

Manipal Academy of Higher Education

Impressions@MAHE

University Departments

MAHE Student Work

Spring 5-1-2021

Role of Non-State Actors in Global Climate Governance: Prospects and Challenges

Kurnica Bhattacharjee

Follow this and additional works at: <https://impressions.manipal.edu/maheud>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES



KURNICA BHATTACHARJEE

Department of Geopolitics and International Relations

Manipal Academy of Higher Education

**Manipal
June 2021**

Manipal Academy of Higher Education

Department of Geopolitics and International Relations

**THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN
GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE:
PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Geopolitics and
International Relations in Partial Fulfilment for Master's Degree in
Geopolitics and International Relations**

Supervisor

DR. DHANASREE JAYARAM

By

KURNICA BHATTACHARJEE

June 2021



MANIPAL

ACADEMY of HIGHER EDUCATION

(Deemed to be University under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)

Date: 19.06.2021

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “**The Role of Non-State Actors in Global Climate Governance: Prospects and Challenges**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Geopolitics and International Relations of Manipal Academy of Higher Education is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

(Kurnica Bhattacharjee)

CERTIFICATE

I recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

(Dr. Nanda Kishor M S)

Associate Professor and Head

(Dr. Dhanasree Jayaram)

Supervisor

Department of Geopolitics and International Relations

Old TAPMI Building, Manipal - 576 104, Karnataka

dir. 91 820 2922398, 2922996 fax. 91 820 2570062 e-mail. nanda.kishor@manipal.edu, geopolitics.mu@manipal.edu www.manipal.edu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As I complete the dissertation, I want to take the courtesy of thanking everybody who has extended their full support till the very end. First and foremost, I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my guide and my mentor, Dr Dhanasree Jayaram, who has been giving her full support and inspiration. I thank Dr. Nanda Kishor, the Head of the Department, for his guidance and encouragement to pursue the course and the dissertation. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr Monish Tourangbam, Dr Ravindranathan, Dr Anand V and Dr Arvind Kumar. Throughout the completion of the course, they have given me knowledge and insights to be able to see through my course work and be ready for the life ahead.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	Australia Aluminium Council
ACE	Action for Climate Environment
ADP	Ad Hoc working group on the Durban Platform
AIGH	Australian Industry Greenhouse Network
ALBA	Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Out America
AOSIS	Alliance Of small Island States
BASIC	Brazil, South Africa, India and China
BCSE	Business Council for Sustainable Environment
BINGO	Business and Industry Non-Governmental Organizations
BP	Bharat Petroleum
CAN	Climate Action Network
CANSA	Climate Action Network South Asia
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBDR	Common But Differentiated Responsibilities
CBDR-RC	Common But Differentiated Responsibilities & Respective Capabilities
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CEEW	Council on Energy, Environment & Water
CFCs	Chlorofluorocarbons
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
CJN	Climate Justice Now
CMA	Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting to the Paris Agreement
COP	Conference of Parties
CSE	Centre for Science and Environment

CSM	Centre for Social Markets
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSSTEP	Centre for Study of Science, Technology & Policy
ECs	Epistemic Communities
EDF	Environmental Defence Fund
ENGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations
FWG	Facilitative Working Group
G77	Group of 77
GAFS	Group of African States
GCC	Global Climate Coalition
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHGs	Greenhouse Gases
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
IEA	International Energy Agency
IETA	International Emissions Trading Associations
IGOs	Intergovernmental Organizations
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
ILAC	Latin America and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPIECA	International Petroleum Industry Energy Conservation Association
IPOs	Indigenous Peoples Organizations

IPPU	Industrial Process and Product Use
IRAD	Integrated Research and Action for Development
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
ISA	International Solar Alliance
JUSCANZ	Japan, Australia, Canada and New Zealand
LCA	Long Term Cooperative Action
LCIPP	Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform
LCTPI	Low Carbon Technology Partnerships Initiatives
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LGMA	Local Government and Municipal Authorities
LMDC	Like Minded Developing Countries
MEAs	Multilevel Environmental Agreements
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
MRV	Measures, Reporting and Verification
NBWL	National Board of Wildlife
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEC	North-Eastern Coalfields
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPCC	National Action Plan on Climate Change
NRDC	Natural Resource Defense Council
NSAs	Non-State Actors
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Organizations for Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPLN	Ocean Plastics Leadership Network

PMCCC	Prime Minister’s Council of Climate Change
QELROs	Quantified Emission Limitations and Reduction Objectives
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RFF	Resources For the Future
RINGO	Research And Independent Organizations
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SSEF	Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation
TAN	Transnational Advocacy Network
TERI	The Energy and Resource Institute
TIP	Tire Industry Project
TUNGO	Trade Union Non-Governmental Organizations
TWI	Terrawatt Initiative
UN	United Nations
UN-ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WCI	World Coal Institute
WGC	Women and Gender Constituency
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

WNA	World Nuclear Association
WRI	World Resource Initiative
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WWI	Worldwatch Institute
YOUNGO	Youth Non-Governmental Organizations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
Declaration.....	I
Acknowledgement.....	II
Abbreviations.....	III-VII
Table of Contents.....	VIII-IX
List of Figures/Tables.....	X
Abstract.....	XI-XIII
CHAPTER - 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1-12
1.1 Background of the Study.....	2-3
1.2 Survey of Literature.....	4-9
1.3 Research Gap.....	9-10
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	10
1.5 Significance and Relevance of the Study.....	10-11
1.6 Methodology Used in the Study.....	11
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	11-12
1.8 Delimitations of the Study.....	12
CHAPTER - 2: THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	13-29
2.1 An Introduction to Global Climate Governance.....	14-18
2.2 Social Constructivism.....	18-20
2.3 Neoliberalism.....	20-22
2.4 World Systems Theory.....	23-25
2.5 Private Authority.....	25-27
CHAPTER - 3: A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPATION OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE UNFCCC PROCESS.....	30-57
3.1 A Historical Background of Key Climate Conferences.....	31-41
3.2 Evolution of the Role of NGOs in the Negotiation Process.....	41-47
3.2.1 Stockholm 1972.....	41-42
3.2.2 Earth Summit 1992.....	42-44

3.2.3 Kyoto Protocol.....	44
3.2.4 Cardoso Report.....	44-45
3.2.5 Copenhagen Summit.....	45
3.2.6 Paris Agreement.....	46
3.2.7 Marrakesh Climate Change Conference.....	46-47
3.3 The Type and Growing Influence of NGOs in the UNFCCC.....	47-51
3.4 The Extent of Influence of NGO Participation in the UNFCCC Process.....	51-53
CHAPTER - 4: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NGO CONSTITUENCIES IN THE UNFCCC PROCESS.....	58-78
4.1 Business and Industry NGOs.....	59-63
4.2 Environmental NGOs.....	63-67
4.3 Youth NGOs/ Research and Independent NGOs/ Indigenous Peoples Organizations.....	67-72
4.4 Strategies of the NGOs.....	72-75
CHAPTER - 5: THE ROLE OF INDIAN NON-STATE ACTORS IN GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE.....	79-97
5.1 India's Engagement in the Climate Change Negotiations.....	80-85
5.2 Civil Society Environmental Movements in India.....	85-90
5.3 Representation of the Indian NGOs in the Negotiation Process.....	90-93
CHAPTER - 6: CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD FOR NON-STATE ACTORS IN GLOBAL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE.....	98-111
6.1 Perceptions and Misperceptions about NGO Participation.....	99-102
6.2 NGO Constituencies in the UNFCCC and their Challenges.....	102-105
6.3 Contemporary Participation of the NSAs and the Way Forward.....	105-109
CHAPTER - 7: CONCLUSION.....	112-122
REFERENCES.....	i-xv

LIST OF FIGURES/TABLES

Figures	Page
Figure 3.1: Cumulative Admission of Observer NGOs/IGOs in Conference of Parties.....	48
Figure 3.2: Attendance of NGO Representatives by Constituency.....	49
Figure 3.3: Regional Representation of Observer Organizations in Conference of Parties.....	50
Tables	
Table 3.1: Key Outcomes of the Conference of Parties since 1995.....	33-39
Table 4.1: Influencing Strategies of the NGOs at the Domestic and International Governance Levels.....	74

ABSTRACT

The dissertation on the theme “Role of Non-State Actors in Global Climate Governance and its perspectives and challenges” has made a modest attempt to explore the participation of non-state actors in global climate governance. This has been steered by various mechanisms and response measures marked by the representation of non-state actors at all levels of governance – international, regional, national, local, etc. Therefore, this transformation within global climate governance is mainly focused on influencing the international climate change negotiations process, their outcomes and implementation. In addition to the states, the expansion of climate governance to include other actors leads to a greater involvement of non-state actors in better facilitating various interests in international climate policy. In this context, the dissertation has sought to assess the growing role of non-state actors in global climate governance, especially within the purview of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations process. The UNFCCC has given recognition to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), classifying them into several constituencies and providing them admission to the Convention bodies. They have formed themselves into loose groups with diverse but broadly clustered interests or perspectives during the negotiation processes such as Business and Industry NGOs (BINGO), Environmental NGOs, Research & Independent NGOs, etc.

The study aims to explore the role of the non-state actors in global climate governance, not only through theoretical and conceptual frameworks, but also by assessing the rationale and the historical context about the participation of the non-state actors within the UNFCCC processes. Furthermore, the study not only critically analyses the implications of participation of non-state actors in the UNFCCC negotiations but also assesses the challenges and the future prospects that are associated with their participation within the UNFCCC. A section of the study also focuses on the role of Indian non-state actors in the UNFCCC processes. The study has been undertaken to explore the agenda setting, decision making process and implementation processes of the non-state actors in global climate governance. The focus on the participation of the Indian non-governmental organizations is accompanied by a comparative assessment of the contrast in the nature of participation of the non-governmental organizations from the Global North and the Global South.

Global climate governance indicates the mechanisms, diplomacy, and response measures focused at directing the social, political and economic systems towards mitigating, preventing or adapting to the risks posed by climate change. The political sphere in relation to global climate governance is defined as the organized multilateral sector where actors can come together and negotiate on how to find solutions to a transnational problem. The UNFCCC is one of the governing bodies which provides a structure and a platform for entities to come together and negotiate in a particular fashion.

The inclusion of civil society in the discussions on global environmental and climate governance outlines certain actions for development in a very sustainable manner leading to a pathway for productive engagement. The Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), along with the government are an integral part of policy formulation and implementation. For instance, in countries such as India, these organizations are frontline actors in approaching the government's adaptation and mitigation policies using community-based frameworks. According to the concept of private authority, these organizations have the available material capabilities along with the intention and the freedom to use them at their will. This significantly drives the private actors to engage in establishing standards, providing welfare as well as security at a transnational level.

The constituency of BINGOs has a wider range of member organizations in great diversity in terms of forwarding their interests as well as lending help in setting the agendas and mandates. This inclusion provides the companies and business groups with vast resources in effectively communicating and advocating their views and agendas with that of the policy makers. The Environmental NGOs (ENGOS), on the other hand also play an important role in establishing and enforcing environmental priorities. Along with enhancing the efficiency of international laws, they also help decide the priorities and enforce international norms. The role of ENGOS includes being independent bargainers and contributing to the available information and perspectives prevalent during policy formulation along with the articulation of universal and contextual perspectives, especially pertaining to the impacts of and solutions to climate change.

India's positions and interests in the international climate change discussions have been clear from the beginning and eventually it managed to secure support from the developing countries too on issues such as equity, climate finance, climate justice, etc. With large parts of Indian

territory being vulnerable to harsh climatic conditions, the various mitigation activities have been carried out not only by the government but also by the civil society and non-governmental organizations. They are a significant player in the formulation and implementation of policies for the country with assistance in the form of research and policy advocacy; adaptation measures based on community and grassroots mobilizations, etc.

The issue of climate change is a complex one which requires close coordination between a wide range of actors. The negotiations for climate change action over the decades have shown the lack of political will among the state actors to meet the promises they make during the negotiations. In this background, the participation of non-state actors is seen as critical in addressing the problem of climate change and contributing to the global governance frameworks for mitigating the climate crisis.