lasting a relatively small period of time in the atmosphere compared to carbon dioxide (from a few days to about a decade), are mostly of high Global Warming Potential (GWP), which makes them particularly potent contributors to climate change.<sup>276</sup> SLCPs include methane, black carbon (soot), tropospheric ozone and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs),

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<sup>276</sup> UNEP & WMO, 'Integrated Assessment of Black Carbon and Tropospheric Ozone'.

and are the result of a range of economic activities and industries, such as agriculture, (in particular, livestock and rice cultivation), the oil and gas industry (gas flaring practices), wastewater management, coal mines, and diesel engines, among others. In addition to the climate benefits of curbing SLCPs, there are also short-term co-benefits, such as in the case of black carbon, which causes respiratory disease. There is therefore a high functional rationale for cooperation on SLCPs. At the same time, the governance of one SLCPs—HFCs—has been a contested issue, with two pertinent conventions governing HFCs. Attempts by developed countries to promote HFC governance under the Montreal Protocol, which governs Ozone-depleting substances, were seen by many developing countries as attempts to subvert the negotiations under the climate convention. While this has now been resolved with the 2016 Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, the tension during the past few decades has contributed to actors undertaking voluntary cooperation. The combination of these factors has therefore made SLCPs a priority area for voluntary cooperation, which provides a rich and pertinent case study for this dissertation.

Similar to the case study on forests, this chapter is organized in four sections. The first section relies on the network dataset to visualize the evolution of the network of initiatives on SLCPs, identify the formation of communities in the network and identify the most “important” actors in the network. This section assesses the influence of IGOs in the network over time. The second section turns to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, and presents an overview of several aspects of its quality, in effect forming the foundation for the analysis in the following section. Next, in section 5.3, the interaction of UNEP, as the secretariat to the CCAC, and

system wide efforts of IGOs including Rio+20, the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA are considered, to assess their impact on the quality of the CCAC over time. The fourth section summarizes the key findings of this chapter and concludes.

## **5.1 IGOs and the Network of Cooperative Initiatives on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants**

This section uses tools and techniques of network analysis to illuminate the growth of the SLCPs network of voluntary cooperation over time and to identify the most influential actors, including the potential paths of influence they may have wielded. Visualization of the network in five-year increments shows its evolution, including the diversity of its actors, their interconnectedness and variation in the density of connections across the network. Community detection is used to identify the clustering of entities into sub-communities within the network—essentially indicating which entities are more closely linked to each other than to others, which points to greater strength of cooperation within those clusters than between them. Finally, three centrality measures are used to identify the most “important” actors in the network over time: out-degree, betweenness and eigenvector. Out-degree centrality provides a measure of how prolific an entity is. The higher the score, the more initiatives of which it is a member. Betweenness centrality measures the information-sharing, bridge-building or convening roles played by an entity. The higher this score, the more an entity is depended upon by others to connect them to other parts of the network and/or to share information. Eigenvector centrality measures how many sought-after entities a given entity is connected to. In other words, it’s a measure of prestige. The higher this score, the more an entity is sought-

after by or connected to others who are also highly-sought after. For this relatively small network, the actors scoring in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of centrality scores are presented, rather than the 95<sup>th</sup>, as was done for the forests network, in order to yield sufficient data points for inference.

#### *5.1.1 The growth of a diverse network*

The network dataset used in this study reflects eighteen known voluntary cooperative initiatives that aim to curb Short-Lived Climate-Pollutants as of 2015 (annex 4 provides a list of these initiatives, their acronyms and their launch dates). The majority of initiatives (eleven) have fewer than fifty members, with the largest membership size being 161. Many initiatives show a multi-stakeholder nature, with nine initiatives consisting of at least eight different types of entities. The participation of subnational authorities and private financial institutions in the network is relatively low compared to other entity types on the network, with membership in two and three initiatives respectively. By contrast, businesses, national governments and intergovernmental organizations are found in twelve, twelve and thirteen initiatives respectively. Ten initiatives count other initiatives in their membership.

As figure 5.2A-D illustrates, the network has not grown evenly, whether over time or among entities. From a few, disconnected initiatives in the early 2000s, a more densely connected and larger network emerged by 2015. The network consisted primarily of businesses in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Notably, this is in connection with the Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy, an initiative that originally was not fully committed to climate action but rather represented the interests of the business community, acting as an industry organization. Over time, however, this same

initiative has evolved to being an important advocate for curbing SLCPs. In the late 1990s, transnational organizations, intergovernmental financial organizations and NGOs began to engage as participants in SLCP initiatives. This preceded a steady growth period starting in 2002, when intergovernmental organizations, governments, philanthropic foundations and research institutions began to engage as members of initiatives, and when the number of initiatives began to rise as well. The period of most significant growth appears to have occurred during 2011-2015, when ten of the eighteen initiatives were launched, and the interconnectivity grew the most. This is associated with increasing engagement of national governments, cities, NGOs, philanthropic foundations and research institutions.

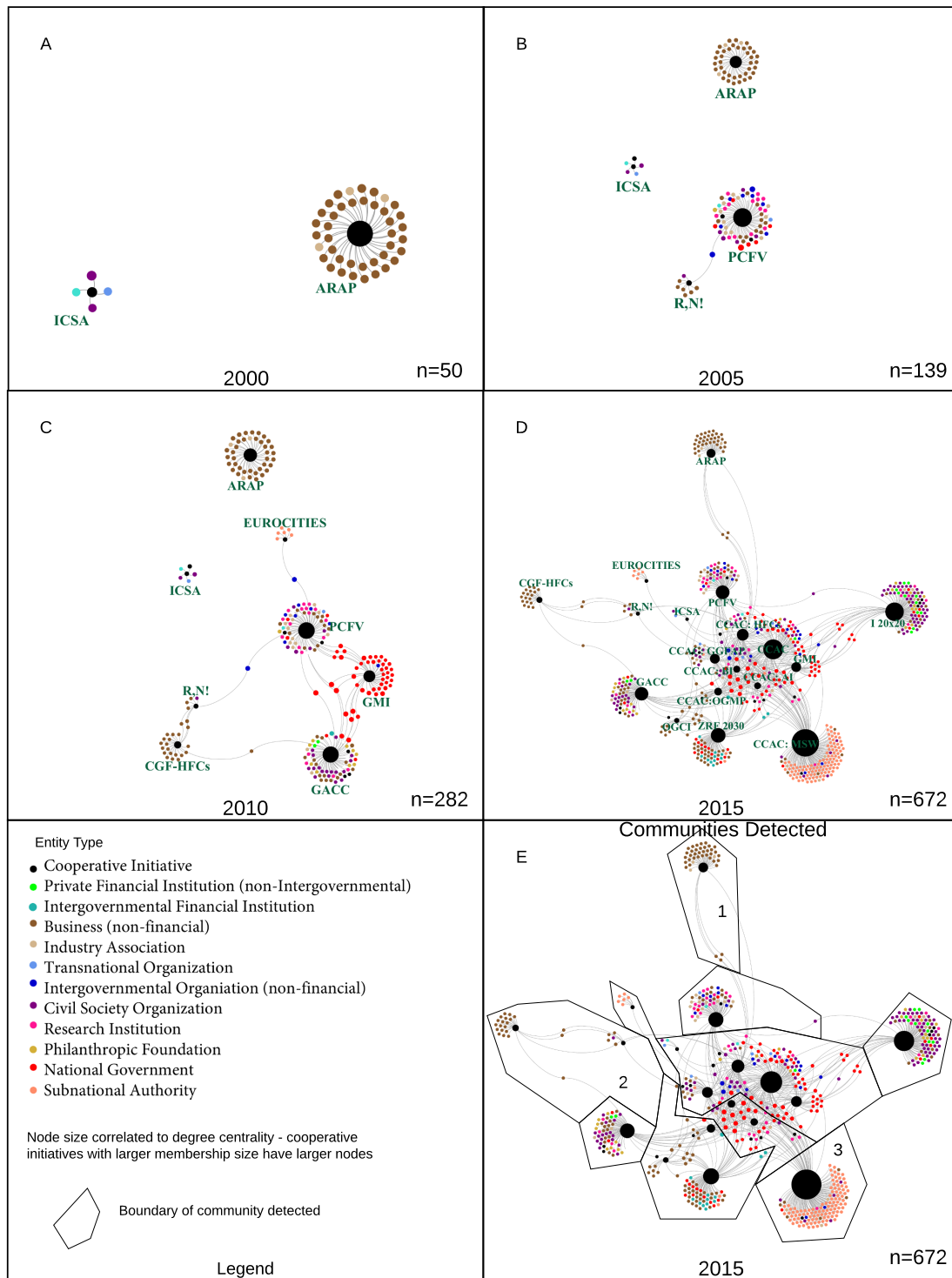
There are clear pockets of comparatively low connectivity to the rest of the network, such as, for example, the Consumer Good Forum's HFCs initiative, or the Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy, both of which occupy peripheral positions in the network as they share only two or three members with other initiatives. By contrast, there are also regions of high connectivity, notably the group of CCAC sub-initiatives, which, unsurprisingly, share a large number of members.

Figure 5.2E demonstrates the communities in the 2015 network that are detectible on the basis of the strength of connections between actors. Actors that have much greater density of connections among themselves than with the rest of the network are defined as forming a community. Out of nine communities detected, five consist of single initiatives, suggesting that there is a high amount of isolation in the network at the initiative level (those initiatives that form their own communities are at the periphery of the network). The communities also appear to have a slight-to-

moderate basis in constituency or entity type: three communities are dominated by a single entity type (businesses and subnational authorities—see communities 1, 2 and 3 in figure 5.1E). this suggests that businesses and subnational authorities are forming within-constituency partnerships in preference multi-stakeholder partnerships. Notably, many national governments are found in the remaining two communities that are more multi-stakeholder, together with intergovernmental organizations.

*What does this visualization tell us about the influence of IGOs in this network over time?* Several IGOs began to engage in the network in the early 2000s, and have evidently played bridge-building roles, connecting subnational- and business-dominated initiatives to more multi-stakeholder initiatives via their joint participation (for example, see figure 5.1C), but this visual observation needs to be verified by the centrality scores. Since the main growth spurt of the SLCPs network appears to have taken place in the 2011-2015 period, this relatively engagement of IGOs suggests a potential driving role in the formation of the network. Unsurprisingly, IGOs participate in many initiatives together with governments. The majority of IGOs in this network appear to have prioritized participation in the various CCAC sub-initiatives, and are densely connected to other entities in the core of the network. Some IGOs are found in more peripheral areas of the network however, notably participating in only one initiative each (see membership of PCFV and CCAC: MSW in figure 5.1D).





**Figure 5.1 Growth of the network of cooperative initiatives on SLCPs from 2000 to 2015.** The network has grown more interconnected over time (Figure 5.1A-D), but shows some constituency-based community formation (Figure 5.1E). *Source: This study's dataset.*

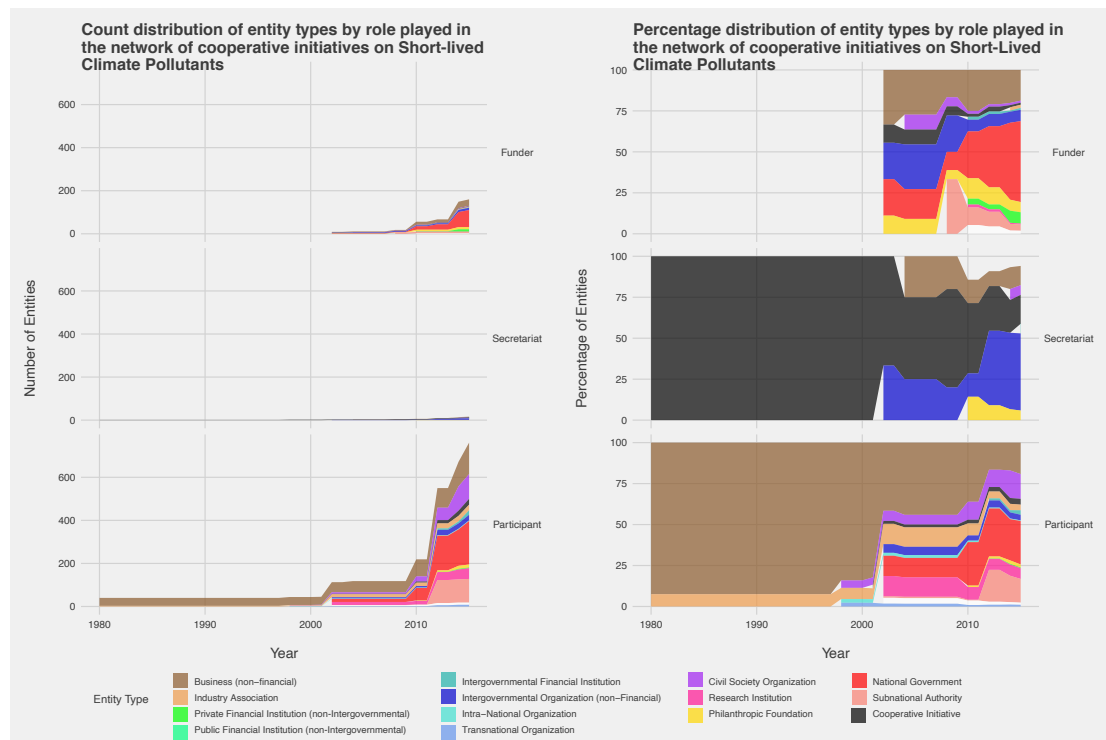
The dominance of the CCAC—an IGO-supported initiative—is noteworthy. It forms the core of the network, together with its sub-initiatives (whose memberships do not overlap fully with the wider coalition), and has evidently been responsible for or at least central in the growth spurt of the network in the 2011-2015 period, accounting for seven of the ten initiatives launched during this period. This points to a very strong sector-shaping role played by CCAC, and potentially by the IGOs that support it, including its secretariat, UNEP.

In sum, the communities detected suggests some fragmentation, particularly with some businesses and subnational authorities tending to form less heterogeneous communities than other entity types, but not always. Likewise, there is strong clustering among some governments and IGOs in the most interconnected communities of the network, but other governments and IGOs are also found in less connected regions. The dominance of the CCAC in the network suggests a highly influential role played by the CCAC and some IGOs in the growth of this network.

Figure 5.2 provides a different perspective on the growth of this network, focusing on the roles taken up by various entity types over time, including those of participant, secretariat and funder. illustrates the distribution of roles taken up by entity types as the network has grown over time, both as a raw count of the number of entities per entity type per role, and as a percentage entity type per role. Several patterns are discernible, as follows.

In keeping with expectations, the majority of the entities in the SLCP network are participants, followed by funders and then secretariats. Limitations of data availability on funding relationships before 2002 mean that it is not possible to form a

full picture of the donors to SLCP initiatives in the late twentieth century, but since 2002, philanthropic foundations, national governments, intergovernmental organizations and businesses have all been funding initiatives. While intergovernmental organizations dominated the funding roles in the early to mid 2000s, in recent years, national governments have become the dominant donor type of SLCP initiatives. The secretariat function for SLCP initiatives was predominantly carried out by the initiatives themselves in the 1980s and 1990s, but as the number of initiatives grew, intergovernmental organizations have taken up this role most frequently, followed by the initiatives and businesses, and to a lesser extent, philanthropic foundations, NGOs and intergovernmental financial organizations.



**Figure 5.2 Distribution of entity types by their function in the network on SLCPs over time.** The count distribution of entity types, left, no particular functional dominance of intergovernmental organizations. The percentage distribution of the same data, right, shows that intergovernmental organizations take up a large ratio of the secretariat roles and also significant funding roles in the 2000s. *Source: This study's dataset.*

There is therefore a clear division of labour in roles undertaken by entity types in the network over time. While intergovernmental organizations account for a very small fraction of the total number of entities in the network, they have consistently taken up a large fraction of the secretariat roles in the network, suggesting potentially important convening, brokering or information-sharing roles that may have driven the growth of the network. While IGOs also took up funding roles in the early 2000s, this function was adopted to a large extent by national governments since the mid-2000s, when the network of SLCPs began to grow significantly. This suggests that IGOs may have played an instigating role in the network.

#### *5.1.2 IGOs are Among the Most “Important” Actors in the Network over Time*

The centrality measures of entities in the network give further insight into the relative importance of different actors in the SLCP network of initiatives over time. In particular, entities with high centrality scores are likely to have been important actors in the network and played potential driving roles, depending on the centrality in question as well as the particular functions played by the entity in the network (secretariat, funder or participant).

Figure 5.4 presents the entities with annual top 10 percent of out-degree, eigenvector and betweenness centrality for the years 2000-2015 in the network of cooperative initiatives on SLCPs. These centrality measures indicate that fifty-three actors, primarily of four entity types—national governments, businesses, cooperative initiatives themselves, and intergovernmental organizations—have been “important” or potential drivers in the evolution of this network. Among businesses, only two

entities are highly central in this narrow group of central actors, which is in contrast to the overall diversity of the network, which suggests it is not a very fragmented network, in contrast to the network on forests considered in chapter four. A consideration of each of the entity types reveals the particular ways in which their most central actors have wielded influence in the network over time, as follows.

**Governments** evidently dominate the group as the most prolific entities in the network, engaging in the highest number of initiatives and most consistently over time since 2010 (only UNEP and the European Union join them in this category). This includes developed countries (Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States) and developing (Nigeria, Colombia and Mexico), with the former as funders as well as participants, but the latter as participants only. This pointing to very influential roles played by these governments in shaping the governance, funding flows and partner inclusion in the overall network. As well, with high betweenness centrality, governments are strong connectors or conveners in this network over time, as funders and as participants. Thus, whether through funding relationships or as supportive participants or implementers in initiatives, governments have played significant roles in connecting entities in the network. The high scores of many governments in eigenvector centrality reveals the development of “in-club” in the network in the period 2009-2015, consisting primarily of governments. This is in keeping with the insights from the network visualization in figure 5.1, which shows the proliferation of the CCAC and its sub-initiatives, which count many of the same governments in their membership. Given the clear dominance of these governments across the centrality scores, and given that they have taken up funding as well as

participant roles, this core group of governments has shaped the growth trajectory of this network in a deep way—determining the flow of funds, the inclusion of members and the rate of change of the network over time.

**Businesses** are a small minority in the group of influential actors in the network over time. Only Johnson&Johnson and Coca Cola enjoy this distinction, scoring highly on betweenness centrality, with the former as a funder and the latter as a participant. This indicates a potentially leadership or pioneering role played by these two companies in the network, as they would have to take risks and engage with disparate actors more than the norm among their competitors, to score highly in this centrality. This then suggests an influential role in shaping the engagement of the business community in the network.

**Cooperative initiatives** themselves are highly central in this network over time. Similar to the forests network, several initiatives are featured in this group of highly central due to trivial solutions in the calculations of centralities: The near solitary existence of the Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy (ARAP) for two decades in the SLCP network accounts for its high eigenvector centrality during these years. Likewise, high betweenness scores of initiatives when they are secretariats reflects their large membership sizes and does not provide much insight. However, the fact that several initiatives are highly central as funders and participants in other initiatives indicates that these partnerships are promoting others like them in furtherance of their own goals. In the case of CCAC having high eigenvector centrality as a funder, this is clearly a function of the CCAC supporting its own sub-initiatives. Similarly, though, other initiatives, such as Global Alliance for Clean

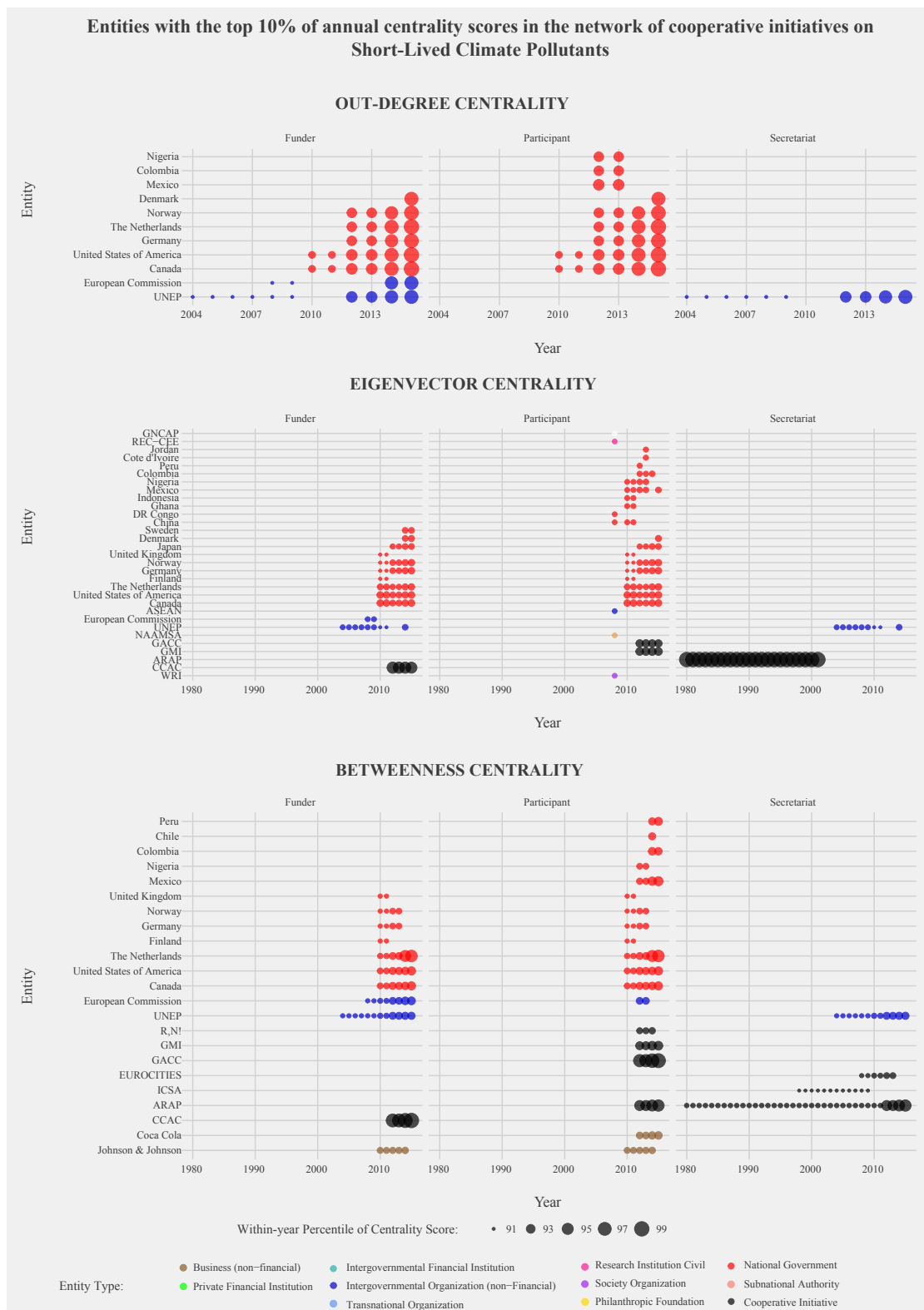
Cookstoves and the Global Methane Initiative are not only participating in (albeit not funding) other initiatives, they are being sought-after as partners by governments while doing so (high eigenvector centrality), which strongly suggests an ecosystem-building and evolutionary logic to the formation of initiatives and quality of cooperation in the sector over time. Several initiatives also show high betweenness centrality as participants mainly, which strongly suggests an ecosystem-building happening. When an initiative participates in another, it brings along its members to some extent at least. If such a ‘participant initiative’ is highly central as a ‘connector’, it means it has connected its membership to the membership of another initiative when they were largely disconnected before. In short, actors are growing the strength of the network over time; individual initiatives are merely the expedient, temporary vehicles to take some steps in this process.

Intergovernmental organizations are a lonely category in the group of highly central actors in the SLCPs network. UNEP is the only intergovernmental organization that scores in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. It also is the only entity in the entire network to score consistently highly as a prolific member from the early 2000s—most other members begin to score highly in the late 2000s. Further, UNEP scores highly across all three measures, and does so as a funder and a secretariat. Indeed, of the 10 entities that have high scores across all three centrality measures (Canada, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, Nigeria, The Netherlands, Norway, the United States, the European Commission and UNEP), UNEP has high centrality for the longest period of time, in funding and secretariat capacities. While the funding from UNEP reflects decisions made by governments that are likely in the network themselves, their choice

to channel the funds through UNEP indicates that this agency may be playing a significant role in the network.

These combined high scores mean that UNEP is unique among IGOs in the SLCPs network. Among IGOs, it is the most important connector, convener and bridge-builder. It is the partner of choice for the most influential governments in the network. It is among the most prolific members of the whole network. In short, UNEP has shaped the growth of this network in a fundamental way. The multilevel analysis complements these insights and serves to reveal the ways in which UNEP has used its capacities to grow this network over time.





**Figure 5.3 Entities with the top 10% of centrality measures in the SLCPs network from 2000 to 2015.** Governments dominate influence in the network consistently over time. UNEP is the only IGO to show high influence. *Source: This study's dataset.*

## **5.2 The Climate and Clean Air Coalition: A Confluence of Political Will**

The CCAC was launched at the U.S. State Department on 16 February 2012. Attended by ministers from Bangladesh, Canada, Mexico and Sweden, the event was presided over by Hillary Clinton, the then U.S. Secretary of State. Since its launch, the initiative has grown significantly, adding partners, sub-initiatives and new goals, attracting funding and so on. As the previous section illustrated, the CCAC, which aims to reduce the incidence of SLCPs across the world, is a dominant SLCP initiative within the network of voluntary cooperation on SLCPs in terms of membership size and diversity.

This section assesses the quality of the CCAC based on the categories of “actor (optimality of partner mix and leadership) and “process” (goal-setting, professionalism of process management, monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and funding). This assessment forms the basis of the multilevel analysis in the next section.

### ***5.2.1 Diverse but Suboptimal Partners***

The CCAC has a diverse *partner mix*, but it is not optimal. The initiative has significant breadth of partners, including developed and developing national governments pertinent to curbing SLCPs, NGOs and research institutes whose work focuses on SLCPs and which have been influential in raising the profile of SLCPs, and businesses and subnational authorities which have jurisdiction over the production of SLCPs. As of May 2020, the coalition includes 289 partners, of which 69 are countries or regional economic institutions such as the European Union or

ECOWAS; 58 are NGOs; 144 are subnational governments or private sector actors; and 18 are intergovernmental organizations.<sup>277</sup>

Notably, however, while this current partner mix includes entities that are influential in curbing SLCPs, this is a result of significant growth since the initiative's launch, and it is not yet optimal. Large, rapidly industrializing countries are among those with greatest potential to influence the trajectory of the growth of SLCPs, as are oil and gas producing countries. While CCAC has always had a mix of developing and developed countries, some of the most pertinent and influential developing countries only joined recently (e.g., 2019 for India), while others such as Brazil, China and most OPEC countries are not yet members, seeing the CCAC as an attempt by developed countries to undermine or distract from the climate negotiations.<sup>278</sup> Recognizing their limitations in attracting the more powerful and pertinent developing countries, the founding governments chose to maximize the numbers of other countries in the CCAC. "If you don't have the most powerful states of the world that can do something on climate, such as Brazil, India, China, UAE, Russia, Japan, which we don't, then maybe it's good to grow in numbers so we become more politically relevant. If we are 100, that's better than 10."<sup>279</sup>

As well, few businesses are defined as full partners in the CCAC, but rather are defined as "actors" in implementation, with reduced influence in the initiative's governance, which limits the fully multi-stakeholder nature of this initiative.

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<sup>277</sup> CCAC Secretariat, 'CCAC Partners'.

<sup>278</sup> Interviewee 20 (senior civil servant of the Government of India), in discussion with author, 5 August 2019.

<sup>279</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

At the time of its launch, the CCAC also included actors that were already highly central within the network of SLCP, including the United States, Canada and UNEP, all of which played determinant roles in the formation of the initiative. As noted in the previous section, with the universe of SLCP initiatives being relatively small, the partners of the CCAC and its sub-initiatives form the bulk of partners in the SLCP network 2012 onwards. Thus, the CCAC built upon existing central actors promoting voluntary cooperation, and in turn, membership of CCAC and its sub-initiatives caused actors to become central in the network from 2012 onwards.

### 5.2.2 *Strong US Leadership, with Supporting Cast*

The *leadership* of the CCAC is a distributed formal arrangement, with a high-level assembly that includes ministerial level representation from the member countries as well as the heads of various IGOs. In addition, two co-chairs of the working group, elected from the membership for staggered two-year terms, shepherd the process of decision-making among the membership.

While this is the now-formal leadership arrangement of the initiative, the formation of the CCAC arguably depended on a catalytic leadership role by the United States government, which began pursuing a two-pronged political strategy on SLCPs and HFCs after the failure of governments to reach a climate agreement in Copenhagen in 2009. First, the Obama Administration was keen to demonstrate practical, on-the-ground action, which would help advance solutions beyond the UNFCCC demands and build some trust between developed and developing countries. “This was a time when the US was under a lot of flak and pressure to extend the Kyoto Protocol. Everyone knew they didn't want to do it. Their strategy

was always one of a bottom-up climate regime rather than top-down. CCAC and other initiatives allowed them to say, ‘guess what guys, while you are fighting, there are coalitions on the ground doing the work.’”<sup>280</sup> This would also open the door to the second part of the strategy, which was to secure an HFC amendment to the Montreal Protocol, thereby boosting global climate ambition significantly and also helping rebuild the reputation of the United States as a supporter of multilateralism. Such was the priority accorded this strategy that during President Xi’s first visit as Head of Government to the United States in June 2013, the two leaders reached agreement on cooperation on two issues: North Korea and HFCs phaseout under the Montreal Protocol.<sup>281</sup> “We absolutely saw the CCAC as a vehicle to advance the Montreal Protocol. It was a hands-on effort to do it.”<sup>282</sup> This approach was appreciated by several other governments. A former cabinet minister of the government of Argentina notes, “The CCAC was not a negotiating forum. So, one of the objectives on HFCs was to use this more relaxed forum in order to unlock the negotiations. This is a sophisticated approach. You create an environment where countries can come and put some money behind these projects, then countries begin moving and answering questions like, what are the benefits of acting and how much will it cost?”<sup>283</sup> Purposive efforts by the United States such as hosting working-level meetings in the margins of the UNFCCC COPs to discuss the potential of a CCAC initiative, to engaging private sector actors in the US to obtain interest, to drafting the articles of

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<sup>280</sup> Interviewee 12 (senior officer at UNEP), in discussion with author, 13 June 2018.

<sup>281</sup> The White House, ‘United States and China Agree to Work Together on Phase Down of HFCs’.

<sup>282</sup> Interviewee 39 (senior official of the United States Government), in discussion with author, 28 May 2019.

<sup>283</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

constitution, and to funding the initiative, were determinant in the formation of CCAC. In short, the United States showed leadership with central decision-making.

Yet, despite the obvious leadership position of the United States, the critical roles of other countries must not be underestimated. Indeed, the ability of the US to convene a large group of actors with little resistance reflects the prioritization that this issue had received in many governments. Several governments including Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands and Norway, already highly central to the network (per figure 5.3) were also leaders during the formation of the initiative (for example, Canada hosted the seminal preparatory meeting for the CCAC in Montreal in 2011) and remained highly influential once the initiative was launched, funding the CCAC and undertaking lead roles in the implementation of specific initiatives.

Nor did these governments develop these priorities on their own. Indeed, the prioritization of the issue in a number of governments including the United States can be attributed in significant part to sustained advocacy work by NGOs and research institutes over a period of decades. The understanding that SLCPs form a threat and an opportunity on climate change was forged among policy-makers by a tenacious group of civil society scientists and advocates on either side of the Atlantic, as well as by business leaders. In the United States, the Institute for Global Sustainable Development (IGSD) worked closely with the Clinton, Bush and Obama Administrations to make the case, often taking advantage of the turnover of staff between administrations, which created a revolving cast of characters between the government and the think tanks and NGOs in the Washington, D.C. area, to gain access to and influence over current policy makers, while producing op-eds and

articles to consistently maintain the issue in the policy ether. Similarly, across the Atlantic, the Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum of the Stockholm Environment Institute was an active influencer on the issue, as was the International Union of Air Pollution Prevention Associations. Interestingly, these entities do not feature as highly central in the network dataset as since the significance of their work lies in preparing the ground for the formation of cooperative initiatives, which is not captured in the network data as it does not entail high strength of formal relationships within initiatives. Demonstration projects were likewise important in influencing governments, including the United States. In the 1990s, Greenpeace spearheaded a campaign on refrigerants by developing an alternative to HFCs and bringing it to market. By targeting companies that rely heavily on HFC-emitting refrigerants for the sale of their products, such as Coca Cola and Ben & Jerry's, Greenpeace enabled the formation of a cooperative initiative called Refrigerants, Naturally!, which brought HFC-free cooling technologies to the market and created confidence in their safety and viability.

These actors—NGOs, think tanks, businesses—formed a close-knit community that would meet in the margins of the UNFCCC negotiations to plan and coordinate their advocacy efforts in order to maximize their impact and spur leadership among national governments. “So it was a conscious strategy to build this high-level political will.”<sup>284</sup> As a result, while the leadership of the United States was essential, the confluence of actors from the NGO community, national governments,

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<sup>284</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

philanthropic foundations and intergovernmental organizations was necessary to the conceptualization and development of this initiative. “This was a real meeting of the minds and it was a path of very little resistance. The idea was born in many places”<sup>285</sup>

### 5.2.3 *A Professional, Well-Monitored and Well-Funded Process*

The *process management* of the CCAC shows a high degree of professionalism. Decision-making is conducted via a governance structure consisting of a high-level assembly, a working group, two co-chairs of the working group, a steering committee, a scientific advisory panel, and a secretariat. Each of these substructures has specific roles in decision-making, as specified in the framework document of the initiative.<sup>286</sup> The high-level assembly is a ministerial-level body that meets annually to review progress and give advice to the working group on the scope and direction of future work, and as such, functions at the political level. By contrast, the steering committee meets every two months (reduced from every month in the early years of the CCAC) to review the details of the activities carried out by the CCAC, and makes recommendations on actions to the working group. In addition, a group of geographically diverse and eminent scientists, which make up the scientific advisory panel, make recommendations to the working group on course corrections or new activities based on the latest scientific developments related to SLCPs. By meeting twice a year, the working group considers these sets of recommendations to make decisions on activities, including the allocation of funds and the launch or continuation of workstreams. The two co-chairs of the working group, which rotate

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<sup>285</sup> Interviewee 64 (senior official of UNEP), in discussion with author, 10 April 2019.

<sup>286</sup> CCAC, ‘CCAC Framework’.



among the membership in staggered two-year terms, are responsible for steering and leading the working group's deliberations for effective decision-making. This governance structure, including preparations and follow-up of meetings, issuance of contracts with implementation partners and administration of the initiative's trust fund are supported by the secretariat, which is housed at the UNEP office in Paris.

Likewise, the CCAC has robust processes for transparent and regular monitoring and evaluation of its work. Annual reports of the overarching initiative trace the efforts taken by the initiative and their aggregate effects, but more than that, according to the annual reports published by the CCAC, the activities undertaken by the CCAC are monitored, evaluated and reported to the governance structure. For projects undertaken on the ground, such as demonstration projects, the CCAC website features assessment reports. In specific sub-initiatives, such as the CCAC's Oil and Gas Methane Partnership launched at the 2014 Climate Summit, the companies that committed to reducing gas flaring produce annual reports on their progress, which are publicly available on the CCAC website, in addition to synthesis reports being produced by the secretariat.

Finally, the CCAC has received stable and significant *funding* since its launch, from a core group of governments, including Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States. For example, the 2014 annual report indicates \$43.3 million received by the trust fund in contributions in addition to \$9.1 million in pledges, for the 2012-2017 period.

#### 5.2.4 Ambitious and Stringent Goal-Setting: Improving Over Time

Given the professional process management of the initiative, the CCAC has articulated clear *goals* since its launch. Guided by the vision statement of the overarching initiative, the CCAC's framework document outlines its purpose and the functions it seeks to fulfil, ranging from capacity-building to improving scientific understanding to enhancing existing public and private efforts, to mobilizing support for developing countries, among others. Annual process goals and milestones for the initiative are agreed upon by the working group each year. The sub-initiatives of CCAC, which focus on particular SLCPs or particular jurisdictions, each articulate specific goals and targets within their domains. For example, the HFC initiative, when launched, explicitly included the following two goals: "By 2016, an HFC-phase down amendment to the Montreal Protocol is negotiated; followed by gradual reduction of HFCs by all countries; Countries promote public procurement of climate-friendly alternatives to HFCs; Dramatic reduction of HFCs in the food cold chain; 30-50% reduction of HFCs by 2025 in the refrigerant servicing sector."<sup>287</sup> Thus, the specificity of the goals varies depending with the level of the initiative being considered. In other words, the CCAC has been able to articulate increasingly specific, ambitious and time-bound goals over time via its sub-initiatives.

### **5.3 The Interactive Influence of IGOs in Driving the formation and Quality of CCAC**

This section conducts a multilevel analysis to understand the interactive effects, if any, of system-wide efforts and initiative-level efforts of IGOs on the

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<sup>287</sup> CCAC Secretariat, 'HFC Initiative Factsheet'.

quality of the CCAC over time. For the initiative-level efforts, this analysis focuses on UNEP. While the CCAC counts 18 IGOs in its membership, including multilateral development banks, UN technical agencies, funds and programmes, and regional organizations, the IGO with the greatest influence at the sectoral and initiative levels in the formation and quality of the initiative has arguably been UNEP, which serves as CCAC's secretariat. For the system-wide efforts, this analysis considers those of the UN General Assembly and UN DESA under Rio+20 in 2012, those of the UN Secretary-General under the 2014 Climate Summit, and those of the LPAA, which included the UN Secretary-General and the UNFCCC Secretariat, in 2015.

This analysis therefore treats the combined system-wide and initiative-level efforts in the three years as test cases for the findings of chapter three, most immediately for the conditions of subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making for successful growth of cooperation, but also for the four other organizational attributes (strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, and emphasis on cooperative commitments) as well as the two enabling conditions of high convening power and autonomy of the actor making the system-wide efforts.

The findings of this section are as follows. The quality of the CCAC has been strongly and positively influenced by UNEP deploying its own convening power, technical expertise and autonomy since the formation phase. UNEP has interacted variably with the system-wide efforts of IGOs, in keeping with the findings from chapter three. In 2014, the interactive effect of the Secretary-General and UNEP served to spur appreciable growth in CCAC's quality—notably by broadening its partners and making its goals more ambitious. In 2015, this effect was muted, and in

2012, when CCAC was formed, the purposive system-wide efforts by the UN General Assembly and DESA under Rio+20 had almost no positive effect on CCAC. Yet, the CCAC experienced strong growth at Rio+20, but this was due to the efforts of the US Government and other CCAC leaders. These findings all provide strong support for the findings from chapter three, and also nuance them: centralized decision-making need not come from an IGO. The convening power, autonomy and decision-making of the US Government provided the ingredients necessary at the formational phase and early years of the initiative, essentially circumventing the need for system-wide IGO support. The following sub-sections consider the interactive effects of IGO efforts at various stages of CCAC's growth, on the aspects of CCAC's quality highlighted in the previous section.

#### *5.3.1 UNEP, Government Leadership and the Absence of System-Wide IGO Influence on the formation of CCAC*

The CCAC was formed and launched during the preparatory phase of the Rio+20 conference, but had no interaction with the organizers for the formation. As expected from the findings of chapter three, due to the relatively hands-off approach of UN DESA and consensus-based decision making of the UN General Assembly, as well as no demand for cooperative commitments, Rio+20 did not create an especially conducive environment for the launch of cooperative initiatives. While there was subsidiarity, there was no central decision-making.

Instead, the formation and initial quality of CCAC, including the mix of partners and the attention to goal-setting, was the result of combined efforts by UNEP and national governments, notably the United States. A highly purposive interaction

was therefore in effect, but it was between UNEP and the United States government. The system-wide IGO effort at the time, namely the Rio+20 conference, was used for its high visibility and convenience, but had no role in spurring the formation or the quality of the CCAC. The following descriptions of how goals were set and partners onboarded in the early years of CCAC illustrate this.

CCAC's commitment from the outset to ensuring its membership would have a multi-stakeholder character was heavily influenced by UNEP during the formation phase. During deliberations on the potential governance structure and membership of the initiative, some founding countries expressed preference to keeping the initiative more multilateral. UNEP made a strong case for a role for non-state actors, including the private sector, in the governance structure. A typical example of the advice given by UNEP in shaping the governance process is found in its inputs provided to the 2011 Montreal meeting, at which the details of the initiative were discussed and agreed: "If partners feel they have no stake in the partnership it will not work. To get their engagement, support and activities, they must feel they are part of it, are listened to and can also express their priorities/concerns and have—some limited—influence on decision making."<sup>288</sup> A senior UNEP official involved in these discussions explains that convincing governments to make the initiative fully multi-stakeholder was challenging. "From the beginning, the coalition was not just member states; there was an openness for a multi-stakeholder coalition, but UNEP wanted it to have a multi-stakeholder nature much more than the countries did. We were asked to soften

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<sup>288</sup> UNEP, 'UNEP Inputs for an Initiative on Short-Lived Climate Forcers'.

our approach, but it was important to stand our ground on this.”<sup>289</sup> Nevertheless, reservations by the national governments on giving too much influence to the private sector and NGOs meant that despite advocacy within the governance-building process, the representation of the private sector in the CCAC remains limited, and hurdles for private sector actors to join the CCAC remain higher than for NGOs and national governments. “The private sector is not well represented in CCAC. They are involved in work on the ground in the initiatives, but not institutionally at a sufficient level.”<sup>290</sup> This conservative and cautious approach to multi-stakeholder governance also reflects the primarily political purpose served by the CCAC: as a trust-building exercise between developed and developing countries, and one that could help advance the United States government’s strategy for HFCs.

While UNEP influenced the decision to make CCAC multi-stakeholder, it did not have the capacity to convince national governments to join the coalition. This was a task taken up by the founding governments. The United States, Canada and Sweden did much of the legwork in engaging with countries to convince them to join the CCAC. For example, being a primary champion of CCAC, the United States used the opportunity as host of the G8 summit in May 2012 to broker an agreement among all eight members of the G8 to join the CCAC. Likewise, the expansion of CCAC announced at Rio+20 in the form of the sub-initiative on municipal solid waste was the result of United States leadership. The State Department pursued a partnership pursued with the coalition of cities known as C40 (then led by Mayor Michael

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<sup>289</sup> Interviewee 64 (senior official of UNEP), in discussion with author, 10 April 2019.

<sup>290</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

Bloomberg), the Clinton Climate initiative, and the Global Methane Initiative—all partnerships that had in common a close-knit community of former and current staffers of U.S. Democratic administrations, which paved a smooth path for the formation of this partnership. Rio+20 was a convenient touchpoint in the international calendar for its announcement, when high visibility and media attention would be assured. However, there is no evidence that these partners came on board because of the opportunity afforded by Rio+20. The strong sense of ownership by the United States and its desire to make quick progress on the climate agenda—including, it then hoped, an HFC amendment to the Montreal Protocol before the Paris Agreement in 2015, was the primary driver.<sup>291</sup>

The strength of the goals and goal-setting process at the formation stage of the CCAC was likewise the result of close interaction between UNEP and the CCAC leadership. As noted in the previous section, a range of non-state actors had promoted the *leadership* of the United States government, which was determinant in the formation of the CCAC, together with the leadership of governments such as Canada and Sweden. Interestingly, although UNEP did not directly spur the US or other countries to show leadership, it played a crucial role by providing the legitimacy and narrative kernel around which motivated leadership could galvanize.

Speaking at the launch event of the CCAC at the State Department in Washington D.C., Secretary Clinton observed that the “UN Environment Program has determined that reducing these pollutants can slow global warming by up to a half

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<sup>291</sup> Interviewee 39 (senior official of the United States Government), in discussion with author, 28 May 2019.

degree Celsius by 2050... Now, exceptional work has already been done to investigate how to reduce these pollutants. For example, UNEP has identified a package of 16 major actions, which include replacing inefficient cookstoves and traditional brick kilns with more efficient ones to cut down on black carbon, stopping the burning of agricultural waste, harvesting coal mine methane, improving wastewater treatment, and adopting emissions standards on vehicles.”<sup>292</sup> More than a generous diplomatic nod to the role of UNEP, Secretary Clinton's reference to this report by UNEP was a reflection of its value as a galvanizing factor for leading governments in the formation of the CCAC and deciding on its goals.<sup>293</sup>

Prior to 2011, no common or unifying term existed for the disparate set of these gases and particulate matter. They were the result of processes often unlinked to each other. For example, black carbon is a product of residential combustion of kerosene such as in the use of cookstoves across Africa and Asia, and also in the land transport sector as a side product of internal combustion engines; methane is a product of industries as diverse as animal husbandry, fossil fuel extraction and municipal waste management. While IPCC reports had referenced methane, they had not referred to short term pollutants as a group.

As a result, even though the scientific basis for SLCPs was becoming clearer, specific projects on the viability and profitability in reducing SLCPs were being demonstrated, and key governments including the United States, Sweden, Canada and others as well as Small Island Developing Countries were beginning to recognize the

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<sup>292</sup> Clinton, ‘Remarks at the Climate and Clean Air Coalition To Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants Initiative’.

<sup>293</sup> For the report, see ‘Near-Term Climate Protection and Clean Air Benefits’.



significant gains to be made, SLCPs did not have high profile as one coherent issue among domestic policy makers worldwide. Indeed, even the term SLCPs did not exist, which prevented them from gaining traction as a priority policy-relevant issue. Consequently, many governments, NGOs and research institutes were recognizing the need for an authoritative and policy-relevant publication that could be used by policy-makers to justify and galvanize voluntary cooperation on SLCPs at scale.

Defining SLCPs as a greenhouse gas emissions sector in itself, with practical near-term solutions, was therefore necessary. Those civil society actors and some developing country governments already engaged in the network called on UNEP to produce such a report. A former cabinet minister from a Latin American country notes, “There was a need for a more important report. It couldn't come from the NGO community. We suggested this to UNEP, and they put together a team very quickly. It was not a negotiated process. UNEP did a very good and fast job in putting this together.”<sup>294</sup>

Given its in-house scientific capacity and mandate on knowledge generation, it is perhaps not surprising that UNEP was able to quickly produce this report. Indeed, the production of policy-friendly reports that bridge dense scientific literature and the needs of policy-makers had become a *modus operandi* for UNEP by then. For example, the annual Emissions Gap Report has become staple reading for domestic policy-makers on climate as more accessible and policy-relevant than the IPCC, and UNEP also saw it as an opportunity to influence countries away from entrenched

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<sup>294</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

negotiating positions. A senior UNEP official remarked, “It’s impossible to orchestrate anything with dense, scientific reports. But once you start to break things down with policies, then it begins to resonate and you can do useful things.”<sup>295</sup> As well, UNEP had been working hand-in-glove with many of these civil society actors to raise the profile of this class of GHGs at the international level. Many of these organizations enjoyed access to UNEP and as is typically the case with UNEP reports such as the IPCC and the Emissions Gap report, UNEP relied on a distributed system of lead and contributing authorship to develop the report.

The UNEP report was a milestone in that it coined the term “Short-Lived Climate Forcers”, which was soon changed to “Short-Lived Climate Pollutants” and served as a focusing device for the governments and civil society actors to prioritize the issue and advance on the notion of a cooperative initiative on SLCPs. A former senior official of the Obama Administration observed, “People used the UNEP report to bolster the case for a conversation that was already going on in the government.”<sup>296</sup> Likewise at the international level, following the launch of the report, in the margins of the negotiations at the UNFCCC, national governments met over the course of 2011 to discuss the potential of an initiative outside the purview of the climate convention, which would demonstrate political will and advance concrete action that would deliver some quick results. In short, the report played the role of a focusing device and galvanizer for a process that was already underway and of which UNEP was a part, but not a lead. “The UNEP report played an important role, but was not

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<sup>295</sup> Interviewee 64 (senior official of UNEP), in discussion with author, 10 April 2019.

<sup>296</sup> Interviewee 61 (senior civil servant of the United States Government), in discussion with author, 11 April 2019.

the deciding factor. It's not that the UNEP report pushed the political will. First, we had the political will, then we decided to make the scientific foundation clear. It was clear that there was a need for an authoritative report, and that couldn't come from the NGO community. Science does not shape policy. It's policy that uses science as a foundation to use as needed.”<sup>297</sup>

Following the launch of this report, UNEP played an influential and foundational role in ensuring it shaped the goal setting process of the CCAC. During the formation phase, when the framework document of the initiative was being drafted, UNEP advocated for the importance of CCAC being goal-oriented. Drawing on lessons learned from other cooperative initiatives for which it had acted as a secretariat, UNEP argued for the importance of setting clear goals from the beginning. For instance, a typical comment made in the margins of the drafts of the framework document is: “On the basis of priorities, resources and partners, [sic] need to consider what could be a set of specific deliverables of the SLCF (evaluation of PCFV underlined importance of setting clear achievable targets right at the beginning).”<sup>298</sup> Furthermore, since the launch of CCAC, for initial projects to be undertaken and specific goals to be set, the steering committee turned to the recommendations made in the report, which included specific policies that would have high impact in the mitigation of SLCPs, categorized by the type of SLCP as well as region. Many of the policies recommended in the report became defined as goals in the sub-initiatives and activities of the CCAC after its launch. As a result, projects

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<sup>297</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

<sup>298</sup> UNEP, ‘UNEP Inputs for an Initiative on Short-Lived Climate Forcers’.

and programmes focused on building capacity, conducting demonstrations and influencing national regulations and legislation to enable these specific policies is the aim of many CCAC activities. For example, on methane, recommended policies include separation and treatment of biodegradable municipal waste, extended methane recovery/utilization and reduced fugitive emissions from oil and gas production; and pre-mine degasification and recovery of methane from coal mine ventilation air, among others. From the recommended policies on methane, the municipal solid waste initiative directly promotes the separation and treatment of biodegradable waste, and the oil and gas methane partnership specifically targets methane emissions from oil and gas production. The goal-setting process in the CCAC, while now mediated by the steering committee and working group, has therefore been shaped significantly by the policy-relevant knowledge function led by UNEP in close interaction with the initiative's leadership and existing network of actors engaged on the issue.

### *5.3.2 Improved Goals and Partners in 2014: Strong Multilevel IGO Interaction*

The 2014 Climate Summit saw CCAC make a slate of more stringent goals. Two new initiatives were launched, including the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership and the Global Green Freight Action Plan. In addition, efforts were accelerated to reduce SLCPs emissions from municipal solid waste, and a statement of intent was made to begin negotiations under the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs.

By 2014, the strong leadership of the United States in CCAC had waned, as efforts of the Obama Administration focused much more on the intergovernmental

process and relationships with China, India and others to smooth the way to an agreement in Paris. The climate summit hosted by the Secretary-General provided an opportunity to significantly raise the profile of SLCPs and draw additional commitments. In the preparation of the summit, SLCPs was identified as one of the eight action tracks or sectoral sessions of the summit and UNEP empowered to be the sectoral convener. This was not a foregone conclusion, however. Although the organizers of the summit had used the UNEP Emissions Gap Report to identify the potential action tracks from the list of main sectors contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, they had not included SLCPs as priority in the summit planning. Instead, the inclusion of an SLCPs-focused action track in this summit was a negotiated decision with UNEP. A senior member of the Secretary-General's team recalled, "Originally we didn't have SLCPs as an organizing action track for the summit. [UNEP] came to [EOSG] and made the case for it to be included."<sup>299</sup> The commitments that arose were the result of combined efforts by UNEP and the office of the Secretary-General, each using their unique advantages.

As the sector-level convener, UNEP engaged within the governance structure of the CCAC to identify potential commitments that could be developed. In this, the original UNEP report that helped galvanize the formation of the initiative itself, continued to be relevant. While green freight had been identified as a priority for CCAC since its launch, a multi-stakeholder coalition committed to advancing the issue had not yet formed, with commitments having been made mainly within constituencies. The high visibility afforded by the summit as well as emphasis on

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<sup>299</sup> Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

sectoral, rather than constituency-focused sessions, helped coalesce this partnership, which UNEP shepherded among the partners in green freight. As one senior CCAC staffer observed, “Green freight was a ripe issue but was not one of our flagship programmes. The 2014 Summit provided a platform and opportunity for us to advance on this issue.”<sup>300</sup> The Executive Director of the Smart Freight Centre noted, “What is unique about today’s announcement is that for the first time, national governments, multinational companies and global institutions are coming together to reduce emissions from global freight movement in a coordinated way.”<sup>301</sup>

Likewise, on methane emissions in the oil and gas sector, the high visibility of the summit was used by the office of the Secretary-General and UNEP to attract the interest of oil and gas companies and obtain a joint commitment. Indeed, commitments by the oil and gas industry were prioritized by the team of the Secretary-General, and several partnerships by this industry were announced at the 2014 summit in addition to that under CCAC.<sup>302</sup> In an echo of the type of leadership undertaken by the Obama Administration to onboard partners when the CCAC was formed, senior officials in the EOSG undertook a significant amount of the outreach needed to convince companies to make the commitment and after two years of discussions. This was engagement that UNEP was not able to conduct. This enabled CCAC to launch the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP), a commitment

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<sup>300</sup> Interviewee 41 (staff member of the CCAC secretariat), in discussion with author, 14 May 2019.

<sup>301</sup> Punte, ‘Speech on Global Green Freight Action Plan’.

<sup>302</sup> For example, the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI), which was developed using the convening role of the world Economic Forum.

among six major companies to report against their gas flaring practice and reduce it.<sup>303</sup>

This was the first time that oil and gas companies had been engaged by CCAC directly, and reflected a significant development in the CCAC's work with the private sector. As one senior executive of a founding company of the OGMP said, "For all these companies to come together and make a commitment, we needed a few things. A moment in time—a year ahead of COP21. A place—where we could put pressure to launch it. A scene—which CEOs would be proud about and where they would actually be seen. And some support—the high-level support of the Secretary-General and the executive secretary of the UNFCCC. And we needed credible partners. For each initiative to be credible and to be launched, we need all of this. It is a Greek drama."<sup>304</sup> The value of high visibility and convening was recognized by others in the initiative as well. The CEO of Statoil noted that effective climate action "will require new policies, new innovation and not the least, action through effective partnership between government, business and civil society. The United Nations is where it can happen."<sup>305</sup>

The combined system-wide and initiative-level efforts to spur new and ambitious commitments on SLCPs therefore resulted in the expansion of the partners engaged, notably oil and gas companies. This complementary division of labour supports the findings on subsidiarity and leadership with central decision-making in

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<sup>303</sup> Eni, Pemex, PTT, Southwestern Energy Company, Statoil and Total S.A.

<sup>304</sup> Interviewee 48 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 3 October 2019.

<sup>305</sup> Lund, 'Speaking Points Industry and Petroleum Session—Topic CCAC'.

chapter three, as well as the necessity of other attributes including high visibility and sectoral orientation for system-wide IGO efforts to be successful.

Following the 2014 Summit, the LPAA process continued to include SLCPs in the sectoral organization of COP21, and UNEP was asked to take on the responsibility of organizing the deliverables, which further entrenched the role of CCAC and UNEP as the lead convener in the SLCPs sector. Interestingly, minutes of planning meetings for the LPAA reveal that under the LPAA, the CCAC deliberately chose to pursue a strategy that prioritized the implementation of existing initiatives rather than the launch of new ones. With the large number of sub-initiatives that had been launched by the CCAC in the previous three years, the member countries of the CCAC felt that a focus on their implementation was key. At COP21, the CCAC made a commitment to further expand its coalition in future years.

### 5.3.3 Strong Process Management: Not Attributable to System-Wide Efforts

The system-wide IGO efforts made little to no contribution to the high level of professionalism in the process management of CCAC. Rather, this was influenced strongly and positively by UNEP since its inception in two key ways. First, in the formation phase of CCAC, much of the work of drafting the core documents of the CCAC including its governance structure was done by the governments of the United States, Canada and Sweden, and UNEP staff members. UNEP played an influential and strategic role in this interaction, making concrete recommendations on the governance structure of the initiative based on past experiences of supporting cooperative initiatives, such as the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV). The inclusion of a steering committee, a trust fund, and a scientific advisory panel



were consequences of UNEP's inputs. Sometimes, the advice given went against the grain of what the founding governments were thinking, and overturned decisions made by the founding governments. Thus, for example, at UNEP's insistence, the scientific advisory panel was expanded from 10 individuals to 20, to ensure the different sectors pertinent to SLCPs are adequately covered.<sup>306</sup> Second, UNEP has taken on the role of the secretariat for the initiative, and is responsible for the governance structure working smoothly. In this role, not only does it ensure professional organization of meetings, preparation of agendas, follow-up, and administration of the trust fund, it is also an active participant in the discussions and often steers conversations productively and provides proactive connective tissue between the various governance units. "From very early on, we fought quite hard to make sure we were an active secretariat. We certainly had to convince the countries on this. They were used to the UNFCCC process, in which the secretariat is not really allowed to do anything but organize meetings. We were able to demonstrate, quite early on, that there is much greater value added in having a secretariat that can understand and produce the science and can move it into action. In the meetings, UNEP was always very involved in the conversation."<sup>307</sup> Governments agree that the higher than expected influence of UNEP as the secretariat has been positive: "The CCAC is not a negotiating body, so the secretariat has more flexibility on what it needs to do. It's a more active secretariat that what you usually expect from a treaty secretariat. It's done that very well."<sup>308</sup>

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<sup>306</sup> UNEP, 'UNEP Inputs for an Initiative on Short-Lived Climate Forcers'.

<sup>307</sup> Interviewee 64 (senior official of UNEP), in discussion with author, 10 April 2019.

<sup>308</sup> Interviewee 42 (cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina), in discussion with author, 12 April 2019.

*The strong monitoring and evaluation arrangements* of the CCAC reflect a consensus decision made by the membership, and supported by UNEP in its capacity as the secretariat. While UNEP conducts the technical work of M&E effectively (given its in-house M&E capacities as a technical intergovernmental organization), it cannot be said to be a driver on this as there is and has been broad agreement on its importance from the outset.

Finally, neither UNEP nor system-wide IGO efforts have been influential in the *funding* of CCAC. Although the lack of progress in the intergovernmental negotiations acted as a passive driver for governments to pursue the CCAC, and while UNEP provided estimated costs for running the initiative and while the professionalism of the process management instilled confidence among governments, the founding countries did not need to be convinced or persuaded to provide funding, and often also provided human resources. As one UNEP official observed, “Large amounts of funding came into the CCAC very quickly. This gave it credibility. All the members also put in staff time behind it from the outset to make it real. Countries took on the responsibility of leading on individual workstreams. Canada, for example, and the [Environmental Protection Agency of the United States].”<sup>309</sup>

Yet, the pre-existing high quality of CCAC’s process management covers up the fact that neither the UN Secretary-General nor the LPAA Quartet prioritized the longevity and sustainability of the commitments when pursuing them for the 2014 Summit and COP21 respectively. This was left to the conveners within the network to figure out. While it has not been a significant problem in this case due to the work

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<sup>309</sup> Interviewee 64 (senior official of UNEP), in discussion with author, 10 April 2019.

done by UNEP and the founding members of CCAC in previous years, it is nevertheless a serious issue if and when the sectoral convener is less well prepared. The importance of sustained engagement by IGOs at the system-wide level remains.

## **5.4 Conclusions**

This chapter conducted a sector-wide network analysis to understand the level of influence that IGOs have in the wider sector of voluntary cooperation on SLCPs by participating in initiatives themselves. In addition, this chapter conducted a multilevel analysis that considered the interactive effects of IGOs working at the initiative and system-wide levels, on the formation and growth in quality of the CCAC initiative. In conducting the multilevel analysis, this chapter also tested the findings of chapter three, namely that six organizational attributes are necessary for the effectiveness of system-wide IGO efforts in spurring the growth of cooperation.

Through the sector-wide analysis, this chapter found that one IGO, UNEP, has played a highly influential role in shaping the growth trajectory of the SLCPs network of voluntary cooperation. By being among the most prolific actors in the network and consistently taking up secretariat and funding roles from the early 2000s, UNEP has positioned itself as a convener and bridge-builder among disparate entities as well as being seen as the partner of choice by other influential entities in the network, notably governments.

Through the multilevel analysis, this chapter found that the interactive effects of system-wide and initiative-level IGO efforts can be such that they spur a growth in cooperation--whether as more ambitious and stringent goals, or new partners, or both. This effect is seen when the six organizational attributes of effective system-wide

IGO efforts are present: strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, an emphasis on cooperative commitments, subsidiarity and leadership with central decision-making. Thus, Rio+20 did not have any appreciable interactive effect with UNEP, while the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA did. This chapter therefore provided strong support for the findings of chapter three. At the same time, this analysis showed a strong interactive effect between UNEP and the United States Government as well as other founders of the CCAC in the formation of the CCAC and its growth in early years. As such, well-positioned lead governments are evidently able to choreograph the growth of cooperation, since they possess the convening power and autonomy to do so.

Finally, this case study has illustrated the fluidity of the network of SLCP initiatives. The CCAC was conceived and developed as a trust-building exercise between developed and developing countries, and to advance the agenda of the HFCs phaseout under the Montreal Protocol. As such, it built on the achievement of earlier initiatives (e.g. the Refrigerants, Naturally! initiative) and in turn coalesced many sub-initiatives to broaden the partners engaged in the sector and to enable more stringent commitments. By building upon existing initiatives, many of the same actors have remained highly central to the network over time. In other words, the quantity of initiatives has often increased as a direct result of efforts to improve the quality of cooperation in the sector. Similar to the findings of the previous chapter, the CCAC and its sub-initiatives are therefore aptly seen as mutations in the evolution of voluntary cooperation in the SLCPs sector. It would be appropriate to consider at

least some aspects of the quality of cooperation at the sectoral level rather than only at the initiative level. These include the mix of partners and the goal-setting.

## 6 Land Transport

This chapter focuses on the network of cooperative initiatives on land transport and in particular considers the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), which was launched in 2009. This chapter seeks to fill two gaps in knowledge, namely (i) an understanding of the levels and types of influence wielded by the various IGOs that participate in land transport initiatives on the growth of voluntary cooperation within the land transport sector; and (ii) an understanding of how IGOs working at the system-wide and initiative levels have interacted and affected the growth of voluntary cooperation in land transport. To fill the first gap, this chapter conducts an exploratory, sector-wide study using network analysis, while to fill the second gap, this chapter conducts a multilevel analysis on SLoCaT. The multilevel analysis also serves to test the key findings of chapter three, in particular the requirements that system-wide IGO efforts organize by the principle of subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making—this corresponds to IGOs at the initiative and system-wide level, respectively. The remaining findings will also be tested.

The transport sector is defined in a variety of ways: by the medium of travel (that is, land, water or air) and by items being transported—humans or otherwise. This case study deals with land transport and both passenger and freight transport, within and across countries. A variety of industries therefore comprise this sector, including road and rail, and a range of overlapping jurisdictions are pertinent to the governance of

this sector, including national and subnational governments, and supranational regions. Mitigation action in the transport sector could contribute to reducing GHG emissions by up to 2.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e/y by 2030,<sup>310</sup> or about 13% of total global emissions. Transport has been defined as a priority sector from an environmental governance perspective since the Stockholm conference of 1972, with many different IGOs implementing mandates on various aspects of transport. While entities such as the ICAO and the IMO are coordinating bodies for air and maritime transport respectively, no one IGO has a dominant mandate on land transport. The GHG emissions relevance, the variety of jurisdictions pertinent to the land transport sector and the lack of a dominant IGO with focality on the issue make this an important case study for voluntary cooperation and for this dissertation.

Similar to the previous two case studies, this chapter is organized in four sections. In the first section, the network dataset is used to illustrate the evolution of the land transport network of voluntary cooperation including the formation of communities and to identify which actors have been most central in the network over time. This is used to understand the influence the IGOs have wielded. The second section focuses on the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), and presents an assessment of the various facets of its quality, which sets up the basis for the multilevel analysis in the following section. In the third section, a multilevel analysis focuses on the interaction of the main IGOs that have engaged in SLoCaT at the system-wide and initiative levels. For the former, these include the efforts under Rio+20, the 2014 Climate Summit and the Lima-Paris Action Agenda. For the latter,

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<sup>310</sup> IPCC, 'Climate Change 2007'.

these include the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Whether and how the efforts of these IGOs has affected the formation, growth and quality of SLoCaT over time is the focus of this analysis, which also serves to test the key findings of chapter three. The fourth section summarizes the key findings of this chapter and concludes.

## **6.1 IGOs and the Network of Cooperative Initiatives on Land Transport**

This section uses tools of network analysis to reveal the growth of the SLCPs network of voluntary cooperation over time and to identify the most influential actors, including the potential paths of influence they may have wielded. The network is visualized in five-year increments to show its evolution, including the diversity of its actors, their interconnectedness and variation in the density of connections across the network. Community detection is used to identify if and how entities form sub-communities in the network—that is, which entities are more closely linked to each other than to others, which points to greater strength of cooperation within those clusters than between them. Finally, three centrality measures are used to identify the most central or “important” actors in the network over time: out-degree, betweenness and eigenvector. Out-degree centrality provides a measure of how prolific an entity is. The higher the score, the more initiatives of which it is a member. Betweenness centrality measures the information-sharing, bridge-building or convening roles played by an entity. The higher this score, the more an entity is depended upon by others to connect them to other parts of the network and/or to share information. Eigenvector centrality measures how many sought-after entities a given entity is



connected to. In other words, it's a measure of prestige. The higher this score, the more an entity is sought-after by or connected to others who are also highly-sought after. For this large network, the actors scoring in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of centrality scores are presented, as this provided sufficient data points for inference. When centrality measures of the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile were considered, other than the names of more entities that are influential, no additional patterns of influence were discernible.

#### *6.1.1 IGOs and the growth of a large, highly diverse network*

The network of voluntary cooperation on sustainable land transport considered in this study consists of 42 cooperative initiatives, which have high variation in purpose, scope and membership (see Annex 5 for a list of the initiatives, their acronyms and dates of launch). The majority of the initiatives have below 100 members each and there is no discernible pattern to increasing or decreasing membership size over time. A large number of initiatives also have high diversity of entity types as members, with 16 having at least 8 different types of entities as members. Interestingly, philanthropic foundations and cities participate in more than one quarter of all transport initiatives, which is a departure from what has been observed in the forests and SLCPs case, but in the case of cities, a logical development given the concentration of road vehicles in cities. Notably, 29 initiatives include other initiatives as members, and there are 47 intergovernmental organizations participating in this network.

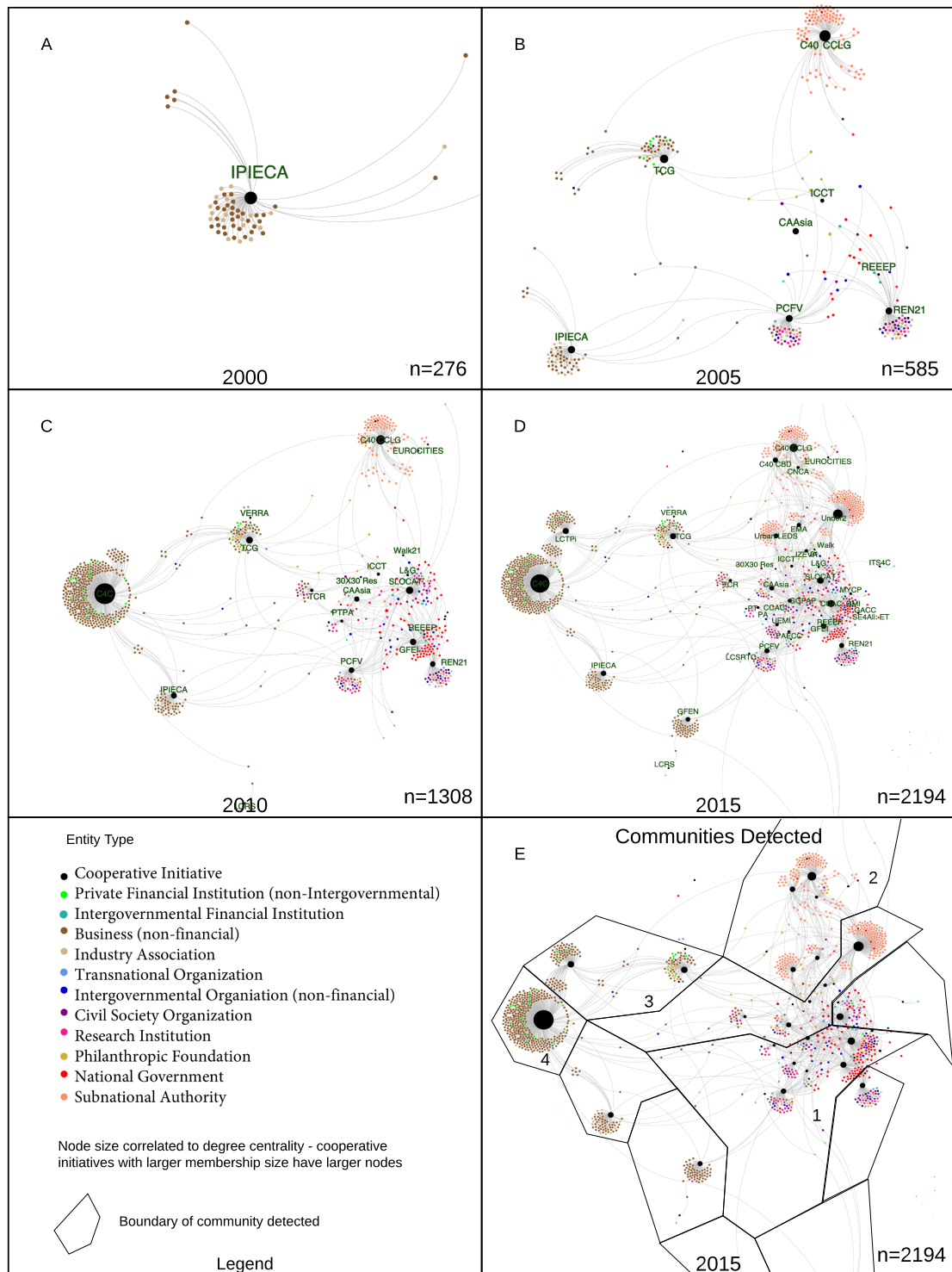
Visualizations of the network at different points in time provide several insights into its growth (figure 6.1 A-D). While the network consisted of only one initiative in 2000, by 2005 it had grown to eight initiatives, largely disconnected from

each other. Over the course of this decade, the membership base of transport initiatives began to expand as the number of initiatives increased. Research institutes, NGOs, financial institutions, intergovernmental organizations and national governments began to engage as participants. By 2010, not only was the network considerably bigger, but also much more densely interconnected, with many initiatives sharing many members. This interconnectivity further grew up to 2015. However, even as the network grew interconnected, there are clear areas of higher and lower connectivity. Peripheral areas of the network consist of initiatives that share few members with other initiatives. Notably, these peripheral areas appear to be dominated by constituency-based initiatives—those with businesses and private financiers, and those with subnational authorities (for example, see the group of initiatives in community 2 in figure 6.1E). Evidently, many subnational authorities and businesses only participate in one initiative. By contrast, national governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and research institutions are found most commonly in the initiatives that have higher inter-connectivity among each other (for example, see the group of initiatives in community 1 in figure 6.1E). The visualization therefore suggests that as the network has grown, it has fragmented into several large components determined by the type of entities engaged in the network.

The communities detected in the 2015 network (figure 6.1E) confirm this demarcation of constituency-based clustering and multi-stakeholder clustering. Some initiatives in the periphery are sufficiently isolated to be seen as communities unto themselves. This includes, for example, the Caring for Climate initiative of the UN Global Compact, which has the highest number of members of all the initiatives, but

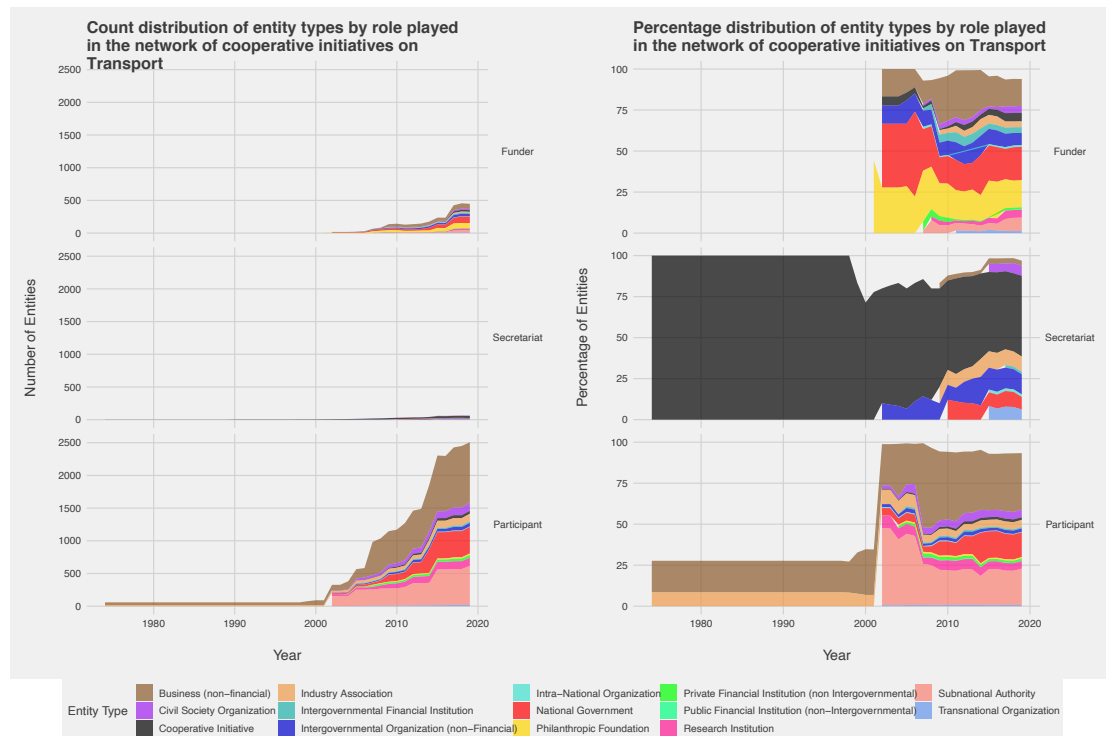
shares a small percentage of its membership with other initiatives (see community 4 in figure 6.1E). However, there are other relatively homogenous communities that include several initiatives. In particular, communities with several initiatives consisting largely of subnational authorities, and several initiatives consisting largely of businesses, are evident (see communities 2 and 3 respectively in figure 6.1E).

*What does this visualization tell us about the roles of IGOs in this network over time?* The IGOs in this network have appeared as members of initiatives from the early 2000s, and have increasingly engaged over time. Most of the 47 IGOs in this network appear to be members of multi-stakeholder initiatives rather than those dominated by individual constituencies, and IGOs are closely associated with national governments by co-participation in the same initiatives (an unsurprising finding, given that IGOs are the creations of governments). The pattern of growth in this visualization suggests that IGOs were not influential in the development of constituency-focused initiatives in this network, but rather have paid most attention to the development of multi-stakeholder initiatives. Further, the absence of IGOs from the periphery indicates that IGOs have tended to engage in multiple initiatives, rather than just one, which further increases their likelihood to have influenced the growth trajectory of the network.



**Figure 6.1 Growth of the network of cooperative initiatives on land transport from 2000 to 2015.** The network has grown more interconnected over time (Figure 6.1A-D), but has done so unevenly, with many businesses and subnational authorities forming constituency-based communities in the network periphery (Figure 6.1E). *Source: This study's dataset.*

Figure 6.2 provides an alternative perspective on the evolution of the network, showing annual changes in the composition of the network and highlighting the specific roles that entity types have played in initiatives over time (that is, whether they have engaged in the network as ordinary participants, as secretariats or as funders of initiatives). The number of entities in the network began to increase rapidly in the 2000s, with major jumps happening in 2005 and 2014-2015, primarily associated with large influx of businesses during these years as participants. Although data on donors to initiatives was not available for the pre-2000 period, during the 2000s governments and philanthropic foundations took the lead in funding land transport initiatives—in contrast to the network on forests and SLCPs, in which philanthropic foundations were not significant donors. Notably, however, the remainder of the group of donors is marked by diversity, including businesses, intergovernmental organizations, subnational governments, industry associations and—interestingly—initiatives themselves (the significance of this is discussed below). Secretariat functions have been dominated by the initiatives themselves, but have increasingly been taken up also by intergovernmental organizations (approximately 10 percent of all secretariat functions), national governments, industry associations, transnational organizations and NGOs.



**Figure 6.2 Distribution of entity types by their function in the network on land transport over time.** The count distribution of entity types, left, according to the roles they play in initiatives shows no particular dominance of intergovernmental organizations. The percentage distribution of the same data, right, shows that intergovernmental organizations take up a large ratio of the secretariat roles in the 2000s. Source: *This study's dataset*.

### 6.1.2 Centrality Measures: IGOs are among a diverse group of 'drivers' in the network

The centrality measures of actors in the land transport network indicate that a group of 99 distinct actors score in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of out-degree, eigenvector or betweenness centrality in at least one year. These include national governments, philanthropic foundations, businesses and industry associations, research institutions, cooperative initiatives and intergovernmental organizations. A consideration of each entity type and the types of influences wielded by those entities in the network over time follows.

**Governments** are evidently among the most prolific entities in the network of land transport initiatives, but they are one group among six entity types that have this

distinction. The governments of France, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and the United States are the most prolific, engaging as funders and participants in initiatives, but with Germany and more recently France, engaging as secretariats as well. France's centrality in this network began in 2015, which suggests that it increased its participation in the context of hosting COP21 and leading the LPAA. By contrast, Germany and the United States have been members of many initiatives most consistently over time. Tellingly, no governments score highly on eigenvector centrality—unlike the SLCPs network, governments have not formed 'clubs' around initiatives on transport, and have not been sought-after as partners by entities in a significant way. Germany and Indonesia also show high betweenness centrality. This points to a stronger convening and connecting role for Germany in the network over time, compared to the other donor governments.

**Philanthropic foundations**, as funders and participants, are among those entities engaging most prolifically in the network and also among those who connect the most entities across the network. In particular, this includes three philanthropies, the ClimateWorks Foundation, Energy Foundation and Fia Foundation. This suggests an influential role in shaping the network over time, akin to those of national governments. Notably, ClimateWorks Foundation became highly central as a funder in the early 2000s, when no government was a central funder. This, given the small size of the network at the time, suggests an especially influential role played by this foundation in the formational phase of the network of land transport.

**Businesses and industry associations** dominate the high scores in eigenvector centrality, but few businesses score highly in betweenness centrality, and

fewer still have been prolific. Most have been central as participants only, and a few as funders. This is a similar pattern to that seen in the forests sector, and also similar is the fact that many businesses within particular industries are found in this list (for example, ten oil and gas companies, including Total, Repsol, Eni, Equinor, OMV, CEMEX, CNOOC, Petrobras, Saudi Aramco and ExxonMobil, and seven consumer goods companies, including Unilever, Mars, Ikea, PepsiCo, Carlsberg, Coca-Cola, and Nestlé). Since the majority of these companies do not have high scores in betweenness or out-degree centrality, their participation in the network has likely been guided by a constituency-based prestige and/or cautiousness (companies may see competitive safety in numbers of their own kind when making voluntary commitments). The few businesses that show high betweenness centrality are likely to have been leaders in shaping the engagement of the business community in the network, since a high betweenness centrality score would need them to engage in a more diverse set of initiatives than their peers, in effect becoming the bridge-builders between their own industry and other industries, or between the business community and other actors. These potential leaders and bridge-builders include Michelin, FGC, H&M, Ikea, Kjaer, Siemens, Arup, Alstrom and Shell.

**Civil society organizations**, although few in number among the group of most central entities, have evidently influenced the growth of this network since its early years in the 2000s. The World Resources institute in particular has been a prolific funder and participant while also playing a strong connecting role in the network. In the years 2005-6, WRI also appears as a high scorer on eigenvector centrality as participant only, suggesting that it pursued relationships with the groups



of businesses in this network and was sought-after by them as a preferred partner just as they were becoming more engaged in the network and making cooperative commitments. This suggests that WRI has been influential not just in shaping the composition of the network in its formational years, but also in the engagement of businesses most central to the network.

**Cooperative initiatives** are among entities that are most prolific and prestigious or sought-after as well as being crucial connectors among actors in the network. While some of the high scores in centrality for cooperative initiatives are not insightful or trivial (for example, as the only cooperative initiative in this network during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the IPIECA shows high betweenness as a secretariat, since it was the only entity connecting other entities), the fact that several initiatives score highly on betweenness centrality as funders and participants further suggests that these initiatives are encouraging the formation of new initiatives over time. In addition, unlike the networks on forests and SLCPs, cooperative initiatives in transport among the most prolific members of other initiatives within the sector, as participants, funders and also as secretariats. For initiatives to score as leaders in becoming members of other initiatives, there needs to be a strong mechanism at work which compels existing initiatives to participate in new ones. This further points to an evolutionary logic, in which new initiatives build on the functions and achievements of existing initiatives, in ways that the existing initiatives are not able to contribute in their given configurations. Understanding the quality or strength of cooperation at the sectoral level rather than initiative level helps explain this evolutionary logic. In

acting this way, initiatives and their members are building the quality of cooperation in the network over time.

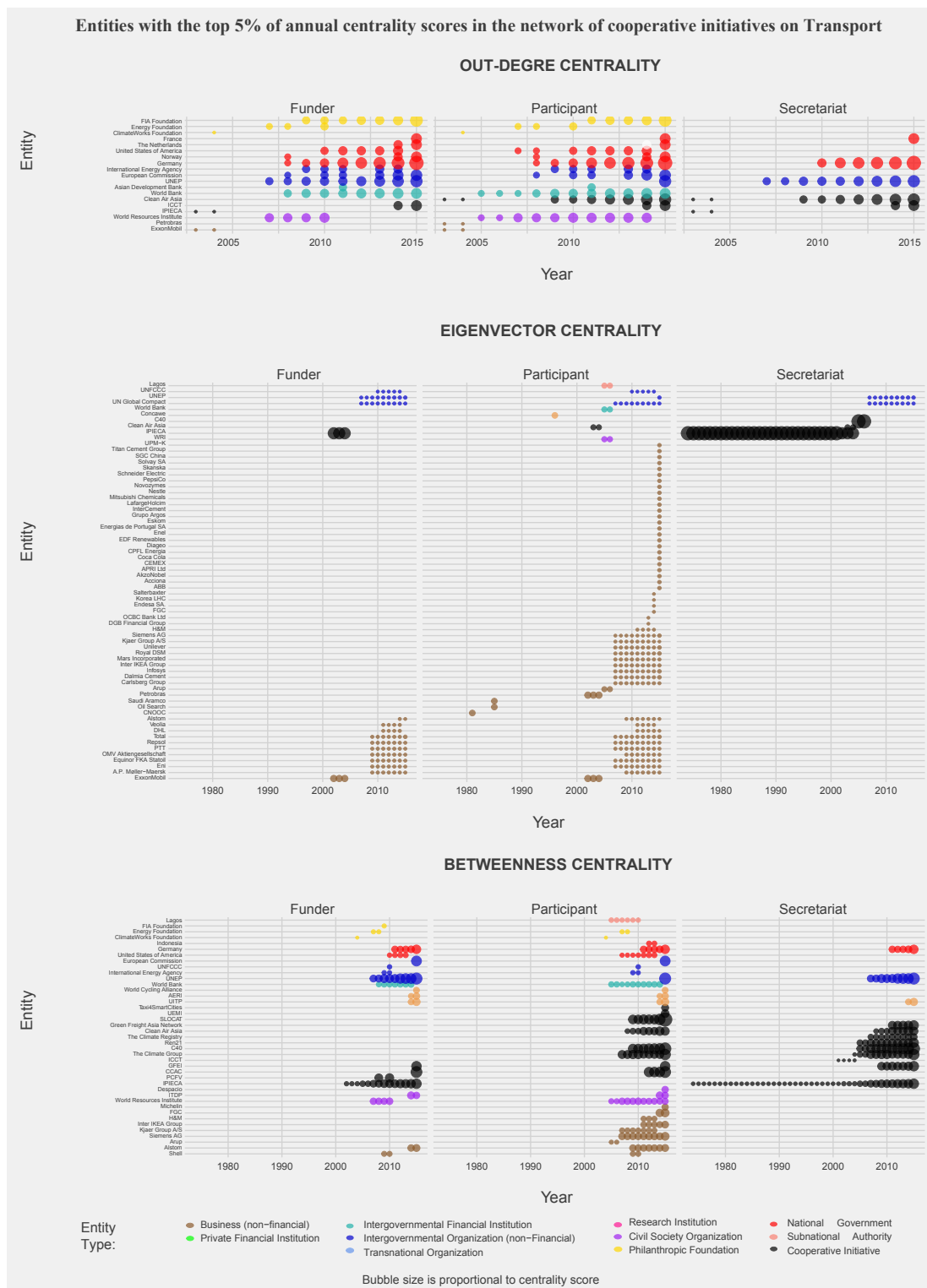
**Intergovernmental organizations** have been among the most prolific, connective and sought-after entities in the network of voluntary cooperation on land transport since the late 2000s, as funders, participants as well as secretariats. This suggests a highly influential role played by IGOs, which include the Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Energy Agency (IEA), UNEP, UN Global Compact, UNFCCC secretariat, and World Bank. Of these, UNEP and the World Bank have been the most consistently central over time.

The high eigenvector centrality of the IGOs, notably the UN Global Compact and UNEP, suggests that they have influenced the development of the business constituency-based parts of the network. As the arm of the UN with the specific mandate for partnership with business, it is unsurprising that the Global Compact is sought-after by businesses or vice versa. The UN Global Compact shows high eigenvector centrality in all three capacities. UNEP has also pursued partnerships with these central businesses, as a funder and secretariat, but not as a participant itself. Especially, since no other non-business entity shows high eigenvector centrality during the years 20009-2015, when the engagement of business grew the most, a reasonable inference is that these two UN entities had uncommon influence over the process by which businesses were making voluntary commitments on transport.

IGOs also show high betweenness centrality in the network (in particular, UNEP, UNFCCC, IEA and the World Bank), which points to an important convening and connecting role over time.

In summary, out of the 47 IGOs that have engaged in the land transport network of voluntary cooperation over time, six have been influential in shaping the composition and growth of the wider network. Of these six, UNEP and the World Bank have been the most influential.

The fact that six IGOs have been among the most influential in the growth of this network, when land transport is a sector characterized by the *lack* of a focal IGO, reflects a complex reality in which different IGOs may have been competing or cooperating informally to nurture the growth of this network.



**Figure 6.3 Entities with the top 5% centrality measures in the land transport network from 2000 to 2015.** 99 distinct actors have been highly central in the growth of the network, but only five show high centrality scores across the three measures, including UNEP and the World Bank.

*Source: This study's dataset.*

## 6.2 The Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport

This section focuses on the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), which was launched on 25 September 2009 in Bangkok. As a thought leader in the Transport sector, it aims to develop new analytical approaches and enable their uptake in policies in developing countries. Interestingly, although a multi-stakeholder partnership itself, it aims to cultivate additional multi-stakeholder partnerships to mitigate emissions in the land transport sector, without necessarily participating in them or, conversely, expecting their formal participation in SLoCaT. This role of SLoCaT is recognized as important for instigating cooperation in the land transport sector by many actors in the transport community, including representatives of philanthropic foundations, governments, and civil society organizations.<sup>311</sup>

This section assesses the quality of SLoCaT based on the categories of “actor (optimality of partner mix and leadership) and “process” (goal-setting, professionalism of process management, monitoring and evaluation arrangements, and funding). The purpose of this assessment is to form the basis of the multilevel analysis in the next section.

### 6.2.1 *A diverse but suboptimal mix of partners*

At the time of its launch, SLoCaT had thirty founding members.<sup>312</sup> SLoCaT currently has a diverse membership of ninety partners, including 9 businesses; 7 industry associations; 27 research institutes; 19 civil society organizations; 3 national

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<sup>311</sup> Interviewee 1 (head of a prominent philanthropic foundation), in discussion with author, 29 August 2019.

<sup>312</sup> United Nations, ‘New Partnership Calls for Copenhagen Climate Agreement to Tackle Growing Transport Emissions’.

governments; 3 philanthropic foundations, 4 transnational organizations, 18 intergovernmental organizations, of which 9 are multilateral development banks and 6 cooperative initiatives, including those that convene cities and subnational authorities, which are not directly members of SLoCaT.

Assessing the optimality of this partner mix requires an understanding of two distinguishing features of the transport sector. First, the sector contains a large diversity of industries, each of which has specific characteristics. Thus, for example, the rail industry is distinct from the automobile industry, which in turn is distinct from the fuel industry. Second, decisions over fuel use in the transport sector are made largely by end-users. Taken together, these characteristics imply that the governance of emissions reductions in the transport sector will need to enable bespoke solutions for the various industries that transport encompasses, as well as target the behaviours of end-users as a priority.

For the partner mix of a multi-stakeholder initiative such as SLoCaT to approach optimality, it would need to include decision makers and influencers in the relevant industries, as well as in national governments, in addition to civil society organizations that can influence community behaviours. SLoCaT's heavy emphasis on civil society organizations and research institutes reflects the latter need. "The end-user has a much greater say in transport than in other areas. The real fly in the ointment is that every trip is made by people not sitting at the policy-making table. Individuals decide how to get to work. Sometimes they are captive, but it's not as controlled as the way the energy sector may be. One option was seen as to bring all the actors together. Hence outreach to all the non-state actors involved—the various

groups.”<sup>313</sup> However, the few national governments and businesses in SLoCaT’s membership limits the optimality of the partner mix.

In addition, few of SLoCaT’s members are highly central in the network of transport initiatives. Out of 90 members, only 6 have scored in the top 5% of any of the three centrality measures. This, coupled with SLoCaT’s own consistently high score on betweenness centrality since its launch indicates it has played a strong convening role in the sector, bringing together actors that on their own have not wielded much influence in the network. Notably, since it doesn’t have a high eigenvector or out-degree score, SLoCaT is likely playing a connecting role among disparate actors without being particularly prioritized by businesses (the entities who are evidently most prestige-seeking in this network), nor has it actively pursued its own formal participation in other initiatives. However, while SLoCaT counts some highly central entities, including IGOs such as the World Bank and lead governments such as Germany, in its membership, others are notably absent, such as UNEP, and it must be noted that the World Bank only joined in 2015.

Yet, while the official membership of SLoCaT has not broadened significantly to approach optimality, SLoCaT has played a driving role in bringing together different stakeholders within the sector, for the formation of new initiatives, which it considers as part of its goal-setting process (see the following sub-section for a discussion of this). Thus, for example, SLoCaT deliberately pursued the development of the Transport Decarbonization Alliance in 2018, in order to bring national

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<sup>313</sup> Interviewee 28 (senior officer at the Asian Development Bank), in discussion with author, 25 June 2019.

governments, subnational authorities and businesses together in joint commitments to implement sustainable transport priorities. “This is what we had in mind while launching the Transport Decarbonization Alliance. By making this an initiative of countries, cities and companies, we got the implementing partners together.”<sup>314</sup> The value-added of considering the optimality of partner mix as an evolution of the transport sector writ large over time, rather than only within specific initiatives, and the driving role of SLoCaT in achieving that, is a notion that many members and observers of SLoCaT agree on. “These initiatives are not isolated. they are not isolated situations or incidents. A lot of excellent work is done and funded, seen in isolation, then falls down. Everyone forgets about it. It's a typical wicked problem issue. We have to think of the additionality of each different initiative.”<sup>315</sup>

### 6.2.2 Cooperative and Consequential Leadership

SLoCaT has clear *leadership* cadre, which consists of a Board of Directors appointed for three years, and a Secretary-General. While this initiative-level leadership is well-established now that SLoCaT is operational, the formation of SLoCaT was the result of leadership by a group of like-minded individuals that occupied interstitial spaces as consultants and technical advisors between organizations such as the Asian Development Bank, the Wuppertal Institute, TRL, and the Fia Foundation—all organizations that included sustainable transport in their work programmes.

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<sup>314</sup> Interviewee 38 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 18 June 2019.

<sup>315</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.



During the early to mid-2000s, actors working on sustainable transport had begun to establish cooperative initiatives to advance the agenda, such as the International Council on Clean Transportation, or the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles. However, these efforts were largely disparate, often oriented around the jurisdictional subsector they occupied, and there was no unifying agenda for these actors to follow, nor was there a unifying theory of change. The founders of SLoCaT sought to redress this. “After the Johannesburg summit it became clear that the transport sector was fragmented. And we didn't have a good story. It became quite obvious that we needed to do something about it.”<sup>316</sup>

To this end, this group of individuals, which had formed a professional community over the years, while meeting in the margins of the climate convention COPs, and engaging in advocacy activities together, convened a meeting hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation at its facilities in Bellagio, to develop an agenda for sustainable transport. The outcome of this meeting, the Bellagio Declaration, consists of a set of principles and a common framework to guide voluntary action and cooperation on sustainable transport.<sup>317</sup> As a secondary outcome, the participants agreed to form SLoCaT, which would be a means of following-up on the agenda and ensuring it has impact. The Bellagio Declaration then became the founding document of SLoCaT. “We did not go to Bellagio with the aim of setting up an initiative. We went with the aim of developing an agenda. During the last session, when we discussed who would be responsible for overseeing or coordinating the

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<sup>316</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.

<sup>317</sup> ADB 2009

implementation of this agenda, it was clear that there was a willingness to create an initiative for this.”<sup>318</sup>

In addition, and critically, the founders of SLoCaT engaged in an aggressive campaign to diffuse the Avoid-Shift-Improve framework as the overarching analytical and organizing theory of change for the land transport sector. Originally developed by the Wuppertal Institute as an input to the German Parliament, SLoCaT's efforts to turn this into the accepted theory of change in sustainable transport has served to galvanize a diversity of actors around has served to enable precision and ambition in goal-setting for the sector. This was a deliberate strategy. “[SLoCaT members] worked as consultants for a number of intergovernmental organizations and managed to get Avoid-Shift-Improve into a lot of strategic documents. For example, we wrote the transport methodology for the GEF. So, Avoid-Shift-Improve has become the leading paradigm for sustainable transport. This has been very helpful to create a voice for the transport community. In the UN context, civil society has been speaking with one voice on transport as a result.”<sup>319</sup>

The leadership in partnership-formation as well as the thought leadership by the SLoCaT founders have served to establish SLoCaT as a central partnership in the transport sector, attracting funders and supporters. While utilizing the institutional centres in which they were anchored, it is the concerted efforts of the group of individuals that provided the leadership for SLoCaT's formation, rather than institutional leadership.

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<sup>318</sup> Interviewee 38 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 18 June 2019.

<sup>319</sup> Interviewee 38.

### 6.2.3 *Professional, Well-Funded and Goal-Oriented*

SLoCaT has prioritized *professionalism of process management*, both within the initiative as well as for the wider sector. A dedicated and independent secretariat, comprising about thirteen professional staff members including a Secretary-General, form the backbone of the initiative. SLoCaT also has a clear governance structure, with established and transparent procedures for decision-making detailed in its constitution, led by its board of directors, which consists of thirteen members including representatives of its membership, its financial supporters and independent observers. By engaging in practices such as commissioning independent reviews of its functioning (the last one was completed in 2018), SLoCaT has maintained high confidence in its process management among its members and observers. Notably, however, a full secretariat took several years to develop, and in the early years of its formation, SLoCaT was not a formal organization. Indeed, for several years, the secretariat was supported on a pro bono basis by the private company of one of the founders, based in Shanghai. As such, the strong individual leadership of the founders was essential in turning SLoCaT into a professional organization.

This professional process management depends on funding for the initiative, which has been provided consistently by a group of multilateral development banks, industry associations, the German government, and several philanthropic organizations including the Fia foundation, Ford Foundation and the Volvo research and Education Foundations.<sup>320</sup> As a result of this diversified and predictable base of

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<sup>320</sup> Deloitte, 'SLoCaT Foundation--Report on the Annual Accounts 2014-2015'; Deloitte, 'SLoCaT Foundation--Report on the Annual Accounts 2015-2016'; Deloitte, 'SLoCaT Foundation--Report on the Annual Accounts 2016-2017'.

funding, SLoCaT has been able to invest resources in the development and implementation of multi-year workplans. “If someone hadn't unlocked a small amount of money to keep us going, it would not have happened. This is where there is a disconnect between what ambition wants to do and the realities. That funding piece doesn't come easily from any of the development agencies. Very few trust funds are set up to do that kind of work. But that piece of funding is critical. We were lucky to have it for a number of years. The German government put in seed funding.”<sup>321</sup> Several founding members of SLoCaT have also observed that the fact that the same individuals held influential positions in the various donor offices made a big difference; institutional memory enabled continuity in funding.

Enabled by the professionalism of process management and flows of funding, SLoCaT has also emphasized ambition and stringency in goal-setting. By virtue of playing a convening role in the land transport sector—one that would normally be taken up by a focal IGO—the goals that SLoCaT pursues can be considered in two broad categories. On the one hand, SLoCaT has sought to create a coherent community of land transport stakeholders and ensure adequate recognition by system-wide intergovernmental processes that allocate resources and political attention. On the other hand, SLoCaT has sought to improve the state of voluntary cooperation on land transport through practical action as well as thought leadership.

Within this context, the goal-setting process of SLoCaT is guided by its founding vision and mission, encapsulated in the Principles for Sustainable Transport, which were endorsed by participants to the Bellagio meeting in 2009, in which

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<sup>321</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.

SLoCaT was founded. Rooted in this set of principles, and responding to current events, opportunities and challenges, the Board of Directors approves an annual work programme, which contains specific goals for SLoCaT to achieve during the year, including indicators and targets in the form of a log frame. These goals range from administrative concerns, such as the maintenance of the SLoCaT website to strategic priorities, such as ensuring that the sustainable development goals and targets adequately reflect sustainable, low carbon transport.<sup>322</sup>

An explicit strategy in its goal-setting is to advance the stringency of goal-setting in the wider transport sector. By acting as a convener and catalyst for new initiatives that have increasingly specific targets, SLoCaT has aims to create more ambitious and stringent goals within the transport sector. For example, as will be described in more detail in the next section, SLoCaT took an active lead to coordinate and broker an agreement among four multilateral development banks to commit \$175billion for sustainable transport, an announcement made to coincide with the Rio+20 conference in 2012. In addition, SLoCaT supported the establishment of several initiatives to be announced at the 2014 Climate Summit, such as the Sustainable, Low Carbon Rail Challenge. Likewise, at COP21, SLoCaT brokered a partnership with Michelin, resulting in the Paris Process on Mobility. The formation of new initiatives reflects the adoption of new goals or targets by an existing partnership (such as in the case of the Rail Challenge) or the joint commitments of actors that have not worked in partnership before (such as in the case of PPMC). In

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<sup>322</sup> SLoCaT, 'Annual Report 2014'.

either case, the result is that the sector benefits from more stringent, ambitious goals than were committed to before.

By pursuing the establishment of new initiatives with more specific and ambitious goals, SLoCaT functions in a similar way to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition explored in chapter 5, which has pursued a goal-setting strategy by establishing sub-initiatives with specific and ambitious goals. The difference is that the initiatives SLoCaT helps found are not its own sub-initiatives, and it does not prioritize its own formal participation in the initiatives it helps to form. “The establishment of SLoCaT was a very important moment for the transport sector. It sought to bring actors together. Its impact was felt most around COP21. There was a serious level of integration, brought about by the association with Michelin.”<sup>323</sup> Thus, an explicit evolutionary theory of change is being followed for voluntary cooperation in the land transport sector.

Closely related to its focus on goal-setting, SLoCaT has prioritized the regular *monitoring and evaluation* of activities resulting from its goal-setting processes. With regard to the goals it sets for itself, which are included in the annual work programmes, SLoCaT’s secretariat produces quarterly reports on activities undertaken by the initiative, which are reviewed by the Board of Directors and which inform their decision-making for future work programmes. Interestingly, the goals in the work programmes also include the follow-up of initiatives that SLoCaT helps to form, even if those initiatives do not fall under the immediate remit of SLoCaT. For

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<sup>323</sup> Interviewee 1 (head of a prominent philanthropic foundation), in discussion with author, 29 August 2019.

example, in its 2014 work programme, SLoCaT defined a goal of monitoring voluntary commitments on sustainable transport made under the Rio+20 conference. It did so by producing a report on all such commitments, the content of which was included by UN DESA in their Sustainable Development in Action report for 2014. Likewise, SLoCaT coordinated inputs from the various initiatives launched at the 2014 Climate Summit, to produce an overview of progress made by these initiatives since their launch. SLoCaT has therefore taken on a convening, coordination and organizing role within the transport sector, not unlike one that could be played by an IGO with a relevant mandate.

### **6.3 The influence of IGOs on the Formation and Quality of SLoCaT**

This section builds on the insights from the previous section to conduct a multilevel analysis of IGOs working at the system-wide and initiative levels, and assess their influence on the formation and growth of SLoCaT. As such, this analysis also acts as a test for the findings of chapter three, namely the six organizational attributes necessary for successful system-wide IGO efforts to spur growth in voluntary cooperation on climate change (strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments, subsidiarity, and leadership with central decision-making) and the requirements that IGOs with high convening power and autonomy are the only ones able to ensure these six attributes.

Several IGOs and their efforts form the focus of this section. Since the launch of SLoCaT, the main system-wide IGO efforts to promote voluntary cooperation, and with which SLoCaT engaged are: Rio+20, the 2014 Climate Summit, LPAA and

COP21; and the 2016 Summit on Sustainable Transport. As well, the 2009 Climate Summit of the Secretary-General took place just a few days before the launch of SLoCaT. At the initiative level, the primary IGOs engaged within SLoCaT are the ADB and UN Habitat. The interaction between these groups of actors and their influence on the quality of SLoCaT forms the focus of inquiry for this section.

This section finds that the interactive, combined efforts of EOSG, LPAA and SLoCaT were essential for the formation and quality of several high-ambition cooperative initiatives in 2014 and 2015, while strong interaction between ADB and DESA for Rio+20 yielded largely individual commitments. Importantly, despite no initiative-level IGO engagement during 2014 and 2015, since SLoCaT took on the convening role, the result was still positive. These findings provide strong and nuanced support for the findings of chapter three. In addition, this section finds that the lack of attention of system-wide IGO efforts to process management and continuity has significantly hampered the initiative and sector-level efforts.

### *6.3.1 A Lacuna of IGO Leadership: The Need to Form SLoCaT*

Arguably, the formation of SLoCaT was spurred in large part by the absence of coherent *leadership* by IGOs. Several actors in the transport community, including SLoCaT's founders, attribute its formation to the lack of sectoral cohesion, which was seen to be a result, in large part, of the absence of an intergovernmental organization with the dominant mandate on Transport. Instead, IGO support to the issue has been characterized by a hodgepodge assortment of intergovernmental organizations that have tried to assert leadership and convening authority in the transport sector, and that have acted in competition with each other, primarily in two arenas: advancing



practical action (such as through cooperative initiatives), and promoting the importance of sustainable transport in intergovernmental negotiations and agreements to raise the profile of the issue and direct political and material resources to it. As examples of the former, UNEP and the World Bank have engaged very actively in voluntary cooperative initiatives, as evidenced by the network centrality measures presented in the previous section. In terms of the latter, UN DESA, UN Habitat and the UNFCCC Secretariat have all increasingly promoted the issue in the UN General Assembly, the Habitat conferences and the climate COPs. “There has been a never-ending debate on whether the UN should have a special home for transport. The UN hasn’t done what it could have done. And nobody else can do what it can do. But that’s changing. UNEP has been a firm part of the partnership on vehicle efficiency. UN Habitat is increasingly playing a role.”<sup>324</sup> Rather than being additive, however, these efforts have created uncoordinated pockets of IGO activity on transport at the intergovernmental and practical levels. This has spurred the UN General Assembly to recently issue a resolution that “Invites the Secretary-General to continue to promote effective international cooperation on road safety issues, including in the broader context of sustainable transport, and in this regard encourages further efforts, as appropriate, to strengthen the coordination of the work of the United Nations system on sustainable transport, while taking into account the need to adequately address road safety issues”.<sup>325</sup> This state of affairs has caused one founding member of SLoCaT to lament, “Even though UN players were around, we didn’t have a

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<sup>324</sup> Interviewee 1 (head of a prominent philanthropic foundation), in discussion with author, 29 August 2019.

<sup>325</sup> United Nations, ‘Improving Global Road Safety’.

champion”<sup>326</sup> and a senior executive of a major business in the transport sector to complain, “it’s clear that the UN doesn’t know what to do with Transport. I could imagine that had we had a UN agency focused on transport, things might have been a little different.”<sup>327</sup>

The lacuna of IGO leadership in the transport sector had detrimental political and material effects on the sustainable transport agenda in intergovernmental fora, and ultimately acted as an indirect driver for the formation of SLoCaT. The low political attention to transport resulted in its low prioritization for climate finance flows, and vice versa, in downward, self-reinforcing spiral. This was particularly noticeable the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol which saw climate finance flowing to energy-focused infrastructure projects in developing countries, such as power plants, but not those on transport, due to energy-focused skew in methodologies approved by countries for assessing projects. “There is no global authority on transport. That’s why it failed in the CDM as well. The methodologies were so inappropriate for transport.”<sup>328</sup> Even the few transport-focused projects that received funding became financially untenable due to the inappropriate methodologies. “We got some allocation under the CDM, but as things got tighter and we got to the MRV, it cost more money to report than what we had received. It was a net loss. If we had been sitting at the table, we would have been able to demonstrate that this is different from transport, but it was so rigid because it came out of the

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<sup>326</sup> Interviewee 3 (senior official of multiple prominent research institutes), in discussion with author, 9 May 2019.

<sup>327</sup> Interviewee 5 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 24 June 2019.

<sup>328</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.

energy side and it was applied to all sectors.”<sup>329</sup> This has led, in the eyes of many, to a downward spiral for the importance of transport and funding allocated to it. “The same frustration applies in the negotiations. If people were geared to where the money was, if they weren't interested in transport, then transport went down in the political agenda, since it doesn't attract the money anyway.”<sup>330</sup> There is, in short, a direct connection between the absence of IGO leadership on transport and the formation of SLoCaT.

The ability of the transport sector to organize itself despite and because of the lack of leadership by IGOs, and the detrimental effects of that lack of leadership are encapsulated in the following observation by a representative of a philanthropic foundation central to the transport network of cooperative initiatives: “I don't think the UN has to be involved for the issue to be addressed. Except, if you are not named or allocated a special entity in the UN then you get less attention and funding.”<sup>331</sup>

In addition to such indirect IGO drivers for the formation of SLoCaT and the organization of the transport sector, some direct, positive forces led by IGOs were also at work. Notably, the Asian Development Bank was consequential for SLoCaT's formation as it played the formal convening role for the foundational meeting in Bellagio, and relied on the membership of its Clean Air Asia initiative to identify the foundational members of SLoCaT.

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<sup>329</sup> Interviewee 28 (senior officer at the Asian Development Bank), in discussion with author, 25 June 2019.

<sup>330</sup> Interviewee 28 (senior officer at the Asian Development Bank), in discussion with author, 25 June 2019.

<sup>331</sup> Interviewee 1 (head of a prominent philanthropic foundation), in discussion with author, 29 August 2019.

### *6.3.2 ADB, DESA and the Formation of SLoCaT*

During the formation phase, ADB played a prominent role in convening a diversity of actors for the foundational meeting in Bellagio. In doing so, it utilized a mandate it had received by the UK government under the Gleneagles Dialogues arising from the 2005 G8 Summit. As chapter 3 revealed, the government of the United Kingdom prioritized the development of voluntary cooperation as part of their G8 Presidency. Given the lacklustre attention to sustainable transport in the UNFCCC negotiations, and authoritative reports indicating the importance of this sector for greenhouse gas emissions as well as the importance of Asia as the locus of projected emissions rise in this sector, the ADB was requested to take a leading role among MDBs and make policy recommendations on sustainable transport.<sup>332</sup> The United States too, had engaged with the ADB for similar reasons (although rooted in the Bush Administration's preference to avoid multilateralism, funding the establishment of Clean Air Asia. The ADB therefore used its convening authority from the Gleneagles Dialogues and as secretariat to Clean Air Asia, to bring together the group of actors and institutions that would form the first set of members of SLoCaT. According to the meeting minutes of the foundational meeting in Bellagio, the participants mostly comprised members of Clean Air Asia, which set the scene for the partner mix for SLoCaT for the coming years.<sup>333</sup> "We tapped into the membership of Clean Air Asia to organize this meeting."<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> See Acknowledgements in Leather, 'Rethinking Transport and Climate Change'.

<sup>333</sup> Asian Development Bank, 'Bellagio Declaration on Transportation and Climate Change'.

<sup>334</sup> Interviewee 38 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 18 June 2019.

Indirectly, the UNFCCC process and its secretariat also influenced the partner mix of SLoCaT, both during the formation phase and after its establishment. During the 2000s, as leading actors in the transport sector (such as research institutes, NGOs, MDBs and industry associations) sought to overcome their fragmentation, they focused efforts first on convening side events at the UNFCCC COPs, a site that had become the ‘place to be seen’. A particular breakthrough came in 2007, when the COP Presidency made it easier for non-heavyweight academic institutions to get side events. “So, there was a sudden surge of people wanting to have side events. The secretariat had to combine us in different ways. As it happened, they combined UITP and UIC with TRL and GTZ and some Japanese institutions. We were fortuitously pushed together and we kept in contact for a long time afterwards.”<sup>335</sup> Each of these entities were among the founding members of SLoCaT.

At the same time, the lack of proactive effort by IGOs has contributed to the limited engagement of national governments in the initiative. For example, UN DESA, as a founding member of SLoCaT, is in a position to encourage participation by members of the UN General Assembly. Indeed, as described in chapter three, DESA was the secretariat to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and held annual partnership fairs. However, the low convening power of these events (which attracted ministries of foreign affairs and not technical line ministries) meant that their ability to attract governments as partners to SLoCaT and develop further initiatives was limited.

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<sup>335</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.

The UN Secretary-General was engaged in the planning of his 2009 Climate Summit during the same time that SLoCaT was being formed. However, there was zero interaction between ADB and the Secretary-General's office on this issue. As described in chapter three, the Secretary-General did not conduct the outreach necessary among central actors in the network, in particular in the various sectors pertinent to GHG emissions, to try to cultivate partnerships.

The thought leadership of the Avoid-Shift-Improve framework, which was an essential part of the leadership necessary for the formation of SLoCaT and the coalescence of the transport sector, was enthusiastically supported by a range of IGOs, including UNEP, UN DESA, ADB, the World Bank, UN Habitat and others—many IGOs that have been highly central to the network of transport initiatives. Prominent reports published by these organizations all promote this framework—a feat achieved by SLoCaT's membership working hand-in-glove with these organizations to promote the framework, often as technical consultants and editors for these reports. However, the primary leadership and driving roles on this framework was the work of research institutes and NGOs, including the Wuppertal Institute. IGOs supported the framework, but the legwork to make it ubiquitous was done by a group of civil society and research actors. This is in contrast to UNEP's active leadership of the development of science for SLCPs and its widespread adoption.

### *6.3.3 Increasingly Ambitious Goals: Strengthening Interactive Effects*

Perhaps the greatest collective influence of IGOs has been on the goal-setting process of SLoCaT over the years, which resulted in the formation of new initiatives. System-wide events, notably Rio+20, the 2014 Climate Summit, the LPAA and

COP21 have all caused SLoCaT to enhance the ambition and specificity of the goals it pursues.

At the Rio+20 conference, less than three years after its launch, SLoCaT's efforts led to the announcement of 17 voluntary commitments by the transport sector, of which two were cooperative initiatives.<sup>336</sup> The confluence of a number of factors created a win-win situation for actors involved, and enabled this to happen. Overall, a core strategy of the Rio+20 conference was to promote voluntary commitments. As DESA was the secretariat to the conference and had also been assigned by previous conferences in the series as the custodian of the transport agenda, staff members at DESA was highly motivated to demonstrate progress on this agenda in time for the conference, but lacked the technical capacity and convening power to galvanize the transport sector themselves. Taking place a few years after the failure of the Copenhagen COP in 2009, many non-state actors were highly motivated to help propel cooperative action and solutions on climate change and sustainable development. By 2012, the SLoCaT initiative had developed a sufficiently robust secretariat and membership to undertake significant efforts to deliver on its founding motivations, and Rio+20 provided a clear opportunity. The availability of a ready-made, expert and influential group on transport that enjoyed strong credibility among transport stakeholders was a gift for DESA, especially so given the high expectations of Rio+20.

A symbiotic relationship therefore formed between DESA and SLoCaT, whereby, using the principle of subsidiarity, DESA effectively engaged SLoCaT to

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<sup>336</sup> SLoCaT, '17 Voluntary Commitments on Sustainable Transport Made at Rio+20'.

not just generate commitments, but also provide inputs to the sustainable transport-focused elements of the Rio+20 outcome document, and SLoCaT used its access to DESA to raise the profile of transport in the intergovernmental process. “After launching SLoCaT, it was a gradual effort to build up the secretariat... what was very significant for the development of SLoCaT was the Rio+20 conference. We were able to get substantive language in the outcome document of Rio+20. SLoCaT team members were sitting in the room and drafting language. And we also encouraged our members to make voluntary commitments. We considered this to be a success. Since we had a technical secretariat, we were able to do reporting on these commitments. By making this effort and by making reports available, we also made it easy for the UN to quote from them and refer to them.”<sup>337</sup>

Notably, however, since Rio+20 did not emphasize partnerships over individual commitments, there was no pressure on SLoCaT to help create partnerships per se. Neither was there any organizing mechanism such as a vetting process or limitations on participation that compelled actors to maximize the ambition level of the commitments being made. The majority of the announcements facilitated by SLoCaT were therefore individual commitments, reflecting ongoing work programmes, and in keeping with the findings of chapter three (given the absence of emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments). Nevertheless, there was one significant exception. The high motivation of SLoCaT to raise the visibility of transport meant that SLoCaT’s leaders undertook great efforts to broker an agreement among four leading MDBs to announce jointly that they have allocated USD 175

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<sup>337</sup> Interviewee 38 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 18 June 2019.



billion for sustainable transport. This was seen as a highly impactful and important announcement at Rio+20. This announcement was not the result of a driving force by DESA or the UN member states or the government of Brazil as host of Rio+20, but rather the leadership and membership of SLoCaT, including the ADB.

The system-wide push by IGOs for cooperation rather than individual commitments would come two years later, at the 2014 Climate Summit, in which SLoCaT once again played a central role to generate new commitments, this time primarily cooperative.

The 2014 Climate Summit included transport as one of its sectoral sessions, and saw the launch of six cooperative initiatives in this area, of which SLoCaT facilitated four. Although by 2014 a strong relationship had formed between DESA and SLoCaT, the autonomy and convening power of the Secretary-General meant that the EOSG team became the primary interlocutor with SLoCaT on the development of the initiatives to be announced at the summit. For this summit, the opportunity for CEOs to share the stage with world leaders was a major galvanizing force for the transport sector. The combination of SLoCaT's technical capabilities and influence within the sector and the EOSG's convening power meant that cooperation at a high level was possible. "There was a real need, almost a desperation, by the Secretary-General's team to get non-state actors to make commitments. In the Abu Dhabi Ascent, it was the first time we were in a room with all ministers. This was the [realization] moment. We were going to have the biggest stage in the world. We were going to have to do stuff. That put it on my CEO's agenda. He put it on other CEOs'

agendas.”<sup>338</sup> In addition, participants in the transport initiatives launched at the 2014 Climate Summit acknowledge that the vetting process gave credibility to the process and encouraged a competitive atmosphere that forced them to set more ambitious goals than they would have otherwise. For example, the commitment on eco-drivers was one that participants were considering before the summit was announced. They were aiming for a 75% reduction. However, after discussions with EOSG and amid demands for higher ambition as the price of admission, they managed to reach consensus for a 100% reduction commitment.<sup>339</sup>

In addition, the preparations for the summit also served to forge greater cooperation among disparate constituencies, notably subnational authorities, transport authorities, and businesses, which is necessary for a distributed issue such as transport. “It really engaged the NSAs. It allowed industry players to state their case and allowed follow through on other things that were going on. It allowed a connection to form between the cities and transport communities that hadn't really happened. In land transport, you have ministers of transport just interested in building infrastructure. Then you have cities struggling with the fact that there are too many cars. Public transport is a cumbersome piece of infrastructure and technology to deal with. The SG's climate summit and its Abu Dhabi preparatory process really helped explain to people why transport was so complex, and that the ministry of transport might not be the right entity to speak to about this.”<sup>340</sup> The combined leadership with

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<sup>338</sup> Interviewee 47 (senior executive of a transport business association), in discussion with author, 24 May 2019.

<sup>339</sup> Interviewee 47 (senior executive of a transport business association), in discussion with author, 24 May 2019. and Interviewee 11 (senior officer at the United Nations), in discussion with author, 14 June 2018.

<sup>340</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SloCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.

centralized decision-making, high visibility, and reliance on the principle of subsidiarity meant that the transport sector was able to overcome existing barriers to cooperative commitments.

This mode of working continued under the LPAA for COP21, which further advanced the partnership-building among constituencies within the sector, with SLoCaT being asked by the LPAA Quartet to continue to play a central convening role. In 2015, SLoCaT focused on building partnership with the private sector, particularly given that the French presidency had used its convening power and autonomy to attract the interest of Michelin. As a leading company in the automobile parts industry, Michelin was able to bring many other companies to the table for potential initiatives, but did not want to be subsumed under an existing initiative. This led to the formation of a new initiative at COP21. “Leading up to Paris, it was clear that SLoCaT was not strong on private sector members. But Michelin was there and they were organizing transport private sector members. How could we join forces? Michelin could become a member of SLoCaT, but we also wanted to mobilize the full ecosystem of members of Michelin. That's why we set up the PPMC.”<sup>341</sup>

The formation of these new initiatives and setting of goals during 2014 and 2015, while promoted by the system-wide IGO efforts, were advanced at the initiative level by the SLoCaT secretariat, and not be a particular IGO. This is in keeping with the findings in chapter three that the empowered convener at the initiative/sector level should be a central actor in the network. It need not be an IGO, and as the evidence shows, strong outcomes are nevertheless obtained.

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<sup>341</sup> Interviewee 38 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 18 June 2019.

#### 6.3.4 Process Management: Undermined by System-Wide IGO Efforts

Given the limited roles of IGOs in SLoCaT's secretariat, they have not influenced the professionalism of the process management in any significant way. Likewise, in terms of funding, IGOs have had little impact on SLoCaT. Although Initial costs during the formation phase were absorbed by ADB, IGOs have not been among the consistent donors to SLoCaT. Similarly, IGOs have not played determinant roles in the decision for SLoCaT to prioritize *monitoring and evaluation* of its activities. While entities such as the ADB and World Bank supported such M&E arrangements, so did other members of SLoCaT. Indeed, funding partners had requirements for M&E (e.g. Germany and the Fia foundation), so SLoCaT members were in agreement on this aspect of their partnership.

In fact, at the sectoral level and system-wide levels, IGOs have undermined M&E of the new initiatives that SLoCaT has helped create at the system-wide events such as Rio+20, the 2014 Climate Summit and COP21, by shirking any responsibilities for following up on the announcements made at the summits. For example, after close engagement in the context of generating commitments for the 2014 summit, the EOSG has not continued collaboration with SLoCaT, which effectively removes the additional heft that EOSG had provided SLoCaT for the launch of the initiatives in 2014 and 2015. "These years after Paris, we are getting closer and closer to 2020 and frankly there is very little progress. There is nobody that is actually following that lack of progress."<sup>342</sup> In addition, due to Decision by Parties to the climate convention, the UNFCCC has become the primary system-wide venue

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<sup>342</sup> Interviewee 17 (founding member of SLoCaT), in discussion with author, 20 June 2019.

for cultivating voluntary action, but lacks the autonomy, convening power and capacity to do so effectively. As a result, though non-state actors are invited to discussions under the COPs to advance cooperative action, “once the discussion is over, there is no follow-up; no way of using what has been done.”<sup>343</sup> Furthermore, lack of institutional memory in the UNFCCC Secretariat, the high level champions for climate action under the UNFCCC as well as in the EOSG means that rather than considering the cooperative initiatives as parts of a continuum that can build on existing components to effect greater impact over time, “everyone wants to reinvent the wheel. SLoCaT and PPMC used to be the ones representing the transport sector in UNFCCC convenings. But now it's an open process and everyone has to compete.”<sup>344</sup> These developments have caused many in the network of transport initiatives to express the sentiment that, “If we really want to decarbonize, we need more accountability. There are limits to the UNFCCC in engaging at the country level.”<sup>345</sup>

## 6.4 Conclusions

This chapter sought to fill two gaps in knowledge about IGOs and the growth of voluntary cooperation to mitigate GHG emissions in the land transport sector. First, by participating in initiatives, how much influence have IGOs wielded throughout the wider network of voluntary cooperation in the land transport sector and its growth? This was addressed through a sector-wide study using network

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<sup>343</sup> Interviewee 5 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 24 June 2019.

<sup>344</sup> Interviewee 5 (senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company), in discussion with author, 24 June 2019.

<sup>345</sup> Interviewee 3 (senior official of multiple prominent research institutes), in discussion with author, 9 May 2019.

analysis. Second, what has been the interactive effect of efforts by IGOs at the system-wide and initiative levels, on the formation and quality of SLoCaT? This was addressed through a multilevel analysis, that covered several system-wide processes or events, including Rio+20 supported by UN DESA, the 2014 Climate Summit, the LPAA, and the 2016 Sustainable Transport Summit also supported by UN DESA. The initiative-level IGOs considered were ADB and UN Habitat, both of which are members of SLoCaT.

The key findings of the sector-wide analysis are surprising. Despite the lack of a focal IGOs on land transport, 47 IGOs have engaged in the network of voluntary cooperation on transport, of which six have been highly influential in shaping the growth trajectory of the network. By taking up funding and secretariat roles and being among the top 5% of most prolific actors in the network, IGOs have positioned themselves as essential connectors for different entity types, as well as becoming the preferred partner for businesses seeking to make voluntary cooperative commitments in transport. IGOs have also been engaged in the network from the early years of its formation, and shown high centrality since then, indicating influence in the composition and topology of the network over time. UNEP and the World Bank have been the most influential among IGOs.

The multilevel analysis, while challenged by the fact that IGOs do not play a strong secretariat or leadership role within SLoCaT, provided strong and nuanced support to the findings of chapter three precisely because of the idiosyncrasies of this case. On a general note, it was found that the lack of an authoritative IGO with a clear mandate on land transport has significantly spurred and shaped the formation and

quality of SLoCaT, which has sought to bring coherence to the transport sector and cultivate cooperative initiatives as well as raise the political profile of transport in the intergovernmental negotiations on sustainable development and climate change. In other words, the lack of leadership by IGOs has been a driving force in the formation and quality of SLoCaT.

Within this context, it was found that when the six organizational attributes were not fully present (as was the case in Rio+20), the efforts of the IGO at the initiative level (ADB) yielded largely individual commitments rather than cooperative commitments. When the six organizational attributes were present (that is, strategic timing, high visibility, sectoral orientation, emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments, subsidiarity and leadership with centralized decision-making), as was the case for the 2014 Climate Summit and the LPAA, the combined efforts at initiative level and system-wide level were highly fruitful, yielding cooperative initiatives with improved mix of partners and more ambitious targets. However, in these cases, at the initiative level, the empowered entity was the leadership of SLoCaT, and not an IGO. This provides stronger support for the findings of chapter 3 than the two previous cases have been able to provide, since the subsidiarity requirement does not entail the entity at the sectoral level being an IGO; and SLoCaT is a positive case in this regard. As well, this chapter highlighted the critical importance of continued system-wide support for sectoral voluntary cooperation, rather than a punctuated approach.

Finally, this chapter found that an essential concept in understanding the growth of the network is that these improvements in partner mix and goal-setting

have occurred at the sectoral level, with new initiatives being formed by amalgamating existing initiatives while adding additional partners or new targets. This was clearly supported by the network centrality scores of cooperative initiatives as well as by interviews of actors within the network. Yet, even while enabling this growth in 2014 and 2015, IGOs have not fully recognized the continuum along which initiatives lie, to the detriment of the network's growth and effectiveness since 2015.



## 7 Conclusion: The Collective Choreography of Cooperation

Did intergovernmental organizations drive the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change? Largely, yes. This work demonstrates that while the answer is nuanced, intergovernmental organizations have had an outsize effect on the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change in the period 2000 to 2015. This has been both as actors trying to cultivate the phenomenon without partaking in partnerships themselves, and as actors taking up particular roles within the cooperative initiatives. In other words, IGOs have been consequential for the growth of cooperative action by working on the outside as well as on the inside of the network of cooperation. They have done so by proactively creating the conditions that stakeholders need to be able to cooperate. Since different IGOs have played these roles on the outside and the inside, this study has considered their individual as well as combined effects on the growth of cooperation. The greatest growth in voluntary cooperation has occurred as a result of IGOs harmonizing these roles, acting as choreographers as well as participants in *a collective choreography of cooperation* among the variety of germane stakeholders.

The key findings of this study relate to these roles of IGOs in this process as well as to the nature of voluntary cooperation itself. Briefly stated, these findings are:

- The ecosystem of cooperative action succeeds or fails at the sectoral level
- Sector-based IGOs are central drivers of the evolution of voluntary cooperation

- The UN Secretary-General has an outsize ability to choreograph surges in cooperation
- Collective choreography depends on six organizational attributes
- Punctuated surges are necessary but insufficient to maintain adequate cooperation over time

A review of these findings and their contribution to knowledge is in order before considering their implications for the study and practice of voluntary cooperation and the work of intergovernmental organizations.

## 7.1 Key Findings and Contributions

The key findings of this study are presented in five parts, with each finding advancing the state of knowledge. They are as follows.

### 7.1.1 *The ecosystem of cooperative action succeeds or fails at the sectoral level*

Cooperative initiatives on climate change form ecosystems among inter-connected entities within sectors that emit greenhouse gases. New initiatives are best understood as evolutionary changes to the strength—or quality—of cooperation in these sectors. Given this, the quality of cooperation must be understood at the sectoral level in addition to the initiative level.

An increase in, for example, the breadth of partners and ambition of commitments being made in the greenhouse gas-emitting sectors is often manifested primarily in the form of new initiatives. This is evident in sectors as diverse as forests, short-lived climate pollutants and transport. As such, initiatives are—and must be viewed as—experimental products of political and economic context,

motivation and feasibility among entities at a given moment in time. Thus, rather than treating the quality and effectiveness of an initiative as intrinsic attributes, it is more apt to consider how an initiative may have improved the quality of cooperation that already existed within the *sector*, such as the optimality of the partners engaged vis-à-vis the problem and the ambition of goals articulated, as well as how it may have led to the formation of new initiatives within the sector.

This finding contributes to knowledge by countering the prevailing conception of cooperative initiatives as self-contained units, and pointing to the more “zoomed out” unit of analysis of the sector as the appropriate one to understand the phenomenon of voluntary cooperation. Thus, while multiple initiatives in a sector may at times undermine each other (as current scholarship highlights), they may also be adding to the quality of cooperation in the sector in other ways and over time. When considered as a manifestation of the quality of cooperation in a sector, multiple initiatives are not inherently a sign of failure. For example, partnerships within constituencies may precede multi-stakeholder partnerships as a natural function of trust-building. Neither is it necessarily a sign of failure of cooperation when initiatives are not achieving their stated purpose. If they have been superseded by other initiatives and actors have effectively “moved on” to the new initiative which creates slightly better conditions for cooperation, the specific failure of the initial initiative may in fact be a signal of improvement in cooperation in the wider sector. Using a sectoral lens therefore provides us with a source of new insight on challenges to and opportunities for improved cooperation.

Furthermore, the network dataset produced for this study, which enabled this and other findings, is in itself a contribution to our pursuit of knowledge of voluntary cooperation, and can be a resource for future study. It is a significant improvement over the only known previous attempt to model cooperative initiatives as a network, in several ways: the number of initiatives covered is much greater; the definition of partnerships/initiatives has been applied discerningly and more methodically; the dataset has a temporal component, thus allowing for analysis of how the network has evolved over time; and the nodes and edges have data on attributes, which allows for richer contextual analysis.

#### *7.1.2 Sector-based IGOs are central drivers of the evolution of voluntary cooperation*

As members of voluntary cooperative initiatives, technical IGOs can have a significant, positive and often decisive effect on the quality of cooperation over time in the wider sector, in addition to the initiatives in which they participate, and are among the most central drivers of evolutionary growth of the sectoral ecosystems.

Despite being few in number, technical agencies such as UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank and others are among the most “important” entities in the sectoral networks of voluntary cooperation, and have greatly influenced growth trajectory of these sectoral networks. Their neutral convening role, technical capacities and some autonomy give IGOs a comparative advantage in building trust among stakeholders that may traditionally be competitors or adversaries, and thus cultivating and implementing ambitious multi-stakeholder partnerships. By taking up secretariat and funding roles consistently and deploying their convening, organizational and

knowledge-generation functions, IGOs have mediated among governments, private sector entities, civil society organizations and subnational authorities to forge partnerships. By doing so more prolifically and strategically than most other entities in the network (that is, by engaging in many and consequential initiatives), a core group of IGOs have positioned themselves very strongly as bridge-builders, conveners and preferred partners (especially of businesses) in their sectoral networks. As such, by virtue of their strategic participation in initiatives, these IGOs have become central and relied-upon community-builders for the wider sectoral networks.

This finding contributes to existing knowledge on the roles of IGOs within partnerships by reaffirming the influential roles they play within initiatives in which they participate, but also extends this knowledge by assessing and revealing their influence in the wider sector. In other words, participation within specific initiatives causes some sector-based IGOs to wield significant influence in the evolution of the quality of voluntary cooperation within the wider sector. IGOs are not only important for the initiatives in which they are members; their participation in initiatives has been and is important and determinant for the entire phenomenon.

### *7.1.3 The UN Secretary-General has a unique ability to choreograph surges in cooperation*

IGOs that have convening power and autonomy can catalyze a surge in the growth of voluntary cooperation, effectively acting as choreographers of participants in the network. Governments that possess the convening power, autonomy and internationally-sanctioned legitimacy are also able to perform this role. This catalytic approach was pioneered by the UN Secretary-General as part of the Climate Summit

in 2014 and subsequently adopted by the Government of France for the Lima-Paris Action Agenda in its capacity as President of COP21 in 2015.

Having established a good offices role on climate change, the office of the UN Secretary-General currently stands unique among intergovernmental organizations in possessing the convening power and autonomy sufficient to choreograph surges in the growth of voluntary cooperation. While autonomy and independent action by secretariats or bureaucracies of intergovernmental organizations have long been recognized as important elements of organizational behaviour, the extent of the independence claimed by the UN Secretary-General in this context is arguably a qualitative shift. The ability of the Secretary-General to convene a leaders' summit on an issue for which member states have established a multilateral architecture and which they have guarded for decades as the appropriate forum for addressing this issue; retain decision-making rights on the agenda and content of such a summit; and reserve the right to decline speaking opportunities to member states depending on the content of their speech; all without losing the interest of the leaders, represents the emergence of a power centre within the global governance of climate change that was not present in decades past.

This is particularly relevant given that the only other entities with similar convening power and high autonomy are national governments, whose motivations to undertake such a choreographic effort to advance the climate agenda are vulnerable to the vagaries of domestic political contexts. Thus, the ability of the UN Secretary-general to act autonomously vis-à-vis member states at a leaders' level opens significant possibilities for the functioning of the organization, on climate change and

well as potentially other issues that require coalitions of entities beyond national governments to make commitments and act on them in order to reach specific goals.

This finding contributes to knowledge on the autonomy and entrepreneurship of IGOs. By revealing the highly path-dependent development of autonomy on climate change by the Secretary-General, it furthers our understanding of how entrepreneurial space is created within institutions and how organizational culture changes. As well, it extends our understanding of the mediation role played by the Secretary-General.

#### *7.1.4 Collective choreography depends on six organizational attributes*

The catalytic surge in cooperation depends on the presence of six enabling organizational attributes, which together characterize the collective choreography that accelerates the growth of cooperation. The six conditions are as follows.

*First*, efforts must be strategically timed, ideally occurring in the runway period up to a major intergovernmental milestone, during which governments, businesses, civil society and other stakeholders are highly motivated to cooperate, but also with a long planning period to ensure adequate preparation by all relevant entities.

*Second*, efforts must provide high visibility to entities engaged in the cooperative initiatives featured, thus motivating governments, businesses and civil society organizations alike through the promise of enhanced reputations.

*Third*, they must be sectorally oriented, rather than constituency-oriented. This is conducive for interaction among different constituencies, such as businesses,

governments and civil society organizations, that are each pertinent for cooperative solutions within specific sectors.

*Fourth*, they must emphasize ambitious cooperative commitments as the measure of success. This implies not just encouragement of such commitments by participants, but their requirement as a price for admission to the culminating event—a price that can be maximized through vetting processes that cause entities to revise their ambitions upwards to the extent feasible. In other words, entities must make speech acts, not just speeches in the culminating events.

*Fifth*, these efforts should adhere to the principle of subsidiarity, whereby those entities with capacities to convene and lead cooperation within sectors are empowered to do so, without the organizers seeking to take on those specialized tasks.

*Sixth*, the principle of subsidiarity must be balanced by leadership with central decision-making, whereby the organizer makes proactive efforts, using his convening power and autonomy, to facilitate partnerships, and holds the ultimate decision-making authority on all aspects of the processes and culminating events, without needing to cede to deliberation among members.

Together, these six enabling conditions create a strong imperative for motivated entities to expand and deepen partnerships within sectors, in effect creating a ‘pipeline’ of commitments. The high visibility and strategic timing capitalize on the existing motivations of actors, and promise a reputational reward. The emphasis on ambitious cooperative commitments serves to focus the efforts of the motivated actors and encourage them to cooperate with each other rather than making individual



commitments, which are easier, and also injects a competitive dynamic among actors to raise their ambition levels. The sectoral orientation encourages multi-stakeholder engagement over within-constituency cooperation, in effect corralling actors together rather than apart. Critically, subsidiarity ensures that the actors best able to convene and galvanize stakeholders at the sectoral level are empowered to do so, while leadership with central decision-making by the organizer maintains the control and agility to choreograph the organization and actors to maximum effect. Thus, while known drivers of cooperation remain necessary, these findings show that they alone do not account for the surge in growth seen in 2014 and 2015.

Critically, while the process requires lead organizers with high convening power and autonomy, it builds on existing motivations of entities in the network, has their enthusiastic support, and benefits from their inputs, since doing so enables them to overcome existing barriers to cooperation and accelerate their voluntary efforts. In short, if the entities in the network are the performers in a modern dance, then this catalytic approach is its collective choreography—an act of mutual creation that generates the dance.

These findings show that the existing explanations or accounts of how and why voluntary cooperation on climate change has increased in recent years and especially in 2014 and 2015 are insufficient. While governments, businesses and civil society are indeed motivated and compelled to cooperate for a variety of functional, self-interested, and normative reasons, without the intervention described here, the rate of growth of their cooperation has been significantly lower. Collective choreography simultaneously capitalizes on the known motivations of all the

pertinent actors to create a competitive-cooperative dynamic among them that accelerate the growth of cooperation. This is a systemic endeavor; one in which the stakeholders willingly take part; and one which they also contribute to shaping.

This conceptualization of IGO behaviour is more nuanced than the currently vogue notion of orchestration, in which intergovernmental organizations act as orchestrators of intermediaries in influencing the behaviours of their targets.<sup>346</sup> Embracing the non-linear and more complex reality in which intergovernmental organizations find themselves, collective choreography points to the systemic roles played by different intergovernmental organizations at multiple levels over time—a phenomenon that orchestration theory recognizes but does not consider at a sufficiently fine-grained level to differentiate between the functions and effects of IGOs at the different levels. Indeed, collective choreography is a notion closer to the roots of the word orchestration, the etymology of which is the ancient Greek word *orkhestra* (ὀρχήστρα), “the area where the chorus danced” in a theatre, which in turn is rooted in *orkheisthai* (ὀρχεῖσθαι), “to dance”.<sup>347</sup>

#### 7.1.5 Punctuated surges are necessary but insufficient to maintain adequate cooperation over time

Sustained and adequate institutional support over time is necessary for the gains resulting from the collective choreography to be impactful. Conversely, efforts that don’t receive this sustained support, often fail to be sustained, or to grow and deliver on their initial promise.

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<sup>346</sup> Abbott et al., *International Organizations as Orchestrators*.

<sup>347</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, ‘Orchestra, n’.

In each of the case studies presented, the importance of sustained catalytic engagement and follow-up for the effective implementation of voluntary cooperation has been clear. In both forests and transport, this clarity emerged due to the absence of limited institutional follow up by any of the IGOs involved in the formation of the initiatives in 2014 and 2015, which has impeded progress in implementation since then. For short-lived climate pollutants, the continued institutional support in the form of the governance structure of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition has enabled progress on the implementation of the commitments made, but the rigid governance structure within the sector has also impeded further entrenchment of partnership with the private sector in particular. In short, given the dominance of intergovernmental organizations as choreographer as well as performer, the combined multilevel efforts of intergovernmental organizations from both outside and within the network of voluntary cooperation must be *maintained* to ensure the effectiveness of voluntary cooperation. This finding is significant because it points to the insufficiency of short-term choreography directed just at the launch of an initiative, such as that of a summit, in facilitating a high-growth trajectory in voluntary cooperation over years and decades.

## **7.2 Directions for Future Research**

Research on multi-stakeholder partnerships is an uphill task made doubly difficult by the nebulous nature of partnerships and the lack of available data on their composition and achievements. It is therefore unsurprising that the ready availability of a dataset on “partnerships” announced at the Johannesburg world summit in 2002 spawned a rich vein of research. Unfortunately, the static ontology in which these

“partnerships” were conceived and presented has meant that the research on partnerships has also internalized and promoted a static conception of partnerships. Although careful case studies in the literature have revealed the importance of the context in which partnerships find themselves, this has been interpreted largely as the national and international context, and not the context of other partnerships in an issue area.

This study has highlighted the value-added to placing partnerships in the context of their network of other partnerships in a given issue area and to considering the progress and effectiveness made by a network of partnerships over time, rather than taking snapshots of individual partnerships at given moments in time. In doing so, it has raised several questions that could guide research on partnership, and intergovernmental organizations. As well, the limitations of this study demand that future research address them in order to build more robust foundations for analysis.

#### *7.2.1 Extending the Parameters of this Study*

The dataset developed and presented in this study, and the case studies conducted, are initial steps in the analysis of voluntary cooperation as an ecosystem that changes over time. As such, the dataset can and should be improved, for example through the addition of currently missing data on participants in initiatives; and the addition of data on geographic location of each entity in the network.

In addition, further case studies such as those undertaken in this study can serve to add robustness to the findings presented here. Have IGOs play significant roles in other sectors such as renewable energy or agriculture? How did national and sub-national contexts interact with the transnational context of the ecosystem of

cooperation? Additional case studies that aim to answer these questions will help to support, refute or fine-tune the findings presented here and may serve to add to their generalizability.

### *7.2.2 Network Analysis for Multi-Stakeholder Partnership*

The network analysis approach demonstrated in this study can be further developed to improve our understanding of how voluntary cooperation evolves and how it can be improved. As illustrated in the study, network analysis can yield useful insights that are otherwise unavailable. For example, the outsize influence of particular actors or types of actors in a network over time can pinpoint the particular entities that may be in a position to make necessary changes to partnerships. Evidence of clustering of specific actor types in sub-communities in a network combined with actors that hold strong bridge-building positions in the network can point to pathways for consolidation and improvement of interaction among entity types in the issue area. These are only exploratory steps in the possibilities presented by network analysis. Additional tools and measures in network analysis such as the density and connectivity of the network, forward and backward reachable paths (the assessment of the temporal influence of individual entities in the network, to identify “patient zero”-type entities that have had and can have transformational impact on the network), and homophily, can all be utilized to reveal more nuanced and sophisticated understandings of the form and evolution of the network.

Some pertinent questions for future research to tackle include: Are constituency-based coalitions a pre-requisite to multi-stakeholder partnership? How

does participation of entities from developing countries evolve over time, and what are the factors or entities that spur their increased participation?

### *7.2.3 Systemic Impacts of Intergovernmental Organizations*

The study of intergovernmental organizations has in recent years increasingly focused on the agency available to or seized by bureaucracies and the influence that different organizations wield on states and non-state actors in delivering their goals and mandates. Little attention has been paid to the interactions among different intergovernmental organizations in the context of the delivery of specific goals. This study has shown that considering the combined effect of intergovernmental organizations working at multiple levels of governance and in concert can yield insights into their working that are not available when considering the actions of organizations in isolation. This opens an avenue of research on the systemic effects of intergovernmental organizations, and the conditions under which intergovernmental organizations can be jointly most impactful.

## **7.3 Policy Implications**

The five key findings summarized above have several implications for policy-making in climate governance as well as global governance writ large, particularly multi-stakeholder partnership and the role of intergovernmental organizations in the twenty-first century.

### *7.3.1 Measure differently: See the forest and the trees*

Since cooperative initiatives form an evolving ecosystem and together reflect the quality of cooperation within the sector, a consideration of measures of quality at

the sectoral level can guide the development of new initiatives and can also be used to assess the value-added of new initiatives. Thus, funders of cooperative initiatives and central influencers within a sectoral sub-network should consider how a new initiative would improve the mix of partners in a sector (whether by the type of entity they are or their geographic location, for example), or the ambition or specificity of the goals being set in the sector. This could be an important rationale for steering the formation of an initiative. From a different perspective, entities performing a watchdog function can use these sectoral level measures to assess whether new initiatives meaningfully contribute to the growth of cooperation in the sector or not. In both cases, the existence and use of a network dataset such as that pioneered in this study would enable the pertinent entities to make their assessments.

### 7.3.2 *Make Partnership Capacity Ubiquitous Among IGOs*

The importance of IGOs in driving the quality of voluntary cooperation and the entrenched path dependency of their roles in the network means that enhancing their capacities to facilitate and develop high quality partnerships would significantly help improve such cooperation in the future. The sector-wide analyses made clear that only a few IGOs have been consequential for the growth of cooperation in their respective sectors. If this is due to a limitation in knowledge and capacity among most other IGOs, it is one that should be addressed as a matter of priority. At the same time, the abilities of the currently central IGOs in the network must be supported and enhanced to the extent possible.

In recent years, IGOs have institutionalized the pursuit of partnerships. For example, UNDP, UNEP and FAO all strongly emphasize the importance of multi-

stakeholder partnership as core elements of their strategic plans for 2018-2021. Yet, the conceptual understanding of multi-stakeholder partnership varies significantly among IGOs, as does their respective capacity to facilitate them. An effort by IGOs to share their own knowledge of best practices among each other and develop robust partnership facilitation abilities and agility should be prioritized. Such an effort, led by the UN Secretary-general, could enhance capacities across the UN System. In the early 2010s, Secretary-General Ban had attempted to reverse institutionalize a so-called Partnership Facility by General Assembly resolution in order to provide such capacity-building functions for the UN system. This was unsuccessful, but in recent years, in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, a significant UN reform effort has been undertaken, with UN member states recognizing and encouraging the role of the Secretary-General in playing a more robust leadership role vis-à-vis the UN development system. In addition, technical IGOs recognize this need—UNDP has established a global platform to support the collective capacity-building of UN System entities in this regard. If funded for multiple years by one of the central donors in the network, the executive office of the Secretary-General could leverage these institutional developments and effectively ramp up the partnership ability and know-how of the UN system to enhance the effectiveness of IGOs as participants in voluntary cooperation.

### *7.3.3 Empower the Right Choreographers*

The need for high convening power and autonomy to accelerate growth in voluntary cooperation means that resources expended for this purpose should empower those entities that possess both. In light of the findings of this study, the



office of the Secretary-General should be supported to continue to play the role of choreographer for enabling surges in the growth of the network of cooperation. In addition, powerful and appropriately motivated countries such as particular members of the Group of Seven should also be urged to play this role when possible. Contexts such as the G7 summits could prove useful in this regard, and proactive leadership by countries in designing these summits according to the criteria uncovered in this study could help accelerate cooperation significantly.

However, over the last five years, IGOs with relatively low convening power and autonomy have been tasked by governments to catalyze voluntary cooperation. At COP21, following the deliberations under the ADP2 and the work of the LPAA, the government of France, together with several Parties to the convention, introduced proposals for Decisions to be adopted by the Parties on the pursuit of voluntary cooperation. This institutionalized an architecture for the promotion of voluntary cooperation, including the convening of a high-level event at each COP, with the purpose to announce new initiatives or coalitions, and the establishment of two high-level champions to be appointed by COP Presidencies, each serving staggered two-year terms, whose purpose is to galvanize additional voluntary cooperation among stakeholders. These decisions were mandated for the 2016-2020 period at COP21, but have since been extended to cover the 2021 to 2025 period.

Institutionally, the high-level champions have low convening power. As individuals appointed by the Presidents of COPs, their ability to attract the attention of government leaders and parts of national governments pertinent to implementation of commitments, such as line ministries, is limited. Consequently, they are not able to

convene and steer those entities that are important to the growth of the network including the implementation of the commitments made, such as technical agencies of national and subnational governments, IGOs with technical mandates and on-the-ground presence, donor governments and philanthropic foundations. The combination of subsidiarity and leadership with central decision-making is therefore lacking. As well, their autonomy is limited. While they are appointed to act on behalf of COP Presidencies, two successive Presidencies are not always aligned on the value of voluntary cooperation, nor on the methods to be used to promote it. Further, the secretariat support to this architecture comes from the UNFCCC Secretariat, which itself has low convening power and autonomy. Thus, over the last five years, despite intensive efforts by the UNFCCC Secretariat, actors in the network have been increasingly dissatisfied with the effectiveness of this architecture to catalyze the growth of voluntary cooperation.

While it is infeasible to discontinue the role that has been allocated to the high-level champions and the UNFCCC Secretariat, the findings of this study could be used to augment their convening power and autonomy, such as through partnership with the UN Secretary-General and specific national governments—a *modus operandi* that was successful in the Lima-Paris Action Agenda.

#### *7.3.4 Organize for Success: Summitry 101*

Since the key findings include six enabling conditions for system-wide efforts to be successful, it is clear that these six elements must be prioritized by entities undertaking such efforts in the future. Whether summits of the Secretary-General, COPs under the climate convention, or otherwise, events that aim to nurture and

accelerate voluntary cooperation should all use the six enabling conditions as an organizing checklist to maximize their effectiveness.

Following COP21, there have been multiple attempts by entities to cultivate voluntary cooperation writ large. For example, the ocean conference convened by the UN General Assembly in 2017; the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS) in 2018 co-hosted by Governor Jerry Brown and Michael Bloomberg; and the UN Secretary-General's 2019 Climate Summit. None of these events prioritized all six enabling conditions. The ocean conference lacked central decision-making and strategic timing, was limited in its sectoral orientation and did not prioritize the announcement of cooperative initiatives (settling for individual commitments). While GCAS generated publicity, its inability to attract the participation of national leaders meant that the visibility and reputation enhancement it would offer commitment-makers across the world was relatively low compared to leaders' level summits. In addition, GCAS welcomed individual commitments and cooperative ones alike. The 2019 Climate Summit was limited in its centralized decision-making, despite the autonomy available to the Secretary-General.

While a detailed examination of the outcomes of these summits is beyond the scope of this study, a desk review indicates that the summits did not succeed in significantly improving the quality of cooperation within sectors. The ocean conference, similar to Rio+20, succeeded in attracting many individual commitments—over 1600—but few cooperative initiatives. In the case of the GCAS, the low convening power of the organizers meant that national government participation was extremely limited in the initiatives launched or expanded. For the

Secretary-General's 2019 summit, the process did not retain central decision-making on the formation and launch of the initiatives, instead ceding much of that power to groups of two or three national governments per sector. As a result, while the press release of the summit announced over 30 new initiatives, many of them were vague statements of intention or reaffirmations of existing commitments. As such, only four of them have been included in the UNEP database of cooperative initiatives. One of the senior team members of this summit observed, "It's a pity we didn't make full use of the Secretary-General's advantage. It was just another type of debate on climate change. We could have made it more selective. We lost the real objective of why we were doing this summit. We gave ownership to member states, and as a result they felt momentum and responsibility, but that also meant they felt they needed a final say in how to present results."<sup>348</sup>

A more in-depth analysis of these events is necessary before the causal mechanisms at work can be explicated, but this initial review supports the findings of this study and reiterates the need to prioritize the six conditions in the organization of these events.

### *7.3.5 Institutionalize Continuity*

The need for sustained institutional support means that IGOs and national governments that are motivated to host events to promote voluntary cooperation must commit to using these events to follow up on the progress of initiatives launched at previous events as well as put in place adequate institutional support between events.

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<sup>348</sup> Interviewee 52 (senior officer at the United Nations and senior civil servant of the Government of China), in discussion with author, 25 September 2019.

While the need for such follow-up has been recognized by the host entities as well as others ever since the Johannesburg summit in 2002, there has been little to no action taken. Even for events that have high autonomy and decision-making, such as the summits of the Secretary-General, there has been no discernible effort to ensure follow-up of initiatives.

This state of affairs can be corrected via two interventions. First, since events are spread among different hosts, but often funded by the same core group of countries and philanthropic foundations, it is feasible that a donors' pact on this issue can put sufficient pressure on the hosts to ensure the continuity needed. Second, the creation of a robust data commons for the network of cooperative initiatives, that is accessible to and used by all entities engaged in cultivating the network, can serve to orient the various conveners and choreographers around a common task of growing the ecosystem of cooperation. The strong support of actors central to the network and the primary choreographers of the network would be needed to ensure the dataset is used effectively. The dataset developed for this study can form the basis of such a commons.

#### *7.3.6 Think Beyond Climate Change: Choreography as the New UN Modus Operandi?*

The collective choreography that enabled the surge in the growth of voluntary cooperation on climate change could perhaps be usefully applied for advancing other global public goods. Although the cultivation of voluntary cooperation among different types of stakeholders may not be the appropriate or effective mechanism to provide all types of global public goods, they are pertinent for some problems that,

like climate mitigation, can be addressed through an aggregate effort of stakeholders, or that may need *all* pertinent stakeholders to take action, and which are facing non-compliance challenges in the multilateral arena.

Global pandemic response and management is one such public good. The World Health Organization (WHO), as a specialized agency of the United Nations, is responsible for coordinating the response of nation states to emerging pandemics. Governed by the World Health Assembly, which is composed primarily of ministers of health, the WHO is limited in its convening power and autonomy. Pandemics require a whole-of-society approach to be adequately mitigated, with jurisdictions of not just ministries of health, but also others such as transport, finance, and food and agriculture, being pertinent to effective action. In addition, jurisdictions of subnational governments play a significant part in the policy response. Further, civil society organizations and businesses are highly influential entities, for example in shaping mass behaviours and in the development and dissemination of vaccinations. In the absence of comprehensive and coherent intergovernmental leadership, the management of pandemics faces similar structural challenges as those presented in the intergovernmental management of climate change over the past three decades.

The development of a ‘good offices’ role by the UN Secretary-General on pandemics over the next decade may strengthen the ability of the intergovernmental system to respond to this challenge, and may help accelerate the growth of voluntary cooperation that is already starting to take shape on this issue. A similar such role could be asserted in other issue areas, potentially across the sustainable development agenda.

As instruments in service of “We the peoples”,<sup>349</sup> intergovernmental organizations are most true to their founding ideals when engaging in the collective choreography this study described. At the various iterations of the People’s Climate March that have taken place since 2014, one phrase commonly appears on banners: *to change everything, it takes everyone*. The vast and interconnected sectoral networks of peoples that together produce and are affected by greenhouse gases are the “everyone” that need to cooperate if the world is to successfully tackle climate change. If the value of collective choreography can be demonstrated in additional areas that demand cooperation, and if this mode of working is adequately nurtured, then the transformative value of intergovernmental organizations—particularly the United Nations—for the peoples of the world may begin to be realized. In a zeitgeist marked by rapidly rising nationalism and retreat from international cooperation, such a role seems not an elective, but a necessity, if we are to achieve our collective aim of “better standards of life in larger freedom”.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> United Nations, ‘Charter of the United Nations’, sec. Preamble.

<sup>350</sup> United Nations, sec. Preamble.

## 8 Appendices

### Annex 1 List of sectors and entity types used in the network dataset

#### Sectors

Agriculture; Cities and Regions; Energy; Finance; Industry; Non-CO<sub>2</sub> Gases; Transport and Navigation; Waster; Water; Resilience

#### Entity Types

Entity Type	Definition used in this study
Private Financial Institution (non Intergovernmental)	Private organization (i.e. a business) engaged in financial services, with or without a development/climate objective
Transnational Organization	Global-level membership-based organization (collects dues from members) established for a specific purpose. Membership is not limited to governments only and neither does it need to be limited to specific industries. Scope of work is usually oriented around specific economic goals.
Intra-National Organization	National-level membership-based organization (collects dues from members) established for a specific purpose. Membership need not be limited to governments only and neither does it need to be limited to specific industries. Scope of work is usually oriented around specific economic goals. Consequently, there is a self-selection of businesses/other entities that become members, in contrast to industry associations, which generally have the interests of the whole industry as their mission, rather than being oriented around a goal that is not necessarily aligned with the current trajectory of the whole industry.
Industry Association	Membership-based organization (collects dues from members) established for a specific purpose, but not by governments, limited to specific industries; high likelihood of lobbying and advocacy efforts; standard-setting; issuing industry reports; acting as governing body
Business (non-financial)	Profit-making company or companies (not financial services)
Philanthropic Foundation	Foundation that provides funds for specified charitable purposes (not governmental). May be family foundation, private, or pubic according to U.S. Government classifications.
Civil Society Organization	Not profit-seeking; depends upon donations (from organizations or general public) and fund-raising; largely independent from national government;
Research Institution	An academic research centre, whether a think tank, higher education entity etc. (but not a school or college in which research is not conducted as main purpose)
Cooperative Initiative	Cooperative initiative on climate change; shared responsibilities among different types of entities, resulting in a joint identity; horizontal; global



Annex 2      **List of Interviewees**

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Interviewee 1	Head of a prominent philanthropic foundation	29 August 2019
Interviewee 2	Senior official of the United States Government and of the IEA	2 August 2019
Interviewee 3	Senior official of multiple prominent research institutes	9 May 2019
Interviewee 4	Senior official of the Government of Norway	19 May 2019
Interviewee 5	Senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company	24 June 2019
Interviewee 6	Senior official of IRENA	10 May 2019
Interviewee 7	Senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Denmark	11 June 2018
Interviewee 8	Head of a prominent think tank	12 April 2019
Interviewee 9	Senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat	31 July 2019
Interviewee 10	Senior official of the United Nations and senior official of the Government of Barbados	22 May 2019
Interviewee 11	Senior officer at the United Nations	14 June 2018
Interviewee 12	Senior officer at UNEP	13 June 2018
Interviewee 13	Senior official of the World Bank	23 October 2019
Interviewee 14	Senior official of the United Nations	18 May 2020
Interviewee 15	Senior elected official of the Government of Norway	3 May 2019
Interviewee 16	Senior official of the IUCN, UNEP and UNDP	4 October 2019
Interviewee 17	Founding member of SloCaT	20 June 2019
Interviewee 18	Senior official of UNDP	3 May 2019
Interviewee 19	Cabinet minister of the Government of Peru	9 October 2018
Interviewee 20	Senior civil servant of the Government of India	5 August 2019
Interviewee 21	Senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat	8 June 2018
Interviewee 22	Senior official of the United Nations	13 June 2018
Interviewee 23	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of India	8 May 2018
Interviewee 24	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Ireland	9 May 2018
Interviewee 25	Senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company	10 May 2019
Interviewee 26	Senior advisor to the COP20 President	22 October 2018
Interviewee 27	Senior official of UNDP	18 April 2019

Interviewee 28	Senior officer at the Asian Development Bank	25 June 2019
Interviewee 29	Member of the Indian Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change	1 August 2019
Interviewee 30	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Cuba	10 May 2018
Interviewee 31	Senior advisor to the UK Government and to the New Climate Economy	27 May 2019
Interviewee 32	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Tanzania	8 May 2018
Interviewee 33	Senior advisor to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum	24 May 2019
Interviewee 34	Senior advisor to the COP21 President	9 October 2018
Interviewee 35	Senior negotiator of the Government of Pakistan and senior officer at the United Nations	14 June 2018
Interviewee 36	Senior official of the United Nations and head of a prominent philanthropic foundation	22 April 2019
Interviewee 37	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of China	9 May 2018
Interviewee 38	Founding member of SLoCaT	18 June 2019
Interviewee 39	Senior official of the United States Government	28 May 2019
Interviewee 40	Senior executive of the World Economic Forum	23 September 2018
Interviewee 41	Staff member of the CCAC secretariat	14 May 2019
Interviewee 42	Cabinet minister of the Government of Argentina	12 April 2019
Interviewee 43	Senior official of the United Nations	9 May 2020
Interviewee 44	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Fiji	9 May 2018
Interviewee 45	Senior official of the UNFCCC Secretariat	18 January 2018
Interviewee 46	Head of a prominent civil society organization	4 August 2019
Interviewee 47	Senior executive of a transport business association	24 May 2019
Interviewee 48	Senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company	3 October 2019
Interviewee 49	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Russia	10 May 2018
Interviewee 50	Senior official of the Government of Mexico and senior official of the United Nations	16 October 2019
Interviewee 51	Senior officer at the UNFCCC Secretariat	10 May 2019

Interviewee 52	Senior officer at the United Nations and senior civil servant of the Government of China	25 September 2019
Interviewee 53	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Iran	7 May 2018
Interviewee 54	Head of a prominent think tank	21 June 2018
Interviewee 55	Senior officer at the United Nations	13 June 2018
Interviewee 56	Senior executive of a Fortune Global 500 company	25 September 2019
Interviewee 57	Senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum	24 September 2019
Interviewee 58	Senior officer at the United Nations	19 May 2020
Interviewee 59	Senior official of the United Nations and senior executive of a prominent NGO	14 May 2019
Interviewee 60	Senior officer at the FAO	4 April 2018
Interviewee 61	Senior civil servant of the United States Government	11 April 2019
Interviewee 62	Senior officer at the OECD	10 July 2019
Interviewee 63	Senior official of the United States Government	10 September 2018
Interviewee 64	Senior official of UNEP	10 April 2019
Interviewee 65	Senior executive at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development	4 October 2019
Interviewee 66	Senior negotiator of the Government of Canada	10 June 2019
Interviewee 67	Senior officer at the United Nations	10 September 2019
Interviewee 68	Senior official of the United States Government and senior executive at a philanthropic foundation	13 June 2019
Interviewee 69	Senior official of the UK Government	23 July 2019
Interviewee 70	Senior officer on climate change at the World Economic Forum	20 June 2018
Interviewee 71	Senior climate negotiator of the Government of Sri Lanka	10 May 2018

Annex 3 **List of Cooperative Initiatives in the Forests Network**

<b>Start Year</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Name</b>
1986	RA	Rainforest Alliance
1990	CA	Climate Alliance
1993	FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
1998	FT	Forest Trends
2001	CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
2003	CCBA	Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance
2003	GPFLR	Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration
2003	GSF	Gold Standard Foundation
2004	RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
2006	GBP	Global Bioenergy Partnership
2007	C4C	Caring for Climate
2008	FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
2008	GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for Sahara and the Sahel Initiative
2008	SOCIALCARBON	SOCIALCARBON
2008	UNREDD	UN-REDD Programme
2009	GCFTF	Governors Climate and Forests Task Force
2010	CGF-DF	Consumer Goods Forum Zero-Net Deforestation Initiative
2010	Climate-KIC	Climate-KIC
2010	CLUA	Climate and Land Use Alliance
2010	PTPA	Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement
2010	REDD+	REDD+
2011	BCI	Blue Carbon Initiative
2011	Bonn Challenge	Bonn Challenge - Landscape Restoration
2011	CGIAR: CCAFS	CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security
2011	LEDS	Low Emissions Development Strategies
2011	R4	R4 Rural Resilience Initiative
2012	TFA2020	Tropical Forest Alliance 2020
2013	BCFISFL	BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes
2013	POIG	Palm Oil Innovation Group
2014	400m Ha	Protection of 400 million Hectares of Forests
2014	I 20x20	Initiative 20x20
2014	NYDF	New York Declaration on Forests
2015	AFLR	African Forest Landscape Restoration
2015	LCTPi	Low Carbon Technology Partnership Initiative
2015	RCDD	Remove commodity-driven deforestation
2015	Under2	Under2 Coalition
2015	ZDC CPT	Zero Deforestation Commitments from Commodity Producers and Traders

Annex 4      **List of Cooperative Initiatives in the Short-Lived Climate**

**Pollutants Network**

<b>Start Year</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Name</b>
1980	ARAP	Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy
1998	ICSA	International Coalition for Sustainable Aviation
2002	PCFV	Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles
2004	R <sub>2</sub> N!	Refrigerants, Naturally!
2008	EUROCITIES	EUROCITIES
2010	CGF-HFCs	Consumer Goods Forum HFC Phase-out Initiative
2010	GACC	Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves
2010	GMI	Global Methane Initiative
2012	CCAC	Climate and Clean Air Coalition
2012	CCAC: BI	CCAC: Bricks Initiative
2012	CCAC: HFCs	CCAC: Phasing Down Climate Potent HFCs
2012	CCAC: MSW	Mitigating SLCPs from the Municipal Solid Waste Sector
2014	CCAC: GGFAP	CCAC: Global Green Freight Action Plan
2014	CCAC: OGMP	CCAC: Oil & Gas Methane Partnership
2014	I 20x20	Initiative 20x20
2014	OGCI	Oil and Gas Climate Initiative
2015	CCAC: AI	CCAC: Agriculture Initiative
2015	ZRF 2030	Zero Routine Flaring by 2030

Annex 5 **List of Cooperative Initiatives in the Land Transport Network**

<b>Start Year</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Name</b>
1974	IPIECA	International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association
1990	CA	Climate Alliance
1990	ICLEI	ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability
2001	CAAsia	Clean Air Asia
2001	ICCT	International Council on Clean Transportation
2002	PCFV	Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles
2003	LCVP	Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership
2004	TCG	The Climate Group
2005	C40 CCLG	C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
2005	REN21	Ren21
2006	Walk21	Walk 21
2007	C4C	Caring for Climate
2007	TCR	The Climate Registry
2007	VERRA	Verra
2008	EUROCITIES	EUROCITIES
2008	L&G	Lean and Green
2009	30X30 Res	"30 by 30" Resolution
2009	GFEI	Global Fuel Economy Initiative
2009	LCRS	Logistics Carbon Reduction Scheme
2009	SLOCAT	Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport
2010	PTPA	Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement
2011	EMA	EcoMobility Alliance
2011	GFEN	Green Freight Asia Network
2012	CCAC	Climate and Clean Air Coalition
2012	Urban-LEDS	Urban-LEDS project
2013	UEMI	Urban Electric Mobility Initiative
2014	CCAC: GGFAP	CCAC: Global Green Freight Action Plan
2014	LCSRTC	Low-Carbon Sustainable Rail Transport Challenge
2014	PTDCL	Public Transport Declaration on Climate Leadership
2014	SE4All: ET	SEforAll: Energy and Transport
2014	VFEA	Vehicle Fuel Efficiency Accelerator
2015	C40 CBD	C40 Clean Bus Declaration/Low emission vehicles
2015	CDGG	Cycling Delivers on the Global Goals
2015	CNCA	Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance
2015	ITS4C	ITS for Climate
2015	IZEVA	International Zero-Emission Vehicle Alliance
2015	LCRRTI	Low Carbon Road and Road Transport Initiative
2015	LCTPi	Low Carbon Technology Partnership Initiative
2015	MYCP	MobiliseYourCity Partnership
2015	PAECC	Paris Declaration on Electromobility on Climate Change
2015	T4SC	Taxi4SmartCities
2015	Under2	Under2 Coalition

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