1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Since its establishment in 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has stipulated and governed the multilateral negotiations on climate change. In recent years, while the negotiations are making little progress on the actual greenhouse gas reduction, as the national governments lock heads with one another, a different trend has been on a steady rise. Climate activism, especially with its focus on climate justice, has become a highly visible presence and prominent voice at the annual Conferences of the Parties (COPs) under the UNFCCC.

In 2017, Fiji became the first small-island state to host the COP. Although it was eventually located in Bonn, Germany, COP23 witnessed an increase of presence and events from small-islanders and indigenous peoples (IPs) who called for attention and specific actions on climate justice. At one event, then Prime Minister of Fiji and President of COP23, Frank Bainimara, spoke about the disproportional hardship for small islands, in front of a colorful background of tropical flowers, starkly contrasting a black-and-white sign that says "Ban Fossil Fuel!" Many other local and IPs organizations, with their vibrant dance, songs, and pictures, vividly depicted how they suffered from the tremendous, irreversible consequences of climate change that had almost wiped out their communities and lands off the map.

At the same COP, women's groups also took the stage with loud and clear voices. Whether it was a chant-and-dance at the Blue Zone, a silent protest by wearing mustache to name-and-shame the patriarchal practices embedded in the governing system, or events featuring local women's leadership in climate solutions, they demanded more gender-specific data related to climate impact and called out the gender gap and the lack of gender-sensitivity in climate policymaking.

These voices, often championed by civil society organizations (CSOs), have clearly entered the UNFCCC process. The multilateral process also responded to their demands. In the same year, COP23 recorded the adoption of two important documents: the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, which supports the exchange of local and indigenous knowledge regarding mitigation and adaptation,[1] and the Gender Action Plan, which promotes gender equality in climate actions.[2] The CSOs championing climate justice never stopped. Although CSOs are observers (i.e. not Parties to the UNFCCC), they

[1] https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/sbsta/eng/06.pdf (Accessed: October 20, 2023).
[2] https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/sbi/eng/l29.pdf (Accessed: October 20, 2023).

continued to bring their issues to the annual COPs. Whether it is Side Events inside the venue or activism and protests outside, they have garnered growing attention from national delegates, international organizations, and the general public.

As non-Party observers of the UNFCCC, these CSOs do not have formal political power. However, they continue to define and redefine the meaning and narratives about climate change through issue framing, a strategy to highlight certain aspects of an issue in order to draw public attention (Albin, 1999; Allan and Hadden, 2017; Snow et al., 1986). In the early years of the UNFCCC, climate change advocacy focused primarily on scientific frames, such as greenhouse gas emissions and technical solutions to reduce them (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2006). Over the past 30 years, the number of CSO participants increased significantly, and so did the diversity of CSOs beyond environmental CSOs. Today, climate change is no longer just about science. Many CSOs frame climate change as a social justice issue, such as gender inequality and IPs' rights violation.

This study examines different ways in which CSOs advocate for climate justice at UNFCCC COPs. We focus on two climate justice frames that have become prominent in recent years: a gender-climate frame and an indigenous-climate frame (Bäckstrand and Lövbrand, 2019). In so doing, we ask what kinds of CSOs develop gender and indigenous frames and why they chose theses frames over other climate frames. To answer these questions, we draw on the theoretical frameworks of framing strategy and organizational ecology. By connecting climate frames with the resource space surrounding CSOs, we argue that CSOs' framing efforts are shaped by both the availability of resources and the expertise of individual organizations. In turn, these framing efforts affect interorganizational dynamics and the evolution of climate frames over time. In particular, we propose two mechanisms of frame development based on interest representation: *self-representation* and *surrogate-representation*.

We find that women's CSOs are self-representative in that they lead and shape advocacy that highlights the need of addressing gender equality in global climate governance. By contrast, IPs advocacy takes on both self-representation and surrogate-representation with the latter growing prominently. In surrogate-representation, a diverse group of CSOs, including non-indigenous CSOs specializing in issues like forestry and agriculture, advocate for IPs. We argue that the patterns of frame development depend on the willingness of early-comer CSOs to discipline their advocacy narratives. A core group of early-comer CSOs leads and shapes the narratives about gender-related issues in climate governance, whereas IPs organizations do not exercise such power but embrace diverse voices. We suggest that these different patterns

can have a long-term impact on how we think about the situations surrounding women and IPs in relation to climate change.

1.2 Contributions

This study sheds new light on the role of CSOs in global climate governance, especially the ones that are specialized in particular issues or people groups. These CSOs tend to be small and lesser known groups, but they are nevertheless experts in their areas of specialization. While these CSOs are often treated as a trivial category of "followers" or "free-riders" (Bob, 2005; Murdie, 2014), recent research on CSOs in global governance has shown how such specialist CSOs might shape the institutional environment surrounding themselves (Bush and Hadden, 2019; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2019; Shibaike, 2023). By highlighting two advocacy communities – gender and IPs – at the UNFCCC, we show how specialization can lead to remarkably different organizational dynamics in climate advocacy. Doing so contributes to a better understanding of how CSOs as a whole carry out climate advocacy and shape the narratives about climate change at the UNFCCC.

This study also contributes to our understanding of IPs' participation in global climate governance. Existing research has shown that IPs have experienced political, economic, and epistemological barriers, as they attempt to engage with the UNFCCC process (Comberti et al., 2019). This study seeks to move beyond the issue of marginalization and highlight the ways in which IPs developed their own voices. We hope to highlight the contributions as well as struggles of IPs at the UNFCCC and suggest more engagement and future research on this topic.

Finally, this study lends insights into the question of democratic legitimacy in global governance (Bexell, Tallberg, and Uhlin, 2010; Steffek, Kissling, and Nanz, 2007; Zhao, 2023). The UNFCCC process is generally considered as a relatively open space where different stakeholders in climate governance can join. It is known for its accessibility for non-Party observer organizations, and thousands of CSOs have flooded to the annual COPs over the years. However, attendance does not equate meaningful and engaging participation. We shift our focus away from mere institutional access and closely examine the mechanism of framing efforts at the UNFCCC. In so doing, we show power dynamics among CSOs and their long-term effects on meaning-making around climate change and participation patterns.

Next, we first offer historical trajectories of women's CSOs and IPs participation in the UNFCCC process, including the institutional responses and arrangements related to their advocacy efforts. We then introduce an outline of the Element.

1.3 Gender and Indigenous Advocacy at the UNFCCC

1.3.1 Women and Gender Advocacy

The linkage between women and climate change came forth during the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro, where the frame connecting women's rights and sustainable development first emerged (Friedman, 2003). After the UNFCCC was established in 1992, however, the regime had little to say about gender equality. From research scientists to national delegates, men have constituted the majority of the research and policymaking forces (Nagel, 2015). The demand for awareness of the linkage between women and climate change started to surface in the early 2000s. In 2001, gender concerns were officially brought into the UNFCCC process, in which the Secretariat was tasked with examining the gender composition at the UN climate governance. However, no mechanism was adopted to ensure gender quality. The failure of Copenhagen, the rising doubt about the UN setup, and the fact that the system was dominated by men, indicated that it was time to call for the participation of women in global climate governance (Buckingham, 2010).

The endeavor to organize movements around women's rights in climate governance came into public view in 2007 during the COP13 meeting in Bali, Indonesia. The Women's Caucus was founded, which later gained the official UNFCCC constituency status as the Women and Gender Constituency (WGC). The initial women and gender CSOs included Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), Gender Climate Change, Women's Environment and Development Organization, and Life.e.V. They, along with other CSOs, demanded the UNFCCC be a "gender-sensitive regime." At the same time, they started "holding joint meetings, lobbying delegates, organizing side events, participating in protests, and advocating for the inclusion of gender-specific text in the negotiations" (Ciplet, 2014: 81). Despite the short-lived attention for gender equality in Indonesia, the COP13 established a fertile ground for the participation of influential women's CSOs in climate governance. For example, in 2008, GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice established a clear linkage between climate change and gender inequality and called for fundamental changes beyond including women in the climate change establishment.

The WGC was formally established in 2009. In the same year, members of the WGC lobbied at the COP15 in Copenhagen for the inclusion of a shared vision "Preamble to the Convention" with the "full integration of gender perspectives" (Ciplet, 2014: 82). However, despite CSOs' persistent advocacy, the Copenhagen Accord did not contain any reference to women or any gender-sensitive language. Overall, the institutional inclusion and engagement

of women at the UNFCCC did not gain real momentum between 2009 and 2011, except for a few gender-specific provisions added in the Cancun Agreement in 2010 and reiterated in the Durban Platform in 2011. However, these commitments remained vague and more of a lip service than a sincere policy change, unable to influence any practices at the national level.

Finally, in 2012, at the COP18 meeting in Doha, Qatar, the mobilization of women's CSOs started paying off. The decision adopted at COP18 included the language of "promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and in the representation of Parties in bodies established pursuant to the Convention or the Kyoto Protocol" (UNFCCC, 2012). The emphasis on the importance of women negotiators in the formal text was heralded by many as the "Doha Miracle." The decision reflected an official commitment to include women in the UNFCCC process and required that data on gender participation be collected and made public, which would make research on women's representation much easier than before.

The following year, the UNFCCC again recognized the need for gender balance in its decision-making processes. As a result, expert bodies of the UNFCCC directed the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to include the language of gender in its 2013 report. Although women's representation was formally mandated, representatives of CSOs claimed that a mere numerical increase had not improved the quality of women's participation. The initiative to increase women delegation is only a "tick-box" approach: the rising number of female delegates cannot be translated into gender equality in climate governance. Mandating women's representation was the first and vital step (Alston, 2015).

The WGC did not stop after the inclusion of gender-specific clauses into the formal texts in 2012 and 2013. They kept advocating for the cause in the years that followed. At the COP20 in Lima, Peru in 2014, the WGC argued that "the COP parties were failing to implement solutions that considered the critical role of women and the importance of gender equality in tackling climate change" (Kuyper and Bäckstrand, 2016: 62). After the 2015 Paris Agreement was adopted at the COP21, the WGC was concerned about how to implement the hard-fought languages of human rights, gender equality, and other principles included in the preamble of the Paris Agreement into practical steps and policy instruments. The WGC successfully persuaded the Parties during the COP22 in 2016 to develop a "Gender Action Plan (UNFCCC, 2017, Decision 3/CP.23)" as an implementation roadmap for them. The Plan was a milestone that underlined the urgency of integrating gender into climate-related policy-making. The goal was to ensure that women have a say in climate change

decision-making and that the interests of all genders are sufficiently represented at the UNFCCC.

1.3.2 Indigenous Peoples Movement

IPs began attending the UNFCCC COPs in 1998. The first groups of IPs at the COP4 in Buenos Aires came from North America who issued "A Call to Action: The Albuquerque Declaration" (1998). Over the years, IPs' presence increased, and several institutional platforms have formed to gather IPs coming to the UNFCCC process. In response to the growing IPs' presence at the COP7 in 2001, the UNFCCC recognized the IPs as one of the non-state observer constituencies, known as the Indigenous Peoples Organizations (IPO) (Belfer et al., 2019). Several years later, in 2008, the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) was established as the caucus for IPs and their allies in the UNFCCC process.[3] Its mandate was to agree specifically on what IPs will be negotiating for in the UNFCCC process, hence providing a channel to develop unified positions for the IPs coming to the venue.

The development of IPs advocacy inside the UNFCCC has drawn heavily from the international legal framework developed outside of the UNFCCC. For instance, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established in 2000 to serve as a high-level advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council.[4] Its composition – a mixture of nation-states and IPs – has become a template for developing proposals for advisory bodies at the UNFCCC (López-Rivera, 2023). One important legal framework developed outside of the UNFCCC is the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) adopted in 2007. The UNDRIP positions the right to self-determination and collective rights to lands, territories and resources at its core principle. It addresses the relationships between indigenous peoples and their land and resources, and how such relationships are essential to their identity and well-being.[5]

Parallel to the UNDRIP, the REDD (Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) program was introduced in 2007. It has been a controversial decision among IPs because of the risk of dispossession of IPs' lands (Claeys and Delgado Pugley, 2017: 3). A range of reactions spawn from

[3] International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change. www.iipfcc.org/who-are-we (Accessed: June 13, 2023).
[4] https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us/permanent-forum-on-indigenous-issues.html (Accessed: June 13, 2023).
[5] https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_ web.pdf (Accessed: August 22, 2023).

the IPs community, ranging from explicit opposition to participation in the program in exchange for cash and a point of contact with the broader mitigation effort. At the same time, many of the IPs' organizations sought to integrate the UNDRIP into the UNFCCC mitigation mechanism. They launched a No Rights, No REDD campaign, as many UNFCCC Parties refused to make an explicit mention of the UNDRIP (Claeys and Delgado Pugley, 2017: 4). IPs expressed disappointment at the lack of political will by Parties to include any reference to the language of indigenous rights crafted under the UNDRIP. The IPs also saw the COP15 in Copenhagen as an opportunity to reverse this political stalemate; however, the COP15 turned out to be a complete disaster for CSOs, as it severely restricted CSO participation in response to disruptive protest events. But the event became an awakening point for CSOs to reconsider the governance of climate change and triggered the climate justice movement worldwide. It prompted the People's Climate Summit in 2010 in Bolivia, where representatives of IPs voiced their views on the management of indigenous territories, extractive industries, and REDD. The consensus among the IPs community was to support the process of recognition of the UNDRIP (Claeys and Delgado Pugley, 2017). They were successful in this effort as the UNDRIP was noted as a safeguard provision of the REDD mechanism in 2010 (Claeys and Delgado Pugley, 2017: 5). However, in the following years, no concrete action was taken based on the Safeguard Information System, which was supposed to guide international reporting on how countries address and respect safeguard standards (Claeys and Delgado Pugley, 2017: 6).

While the IPs' voices and the REDD have been entangled for years without a clear resolution, the recognition and inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the Paris Agreement was a notable victory. More specifically, the Paris Agreement encourages Parties to consider "the best available science" along with "traditional knowledge, knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems" (UNFCCC, 2017: Article 7.5). The accompanying decision to the Paris Agreement introduced an institutional innovation that materialized this formal recognition by establishing the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP).[6] It was a unique achievement, as it established the first formal, permanent, and distinct space created for IPs within the UNFCCC. Unlike existing initiatives, the LCIPP was designed to feed directly into the negotiation process as a working group. It is a forum for fostering dialogue between Parties and IPs about what inclusive national and international climate

[6] Report of the Conference of the Parties on Its Twenty-First Session, decision 1/CP.21, para 135, UN Doc. FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1.

actions should look like, while increasing the capacity of IPs to implement their own projects (Belfer et al., 2019; López-Rivera, 2023).

Despite its importance, the LCIPP created under the Paris Agreement has been an inadequate mechanism for IPs participation in the UNFCCC process, as it fails to acknowledge IPs' participation as inherent rights and avoids recognizing the colonial systems and practices that marginalize IPs (Maldonado et al., 2016; Raffel, 2016; Tormos-Aponte, 2021). It also left much ambiguity for interpretation when Parties seek implementation based on the LCIPP. Following the COP21 in Paris, the interpretation and design of the LCIPP have been in disarray due to its vague language, allowing for various interpretations and submissions from Parties regarding how to implement Paragraph 135, which called for strengthening indigenous knowledge in climate actions. Some Parties, such as Canada and Ecuador, become the champions for IPs, while others have not (for example, Brazil only called for a website to "deposit" indigenous knowledge) (López-Rivera, 2023). Therefore, from the IIPFCC to the REDD+ and then to the LCIPP, the right to self-determination and the right to natural resources on indigenous lands and territories remain insufficiently fulfilled.

1.4 Outline of the Element

Against this background of gender and IPs' advocacy at the UNFCCC, this study examines how CSOs working on these two areas built their narratives through framing efforts. To explore CSOs' framing efforts, we begin by presenting our theoretical framework in Section 2. We connect the literature on advocacy framing with the theory of organizational ecology to explain the observed differences in framing processes, outcomes, and future implications. In particular, we explain how self-representation and surrogate-representation may explain the process of frame development at the UNFCCC process.

Our empirical research adopts a mixed-method approach. In Section 3, we use Twitter (now X) data to empirically observe variations in the use of different frames among CSOs during COP21 in Paris, a milestone event in global climate governance. Twitter is (or was during COP21) a widely used social media platform among CSOs. It provides a channel for them to publicize their voices with a minimum entry barrier. We first show the landscape of civil society advocacy at the UNFCCC based on computational text analysis. We then use statistical models to analyze the characteristics of CSOs associated with gender and IPs advocacy. The findings illustrate the patterns of self-representation and surrogate-representation in gender and IPs advocacy.

In Section 4, we draw on the in-depth interviews conducted at COP23, COP24, and COP27 to qualitatively explore CSOs' framing efforts for gender

and IPs. We leverage accounts from CSO representatives to show how CSOs perceived their institutional environment, how they interact with one another at the UNFCCC, and their long-term impacts on both climate advocacy and the organizations involved.

Section 5 concludes and considers the implications for future climate advocacy and research agenda. The theory and data that we provide in this Element suggest new ways to look at the process of frame development among CSOs. We call for further attention to organizational population dynamics in analyzing advocacy frames. We end with practical considerations for the future of climate advocacy based on the findings in this Element.

2 Theoretical Framework

During the past few decades, civil society organizations (CSOs) have became a group of salient political actors in the governance of transnational issues, including human rights, development, and the environment and climate change. They have challenged the state-centric system of global governance by exercising their normative and symbolic power (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). CSOs play a crucial role at multiple stages of international policy-making processes, including norm creation, agenda-setting, policy formation, monitoring, and enforcement of international agreements (Steffek, 2013; Tallberg, Sommerer, and Squatrito, 2013). Today they are widely regarded as an indispensable part of world politics. The theorizing of CSOs progressed with the emergence of constructivist theory in the field of international relations (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). With its emphasis on social and ideational factors in world politics (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001), a constructivist framework became a major approach in explaining how CSOs, which lack the conventional forms of material power, can effect political and normative changes (Willetts, 2001). Over time, scholarly questions about CSOs and their effects on world politics expanded. Scholars ask not only whether or not CSOs matter in world politics, but why and under what conditions they matter. Much academic attention has been paid to the strategies of CSOs, such as building connections through transnational networks (Allan and Hadden, 2017; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Shawki, 2011), naming and shaming (Dietrich and Murdie, 2017; Hafner-Burton, 2008; Hendrix and Wong, 2013), and the combination of insider and outsider strategies at intergovernmental organizations (Fox and Brown, 1998; Hadden, 2015).

We build on the existing efforts to analyze CSO strategies. This section focuses on how and why CSOs choose their frames at the UNFCCC and how their framing choices in turn affect inter-organizational dynamics. First, we