

**Master Thesis M.A. – European Studies**

**The EU as a global leader? A comparative  
study on Copenhagen and Paris UN  
climate change negotiations**



**LUNDS**  
UNIVERSITET

**Student: Razvan Cristian Belu (9201177756)**

**Supervisor: Dr. Gunnhildur Lily Magnusdottir**

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## **Abstract**

Climate change is a global and demanding issue, which affects all the states on the planet. The European Union has from the 90s been vigorously engaged in the international efforts to tackle climate change and even pursued to take on the leading role in the global climate regime. The two most anticipated UN conferences for combating climate change at the global level were the COP15 in 2009 and COP21 in 2015. The EU, described by the academia as the possible leader, had high ambitions and sought to negotiate an agreement, which would legally bind the parties to reduce the greenhouse gases emissions. Although the EU had the same ambitions in prior to both summits, the outcome was one of a very different nature. COP15 was described by EU's lead negotiators as *disappointing*, while COP21 was termed *historical*.

The ultimate aim of this thesis is to account for the reasons behind the outcome discrepancy by comparing the two UN Conferences by primarily analyzing the role played by the alleged climate leader, the European Union. The study will also consider the most relevant aspects of the political and economic context, as well as the most dominant parties at the UNFCCC. The EU is not a state, nor a traditional international institution. Thus, the thesis departs from evaluating the status of the European Union in the international climate change regime, using the criteria developed by Jupille & Caporaso and Vogler & Bretherton. After concluding the nature of EU actorness, the study will make use of the leadership types elaborated by Wurzel and Connelly in order to gain a more nuanced conceptualization of EU's role and leadership at the conferences. After the EU's actorness at both Copenhagen and Paris is conclusively demonstrated, the role and leadership of the Union are finally assessed in order to identify the reasons behind the outcome discrepancy. The conclusion is that the EU failed to assume the role of the leader in Copenhagen, while succeeding it, at least to some extent, in Paris. External factors, such as China's approach, have also played a crucial role.



## 1. Introduction

That climate change is one of the most challenging issues of our time due to its trans-boundary nature, remains, at least to a great deal of the academia, undisputed. The fact that climate change cannot be dealt with single-handedly has led many states to attempt to find collective solutions by cooperating with other states. As the international system lacked a central authority, a global regime, which would tackle the all-affecting issue of climate change, had to be created. At the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, 150 states signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, henceforth UNFCCC (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 277). The treaty provides a framework for the development of future climate policy and legislation (Oberthür & Pallemerts, 2010, p. 30) with the aim of stabilizing the ‘greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system’ (Article 2, 1992).

The main accomplishment of the regime was the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, although with many states opting out, such as the US. Fast forward to 2009 and COP15 in Copenhagen was the most anticipated conference on climate change in history. The parties, amounting to around 180, met to sign an agreement that would bind the parties, each according to its own responsibilities, to make the necessary GHG emissions cuts. The European Union, regarded by many scholars as the previous leader of the Kyoto Protocol who pushed the whole regime into realization, as well as ‘the most likely candidate for leading the climate change regime (Gupta & Grubb, 2000, p. 47), came allegedly prepared and with high ambitions for a legally binding deal. After two weeks, the negotiations ended with the drafting of the Copenhagen Accord, which was referred to as a ‘disappointment’ by the EU.

Six years later, COP21 in Paris was approaching and the European Union had prepared again for an ambitious binding deal. The conference was highly anticipated as well, but it seemed that the external expectations, at least before the summit itself, were somewhat lower than in Copenhagen. Two weeks later, in December 2015, an agreement was negotiated, which would become legally binding after its ratification. This time, the EU expressed a high level of satisfaction, calling it ‘a historical agreement’.

The EU, claiming leadership in both cases, had its ambitions unfulfilled in Copenhagen,

and fulfilled in Paris. The US and China had expressed relative content for both outcomes. In only a few years, two similar UNFCCC's summits concluded two radically different achievements. The logical question, which comes to mind, is:

*Why did the outcomes differ to such a great extent if the supposedly leader had the same ambitions?*

To be able to answer that question, which at the same time is the central research question, it is imperative to analyze the two conferences separately before comparing them.

### **1.1. Research questions**

Since the European Union performed leadership in relation to the Kyoto Protocol, has the EU too done justice to its leadership in Copenhagen and Paris? And if so, what kind of leadership is that? Is it perhaps the conceptualization of 'leadership' that might give us an answer to the main research question of how come did the outcomes turn out so differently? Moreover, it is rather natural to assume that the EU had roughly the same resources. Then, does the usage of those resources fluctuated to account for the dissimilarity of the outcomes?

In order to answer those questions, which themselves are crucial to solving the central research question, we need to go deeper into EU's crucial defining elements. What is it the power that defines the EU? Is it perhaps hard power, soft power or perhaps something in between? Where does it come from and how well has it aided the EU's leadership at COP15 and COP21?

Furthermore, the core two theories of integration, neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism can also account for the differences between the outcomes, since according to the latter only powerful states are able to shape 'high politics' and since the EU is not a state but just an intergovernmental organization, the EU has no power to influence the regime. Has the EU been falsely under the impression of leading the climate change regime, while the member states dominated the whole process? Or perhaps climate change is not a sector of 'high politics' and for that reason the EU acquired shared competence.

Lastly, an assessment of EU's actorness will be conducted, as it is imperative to see if the Union qualifies as an actor in its own right at both COP15 and COP21. Performing this analysis might lead to subtle disparities with regard to its actorness' nature in Copenhagen, in Paris. Taken cumulatively, the aspiration behind those secondary research questions is that they will bring us closer to the main and more complex research question of how can we account for the radically different outcomes of the conferences.

## **1.2. Summary of previous research**

A comparative study between COP15 and COP21 has not yet been conducted, as the latter has only recently taken place. The ratification of the Paris Protocol is yet to take place at the time of the writing, thus limiting to some extent various research questions. For instance, it cannot be unmistakably claimed that the Protocol shall lead to dramatic GHG mitigation effort, as for now. Furthermore, it is difficult to research the implications of the treaty until the ratification period will run out. Thus, with extremely limited academic body of work on COP21, EU's press releases, reports and news articles will comprise the main body of sources for my own research.

With respect to COP15 on the other hand, a decent amount of research has been done. Connelly *et al.* have studied the summit, not only from a European perspective, but also from an international perspective, assessing the different parties' positions. He attributes the failure of COP15 and the impediment to collective action to rapidly industrializing states, such as China. Michael M. Gunter Jr. talks about multilateralism as failing when it comes to climate change. He considers the nature of EU's leadership and urges the academia to break it into different types for a better understanding. He claims that the EU's leadership after COP15 was declining and that the EU role was lessened (Gunter Jr, 2013).

Lisanne Groen and Arne Niemann from the University of Amsterdam write on EU's actorness being under political pressure at COP15. Dimitrov (2011) writes about how, when the bargaining failed, the 'priority switched from saving the world to saving face'. Van Schaik and Schunz have also researched on EU activism and impact in global climate politics, as well as COP15.



Moreover, in chapter 3.2.1, previous research on EU's actorness is assessed. Three basic approaches will be presented. The first two approaches regard the EU as an actor but differ with respect to EU's normativity. Manners, respectively Sjursen are the scholars behind them. Lastly, the third take on the matter takes its departure in realism and is skeptical of perceiving the EU as an actor in its own right.

### **1.3. Justification of the study**

There are three important justifications for conducting this study. Firstly, the current thesis adds value to our comprehension of the identity of the European Union. Its actorness is being put to test in relation to COP15 and COP21 as well as its leadership and normative power. Neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism contribute also to an understanding of the nature of the EU. Moreover, the environmental policy of the EU, especially the climate action, is a very central part of the EU, and an extremely successful one in comparison to others where member states still have power. That is illustrated by the claims that the EU is a global leader when it comes to climate change. This emphasizes the need for an elaborate understanding of the issue.

Secondly, the study is a rather fresh one, without huge existing bodies of literature on the subject. COP21 is very recent and quite under-researched, thus making the comparison between the two extremely under-researched. Studying a new area is always fruitful as it can communicate us more about the nature of things.

Thirdly, and in close connection to the study's low level of research, is the fact that the issue is rather important. Certainly any subject matters and is relevant in its own way, but climate change is an all-affecting issue, not only physically but also inwardly, which unresolved in time may lead to dire consequences for life on Earth. Coupled with the fact that the EU has the highest probability of leading the regime into mitigation and adaptation strategies, I see it as essential to study the subject.

### **1.4. Sources**

The current thesis offers a qualitative analysis of the EU prior, during and shortly after COP15 and COP21 as well as the international context that is relevant to the research question. Chapter 4, however, looks at the climate issue, the emergence and the activity

within UNFCCC up to COP15, as well as EU's institutional configuration for climate negotiations. The assessment of the conferences is based on a rather large range of sources: reports, official documents and statements, speeches, academic studies and newspaper articles, especially in relation to COP21. The main advantage of using a broad range of sources is that it opens up different angles for examination. However, in relation to COP21, as mentioned previously, we have a lack of academic studies limiting the scope, risking to some extent to overuse normative sources.

In order to analyze both conferences to assess EU's actorness and to identify features, which can ease the inquiry, it is imperative to evaluate official documents and reports. Because of the relatively far-reaching approach, documents from the EU institutions, as well as from various EU member states and their heads of state are used. Certain declarations from international organizations, such as the UN, are also taken into consideration. This combined allows for a relatively extensive comprehension of the two summits. The EU materials are utilized as a way of understanding the goals and the ambitions of the actors.

Official statements, as well as speeches are beneficial since they sometimes go even further than the official strategy papers. Academic investigation forms also an integral part when possible, as their interpretations give insights into the selected issues. As COP15 and COP21 received huge amounts of media coverage and due to the recent nature of COP21, newspaper articles are included.

Lastly, the scholars and the sources used for the theoretical framework as well as for the methodology will be introduced at the beginning of each of the chapters. Furthermore, an argumentation will be given as to why I consider them appropriate to answer the research question.

## **1.5. Structure of the thesis**

Chapter two presents an assessment of the analytical framework of the present thesis, namely the two core theories of integration, neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism, along with normative power. The main assumptions of liberal neofunctionalism are assessed, followed by a similar analysis on liberal

intergovernmentalism, regarded as the opposing theory.

Chapter three deals with the methods for the study and the reasons why they seem suitable. The ontological and epistemological bases of the thesis are spelled out. Firstly, the actorness is defined and the actorness criteria as elaborated by Jupille & Caporaso, respectively Vogler & Bretherton is provided. The three generally accepted leadership types coined by Oran R. Young and slightly modified by Wurzel & Connelly are assessed. Lastly, the limitations of the chosen methods are addressed.

In Chapter four, a brief historical account of the events leading up to COP15 is given. The UNFCCC and the EU's setup for climate negotiations are addressed as well. Chapter five and chapter six are similarly arranged. Both start with introducing the prospects, issues and negotiations. Afterwards, the position of the EU prior to the negotiations is discussed. Subsequently an account of the talks halfway through is provided. Lastly, the outcome, EU afterwards and preliminary conclusions are discussed.

The last chapter deals with the comparative study. Firstly, EU's actorness is evaluated within both conferences with the criteria presented in chapter three. Secondly, an assessment will follow, which takes into consideration all the theories presented in chapter two, discussing the results and answering the majority of the questions posed in the chapter 1.1, entitled 'Research questions'. Finally, conclusions and reflective remarks come after. Here the research results are formulated into clear conclusions and the answer to the main research question is summarized. Final thoughts on how the results may be developed further, and if there is a possibility for generalizing the results, form the second part of the chapter.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

Theories are a "simplifying device", meant for assisting the progress of our comprehension of intricate systems such as world politics (S. Smith, Baylis, & Owens, 2005, p. 3). Evidently, a theory is a simplification apparatus only when one acquires a deep understanding of the theory. In doing that, this chapter starts with an examination of the basic assumptions of the two main theories applied for explaining European integration, neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism. Neofunctionalism is first assessed,

followed by liberal intergovernmentalism, which is the opposing theory of neofunctionalism.

Secondly, the concept of normative power as outlined by Ian Manners is going to be presented and clarified, as it is imperative to do so for the subject matter. It is suggested that the European Union does not lead by possessing strong military power such as the United States, but unlike the latter, the Union enjoys normative power. Obviously, power regardless of form, is an extremely crucial aspect for understanding to what extent the EU played a leading role at the UNFCCC's and whether it has accomplished its aim. Another meaningful element to consider is how normative power behaves in relation to hard power and which, if any, carries a bigger weight within the UNFCCC's, and above all within COP15 and COP21.

The argument is that normative power and theories of European integration seem to be suitable theoretical tools for the assessment of EU's role in Copenhagen and Paris. An ever-increasing number of scholars have tried to theorize about EU's power. Recently, the debate started to revolve around Manners' idea of European normative power. Many researchers use it as a departure point and eventually add to it various inputs. Considering that the subject matter is one concerned with the perception of climate change by the states and even by the individuals, looking at normative power seems imperative. The theories of integration are also important since we are looking at the EU's identity and role. Through them we can pierce deeper into EU's intricacies and explain its actions. Moreover, if the events suggest a neofunctionalist approach, we can expect that the Union will be more cohesive and more able to lead the global efforts, whereas a liberal intergovernmentalist take on the matter would signify that EU's climate action efforts are dominated by the member states and could come to a halt at any time due to conflicting interests.

### **2.1.1. Neofunctionalism**

Neofunctionalism was the first widely accepted theory of European integration and 'during the first period.... appeared to be winning the theoretical debate (Bache, 2006, p. 10). According to neofunctionalist thinking, the political integration at the European level is an effect of economic integration through a process of 'spillover' (Haas, 1968; Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 293). Integration happens first in key economic areas (Rosamond, 2000, p. 51 &

Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 293). Subsequently, supranational bodies are created to further aid integration and oversee the existing process. As competences and powers are progressively shifted to the supranational level, it is argued that integration ‘creates spillover pressures on cognate sectors’, as the environment to also integrate. This process is shortly known as ‘issue linkage’ (Ibid.).

Gradually, as powers are allocated upwards, the interest groups move their loyalties from the national level to the European level (Ibid.). Additional supranational institutionalization takes place, as deepening integration needs more oversight, meaning that ‘political integration follows economic integration’ (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 293). The process is naturally expansive, but at the same time it is difficult to predict it, with supranational task allocation in one sector transcending into integration in others (Ibid.).

### **2.1.2. Liberal Intergovernmentalism**

Starting more as critique to neofunctionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism has been one of the central theories in the study of European integration. The key actors here are the governments, which bargain for their national interest. It is argued that the government constructs its national preference based on the influence from national interest groups, but it also regards the governing party as well as prominent officials as instrumental. Its focus on governments derives from the idea that binding agreements can only be made by the elected body, thus devaluating the integration to a primarily intergovernmental process (Bache, 2006, p. 12-13).

Liberal intergovernmentalism departs from a state oriented model towards a more economic and political approach for the process of integration (Moravscik, 1998). In simple terms, the concept can be condensed into a supply and demand theory in which the main actors are the EU’s member states. According to this, European integration can be explained through a liberal theory of the formation of national preferences (considered to be the *demand*) and an intergovernmental system of negotiation between states (considered to be the *supply*). The *demand* component takes into account the national preferences as part of the internal politics of the member states. Once formulated, the interests are then negotiated in an intergovernmental system, which represents the *demand* component (Wallace, 1990, p. 46).

In this way, as Moravcsik explains, the governments transfer sovereignty to the international institutions where the potential joint gains are larger, but at the same time 'efforts to secure compliance by foreign governments through decentralized or domestic means are likely to be ineffective' (Moravcsik, 1998, p. 9). What is extremely striking is the way in which Moravcsik diminishes the importance of supranational institutions. Furthermore, the American researcher claims that the success of various EU's treaties, such as the Single European Act is a result of the intense actions of transnational actors, as well as international ones along with the bargaining between the leaders of the most powerful European states. From this standpoint, the Commission has been generated through the member states' bargaining. It is the national governments who launch initiatives in the Council of Ministers and in the European Council, but at the same time they do so because of their own self national interests. In this vein, the EU policies are an extension of the national ones. The safeguarding of sovereignty is, as a matter of fact, the result of giving up some of the national sovereignty to the supranational institutions, as they receive other benefits for doing so. Nonetheless, the member states are extremely reticent in handing over important bits of their sovereignty, but instead they prefer to bargain within intergovernmental institutions such as the Council of Ministers and not within the supranational institutions such as the Commission or the European Parliament.

## **2.2. The European Union and normative power**

Following the fall of the Iron Curtain and the consequential upheaval on the European continent, researchers have attempted to conceptualize the EU as a global actor. In the early 1990s the European Union has encountered considerable challenges, which required the Union's full energy and resources. The Union found itself at a crossroads; it was forced to either address the challenges in order to increase its status in the international arena or to risk its downfall, or at best, to survive as a purely economic organization. After the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the outlook started to look brighter, as the CFSP seemed that it would bring the member states together for peacekeeping missions and humanitarian aid. Along with the common policies on trade and other cooperation agreements, the EU seemed to be the only genuine supranational power in international politics (Smith, 2005, p. 171 & Hardwick, 2011). Before the Civil War in Yugoslavia erupted, it might have seemed that the EU retained the likelihood of becoming a military power.

The debate shifted from focusing on the member states to an analysis of the European Union as a unitary institution (White, 2004, p. 17). This led many scholars to theorize about the European project. Javier Solana which acted as the High Representative from 1999 to 2009 has asserted that the EU has the responsibility to work for the 'global common good' and that is an accurate way of describing EU's international role and ambitions (Aggestam, 2008, p. 6). Ian Manners is one of the key scholars on EU's normative power and he claims that the EU is a normative power. His interpretation is that the EU 'changes norms, standards and prescriptions of work politics away from bounded expectations of state-centricity' (Manners, 2008, p. 45-46). In the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Manners writes that 'normative power' can be defined as 'the ability to define what pass for *normal* in world politics' (2002, p. 236).

His perspective on the matter has made many others to reconsider EU's identity and function. Unlike the anterior ways of conceptualizing, such as 'military — or civilian power Europe', normative power concentrates 'on the ideations and power of norms' (Whitman, 2011, p. 2). Manners claims that the EU has not only been established on a normative foundation and that it has retained it ever since, but that it behaves in a normative way, exerting itself to 'extend its norms into the international system' (Manners, 2002, p. 252).

Going even further, Manners claims that 'the notion of a normative power Europe is located in a discussion of the 'power over opinion'... and the desire to move beyond the debate over state-like features through and understanding of the EU's identity'; basically a set of principles or common beliefs which the member states comply with and set an example of (Manners, 2002, p. 239; Hardwick, 2011). Those principles, which the EU pursues are enshrined in the EU's body of law, the so-called *acquis communautaire*. The principles are sometimes referred to as norms and they consist of human rights, rule of law, democracy, liberty and the centrality of peace along with four secondary ones, anti-discrimination, good governance, social solidarity and sustainable development. Manners argue that it is the combination of these norms, which separate it from other political entities and make it perform in a normative manner. As Dunne notes, the member states have so many agreements regarding those norms that they have become strong binding commitments (2008, p. 22). Manners reason that the European Union will not change its

normative nature in the near future (2008, p. 45); setting an example and leading by that logic in contrast to the traditional use of hard power will continue to define the EU.

Surely, finding out whether EU diffuses its norms in connection to third parties is not an easy task. However, when considering the environment and especially climate change, the vantage point seems to become clearer. One example reinforcing this view is the EU's engagement with China on climate change in the past several years. Rhetorically, China talks about sustainable development and a few years ago it has committed itself along with the EU to 'jointly advancing international efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals, eliminate poverty and achieve sustainable development with a view to realizing common development and prosperity' (China Policy Paper on the EU; Shaohua, 2015). This has happened after the EU has repeatedly tried from the 90s through various strategic communications to develop dialogue with China and to engage it in sustainable development (Shaohua, 2015). Those efforts, which arguably have achieved a more positive China towards sustainable development can be seen as 'informational diffusion'. 'Procedural diffusion' can also take place considering that there are annual EU-China summits, dialogues on climate change and other dialogues at the ministerial level. It can also be a proof of 'transference' when one looks at EU's trade policy and that the Union wishes international trade and investment to be used as a tool for achieving genuine global sustainable development (Council of the EU, 'Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy', 2006, p. 19). It is hardly unlikely that the EU, serving as the largest trading block to not diffuse its norms to China. It is more obvious that diffusion happens when one takes into account the fact that the EU stipulates conditionality clauses that bind the partners, for instance, to apply human rights. This could be seen as 'transference'. A similar assessment will be performed when analyzing the UNFCCC conferences in Chapter 7.

One aspect, which supports the Union's normative power in international relations is its leadership in international environmental politics. Evidently, the time scale is rather short, lacking historical depth, which points to the fact that we should be critical of EU's normativity. Moreover, the clashes between the different member states, having competing principles, seem to encourage the questioning of whether the EU is best understood as a normative power.



The EU is definitely a different type of global actor due to its unique institutional framework; but does it vary as well when it comes to pursuing different interests? Is the EU seeking to shape the international order through normative change rather than using force? (Manners and Whitman, 2003; Therborn, 1997; Falkner, p. 2). It is rather impossible to argue that the UE lacks global power. Most certainly it does not retain encompassing military powers. We are left with other choices where normative power seem to fit in well, even the best, with the argument according to which international interests and universal values make up the core of EU's foreign policy (Falkner, p. 2). 'Leadership by example' is the Union's strategy for the climate bargaining and in order for that to pass the credibility test, the EU needs to have a comprehensive climate change policy (van Schaik, p. 7; Oberthür & Dupont, 2011; Parker & Karlsson, 2010). The ambitious EU climate and energy package could be considered an example for the other states and thus display moral leadership.

### **3. Methodology**

This chapter starts by spelling out the ontological and epistemological bases. Afterwards, actorness is defined and the actorness criteria developed by Jupille & Caporaso, respectively Vogler & Bretherton is provided. The three leadership types as elaborated by Oran R. Young and Wurzel & Connelly are discussed. Lastly, the limitations of the chosen methods are addressed.

Firstly, I deem the actorness criteria to be appropriate to answer the research question due to the need of conceptualizing the role of the EU at both summits. As argued earlier, the EU is neither a state, nor an orthodox international organization and thus it must be evaluated against a generally accepted criteria to see whether the EU qualifies as an actor in its own right or not. Moreover, opting for evaluating the EU through two slightly different criteria, will confer the analysis more scientificity. Vogler is one of the very first scholars theorizing about the EU role in the global arena and thus is of paramount importance. Joseph Jupille and James A Caporaso are also two central figures in the field of EU's actorness. The two pairs of researchers differ also with respect to the belief in EU's actorness. While Vogler & Bretherton are more positive, Jupille and Caporaso are rather skeptical of the degree of EU actorness.

Secondly, leadership types are significant since it is imperative to understand what leadership is, as the EU has been referred to and has aspired to be a leader. This can give us insights into the main research question. Understanding what type of leadership the EU might possess or not leads to relevant conclusions. This also allows for a comparison of the different types of leaderships and how the actors fit them and what does that mean for the climate change regime. As we shall see, normative power is also closely linked to one of the types.

### **3.1. Ontological and Epistemological claims**

The following section aims to cover the core epistemological and ontological commitments. The ontological assumption regards the nature of reality. While for the positivists the reality is only one, and at the same time external and objective for the researcher, for the interpretivists there exists many realities, as every one of us carries its own unique perception; thus pointing to a subjective reality (Hussey, 2009)

The epistemological claim handles what is accepted as being valid knowledge. While the positivists believe that barely the phenomena which is measurable and observable counts as knowledge, the interpretivists argue that the knowledge is the researcher's own beliefs after he or she has interacted with what is being researched (Hussey, 2009).

Based on the clarifications made above, a stance will now be taken. As the subject matter is the study of two conferences and finding discrepancies in-between, through the analysis of different and itself subjective sources, considering myself independent of the researched reality is not possible. According to the positivist take, the research has to be unbiased (Creswell, 1994, p. 5; Hussey, 2009). Obviously, this is entirely impossible, as not even refraining from conclusions would make the study unbiased.

The purpose of this thesis is to gain insights into why did the two outcomes turned out so differently. I believe that there are multiple ways of accounting for it, but most essentially, in order to grasp the delicate contrasts better between the two summits, the researcher would have to be present, which in itself leads to more subjectivity, departing a long way from the required objectivity of positivism.

Doing it independently would also be impossible, as that would imply not to use sources. Lastly, it is also a question about measurement. There is no single measurement or computation, which can magically answer all the above questions. Thus, the thesis' departs from the positivistic approach only to embrace an interpretative explanation.

### **3.2. Actorness Criteria**

As mentioned previously, the EU's roll as an actor has been discussed greatly within political science. In this chapter we first look at three schools of thought regarding the EU as an international actor. Finally, the criteria by Jupille & Caporaso and Vogler & Bretherton are articulated, being adopted for assessing EU's actorness at COP15 and COP21.

#### **3.2.1. Previous research on EU's actorness**

The first approach recognizes EU's normative power and places the EU as having a special position in world's affairs. Manners, one of the founders of this perspective, argues that the Union has built in values such as democracy, liberty and focus on human rights both internally and externally while the latter is seen as being performed more encompassing than what other comparable actors engage in (Manners, 2002, p. 241). The EU is consciously using those norms to attempt to gain legitimacy and to be perceived as something bigger than only the sum of its member states, along with avoiding being seen as just an economic actor (Ibid., p. 244). What is required for promoting this identity are not only statements, but also actions in this direction. Manners' example is EU's fight to abolish the death penalty. The final conclusion is that EU is not only a normative and special actor, but that this is something normatively positive and that the European Union should pursue this already well-defined path (Ibid., p. 252).

The second perspective incorporating scholars such as Helene Sjursen criticizes the first approach. Sjursen argues that the conclusion according to which EU should be best viewed as a normative actor should be highly challenged, as the description in line with EU's being ethical reminds too much of official statements from EU's leading representatives, something that makes the researcher's objectivity questionable (Sjursen, 2006a, p. 170). Critical is this approach to EU's normative roll's uniqueness as well, as US has too driven questions of human rights and democracy when, for instance, Woodrow Wilson or Jimmy

Carter held the office. The main issue at hand is what makes the EU so different from the US, apart from the obvious lack of military means (Sjursen, 2006b, p. 240). Finally, Sjursen believes that to be classified as a normative actor it is required to put international and cosmopolitan law, meaning ideas which promote the right of the individual, ahead of the state's sovereignty, something which the EU has not done enough of (Ibid., p. 249). Regardless how disparate they are, what those two approaches have in common is the fact that they both take for granted the fact that the EU is an actor. The debate is more concerned with whether the EU is uniquely normative or rather similar to other great powers.

Lastly, the third approach, quite distinct from the first two, does not identify the European Union as a unitary actor, especially when it comes to security issues. Its departure is located in realism and thus more views EU's actorness more skeptically. Liberal intergovernmentalism, discussed in the previous chapter, resembles to a great extent this world view. This perspective dismisses the possibility of EU being a normative actor, especially after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Hyde-Price claims that the powerful states within the EU have accomplished their goals by soft power; using diplomacy and collaborative endeavors (Hyde-Price, 2006, p. 227). Germany, France and Great Britain, is argued, drive the European project as a way of safeguard their own security interests, something that makes the whole EU be seen as an intergovernmental cooperation. As a conclusion, the last approach dismisses the EU as being an actor and does not recognize EU's complexity.

### **3.2.2. Criteria by Jupille & Caporaso**

The four preconditions for the European Union and for any other entities to be able to influence global politics, according to Jubille and Caporaso are: *recognition*, *authority*, *autonomy* and *cohesion* (1998, p. 214). *Recognition*, the first criterion, is defined as the 'acceptance of and interaction with the entity by others' (Ibid.). *Authority* is used 'in the sense of legal competence to act' (Ibid.). The third component for assessing an actor's capacity, *autonomy*, is 'conceived as institutional distinctiveness and independence from other actors', while the last one, entitled *cohesion*, refers to 'the degree to which an entity is able to formulate and articulate internally consistent policy preferences' (Ibid.).

Regarding *recognition*, it is a criterion which is something of a minimum prerequisite,

'simply registering it on the analytical radar' (Ibid., p. 215). Therefore we can conclude that the third parties interacting with the European Union inherently bestow recognition to it. Its *authority* to act externally, by possession legal competence in a given area, is put together by the member states. From the very first environmental conferences, the European Union set up its legal authority to operate on different provisions.

The *autonomy*, being intimately related to authority, presupposes that as an actor, the European Union must have a 'distinctive institutional apparatus, even if it is grounded in, or intermingles with, domestic political institutions' (Jupille & Caporaso, 1998, p. 217). Related to independence, 'these institutions should make a difference, compared to the baseline expectation of a decentralized state system working on the basis of power and interest' (Ibid.). Finally, the important distinction is 'whether the EU is a *corporate* — rather than a *collective* — entity, which has, or at least can have, causal importance that is more than the sum of its constituent parts' (Ibid.).

Lastly, *cohesion* is explained as 'the degree to which an entity is able to formulate and articulate internally consistent policy preferences' (Ibid., p. 214). The authors break down *cohesion* into four dimensions in order to better account for the concept, value (goal) cohesion, tactical cohesion, procedural cohesion and output cohesion. *Value cohesion* refers to 'the similarity or compatibility of basic goals', while *tactical cohesion* is when relatively different goals are 'made to fit with one another through issue linkages and side payments' (Ibid., p. 219). *Procedural cohesion* concerns issues where there is conflict, yet some consensus may exist when it comes to the procedures and rules to be used. Finally, output cohesion is directly coupled with public policies, meaning that there is more cohesion when the member states set up collective policies (Ibid., p. 219-220). What is important to remember is that cohesion should not be regarded as an all-or-nothing yardstick; hence it results that an actor can manifest very low levels of cohesion in some areas and extremely high levels in others (Ibid.).

### **3.2.3. Criteria by Vogler & Bretherton**

The two researchers have worked out a different conceptualization for determining the Union's actorness in global climate politics, grounded in three criteria, presence, opportunity and capability. Vogler & Bretherton's angle does not attempt to exclude Jupille & Caporaso's approach, but rather to complement it. In the view of Vogler & Bretherton, actorness is 'critically dependent upon the expectations and constructions of

other international actors' (Vogler & Bretherton, 2006b, p. 5). They go further by pointing out three facets — *presence*, *opportunity* and *capability*.

*Presence*, the first *criterion*, is defined through Allen and Smith as the capacity to 'exert influence to shape the perceptions and expectations of others' (Ibid.; Allen & Smith, 1990, p. 21). This is, however, not something done with purpose, but more likely a result of the external effect of EU's internal policies; or as Vogler and Bretherton put it, it is more like a function of being rather than doing (Vogler & Bretherton, 2006b, p. 5). Unavoidably, EU's *presence* is strengthened by the success of EU's policies, or belittled by the nonperformance of the same. Public disunity can also negatively impact *presence* (Ibid.).

*Opportunity* is concerned with the 'external environment of ideas and events that enable or constrain purposive action', signifying the structural context of the action (Ibid.). As explained previously and in the next chapter, the US withdrawal along with the end of the Cold War meant a great deal for the enhancement of EU's external position. With the URSS's opposition to EU participation, the latter managed to solidify and build up relationships with other states and as a consequence, the possibilities for the EU to become an international actor became real (Ibid., p. 8).

Lastly, *capability*, is understood as 'the capacity to formulate and implement external policy, both in developing a proactive policy agenda and in order to respond effectively to external expectations, demands, and opportunities' (Ibid., p. 5). It is true that the EU has in the past years acquired the role discarded by the US, but whether the EU has the capability to sustain it remains questionable. The final touch added by the two scholars in relation to this, is the EU's requirement of possessing a set of prerequisites of actor capability in order for it to rest on its presence and to be able to take advantage of the available opportunities. They are the following: 'shared commitment to a set of overarching values and principles'; 'the ability to identify priorities and to formulate coherent and consistent policies'; 'the ability to negotiate effectively with third parties and to implement agreements'; 'capability in the deployment of diplomatic, economic, and other instruments in support of common policies'; and lastly, 'public and parliamentary support to legitimize action' (Ibid., p. 9-10).

### **3.3. Leadership types**

As previously alluded, a single and all-embracing definition of leadership does not exist, but rather there are a multitude of them and many scholars theorize about it. Underdal (1998, p. 101) defines it as someone exercising 'what might be called 'positive' influence,

guiding rather than vetoing or obstructing collective action'. Likewise, Young writes that leadership is 'the actions of individuals who endeavor to solve or circumvent the collective action problems that plague the efforts of parties seeking to reap joint gains in processes of institutional bargaining' (1991, p. 285; Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 275).

The EU sees itself as a leader and aspires to remain one. Journalists and various scientists deem the European Union as having the right capabilities to lead the climate change regime (Gupta & Grubb, 2000, p. 47). With USA's refusal to engage in the fight against climate change and even overlooking its responsibilities, EU gained ground. This was strengthened by China's weak economy at the time, Russia's inability to take on the role, along with the other industrialized countries which, were either unwilling or unable to take up the void (Waldmann, 2007, p. 252).

Oran R. Young pioneered the idea of dividing 'leadership' in multilateral negotiations into three pillars; structural, intellectual and entrepreneurial. Subsequently, various scholars have intervened and made alterations. What unites all of them is the neorealist foundation upon which they are conceived (Gupta & Grubb, 2000, p. 18).

Wurzel and Connelly have too followed in the same steps, developing a three-way scale. Structural, entrepreneurial and cognitive leadership are the basic types identified by the two. Structural leadership is directly linked to an actor's hard power and teams up with material resources as economic power. The second, entrepreneurial leadership is, according to the two writers, more common and refers to the use of diplomacy and having bargaining skills to facilitate agreements with third parties. Cognitive leadership is defined as 'the definition/redefinition of interests through ideas' (2011, p. 272). The latter can strengthen the view that a normative power can possess some kind of leadership, while the structural leadership can, from an intergovernmentalist standpoint, play out against the EU since the EU is not a state per se, lacking the kind of resources powerful states such as the US exhibit.

Considering structural leadership, the US and perhaps the nowadays China are two basic examples. Because the EU enjoys having the world's largest market and accommodates more than 500 million people it can be argued that EU has structural powers (Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 272). However, the assumption that EU possesses structural leadership

is highly challenged by many scholars. One argument may come from its lack of military strength which can be complemented with the fact that 'the EU punches below its economic weight because it is either unable or unwilling to translate its putative economic structural powers into bargaining leverage in international climate change negotiations' (Ibid.). When looking inside the EU, it is the larger member states, such as Germany, who can exhibit structural leadership.

Secondly, what is vital for the manifestation of entrepreneurial leadership are the 'negotiating skills to frame issues in ways that foster integrative bargaining' (Young, 1991, p. 293; Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 275). Hence it appears that the countries wielding their veto power or organizing coalitions to water down ambitious agreements do not tally as leaders (Ibid.). Grubb and Gupta deem the EU ill suited for this style of leadership as the European negotiations a more limited scope for entrepreneurial action than the representatives of equally weighty nation-states (2000, p. 19-20; Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 276). However, the 6 months Presidency can award the holder some opportunities to exhibit entrepreneurial leadership. Speaking on behalf of the EU in international climate change conferences, the Presidency 'acts as chair, mediator and initiator within the Council and also within the European Council (Ibid., Wurzel, 1996). UK and Germany are an example here, both internally and externally since their active climate change diplomacy was evident both when they held the office within the G8 and the Presidency of the EU; succeeding turning climate change as a priority.

Lastly, cognitive leadership is essentially dependent on scientific expertise. EU is for some time now funding climate change research and it is the Commission who can collect research and use it for welding it into innovative EU policy proposals (Ibid., p. 277). It seems that the Commission is EU's main hope in exhibiting cognitive leadership. The Stern report which was originated from the UK is for Rayner and Jordan a good illustration of it (Ibid.; Rayner & Jordan, 2011). Germany is again another example as it has provided a knowledge-base and advocated ecological modernisation. A normative power has, arguably, need of cognitive leadership. By pointing out through scientific research the issues and highlighting them time after time can eventually frame them as something normative. Young defines intellectual leadership, which is in essence cognitive leadership as being 'a deliberative process; it is difficult to articulate coherent systems of thought in the midst of the fast-paced negotiations associated with institutional bargaining. It is also



in part due to the fact that new ideas generally have to triumph over the entrenched mindsets or worldviews held by policymakers' (Young, 1991, p. 298).

It is quite clear that only one type of leadership does not suffice if one is to achieve integrative institutional bargaining success (Young, 1991). Thus, when assessing European Union's leadership at the Copenhagen and Paris summits it is useful to related it to all the leadership types and to see to what extend EU fits the definition how it can ease our comprehension of EU's role.

### **3.4. Limitations of the study**

As pointed out the chapter 1.4, entitled 'Sources', the sources available, especially in connection to COP21, restrict access to information from different vantage points. The existence of scientific papers could have constructively enhanced the present thesis, as comparisons with similar research could have granted new insights. Therefore, no prior research on COP21 means that, at least the initial phase, has to be somewhat modest, as there are no other scholars who can propel me into deep knowledge.

The public appearance of the parties present at the summits means a great deal for assessing some of the criteria, as well as to better grasp the subtleties. Due to only basing the study on indirect sources, the subsequent understanding is constrained by them. Moving onto leadership types, the limitation here is the fact that the various types are not quantifiable. Without being able to account for the extent of the power each of them carries, small uncertainties with regard to EU's real power of influencing and leading others could appear.

Lastly, there is no sector within the European Union, which strongly resembles the environment. EU has attained shared competence and has managed to play a defining role within the global regime on climate change. The EU is an extremely complex and new organization that is hard to delineate. Thus, attempts to generalize are not plain, limiting to some extent the conclusions of the study to only this sector.

#### **4. The climate issue, the UNFCCC and the EU: an overview**

In Chapter four, a brief historical account of the events leading up to COP15 is given. The UNFCCC and the EU's setup for climate negotiations are addressed as well. The current chapter is introductory and discusses some general concepts, as well providing an account for the most relevant aspects of the regime. The purpose of this chapter is, mostly, to initiate the reader into the international climate change regime.

##### **4.1. The climate issue**

The politics of climate change are characterized by two distinct and vital aspects. Firstly, there are citizens of particular states which run a lower risk of being vitally affected by the impacts of climate change, whereas some other countries, in particular small island states and Bangladesh already experience the negative consequences, such as heat-waves or floods (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 276). Thus, there is a division between the involved parts. Netherlands, argues Connelly, due to the fact of being rich, low-lying and industrialized, can adapt faster than more vulnerable countries which cannot respond adequately and quick enough (Ibid.). For that reason, it is more likely that countries that are seriously challenged will have the incentive of reducing carbon emissions and surely, to cooperate with other actors for the achievement of a binding carbon-emissions reduction treaty.

Secondly, and since the very dawn of climate politics, differential responsibilities are defining the picture. Here, many scholars and political figures argue for a segmentation between each country's obligations towards CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The logic behind this demarcation is the level of industrialization of one's country. Since countries, such as the United Kingdom, have achieved their level of affluence through an economy that runs and is dependent of fossil fuels, should contribute more than a sub-Saharan African country which have not undergone a deep industrialization and that simply do not have the means of achieving a carbon-neutral economy. Moreover, even among countries which have similar levels of development huge discrepancies can be spotted. For instance, in 2009, the average citizen of Canada burned over 17 tons while in France it was under 6 tones (IEA 2009, p. 89). Therefore, one can say that there is a double burden on the highly industrialized countries, as they need to cut down their greenhouse gases and to financially and technologically assist less developed countries so that they can reach a sustainable development.

The environment, along with climate change, can be regarded as a public good, hence adding complexity to the issue at hand. A public good can be perceived as something that, once provided, can be used by everyone, as it is not excludable and for which the parties do not fight over, as there is no need for doing so. One problem of any given public good is to make sure that the good is provided by collective action and that free riding is constrained (Olson, pp. 9-16). While at the national level the existence of a centralized authority can make the provision of public goods possible fairly easily, doing so at the international level is more difficult. The complication lies in the lack of a similar authority beyond the national level, which can compel its parties to contribute in supplying the provision.

#### **4.2. The UNFCCC**

The very first conference on climate took place towards the end of the 1970s as the scientific consensus on the impact of human activities increased. The IPCC, which was established in the late 80s led to a growing awareness of the flaws of burning greenhouse gases. This paved the way, notes Connelly, to the birth of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, henceforth UNFCCC, which was signed by more than 150 states at the Rio Earth Summit from 1992 (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 277). The treaty provides a framework for the development of future climate policy and legislation (Oberthür & Pallemearns, p. 30), and continues to do so. The aim of the regime is the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" (Article 2, 1992).

One of its principles is the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (Oberthür & Pallemearns, p. 30). Although it serves as the foundation for international cooperation on climate change, the UNFCCC does not articulate any set of measures or quantified objectives to achieve its ambitions (Ibid.). Likewise, the UNFCCC does not impose palpable responsibilities on its constituents, but constitutes a framework for bargaining in regard to climate governance. Moreover, the framework divides its constituents into two parties; the affluent, industrialized states, referred to as Annex I parties and the developing countries referred to as non-annex parties, counting China. Lastly, consensus has been instituted as the decision-making rule.

Starting in 1995, annual Conferences of the Parties, hereafter COP, took place in different cities around the world. COP3, which took place in Kyoto in 1997, is probably the most recognized, at least until COP15 and COP21, as it managed to generate the Kyoto Protocol, which comprised legally binding targets for the participant countries. However, the states' non-compliance was strong due to considerable flaws in its regime architecture. The Kyoto Protocol, which the EU advocated for, required a jointly 5.2 per cent reduction of the greenhouse gases emitted based on the year 1990 by 2012 (Kyoto Protocol, 1998). Based on differentiated capacities logic, nations were assigned different targets. EU committed itself to an overall 8 per cent reduction, whereas Canada and Japan by 6 per cent and the US by 7 per cent. The regime, although providing binding targets, was not one that would suffice. Doubtless, the 5.2 per cent reduction target is not enough to avert the effects of climate change (IPCC, 2007). Countries that were on the brink of industrialization, such as China, were not required to commit to any decreases.

Why did the regime turned out the way it did? One explanation could reside in the fact that the cuts in terms of greenhouse gases were perceived as damaging to the economy, whereas the short-term benefits did not seem evident. Another explanation can be linked to the US. The United States has arguably undermined the regime twice; first by slowing the negotiations and diminishing the final aims, and secondly by refusing to ratify the Protocol and withdrawing from it at once. It can be argued from a realist/neorealist perspective that the lack of willingness from the US, arguably the most dominant structural power in the world, frustrated the whole regime.

Several COPs followed in a rather resembling manner: states opted for national sovereignty and economic precaution, accompanied by the traditional Southern and Northern disunity. The first one, which followed after the US disengagement, took place in Bonn in 2001. Major concessions were given by the European Union towards some of the big laggard countries, such as Russia or Japan (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 279). Those consisted in carbon sinks in the form of forests and agricultural land which represent a means of avoiding the reduction of emissions and it works best for affluent countries which have the resources to do so.

COP11 (2005) in Montreal and COP13 (2007) in Bali brought some progress, with the EU

leading the way again. The main goal during the 2000s was to secure another binding agreement, which would follow after the Kyoto Protocol would run out. EU tried to set the stage for the signing and the renewal of a more comprehensive regime that would commit the other main polluters to serious reductions. During COP11, the Montreal Action Plan was signed which, to put it briefly, committed the parts to "take this process forward" (Ibid.). Two years later, in Bali, the talks produced the Bali "Roadmap" which strengthened the path agreed upon two years ago in Montreal. Copenhagen followed with the EU who wished to reach a solid deal that would include sizable commitments from the developed states as well as some commitments from the most advanced developing countries, such as China. The EU desired to achieve a single and legally binding international treaty, which would produce one institutional framework for all the concerned parties. A binding agreement would have to wait until COP21, in Paris.

#### **4.3. The EU's institutional setup for climate negotiations**

The European Union's arrangement for negotiating within the UNFCCC is nowhere near simple. When the EU signed the UNFCCC, it did so as an REIO<sup>1</sup>, and for that reason it does not have its own vote. As commented earlier, the environment is a shared competence, meaning that the Union is obliged to represent itself along the side of member states and thus has to set up practices for common representation and bargaining. *Practical arrangements* come into play here, which mean that the EU institutions and the member states agree on the distribution of responsibilities. Customarily, it involved the head of the Council<sup>2</sup> playing the role as the lead negotiator and receiving support from the Commission. Moreover, it has been common to use an arrangement of issue leaders, signifying that the member states with greater interest or possessing extra resources should take the lead on an appropriate matter of contention. During the whole process, both the Union and the member states are present and the internal coordination is assured by the Council working groups, particularly the WPIEI<sup>3</sup>, on a steady basis. During the negotiations, it is WPIEI who allegedly issues mandates and positions and receives briefings on preparatory negotiations. Likewise, it is the same working party where third party stances are studied, reacted upon and absorbed.

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Economic Integration Organization

<sup>2</sup> The present Council Presidency

<sup>3</sup> Working Party on International Environmental Issues

<sup>3</sup> Working Party on International Environmental Issues

What is quite apparent from this configuration is that it can generate internal issues and limitations. Those practical arrangements have been played out in different ways, producing varied results each time. Moreover, EU's representative body's continuity can suffer at the negotiations. Those conditions taken all at once could be a recipe for failure, as EU negotiating position may undergo complications. Nevertheless, those aspects will be discussed in the following chapters. We will now turn our attention to the 15<sup>th</sup> COP conference held in Copenhagen and from there advance to the 21<sup>st</sup> COP in Paris, but not before inspecting whether the EU awaited Paris with its lesson learnt or not.

## **5. COP15 in Copenhagen**

The prospect of securing a successor to the Kyoto Protocol looked positive. The deal, which was about to be negotiated had to have stringent measures in order for the human-produced climate change to stop. Many people considered Copenhagen as the last chance to save the Earth from the extremely risky temperature rise above 2C. Scientific evidence pointed out that, for not exceeding 2C, reductions amounting to 80%-95% by 2015, relative to the 1990 levels are required of the industrialized states, and of the developing ones around 15%-30 in 2020 (EC, 2009b). The result would be a peak of the world emissions before 2020 followed by a minimum 50% cut by the 2050 (CO2 Handel, 2009). After months of pre-negotiations, the national representatives met in Copenhagen for COP15 to produce a legally binding framework for climate change mitigation beyond 2012 (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 281).

The chapter starts by looking at issues and negotiations outlining the political context. EU prior and during to the conference is subsequently assessed. The outcome and EU's position after Copenhagen take up the next section of the chapter. Finally, a preliminary conclusion is given.

### **5.1. Issues and Negotiations**

Similar to Kyoto, various coalitions of states were apparent. In contrast to Kyoto, however, new alliances were created and the traditional division between North and South was less clear. As specified in Chapter 4, the EU had already convened on an internal commitment for cutting emissions by 20% by 2020. Moreover, a 30% reduction was guaranteed in the

case of a binding agreement at Copenhagen. Unlike Kyoto, rapidly industrializing states set up their own bloc, commonly referred to as the BASIC group<sup>4</sup> (Ibid.). The BASIC group, containing some of the highest emitters, ‘emerged as key veto players’ (Ibid.). The per capita emissions varied remarkably, Confronting with major discrepancies and suspecting that competitors could get an upper hand, some countries, notably the US and China, were hesitant to lead or even follow global initiatives (Gunter Jr., 2013, p. 340).

The form of the eventual agreement, along with mitigation and adaptation were the matters most discussed. Similarly to Kyoto and perhaps more evident than ever, due to the BASIC group coalition, the issue of who should be cutting and to what extent, was overly present. As brought up in the introductory part of the current chapter, the developing states are also needed to reduce emissions. Thus, attuning the emissions reduction represented an important bit of the bargaining. Moreover, the focus of the African countries was, as well as previously, the one of environmental justice and seeking economic aid from the Northern states for mitigation and adaptation (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 281). Somewhat surprisingly, the previously laggard countries, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Canada were now displaying possible reductions. Finally, the Alliance of Small Island States were the ones advocating for the largest cuts and had, as previously, only a minor say. (Ibid.). 192 parties came together at COP15, each representing its own national interests. Apart from the clearly distinguishable status of either industrialized or developed state, the rapidly industrializing countries, Brazil, India and China, had its status engulfed by clutter.

The United States was too breaking with its in recent history attitude, at least initially, and offered cuts and being supportive. However, due to domestic political reasons, it soon played the role of a state offering minor emissions. Having its national climate legislation stranded in the Senate, the US negotiators were helpless. Because of that, the American delegation offered 17% cuts based on the 2005 levels, something which only represents 4% based on the 1990 levels (Germanwatch, 2009). The Congress responded that without significant cuts from the rapidly developing states it would not accept any treaty (Wong & Bradsher, 2009).

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<sup>4</sup> BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China)

The European Union, also one of the largest GHG emitters, played an important part. The EU desired to sign a comprehensive deal in which developed states would commit to the largest share of reduction and major developing states taking on sizeable cuts. Moreover, it inclined towards having a single and legally binding agreement, which would generate a unique institutional framework for all the participants.

China, on the other hand, refused to take on any responsibilities. It communicated that ‘environmental concerns must be balanced with economic growth and that developed countries must first demonstrate a significant commitment to reducing their own emission’ (Ibid.). Shortly after the beginnings of COP15, China joined the G77<sup>5</sup>. The group fought for a deal that would grant them economic support from the developed world, the argument being that they must reach standards of living which correspond to the ones available in the developed world before cutting back their industrial capacities (Adam & Randerson, 2009). At a time when China outpaced the US as the world’s largest emitter (PBL, 2008), both had significant positions.

## **5.2. EU prior to COP15**

As specified in Chapter 4, the EU had already convened on an internal commitment for cutting emissions by 20% by 2020. Moreover, a 30% reduction was guaranteed in the case of a binding agreement at Copenhagen. The COP15 climate meeting was described as ‘a crucial step in a process dating back to 1992 and the UN’s Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro’ (EEA, 2011).

On December 2, the European Commission published a press release, which illustrated its goals in relation to the Copenhagen conference. The title itself, ‘Copenhagen conference must produce global, ambitious and comprehensive agreement to avert dangerous climate change’ (EC, 2009b), adds to the EU’s desire of achieving a considerable deal and leading the negotiations. Furthermore, it is stated that ‘The European Union will be working to achieve maximum progress towards finalization of an ambitious and legally binding global

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<sup>5</sup> Countries in the developing world usually work through the Group of 77 to achieve common negotiating positions. The G- 77 was created in 1964 by 77 developing countries in the context of the UN Conference on Trade and Development. Today the group has over 135 members and functions throughout the whole UN system (UNFCCC n.d.).



climate treaty to succeed the Kyoto Protocol in 2013.... The Copenhagen agreement must also incorporate a ‘fast start’ deal allowing for immediate implementation or preparation of certain actions, including financial assistance to least developed countries’ (Ibid.).

The then President of the EC, José Manuel Barroso, said that Copenhagen is an historic opportunity to ‘unleash a wave of innovation that can revitalize our economies through the creation of new, sustainable growth sectors and ‘green collar’ jobs’ (Ibid.). This is an exemplification of ecological modernization and it adds to the thesis of the EC as having cognitive leadership. Lastly, he upholds and reminds that the EU has set the pace with its ‘unilateral commitment to cut emissions 20% by 2020’ and with its ‘climate financing proposals for developing countries’ (Ibid.).

The European Commissioner for the Environment back then, Stavros Dimas announced that ‘the US and China have recently put concrete emission targets or actions on the table’ (Ibid.). Thus, the circumstances looked extremely positive, at least according to Dimas. Nevertheless, he adds that the aggregate offers from the developed states are not enough and urges ‘those countries with weak targets to improve them’ (Ibid.).

Lastly, in another press release of the EC prior to Copenhagen, we identify four key EU objectives: pledges on emissions and finance, key architectural components of the future treaty, a ‘fast start’ deal and the follow-up process which needs to stay on a single track. The second one describes 11 components, which need to be agreed for making the mitigation pledges more ambitious and are needed to make sure that the pledges are implemented. Nevertheless, they are essentially conceived for a legally binding agreement (EC, 2009c).

### **5.3. EU during COP15**

By the second week of December, the crisis engulfed the whole process (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 282). A so-called ‘Danish Text’ represented the first attempt to secure a deal, but it failed secure unanimous support as the developing states accused the developed ones of negotiating a deal in secret (Ibid.). After that, the whole process went from bad to worse. The parts succeeded to broke a deal on measures for transferring funding from developed states to poorer states ‘for adaptation and preventing deforestation’ (Ibid.). An agreement

concerning binding emissions cuts turned out to be beyond the limits of possibility. The deal emerging from the conference was the Copenhagen Accord. It was drafted by the US, China, India, South Africa and Brazil and ‘aimed at keeping global temperature rises to below 2C’ (Ibid.). Other nations, such as the EU leaders, were presented with *fait accompli*. Rejecting the deal would have left the conference ‘in a state of complete failure’. (Ibid.).

In October 2009, the EU’s Environment Ministers assented with one another to a common negotiating mandate for COP15 at a Council Meeting with the aim of having a united front. Thus, the European Union agreed on various matters intended to reach an international, ambitious, comprehensive and legally binding agreement (EC, 2009b). In the Conclusion of the Council it was written that the developed states should be at the forefront of reduction efforts and encouraged them to declare their proposals before the conference (Council of the European Union, 2009).

Quite prematurely in during the initial negotiations, the EU offered to provide ‘its fair share of ‘fast-start’ financing to help developing countries build up their capacities to combat climate change over the period 2010-2012’ (EC, 2009b). The European Council has assigned the entire European Union to be partly responsible to a fair share of the international public financing, without, however, specifying any numbers (Ibid.). As mentioned above, the slow headway in the first days, led the EU to publicly reveal that a Kyoto-successor is hardly likely to emerge from the COP15 (EC, 2009c). As reaching a binding agreement looked ever more elusive, the Union tried to make as much progress as possible. During the conference, a Council meeting took place, in which the members recalled their initial position. It was stressed out that the Copenhagen conference should deliver at least a legally binding instrument (European Council, 2009).

#### **5.4. Outcome**

The agreement which resulted from the bargaining, the Copenhagen Accord, included extremely few ambitious targets, falling short of the EU’s aim. The document, which is only three page long, stresses the strong political will of the states to tackle climate change but does not specify any binding measures. What stands out is, however, the aspiration of keeping the global change below 2C rise (COP, 2009), laying out that the national and

global peaks of GHG emissions must come about as soon as possible. ‘The more the peak is delayed and the higher it is, the faster emissions must decline afterwards in order to stay within the temperature limit’ (UNEP, 2010). Thus, it can be a talk of a tradeoff. As mentioned previously, the scientific recommendation for the global peak is somewhere before 2020. Therefore, not setting any concrete targets with respect to years, will not suffice.

Although not including binding mitigation targets, the Accord appeal to the annex I parties ‘to implement individually or jointly quantified economy-wide emissions targets for 2020’ (COP, 2009), along with non-annex parties who should enable mitigation actions. The due date for submitting climate action strategies was turned into a ‘soft’ deadline, meaning that states can enroll whenever, turning the Accord into a living document (Vidal, 2010). Two months after the conference, around 55 states have submitted national pledges to the UNFCCC, counting the European Union, US, the BASIC group and Russia; together making up 78% of the international GHG emissions (UNFCCC, 2010).

Another essential aspect of the Copenhagen Accord is the pledge of the developed states to provide ‘financial resources, technology and capacity-building to support the implementation of adaptation action in developing countries’ (COP, 2009). Related to the ‘fast-start’ agreement, it was decided that the developed world would fund the others with 30 billion USD. It was also decided that the most vulnerable states, such as the small island developing states and Africa, shall get funding priority.

De Boer calls the outcome a ‘political letter of intent’ (UNFCCC, 2009). No matter how disappointing the Accord is, many government agents talked about the commitment as something positive, especially in relation to financing to developing states. The President Obama talked of a ‘meaningful’ outcome (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 282). China and India underlined the constructive nature of the agreement, while the EU leaders, excluded from the last stages of the bargaining, declared ‘collective and individual disappointment’ (Ibid.). To illustrate the position of environmental groups, John Sauven from Greenpeace UK wrote: ‘The city of Copenhagen is a crime scene tonight, with the guilty men and women fleeing to the airport... It seems there are too few politicians in this world capable of looking beyond the horizon of their narrow self-interest, let alone caring much for the millions of people who are facing down the threat of climate change’ (Ibid.; BBC, 2009).

## **5.5. EU after COP15**

The COP15 has resulted in mediocre outcomes, particularly from the standpoint of the EU. Conflicting with the EU's original plan, no legally binding deal with comprehensive targets was signed to replace the Kyoto Protocol. As reminded in the previous subchapter, the European Union representatives, completely cut out from the final stages of the negotiations, displayed huge disappointment. José Manuel Barroso commented during a speech that 'this accord is better than no accord' (Barroso, 2009). He then states that 'this was a positive step but clearly below our ambition' and that he shall not hide his disappointment 'regarding the ambition in terms of the binding nature' of the agreement.... the text agreed today falls far short of our expectations' (Ibid.).

In the Presidency conclusions on COP15, it is stated that 'the climate change challenge has not diminished and further work should follow tight time schedule with clear deadlines and the EU should continue to offer ambition and leadership (Council of the EU, 2009). In the European Parliament resolution we can read that the 'negotiations on a comprehensive international post -2012 agreement on climate change.... ended with a disappointing Accord (EP, 2010).

It reads 'disappointment' all over the European Union's declarations. While different states seemed pleased with the outcome, such as the US and China, the EU was left at the other side of the pole. This casts doubt on European Union's leadership and actorness and points forward to the dilemma of what is the magnitude of EU's actorness and of whether the EU, with its seemingly normative power, can lead the regime or not.

## **5.6. Preliminary Conclusion**

Firstly, why did the agreement turned out the way it did? The simple answer is the difficulty of achieving collective action on climate change. Essentially, the parties had divergent positions, especially the industrialized states. When performing an inquiry on who is to blame, the answer varies from respondent to respondent. While the developing countries target the developed ones for refusing to assume their responsibilities, the developed world, generally, draw attention to China for effectively blocking the negotiations to not endanger its economic progress. Obviously, things are not that simple,

and before preliminarily exploring the outcome's implications on the EU's initial hypothesis in the current chapter, the discussion will revolve around possible explanations for the weak result of COP15.

A first possible reason might have to do with the US delegation. Although the 'Obama administration had prioritized climate change as a foreign policy issue' (Connelly *et al.* 2012, p. 281), the inability to act had easily impacted the bargaining in a restricting manner. After US's absence and withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol, a strong committed position would have certainly stimulated the developed countries to boost their reduction proposals and possibly straighten out what was demanded by the developing states. Unfortunately, that alternative was not possible due to the Congress' restrictions.

Secondly, and as claimed by the developed nations, and ever more common in the western media is the belief that 'China wrecked the talks' (The Guardian, 2009). Even Obama, alluded that China's position was the main obstacle. To some extent, it could not be more true, as the Chinese Premier, Wen Jinbao, did not even attend the last stages of the conference in person, but instead sent 'a second-tier official in the country's foreign ministry to sit opposite Obama himself' (Ibid.), among Angela Merkel and the UN General-Secretary Ban Ki-moon. Some of the 'world's most powerful heads of state were forced to wait around as the Chinese delegate went off to make telephone calls to his 'superiors (Ibid.). China, at times backed by India, managed to take out all the numbers which were important, ranging from emission cuts targets, 50% reduction by 2050 to the 2020 being the peak year in international emissions (Ibid.). It is evident that China had the upper hand and was in an exceptionally powerful position. Mark Lynas writing for The Guardian, who was participated at the event, attributes China's extremely influential position to the fact that China, although as the world's biggest polluter, was not after a deal, but the other states were contingent on the China's cooperation for a truly productive agreement, especially Obama who 'needed to be able to demonstrate to the Senate that he could deliver China in any global climate regulation framework, so conservative senators could not argue that US carbon cuts would further advantage Chinese industry' (Ibid.)

Lastly, the Danish Presidency was full of errors and provocations. Lars Lokke Rasmussen's office, proposed the 'Danish text', briefly discussed in Chapter 5.3, even before the summit began. This draft-like declaration was granted to only 'a select group of

important countries – thereby annoying every country not on the list, including most of the ones that feel seriously threatened by climate impacts (BBC, 2009). When Denmark's Prime Minister 'took over for the high-level talks, it became quickly evident that he understood neither the climate convention itself nor the politics of the issue'. Experienced observers said they had rarely seen a UN summit more ineptly chaired' (Ibid.). Thus, we can safely say that the Danish activity enlarged the already large gap between the developing and the developed nations, complicating even more the bargaining.

So, what can we preliminarily assert about the EU in relation to COP15 considering its leadership, actorness and its normative power? As those aspects will be more extensively assessed in Chapter 7, we can say that the overall impression is that the European Union has played an important role at the COP15. Overall actorness concerned, it is likely that the EU fulfills a great deal of the criteria presented in Chapter 3.2. One strong preliminary argument for this is the common negotiating stance adopted by the member states prior to the talks. This enhances the EU's position in spite of the shared competences, which define the climate policy.

At anterior conferences centered on climate change, the EU has acted as a leader. Although their outcomes were basically never the one desired by the Union, it can be argued that without the EU's contribution, the result would have been much weaker or even nonexistent. Before delving into EU's leadership style, type and its effect in Chapter 7, we can shortly answer the question of whether the Union continued the same trajectory in the global climate regime. I argue that EU's leadership can be challenged by the poor and completely disappointing outcome of the conference. While the result matches to some extent the goals of China and arguably even the US, the EU is left alone with its unilateral commitment on 20% reduction to 2020. Moreover, although EU has clear targets, there were many European representatives on behalf of the EU. It also seems that there was an extremely poor coordination between the Danish hosts and the EU. There is also a strong hint of liberal intergovernmentalism when considering the multitude of European national representatives. Finally, the allegedly normative power possessed by the EU may not be sufficient. Cognitive leadership may not alone be enough for the driving of an entire global regime, but instead a combination of leadership types may be crucial to 'successful integrative bargaining' (Gunter Jr, 2013, p. 342-343).

## **6. COP21 in Paris**

At the time of writing this chapter, the COP21 in Paris is still quite under-researched.

The summit, which was held between 30 November 2015 and 12 December 2015 was rather well promoted and received large levels of media coverage; its popularity as a climate change conference was probably only matched by the COP15 in Copenhagen. The prospect of securing a deal looked, similar to Copenhagen six years ago, positive.

The chapter starts by introducing the issues, the negotiating context, as well as the prospects. It then looks at the EU prior to COP21 as well as during the negotiations. The state of the bargaining halfway through is then assessed. Outcome, along with the EU's position and remarks after the conference will follow. The chapter closes with a preliminary conclusion.

### **6.1. Prospects, Issues and Negotiations**

The issues and negotiations were roughly the same. Similar to Kyoto and to Copenhagen, the coalitions were very similar but the classic North-South division was just a bit more hazier with respect to some states. The BASIC group was still united and after Russia joined their cause, the now five states were commonly referred to as BRICs. Prakash Javadekar, India's Environment Minister, worked to unify their positions before arriving at the negotiations (Good, 2015). Prior to the summit, the European Union was looking more united than ever with the Luxembourg holding the presidency. Carole DIESCHBOURG, Luxembourg's Minister for Environment was the lead negotiator. During the past year she strived to coordinate the EU leaders and 'arriving at a consensus position for the disparate needs and interests within the Union (Ibid.). EU has committed to at least 40% domestic cuts by 2030 compared to 1990 levels (BSR, 2015). China looked a lot more willing to discuss mitigation and adaptation as in June 2015 China submitted its INDC<sup>6</sup> to UNFCCC Secretariat. China aimed 'to achieve a peaking of its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2030', as well as reducing its 'CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per unit of GDP by 60-65% on 2005 levels by 2030' (Citepa, 2015). The US on the other hand, has committed itself to reduce GHG emissions by 26% to 28% below the 2005 level (BSR, 2015). More importantly for the agreement's prospects, there was a closer alignment between the US and China as suggested by their

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<sup>6</sup> Intended nationally determined contribution (will be discussed later in the chapter)

joint announcements on climate change in 2014 and 2015 (Bailey, 2015). This is something completely different from Copenhagen, where the two largest emitters had conflicting standpoints.

According to a brief by the Council of Councils, the conditions for an agreement looked better than Copenhagen's. Firstly, the costs of renewable energy technologies have decreased markedly (Ibid.). In the same brief, which gathered 'expert opinions from global experts', we can read that 'the local benefits of low-carbon technologies, in terms of cleaner air, fewer deaths, less illness, and higher productivity are increasingly clear.... 2014 was the first year of global economic growth without growth in energy emissions' (Ibid.). Thus, it is becoming widely accepted among populations that GHG cuts and the transition to a carbon free economy is the future. Are we to suppose that EU's cognitive leadership and normative power can perform better than 6 years ago? Recalling Young from Chapter 2 that 'new ideas generally have to triumph over the entrenched mindsets or worldviews held by policymakers' (Young, 1991, p. 298); could suggests that yes, it is possible.

Secondly, and as pointed out in the previous paragraph, China and US were cooperating. Thirdly, the ambitions were somewhat lower then six years ago, thus improving the odds (Bailey, 2015). Before COP15 the inclination was for states to bargain legally binding emissions cuts as a top-down target, but in the recent past, 'negotiations have moved towards a softer, 'bottom-up' framework in which countries make nonbinding, non-standardized pledges of any kind they wish' (Ibid.). The intended (i.e. non-binding) nationally determined (i.e. not top-down) contributions (i.e. not commitments), shortly referred to as INDCs, illustrate this shift. A large number of states, amounting to 187 and representing 97% of the global greenhouse gas emissions have submitted INDCs (BSR, 2015). The lack of binding commitments have not, however downplayed the expectations.

However, even though the pledges are not binding, there is still 'a huge emissions gap between what is pledged and what is required (Ibid). This indicates a low level of collective ambition and puts under question the issue of credibility of any declared desire to do what is necessary in terms of GHG cuts.

The US, although submitting INDC and pledging for cuts, alike Copenhagen, had the old



problem with the Congress due to the opposition from the Republican majority, alike Copenhagen. However, a question which was brought up at COP15 was the designing the agreement in such a way that it will not require approval by the US. Congress. The French foreign minister, Laurent Fabius said that: ‘We know the politics in the US. Whether we like it or not, if it comes to the Congress, they will refuse’ (The Guardian, 2015a). He then added that ‘the global climate agreement being negotiated this year must be worded in such a way that it doesn’t require approval by the US Congress. So, depending on the agreement’s specific contents, the deal may not require legislative approval. Dan Bodansky, who is a distinguished authority on international global change focusing on international law, notes: ‘The President would be on relatively firm legal ground accepting a new climate agreement with legal force, without submitting it to the Senate or Congress for approval, to the extent it is procedurally oriented, could be implemented on the basis of existing law, and is aimed at implementing or elaborating the UNFCCC. On the other hand, if the new agreement establishes legally binding emissions limits or new legally binding financial commitments, this would weigh in favor of seeking Senate’ (Bodansky, 2015). Shortly, the agreement cannot be legally binding, only political in character, much like the Copenhagen Accord, if it is to skip the Senate or the Congress.

## **6.2. EU prior to COP21**

On 20 October 2015, the European Environmental Agency, henceforth EEA, released a report in which is written that the EU ‘is on track towards meeting and overachieving its 2020 target for reducing greenhouse emissions by 20%’ (EC, 2015c). Miguel Arias Cañete<sup>7</sup> said that ‘these results speak for themselves: Europe succeeded in cutting emissions by 23% between 1990 and 2014 while the European economy grew by 46% over the same period. We have shown consistently that climate protection and economic growth go hand in hand’ (Ibid.). The success of the EU looks quite real and is arguably an aspect, which strengthens its cognitive leadership, through a clear example of ecological modernization. He concludes by claiming that a strong signal was sent before the COP15 that ‘Europe stands by its commitments and that our climate and energy policies work’. (Ibid.).

In October 2014, the EU leaders agreed on a domestic 2030 GHG reduction target of at

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<sup>7</sup> The European Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy

least 40%, which was going to be EU's 'contribution to the new global climate change agreement' (EC, 2015a). The same Miguel Arias Cañete said during a speech that the Union is 'now equipped with a solid position for Paris. The EU stands united and ready to negotiate an ambitious, robust and binding global climate deal' (EC, 2015b). Furthermore, a week before, President Juncker stated during that EU is not prepared to sign just any deal (Ibid.). During the same press conference, Carole Dierckx claimed that the EU 'adopted a strong and responsible EU mandate for the COP21' (Environment Council, 2015).

According to a press release from the EC, it is stated that the EU sees it as imperative for the deal to provide 'a clearly defined pathway to achieving the below 2C objective' and that the GHG must peak by 2020 at the latest and to be diminished by at least 50% by 2050 in relation to 1990 and be around 0 by 2100 (EC, 2015b). Moreover, in an infographic published by the EC, we can distinguish four objectives, or in EU's terminology, the 'EU vision for the Paris Protocol' (EC, 2015a):

- Legally binding for all parties
- Fair & ambitious commitments from all parties
- Regular reviews to increase ambition
- Robust common rules for transparency & accountability

Additionally, an extraordinary meeting of the Environmental Council held on the 18 September 2015, set out the goal of keeping the average global temperature below 2C. Lastly, the Council conclusions support a balanced Paris Agreement including strong action to cut GHG emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change as well as responsible support for financing climate action (EC, 2015b).

According to Thomas Spencer from the SciencesPo's Institute for Sustainable Development, another failure in Paris could most likely deal a blow to EU's reputation as a diplomatic actor (IDDRI, 2015). It is reasonable to assume at this point that after EU's leadership put to question and under pressure at COP15, a prospect not only for tackling climate change, but also for proving its leadership and actorness within the global climate change regime was at the horizon.

### **6.3. The state of the negotiations and the EU halfway through COP21**

A striking feature which was obvious after the first days, was the newly emerged coalition, the so-called ‘high ambition coalition’. This coalition, consisting of more than 100 countries, ‘formed in secrecy’ six months prior to the conference (The Guardian, 2015b). This coalition was made up of extremely important states, including the EU, which claims that the coalition is an ‘EU-led ambition coalition’ (EC, 2015d), the US, which allegedly joined the coalition later, on the 9 December (BBC, 2015a), along with 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, as well as China and India (The Guardian, 2015b). Cañete said that the alliance demonstrates that developing and develop countries can work together when they have common interests (Ibid.).

BBC writes that the coalition was established over informal drinks on the sidelines of a climate meeting in July. Pabla Samper<sup>8</sup> said, according to the same article, that the mind behind the coalition is De Brum<sup>9</sup>. A group of 15 foreign ministers, including Cañete and Todd Stern, the US’ chief negotiator, met in secrecy a couple of times (Ibid.). They managed to converge on various issues on which they found common ground. While the group was firstly known as ‘the informal ministerial gathering’, Stern changed the name into ‘the high ambition coalition’ during a press conference on the 7 January (Ibid.). De Brum wanted the states to act as a ‘mosquito fleet’, meaning that they would send envoys to other parties in an attempt to ‘bite them in a nice way’. That happened with Australia, Poland, Canada and India (Ibid). Although some level of divergence was present within the coalition, De Brum and Samper presented eight ‘points of convergence’ to which the EU appeared to be in accord, according to The Guardian (Ibid.). The alliance, counting the EU, agreed that the Paris Protocol has to be ‘legally binding, inclusive, fair, ambitious, durable and dynamic’, setting out ‘a clear and operational long-term goal’ (EC, 2015d). Lastly, a mechanism for review available to the parties for coming together once every five years to assess the progress made and to strengthen collective and individual efforts, was deemed needed.

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<sup>8</sup> Colombia’s deputy environment minister

<sup>9</sup> The Foreign Minister of the Marshall Islands and the strongest voice of the Alliance of Small Island States

According to Africa Research Bulletin, before the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, thus, before the official siding of the US with the coalition, ‘none of the major arguments were resolved’, but the hopes were still high (ARB, 2015a). One dispute is the request by the developed states to receive hundreds of billions dollars to pay for the shift to renewable sources and to cope with the consequences of climate change. Other disagreements included the issue of how much should be legally binding, few parts of the whole agreement; along with the decision between 1,5C or 2C; and how to make sure the countries keep their promises. According to the same source, China, India and the US sought 2C (ARB, 2015a). The small island nations, in contrast to Copenhagen, felt that their voices were being heard at COP21, saying that the talks, reflects their key priorities’ (Ibid.). China’s climate envoy, Su Wei, extremely surprisingly, announced that they are ‘very happy to have this progress’ (Bangkok Post, 2015). To conclude, it seemed that success was not that close and as Cañete put it, ‘next week is the week of compromise’ (BBC, 2015b).

#### **6.4. Outcome**

On the 12 December, an agreement agreed by 195 nations, which has been referred to as ‘historic’, ‘ambitious’ or ‘a landmark deal’, has been settled (EC, 2015e; UNFCCC, 2015; ARB, 2015b; BBC, 2015c). The agreement is the first to commit all the states to reduce GHG emissions and it is ‘party legally binding and partly voluntary’ (BBC, 2015c). The main points include: 1) keeping the world’s temperature increase ‘well below 2C’ and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5 C; 2) peaking GHG emissions as soon as possible and achieving a balance between the sources and sinks of GHG in the second half of the century; 3) progress shall be reviewed every five years; 4) 100 billion dollars per year in climate finance for the developing states by 2020, pledging to further finance in the future (BBC, 2015c). Following the outcome, the UNFCCC released a press released praising the agreement and commenting that all crucial areas identified as essential for a landmark conclusion are covered: 1) mitigation; 2) a transparency system and global stock-take; 3) adaptation; 4) loss and damage; 5) support (UNFCCC, 2015).

Final key details on the Paris Agreement include a compliance mechanism, overseen by a group of experts operating in a non-punitive way as well as the obligation for all the parties to submit adaptation communications in which they can point out their support needs,

plans and adaptation priorities (Ibid.). Lastly, the agreement will be deposited at the UN quarters in New York and be opened for signature on 22 April 2016 for one year. Entering into force requires ratification from 55 countries accounting for at least 55% of the global emissions (Ibid.). Currently, on 12 August 2016, 22 states have ratified the agreement amounting to 1.09% of the global emissions. The countries include Norway, Peru and other developing nations, such as Cameroon as well as many small island states.

President Obama expressed content with the outcome of the conference, arguing that ‘the Paris agreement established the enduring framework the world needs to solve the climate crisis’ (The White House Statements & Releases, 2015). Laurent Fabius seemed extremely pleased with the outcome, while the French President articulated its satisfaction by saying ‘you’ve done it, reached an ambitious agreement, a binding agreement, a universal agreement.... Never will I be able to express more gratitude to a conference’ (UNFCCC, 2015). UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Christiana Figueras<sup>10</sup> used great words when describing the final result. China’s chief negotiator, Xie Zhenhua, said that the agreement was not perfect but that it ‘does not prevent us from marching historical steps forward’ (The China Post, 2015).

We can conclude that, in contrast to Copenhagen, the outcome was extremely well received. The whole process was extremely well anticipated and the parties came prepared to strike a deal. China, for instance, had an entirely different attitude and its desire to tackle the climate issue seemed real compared to its performance six years ago. We will now shift our attention towards the EU’s position and reaction to the outcome.

## **6.5. EU after COP21**

As disclosed in the previous subchapter, the EU too calls the deal ‘historic’, claiming that the EU played ‘a key role in brokering a historic agreement in Paris, where the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal was adopted’ (EC, 2015e). Shortly, the EU claims leadership. Likewise, the Council names it ‘a landmark achievement’ for multilateralism, representing ‘an ambitious, balanced, equitable and legally binding agreement’ (Council of the EU, 2016). Following, it is stated that the EU worked with

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<sup>10</sup> The Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

many partners within the ‘High Ambition Coalition’, something, which played a crucial role ‘in shifting negotiations dynamics’ (Ibid.). In the same vein, we can read in an EC’s Communication to the EP and the Council that ‘the EU has been at the heart of the High Ambition Coalition of developed and developing countries’ (EC, 2016a). The same conclusion is also shared by Cañete (EC, 2015e). The EC calls the agreement ‘the culmination of years of efforts by the international community to bring about a universal multilateral agreement on climate change’ (Ibid).

Jean-Claude Juncker attributes the success partly to the European Union, as the latter has been the key player throughout the talks. He said that the EU has long been the international leader in climate action and Paris deal reflects this (EC, 2015e). Cañete calls for the continuation of the EU’s leadership within the global climate change regime, who should keep the issue at the top of the global political agenda through its climate diplomacy (EC, 2016b). The same EU diplomacy, according to the Council of the EU should engage the Parties to raise their ambitions (Council of the EU, 2016). The issue has to remain a priority for the EU including in bilateral and bi-regional dialogues with partner states (Ibid.). The Council invites the member states, the Commission and the High Representative, ‘in line with their respective roles and competences’, to continue the on the same path (Ibid).

Lastly, and rather beneficial for the analysis which follows in Chapter 7, in the same communication the EC sent to the other main EU institutions, it can be read that throughout the conference, the Union ‘maintained a high level of political coherence’, acting as one and speaking with ‘a single and unified voice in all phases of the negotiations, a crucial element for the successful outcome in Paris’ (EC, 2016a). With this being said, it is clear that the EU was entirely satisfied with the result, attributing the achievement to a great extent, to itself. While ‘disappointment’ was the defining word in 2009, ‘historical’ was the designation used in 2015 by the EU leaders.

## **6.6. Preliminary Conclusion**

In simple terms, the outcome was rather satisfactory for all the states, including the EU. In the same vein, The Paris Protocol was extremely different from the Copenhagen Accord, binding the states, which pledged to keep the global temperature rise well below 2C.

Copenhagen, in the other hand, was defined by misunderstandings, discrepancies and unwillingness. It seems that in just 6 years, many circumstances shifted only to fit EU's ambitions. Unmistakably, the process of fully sticking to the agreement and resourcefully convert the national energy sources into renewable ones will be anything but easy. However, this does not constitute the objective of this thesis, but rather try to understand why did the two negotiations were settled by such distinctive agreements. And moreover, how much is actually the EU's contribution? Did the EU truly lead the parties, as the EC claims? And if so, by what means and how did it differ from 2009? Those questions will be tackled principally in Chapter 7, but in what follows next within this chapter, assumptions will be made based on the overall impression which are going to be tested in Chapter 7 through the theoretical framework and by using the selected methodology.

EU had the same ambitions and referred to both COP15 and COP21 as a historical opportunity. In both cases, the EU was on track towards meeting and even overachieving its GHG emissions cuts; firstly, in relation to Kyoto, and secondly to its internal commitment agreed upon prior to Copenhagen. In both cases, as specified above, the EU had already implemented domestic reduction targets, 20% by 2020 prior to Copenhagen and 40% by 2030 prior to Paris. Thus, it is unreasonable to assume that the EU wished something entirely different and that its aspirations varied.

According to the EC's report following the signing of the agreement, after 'the limited participation in the Kyoto Protocol and lack of agreement in Copenhagen', the EU has been actively involved in creating a coalition of developing and developed states 'in favor of high ambition that shaped the successful outcome of the Paris conference' (EC, 2015e). That the EU formed the coalition and led it and doing it by showing a high level of political coherence, seems to be present in many documents (EC; 2016a).

While the EU played by roughly the same parameters, it seems that the international context in Paris was a different one, one that given the right additions at the right time, managed to produce a successful agreement. Even the EC admitted that the global settings 'changed completely when compared to Copenhagen', where mobilization of Governments and non-State actors was crucial (Ibid). The hypothesis is that while the EU acted as an actor, perhaps more united than ever and speaking with a single voice, the conditions were also favorable for its climate change leadership to come at the forefront. I speculate that

the Union's normative power and cognitive leadership functioned better due to the right conditions in the global arena, as climate issues have simply become the norm and that tackling them is seen as the rational and right thing to do. The EU has, in fact, shown that economic growth and emissions cuts are possible. In other words, it seems that, in contrast to Copenhagen, EU had also better tools and showed 'leadership ahead of Paris with 23% emissions cut' (EEA, 2015). In what follows next, the hypothesis will be put to test through the selected methodology, while drawing from the chosen theories.

## **7. Comparative study**

The last chapter starts by verifying the EU's actorness at COP15 and COP21 through the criteria presented in the methodological chapter by Jupille & Caporaso and Vogler & Bretherton. Afterwards, by actively employing the leadership types, the concept of normative power and the two key theories of integration, conclusions to the research questions presented in the first chapter are drawn.

Finally, in 'Conclusions', the essential findings are analyzed and the main research questions are answered. This is done by formulating the most important research results into concise conclusions and summarizing the answer to the main research question. Lastly, in 'Reflective remarks, a brief examination of how the obtained research results could be used for other applications, as well as how the methodology can be further elaborated for similar studies is performed.

### **7.1. Actorness criteria at COP15**

Recalling the Jupille & Caporaso criteria for actorness – *recognition, autonomy, cohesion, authority* – as well as the criteria developed by Vogler & Bretherton – presence, opportunity and capability – the hypothesis is to be examined as to whether or not the Union qualified as an actor at the COP15. Starting with Jupille & Caporaso and with the first criterion, *recognition*, which is also referred to as a minim prerequisite, the EU's attendance at the conference, as well as the other parties' expectations of its efficiency approve the criterion. Another aspect, which furthermore approves it, is the fact that the IPCC, starting with 2009, gave the Union full participation within the IPCC meetings, something generally granted to governments (EC, 2009d). All this combined points



unambiguously to the fact that EU receives *recognition* as a global actor in the climate regime.

EU's *authority* is also well approved by the harmonized negotiating position agreed upon by the member states prior to the summit since it enhances EU's position in spite of the mixed competences. With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which stipulates the Union's commitment to sustainable development, the EU's *authority* was arguably strengthened. Moreover, after the commencement, which occurred around the time COP15 was taking place, the EU was granted the right to conclude agreements with third states for the attainment of the objectives stipulated in the treaty (EU, 2007). Similarly, the climate and energy package, likewise the common negotiating mandate, uphold the criterion *autonomy*. Furthermore, the Union compensated for its small degree of flexibility to respond to changes and proposals happening during the talks by having a Council meeting after the first part of the summit ended. *Value Cohesion* concerned arguably comes from the EU treaty provisions. The Lisbon Treaty enhanced this type of *cohesion* even more. By agreeing on a climate and energy package, the EU tailored the distinct positions into a unitary one, thus providing for the *tactical cohesion*. It also did this in advance. *Procedural cohesion* is not as central here since the unanimity is the method utilized. Lastly, output cohesion is checked as the Union committed to reduce GHG emissions by 20% by 2020, proving the existence of collective policies.

Advancing to Vogler & Bretherton, *presence* is reinforced by the prosperity of the EU policies, or belittled by their failure. The European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) is the largest GHG emissions trading scheme in the world, both during COP15 and during COP21 and it can be argued that it generates EU *presence*. At the time of Copenhagen, the EU was on the right path to achieve its Kyoto commitments, something, which enhances the criterion (UNFCCC Compliance Committee, 2009). The drawback here is, however, that since public appearance is a great part of the conceptualization, the criterion cannot be entirely assessed, as the role the EU had at COP15 is essential for its *presence*.

The outer milieu of ideas and events, which characterizes *opportunity*, cannot be rightly assessed, as the course of the summit must be taken into account. Surely, the US was supposedly willing, but incapable to participate in purposive climate action because of

internal constraints. On the other hand, it was established that China would be able to cause problems in achieving a deal. The withdrawal of two immensely important actors means a lot for the climate action progress, but doubtless leaves *opportunity* for the EU to carry out its *presence*. Similarly, *capability* depends on EU's performance within the summit. However, the common negotiating mandate reinforced its condition.

The European Union has therefore met the criteria developed by Jupille & Caporaso concerning its presence at COP15. With respect to Vogler & Bretherton, it is beyond the bounds of possibility to give a final conclusion since plenty hinges on the Union's performance at the negotiations. Still, many aspects militate for EU's actorness. Altogether, the thesis according to which EU qualified as an actor at COP15, has been proved, albeit not fully.

## **7.2. Actorness criteria at COP21**

Before delving into the intricacies of the analysis, it has to be noted that, since the time scale is small and because the entity is the same, the arguments used for militating for or against in both summits are rather similar. Starting again with Jupille & Caporaso criteria – *recognition* is easily approved, as all the evidence militating for it at COP15 qualifies for COP21 as well. Allegedly, the EU led the high ambition coalition, something, which would not have been possible if not for the EU's presence, acceptance and interaction with others.

By COP21, the EU's commitment to sustainable development stipulated by the Lisbon Treaty was a fact, thus strengthening the *authority* criterion. Vitaly, EU had, as well as 6 years ago, a common negotiating position agreed upon in advance of the final summit. Moreover, the EU has been involved in building a coalition of developing and developed states 'in favor of high ambition that shaped the successful outcome of the Paris conference' (EC, 2015e). Thus, fulfilling the criterion exceptionally. *Autonomy* is checked due to the newly negotiated climate and energy package, the common negotiating mandate as well as the fact that the EU 'maintained a high level of political coherence', acting as one and speaking with a single voice... in all phases of the negotiations' (EC, 2016a). This suggests a neofunctionalist approach of the European integration. Lastly, the four

dimensions of *cohesion* are, to a very large extent, achieved in the same manner as for COP15.

Moving on to Vogler & Bretherton, *presence* seems to be even more strongly attained, as the EU has shown through its policies that it is possible to have economic growth alongside GHG emissions cuts. The EU ETS remained the largest GHG emissions trading scheme in the world during that period, while the EU over-achieved its Kyoto commitments and was striving to achieve its 2020 goal (EC, 2013). The EU, thus, has the right position to be able to exert influence and to shape the perceptions of others', as required by the criterion (Allen & Smith, 1990, p. 21). As well as for COP15, the public appearance of the actor is a large factor of the conceptualization, making the criterion less telling. *Opportunity* and especially *capability* have a similar story. *Opportunity*, even though it cannot be assessed indoors, it existed internationally, with China and the US more eager for concluding an agreement, but with no one willing to lead the way such as the EU.

The EU has met once more met the criteria elaborated by Jupille & Caporaso with regard to its participation in Paris; this time by an even larger margin. However, nothing conclusive can be claimed about Vogler & Bretherton's criteria, but the overall impression is that EU fulfills the greatest part of it. Thus, the hypothesis that EU behaved as an actor in Paris is certainly close to the truth.

As a last conclusion to EU's actorness at COP15 and COP21 we can now say that, in relation to the previous research on EU's actorness presented in chapter 3.3.1, only the first two approaches can fit the result of our analysis, namely Manners and Sjørnsen's approaches. The third one, which departs from realism and sees the EU as an intergovernmental cooperation, dismissing its actorness, does not correspond to the findings.

### **7.3. Considering leadership types, normativity & theories of integration**

So, what was the role played by the EU as an actor in its own right at COP15, respectively COP21? How about leadership? It is widely accepted that the EU performed leadership when the parties negotiated the Kyoto Protocol. Has the EU then do justice to its

leadership in Copenhagen and Paris? And if so, what type of leadership? Can we perhaps make a generalization? The European Union perceives itself as a leader and desires to remain one. As Gupta & Grubb note, many scholars regard the EU as the most likely candidate for leading the way (Gupta & Grubb, 2000, p. 47).

The liberal intergovernmentalist scholars would assert that only the most powerful nations are able to shape 'high politics'. Are we to say that climate change is 'high politics'? Certainly not in the 80s or even the 90s, but as Oberthür and Pallemmaerts write, 'internationally, the issue has become one of 'high politics' (2010, cover page). Lastly, Young notes that leadership is 'the actions of individuals who endeavor to solve or circumvent the collective action problems that plague the efforts of parties seeking to reap joint gains in processes of institutional bargaining' (1991, p. 285; Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 275). Does the EU fit Young's definition? Thus, the states wielding their veto power and creating coalitions to water down ambitious agreements do not count as leader (Ibid.; Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 275).

Europe normative power, I believe, is a key concept here. The normative power approach takes for granted the fact that EU enjoys sufficient actorness, which as we have just seen, holds true. While after Copenhagen, EU's normativity and especially its leadership were under pressure and perhaps to some extent doubtful, Paris brought in a new perspective. During COP21, the EU's expectations were finally met. The European Commission and the Council are claiming that the EU, exhibiting leadership, guided the parties through the process. While the EU had the same ambitions in COP21 as in COP15, basically the same institutional apparatus, but perhaps retaining a higher level of coherence in the case of Paris, the outcomes were entirely different. That EU's leadership changed dramatically in 6 years is not a feasible scenario. I argue that cognitive leadership, which is essentially based on normative power, was the central capability, which propelled the EU at the forefront of the negotiations.

An argument for this is found through Young's verdict of intellectual leadership; writing that 'it is difficult to articulate coherent systems of thought in the midst of the fast-paced negotiations associated with institutional bargaining. It is also due to the fact that new ideas generally have to triumph over the entrenched mindsets or worldviews held by policymakers' (Young, 1991, p. 298). Shortly, the EU was favored in 2015 by the existing

mindsets, which were more finely attuned to perceive the climate change as a serious threat. On the other hand, in 2009, perhaps those ‘new ideas’, as Young puts it, triumphed to some extent, but not where it really mattered, e.g. China. Thus, we can say that EU’s normative power was enhanced by the existing milieu in 2015, while it was scaled down in 2009. At Paris, EU’s ideas and intentions regarding climate change were simply better grasped, sympathized and assimilated by the other parties. Whereas in 2009, as explained, they were to a lesser extent.

Thus, we have tentatively concluded that normative power played an important role in granting the EU the desired leadership, in this case, cognitive leadership, at COP21. Recalling Young from Chapter 2, leadership, in order to work, must be of at least two different types, as only one type does not suffice (Young, 1991). First, with regard to structural leadership, it is hard to argue that the EU does not possess any, especially when considering that Germany, France, the UK and Italy, which are also full members of the G7, are represented by the European Union at the climate change regime. Moreover, the EU has the world’s largest market, which has to account to some structural power. Even though the EU does not possess military power, it has considerable economic power.

Lastly, entrepreneurial leadership, which refers to the negotiating skills for framing issues such that it fosters integrative bargaining, could also form a part of the EU’s repertoire. As argued previously, the Presidency grants opportunities for entrepreneurial leadership. The Swedish Presidency during COP15 has, speaking on behalf of the EU, attempted to frame the climate change as a collective issue and to demand responsibilities from the parties. Andreas Calgren, the Swedish Minister for Environment, said that ‘the Earth’s climate has waited long enough. The time has come to show genuine political leadership. The EU is determined to provide that leadership’ (Swedish Presidency, 2009). As we have seen in Chapter 6, Carole Dieschbourg, acting as the lead negotiator for the EU at COP21, has taken on the role of trying to frame climate change so that it fosters integrative bargaining prior and during the Summit. One aspect, which should be taken into consideration, as a contrast between the summits, is the performance of the president of both COPs. While at COP15, Rasmussen ‘seemed at sea with the details and the conventions of the process’, Fabius exuded knowledge and respect (BBC, 2015d). Thus, it can be argued that entrepreneurial leadership was stronger at COP21 than at COP15.

As reminded in the beginning of the current chapter, liberal intergovernmentalists downsize the role of the EU, arguing that only structural powers can influence ‘high politics’. The first point, which should be made, is why then, did the member states partially hand over an area, which is arguably one of ‘high politics’ to the supranational institutions? According to the same approach, they do so only when the gains are bigger than at the national level. It is truly difficult to establish the reasons behind, whereas neofunctionalism offers a more compelling way. Environmental policy seems to qualify as a process of issue linkage, as the EU enjoys considerable powers. As discussed previously, environmental considerations and trade are ever more complementary as trade policies acknowledge the environmental considerations and tries to adjust properly. Moreover, as trade is a key economic area, it is possible to argue that a spillover process occurred towards the environment, shifting gradually competences and powers to the supranational level, thus further aiding integration. The environment here, including climate change, can be perceived as a cognate sector onto which pressure was applied to also be integrated.

When looking at COP15, the fact that the EU’s aims did not succeed, might point to an explanation in the light of the intergovernmentalist thinking. EU simply did not matter, as it is not a state, but an intergovernmental institution dominated by the member states through the European Council. The EU’s cognitive leadership, which the intergovernmentalists might not even acknowledge, was downplayed and its structural leadership nonexistent. Furthermore, this is supported by Connie Hedegaard’s statement that ‘in the last hours, China, India, Russia, Japan each spoke with one voice, while Europe spoke with many different voices’ (Phillips, 2010). On the other hand, at COP21, with EU allegedly leading the ‘high ambition coalition’ and with the achievement of its goals, the liberal intergovernmentalism seems ill fit to account for the events, leaving space for a neofunctionalist explanation. The EU was capable of leading the negotiations because the political context allowed it and because its cognitive leadership and normativity were recognized by the other parties.

That the EU at COP21 was united, capable of leading the talks and speaking with ‘a single and unified voice in all phases of the negotiations’ voice points to a neofunctionalist way of thinking (EC, 2016a). If the EU had been characterized by internal conflict, disagreements and multiple, divergent voices, the liberal intergovernmentalism would have been crucial in explaining the EU’s performance. While at COP15 liberal

intergovernmentalism seem to better account for the events, in Paris neofunctionalism takes the lead.

There is also the discussion of who has more to gain from a successful climate change regime: the individual member states which can by themselves resemble nations such as Australia, Japan or Canada who have not been instrumental and very willing to cooperate within the regime or the EU who pushed all the parties into cooperation? It is suggested that the EU. The whole regime is about cooperation and lowering national interests in the favor of collective and future gains. The EU, on its track to prove its autonomy to the world and to find ways through which it can do it, has come across the climate change regime, which offered the Union the breach it needed. The climate change issue is all about cooperation and the EU is the representation of cooperation. Thus, the EU has more to gain, as it wishes to perpetuate its own existence and the easiest way of doing it is through multilateral agreements, which includes itself. This communicates to us a great deal about the European Union, suggesting a neofunctionalist approach to integration. Lastly, climate change is not just a relevant aspect for a EU foreign policy opportunity for expanding in ambitions and scope, but instead, as Van Schaik and Van Hecke claim, it should be perceived as a ‘saviour’ issue for the EU process of integration (Van Schaik & Van Hecke, 2008, p. 6). Climate change looks like the ideal issue for the European Union to broaden its global role and importance.

Finally, going back to Young’s definition of a leader, the EU seems to fit in. First, the EU did not use its veto power at COP15 to water down the modest agreement, which did not match EU’s expectations. Instead, the EU worked tirelessly to establish willing coalitions. It can even be argued that the EU tried to ‘solve the collective action problems’ and ‘reap joint gains’ (Young, 1991, p. 285; Wurzel & Connelly, 2011, p. 275). The first is obvious through the nature of the climate change issue and through EU’s performance and the latter can also be demonstrated through the nature of the climate change, as the gains will be absorbed by all the inhabitants of the planet, especially by the generations of tomorrow.

#### **7.4. Conclusions**

In the previous sections we have assessed EU’s actorness in relation to COP15 and to COP21. The European Union qualified as an actor in its own right at both, but by a larger

margin at COP21. However, some of the Vogler & Bretherton's criteria cannot be comprehensively evaluated. The study conducted also points to the fact that the EU performed leadership at COP21. As to COP15, the EU behaved in a less cohesive manner, speaking with multiple voices at times, suggesting a lessened degree of leadership. While the EU's performance at COP21 is best understood in the neofunctionalist light, liberal intergovernmentalism seems to account better for the events, as EU's structural power is non-existent and as the EU's multi-facetedness at the summit is due to the member states pulling into divergent directions. Overall the impression is that neofunctionalism has the upper hand, helping to clarify more of the selected research questions. The EU seems to qualify as a leader when considering Young's definition as somebody who is solving collective action problems and reaping joint gains.

We have also concluded that normative power is the key to European Union's leadership as it enhances EU's cognitive leadership. Moreover, thesis argues that the EU has a certain degree of structural leadership and of entrepreneurial leadership. The latter, however, can also play against the EU as we have seen in the case of Rasmussen at COP15. On the other hand, Laurent Fabius has arguably strengthened EU's position and possibly EU's entrepreneurial leadership by framing the issues so that it fosters integrative bargaining.

Going back to the research questions formulated in chapter 1.2, it seems that the EU has done justice to its leadership in Paris, but not so much in Copenhagen. The resources the EU possessed seemed to be similar, but the usage of them was perhaps slightly different. The EU met halfway during both summits and had agreed upon common negotiating positions prior to the conferences. However, as the outcome has shown, the degree of cohesiveness has been higher in relation to COP21 than to COP15.

With respect to the main research question of *why did the outcomes differ to such a great extent if the supposedly leader had the same ambitions?*, we can now answer by calling attention to several factors. On one hand, several external main factors were identified. Firstly, China's more willing position to negotiate a deal at COP21 in comparison to COP15's successful attempts of blocking the negotiations has arguably played an extremely important role. China is aware of the fact that it is becoming an undisputed superpower; this being proven by 'its newfound muscular confidence' which 'was on striking display in Copenhagen' (The Guardian, 2009). Vitaly, the US and China had



submitted a joint agreement on climate change prior to COP21; thus signaling the desire of cooperation within the climate change regime.

Secondly, the negotiations around COP21 were more focused on political feasibility than at COP15, where the emphasis was put on architectural integrity. As we have seen in chapter 6, this enhanced the chances that the US will not be required to submit it to the Senate for approval. Thirdly, INDCs from 187 have been submitted in advance of COP21, thus facilitating the bargaining dynamics. And thirdly, the costs of renewable energy technologies have fallen considerably from 2009 to 2015 and thus the prospect of replacing polluting energy sources seemed more attractive.

On the other hand, the aspects related to EU's performance, which may have played a decisive role were the following: 1) less cohesiveness at COP15 and more at COP21 as the EU negotiating position seemed to be more strongly discussed and more extensively agreed upon prior to COP21; 2) perhaps not entirely related to the EU, although both were representing EU member states, the performance of the individuals serving as presidents for the COP; 3) the successful EU leadership, especially with respect to the 'high ambition coalition'; 4) EU's normativity and cognitive leadership were favored in 2015 by the existing mindsets, which were more finely attuned in seeing climate change as a serious issue. In relation to the fourth argument, Manners claims that 'the ability to define what passes for *normal* in world politics is, ultimately, the greatest power of all' (Manners, 2002, p. 253). But as Young puts it, 'new ideas generally have to triumph over the entrenched mindsets' (Young, 1991, p. 298). Thus, I conclude that the parties were simply more willing to take for granted those norms the EU was advancing, in 2015 than in 2009, thus adding more significance to the European Union in Paris than in Copenhagen.

## **7.5. Reflective remarks**

As argued in the limitations of the study chapter, generalization is a difficult issue, as the selected sector is an extremely unique one and the role the EU takes upon itself does not really match anything else. Nevertheless, we can still say that the within the environmental sector, especially with respect to climate change, EU is an actor in its own right, capable of leading and influencing the international regime on climate change. Its leadership is mostly cognitive or intellectual, meaning that it mostly breeds on normativity. Lastly, with respect

to climate change there is not a crowning core integration theory, which accounts for everything, but rather a mix of them.

The obtained research results can be utilized both within and outside the academia. The findings can be used to further elaborate on the topic, especially after more materials are released and the ratification period runs out. The topic can be enlarged from different perspectives. Performing an in-depth analysis of COP21 to detect more subtleties can tell us more about the nature of EU's actorness and its leadership. The current thesis can be a departure point. The comparative study can also be developed further and use it as a guideline for the following COPs.

Moreover, the study means a great deal for the researchers who would like to theorize about the EU within the climate change regime. Tools used here, such as actorness criteria and leadership types can be successfully used to uncover the nature of EU's identity, but different ways can be as good. Thus, performing an analysis from a different angle is entirely possible; a subsequent comparison of the current study with the second one can further clarify many aspects. The environment represents a fruitful area due to its uniqueness and due to EU's theorized opportunities of leading the climate change (Gupta & Grubb, 2000, p. 47).

The methods used, such leadership types and actorness criteria can be further elaborated if the researcher disposes of a larger amount of materials and resources. The leadership analysis can be broken down into two sets of styles, as defined by the same Wurzel & Connelly, including heroic vs. humdrum leadership where the first refers to 'long-term objectives, strong policy and coordination', and the latter to incremental, short-term leadership (2011, p. 13). As well as transformational leadership, which leads to history changing events vs. transactional leadership, which leads to incremental policy change (Ibid.). The employment of those categorizations can disclose other aspects of the EU within the climate regime. Another asset would be to consider how norm diffusion happens; Manners with its 6 ways can be the departure point. Taken cumulatively, they can develop a similar study even more.

As for extra-academic applications, the study tells us a great deal about climate change, which is an all-affecting issue, and about the probability of it being tackled. It informs us

about who is leading the global efforts and who is blocking them. It can be utilized for reconsidering the nature of the EU's norms. The climate change efforts start with the EU. Perhaps in this time of euroskepticism, many will find EU's efforts to tackle climate change as telling, and start forming a more elaborate picture of what the EU is, and desires to achieve.

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