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**Perceived influence on policy outcomes of Transnational
City Networks at the Conference of Parties to the
UNFCCC.**

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List of Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
BINGO	Business and Industry Non-Government Organisation
C40	C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
CAN	Climate Action Network
CCP	Cities for Climate Protection
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
COP	Conference of Parties
ENGO	Environmental Non-Government Organisation
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GHG	GreenHouse Gas
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IG	Interest Group
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IPO	Indigenous Peoples Organisation
LDC	Least-Developed Countries
LGMA	Local Government Modernisation Agenda

MEP	Member of European Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIE	National Implementing Entities
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSAG	Private Sector Advisory Group
RINGO	Research and Independent Non-Governmental Organisation
TCN	Transnational City Networks
TNA	Trans-National Actor
TUNGO	Trade Union Non-Governmental Organisation
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UN-HABITAT United Nations Human Settlements Programme

WHO World Health Organisation

WWF World Wide Fund for Nature

YOUNGO Youth Non-Governmental Organisation

1 Introduction

The Copenhagen climate change negotiations of 2009 have been widely regarded a failure. Representatives of over 190 national governments proved unable to agree on and document an international approach to effectively address climate change. In 2011 all governments agreed in the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action that a new global agreement to tackle climate change would have to be reached by 2015 at the latest. This year climate change negotiations will take place in Paris, where these new agreements will have to be finalized (McGregor 2014).

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental treaty negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, held in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Giddens 2009). The objective of the Convention, also referred to as the Climate Change Regime, is to “stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (UNFCCC Article 2). The treaty sets no binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions for individual countries, but instead provides a framework for negotiating specific international ‘protocols’ that may set binding limits on greenhouse gases (Giddens 2009: 187).

The Conference of Parties (COP) is the highest body of the UNFCCC and consists of ministers of the environment who meet every year to negotiate climate protocols that all parties can agree to. According to article 7 of UNFCCC, the primary task of COP is to control, review and promote the effective implementation of the Convention and any related legal instruments (UN 1992: 17-19). In that context, the COP serves as a forum for negotiations at improving the Climate Change Regime. Also each year, prior to the COP, negotiations take place in Bonn (the ‘Bonn talks’), where the key elements for the new protocol are agreed upon.

Apart from participant countries, the presence of all kinds of non-treaty actors at the conferences and summits demonstrates that there is room for influence of third parties on the outcomes. UN bodies and specialised agencies may participate as observers in COP sessions and the same applies to a large number of other governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) “... qualified in matters covered by the Convention” who are also admitted to the COP deliberation as observers at its annual sessions (UN 1992: 19, item 6).

In recent years a new kind of actor has come to the stage at the COPs: the Transnational City Networks (TCNs). TCNs are defined as ‘associations’ with cities and regional governments as enlisted members (Lowery & Brasher 2003). Their core activities are to share information around the globe between their member cities, support processes for capacity building and implementation and rule setting. There are public, private and hybrid funded TCNs (Andonova, Betsill & Bulkeley 2009: 53). The community of TCNs is diverse and its representation changes over time (Hanegraaff 2015). TCNs can have a specific purpose, such as Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) and the International Solar Cities Initiative, or they can be institutionalised organisations with a wide range of activities, such as ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, C40 and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) (Toly 2008: 344).

Deliberation about the process and impact of environmental governance has long been detached from local politics and concerns of individuals and communities. However, a proliferation of bottom-up instead of top-down governance has paved the way for increased expression of local issues and necessities in matters of the environment. According to political and scholarly debates these developments have “quite radical implications for global environmental governance” (O’Neill 2009: 207).

However, though many studies have looked into how TCNs formed their networks, how they share knowledge and expertise within their network and what their contribution has been on a local level, little is still known about their

influence on international politics. And even less is known about the influence of TCNs on the climate change negotiations of the UNFCCC.

All life on this planet, including the quality of life for our children, is dependent on what the earth can provide. Clean air, water and food, safe areas to live. All of this is connected with the climate and climate change. It is expected that, when climate changes affects human lives more, citizens will seek for platforms to have influence on their political leaders. TCNs, which are local and global at the same time (Betsill and Bulkeley 2004: 142), could provide citizens with such a platform. So this mean that there is not only a gap in the literature on interest groups in international climate change negotiations, TCNs could potentially be a very influential interest group at the UNFCCC for their close connection to citizens and their voicing of these citizens' concerns.

And these concerns could very well grow quickly, as in 2013 a working group on carbon emission policy and regulation held at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, concluded that all the efforts to design and implement treaties to control climate change have had “modest practical results in terms of curbing emissions” (Lucon et al. 2013: 938).

The focus of this thesis will therefore be on the influence of TCNs on the Climate Change Regime.

This leads to the following research question:

What is the influence of TCNs on the policy outcomes of the climate change negotiations compared to the influence of other interest groups?

Structure of the thesis

In the following chapter the relevant literature will be discussed in the theoretical framework and propositions will be established about the influence of TCNs. In chapter three the research design and methods will be explicated. Then in chapter four the results of the empirical research will be described,

followed by a discussion of the results in chapter five. The thesis will be concluded with a conclusion and recommendations for future research in chapter six.

2 Theoretical framework

The purpose of this thesis, as explained in the introduction, is the gathering of insight in the influence of TCNs in climate change negotiations and to compare their influence to that of other IGs. The aim is to enhance existing theory on the topic at hand by connecting theory to insights gained in practice by actors in these negotiations. This chapter will serve as a review of relevant concepts and for the formulation of hypotheses that can be tested in the further research.

First, a bit more background will be given of the UNFCCC, its processes and its participants and interest groups. Then some more will be said on Transnational City Networks. Thirdly, the definition of influence chosen for this thesis will be explicated. And finally, from studies of influence regarding International Organisations (IOs), in the political context of the United States, European countries and the EU, four variables are argued to be main drivers of influence, namely: 'insider status', 'resources', 'specific knowledge' and 'coalitions'. For each of the four variables a proposition in regard to TCNs will be proposed.

2.1 The Climate Change Regime negotiations

The parties to the convention are by now 196 countries, divided into Annex-I (classified as industrialised countries and economies in transition), Annex-II (countries united in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)), Annex-B (Annex-I Parties with first- or second-round Kyoto greenhouse gas emissions targets), Least-developed countries (LDCs) and Non-Annex I parties (mostly low-income and developing countries). Parties participating in a session are represented by a delegation consisting of a head of delegation and other accredited representatives.

Negotiation process

The COP sessions are held in formal and informal plenary meetings. The negotiation structure at the COP includes a number of subsidiary bodies and

working groups mandated by the COP to work on particular issues within a set time frame (Blavoukos & Bourantonis 2011: 74).

Negotiations at the climate change regime are an ever ongoing process. Three steps constitute the negotiation process of the regime formation and co-creation. The first step is the agenda setting and framing of environmental problems to be addressed by the COP. Then nation states will meet on several occasions and negotiate. Finally, at the COP ministers can establish an agreement on the issue at hand, which nation states will now need to implement. When this is done, at subsequent meetings the same issue can be put back on the agenda, maybe even with another perspective with another policy goal (O'Neill 2009: 78-79).

Each party to the conference has one vote. However, there is still no agreement on a voting rule for substantive matters, which means that consensus is still required for all substantive matters. This cannot be viewed as being tantamount to unanimity, but rather as that “there are no stated or formal objections to a decision.” (Yamin and Depledge 2004: 443)

Non-participant interest groups involvement

Side-events are the most visible platform for non-participant involvement in international climate negotiations. Historically, new items were introduced at COP side-events before being discussed in the formal negotiations. Furthermore, side-events provide a process for creating a shared vision. By providing a forum that includes more organisations and actors in conjunction with the negotiations, side-events have the potential to increase the input legitimacy of the international policy process (Hjerpe & Linnér 2010: 168-171).

During the COPs of the Climate Change Regime, non-participant organisations admitted as observers at sessions of the Convention, have formed themselves into loose groups with diverse but broadly clustered interests and perspectives. Business and industry organisations as well as environmental groups have been particularly active and have initiated systematic channels of communications with the UNFCCC secretariat and the Parties to the convention, resulting in the

acknowledgment of these 'constituencies'. A system evolved which enhanced the participation of large numbers of observer organisations, of which there are currently more than 1,400. Without the cooperation of these constituencies, it would not be possible for the Regime's secretariat to maintain effective interaction with interested stakeholders (UNFCCC 2011b).

The business and industry non-government organisations (BINGO) and the environmental non-government organisations (ENGO) were the first two constituencies, active from the start of the Regime. Over the years and the COPs other constituencies have been formed and recognised. At COP 1 the LGMA constituency for local government and municipal authorities was established. The ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, founded in 1990, became LGMA's focal point. COPs 7, 9 and 14 saw the formation of the indigenous peoples organisations (IPO), the research and independent non-governmental organisations (RINGO), the trade union non-governmental organisations (TUNGO), farmers and agricultural non-governmental organisations (Farmers), women and gender non-governmental organisations (Women and Gender) and youth non-governmental organisations (YOUNGO) respectively. (Otto-Zimmermann 2012: 511-512).

2.2 About Transnational City Networks

It is said that international institutions encouraged the proliferation of local governments at the international political stage. In the mid-80s, for example, the World Bank started to invest in their position, which stimulated the creation of TCNs (O'Neill 2009; Bouteligier 2010). In the 1980s the World Bank gave "direct assistance to cities, thus bypassing central governments" (De Ponte 2002: 209; cit. Bouteligier 2010: 9). An example of World Bank financed activity of a TCN is the 1991 Sustainable Cities Program, organised under the UNEP and UN-HABITAT auspices (Bouteligier 2010: 9).

After the initiative of The World Bank to invest in the role of local governments, other multilateral institutions followed the example of The World Bank to address cities as focal points for development. Social, economic or environmental activities, such as the Sustainable Cities, the WHO Healthy Cities program and the Man and Biosphere Program (UNESCO) were developed (Bouteligier 2010: 9). Many of these programs were funded by The World Bank. They stimulated partnerships of international institutions with the local level. Various international projects and institutions are working together over time and in many places at once. Because of this growth of activities the view of these international organisations tilted in a positive direction and “multilateral institutions started to value city networks” (UNDP 2000). Today we see that “multilateral institutions want to increase cities’ capacity to tackle global challenges” (Bouteligier 2010: 9).

According to Bouteligier, multilateral institutions nowadays, “have renewed their urban strategies” in which they stress “cities’ potential to contribute to the world’s development in a positive and sustainable way” (The World Bank 2009, UN-Habitat 2006, 2008, in Bouteligier 2010: 10). Leaders of International Organisations confirm the view of scholars in the area of TCNs. For instance, Odile Sallard, director of the OECD public governance and territorial development directorate, said the following about the cooperation of international bodies and networks of local governments at the 2nd Annual Meeting of the OECD Roundtable Strategy for Urban Development, held in Milan (Italy) in October 2008.

“Transnational networks of mayors and local officials, such as ICLEI, UCLG, and the C40, have provided venues for a rich exchange. Beyond debate, resolutions like the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement (2005), the UNEP Green Cities Declaration (2005), and the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (2007) all testify to the tremendous commitments being made. This co-operation has produced a rich exchange of information on energy efficiency, smart growth, recycling, and public transportation that can better tap CO₂ reduction potentials” (OECD 2008:27).

Political effects of TCNs for cities

Cities have become global actors through the activities of their TCNs which strengthen the ability of cities to exchange knowledge, information and examples of best practices (Bouteligier 2010: 10). Because of these internationally coordinated activities cities have become better able to address the consequences of climate change.

Furthermore, TCNs empower cities by the linkages they create and the cooperation they organise. The political sphere of influence of cities, the political levels where they can be active and where they can address their concerns about the consequences of climate change, have broadened (Bouteligier 2010: 10).

And lastly, TCNs provide cities access to the UNFCCC and to other actors at the COPs (Pattberg 2006: 589 op cit. Bouteligier 2010: 10). TCNs link with external actors, such as the UNFCCC secretariat and working groups, “tap[ping] into competencies and resources of others” (Utting 2000, op cit. Bouteligier 2010: 11), which strengthens cities in the political arena.

2.3 Defining influence

This thesis focuses on the question of how interests groups can influence the policy outcome of political negotiations. Therefore it is important to define what is meant with their influence in the context of this research. There are various definitions of influence and they cannot be separated from the concept of power.

In the last sixty years there has been no consensus in the literature about a definition of influence and this confusion. Already in 1955, March (1955) noted that there is no clear definition in the literature, as the concept of influence tend to depend on research purposes and conditions. In addition, there also has been little focus in the literature on defining influence in the context of NGOs.

For instance, in 2001 Betsill and Corell stated that surprisingly few scholars focused their research on the question of how to define the influence of NGOs. Furthermore, what is meant by influence of NGOs on a system in which states are the actors, and how their influence can be identified, accordingly, is open for further scrutiny (Betsill and Corell 2001:68). However, also Betsill & Corell failed to formulate a clear definition of influence, even though their article's aim is to provide a framework for the study of influence.

Moreover, influence is connected with power, and they're both hard to define and used as overlapping concepts (Hart, 1976).

For instance, Dür and De Bièvre (2007) use the words power and influence within one sentence without outlining the difference between them (Dür & De Bièvre 2007: 1). Dür and De Bièvre (2007) blame the complexity of the power and influence debate for the "demise of research on the influence of interest groups" because of the "difficulty to operationalise the concepts of 'influence' and 'power', to construct reliable indicators, and to measure these empirically, whether qualitatively or quantitatively" (Dür & De Bièvre 2007: 2). However, also Dür and De Bièvre (2007) connect power to influence, as according to them actors are powerful "if they manage to influence outcomes in a way that brings them closer to their ideal points" (Dür & De Bièvre 2007: 2).

This will therefore be the definition of influence used for the purpose of this thesis: influence is the ability of interest groups to alter policy outcomes in the direction desired.

2.4 Influence through insider status

One reason why TCNs might have influence results from their insider status.

Insiders do not have to put their energy in gaining access, they can jump directly to “the exchange of policy-relevant information with public officials through formal or informal networks” (Beyers 2004: 213). So “access refers to interest groups’ direct expression of demands to decision-makers” (Dür 2008: 1221).

According to Beyers an insider strategy for interest groups is very useful for operational and technical information. Part of an insider strategy is to attend expert panels, advisory boards and so on. In these settings the technical details are discussed comprehensively. For TCNs this would be the place where they can bring their local issues to the table.

However, access doesn’t necessarily lead to influence. For instance, interest groups with opposing objectives may have access to the same degree, for instance a round table with ministers of policy advisers (Betsill and Corell 2001: 70).

According to Tallberg, et al. (2013) influencing international organisations just as in national politics, takes place through informal channels and does not depend much on social mobilisation. It is commonly accepted that influence at the domestic level is gained by exchanging knowledge with the decision makers; they are the ones who are demanding knowledge about their intended policies. The idea is that knowledge, which is of importance to make political choices, is exchanged in the same way as in a market place. Their argument stems from the rational choice theory, which assumes that individuals always make logical decisions that provide them with the greatest benefit or satisfaction for the lowest costs. The trade-off is not monetary but through influence (Tallberg et al. 2013: 10). TCNs are specialised in information concerning topics that affect their constituencies. Furthermore, according to Gupta (2014), many of the activities of NGOs are “unlikely to be very effective if NGOs have not already done their homework in the domestic context of the countries in which they are based” (Gupta 2014: 170).

Cities' staff can do this 'homework' for the TCNs during the year. This gives TCNs an advantage. City governments are public organisations, just like the national government. Therefore the public servants who are active within the network of TCNs have the same professional skills as national public officials. They both act and think like public servants. Also, they are part of the policy process within the nation states, when they are developing their policies for mitigation of Green House Gases and resilience against the consequences of Climate Change. Also, city staff can be part of a national delegates, their influence will increase accordingly.

Proposition: *Transnational City Networks have an insider position, therefore they are more influential than other Interest Groups at the COPs.*

2.5 Influence through resources

Another reason why TCNs might have influence results from the resources they possess. Resource-based explanations emphasize the material basis of organised interests. The resource-based approach focuses on the survival of interest groups. Therefore it focuses on the material foundation and continuity of interest groups, on their constituency and on their embeddedness in the political system (Gais and Walker 1991: 105–7). When deployed efficiently, resources can be used to gain and exploit access and maintain the support of their constituencies. This approach assumes that organisations that don't have access to policy makers, use the outsider strategy to raise their voices and transmit policy-relevant information of their special interest. Hence, if we take a look at the inside position of TCNs, there is no need to analyse how resources are used to gain access. Therefore resources such as financial means as an explanation for influence are discussed in this thesis.

Beyers states in 2004 that resource-based explanations are 'incomplete' as if interest groups are "as prisoners of their own capabilities and do[.] not account

for the institutional environment in which they operate” (Beyers 2004: 212 - 213). This institutional-approach based critique is tackled in paragraph 2.5, where the context of the UNFCCC is portrayed as a regime that demands expert knowledge, which in its turn also has an effect on the capabilities for interest groups to have influence as well.

Finally, Baumgartner et al. (2009) claims that only having enough resources isn't a predictor for influence on the policy outcomes by itself, if you don't take other variables into account. On the other hand you cannot say that financial resources are unimportant for predicting influence on the policy outcomes (Baumgartner et al. 2009: 198–212, in Braun-Poppelaars 2010: 897). The reason for this is that a “complex causation is an important explanation for the limited impact of each individual predictor” (Baumgartner et al. 2009: 247–254, in Braun-Poppelaars 2010: 897)

Another important point to note is that TCNs are membership organisations, their members are cities or regional governments. Member cities appoint accountholders to manage the interaction with the network. They exchange knowledge about climate change and its effects and participate in projects initiated to mitigate the impact of climate change and to adapt to climate change. Cities have the capacity to commission staff and specialists to work on matters of climate change and environmental politics and other aspects of the Climate Change Regime in order to contribute to the team that attends the COPs. Therefore, TCNs are able to build large, multi-disciplinary teams. Hence, the following proposition can be formulated:

Proposition: Transnational City Networks have large resources in terms of staff during the COPs, therefore they are more influential than other Interest Groups at the COPs.

2.6 Influence through knowledge

Also the specific knowledge of TCNs may be seen as a way in which TCNs have influence. TCNs exploit the information asymmetry between themselves and the UNFCCC. Derived from exchange theories it can be assumed that “the exchange is reciprocal and both sides receive benefits from the interaction” (Bouwen 2002: 368, op cit. Tallberg et al. 2013: 11). Tallberg et al. use the term Transnational Actors (TNAs), a concept that in this thesis is applied to TCNs because TCNs automatically are TNAs, whereas a TNA isn't automatically a TCN.

There are three arguments to support the assumption that the ‘generic logic of information-access exchange’ is applicable to TCNs' interactions with the UNFCCC.

First, the UNFCCC is very dependent on information. It has a relatively small staff, so they depend on external information. This means that they depend on state and non-state information providers (Tallberg et al. 2013: 13). Secondly, the larger TCNs are specialized in providing information to international organisations, such as the UNFCCC, which they do freely. Of particular interest to the UNFCCC could be the fact that TCNs can detect non-compliance to the regime, because they act on the ground, in the cities and towns across the globe. At the same time, they serve as representatives of the cities, towns and local communities, so they can voice the issues that are important at the local level.

And finally, there are empirical indications that point towards TCNs and international organisations exchanging information for access and towards the likelihood that the number of TNAs that had access, increased a lot in the past few years. For environmental international regimes it is business as usual to invite private actors. A study of delegates pointed out that “TNAs are most frequently enlisted as ‘helpers,’ contributing to the implementation of treaties largely through their expertise” (Green 2010: 172, in Tallberg et al. 2013: 14). Therefore it is concluded that both sides benefit from the exchange of information (Bouteligier 2012: 12).

TCNs initiate and support activities in cities all over the world regarding climate change. Therefore they can collect contemporary information about the costs and the benefits of resilience programs. They also know to a certain extent, what initiatives are needed on infrastructural projects in cities all over the world to mitigate the emission of greenhouse gases. Their knowledge is about the effects of policy outcomes of the COPs for local governments. This information is precious for a regime that is on the outlook for new ways to combat climate change. Accordingly, TCNs possess data the regime needs in order to strengthen the qualities of the rules and regulations the regime is aiming for. Hence, the following proposition can be formulated:

Proposition: The knowledge of TCNs is wanted at the COPs; therefore they are more influential than other Interest Groups at the COPs.

2.7 Influence through coalition building

A fourth explanation of the influence of TCNs comes from their ability for coalition building. By joining a coalition, actors take a collective stance towards policy makers. According to Mahoney (2007) three aspects shape the choice whether to join a coalition or not. These three aspects are the institutional structure of the UNFCCC or any other institution, the nature of the issue and the characteristics of the interest group itself (Mahoney 2007). Coalition building or being part of a coalition has a wide variety; a light form is when information is shared occasionally, a strong joint means co-ordinated actions, maybe even a shared logo.

The question here is how coalitions contribute to the influence TCNs can have on the policy outcomes of COPs to the UNFCCC.

Coalitions are important for interest groups active in a policy process because first, these strengthen their information position in regards to policy debates and (potential) proposals, and to receive the knowledge, ideas and opinion of other advocates. This can be achieved just by networking. Secondly, it shows that if there is a broader support for a certain policy position, and for policy makers this could be a signal that differences between interest groups have been sorted out. And finally, coalitions save more resources than when acting on their own (Mahoney 2007: 369). In the literature on coalitions of interest groups ad-hoc coalitions are mentioned as a single discrete issue fight, which is assumed to be more informal than formal (Pijnenburg 1998). Pijnenburg also found that the inside status and insider position of some of the coalition members is a strong incentive for advocates to join a coalition.

According to Hojnacki (1997) joining a coalition is a matter of a cost- benefit analysis. Holyoke discovered that joining a coalition is a bargaining process itself (Holyoke 2004).

Smog and pollution in cities lead to organised activism, demanding clean air and a healthy environment. It is expected that local governments are, in contrast to nation-states, more open to the voices of the people. Also, because of the economic competition between global cities, many cities invest in product development and innovation in sectors such as mobility, transportation and energy production. In many cities civil society and local governments work together on innovation and sustainability. As a result of these dynamics between local government, business and civil society, cities have a good relation with the civil society and small businesses in these sectors.

So not only do TCNs have an advanced position as insiders of the political system, they also have the capacity to make broad coalitions with both urban civil society and with businesses in the field of sustainability. These coalitions can be translated into coalitions at the COPs to the UNFCCC. Hence the following proposition can be formulated:

Proposition: *TCNs form broad coalitions during the COPs; therefore they are more influential than other Interest Groups at the COPs.*

Summary

This chapter first discussed various definitions of influence, and the following definition was chosen in the context of this research: influence is the ability of interest groups to alter policy outcomes in the direction desired. Moreover, various explanations were found why in theory it seems that TCNs would be better able to influence climate change negotiations at the UNFCCC's COPs than other IGs: 1) TCNs enjoy an insider status and therefore have better access to the negotiators; 2) TCNs have great resources at their disposal in terms of staff; 3) TCNs, especially the larger ones, are specialized in providing information to international organisations; and 4) TCNs have the capacity to make broad coalitions with both civil society and businesses in the field of sustainability.

The question is now whether empirical evidence can be found supporting these propositions. This will be examined in the empirical part of this thesis. However, first in the next chapter the research design of the empirical research will be described.

3 Research design and research method

This chapter will outline the research design used to measure influence, the method used for collection of data, the research population and the policy issue selected as test case and the limitations of this research.

The methods that have been applied in this research are based on the Matrix-method as a tool for the analysis of qualitative research data in the business domain (Groenland 2014), supported by the methods of Baarda, De Goede & Teunissen (2005) and Baarda, De Goede & Van der Meer-Middelburg (2007) for carrying out qualitative research and doing interviews.

3.1 How can the study of influence of lobby groups be approached?

It is generally accepted by the academic community that there are three research approaches for measuring influence of interest groups. The first is that of Process-tracing, the second is that of attributed influence and the third is that of analysing goal attainment.

Process-tracing

This method is focused on finding a casual mechanism between the activities of a TNA and the policy outcomes. To make a case for causality stronger, the process should be analysed to see if there weren't other actors striving for the same goals who were able to bring it in. In short, the policy preferences of actors and the policy output will be compared; thereby winners and losers (Baumgartner et al. 2009, in Tallberg et al. 2013: 16) will be identified.

The impact of specific lobbying strategies is analysed by the effect that the transmission of information had on policy outcomes (Dür 2008: 1213). This is carried out by scrutiny of all evidence and by making a chain linking the information-transmitted by TNAs and its use or non-use of that information by

the actors to whom the information was transmitted. Furthermore, the effect, or non-effect, of the transmitted information is taken into account too (Betsill and Corell 2001: 71-72).

Betsill and Corell (2001) are strong advocates of this research approach. This because this approach strengthens the understanding of the circumstances under which TNAs can have influence. The researcher then needs to analyse the process in which information is transmitted intentionally, and aims to alter an actor's action (or agreement). The response of decision-makers to that information and the potential alteration of their behaviour (or text of an agreement) and outcome, accordingly are taken into account (Betsill & Corell 2001: 77).

Dür (2008: 1223), on the other hand, sees two issues concerning this research method. Firstly, how to measure the degree in which to reflect one's influence, while there is no focal point to reflect on? Secondly, the data intensity of this type of research is large and would be problematic. Only a few case studies will fit, which makes generalisations across cases and policy issues more problematic.

Perceived influence

Measuring perceived influence by conducting interviews with public affairs officers is the oldest method to measure influence. "Today goal attainment and the use of big data is more popular. Recent literature shows that. It can be seen as a generation thing, every method has it pro's and con's" (Timmermans 2014). It is conducted simply "by asking groups to assess their own and/or other groups' influence, or by inviting experts to gauge the influence of different groups" (Dür 2008: 1224). In this thesis groups will mean individual advocates of interest groups. What is measured is the perception of influence, not influence "as such" (idem). This method is no longer common.

Attributed influence is introduced by March (1955). First, March praises this method because its "simplicity" in the standpoint of the researcher. For the respondent it will be more difficult, this can be resolved by using relatively broad scores. Secondly, as researcher you can tap into the feeling and observations, by

asking about their perceptions, of the lobbyists. They have seen patters in behaviour, and know better who is really influential and who is capable in making just noise (March 1955: 445).

There is also critique on this method. “The results attained from such studies, though, have to be treated very cautiously because interest groups may have good reasons to either over-estimate it – if they want to legitimate their existence vis-a`-vis their members – or under- estimate it – to avoid the creation of counter-lobbies that may affect their policy impact. This problem can only be resolved if results are crosschecked with the assessments made by other groups and public actors” (Dür 2008: 1224). “The method of attributed influence draws on self-assessments, other-assessments, or expert assessments, usually through surveys” (March 1955, in Tallberg et al. 2013: 16).

Goal attainment

According to Keck and Sikkink (1998: 25) it is relevant to examine *goal attainment at different levels* to see what the influence was of TNAs. By comparing the political outcomes with the objectives of TNAs, this could lead to evidence of influence. Evidence such as the inclusion of a specific text in the agreement, will be stronger than just looking at resources or access. But even then, it is important not to confuse correlation with causation. When texts of TNAs end up in the final draft, it doesn't automatically say it is because of their effort. The text could also come from other actors with similar goals.

Another way to study goal attainment is analysing the impact of specific lobbying strategies by analysing the effect of information transmission on these policy outcomes (Dür 2008: 1213).

Technically the researchers then will assess the distance between actors' preferences and policy outcomes. Evidence for influence can then be established by finding that an actor's goals are close to the policy outcomes (Mahoney 2007, Dür 2008: 1224).

A more profound way to study goal attainment is applied if a realistic perspective on international politics is taken into account. The preferences of the public actors – which in the case of the COPs to the UNFCCC, are the delegates of the countries who have formal decision power– is then the core of analysis to predict an outcome. The influence of interest groups is in this way found by comparing the initially expected outcome and the observed outcome. The distance between the outcome and the move towards ideal points of an actor shows how great this actor's power was at the negotiations (Dür 2008: 1224-1225).

As the approaches of measuring influence by process-tracing and measuring influence by goal-attainment are not achievable within the scope of a research like this thesis, the approach of measuring influence by perceived influence will be used for the research at hand.

3.2 Data collection

This thesis has an explorative research approach, as TCNs are a relatively new actor in international climate change negotiations and very little data exists yet on the matter of their influence. Qualitative research was chosen for this thesis in order to enhance existing theory on the topic at hand by connecting the theory to insights gained in practice by members of the research population. The aim of the empirical part of this study is to verify whether the variables of influence stated in the theoretical framework of chapter 2 are indeed key in defining the influence of TCNs on the policy outcomes of the climate change negotiations of the UNFCCC. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the instrument to collect the data that will be used to verify the propositions that were proposed from the theoretical framework, because they provide rich data about the context studied.

On the basis of the literature studied and the propositions proposed, as depicted in chapter 2, a list of topics was drafted. The interviews were semi-structured,

for which the checklist of topics served to provide the interviewer with a clear set of topics in order to attain reliable and comparable sets of data from the multiple interviews, but also giving plenty of space to change question formulations and to stray from the topics when this was deemed necessary (Baarda, De Goede & Teunissen 2005).

The topics from the checklist were: the nature of the respondents activities at the COPs; his or her views on success and their definition of influence; their general appraisal of the four variables as drivers of influence (in regard to their own organisations activities and in regard to that of successful other interest groups); his or her views on the influence of TCNs; and their appraisal of the four variables as drivers of influence of TCNs (in general and in regard to the negotiations on the Green Climate Fund). The variables of the propositions weren't mentioned in the questions, to prevent steering the answers in the direction of this thesis. During the conversation the variables were mentioned, to see if the respondents recognised them and would say something about these variables in regard to the influencing process of themselves and that of other interest groups.

The interviews were held face to face or, when the respondent was not based in the Netherlands, via Skype. All interviews were tape-recorded so that the researcher could fully focus on conducting the interview and the interview could be transcribed afterwards. The interviews were analysed by labelling the transcriptions per topic from the checklist and comparing the results from the various respondents.

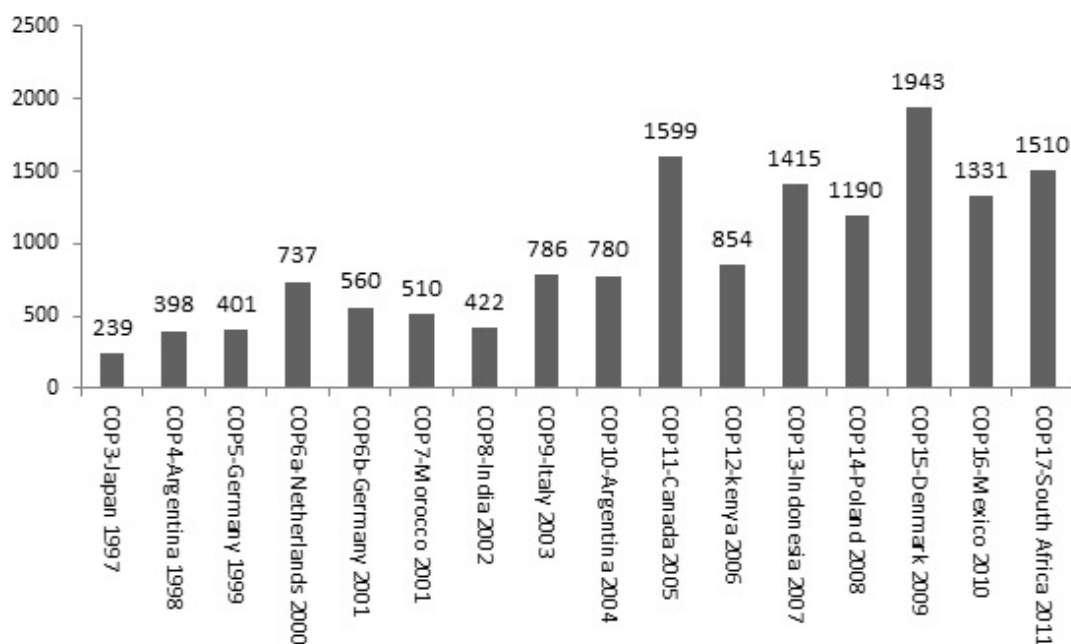
3.3 Research population

The research population for this study consists of all interest groups lobbying at the COPs to the UNFCCC. Not only TCN representatives, are a variable, but so is the group 'other interest groups'.

Recent studies of Hanegraaff (2015) pointed out that the COPs are visited by 6,665 unique visiting NGOs. Also, between COP10 and COP11 there is a cut in the amount of unique NGOs attaining the COPs to the UNFCCC. The average amount of unique visiting NGOs at each COP, between 1997 and 2004, was 537. Between 2005 and 2011 this number, on average, was 1406 unique NGOs visiting the COPs. It can be concluded that the average amount of attaining NGOs almost tripled since 2005, see also Figure I.

Figure I

Number of interest groups by conference between 1997-2011



Source: Hanegraaff 2014

For the purpose of this research a selection from Hanegraaffs database was taken based on the criteria 'Associations of Public Authorities', the size of this sample is 88 NGOs. These NGOs have their offices all around the globe. Not all of them have websites; of the ones who do have one, not all have appropriate contact details on it. The list shows that the ICLEI is very active on the COP to the UNFCCC, visiting the COPs with ten different ICLEI offices from around the globe. So the ICLEI needed to be in this research. Taken all in all, it was hard to get any warm

contacts out of this approach. Consequently the search for respondents needed to change. The researcher chose a network-based approach, communicating the same values as lobbyists apply in their daily practice: personal contact, reliability and confidentiality. Through trusted and willing connections a list of respondents who could be contacted was built.

New criteria were set and communicated with the network of the researcher about the call for an interview with Climate Change lobbyists.

For the representatives of interest groups, the size, the connection with the Climate Change Regime, and recent activities at the COPs to the UNFCCC, were set as criteria.

For TCNs the choice fell on the ICLEI. Furthermore, the big TCNs were selected: C40, UCLG and CEMR. The ICLEI has a long history with the Climate Change Regime and is organised and active on all continents and the ICLEI has a co-ordinating role as constituency at the COPs. C40 is now leading a network of mayors (C40 Cities: 2011) and has become a well-known TCN while the UCLG and their European counterpart, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) fitted the criteria as well. The search for respondents led to one respondent.

Characterization	Type of organisation and function	COPs visited
Policy advisor.	TCN, Policy advisor for Institutional & Statutory Affairs.	COP 19 (Warsaw, 2013) as well as the annual Bonn Talks (June 2014).

For the group with 'other interest groups' lobbyists of non-TCN, NGOs and BINGOs lobbyists were targeted. The search for respondents led to two respondents.

Characterization	Type of organisation and function	COPs visited
BINGO president.	BINGO, former president of a global interest group who is the solely representing agent for an industry and lobbyist at the COPs.	COP 15 in Copenhagen. COP 16 in Cancún. The following Bonn Talk. COP 17 in Durban.
NGO lobbyist.	NGO, former lobbyist for a small NGO in the Netherlands.	COP 15.

Thirdly, there is the idea that delegate leaders of the parties, scientists and politicians have an overview of the processes at the COPs. They are able to see who is able to influence the policy outcomes and who is not, and why. Moreover, they can say something about the influence of TCNs compared to the influence of other interest groups. The search for respondents led to four respondents.

Characterization	Type of organisation and function	COPs visited
EU head negotiator.	Headed the delegation between 2007–2013 for an Annex I country. Also, in that period of time he was lent for three years to the EU, as EU head negotiator at the UN Climate Negotiations.	Visited all COPs in that timespan , 2007-2013, COP 13 to COP 19.
Member of European Parliament (MEP).	European Parliament, Former member European Parliament (1999 - 2004) for the	RIO 1992, COP 1, COP 5 to COP 10.

	Green Party, headed the negotiations for the EP and has been observer at the COPs.	
Non-Annex I country delegate leader.	Delegate leader and focal point of a Non-Annex I developing country.	Leading negotiator for a Non-Annex I country and vocal point at the conference.

3.4 Test case: the Green Climate Fund

Because the characteristics of a specific policy issue are determinative for the influence of IGs, for this research the policy issue needs to be a constant variable. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was selected as test case, because several of the main political issues that are being debated in regard to the GCF touch on matters of local significance. It is therefore expected that these are policy issues that TCNs are trying to influence (Dür 2008; Baumgartner et al. 2009).

The GFC was proposed at the Copenhagen climate summit in 2009 and was established in 2010 at the climate summit in Cancun, Mexico. The fund is the main financial mechanism under the UNFCCC to help developing countries implement climate policies, projects and programs. Contributions to the fund come from developed country parties; however, financial inputs from a variety of other sources, public and private, including alternative sources, are also invited (UNFCCC 2011a; UNFCCC 2014).

The GFC is governed by the GCF Board and came into effect in January 2015 for its three year ‘initial resource mobilisation period’. At the time of the COP20 in Lima, Peru, December 2014, USD 10.2 billion had been mobilised, but resource mobilisation efforts will be ongoing throughout the initial period (UNFCCC 2011;

UNFCCC 2014). An annual target of USD 100 billion by the year 2020 was pledged by the developed nations (Kerkhoff et al. 2011: 18-19).

At the moment there are three major political issues concerning the GCF in which stakeholders have different objectives. The first two issues involve defining the fund's operating rules:

- how it will find long-term sources of climate finance; and
- how it will allocate money efficiently and effectively to areas in need.

The third issue is the transfer of technology, in which intellectual property rights are a particular matter of contention and polarisation. I will explain these different aspects a bit further in the next paragraph.

Long-term sources of climate finance

It is widely acknowledged that, in order to be able to mobilise adequate and predictable climate finance, a range of sources are necessary. Besides public finance, potential sources are, among others, private capital, development bank instruments, commitment funds and carbon markets. However, there is little consensus among the parties to the COP about the balance between public finance and other sources. Disaccord exists in particular between developed and developing countries (Lattanzio 2013: 8-9).

The results from an online questionnaire survey, conducted between 9 January and 4 February 2013 and open to all those interested in international negotiations on climate change, are characteristic. Asked the question 'Which option on financial mechanisms would your country most likely favour?', most of the respondents from Annex-I countries favoured an institution with a financial mechanism that is financed by diverse sources, including private capital. A quarter of the respondents from non-Annex-I countries, on the other hand, indicated that funding should come exclusively from public resources from developed countries (Kameyama et al. 2013: 18-19).

According to Janet Redman, director of the Climate Policy Program at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington DC, "Many members of the board from

developed countries have said they don't want to talk about potential sources for the public money, and have focused instead on how to leverage private capital" (Biron 2013). Donner et al. (2011) argue that the exclusion of other sources than public finance will be detrimental to the enthusiasm of developed countries, as well as to the rate at which the GCF will develop and expand.

Developing countries that are party to the COP, on the other hand, argue that financial contributions should be primarily in the form of grants. Private capital cannot be a substitute for direct public support, because, as the Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) advised the GCF Board, "the GCF should not aim to be an 'AAA - rated' financial institution but rather a risk - bearing institution" (PSAG 2014, general point 4). Though the Board should not take unnecessary risks, they need to be prepared to support projects with a higher risk of failure in order to achieve the climate goals. Furthermore, many areas in need of funding for adaptation purposes will not turn a profit. Thus it is argued that foreign investment, usually looking to extract profit, is in general not a suitable source of finance (Biron 2013).

In addition, Stadelmann et al. (2011) note that according to all major climate agreements, climate finance for developing countries will have to be 'new and additional'. Developing countries therefore argue that, to the extent that concessional finance is provided, only the concessional element should be counted as 'new and additional'.

Allocation of resources to areas in need

Resources from an international fund like the GCF can be allocated and implemented at three main institutional levels: international, national and local/project-based. When project implementation is undertaken by domestic institutions rather than by an international body, they can be allowed either direct access or enhanced direct access. Direct access means that a national or sub-national government receives international climate funds and disburses them to projects that were selected on an international level, whereas enhanced

direct access means that funding decisions and management take place at the national level (AfDB 2012: 2).

At the third meeting of the GCF Board in Berlin in March 2013, some Board members from developing countries stressed that for the GCF, direct access to the resources would have to be one of the key structures for country ownership. Board members from developed countries contended that direct access is important, but is only one of several ways to access funding, leaving open also a larger role for international agencies (Berliner et al. 2013).

It is argued that direct access approaches may carry risks, because procedures and processes to ensure that money is used for the correct purposes and in an effectual manner may not always have been in place and may not yet have demonstrated that they function properly over a longer period of time (AfDB 2012: 3).

It is also argued, however, that global financing that is restricted to national government bodies “may fail to engage the energy, skills, and operational effectiveness of non-government and subnational actors” (Kerkhoff et al. 2011: 20). Moreover, it has been shown that, for example in India, international donor funds for climate change that have been channelled to the local level had been restricted or allocated to individual issue areas while they were going through the different institutional levels. They could therefore no longer be used for the multi-sectorial approaches which would have been necessary to effectively address “crosscutting issues” such as adaptation at the local level (Marston 2013: 10).

In favour of direct access the example of the Adaption Fund has been given on multiple accounts. In order to overcome high transaction costs for direct engagement with small-scale local agencies by a large global-scale fund, the Adaptation Fund created national implementing entities (NIEs), national-scale institutions approved by the Fund’s board, to be entrusted with the implementation of sub-national projects. In this way it increased the speed of

allocation of funds to where they were needed, and improved the targeting of resources to local priorities (Kerkhoff et al. 2011; AfDB 2012; Marston 2013).

Technology transfer and intellectual property rights

Central to the efforts to manage climate change will be the availability, cost and performance of technologies that can help mitigate CO₂ emissions and adapt to climate change. Technology transfer has therefore been “one of the main pillars of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since its inception” (Latif 2015: 103). At COP 16 in Cancun the Technology Mechanism was established as a means to facilitate enhanced action on technology development and transfer and for the adaptation and deployment of technologies to meet local needs and circumstances (Veen & Osseweijer 2014).

The insurance of countries party to the UNFCCC for adequate resources for technology development and transfer has linked the Technology Mechanism to the GCF (CP.17, annex to draft decision, paragraph 38), as the resources from the GCF will have to be a primary funding source for climate change technologies for the developing world in order to live up to this assurance (Veen & Osseweijer 2014). Furthermore, it has been noted that the GCF presents a great opportunity for further development of technologies “that do not currently fund themselves” but may be of critical importance for climate adaptation in the future (Chuffart-Finsterwald 2014: 255).

However, while the Copenhagen Accord specified that the to be newly established Green Climate Fund was to “support projects, programme, policies and other activities in developing countries related to mitigation including REDD-plus, adaptation, capacity building, technology development and transfer,” (UNFCCC 2009: 3, item 10), the Cancun negotiating text no longer showed any such references to technology in relation to the GCF (UNFCCC 2010). A particularly contentious and polarising issue in the negotiations concerning development and transfer of climate change technologies has been the role of intellectual property rights (IPRs); an issue that has hindered progress significantly (Latif 2013; Veen 2012).

Intellectual property rights foster technological innovation by creating incentives for developers, but at the same time they create barriers for universal dissemination and transfer of technology (Latif et al. 2011). During negotiations on the matter of technology transfer, developing countries have put forward proposals to eliminate patentability, to enable compulsory licensing and even to revoke existing IPRs on clean technologies, but, maintaining that intellectual property rights are essential for technological developments, developed countries have not been willing to negotiate the weakening of IPRs in any way (Veen 2012).

Potential solutions that have been raised include creating patent pools, developing public-private partnerships, and licenses on technology as an alternative type of funding for the GCF (Veen 2012; Latif 2015). But several issues will still have to be settled. For example, the monetary appraisal of the donation and whether private donations could be counted as a donation of the member state where the private company resides. And also, who will be at the receiving end: national governments, or maybe cities, municipalities or even local initiatives?

3.5 Limitations Case

Because of the explorative qualitative character of the research, the results are isolated and only applicable in the context of the COPs. They cannot therefore be generalized. However, the results could be followed up by additional researches in various other contexts.

Furthermore, because of the limited amount of time available and because of the difficulty of finding respondents that could find the time or were willing to be interviewed for this research, a limited amount of respondents was interviewed. This could reduce the reliability of the research. Reliability of the research can

also be reduced by the possibility of participant bias, because of the qualitative character of the research: participants could have interpreted the interview questions differently, or could have answered in ways that were socially desirable or in their own interest. The respondents that did partake, however, were all from different organizations and different types of countries party to the COP, so any particular bias by the respondents can in part be filtered out from the results.

Because there exists no clear-cut definition of influence in the literature, a definition of influence had to be chosen. The chosen definition could not be validated, which in turn can affect the validity of this research. Additionally, other possible explanations of influence of TCNs on the policy outcomes of the international climate change negotiations were disregarded.

4 Results

In this chapter the results of the interviews will be presented. The results have been subdivided into five topics, four of which pertain to the propositions that were established in chapter 2. The respective topics are as follows:

- Insider status as a driver of influence
- Interest groups resources as a driver of influence
- Knowledge as a driver of influence
- Coalitions as a driver of influence
- TCNs influence at the COPs and in regard to the GCF

4.1 Insider status as a driver of influence at the COPs to the UNFCCC

In the interviews respondents were asked about the different drivers of influence at the COPs. Insider status was one of the four drivers discussed in the interviews. This paragraph will first explain the views and insights the different respondents had, first about the concept and their experience with this aspect in general; later questions were asked about their perception of the influence other interest groups have, including TCNs, on the influence of TCNs on the Green Climate Fund. This paragraph is concluded with some remarks and general statements that can be made on insider status as a driver of influence at the COPs.

Detailed discussion of influence through insider status

The MEP says that the Climate Action Network (CAN) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) are influential because of their insider position. They can quickly acquire information and can act fast by giving feedback to the negotiators.

Because of this position during the negotiations, these organisations are more influential than other interest groups who don't have this position. He also states that non-insiders can have influence on ministers because they try to work on the conscience of politicians. "That should have some effect" he says. Here, the

MEP says voice can contribute to the influence NGOs have, but he agrees with the theoretical assumption that the insider position is a much stronger explanatory determinant for influence. This is in line with Tallberg's (2013) finding that inside lobbying is more effective than voice.

The NGO lobbyist says that the fact that she accompanied the Dutch delegation gave her legitimacy within the COP. Because she had access to the Dutch negotiators, she was interesting to talk with for other lobbyists who sought attention from the Dutch negotiators.

The policy adviser for a TCN thinks that it is not clear that an insider status means that one will have more influence on policy outcomes. Of course, he says "you are close to the negotiators who take the final decision, but it is still not the NGOs who are the decision makers." This opinion is in line with the theories about the insider status as described by Betsill and Corell (2001) that say that access doesn't necessarily lead to influence.

The BINGO president introduced a new sector to the Climate Change Regime, Solid Waste recycling. Within a few years this agenda point went from 'not on the agenda', to 'a visible sector' that should help to reduce the emission of GHGs. His strategy was focused on getting into contact with the Dutch delegates, get connected and find support for his contribution to the Climate Change Regime. During the COPs he rented a room in the same hotel as the Dutch delegates, and made professional connections during breakfast. But he stresses that he gained access and trust because of his good position paper, and because his contribution the sector he represented could contribute to the mitigation of CO2 emissions. In the end, his organisation managed to get some sort of informal insider status, with the remark that the real insiders are the countries. This is in line with Tallberg et al. (2013) findings that information exchange through informal channels is more influential than other means for transmitting information. The EU head negotiator confirmed the story about the agenda setting and the influence on the policy outcomes concerning recycling and solid waste sector to the UNFCCC, as told by the BINGO president.

The Non-Annex I country delegate leader says that visibility, being present at the many events, improves the possibilities to have influence on the policy outcomes. Just being an official party of the treaty is not enough. “We were able to have influence on the REDD+ treaty because we focused on this issue; we were actively visible, delivered position papers and debated in the rainforest nations’ coalition.” Therefore, he continues “we are, concerning this issue, an insider and have been able to exercise reasonable influence.”

The EU head negotiator says that it is reasonable to say that the country he represents has an insider status. “But this position is derived from the fact that we are part of the European Union, and that his country has always made a solid contribution to the climate change agenda.” More about this aspect, which is about the coalition of which the country he represented is a part of, can be found in paragraphs 4.6 and 4.6.1. His country has always been present at the COPs and active at the COPs to the UNFCCC. The insider status was supported by the fact that his country has supplied two executive secretaries of the UNFCCC secretariat: “at key moments, for example in Argentina, Buenos Aires and at the time of the establishment of the Kyoto protocol, we supplied the president of the Council of the European Union.” So, he concludes that, “first there is trust by the people in the framework for our professionals, secondly, that we have had many key positions in the last ten years.” The EU head negotiator concludes that the presidency of the Council could bring more influence. On the other hand, the amount of influence nation states have on the policy outcomes varies. “There is an inner core of about 15 countries who deal with each other about the final agreement.”

The NGO lobbyist proposes that interest groups who are active during the year in the process before the COP, and therefore are more familiar with the system, and have more contacts, are more influential than interest groups who only come to one COP. It is important to know where you have to be, at the right platforms, you need to be active before a COP for about a year and a half ahead. Interest groups who do this have more influence than organisations that don’t. Insiders

do know this; the others don't and need to put energy in finding this out. In such a situation you aren't able to know where and with whom you need to exchange which information, which is an important characteristic of the insider, as Dür (2008) and Beyers (2004) have stated about the insider position, which makes it possible to have more influence than when you haven't got that position (Tallberg 2013). The NGO lobbyist is of the opinion that the influence that interest groups can have during the COP is about 5%; the other 95% is effected before the COP.

According to the NGO lobbyist Oxfam and Friends of the Earth are the most influential NGOs, because they have the most experience. The big and well-known NGOs who are present through the years and at all COPs have the connections with the delegates of the parties. For instance, in order to receive the drafts, as if these had been 'forgotten' at the copier. The big interest groups do have that position. In contrast with the MEP, the NGO lobbyist hasn't noticed the influence of the Climate Action Network, but this could be, the NGO lobbyist says because she works in another field. After a suggestion by the interviewer WWF can be added to the list of strong influencers.

The organisation that the policy advisor works for, lobbies together with their international umbrella organisation, at the COPs to the UNFCCC. Together they are active at the UNFCCC throughout the year, including the yearly Bonn talks, the preparatory meetings before the COPs. The umbrella organisation has a lobbyist in its team with a very good governmental position, "he is a member of the French Senate and he visits all COPs. He always shows efforts to influence the final drafts in the direction we desire, and he has very good connections with the French national government." So the policy advisor concludes that "these connections and positions have always helped with specific elements in the final decisions of negotiations."

The opinion of the BINGO president on the vocal activities of the environmental lobby, which are contrary to lobby activities of insiders, didn't impress him. He saw how they raised their voices "for non-realistic policy goals", outside the

building of the Copenhagen COP in 2009, He concluded for himself that that didn't work. He thinks that it is much more effective to be inside the process of negotiations, panel discussions, sharing information and so forth. So in his perspective, the insider has an advantage over the outsider.

The EU head negotiator explained how the process of influence at the COPs works, from his perspective as delegate leader. He simplifies the whole process of influence to a playing field that consists of four circles, every circle encircling another. "Of course the COPs are visited by many people, who even talk more, but that doesn't mean the process as such is complicated", he says. Every circle consists of a particular kind of visitor, and every lobbyist tries to find his or her way to the innermost circle. He says, "First there is an inner shell of negotiators who can approximately be reduced to about 50 males and females. The second shell consists of their colleagues; so the second shell still represents governments. These are people who are part of the delegations, but are not directly at the table where the texts are negotiated. The third layer consists of the observers in all shapes and flavors, the non-state actors. They can be an NGO or a private company, or a scientist. The fourth adjacent skin is one who is always there: the media. The rules and the dynamics of each layer are fairly uniform, so what interest groups need to do to have influence is to map the playing field in every skin, and analyze what comes in and out of every shell." For Non-Annex I countries there is another problem, often they have a shortage of resources. They are "are commonly on the outside of the second skin and rarely in the inner skin. But, because they are party to the treaty they have more possibilities to push certain buttons. Parties who are really on the outside of the second skin have a lack of resources to participate with enough people." It seems as if the EU head negotiator, is very modest about the influence observers can have. For instance, even the delegate members from the EU are "de facto observers", he says. "They don't participate in the negotiations." At the end of the COPs there are only 15 representatives in a small room negotiating about the final text. "In this room certain things that are advocated in the other skins are relevant or not. Interest groups, who know which things are relevant in that room, might find a way to

have influence on the policy outcomes. So it is important to get close to this room, or close to people who are close to this room.”

Conclusion about influence through insider status

All respondents agree that insiders can have more influence on the policy outcomes than interest groups who aren't insiders. But the respondents perceive the concept of insider status differently. To be precise, insiders are the negotiating parties, but within this group three respondents (the EU head negotiator, the Non-Annex I country delegate leader and the MEP) see that between the parties there are different levels of influence. According to EU head negotiator there is an inner core of perhaps 15 countries that takes the final decision. Non-Annex I countries aren't part of this inner group. Neither are the NGOs, but both groups try to influence the final negotiations that these 15 parties have. At this point an insider status gives an advantage to interest groups who do not have access to the inner core.

From the perspective of interest groups the insider status is when you are able to talk to the delegates and can do business with them. The closer an organisation gets to the inner core, the more influence is attributed to that interest group. Therefore the answer to the question how to conceptualise 'influence', the answer depends on the position that the interest group has within the Climate Change Regime.

Another conclusion we might draw is that an insider position is linked to the effort interest groups and countries put into the UNFCCC. This is connected with the variables that can explain interest group influence, discussed in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.6, which are resources, specific knowledge and coalitions.

After discussing the general ideas about influence with the respondents, in which the respondents shared their views based on their own experiences, the conversation was brought to the question of how this aspect functioned for other organisations including TCNs and how this was implemented during the negotiations about the Green Climate Fund. WWF and Climate Action Network

were mentioned when respondents were asked which interest groups have an inside position. TCNs weren't on their radar; respondents couldn't confirm them as NGOs with significant influence.

The policy advisor, who also advocates for that TCN at the COP, explains how they try to influence the regime by being present at all negotiations, and he noted the TCN he represents had close connections to governments. The other respondent couldn't say if the TCNs had an inner status. The EU head negotiator used his metaphor about the circles; explaining that TCNs are situated in shell number 3.

So it is concluded in this thesis that TCNs aren't visible for other lobbyists or for the two party representatives who were interviewed as insiders at the Climate Change Regime. This is also the case for TCN activity to the Green Climate Fund: the respondents perceived no insider status.

Insiders can have more influence on the policy outcomes than outsider interest groups. However, the respondents perceive the concept of insider status differently. Insiders are the parties, but within the group parties there is an inner core of perhaps 15 countries that takes the final decision. Non-Annex I countries aren't part of this inner group. Notwithstanding the NGOs, but both try to influence the final negotiations these 15 parties have. At this point an insider status gives an advantage to interest groups who do not have access to the inner core.

4.2 Interest groups resources as a driver of influence at the COPs to the UNFCCC

In the interviews respondents were asked about the different drivers of influence at the COPs. Interest group resources is the second of the four drivers discussed in the interviews. This paragraph will first explain the views and

insights of the respondents. First about the concept and their in experience with this aspect in general. Later questions were asked about their perception of the influence other interest groups have, including TCNs, and of the influence of TCNs on the Green Climate Fund. This paragraph concludes with some remarks and general statements on interest group resources as drivers of influence in the case of the COPs.

Detailed discussion of influence through interest groups resources

According to the MEP the WWF is influential “because of their expertise, their speed of operation during the negotiations and because they can form and run coalitions best. Taking a look at the advocacy teams of industrialised countries you also see they invest in large teams. To give an example: At the beginning of the COP China’s delegation consisted of only three men; now they come with 90 people. The United States of America also arrive with a large team. A negotiation day is 16 hours; they work with a rotation system. When one person stops, the other steps in.” He concludes his remarks on resources with the statement that “sufficient resources are needed to finance all these activities.”

The EU head negotiator says the same is true of the EU presence at the Bonn talks: “The negotiations are about more technical stuff.” In his opinion a large team of specialists is needed to talk to the many representatives. “The EU is strongly represented there, not with just 2 people.” He also says “resources or the lack of resources are very influential for your position within the UNFCCC.” To make things even more resource-extensive, he points to the fact that “the COP is just one moment in a year, a more visible event, but another important summit is the Bonn talks.”

The Annex I country the EU head negotiator represented has always been “well and intensively represented at the COPs to the UNFCCC.” As mentioned before, his country twice supplied an executive secretary of the UNFCCC. Furthermore, “they were president of the Council of the European Union at key moments, for example in Argentina, Buenos Aires and at the time of the establishment of the Kyoto protocol.” He concludes that, “first there is trust by the people in the

framework for our professionals, secondly, that we had, in the past ten years, many key positions and finally, that the professionals sent to have broader responsibilities than representing our country, at the UNFCCC delivered good work. Without the resources invested in these activities our country wouldn't be in this position." It is concluded in this thesis that the EU head negotiator thinks that resources are an important asset in order to have influence.

The NGO lobbyist says that influential NGOs "are active in many countries at the same time, with good references and many members. This together explains the influence some NGOs have. It is important to have enough resources, to become a respected organisation." So, the NGO lobbyist sees resources as an important factor to be influential.

The Non-Annex I country delegate leader sees resources as a strong predictor for influence. "Limited resources both in specialists and lobbyists are a problem for a developing country with limited financial resources and a small population. Especially when, at every COP the Annex I, CO2 emitting countries, come with new issues that need to be negotiated. The Annex I countries are in this way always ahead of us. In the meantime the US comes with a team bigger than a hundred people. We cannot keep up with that."

The EU head negotiator states that the fact that poorer Non-Annex I countries barely have a place in the inner core of influencers has a lot to do with their limited resources. "Resources are needed to develop the knowledge that is useful, put down on paper in the right and convincing way on only half a page, during the negotiations. For developing countries this is an, understandable, problem." He concludes by saying that "parties and interest groups who are influential have invested in the process, in time, in human capacity". Based on these statements it is concluded in this thesis, that countries and organisation that can produce these documents have an advantage over organisations that cannot.

The policy advisor points out that for the professional advocating NGOs their professionalism as a lobbying organisation gives them an advantage too. “It is not specifically their size that matters, but their dedication. There are resources needed to show this dedication, but the determination to do what for instance Greenpeace does, is also of importance.”

Conclusion about influence through interest groups resources

All respondents agree that resources are important to have influence on the policy outcomes. They also had the same kind of definition of what resources are: financial means and the staff needed to lobby and produce the adequate documents used to influence the regime.

The MEP focusses on resources used to have many lobbyists at as many occasions as possible, and to manage a coalition. Resources, used to have a great team are also mentioned by all other respondents. The EU head negotiator and the Non-Annex I country delegate leader agreed on the fact that the limitations in resources, both in professionals to produce the right knowledge and documentations as in the size of the lobby team, put the Non-Annex I countries in a weak position at the COPs.

Resources are, in sum, important to fund a big team, with experts, and with enough lobbyists and writers. To fund travels to many different occasions besides the COP, such as the Bonn talks and to steer a network.

Again, none of the respondents were triggered to name TCNs as organisations with lots of resources and therefore influential at the COPs. Because of their lack of knowledge about TCNs and their resources they couldn't say anything about the influence TCNs had on the Green Climate Fund.

4.3 Knowledge as a driver of influence at the COPs to the UNFCCC

In the interviews respondents were asked about the different drivers of influence at the COPs. Interest group knowledge is the third of the four drivers discussed in the interviews. This paragraph will first explain the views and insights the different respondents had, first about the concept and their experience with this aspect in general, later questions were asked about their perception of influence other interest groups have, including TCNs and on the influence of TCNs on the Green Climate Fund. This paragraph ends with some concluding remarks and general statements that can be made on interest group knowledge as a driver of influence at the COPs.

Detailed discussion about influence through the use of knowledge

The MEP thinks “about the expertise of the WWF and the CAN, they have all the necessary knowledge, and also of the texts at the negotiation table, which makes them very influential during the negotiation process. They also bring direct feedback, can talk with their friends and to public officials about their feedback. This combination makes them influential.”

The BINGO president thinks that the fact that they were the sole representative of the solid waste sector contributed to their success. They introduced unique knowledge to the COPs to the UNFCCC. Their information was the following: “As for the emission that was avoided and which otherwise would have been produced for the use of pulling resources out of the ground, which is a very emission-rich process, waste recycling could contribute to these emission cuts. We're talking here about 18 to 20% of the Kyoto targets for Europe. This message was unique; the contribution of the recycling sector could really be significant.” He said “the position paper of our organisation brought in new means to reduce CO₂ emissions. The sector was completely new for the Climate Change Regime. It claimed that the industry was only 5% of the issues, namely emissions from landfills, methane, so it's a bit of 3 to 5% of the CO₂ emissions issue. But if there were more recycling, that emission would decrease, but not only that.” The BINGO president concludes, as an answer to the question whether their knowledge helped to have influence on the policy outcomes: “The unique

knowledge we had must have helped strongly, in addition to the unique network we have got”.

The EU head negotiator states that “the organisations who come with relevant and useful information, without making noise, are the ones who can have the most valuable influence. Therefore interest groups, even the ones who really campaign and can be loud in public, who are influential, have their influence because of the relevant analysis and useful information and concrete suggestions, focused on the texts’, which is eventually the final product of the COPs. WWF is one of these examples”.

During the conversations with the respondents a question about the knowledge, and therefore possible influence TCNs have, most respondents couldn’t give an answer on how they see TCNs in this picture. When asked this question, the answer of the MEP was: “I think that NGOs have more useful knowledge for the delegate leaders of the parties than TCNs”. The NGO lobbyist said that she didn’t have an overview of the objectives and information of other interest groups, including TCNs. Therefore she couldn’t say anything about the influence of others. Concerning TCNs and the Green Climate Fund nothing was known by the respondents.

Conclusion about influence through the use of knowledge

All respondents agree that knowledge is important if you wish to have influence on the policy outcomes. They also shared the definition of what knowledge is, what kind of knowledge can provide influence and the respondents showed in their answers that there are different kind of aspects to knowledge at the different stages of the negotiation process at the COP. All respondents agree with Tallberg et al. (2013) that offering their knowledge in exchange for influence is the best way to influence the policy outcomes.

There is knowledge that helps the reduction of emissions of Green House Gases, there is knowledge about the negotiation process which at best is the knowledge

about what is at hand in the negotiation table at the inner core of treaty parties, and finally there is knowledge by which NGOs and other interest groups can respond as quickly as possible to the negotiation table, with as objective to have some influence on their decision making. The EU head negotiator calls this “relevant analysis and useful information and concrete suggestions”. The knowledge that is used during the negotiation process is partly collected by forming coalitions. Also, the BINGO president points out that the information could be effective because of the coalition that was formed to put their view forward. In the next paragraph the function of coalitions for influence is discussed.

Again, the response on questions about the influence of TCNs with the help of their specific knowledge was that this influence was very poor. Compared to that of NGOs, the MEP argued, that NGOs would have more useful knowledge than TCNs.

4.4 Coalitions as a driver of influence at the COPs to the UNFCCC

In the interviews respondents were asked about the different drivers of influence at the COPs. Interest group influence through coalitions is the fourth out of the four drivers discussed in the interviews. This paragraph will first explain the views and insights the different respondents had, first about the concept and their experience with this aspect in general, later questions were asked about their perception of influence other interest groups have, including TCNs and on the influence of TCNs on the Green Climate Fund. This paragraph is rounded off with some concluding remarks and general statements that can be made on interest group knowledge as a driver of influence at the COPs.

Detailed discussion about influence through coalitions

The MEP says that “through good mutual contact, NGOs who run a broad coalition, can track all information and this allows them to keep in touch with the

newest developments of the final texts. In some cases they are even ahead of the civil servants in the delegations. By having such a strong information position, they can steer their lobby activities better, and have impact on the final text.” Referring to the influence of the WWF, the MEP stipulates their capacity to steer a network during the negotiations. This is in line with the findings of Mahoney (2007) who supports the idea that coalition forming supports the information position of interest groups. This in its turn increases the possibilities to have influence on the policy outcomes.

The policy advisor says that their organisation forms coalitions with other civil society actors at the COP. They have also signed a pamphlet to show they’ve formed a coalition at a certain list of issues with other constituencies. He assumes that these activities make their message “much more powerful, but on the other hand, there is no proof that these coalitions improved the influence of the participants of the pamphlet.”

The Non-Annex I country delegate leader said that in order to have influence his country also joins coalitions. These coalitions prepare in alignment sessions. “So, if we want to have influence, we need to prepare ourselves for the alignment sessions in order to make them adopt our positions and points of view. As an individual country it is hard to have influence. In general one can say that by building coalitions you enhance the influence with the resources we have.” He thinks that it is much harder for an individual country to have influence. But, he also says: “keep in mind that we’re talking about economic interests at the COPs. We cannot change that; consequently, the influence you can have at the regime as such and focused on the reduction of CO₂ emission, is small.” The country he represents at the COPs is a Non-Annex I country with limited resources regarding Climate Change politics. Therefore it also saves money, as Hojnacki (1997) predicts as a reason for joining coalitions. Also, Holyoke (2004) notes that joining a coalition is a bargaining process which, is confirmed above.

The EU head negotiator supports the idea of the MEP about the influence some NGOs can have during the negotiations because of their good information

position. But how would that function in the final stage of the COP, when the 15 most important negotiators sit in one room? Therefore an outsider must have access to that room, and “know what texts and what issues are on the negotiation table”. Then they can understand what information is needed to get the negotiators’ attention and maybe even improve what the negotiators bring in. The actors who have this knowledge, can contribute with the most fitting and adequate information. These actors need coalitions to increase their information position.” And finally, “a coalition is proof for the negotiators that there is support by the wider community of interest groups. The 15 decision makers in that room need that, so there is another incentive for interest groups to form coalitions and to understand why coalitions are more influential than other interests.” He further notes that his country is a member of the EU, and that the EU is influential at the UNFCCC. On the other hand, his country is very active for the European environmental agenda, “therefore we have indirect influence, with what you might call *borrowed power* from the EU. The EU negotiates as one block, with 26 countries.” In this thesis, therefore, in this thesis, the EU is seen as a coalition at the COPs.

The NGO lobbyist sees the WWF as a strong influencer at the COPs to the UNFCCC because of their ability to build wide coalitions which include business interests with the World Business Council and so on.

The Non-Annex I country delegate leader had positive experiences with the effectiveness of the coalition of rainforest nations. About other coalitions, besides the well-known coalitions, he cannot say from experience if they are influential or not.

In the interview the EU head negotiator also gives advice on the matter of coalitions for interest groups. He said that lobbyists should start in their own state: “First and foremost an NGO should try to influence the delegates of the country the NGO is based in. It is effective if you’ve convinced them already before the COP is held. This is the case if an NGO has given some good ideas or solutions for particular problems, and also if the minister has a good relation

with an NGO and adopts one of their points and promises to put it in the instructions for the COP.”

The BINGO president built a coalition of supporting countries. Of course he will not give all the details about the influencing process, but what he did share is in line with the advice the EU head negotiator gave on this matter. Pretty early in the process he received support from the national delegation; they connected him through the year with business interest groups, who were also in favour of his ideas as written down in his position paper. Argentina also supported the position paper that the BINGO president brought to the COPs, and so he built a coalition of parties for support. His organisation also kept “investing in the consensus workshop, places where coalitions formulate their positions.” So it is concluded in this thesis that coalitions are important for interest groups in order to have influence on the policy outcomes.

None, except one of the respondents met TCNs in the coalitions they were participating in.

Conclusion about influence through coalitions

All respondents agree that coalitions can be stronger than single operating countries or interest groups. But the reason why parties or interest groups join coalitions may differ per case, interest group or country.

Interest groups can improve their information position of what is going on at the negotiation table and therefore have a better response to the negotiators’ demand for knowledge. It also shows there is broad support for certain decisions. Therefore the negotiators can be attracted to a certain idea or solution for an issue at hand. Saving resources is another reason to join coalitions. In addition, coalitions know better what demands and policy adjectives are potentially well accepted in the wider community.

In spite of these positive words on coalition it is also said that there is no causal mechanism for joining a coalition and having influence on the policy outcomes.

This is in line with other comments on this subject that coalitions could, and would enhance influence. There is no certainty, but good examples are shared during the interviews.

4.5 Views on the influence of TCNs in general and in regard to the Green Climate Fund

In the interviews respondents were asked about the different drivers of influence at the COPs. Then the respondents were asked what they had noticed of the influence of TCNs and which of the four drivers made what kind of contribution to the influence of TCNs. Also, concerning the Green Climate Fund, which could fund local initiatives if the rules will allow that in future and which was connected to the influence of TCNs, the question was asked what respondents had noticed of TCN activities on the issue of the Green Climate Fund. It is assumed in this thesis that TCNs would be advocating the Green Climate Fund strongly.

About the influence of TCNs

This paragraph will explain the views and insights the different respondents had on the influence of TCNs to the COPs that didn't fit in the structure of the four variables, but yet delivered valuable data on the influence TCNs have on the COPs and to the Green Climate Fund.

According to the MEP TCNs have barely any influence on the Climate Change Regime. "They don't have an agenda of their own to reduce CO2 emissions. What they do want is for municipalities to be mentioned in the agreements, because Climate Change also affects the cities. If their names are in the texts, that won't change anything about the problem." This view on influence brings in the notion that 'influence on policy outcomes' is in the eye of the beholder. If you consider 'texts of TCNs in a final draft' as influence, we may find their influence, but if we take the aim of the regime as such: coming to an agreement where nation states pledge to reduce their CO2 emission, "their influence is zero", according to the MEP.

The policy advisor says that there is a group of nation states that have pledged to support the local agenda, “we call them the ‘Friends of the Cities’¹. And you have France in there, you have Mexico, I think Brazil and Indonesia. So basically, if you want to try to get a specific message in the decisions, you can talk to them. So again basically, it’s national governments that can insert something in the final decisions. I mean local governments as such, NGOs as such have no power at all when it comes to the text of the final decisions. So you need to have a government, a national government that is tabling a specific proposal.” The MEP said he needed to talk a whole day at a COP about local governments because France had put this on the agenda, a country with notoriously weak local government, also advocating addressing the subnationals in the COP 21 in Paris in 2015. “I’ve seen it in draft texts. But it will be complicated, because China doesn’t have independent city governments and they want to keep it like that”, he says.

The BINGO president noticed that the ICLEI is influential, because they lobby with very precise textual objectives, more specific than his own agenda. “They knew on which page they wanted what changed, e.g. they are well informed.” The EU head negotiator has confirmed this. He has received a phone call from one of the ICLEI directors once in a while throughout the year. That’s the only TCN he had contact with as far as he can recall during the interview. “Their activities seem to be limited”. He further said that the Association of Municipalities in his country barely contacted him, while he was in office. Furthermore, he wants to stress that, first, before the years 2001-2013 cities weren’t visible in the Climate Change Regime and that second, cities and therefore TCNs have a relevant agenda concerning many aspects of Climate Change Regime. However, that doesn’t mean that they will have any influence because of that!” On the other hand he sees that their role and the recognition of their role in the solutions for Climate Change has increased in the last 10 years.

¹ Red. Pioneering members: France, Poland, Mexico, Indonesia, South Africa, Peru, kick off in June 2013 (ICLEI 2013).

The EU head negotiator thinks that TCNs should make agreements on mitigation with the cities on their own. It is really hard to have influence at the COPs. There aren't many actors who influence the negotiations, so why bother: "NGOs and observers have been relatively unsuccessful so far."

TCNs activities pertaining to Green Climate Fund

The EU head negotiator says that 80 per cent of the time spent up to now on the Green Climate Fund was about questions such as who puts how much money in the fund, and on how the funds would be distributed among regions. Debates about what kind of projects will be funded has just started. The Non-Annex I country delegate leader said that the Green Climate Fund doesn't have enough funding, and is therefore useless.

I haven't seen TCN activity on this subject, but I think they maybe haven't missed much. But I expect now they will become more active and will address their vision, that now being more relevant than two years earlier.

5 Discussion

In the previous chapter the results have been presented of the interviews with respondents that have been active at the COPs to the UNFCCC as a representative of an interest group, as a delegate leader for a country, or as a member of the European Parliament. In this chapter these results will be related to the theory that has been discussed in chapter 2 and the propositions that have been established based on the theory. Other significant findings from the interviews will also be discussed here.

5.1 Discussion about influence through insider status

All respondents agree that insiders can have more influence on the policy outcomes than interest groups who aren't insiders.

The respondents had two perspectives on the question: what makes an insider? First, a formal argument: NGOs, TCNs, BINGOs and all other observers and participants are no insiders at the COPs to the UNFCCC because they aren't treaty parties. Moreover, most of the parties aren't real insiders; at the end of the conference about fifteen of the economically most powerful parties to the COPs sit together and negotiate the final texts of the treaty. But the NGOs that are closest to this inner circle and can exchange information in that phase of the conference, get the most influence attributed to them. The second perspective is focused on the informal aspects of the negotiation process. From the perspective of interest groups the insider status is when you are able to talk to the delegates and can do business with them. Therefore the answer to the question how to conceptualise 'influence' depends on the position that that interest group has within the Climate Change Regime.

This is in line with the theory that expects that insiders don't have to put their energy into gaining access to policy makers because they already have that

access. They can therefore directly exchange knowledge for influence (Dür 2008). This direct contact with policy makers is very useful for operational and technical information (Beyers 2004). Interest groups with knowledge that is useful will have an advantage over interest groups that have more general demands in regards to the demand by the policy makers for their information (Tallberg 2013). Also, the insider is more influential than non-insiders who give voice by media attention, demonstrations and so forth (Tallberg et al. 2013).

The respondents couldn't indicate the position TCNs have in this regard. WWF and CAN were mentioned as influential by most respondents; the EU head negotiator was very disconfirming about influence of all NGOs. On the other hand, the respondent who works for a TCN explained that they have close contacts with a French government official, who successfully advocates the role of local governments. Another high level respondent confirms their efforts and influence concerning the agenda setting of the role of local governments in the Climate Change Regime.

There is evidence in this research that TCNs can influence the COPs through their connections from bottom up towards their national representatives at the COP, which is in line with the findings of Gupta (2014).

5.2 Discussion about influence through interest groups resources

According to all respondents, having sufficient resources is crucial for both countries and interest groups that want to exercise influence. They defined resources as financial means and staff that are needed to lobby and produce the adequate documents to influence the negotiators. The countries and NGOs with the largest teams at the COPs and also enough resources to be active throughout the year, e.g. during the Bonn talks, are the most influential. The team members lobby, produce documents and manage coalitions. Small NGOs and usually all Non-Annex I countries do not have sufficient resources to build a team like that

and to be present at all occasions the regime meets throughout the year. Presence of TCNs wasn't apparent for the respondents, therefore they also couldn't say what resources TCNs have for their activities, both for the COPs in general or for the Green Climate Fund in particular.

The resource-based approach is focused on getting attention of policy makers (Beyers 2004). Financial resources are used to pay for the costs involved in reaching this goal. The respondents share the opinion of scholars that resources are used for attracting attention of the policy makers (Beyers 2004: 212), of course with the purpose to influence the policy outcomes.

The critical note of Baumgartner et al. (2009, found in Braun-Poppelaars 2010) that having enough resources is in itself not a predictor for influence on the policy outcomes, cannot, according to the respondents, be applied to the practical reality of the COPs. According to them, the larger NGOs and countries with sufficient financial resources are indeed able to have more influence on the policy outcomes.

5.3 Discussion about influence through the use of knowledge

All respondents agree that knowledge is important for having influence on the policy outcomes. Interest groups who have the appropriate knowledge, that negotiators need, can have more influence than interest groups who cannot provide them with adequate information. The respondents also agree on the fact that interest groups who cannot provide the information needed have less influence. This is a problem for Non-Annex I countries.

Respondents also agree on the fact that knowledge is something that is used like a tool during the COPs and that the producers of the most useful knowledge, and with the skills to produce it fast when it is needed, are the most influential actors.

Therefore their perception of how influence is used by interest groups coincides with the Tallberg et al. (2013) findings that offering knowledge in exchange for influence is the best way to influence the policy outcomes. The respondents also showed that the UNFCCC has a demand for knowledge, which interest groups can provide. So both sides benefit from the exchange of information (Bouteligier 2012: 12).

The question formulated in proposition 3, whether TCNs, because of their local knowledge and knowledge about implementation, are more influential, could not be argued for or against by any of the respondents; they hadn't noticed anything relevant. One respondent, however, answered this question to the effect that the influential NGOs have more useful knowledge than TCNs.

5.4 Discussion about influence through coalitions

Coalitions are perceived as more influential than interest groups operating on their own, or than Non-Annex I countries. The most interesting aspect about coalitions, according to the respondents, was the information position during the most important negotiations at the end of the COPs.

Reasons to join a coalition may differ. Joining a coalition can improve the information position of negotiators and therefore enhance their negotiation position. It saves financial resources and it is proof for the core decision makers that there is a wider support for a certain decision. On the other hand, respondents agreed that joining a coalition doesn't provide a guarantee for influence. However, most respondents pointed to WWF coalition forms as good examples of successful coalitions. Only one of the respondents met with TCNs in the coalitions they were participating in. These findings are according the reasons of Mahoney (2007) for joining a coalition.

Besides the aspects stated above, given by the respondents, Mohaney (2007) also proposes that position-taking is a reason for joining a coalition. This is a sine qua non for the lobbyist interviewed. The horizontal position-taking between NGOs, that Mahoney (2007: 369) mentions, is not affirmed by any of the respondents. Financial reasons for interest groups and countries with fewer resources, are in line with the argument of Hojnacki (1997) that joining a coalition is a matter of a cost-benefit analysis.

5.5 Views on the influence of TCNs in general and in regard to the Green Climate Fund

In the interviews respondents were asked about the different drivers of influence at the COPs. Later in the interview the respondents were asked their opinion about the influence of TCNs, also related to the establishment of the Green Climate Fund. It was expected that the TCNs would be very active and therefore visible for the respondents on these issues. This expectation was not met, and the questions about the influence of TCNs at the COPs, about the Green Climate Fund and their opinions about TCNs performance on the four drivers for influence were poorly answered, because of lack of knowledge about their presence at the COPs. Most of the information shared did not fit in the structure of paragraphs 5.1 to 5.4; therefore the knowledge is discussed in this paragraph. This knowledge helps to formulate an answer to the research question of this thesis in chapter 6.

This paragraph will summarize the views and insights the respondents had on the influence of TCNs to the COPs that didn't fit in the structure of the four propositions, but yet delivered valuable data on the influence TCNs have on the COPs and on the Green Climate Fund.

- TCNs have no influence on the outcomes of the COPs from the perspective of the objectives that the COP is for: to set a treaty with CO2 emission reduction targets;
- TCNs do have influence at the COPs regarding texts in all kind of subsidiary agreements that addresses local governments as change agents for resilience, adaptation and mitigation;
- TCNs have this influence because nation-states agree to support these efforts, one example of a group of nation-states is the group 'Friends of Cities'²;
- It is odd that there are members in this group of 'Friends of Cities' who have weak local governance, like France;
- Also, another country with weak local governments is China, who are influential at the COPs and wouldn't want to see any change in their state apparatus; so support for TCNs proposals during the COPs in the future could be fragile;
- The ICLEI is the best known TCN among the respondents, yet only one respondent had actual, regular contact with a spokesperson of the ICLEI, with one other respondent having one short chat in the hall of one of the COPs to see if he had their support;
- One respondent noted that the importance of and attention for TCN increased in the past ten years;
- One respondent noted that cities are in fact important for combating Climate Change, but that that doesn't mean they will have any strong influence at the COPs to the INFCCC;
- Until now the negotiations for the Green Climate Fund weren't that relevant for TCNs, so they haven't missed much, according to one respondent;
- It is expected by the same respondent that this will change fast;
- And the respondent working for a Non-Annex I country said that the Green Climate Fund is poorly funded and will stay irrelevant because of that and because of the difficulty to participate in it.

² Red. Pioneering members: France, Poland, Mexico, Indonesia, South Africa, Peru, it is kicked of in June 2013 (ICLEI 2013).

6 Conclusion

This research set out to get an answer to the research question *“What is the perceived influence of interest groups for local governments on the outcomes of the negotiations compared to the perceived influence of other interest groups?”*

First the UNFCCC and TCNs were explained, then four variables that explain TCNs influence on the Climate Change Regime were selected and made measurable. Consequently the research approach of perceived influence was selected, after carefully examination of which methods there are to study influence. Six interviews were conducted with carefully selected and mostly high level representatives of interest groups and head negotiators and focal points for an Annex I and for a Non-Annex I country. This brought a wide perspective on the perceived influence of TCNs and other interest groups. Finally one test case was selected, the Green Climate Fund. The assumption was that this fund, which will be filled in future with a budget of a hundred billion US Dollars, is a case TCNs would put a lot of lobby efforts on the create access for local governments.

For the moment, this assumption turned out to be false. There weren't any activities of TCNs noted by the respondents, to the establishment of the Green Climate Fund. The EU head negotiator suggested that the case of the Green Climate Fund was selected to early. Until recent it was a case solely for the parties, he says. Which is odd, because if there is money to spend for projects in developing countries, TCNs who are active in developing countries, should strive for access for local governments.

Also, the insider position of TCNs is first of all a much more complicated thing than expected, and secondly, the insider position is a thing the member cities should work for. The respondents haven't seen much of that. So they are no insider according the respondents.

The knowledge TCNs posses about the local impact and possible solutions can be of importance to the negotiations, but again the respondents, except for one, did

not see the TCNs. The precision of the ICLEIs textual proposal was significant, therefore they could be influential, but no one could confirm this.

TCNs weren't as strong as the WWF and the CAN in building and running influential coalitions. The potential for strong coalitions with TCNs, as in this thesis suggested is great.

So it is concluded in this thesis that TCNs aren't visible for other lobbyists or for the two party representatives who were interviewed as insiders at the Climate Change Regime. This is also the case for TCN activity to the Green Climate Fund.

Recommendations for future research

- The potential of cities to influence their national COP strategy should be investigated to get a better understanding of the potential of TCNs to have influence.
- Goal attainment research should be conducted to check for a bias by the respondents.
- If there is a gap between the goal attainment by TCNs and the (low) visibility of TCNs by the respondents, it is further relevant to investigate why this is the case.

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