

Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

Hartmut Wessler, Julia Lück, and Antal Wozniak

Subject: Climate Change Communication Online Publication Date: Apr 2017

DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.406

Summary and Keywords

The annual United Nations Climate Change Conferences, officially called Conferences of the Parties (COPs), are the main drivers of media attention to climate change around the world. Even more so than the Rio and Rio+20 “Earth Summits” (1992 and 2012) and the meetings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the COPs offer multiple access points for the communicative engagement of all kinds of stakeholders. COPs convene up to 20,000 people in one place for two weeks, including national delegations, civil society and business representatives, scientific organizations, representatives from other international organizations, as well as journalists from around the world. While intergovernmental negotiation under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) constitutes the core of COP business, these multifunctional events also offer arenas for civil society mobilization, economic lobbying, as well as expert communication and knowledge transfer.

The media image of the COPs emerges as a product of distinct networks of coproduction constituted by journalists, professional communicators from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and national delegations. Production structures at the COPs are relatively globalized with uniform access rules for journalists from all over the world, a few transnational news agencies dominating distribution of both basic information and news visuals, and dense localized interaction between public relations (PR) professionals and journalists. Photo opportunities created by globally coordinated environmental NGOs meet the selection of journalists much better than the visual strategies pursued by delegation spokespeople. This gives NGOs the upper hand in the visual framing contest, whereas in textual framing NGOs are sidelined and national politicians clearly dominate media coverage. The globalized production environment leads to relatively similar patterns of basic news framing in national media coverage of the COPs that reflect overarching ways of approaching the topic: through a focus on problems and victims; a perspective on civil society demands and solutions; an emphasis on conflict in

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

negotiations; or a focus on the benefits of clean energy production. News narratives, on the other hand, give journalists from different countries more leeway in adapting COP news to national audiences' presumed interests and preoccupations.

Even after the adoption of a new global treaty at COP21 in Paris in 2015 that specifies emission reduction targets for all participating countries, the annual UN Climate Change Conferences are likely to remain in the media spotlight. Future research could look more systematically at the impact of global civil society and media in monitoring the national contributions to climate change mitigation introduced in the Paris Agreement and shoring up even more ambitious commitments needed to reach the goal of keeping global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius as compared to pre-industrial levels.

Keywords: United Nations, Conference of the Parties, media event, strategic communication, global public sphere, non-governmental organization, journalist, coproduction, media framing, photo opportunity, news narrative

The Significance of International Meetings for Climate Change Communication

Three kinds of international meetings have proved to be particularly consequential for climate change communication: the so-called "Earth Summits" Rio and Rio+20; the annual United Nations Climate Change Conferences (Conferences of the Parties, COPs); and the meetings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which include the publication of the IPCC's assessment reports reflecting the state of scientific knowledge on changes in global climate conditions.

Chronologically, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, also known as the "Rio Earth Summit," was the first major steppingstone in a series of events that served to highlight climate change as a global problem. In Rio, 154 governments signed, among other things, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which came into effect two years later. The Convention serves as the legal basis for binding agreements about the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is supported by a secretariat based in Bonn, Germany. After Rio+5 in New York, and Rio+10 in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Rio+20 conference in 2012 was held in Rio de Janeiro again. In the meantime, the center of global environmental governance and climate change communication had shifted to a new venue, the COPs, also known as UN Climate Change Conferences, held annually since 1995.

Over the years, three COPs have acquired particular significance and engendered exceptional media attention: COP3 in Kyoto, Japan (1997), COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark (2009), and COP 21 in Paris, France (2015). UN Climate Change Conferences are huge meetings that can convene up to 20,000 people for two weeks, including

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

national delegations, civil society and business representatives, scientific organizations, representatives from other international organizations, as well as journalists from around the world.

In 1997, at the third UN Climate Change Conference, the Kyoto Protocol was signed, which obliges the industrialized countries to reduce carbon emissions due to their historical responsibility for GHG production while exempting developing countries from obligations of this kind. The Kyoto Protocol only came into effect in 2005 because many countries, including the United States, did not officially ratify the Protocol. The Protocol's first commitment period ran from 2008 to 2012 and contained a target of reducing GHG emissions by 5% compared to the level in 1990. Since 2005 (COP11 in Montreal, Canada), the COPs have also functioned as the meetings of the members of the Kyoto Protocol, officially labeled CMPs (Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol).

The next milestone, COP15, held in Copenhagen in 2009, was supposed to see an agreement on a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol to span the period from 2013 to 2020. This agreement failed to materialize, and the extremely high expectations raised in the run-up to COP15 crumbled. The second commitment period was finally agreed upon at COP18 in Doha, Qatar, but a number of large emitters and former supporters of the Kyoto Protocol did not join, making the new agreement less effective than it could have been. After a series of transitional conferences (COPs 16 to 20), COP21 held in Paris in December 2015 saw an agreement on a new global climate change treaty. The "Paris Agreement" for the first time specifies binding reduction targets for all countries based on "intended nationally determined contributions" (INDCs). Governments worldwide have agreed to the aim of keeping the global temperature increase to well below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5 degrees, as compared to pre-industrial times. They have introduced a periodical review mechanism aimed at monitoring progress and adjusting reduction targets to meeting the below-2 degree goal. Many observers have claimed that, in order to reach those goals, national GHG reduction targets must become gradually more ambitious than they were in 2015, so that intergovernmental negotiations on such reduction targets will likely remain a central feature of future COPs. This will also likely secure media attention to the COPs for the foreseeable future.

The third type of international meeting important for climate change communication are the meetings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The IPCC is a global body of climate researchers working under the auspices of the United Nations. It summarizes scientific knowledge, develops projections of future climatic developments, and gives assessments of policy options for governments around the world. Since its inception in 1988 the IPCC has issued five assessment reports (AR1-5 in 1990, 1996, 2001, 2007, and 2014, respectively). AR1, with a supplementary report from 1992, was discussed at the Rio Earth Summit and was instrumental in the initiation of the UNFCCC process. IPCC assessment reports come with "Summaries for Policymakers" that are approved line by line by delegates from all participating governments during IPCC conferences. This procedure has made the wording of the summaries a matter of

sometimes intense negotiation, which has contributed to the news media's interest in IPCC meetings and reports, particularly the conclusions to be drawn from AR4 and AR5. In 2007 the IPCC received the Nobel Peace Prize together with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, with both Nobel laureates enjoying substantial media attention.

International Meetings as Drivers of Media Attention

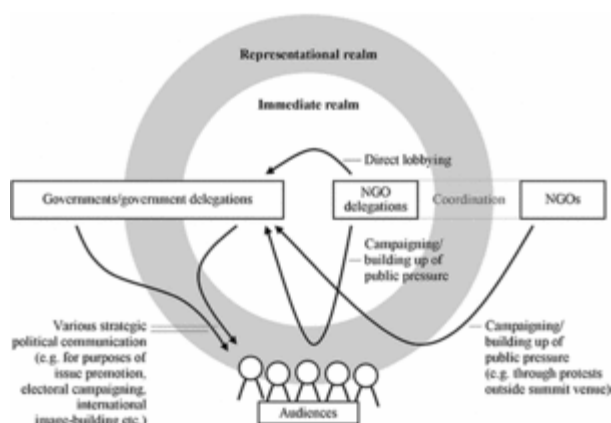
Schmidt, Ivanova, and Schäfer (2013) show that global media attention to climate change-related topics fluctuates, but it peaks around specific events, especially during COPs, in all 27 countries investigated. The COPs are by far the most important drivers of media attention to climate change in a set of three industrialized and emerging countries (Germany, Australia, and India) (Schäfer, Ivanova, & Schmidt, 2014). The authors measure the COPs' impact against a host of other factors, and the only other driver that works across all three countries is activities of international environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) such as Greenpeace International and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). In addition, the Rio Earth Summits played a role in explaining media attention in Australia, the IPCC assessment reports drove up coverage in Germany, and in India climate change coverage was fostered by the former G8 summits for which the heads of government of the world's seven leading economies plus Russia met to consult. By comparison, real-world indicators such as extreme weather events and actual changes in temperature levels drove up media attention to climate change only in Germany (Schäfer et al., 2014). They do not constitute strong across-the-board predictors of media attention. Similarly, Liu, Lindquist, and Vedlitz (2011) show that international focusing events (such as the creation of the IPCC, the IPCC assessments reports and the COPs) were the most important drivers of attention to the issue in both the *New York Times* and the U.S. Congress during the period from 1969 to 2005. Interestingly, such focusing events boosted *New York Times* coverage in the same year and drove up congressional attention in the year following the event. Real-world indicators of climate change have a much smaller impact and only influence congressional attention (Liu et al., 2011). As most of the existing research on communication surrounding international climate change meetings is on the UN Climate Change Conferences, we will focus on the COPs in the following while occasionally drawing in findings on other event types where they are available.

Theoretical Perspectives

International climate change meetings serve a number of functions that need to be distinguished first. In relation to the COPs, Kunelius and Eide (2012) point out: “The summits have become an intensive (and exceptional) example of a global mediatized political event where an enormous amount of knowledge production, economic lobbying, civic activism, and bargaining gravitate around potentially consequential political decision making” (pp. 267–268). While negotiation of international agreements constitutes the core of the COPs, these events also serve as platforms for national and global ENGOs to mobilize support and to lobby national delegations. A large component of COP activities consists in a packed schedule of so-called side events devoted to knowledge production and sharing between scientists, ENGOs, journalists, and some members of national delegations. In accordance with the different communicative functions of the COPs, these conferences can be studied from different theoretical angles, each of which will be briefly sketched in the following.

The Strategic Communication Perspective

It is obvious that international negotiations will be accompanied first and foremost by strategic communication efforts on all sides. Event-based condensations of strategic communication such as those observable at UN Climate Change Conferences and, to a lesser degree, at other types of meetings have unique features that set them apart from day-to-day business in public relations (PR). Adolphsen (2014) provides a useful model that disentangles the different routes of strategic communication found at such events (Figure 1).



[Click to view larger](#)

Figure 1. Routes of strategic communication at summit meetings.

(Source: Adolphsen, 2014, p. 86. © Springer VS, Wiesbaden)

It is important to distinguish the sphere of direct interaction on the conference premises (the “immediate realm”), the sphere of media representations of conference proceedings (the “representational realm”), and activities that take place outside the conference venue or even remotely in participants’ home countries. Both NGOs and governments attempt to bridge these

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

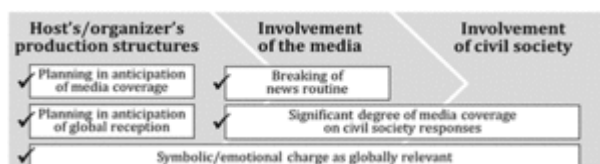
different realms by internally coordinating their activities. NGOs, for example, (a) lobby government delegations directly on the conference premises, (b) organize off-site protests to build public pressure on negotiators, and (c) initiate media representations of on-site activities designed to sway audience opinion that, in turn, could put pressure on governments to act. Conversely, government agencies and national delegations both initiate media coverage to convince audiences to promote their issue stance but also to achieve secondary goals less directly connected to the climate issue such as domestic electoral success or national image-building to support more general nation-branding strategies. The strategies of different actors and actor types are complicated by the fact that, during the two-week period of a COP, media representations of an actor's activities are more or less systematically observed and reflexively taken into account by the respective other actors. This creates a strategic environment that can demand rapid responses by PR crews on both the delegation and the NGO side. Actors try to take advantage of "short-term discursive opportunity structures" (Adolphsen, 2014, p. 175) that open up a window of opportunity to place one's message prominently or to attack an opponent. Some governments as well as all global NGOs and their coordinating umbrella organizations commit resources to be able to react to such short-term challenges, aligning their investments to the amount of media attention and, by implication, possible public pressure or support they anticipate for the respective COP.

From a strategic communication perspective, two questions are central: How can the choice of communication strategies by particular actors and actor types be explained? and What determines the success of such strategies? As for the first question, Adolphsen's (2014) case study on COP16 in Cancún shows that on the whole NGOs put more emphasis on proactive professionalized and creative PR activities than governments because NGOs' institutionalized influence on negotiation results is minimal. Governments differ in their strategies according to what their general level of ambition is on the international stage with emerging countries, such as Brazil, engaging in massive PR operations. The success of communication strategies, on the other hand, has not been systematically assessed in the scholarly literature on international climate change meetings. More precisely, a direct causal link between NGO communication strategies and negotiation results cannot be established, largely because public pressure is only one contextual factor that indirectly influences the internal give-and-take dynamics between country delegations and country groups. In theoretical terms, it would seem more appropriate to measure the success of NGO communication operations in terms of their influence on media framing. Are they able to set the tone and influence the wording and perspective that leading media take on the climate change negotiations? The available evidence paints a mixed picture in this regard, and the reasons for success or failure are not well known yet.

The Media Event Perspective

Some researchers have argued that beyond its strategic aspect, communication at UN Climate Change Conferences also exhibits a ritual quality. In particular, two COPs displayed a layer of symbolic loading that transcended the mundane clash of national interests and organizational strategies. COP15 held in Copenhagen in 2009 was at first symbolically constructed as “Hopenhagen” by NGOs and happily collaborating media and then deconstructed as “Brokenhagen” resulting in a deep sense of futility on the part of many actors, media, and, presumably, audience members (Eide & Kunelius, 2012). In contrast, COP21 in Paris in 2015 was skeptically anticipated but then saw the much-awaited agreement on a new global climate treaty, including the surprising “underbidding” of the hitherto consensual 2-degree target by widely unexpected talk of 1.5 degrees Celsius as the more ambitious goal. As a result, the “Paris Agreement” was almost unanimously hailed as a decisive step forward for humankind.

For exceptional cases like these, Wessler (2012) proposes to look at COPs as staged global political media events (SGPMEs): hosts and organizers, media and civil society engage in a common event performance and collectively produce symbolic resources that foster shared experiences of community and common purpose (see Figure 2). None of these actors would be able to stage the event against the others or even without at least the tacit consent of the others; a “recursive amplification” between them is necessary. “The ability of this interlocking actor set to collectively turn an intergovernmental negotiation meeting into a global watershed moment of historic significance reflects an enormous symbolic capacity” (Wessler, 2012, pp. 446–447).



Click to view larger

Figure 2. Global staged political media events— heuristic model.

(Source: Wessler, 2012, p. 446. © Scandinavian Academic Press, Oslo)

The media event perspective directs analytical attention to (a) the types of resources produced to create the symbolic loading, (b) the types and scopes of communities that can be experienced in relation to the event, and (c) the

dominant modes of emotional experience associated with it (celebrating, mourning, consoling, revolting; see Brüggemann & Wessler, 2014). This perspective thus calls for a case- and context-sensitive set of interpretive methods and analytical strategies aimed at in-depth understanding. The existing literature contains a number of hints for the viability of a media event perspective (see Adolphsen, 2014, pp. 175–186; Eide & Kunelius, 2012). There is imagery of a commonly felt threat but also of a global community faced with a common fate, and much positive emotion was involved when the new treaty was finally sealed in Paris. Generalized conclusions, however, about the symbolic construction of the COPs as media events as well as their symbolic impact have not emerged yet, partly

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

because SGPMs with the kind of symbolic quality posited in the heuristic are so rare. Nevertheless, the media event perspective does suggest an examination of whether the collective symbolic capacity surfacing in GSPMs might have long-term effects on how climate change is being discussed in different parts of the world and, more generally, on how the globalized world is being imagined.

The Transnational Public Sphere Perspective

A third perspective on international climate change meetings looks at them as instances of an emerging transnational public sphere, that is, a space of cross-border contestation and deliberation. This perspective puts emphasis on the mediated exchange of ideas across national borders in the contested search for solutions to a common problem (Brüggemann & Wessler, 2014). The venues in which transnational public spheres operate need not necessarily be transnational media that cater to border-transcending audiences. Instead, national media outlets can internally transnationalize if and when they observe global governance processes such as the UNFCCC and the COPs (vertical dimension) and give voice to speakers from other countries and regions in their coverage (horizontal dimension) (Hepp, Elsler, Lingenberg, Mollen, Möller, & Offerhaus, 2016). Moreover, in a procedural perspective the transnational public sphere perspective suggests that media debates in different countries about common issues should become more similar over time, thus strengthening a core of mutually intelligible and acceptable ideas and positions—a process called transnational discourse convergence (see Wessler, Peters, Brüggemann, Kleinen-von Königslöw, & Sifft, 2008). Finally, an element of transnational collective identification is found desirable from a public sphere perspective so that speakers conceive of themselves as members in the same community of discourse. Long-term trends of transnationalization have mostly been studied in the European context, not on a global scale, and results have been especially sobering on the identification dimension, while on the vertical and horizontal dimension substantial levels of transnationalization have been reached in Europe (Hepp et al., 2016). There have also been instances of discourse convergence in the European Union context, but it is unclear how generalizable they are to the global level.

Global political events such as the COPs that attract much media coverage in different countries are prone to engendering short-term instances of transnationalized media debate because they almost by definition cover global governance processes more intensely and make more voices from more places heard more strongly than is the case in periods of routine coverage. The COPs thus constitute episodes of transnational public spheres.

The Production of Event Communication

The UN Climate Change Conferences are in several ways exceptional examples of international political events. They exhibit a unique combination of different event features (Lück, Wozniak, & Wessler, 2015) that shape the circumstances under which actors operate on-site. Unlike many other international summits, political bargaining at the COPs does not exclude civil society by strictly separating them from negotiators spatially and functionally. However, access of civil society groups and ENGOs to the actual negotiations, especially to informal rounds in which decisive phrasing for decisions is prepared, is usually more restricted (Albin, 1999). Only some countries include representatives from non-governmental and civil society organizations as members of their delegations or grant them wider access for consulting decision-makers (Böhmelt, 2013).

The conference routine itself is highly complex. Decisions on specific aspects are negotiated along thematic tracks in working groups that bargain over the details and wording of the final document. Plenary debates give parties the opportunity to comment on aspects, expressing approval or disapproval. The complex structure is accompanied by a decision-making process that follows the consensus principle, which has often been criticized for its clunkiness and unsatisfactory outcomes (Vihma, 2015).

Even so, the conferences do catalyze the emergence of “short-term, issue specific transnational public spheres [...], which are characterized by more or less similar treatments of these events around the globe, for example through concurrent debate or emotional reception” (Adolphsen & Lück, 2012, p. 155). In order to build such a sphere, communication and interaction between communication professionals and journalists is exceptionally dense: “Facilitated by the close spatial and temporal confines of the summits, this situation then means that both sides are forced to continuously engage with each other. [...] [T]his constitutes a unique setting for working relationships between journalists and political PR professionals—different from their everyday routines in, say, Washington, D.C. or Mexico City, where mutual reservations might be more frequent” (Adolphsen & Lück, 2012, p. 156). Adolphsen and Lück (2012) emphasize the “camp feeling” that emerges when journalists and PR professionals share working spaces, meet at the coffee bar and in the food court, share the same hotels, and run into each other on several occasions a day. This situation during the two intensive weeks of the conference differs greatly from day-to-day routines for both actor groups, “especially because of the denseness of the event that progresses constantly and provides occasions for interactions that go back and forth and back again until they pause at the end of the conference, only to resume at the next COP. Instances of spontaneous communication or communication by chance in moments of idling during the conferences’ daily routines occur more easily and add to a blurring of the lines in professional relationships” (Lück et al., 2015, p. 17). “Coproduction” is the appropriate term to describe this extraordinary

constellation in which professional boundaries are challenged and “political PR professionals and journalists [do] not hesitate to work hand in hand and cooperatively construct the worldwide image of the summit” (Adolphsen, 2014, p. 164).

Environmental Journalists

Environmental journalists have been of special scholarly interest because they are often associated with an advocacy role perception toward environmental affairs rather than the ethos of neutral reporting (Tandoc & Takahashi, 2014). Against such a background, it would not be surprising if environmental journalists were less reluctant with respect to public relations efforts of environmental organizations. However, reality is more complex, and environmental journalists may identify with different role perceptions. Tandoc and Takahashi (2014) distinguish five roles: interpretative, disseminator, mobilizer, adversarial, and advocate. Their survey reveals that environmental journalists identify most often with the interpretative role and least often with the advocacy role. However, support for the advocacy role exhibits the highest variance among these five role perceptions, pointing to a certain inner conflict. In the same vein, a twofold position in global climate journalism emerging around the COPs is identified by Kunelius and Eide (2012, p. 284). What they call “the advocacy of hope and the mode of realism” expresses different dynamics characterizing the transnational climate journalism. Advocating for change as well as critically accompanying political processes as watchdogs therefore reflect two important poles between which climate journalists oscillate.

Nevertheless, environmental journalists share certain basic factual interpretations. Brüggemann and Engesser (2014) find that most climate journalists agree with the IPCC consensus on anthropogenic climate change and also with common proposals for solutions. Their notion of an “interpretative community” suggests that journalists hold common interpretations on the climate change issue and especially its causes (Brüggemann & Engesser, 2014).

Nongovernmental Organizations

NGOs first and foremost aim at influencing the negotiation process and its outcome through official as well as informal channels (Gough & Shackley, 2001). Albin (1999) lists seven main types of NGO activities through which these actors try to exert an influence before, during, and after negotiation: “problem definition, agenda setting, and goal setting; enforcement of principles and norms; provision of information and expertise; public advocacy and mobilization; lobbying; direct participation in the formulation of international agreements; and monitoring and other assistance with compliance” (p. 378). For the success of some of these activities, media representation is surely vital. However,

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

compared to government officials or business representatives, NGOs in general face an uphill battle to achieve publicity while at the same time competition between NGOs increases (Powers, 2015). In order to investigate NGO influence on the international stage, Nasiritousi, Hjerpe, and Linnér (2014) propose a typology of power sources that non-governmental actors use “to gain authority in global governance: symbolic (legitimacy/ability to invoke moral claims), cognitive (knowledge, expertise), social (access to networks), leverage (access to key agents and decision-making processes), and material (access to resources and position in the global economy)” (p. 5). Nevertheless, as the direct access to many parts of the official negotiations is restricted for NGOs, their need to build up pressure from outside increases the dependency on media representation.

Beyond official conduits, NGOs also use more indirect strategies to promote their positions, for example, “developing and using informal relationships with state delegates, lurking in the corridors, talking to state delegates on cellular telephones, and even searching trash cans and copy machines in hopes of retrieving documents being worked on behind closed doors” (Betsill & Corell, 2001, p. 70). It is difficult to assess the actual influence of NGOs in the political process—that is, what marginal difference is made through their actions (Betsill & Corell, 2001; Böhmelt, Bernauer, & Koubi, 2015), but it is clear that it counts as a visible success for NGOs if they are able to establish a certain jargon—such as the expression “hot air”—that influences “how negotiators and observers perceive various issues and proposals in a negotiation” (Betsill & Corell, 2001, p. 76). Another strength that can ensure NGOs a certain degree of media attention is their ability to act as a watchdog in the negotiations, especially of politicians, and to report on “misconduct, ineptitude, and negligence” (Russell, 2013, p. 15). One example of this strategy is the project “Adopt a Negotiator,” developed by the Global Call for Climate Action network for the COPs.

Environmental NGOs also use humorous and symbolic events as a means to draw the media’s attention to their perspectives on the issue. One prominent example is the “Fossil of the Day” Award issued by the Climate Action Network (CAN) on every conference day to the countries “judged to have done their ‘best’ to block progress in the negotiations in the last days of talks” (Climate Action Network International, 2015). The staged award ceremonies (complete with a collectively sung anthem and handing out of trophies) are attended by a substantial number of (photo) reporters and often lead to quite extensive coverage, especially in the media from countries that “win” the award. Another permanent feature of the COPs is the NGO protest march that usually takes place on the Saturday between the first and second conference weeks. Organized by the local offices of major NGOs or NGO umbrella organizations, these protest marches continuously manage to get covered, albeit often in a manner that reduces them to mere “camera fodder” (see Wozniak, Wessler, & Lück, 2016).

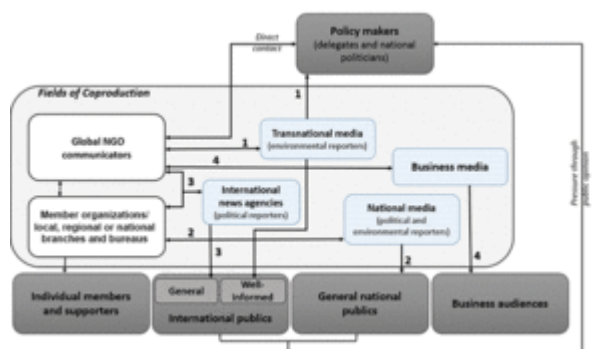
NGOs also regularly use the COPs to stage more spontaneous and topical protests or PR stunts inside or outside the respective conference venue. Vivid examples have been the gatecrashing of a high-level banquet at COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009, an installation of models of tourist attractions from around the world (such as the Eiffel Tower or the Taj

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

Mahal) half-submerged in water at the beach of Cancún at COP16 in 2010, or the symbolic walking out of the conference venue by most of the NGOs at COP19 in Warsaw in 2013.

Coproduction Networks

Based on extensive interview and observation data, Lück et al. (2015) reveal four distinct networks of coproduction between ENGOs and journalists at the COPs. Coproduction works differently within specific subgroups depending on (a) whether journalists work in the environmental, political, or business beat, (b) whether they report for national or transnational media outlets or global news agencies, or (c) whether ENGO communicators work for global and umbrella organizations or for national and local branches (see Figure 3).



[Click to view larger](#)

Figure 3. Four networks of coproduction at UN Climate Change Conferences.

(Source: Lück, Wozniak, & Wessler, 2015, p. 10. © SAGE, London)

The first network identified by Lück et al. (2015) consists of transnational journalists and global ENGO communicators, who put an emphasis on directly lobbying decision-makers. In order to offer in-depth information and sophisticated debate contributions to their highly interested specialized audiences,

these journalists are in need of firsthand information from the negotiations and discussions behind closed doors, which can partly be provided by the well-networked representatives of transnational ENGOs. Journalists and ENGO representatives in this network maintain working relationships for years.

The second network consists of representatives from media outlets with a national outreach and representatives from the national branches of the leading ENGOs. These journalists seek information that relates to audiences in their home countries, and they try to provide information that people can understand and use. The national ENGO branches are especially keen to provide assessments of the conference proceedings that are easy to use for journalists by explaining scientific and technical details in plain words. The direct contact in this network is more formal and works through official press conferences and press briefings.

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

A third network consists of global ENGO communicators as well as representatives from regional or national branches, on the one hand, and political reporters working for international news agencies, on the other. Addressing general international publics by collecting information on all aspects of the issue and providing it to media outlets around the world, these reporters search a wide variety of information. Maintaining a rather classical reporter–source relationship, NGO contacts for reporters in this network are nevertheless valuable and often long-lasting.

The fourth and final network consists of business media reporters and global NGO representatives. Close and trustful relationships between individuals are maintained for years especially because of the journalists' needs for very specialized information on specific subissues that deal with economic questions and consequences. Outside of these four networks, other journalists prefer not to maintain relationships to ENGOs but focus rather on national delegations and avoid the ideological spin of the NGOs (Lück et al., 2015).

National Delegations

State delegations at the COPs are usually well aware of the role of strategic communication to pursue their own goals. Adolphsen (2014) found that government public relations varies between traditional approaches with rather quiet media work at one end of the continuum and professionalized communication operations with mixed strategies or colorful one-man shows that center on a prominent figure at the other end.

Governments also exhibit more variance in their strategic messaging. While some governments' communication strategies lack an overarching theme with connection to climate change, others focus on strategically designed and detailed policy statements. Adolphsen's analysis reveals that countries like Germany and the United States did not invest much in specific messaging that would present their precise standpoints beyond a general affirmation of the country's willingness to fight climate change. Brazil, on the other hand, pushed a detailed message that connected the Amazon region with the overall theme of political and economic progress (Adolphsen, 2014, p. 195). For countries at the conferences, communication is particularly important in order to publicly define their role in the process and their relation to other countries. De Águeda Corneloup and Mol (2014) distinguish different kinds of leadership that countries can strive for: entrepreneurial, intellectual, environmental, or moral. Specific communication strategies accompany these leadership approaches. The authors address the role of small island states at COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009 as an example. Lacking structural power, small island states have to find ways to place their demands in the negotiations and influence the process. Through communication strategies that displayed moral power as well as the engagement in overarching discourse coalitions, the small island states managed to push their agenda to secure their interests (de Águeda Corneloup & Mol, 2014). One prominent example is the underwater cabinet meeting of the Maldives government during COP15 in

2009. Other governments have used a similar strategy around that conference, exemplified by the meeting of Nepal's ministers on the Kalapathar plateau in the Himalayas and a Mongolian government conference taking place in the desert (see Kunelius & Eide, 2012).

Online Communication and Social Media

In looking at the different kinds of strategic communication around the COPs, online communication and social media use deserve special attention. These have increased in relevance over recent years during which the mass media environment became much more diversified and traditional media such as television and newspapers seem less relevant, especially when communication efforts aim at interactive many-to-many communication. Schäfer (2012) presents an extensive review of previous research on online communication and its uses and effects, including strategies of the different actors and stakeholders in the world of climate politics. NGOs appear to be “the champions of online communication” (Schäfer, 2012, p. 530), with practically every climate NGO using online strategies as part of their repertoire. NGOs use online communication to (a) provide information (e.g., about their topics, aims, and actions, mainly on their websites), (b) address news media (in order to place their contents and get attention), (c) try to increase outside support (e.g., through online fundraising campaigns or networking with outsiders and other NGOs), and (d) change behavior and mobilize action. According to Schäfer (2012), online communication is used in a rather conventional way, mainly through websites and email. Social media is predominantly used as one tool among others for mobilizing and initiating pressurizing action.

An instructive example of social media use during the climate change conference in Copenhagen 2009 is provided by Segerberg and Bennett (2011), who analyze the role of Twitter in NGO action. They show that Twitter is an important device to connect diverse players and cut across networks by using hyperlinks to construct and show alliances between players. Especially during protest actions such as marches, Twitter serves as an instrument to connect protesters to NGOs that provide logistic information.

Research on online communication of governments in the field of climate change is scarce (Schäfer, 2012). Very few studies address government online strategies involving information campaigns about climate change, encouraging public participation or establishing tools for disaster management. There is also a lack of research on how business and corporate actors as well as scientists and scientific institutions use online communication within their PR activities in the climate change field.

Comparing Media Coverage of International Climate Change Meetings

The UN Climate Change Conferences regularly trigger media coverage due to their political significance as the formal gathering point for the UNFCCC parties. They also offer a familiar news beat for journalists, with a large number of stakeholders (government delegations, UN bureaucrats, and NGOs) and their respective spokespeople being present and easily approachable over a two-week period. Because COPs draw more media attention to climate change than any other event or occurrence, coverage of the COPs is crucial in defining what kind of information media users have access to.

In a content analysis of media coverage about the UN Climate Change Conferences from 2010 (COP16 in Cancún, Mexico) to 2013 (COP19 in Warsaw, Poland) in 10 leading newspapers from five democratic countries on the five major continents (Brazil, Germany, India, South Africa, and the United States), Wessler and colleagues identified a total of 902 discrete news items that had been triggered by the respective COPs (unpublished data based on the study described in Wessler, Wozniak, Hofer, & Lück, 2016). The COP-induced articles comprised 66% of all climate change-related articles during the periods of analysis. Coverage of COPs amounts to 90 items on average per newspaper, or 22 per newspaper and COP, i.e., almost one article per day of coverage during the four-week periods sampled.

Data by Boykoff (2012) shows that COP16 in Cancún, Mexico, received roughly a third of the coverage in leading U.S. media than did the meeting in Copenhagen one year before. Kunelius and Eide (2012) find that Copenhagen also received more attention than COP13 in Bali in 2007 had been able to muster. The lower levels for Bali and Cancún provide robust indicators for the mainstream media's attention to business-as-usual COPs that are not especially propelled into the media's spotlight by the appearance of top political leaders from major global powers.

The level of media attention to the COPs also shows some national particularities (Wessler et al., 2016). South African newspapers covered COP17 in their own country quite extensively due to it being a local event but showed very little interest in climate change conferences taking place elsewhere. Media attention in other countries corresponded much more with the global political significance of each COP than with their geographical proximity. Attention to COPs 16 to 19 was strongest in Germany and Brazil, whereas the number of COP-triggered news items in Indian and U.S. newspapers was lower. This speaks to the variable level of significance that the issue of climate change enjoys in different national public spheres.

Sources

COP coverage is consistently dominated by elite political sources. The 902 COP-related articles found in the study described in Wessler et al. (2016) contain direct quotes or paraphrases from 3,145 actors. Of these, 52% are domestic politicians (such as heads of state or government, ministers or secretaries, or government-appointed negotiators). A further 17% of statements are provided by representatives of international or intergovernmental institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, or the Alliance of Small Island States. Representatives from NGOs (such as Greenpeace, WWF, or Friends of the Earth) account for only 12% of all statements reproduced in media reports. Almost every tenth statement in COP reports is attributed to scientists (9%), while business representatives (4%) and ordinary citizens (2%) only marginally contribute to newspaper debates on the COPs. These results by and large parallel those by Boykoff (2012) from his analysis of coverage by U.S. newspapers and television networks of COP16 in Cancún. He found that national or local political actors dominated coverage, followed by NGO representatives and the business community. Scholars made up an even smaller share of news sources, while grassroots activists and indigenous voices were marginalized. A very similar picture emerges in Kunelius and Eide's (2012) global study on the coverage of COP15.

Media Framing

In their analysis of Dutch and French newspaper framing of the COPs between 2001 and 2007, Dirikx and Gelders (2010) found that a majority of the articles employ what the authors call a "consequence" frame, which highlights the possible losses and gains that (in-)action would lead to. A second salient frame was the "responsibility" frame, which contains references to the need for urgent action, possible solutions, and governments' responsibility (and capability) for addressing climate change problems. The "conflict" frame appeared only occasionally, but more regularly than the "human interest" frame.

A text-based, cross-national comparison of media frames in five countries during COPs 16 to 19 yielded similar results (for a description of the methodology used, see Wozniak, Lück, & Wessler, 2015). Based on 3,252 actor statements, the authors found a "green energy solution" frame to be most salient. With its emphasis on green energy as a way to mitigate climate change, sometimes in combination with a call for financial help for poorer countries, it resembles the "responsibility" frame found by Dirikx and Gelders (2010). Also very prominent in COP newspaper coverage was a type of "consequence" frame, in which actors highlight the worldwide increase in temperatures and related effects such as rising sea levels and more extreme weather events. In addition, a "causality" frame was prominent in which actors explicitly point out GHG emissions as the cause for global warming.

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

In order to better capture the issue's framing in news items as they are perceived by audience members (with accompanying pictures both serving as attention-grabbers and providing additional context), Wessler et al. (2016) conducted a multimodal frame analysis based on 432 illustrated articles published about COPs 16 to 19. The authors combined both textual and visual frame elements in a single cluster analysis. With this new approach they were able to identify four major multimodal frames deployed in news reports to organize the issue: a "global warming victims" frame, a "civil society demands" frame, a "political negotiations" frame, and a "sustainable energy" frame. The distribution of these frames was relatively stable across the five countries under study (Brazil, Germany, India, South Africa, and the United States), which suggests a rather homogeneous journalistic practice in processing this issue driven by the uniform globalized production environment at the COPs (as described in the section on the "production of event communication").

In their analysis of coverage of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report in U.S. and U.K. broadcast and print media as well as on Twitter, O'Neill, Williams, Kurz, Wiersma, and Boykoff (2015) showed how framing varied by IPCC working group report (WGI-III) and by media institution. While a "settled science" frame was prominent in coverage of WGI ("The Physical Science Basis") and WGIII ("Mitigation of Climate Change"), a "disaster" frame was much more common in coverage of the WGII report ("Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability") (O'Neill et al., 2015). Frames also varied depending on media type (with newspapers heavily using a "political or ideological struggle" frame and Twitter users often employing the "settled science" frame) and the media outlet's ideological orientation. The *Guardian* often framed the issue as a "political or ideological struggle," while the *Wall Street Journal* most frequently emphasized the "uncertain science" frame (O'Neill et al., 2015).

Visualizing the COPs

A visual content analysis by Wozniak et al. (2016) of newspaper coverage of COPs 16 to 19 yielded a total of 451 news visuals on climate change. In total, 61% of all news photos in this sample deploy human imagery (i.e., photos of people and/or PR stunt installations). Noteworthy is the prominence of NGOs/environmentalists, who are depicted more often than politicians (including UN officials). Business or industry representatives, scientists, and celebrities were rarely depicted in news visuals.

The bias toward human imagery in general, and depictions of NGOs and activists in particular, indicates that the published news visuals might be more similar to the visual frame conceptions of NGOs than to the conceptions of government delegations. To test this assumption, Wozniak et al. (2016) used categories derived from semi-standardized interviews with journalists and spokespeople from government delegations and NGOs as benchmarks and calculated the respective percentage of news visuals that match these actor groups' visual frame conceptions. While the main visual frame conceptions of government delegations' spokespersons and journalists are represented in about one-fourth of all news visuals, the core notions of what makes up effective visualizations of the COPs by NGO spokespersons are paralleled in 40% of all published news visuals. This relative success of NGOs in the visual framing contest relating to COPs is indicative of their "framing expertise" (Dan & Ihlen, 2011) and their ability to provide those kinds of visual representations that match the expectations of both reporters and picture editors.

However, this NGO "success story" has to be critically contemplated against the textual-verbal aspects of the very same articles, which is dominated by statements from national political actors. NGO representatives and environmental activists only make up 13% of all referenced textual sources—a sharp contrast to the 40% uptake quota of NGOs' visual framing conceptions. This finding is in line with previous empirical findings concerning the contrast between NGOs' visual success and their difficulty in getting their messages across in verbal statements in mainstream media content (see Powers, 2015; Thrall, Stecula, & Sweet, 2014).

Journalistic Narratives

"A news story is both news and a story" (Schudson, 2012, p. 171). While a frame analysis helps to uncover the relative salience of specific aspects of an issue and the way they are combined into coherent patterns of argumentation, an analysis of narrative elements can inform us about the style and prose of the stories told to audiences in news reports. Lück, Wessler, Wozniak, and Lycariao (2016) follow a three-tiered model of journalistic narration that assesses (a) the general narrativity of an article (i.e., whether or not it features dramatization, emotionalization, fictionalization, and personalization), (b) its narrative

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

genre or story type, and (c) the way protagonists are (explicitly or implicitly) assigned the roles of victim, villain, or hero.

Analyzing 1,236 newspaper articles, Lück et al. (2016) found that the overall degree of narrativity is highest in Brazilian news reports, followed by Germany, while U.S., South African, and Indian newspapers score significantly lower on the narrativity index. Conducting a cluster analysis using the narrative variables “overall theme,” “tone,” and “outcome,” the authors found five distinct story types in newspaper coverage about COPs 16 to 19. The most prevalent narrative (used in 32% of all articles) is the story of an “Ongoing Conflict,” followed by the “Catastrophe” narrative (21%), the “Hopeful Struggle” narrative (20%), the “Business as Usual” narrative (14%), and the “Stories of Success” narrative (13%). Beyond this general distribution, country-specific patterns of story types resemble distinct cultural and political situations and connect global events to national and regional audiences. The Brazilian coverage, for example, reveals a certain inconclusiveness. Here the Catastrophe narrative is the most salient one, pointing to an increasing threat connected to climate change. At the same time, the Hopeful Struggle narrative is the second-most-often-used narrative, hinting at a level of optimism that problems can still be solved.

Country-specific differences can also be identified with respect to the use of narrative roles. Lück et al. (2016) describe two distinct patterns in their sample that align most clearly with the two most distinctive story types: the Catastrophe and Stories of Success. In German and U.S. newspapers, climate change mostly affects “others” (developing countries, small island states, etc.), which are depicted as the typical victims. The ones responsible, the villains, are either unspecified (e.g., humankind or former generations) or direct political opponents in the negotiations (e.g., Canada, Japan, and Bolivia for Germany or India and China for the United States). The hero role is clearly reserved for actors from the West. By contrast, in the newspaper coverage of the emerging countries Brazil, India, and South Africa, these countries themselves take on the roles of both victims and heroes while the villain role is clearly attributed to the West or the developed countries collectively.

Investigating journalistic narratives in news reports about COP13 in Bali, Indonesia, in 2007, Krøvel (2011) found a persistent pattern of protagonists that saw the United States as the “opponent” that needs to be overcome for a desired goal to be achieved. Krøvel (2011) also highlights the problematic aspect of journalists employing historical, predefined meta-narratives in their coverage when the construction of “a good story [takes] precedence over the ideal of informing society” (p. 100).

Climate Skepticism

Climate denial or skepticism has been found to be common in news reports in the United States in the past (see Antilla, 2005; Boykoff & Boykoff, 2004). However, a linguistic analysis of U.S. newspaper coverage of climate change by Kuha (2009) showed that expressions of certainty substantially increased in news coverage after the Bali conference in 2007. This result suggests an effect by the UN Climate Change Conferences toward a more scientific consensus-based media discourse that leaves less room for outlier views. The virtual absence of climate skepticism in media coverage about the COPs is confirmed by the study of Wessler et al. (2016). Of the 5,561 discrete actor statements, only 53 (roughly 1%) contained a denial of the reality of global warming or the assertion that climate change is unproblematic. Climate skepticism was most prevalent in South African news reports, where denials of climate change appear in 3.5% of all statements. Climate denial in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, on the other hand, is very marginal (less than 1% of all statements) and even completely absent in the coverage of the English-language Indian newspapers the *Hindu* and the *Times of India*. These results indicate that mainstream media discourse about climate change conferences systematically sidelines actors who explicitly deny the reality of global warming. Climate deniers seem to seek out other occasions and other venues for their messages.

Research Perspectives

The UN Climate Change Conferences as the prime example of international meetings in the area of climate policy are large-scale, multifunctional focusing events. Around their core, the intergovernmental negotiation of climate agreements, a set of other communication processes has established itself: civil society mobilization by the global environmental movement and knowledge production and sharing by scientists, ENGOs, and other stakeholders as well as direct lobbying by business representatives and ENGOs. Whether they are open or concealed, mediated or non-mediated, these processes all contribute to the complex communicative reality of international climate change meetings. Apart from their sheer size and multifunctionality, the temporal and spatial confinement creates unique conditions: up to 20,000 people interact in a more-or-less shared space for two weeks, and it is no wonder that some of them develop a camp feeling that unites them despite different backgrounds and tasks. If we add to this equation the almost permanent observation by news media from around the world as well as the reflexive adaptation of participants to media reporting and the opinion climate they transport, it becomes clear that COPs are communicatively constructed events par excellence. In exceptional cases such as COP15 in Copenhagen and COP21 in Paris, these communicative constructions acquire an additional ritual quality that hosts and organizers, media and civil society collectively produce. In such instances the event can

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

be imbued with a symbolic intensity that makes it appear as a watershed moment in human history. While this intensity is rare and highly contingent, the globalized production structures—uniform access rules for journalists, a limited set of similar sources, the relative pictorial dearth of the negotiations proper with the resulting urge for “good,” dramatic images, etc.—are characteristic of all these events. NGOs in particular are instrumental in providing such images but limited in their ability to get their statements quoted in the news media.

The unique working conditions and uniform production structures at the COPs result in a relatively similar media framing that reflects basic journalistic approaches to the issue despite diverging national media cultures—focusing on problems and victims, on demands for change, on the actual negotiations, or on clean energy as the larger policy context. Journalists from different countries have comparatively more leeway in domesticating these frames through narrative devices, particular story types, and narrative role constellations. Who appears as the victim, the villain, and the hero, for example, and whether the tone of a story is optimistic, pessimistic, or fatalistic is somewhat more strongly determined by national conventions than by the repertoire of frame elements that constitutes the backbone of a particular news item.

Knowledge about how and under what conditions communication at the UN Climate Change Conferences is produced and how the resulting COP coverage plays out in various national contexts has grown in recent years, particularly since Copenhagen. However, too little is still known about the impacts of COP communication. This pertains to the discursive impact—that is, in relation to how climate change is discussed in news media between COPs and whether discourses around the world partly converge on dominant themes and messages due to the COPs’ symbolic power. Enough theoretical work on the transnationalization of mediated public debate exists that can in principle guide such analysis, but event-focused case studies and long-term investigations have not been sufficiently combined.

Finally, we also do not know enough about the political impact of communication activities employed by COP participants. Does all the strategic communication by delegations and NGOs and all the intense media attention actually influence how negotiators act and what they decide? It is of course extremely hard to prove empirically that a particular communication strategy or activity has led to a change in behavior or decision at the negotiation table. On the other hand, it seems plausible to assume that the massive presence of critical, professional observers (journalists, NGOs, and competing delegations) at the COPs has a general conditioning effect on how actors go about their business. In the future we may even be able to pinpoint such communication effects on decisions more directly because the “Paris Agreement” signed at COP21 in 2015 has produced an almost ideal setting for a hard test: the periodical review mechanism built into the Agreement institutionalizes mutual observation and control through open and public criticism of the INDCs. This invites a close look at whether such mutual control in and by a critical global public sphere exerts an influence on the revision of INDCs in the COPs after Paris. In theoretical terms, such an investigation might move public sphere

theory and analysis in a more hard-nosed, impact-oriented direction. In this way climate change communication research, important in itself, might also be able to contribute to more general advancements in communication and public sphere theory.

References

Adolphsen, M. (2014). *Communication strategies of governments and NGOs: Engineering global discourse at high-level international summits*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer.

Adolphsen, M., & Lück, J. (2012). Non-routine interactions behind the scenes of a global media event: How journalists and political PR professionals coproduced the 2010 UN Climate Conference in Cancún. *Medien & Kommunikationswissenschaft, Sonderband Nr. 2 "Grenzüberschreitende Medienkommunikation,"* 141–158.

Albin, C. (1999). **Enhance the effectiveness of international negotiation?** *International Negotiation*, 4(3), 371–387.

Antilla, L. (2005). Climate of scepticism: US newspaper coverage of the science of climate change. *Global Environmental Change*, 15, 338–352.

Betsill, M. M., & Corell, E. (2001). **NGO influence in international environmental negotiations: A framework for analysis**. *Global Environmental Politics*, 1(4), 65–85.

Böhmelt, T. (2013). **Civil society lobbying and countries' climate change policies: A matching approach**. *Climate Policy*, 13(6), 698–717.

Böhmelt, T., Bernauer, T., & Koubi, V. (2015). **The marginal impact of ENGOs in different types of democratic systems**. *European Political Science Review*, 7(1), 93–118.

Boykoff, J. M. (2012). **US media coverage of the Cancun climate change conference**. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 45(02), 251–258.

Boykoff, M. T., & Boykoff, J. M. (2004). **Balance as bias: Global warming and the US prestige press**. *Global Environmental Change*, 14(2), 125–136.

Brüggemann, M., & Engesser, S. (2014). **Between consensus and denial: Climate journalists as interpretive community**. *Science Communication*, 36(4), 399–427.

Brüggemann, M., & Wessler, H. (2014). **Transnational communication as deliberation, ritual and strategy**. *Communication Theory*, 24(4), 394–414.

Climate Action Network International. (2015). *Fossil of the day: EU and umbrella group win fossil for blocking ambition boost*. Retrieved from <http://www.climatenetwork.org/fossil-of-the-day>.

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

Dan, V., & Ihlen, Ø. (2011). **Framing expertise: A cross-cultural analysis of success in framing contests.** *Journal of Communication Management*, 15(4), 368–388.

de Águeda Corneloup, I., & Mol, A. P. J. (2014). **Small island developing states and international climate change negotiations: the power of moral “leadership”.** *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 14(3), 281–297.

Dirikx, A., & Gelders, D. (2010). **To frame is to explain: A deductive frame-analysis of Dutch and French climate change coverage during the annual UN Conferences of the Parties.** *Public Understanding of Science*, 19(6), 732–742.

Eide, E., & Kunelius, R. (2012). Introduction. In E. Eide & R. Kunelius (Eds.), *Media meets climate: The global challenge for journalism* (pp. 9–28). Göteborg, Sweden: Nordicom.

Gough, C., & Shackley, S. (2001). **The respectable politics of climate change: The epistemic communities and NGOs.** *International Affairs*, 77(2), 329–346.

Hepp, A., Elsler, M., Lingenberg, S., Mollen, A., Möller, J., & Offerhaus, A. (2016). *The communicative construction of Europe. Cultures of political discourse, public sphere and the Euro crisis.* Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.

Krøvel, R. (2011). Journalistic narratives of success and failure at the Bali climate change conference in 2007. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 20(2), 89–104.

Kuha, M. (2009). Uncertainty about causes and effects of global warming in US news coverage before and after Bali. *Language & Ecology*, 2(4), 1–18.

Kunelius, R., & Eide, E. (2012). Moment of hope, mode of realism: On the dynamics of a transnational journalistic field during UN Climate Change Summits. *International Journal of Communication*, 6, 266–285.

Liu, X., Lindquist, E., & Vedlitz, A. (2011). **Explaining media and congressional attention to global climate change, 1969–2005: An empirical test of agenda-setting theory.** *Political Research. Quarterly*, 64, 405–419.

Lück, J., Wessler, H., Wozniak, A., & Lycariao, D. (2016). **Counterbalancing global media frames with nationally colored narratives: A comparative study of news narratives and news framing in the climate change coverage of five countries.** *Journalism*.

Lück, J., Wozniak, A., & Wessler, H. (2015). **Networks of coproduction: How journalists and environmental NGOs create common interpretations of the UN Climate Change Conferences.** *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 21(1), 25–47.

Nasiritousi, N., Hjerpe, M., & Linnér, B.-O. (2014). **The roles of non-state actors in climate change governance: understanding agency through governance profiles.** *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 16(1), 109–126.

O'Neill, S., Williams, H. T., Kurz, T., Wiersma, B., & Boykoff, M. (2015). **Dominant frames in legacy and social media coverage of the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report.** *Nature Climate Change*, 5(4), 380–385.

Powers, M. (2015). **Contemporary NGO-journalist relations: Reviewing and evaluating an emergent area of research.** *Sociology Compass*, 9(6), 427–437.

Russell, A. (2013). **Innovation in hybrid spaces: 2011 UN Climate Summit and the expanding journalism landscape.** *Journalism*, 14(7), 904–920.

Schäfer, M. S. (2012). **Online communication on climate change and climate politics: A literature review.** *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 3(6), 527–543.

Schäfer, M. S., Ivanova, A., & Schmidt, A. (2014). **What drives media attention for climate change? Explaining issue attention in Australian, German and Indian print media from 1996 to 2010.** *International Communication Gazette*, 76(2), 152–176.

Schmidt, A., Ivanova, A., & Schäfer, M. S. (2013). **Media attention for climate change around the world: A comparative analysis of newspaper coverage in 27 countries.** *Global Environmental Change*, 23(5), 1233–1248.

Schudson, M. (2012). *The sociology of news*. New York: Norton.

Seegerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social media and the organization of collective action: Using Twitter to explore the ecologies of two climate change protests. *The Communication Review*, 14(3), 197–215.

Tandoc, E., & Takahashi, B. (2014). **Playing a crusader role or just playing by the rules? Role conceptions and role inconsistencies among environmental journalists.** *Journalism*, 15(7), 889–907.

Thrall, A. T., Stecula, D., & Sweet, D. (2014). **May we have your attention please? Human-rights NGOs and the problem of global communication.** *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 19(2), 135–159.

Vihma, A. (2015). **Climate of consensus: Managing decision making in the UN climate change negotiations.** *Review of European, Comparative & International Environmental Law*, 24(1), 58–68.

Wessler, H. (2012). Identifying global public sphere moments. In J. F. Hovden & K. Knapskog (Eds.), *Hunting high and low. Skriftfest til Jostein Gripsrud pa 60-arsdagen* (pp. 437–455). Oslo: Scandinavian Academic Press.

Wessler, H., Peters, B., Brüggemann, M., Kleinen-von Königslöw, K., & Sifft, S. (2008). *Transnationalization of public spheres*. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.

Communication, Negotiation, and Influence at International Climate Change Meetings and Summits

Wessler, H., Wozniak, A., Hofer, L., & Lück, J. (2016). **Global multimodal news frames on climate change. A comparison of five democracies around the world.**

International Journal of Press/Politics, 21(4), 423–445.

Wozniak, A., Lück, J., & Wessler, H. (2015). **Frames, stories, and images: The advantages of a multimodal approach in comparative media content research on climate change.** *Environmental Communication*, 9(4), 469–490.

Wozniak, A., Wessler, H., & Lück, J. (2016). **Who prevails in the visual framing contest about the United Nations Climate Change Conferences?.** *Journalism Studies* (online first).

Hartmut Wessler

Institute for Media and Communication Studies, Universität Mannheim

Julia Lück

Mannheim Center for European Social Research , Universität Mannheim

Antal Wozniak

Mannheim Center for European Social Research, Universität Mannheim

