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Thirty Years On: Planetary Climate Planning and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in Geography

by

Benjamin Asher Kaplan Weinger

2022

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Thirty Years On: Planetary Climate Planning and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee
of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

by

Benjamin Asher Kaplan Weinger

Master of Arts in Geography

University of California, Los Angeles, 2022

Professor John Agnew, Chair

On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), this principal supra-national institution remains paramount to the project of planetary climate planning and governance. Yet, despite praise among climate leaders, reflections on this anniversary should serve to recall the contestations through which this foundational institution was formed, and the normative geographical assumptions that continue to be reproduced in its wake. The debates and political dynamics that afflicted the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) tasked with crafting the Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as dissension in the periphery, remain as relevant today as they were three decades ago. Yet, few works have pieced together the antecedent conditions that formed a cleavage in the world system and sparked the elusive committee and the tedious

negotiating process that yielded today's enduring institution of planetary governance. This archival analysis seeks to reprise the critical juncture that informed the institutional innovation of the INC, probing mechanisms of frame alignment with a truth regime of global kinds of knowledge and path dependence on geographical governance norms. Considering the legacy of this enduring institution, I seek to render visible actors and proposals peripheralized in the formation of planetary climate governance to extrapolate normative boundaries and proffer heterodox lessons from the margins.

The thesis of Benjamin Asher Kaplan Weinger is approved.

Adam Moore

Shaina Potts

John Agnew, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Acronyms	vi
Acknowledgments	vii
I. Introduction	1
II. Methodology	4
III. Historicizing the climate institution	5
IV. A sequence of planetary climate planning and timeline of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee	12
Forging an inter-state climate authority	16
V. How the climate became governable: Critical antecedents	20
Frame alignment with the dominant truth regime of global climate change	21
Institutional path dependence	34
VI. Fashioning a critical juncture: North/South institutional bargaining	40
The Southern perspective	42
The Northern perspective	45
A North/South cleavage emerges	46
Fracture in the eleventh hour: Institutionalizing the political cleavage	56
Consensual conventions: A critical juncture emerges	62
VII. Normative geographical dimensions of climate planning: The legacy of the INC	67
VIII. Conclusion: Heterodox climate planning and lessons from the margins	71
Appendix	74
References	79

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

First World Climate Conference (WCC-1)

Global surface temperature (GST)

Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change
(INC)

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

International Council of Scientific Unions (ISCU)

International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP)

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

United Nations (UN)

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

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I. Introduction

The instituted institution makes us forget that it issues out of a long series of institution (in the active sense) and hence has all the appearances of the natural. That is why there is no more potent tool for rupture than the reconstruction of genesis: by bringing back into view the conflicts and confrontations of the early beginnings and therefore all the discarded possibles, it retrieves the possibility that things could have been (and still could be) otherwise. And, through such a practical utopia, it questions the “possible” which, among all others, was actualized.

—Bourdieu, *Rethinking the State*

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change constitutes both an inter-state treaty (herein Framework Convention) opened for signature in 1992 following a fifteen-month process of institutional bargaining and the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat (herein UNFCCC) that was formed in its wake. This paper derives from a straightforward inquiry: Why did the UNFCCC take the institutional developmental path it did? On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the opening of the Framework Convention for signature and the establishment of its eponymous Secretariat, reflections on the institution have been ample. Many have admonished the failure of governments, however, as opposed to revisiting the system’s configuration and its developmental paths (Kinley et al. 2021; Stoddard et al. 2021). Moreover, three decades since inter-state negotiations first began, contemporary planetary climate management remains fixed within the institutional boundaries prescribed by the Framework Convention, a now sacrosanct constitution for managing the planet’s climate.

Today’s contentious inter-state negotiations and impasse are entangled with the logics and contestations that informed the first round of negotiations within the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (herein INC) convened to craft the Framework Convention between 1991 and 1992. Then, delegations of UN member states toiled to form a consensus-based framework in preparation for signature by state leaders at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Considered now a long-term, highly routinized, standard-setting

institution at the core of climate governance, the UNFCCC is in particular need of critical scrutiny on the occasion of this anniversary, especially in the wake of praise from governmental leadership and increasingly from owners of the means of production who have become enveloped in the negotiating process (Richard et al. 2021). The bureaucratic institutionalization of future planning codified by the UNFCCC has developed a set of logics, practices, and discourses both generative and constraining. To expose the normative dimensions and inequities structured into this social order, I seek to bring to the fore questions about institutional design and the social processes that rendered this playing field uneven from the start (Jasanoff 2004).

The institutionalization of climate management toward the end of the twentieth century is an important case study in global norms making (Jasanoff 2004). I argue for empirical and analytical attention to the constitutional moment in which climate management was actively instituted. The formation of the INC and its crafting of the Framework Convention represent a critical juncture—a major episode of institutional innovation and period of significant change—in the history of climate change politics (Collier and Collier 1991). By studying this critical juncture, we can ask: Why did this institution come into existence? What historical processes yielded this particular path of institutional development over all other possible paths? And how did the institution reproduce an enduring legacy?

I center the contested process of its production via the INC to draw attention to the distribution of power, the underlying politics of expertise, and the scalar politics—and scale framing—involved in defining the global/planet as the relevant and privileged spatiality for climate science and political responses. The Framework Convention did not simply land on the tables of delegations at the UN Conference on Environment and Development. Yet lay and scholarly analysis of climate politics has overlooked the processual negotiations of the INC that

crafted the Framework Convention. Existing work relegates the Committee's existence to mere functionalist terms (Zilman 2009, 147; Djoghlaflaf 2994, 99). While the INC is brushed over as a mere step in the process towards creating the Framework Convention, the goal of this paper is to illuminate the process through which the INC and its outcome, the Framework Convention, emerged not as a guarantee but through contentious politics.

Positioning the INC and its legacy planning document, the Framework Convention, as a critical juncture, I analyze the sequence of this institution with the understanding that the UNFCCC is now enduring and normative. After a brief note on methodology and a review of the literature and its gap, I begin by outlining a sequence of events leading up to the formation of the INC. This section provides the global historical context for the following section which focuses on the critical antecedents of the Framework Convention—those historical events and conditions without which the Framework Convention would not have taken the developmental path it did. To do so I analyze a series of mechanisms—frame alignment with a truth regime about global kinds of climate knowledge and path dependence of institutional development within the United Nations paradigm. The analysis of the geopolitics of knowledge about climate change reveals the stakes of emphasizing the “global” as the scale framing of the climate institution, namely the elision of the “local,” particularity, and views of the marginalized. In the following section I turn to a political cleavage that emerged between delegations of the Third World Front and the Industrialized Front, animated by environmentally uneven exchange and the institutional privileging of developmental ideals. Together these antecedent conditions and cleavage engendered the critical juncture of the Framework Convention. I then examine the normative dilemma of the Framework Convention, namely: Who gets to decide how to manage the planet's climate? Finally, considering the legacy of the enduring institution, I conclude by rendering

visible proposals that were peripheralized in the formation of planetary climate governance to extrapolate normative boundaries and proffer heterodox lessons from the margins.

II. Methodology

Following calls in political geography to “open the black box of the organization” by conceptualizing organizations as socio-material networks that emerge from contentious processes of ordering (Müller 2012), I call for empirical attention to the context in which global climate management was actively instituted through the United Nations. A close historical reading of the INC highlights the processes through which various authorities, knowledges, and norms converged to form the Framework Convention (Eriksen et al. 2015). By retracing the history of planetary climate management and focusing on the contestations of this social process, I analyze the tacit political and epistemic commitments and the circulation of geopolitical ideas reproduced through these negotiations.

To unmask these normative dimensions, I draw on two methods of qualitative data collection. Driving this paper empirically is an extensive archival analysis of hundreds of hours of audio materials accessed on request from the Audiovisual Archives of the UNFCCC Secretariat. These recordings captured live translations of the plenary stage, general debates, and working group oral reports. While the scarcity of ethnographic data remains a clear limitation to the reconstruction of the genesis of this institution, including the crucial informal negotiations that took place in the absence of rapporteurs, I address these shortcomings by triangulating these significantly detailed archival audio materials with extensive textual analysis of primary UNFCCC documents and submissions including: resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly; reports, draft decisions, informal delegate papers, and the rapporteur’s proceedings of the five sessions of the INC between 1991 and 1992; legal texts of UNFCCC agreements; and

other primary documents from the UNFCCC Archives. I follow Weisser's (2014) work on the "documentality" (Ferraris, 2013) of contemporary UNFCCC environmental negotiations which conceives of documents and the policies they contain as "effects of practice," encoding various arguments, interests, and divergent points of view. While this conception might be obvious in the context of contentious inter-state environmental negotiations, the tendency to conceive of such documents and the policies they contain as apolitical and technical the moment consensus is reached demands that we interrogate the archeology of the document (Müller, 2012, 379). This approach links macro-scale processes of geopolitical economic processes to the mundane micro-scale practices of institutional bargaining on the ground (Potts 2021, 14). I thereby follow numerous others practicing extensive textual analysis of UNFCCC documents as a supplementary methodology (Demeritt 2001; Hall and Persson 2017; Hickmann et al. 2019).

Before arriving at the empirical argument I will first situate my inquiry on the sequenced formation of the INC and UNFCCC in existing research and scholarly paradigms on institutions, knowledge, and state sovereignty.

III. Historicizing the climate institution

To understand the institutional innovation of the INC and the constitutional moment of the Framework Convention, I draw on three primary bodies of literature that outline how institutions come about, how knowledge is instrumentalized and politicized to engender certain developmental paths, and how the political economic moment inflected the material conditions and parameters for change. First, historical institutionalism emphasizes how a sequence of antecedent conditions and mechanisms yields a critical juncture and shapes the institutional development of global climate politics (Collier and Collier 1991; Capoccia and Keleman 2007). Second, Science and Technology Studies (STS) questions normative boundaries regarding the

politics of expertise and knowledge production: How do avowedly scientific practices of climate and global kinds of knowledge—knowledge claiming to offer a view from everywhere (Hulme 2020)—constitute or privilege certain epistemes over others (Jasanoff 2004; Miller 2007)? Finally, shifting away from ideological components, political geography and critical state theory highlight the material and relational political-economic conditions of this particular moment as states reoriented towards the market and rescaled authority through devolution to inter-state governance institutions (Brenner 1998, 1999, 2004; Bulkeley 2005). The literature also points to the evolving principles of sovereignty and territoriality within the United Nations system and the power differentials that animated inter-state institutional development (Beck et al. 2017; Brand et al. 2008). I outline these frameworks and theories below.

I begin with historical institutionalism which offers an effective framework of analysis to structure examinations of the active genesis of institutions and identify critical antecedent conditions, mechanisms that engender a cleavage and the critical juncture of institutional innovation, and explain its reproduction and legacy (Collier and Monck 2017). Critical junctures are generally taken to be a concentrated episode of “synoptic policy innovation” when new logics or practices can be instituted (Collier and Monck 2017). A critical juncture comes about amid a shock or cleavage that triggers a policy breakthrough and institutional innovation. These are necessarily delimited by a series of antecedent conditions (economic, social, and political developments) that set the parameters for change. Mechanisms of reproduction therein create an enduring institutional legacy that stabilizes the institution (or reverberates outward) for a substantial period (Collier and Munck 2017).

The guiding question for those studying critical junctures thus becomes: Why does a given institution come into existence, or what sequence of events happened to yield a particular

path of institutional development over all other possible paths? And further, how does an institution reproduce an enduring legacy? These questions matter because institutions are not simply bureaucratic organizations, but rather “durable structures of knowledge that define the rules and expectations of recurrent behaviors” (Viterna and Robertson 2015, 252; Patterson 2014, 14). An institution is a patterned way of doing and knowing, in other words the “reciprocal typification of habitualized action” (Berger and Luckman 1990, 52). To understand these particular ways of doing and knowing, STS literature probes how epistemic and political authority are reproduced in a particular context.

STS approaches assess contentious negotiations within institutional settings. Put simply, these approaches point to the mechanisms through which scientific knowledge inevitably comes to rest on tacit assumptions and values that carry consequential implications when forming the basis of political decisions (Miller 2004, 93). The approach identifies an underlying politics of expertise that animate inherently political contexts of knowledge production and negotiation (Beck et al. 2017). Probing the precise moments through which an institution-in-the-making validates and bounds certain knowledge claims fundamentally identifies those knowledge claims rendered out-of-bounds. The consequential translation of this expertise into power and authority then sets the institutional standards developed through negotiation (Miller 2007, 327; Hulme 2010, 561). The practice of boundary work or social ordering, such as assigning an issue to the realm of science or politics or scaling an issue to the level of local or global, is an inherently political exercise that delegates power, authority, and resources to certain forms of knowledge over others.

Attending to knowledge production in the case of climate institutions has involved probing which types of knowledge claims have been considered authoritative and of universal

relevance to climate change responses (Eriksen et al. 2015, 528). STS approaches draw attention to the practices, strategies, and devices through which knowledge acquires authority and achieves currency (Martello & Jasanoff 2004; Beck et al. 2017, 539). Often this occurs through a process of co-production, whereby modern societies form their epistemic and normative understandings of the world in a joint process of articulation (Jasanoff 2004), such as scientists and policy makers setting the boundaries of climate change as a global issue requiring a global solution.

Particular knowledge claims proffered by institutional actors in the formation of the climate institution can best be understood in conversation with a body of political geography and critical state literature that has, especially since the late-twentieth century, unsettled the norms of international relations theory. This literature explains the formation and reproduction of supra-national organizations on a range of social issues—population management, hunger, gender equality, public health, conflict resolution, humanitarian aid, and, in this case, climate change (Chorev 2012). The United Nations created many of these institutions in a particular political-economic moment of state restructuring and market reorientation in the late twentieth century (Brenner 1998, 1999). Devolution of state responsibility to other levels of governance (such as the UN) came amid many states' reorientations to serve the market by way of fiscal shrinkage, symbolic degradation, privatization, and re-regulation (Fourcade and Gordon 2020; Brown 2015; Farrell 2018; Prasad 2018). Situated in this context, the questions of states then become what social issues do states commit to addressing endogenously, and by what rationality? And how has the role of the United Nations shifted in this moment as states potentially offload functions onto supra-national institutions?

The United Nations is built upon and further enshrines an ideal principle of sovereignty (Andersen 2020). This sovereignty ideal is a fixture of the UN system and post-war order (Adamian 2008, 78). The UN Charter (1945) qualifies the organization as “based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.” This ideal is rooted in the modern Westphalian order of territorial space and model of absolute sovereignty that carved states into exclusive units of territory over which states claimed absolute authority (Agnew 1994, 2018, 2019; Delaney 2005; Elden 2010). Political space became rigid, disjointed, and qualified as mutually exclusive, especially in the twentieth century codification of the territorial-state world map (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006, 220; Murphy 2012). The territorial organization of world politics formed two putatively separate spheres of space: the “domestic” space within boundaries and the “international” between boundaries (Agnew 1994, Fall 2020). The domestic became the container for society, the legitimate and central authority (Moore 2008). Beyond sovereign boundaries qualified the “international,” or the inter-state relations characterized by a lack of single sovereign authority and the assumption that national-states were the adequate entities for organizing politics (Wimmer and Schiller 2003).

The sovereignty ideal is a paradoxical feature at once state-centric yet simultaneously undermining state sovereignty (Andersen 2020, 138). While institutions like the United Nations buttress the regulatory authority of the national-state, the state must also undergo a process of internationalization whereby agents of the state seed authority to the supranational governance regime (McCarthy 2005, 750; Beck et al. 2017, 538; Head and Gibson 2021, 700). Yet, the formal sovereignty of states is not diminished but rather reinforced. States hold the bargaining power, albeit unevenly, to inscribe their interests via voluntary membership and consensual decision-making (Beck et al. 2017, 544; Adamian 2008, 68). The inter-state regime is always

susceptible to collapse and contestation because the authority of global governance remains vested in the consent of the very states to which it applies (Adamian 2008, 69). The United Nations is not a sovereign world government nor an exclusive legislative body. In seeking to respect state rights, crafters of the Charter rendered accountability mechanisms across the UN system inordinately difficult (Andersen 2020). While the UN likely would not have gained its broad support without safeguards to state sovereignty, which can be seen as protecting states from a monopolistic one world regime (Adamian 78), the uneven legal forms of sovereignty ascribed to constituent states enables certain state governments to sway inter-state institutions toward the national interests they represent, often at the expense of a large majority of other states (Beck et al. 2017, 546; Brand et al. 2008).

The privileged organization of political space into enclosed territorial states has also denied alternative arrangements and obscured the genuine functioning of the world by siloing issues like climatic changes into the arena of inter-state affairs (Painter 2010; Sassen 2013; Dawson 2013; Halvorsen 2019). Industrial emissions—causing a majority of atmospheric warming—do not lend themselves so easily to the spatiality of the territorial state organization. The global articulation of climate change thus presented those tasked with forming a management system with a methodological dilemma: In a political system rooted in state territoriality, how can states manage a transboundary issue like climate change (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006)?

As I will highlight via the archives, scientists and policy makers conceived of climatic changes within this territorial organization of political space, restricting the issue to the state and a scalar hierarchy of governance predicated upon a division between the imagined domestic and international (Moore 2008). Delegates of the INC positioned the climate as a global system

requiring global management by none other than representatives of sovereign states. They effectively “territorialized” the carbon cycle by articulating emissions on national state scales (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006). But this “articulation of the carbon cycle on the national scale is not a neutral representation, it is a way of ordering the world that shape social practices, hence, an epistemology” (219). And it’s these very social practices and the geographical consequences created in their wake that I seek to examine.

Together, these three literatures can help elucidate the particular developmental path taken by the INC, the precursor to the Framework Convention. However, little empirical work has assessed the INC. This institution has not been historicized or studied as a critical juncture, a framework that elucidates the critical conditions that bring about institutional change. On the thirtieth anniversary of the formation of this institution, applying critical scrutiny to its genesis may aid in charting a new path and proffering heterodox proposals.

Historical institutionalist perspectives help trace the genesis of climate planning and identify critical antecedent conditions, the mechanisms that engender a cleavage and the critical juncture of institutional innovation, and the mechanisms that reproduce a legacy. The UNFCCC is enduring and self-perpetuating as Conference of the Parties have been organized each year since 1994. I frame the formation of the INC and its crafting of the Framework Convention as a critical juncture—a major episode of institutional innovation and period of significant change—in the history of climate change politics (Collier and Collier 1991; Capoccia and Keleman 2007; Collier and Munck 2017). Ultimately this framework provides valuable insight into trajectories of political change.

Meanwhile, the STS literature identifies mechanisms of knowledge production to link antecedent conditions of climate science paradigms to the global kinds of knowledge about

climate change that qualified this issue for management in the inter-state system of global governance. In the case of the INC, STS approaches explain how the Framework Convention arose in a symbolic context whereby the planet was framed as an indispensable scale of social analysis (Jasanoff 2010, 240; Selcer 2018).

Finally, political geography literature identifies the political economic conditions that shaped the critical juncture of the Framework Convention and the normative dimensions of climate planning created in its wake. Since the rise of climate science and global kinds of knowledge in the late twentieth century, the issue of climate change has been conceptualized within the boundaries of territorial sovereignty, particularly within the United Nations system. This has occurred in spite of the recognition that climate change's causes (e.g., planetary warming greenhouse gasses from industrial pollution) and consequences are global problems, albeit with uneven causes and outcomes across regions and populations. The concurrent reorientation of the state toward the market in the late twentieth century must be considered in explaining how states came together to govern climate planning in the way they did.

I adopt the strengths of all three literatures in filling an empirical lacuna—explaining the emergence and endurance of climate planning through the UNFCCC. Before answering why the UNFCCC took the developmental path it did, I will briefly outline the history of climate negotiations prior to the formation of the INC.

IV. A sequence of planetary climate planning and timeline of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee

The history of climate planning is rooted in a series of co-productions (Jasanoff 2004) between scientists and policy actors. In this section, I briefly sketch the arc of activities leading to the establishment of the INC and the subsequent formation of a Framework Convention.

Specialized agencies of the United Nations were among the key conveners of climate scientists in the mid-twentieth century. In 1979, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Council of Scientific Unions (ISCU), and numerous other scientific bodies convened the First World Climate Conference (WCC-1), headlined “A Conference of Experts on Climate and Mankind” (Zillman 2009). Held in Geneva from 12 to 23 February, organizers welcomed 350 technical specialists from 53 countries and 24 international organizations during the first week. The following week organizers extended invitations to a group of one hundred policy specialists who together released the Declaration of the World Climate Conference (World Meteorological Organization 1979). The declaration’s “Appeal to Nations” called on nations to work together toward the “long-term survival of mankind” (716).

Following this conference at the Eighth WMO Congress (World Meteorological Organization 1980) in April and May 1979, the WMO established the World Climate Programme to formally study the role of increasing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gasses. “In the field of climatology a new era is looming large,” declared WMO President Mohamed Fathi Taha at the first plenary meeting, “thanks in large measure to the highly successful World Climate Conference which WMO organized” (9).

Proceeding a series of conferences hosted by the WMO, and joint efforts of the UNEP and WMO to form the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) based on the principle of being “policy-relevant and yet policy-neutral, never policy-prescriptive,” the two organizations convened in Toronto, Canada from 27-30 June 1988 to host the World Conference

on the Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security (the Toronto Conference). Over 340 delegates represented forty-six countries, although roughly sixty percent of delegates were from North America alone. Unlike previous conferences on the emerging climate data, the Toronto Conference facilitated rich debate among the 20 politicians, 118 policy advisors, 73 physical and 50 social scientists, 50 environmental activists, and 50 industry representatives in attendance. These debates, examined in the following section, were captured in detail in the conference proceedings (WMO/UNEP 1988). Negotiations provide a glimpse into contestations defining early climate negotiations, namely the normative dilemma of the scale in which and actors by which to govern the planet's climate.

The year 1990 marked a turning point in the translation of climate science to planetary climate planning. First, following UN General Assembly (1989) Resolution 44/207 of 22 December 1989, "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind," an Ad Hoc Working Group of Government Representatives (UN General Assembly 1990a) from seventy countries convened in Geneva from 24 to 26 September 1990 to prepare for negotiations on a Framework Convention on climate change, a putatively legally binding treaty of international law. Adopted by consensus, the group's twenty recommendations formed the foundation of planetary climate planning by identifying "one option regarding the organization of the negotiating process": namely, the convention-protocol approach (UN General Assembly 1990a; Kuyper et al. 2018). This approach, extracted from the inter-state precedent of the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its 1987 Montreal Protocol, effectively withdrew binding commitments from an institutional framework. Ultimately, the Ad Hoc Working Group laid the groundwork for the negotiating body that would soon continue this work.

Next, from 2 October to 7 November 1990, the Second World Climate Conference convened in Geneva. A North/South divide within the inter-state system over global inequality that had long plagued other UN negotiations animated this conference. Yet within the category of the “South,” represented by the G77, distinctive groups began to emerge: The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), oil-producing states, and other developing countries (Ramakrishna and Young 1992, 258). Many of the delegates from advanced industrial states centered their discussions on the unsettled scientific and environmental dimensions of climate planning while delegates of developing states discussed power and inequality, poverty, and development. The conference first convened six days of technical scientific discussions among 747 participants from 116 countries. Organizers then shifted venues to the Palais des Nations in a symbolic act of epistemic ordering (Miller 2004). Ministerial sessions among 908 participants from 137 countries produced a declaration differing dramatically from the final statement of the technical sessions (United Nations General Assembly 1990a).

Discussing results from the first decade of research of the World Climate Programme and the recently convened IPCC, the technical statement established that “a clear scientific consensus has emerged on estimates of the range of global warming” expected during the next century (3), signaling the impacts that will be felt “most severely in regions already under stress, mainly in developing countries” (5). The statement insisted that historical growth in emissions had been a direct consequence of, among other phenomena, “the related exploitation of fossil fuels by industrialized societies [...] some 75 percent of total CO₂ emissions have come from the industrialized countries” (4-5). The language in this text was unambiguous. Meanwhile, the subsequent Ministerial Declaration, agreed upon by consensus by heads of state and their policymakers, drew upon a limited discursive bank of options, represented by keywords

underlined throughout the declaration text, such as *reaffirm, stress, recommend, recognize, note, welcome*. It was in this context of co-production that political pacts, such as the Alliance of Small Island States, began to assemble to oppose the sanitizing consensus process. Delegates on behalf of developing countries argued that the technoscientific IPCC process did not address their concerns. Many delegates thereby rejected the proposal that a negotiating committee be convened under the auspices of the WMO and UNEP.

Finally, on 21 December 1990, at the 71st plenary meeting, the UN General Assembly (1990b) passed Resolution 45/212 formally establishing “a single intergovernmental negotiating process under the auspices of the General Assembly, supported by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization, for the preparation by an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee of an effective Framework Convention on climate change” (148). It was in this resolution that the United Nations decided that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee would be open to all member states of the UN or specialized agencies, “with the participation of observers in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly” (148). The Resolution also declares the maximum duration of each negotiating session to be two weeks, a timeline that persists in negotiations today. The resolution also established a Special Voluntary Fund to ensure developing state participation, and nongovernmental organizations were invited to “make contributions [...] on the understanding that these organizations shall not have any negotiating role during the process” (149). The normative boundaries of climate governance were beginning to take shape.

Forging an inter-state climate authority

The INC, opened to all State Members of the United Nations and specialized agencies, met in five sessions between February 1991 and May 1992 (see Figure I). On 19 December

1991, the UN General Assembly passed resolution 46/169 urging the Committee to expedite and complete negotiations in time for the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992. On 9 May 1992, the Chairman agreed upon and adopted the final text of the Framework Convention and recommended it for signature during the UNCED. In this section I briefly outline the timeline and key outcomes of the five INC sessions.

Guiding the initial session of the INC was the First Assessment Report of the IPCC as well as the Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Government Representatives to Prepare for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (United Nations General Assembly 1990a). One hundred and two states were represented at the session, as well as specialized agencies like the UNESCO, WHO, World Bank, WMO, as well as seventy-six non-governmental organizations, including the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association, representing a consortium of the largest oil and gas multinationals; the American Petroleum Institute, the largest U.S. trade association for the oil and natural gas industry; as well as environmentalist organizations like Greenpeace International (INC 1991a, 22).

At the first session the committee agreed through consensus to establish two working groups to prepare draft texts for consideration by the plenary: Working Group I related to commitments (greenhouse gas reductions, financial resource allocation, special situation of developing countries) and Working Group II related to legal and institutional accountability mechanisms of the framework (24).

Of relevance in the oral report of Working Group I were the varying degrees of support expressed for the following concepts and approaches: Climate change as a common concern of humanity, equity, differentiated responsibility, 'polluter pays principle,' 'precautionary principle,' cost-effectiveness, flexibility, compatibility with development needs, sovereignty over

natural resources, need for short-term and long-term action, international cooperation, compensation for incremental costs incurred by developing countries, need for mechanisms for finance and transfer of technology, and special circumstances of different groups of countries (12). There was also a divergence of views concerning the commitments to be included in the Framework Convention, with several delegations insisting that specific emissions reduction commitments, initially undertaken by industrialized countries, should be established. Delegates from advanced industrial states argued that specific commitments “should not be sought at the present stage and that the Framework Convention should provide a flexible system permitting countries to adopt their own strategies” (13).

Of relevance in the oral report of Working Group II were questions around a dispute settlement mechanism being compulsory; financial resources being new funds separate from development assistance and mandatory; and the transfer of technology on a non-commercial basis (17). The Working Group agreed to provide travel and subsistence costs to one delegate each from ninety-nine developing countries.

At the second session of the INC, delegates set two key processes underway. First, both working groups presented their initial findings and recommendations following private and informal sessions. Second, the Committee introduced a “Compilation of Possible Elements for a Framework Convention on Climate Change” (INC 1991c), a document consisting of material culled from the following sources: General Assembly resolutions; Ministerial Declarations; the IPCC First Assessment Report, Volume 1; the IPCC Legal Measures Report of Topic Coordinators; the texts of existing international agreements, conventions and protocols on related subjects; and, most importantly, the set of informal papers, including “non-papers” (documents

that do not carry the official seal of a government) submitted by state delegations (see INC 1991f-h for samples).

During the third session of the INC, both working groups again presented updates on the negotiations as informal negotiations took place (INC 1991d). The fourth session of the INC facilitated formal and informal readings of the draft convention, progressing toward a “Consolidated Working Document” (INC 1991e). Yet, delegates continued to debate the scope of the Framework Convention, diverging on quantitative targets for reduction, the choice of gasses to be controlled, the measures to be taken, the criteria to be used to control emissions, and the question of categorization of countries in relation to the creation of an international climate fund and its governance (10). Lack of time was cited as the major inhibitor, while “delegations were keener to meet in informal groups to sort out their differences and come up with compromise texts. This led to a number of joint proposals being submitted on principles and on commitments” (10).

Finally, the two-part fifth session was marked by intense contestations and accusations of marginalization. Bureau staff produced a “clean” “Revised Text Under Negotiation” in the first part (INC 1992a, 7) marked by numerous political decisions yet to be agreed upon. The Chairman adopted a completed Framework Convention in the final part for signature at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992.

Retracing the INC process, meticulously documented in the archives and discussed in depth in the following sections, brings back into view the conflicts through which the institution was formed. What emerged as a singular and unified Framework Convention was indeed predicated on divergent views concerning almost every aspect of the agreement. It is precisely in the depth of these archival materials, particularly during the second, fourth, and fifth sessions,

that we can identify critical moments of cleavage and the actors responsible for the promotion or elimination of concepts and approaches. I preface the political cleavage and critical juncture with a series of critical antecedent conditions and transformational mechanisms that set the parameters for institutional innovation.

V. How the climate became governable: Critical antecedents

The political development of the INC and Framework Convention was conditioned by a series of antecedent conditions. As the goal of this analysis is to explain the particular institutional developmental path, I move now to identify key transformational mechanisms by which the formation of the politically important and enduring governance institution for climate change came about. A mechanism is a general sequence of social events or processes by which some cause X tends to bring about some effect Y in the realm of human social relations (Gross 2009, 364). “This sequence or set may or may not be analytically reducible to the actions of individuals who enact it, may underwrite formal or substantive causal processes, and may be observed, unobserved, or in principle unobservable” (364). This process entails breaking down the complex social phenomena structuring the formation of planetary governance into component parts to examine how chains of actors directed particular developmental paths to bring about systematic effects (364).

The INC and Framework Convention were formed in a context whereby scientists and policy makers had actively framed the planet/globe as an indispensable scale of social analysis. Knowledge had been conditioned to produce distinctive responses to such truth claims (Jasanoff 2010, 240; Selcer 2018). This process represented a co-production through which modern societies formed their epistemic and normative understandings of the world (Jasanoff 2004). In particular, the “global” as a conception of scale separate from the international or other

supranational scales became increasingly normative in the 1980s and 1990s, often articulated in relation to “globalization.” This emergent scale framing increasingly displaced all others rather than being articulated as another scale simply thought of relationally to those like the national and the urban. These more “local” scales and national concerns were dismissed in favor of the enterprise of thinking in terms of “global” climate change.

I identify two key transformational mechanisms consistently referenced in archival materials. These include the Committee’s frame alignment with a dominant truth regime (Foucault 1980; Weir 2008) of the climate as a global system to be managed on a global scale, and its institutional path dependence (Castro et al. 2014) wherein the United Nations functioned as the axiomatic facilitator of supranational politics. This section ultimately probes the knowledge infrastructures that made the global-scale climate a political vision and the institutional infrastructures that made global-scale climate management a political reality (Selcer 2018).

Frame alignment with the dominant truth regime of global climate change

There was virtually unanimous agreement that science and the continuing development of scientific knowledge through research were the bases upon which the convention should rest.

—INC Second Session

During the second session of the INC, Working Group II noted how delegations were united in their conviction that scientific knowledge about the climate would be the driving engine of the institution (Hulme 2014, 302). Throughout the negotiating process, delegations consistently cited the authority of science—a “regime of truth” (Foucault 1980, 133) around the changing climate—as their guiding principle for the construction of a political governance institution. This truth regime operated “as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements [...] linked in a circular relation

with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it” (133). Before explaining how and why delegations aligned with this regime of the production of truth, I first explore its critical antecedents.¹

STS literature identifies three key historical antecedents to the formation of a truth regime around climate change. First, the conceptualization of climate as a global system is traced to a long series of developments within meteorology and mathematical modeling over the past century (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006). Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius, building on the work of physicists like Joseph Fourier hypothesizing the heat-trapping elements of atmospheric gases, is often viewed as the first to quantify global warming in 1896 and calculate the extent to which increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide (or carbonic acid in his case) can increase Earth’s surface temperature (Chakrabarty 2009, 198; Bolin 2007). But Arrhenius’s theory did not have an immediate impact, despite his 1903 Nobel Prize on a different topic. Around the time of his theory, as states established meteorological services, more scientists began compiling composite temperature measurements from across the globe. Charles Keeling, inventing an early instrument to measure carbon dioxide samples of the atmosphere, published his well-known “Keeling Curve” research in 1961 showing the levels of carbon dioxide were increasing. The practice of mathematical modeling, assisted significantly by the advance of computing technologies, further aided scientists in linking oceanographic and atmospheric modeling of the global carbon cycle, discussed in more detail below (Demeritt 2001, 314; Hart and Victor 1993). What, however, explains the gap between 1896 and the establishment of planetary climate governance in 1992?

¹ An archeology of the truth regime does not refute the science of climate change or its planetary framing, but rather seeks out the mechanisms that made it possible to configure a global institution of climate management and understand what is being secured if not the climate (Oels 2005, 201).

Not until other economic and political systems of the world were conceptualized as interconnected and globalized in a period of “globalization” in the late twentieth century did discussions of global warming take off in the public realm. This scale framing increasingly displaced all others as the marker of key metrics and governance level of issues like poverty, hunger, public health, and others (Agnew 2018). Much existing literature attends to the cultural politics of scientific practice (Demeritt 2001, 308) and posits how post World War II conditions inflected the emergence of the global climate system and globalized environmental science (Masco 2010; Zillman 2009). For instance, meteorologist and former President of the WMO John Zillman (2009) outlined five key scientific, technological, and geopolitical developments that converged in this particular moment of time and space to propel a conception of climate as a popular object of study and management. These developments included a) post-war shifts in atmospheric science toward large-scale circulation models; b) the establishment of new geographical observation tools such as the Mauna Loa Observatory in 1958; c) the recognition of Earth-orbiting satellites as potential meteorological tools in the early 1960s; d) the proliferation of the modern computer, particularly super-computing capacities; and finally, e) the inter-state cooperation cultivated by the UN and its institutions. In particular, a 1961 UN General Assembly Resolution (1721) on “International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space” called upon member states and the WMO “to advance the state of atmospheric science and technology so as to provide greater knowledge of basic physical forces affecting climate and the possibility of large-scale weather modification.” This resolution formed the WMO World Weather Watch and the WMO/ICSU Global Atmospheric Research Programme and motivated subsequent General Assembly actions such as the 1974 resolution on undertaking a study of climate change (Zillman 2009, 142; World Meteorological Organization 1974).

The idea of climate thus evolved “from being interpretative, and hence geographically differentiated, to becoming enumerated and hence readily globalised” (Hulme 2010, 560). Two institutions in particular began producing facts about the climate on a planetary scale: the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (est. 1986), and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (est. 1988). These research networks “globalized the atmosphere by constructing a discourse that framed climate change as a risk to the global environment” (Miller 2004, 47). The technologies employed by the IPCC—global surveys, a global surveillance system via remote sensing, computer numerical modeling of general circulation—rendered the planet “like a spaceship” that certain humans could steer on the basis of data and models provided by the natural sciences (Oels 2005, 197, Selcer 2018). “Climates plural became global climate singular, regional climate variations became global climate change, and global climate change became the systemic entity that was to be predicted by the new Earth System science” (Hulme 2010, 560). The IPCC, in particular, proffered a model of global politics in which technical experts and their knowledge, rendered politically neutral, were afforded significant authority to define the terms of global policy (Miller 2004, 47).

Finally and concurrently, the Cold War context brought ecological crises into mutual focus with nuclear crisis. Masco (2010) illustrates a set of contingent developments that rendered an understanding of the planet as a singular system, considering the conditions under which it became “possible for citizens to imagine a truly planetary crisis” (9). Within the military archives of the Cold War, Masco locates particular moments in which the US nuclear testing program transformed the earth into a laboratory—an experimental theater for nuclear science. Militarizing the global biosphere, Cold War technoscience developed (via funding for the earth and atmospheric sciences) an understanding of a singular, integrated, and fragile planet. The

Cold War-era production of satellites and computer models, along with an increasingly interconnected network of scientific institutions, enabled this particular construction of the climate system to emerge by reinforcing “global visibilities at the cost of local specificities” (Oels 2005, 197).

This imaginative geography of the global atmosphere has produced what Edwards (2006, 230; 2010) terms an infrastructural globalism, “by which ‘the world’ as a whole is produced and maintained—as both object of knowledge and unified arena of human action.” Grouping greenhouse gasses into a composition of universal physical properties served as a key component of this process. The collective effect of increasing atmospheric concentrations impacted the constructed radiation budget of the planet as a whole (Demeritt 2011, 312). To parse out a planetary radiation budget, scientists devised global circulation or climate models, which dissected the three-dimensional earth into layers of grids and calculated the exchange of energy between them through mathematical equations. This process regarded climate change as a matter of energy exchange which could only be understood as a global-scale phenomenon taking place over an observable unit of time.

This construction of global warming, predicated upon the universal and predictable physical properties of greenhouse gasses, effectively appealed to a common, undifferentiated humanity as certain groups altered the atmosphere (Demeritt 2001, 313). This representation is not untrue but rather partial. Humans are all reliant upon the atmosphere and the slow concentration of greenhouse gasses surely does render climate change a planetary phenomenon. Yet the anthropos in its entirety is not uniformly responsible nor are impacts experienced universally (Whyte 2017; Davis and Todd 2017). Positing climatic changes as a singular,

planetary phenomenon situates governance within a global scale, as opposed to the local and regional understandings of the atmosphere that had long preceded this conceptualization.

It was the convergence of these circumstances around the year 1990 that set a developmental path for the normative climate change project, or what Hulme (2014, 301) has termed “The Plan.” Climate change became situated within the discourse of globalism (Roe 1998, 117; Oels 2005 197). But in order to have meaning and become a causal mechanism of planetary climate planning, these grand, abstract ideas about climate science had to be adopted and reproduced within the social context of a governance institution.

The five sessions of the INC highlight the relevance of global kinds of knowledge. The institutional development of the INC was inflected through a mechanism of frame alignment with and reproduction of knowledge predicated upon a globalized political and scalar ordering (Hulme 2010). It was not the truth regime itself that caused the outcome of the Framework Convention, but rather social actors (INC delegates) bridging their values with preexisting norms and deploying these standards toward the formation of a new institution, namely via the development of the Framework Convention. By frame alignment, I refer to the linkage of delegation orientations to those of scientific institutions such that the goals, interests, and beliefs of individual delegations became congruent and complementary with the dominant truth regime of climate science (Snow et al. 1986, 464) as delegates participated in a “politics of signification” (Hall 1982). Archival materials, as discussed below, reveal the organizational outreach and information diffusion by which scientific institutions such as the IPCC participated in, and often initiated, political negotiations to form a governance institution. Rendering particular knowledge about the climate meaningful, the networks shaped how delegations in the INC would go on to produce an ideologically isomorphic truth regime about the climate. The

dominant truth regime effectively established a new civic epistemology—“a set of evidence, facts, logics, rationales, and styles of reasoning on which to ground policies that encompass the globe” (Miller 2007, 350).

This mechanism of frame alignment within an existing truth regime and politics of expertise is a product of situated commitments to forms of epistemic and social order (Mahony and Hulme 2018, 402). I offer two empirical cases from the INC archives to examine how delegations aligned frames with the dominant truth regime of climate science.

I begin with one of the first cases of inter-state co-production between scientists and politicians around climate change: the Toronto Conference. From 27-30 June 1988, the WMO and IPCC, along with the Canadian government, convened the World Conference on the Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security (the Toronto Conference). As scientists and other advocates began promoting global kinds of knowledge with the political community from the late-1970s onward, they co-produced a political vision of a globally coordinated, inter-state management institution (Miller 2007, 340). Unlike previous conferences on emerging climate science, the Toronto Conference facilitated rich debate among the politicians and scientists (WMO/UNEP 1988, viii). Speaking on the objectives of the Toronto Conference, conference director H.L. Ferguson explained that “we were intent on demonstrating our conviction that these major atmospheric pollution issues are not independent, but are inextricably linked, and that political action to deal with both causes and effects must be based on a more holistic approach to atmospheric change and the human and economic dimensions of such change” (vii). This approach included examining “ways and means of developing an international agreement to stabilize and reduce the adverse human influences on the global

atmosphere [...] promote and increase global cooperation [...] and] instigate concrete responses within the policy-making bodies of national governments and industrial boardrooms” (viii).

At the conference, scientific delegations presented political leaders the (largely Northern) scientific consensus of climate change and began to shape a truth regime for managing the climate on a global scale. They cited past environmental negotiations, such as the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, as potential inter-state models for a climate change political institution:

The first steps in developing international law and practices to address pollution of the air have already been taken: in the Trail Smelter arbitration of 1935 and 1938; Principle 21 of the 1972 Declaration of the UN Conference on the Environment; the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution and its Protocol (Helsinki, 1985) for sulphur reductions; Part XII of the Law of the Sea Convention; and the Vienna Convention for Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montréal Protocol (1987) (296).

As the Conference proceedings highlight, within the emerging global order of the late twentieth century the tendency to frame policy problems in specifically global terms had numerous precedents within the UN system (Miller 2004, 82).

Extrapolating the implications of climate science, delegations agreed upon a particular developmental path for inter-state negotiations moving forward as expressed in the Conference Statement:

The Conference called upon governments to work with urgency towards an Action Plan for the Protection of the Atmosphere. This should include an international Framework Convention, while encouraging other standard-setting agreements along the way, as well as national legislation to provide for protection of the global atmosphere. The Conference also called upon governments to establish a World Atmosphere Fund financed in part by a levy on the fossil fuel consumption of industrialized countries to mobilize a substantial part of the resources needed for these measures (292).

The scientific construction of global environmental change underpinned the legitimacy of claims for a global management institution (Miller 2004, 64). Only after rendering the global

atmosphere a unit of political scale could scientists render the climate crisis a global political cause (Selcer 2018). This scientific representation of the climate system, carbon cycle, and temperature was a fundamental element in the framing of climate change as a global issue to be managed on a global scale (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006, 225). Politically, such representations of the earth system offered policy makers a “demanding totality which must be prudently managed within prescribed boundaries and limits,” particularly at so-called global scales (Mahony and Hulme 2018, 406).

While delegates at the Toronto Conference were in agreement over the scale defined in the governance and management of climate, statements by particular delegates revealed the political paths still at stake. Cheikh Cissokho, Minister of Rural Development of Senegal, argued at the conference that,

Solutions must be global if they are to be effective and workable. A global solution resides in the affirmation of interdependence and co-responsibility [...]. Real technological transfer to the developing countries must be implemented for the study and control of atmospheric change. Resources must be shared to remedy damage. The developing countries must be helped socially and economically (mainly those that suffer from desertification) so that they can find new approaches to development and, also, to contribute to restoration. Remission of debts is one of the first actions needed to reverse the actual negative north-south transfer (287).

Cissokho revealed the linkage of his political orientations to the scientific construction of global climate change. Yet, his goals, interests, and beliefs for technological transfer, development, and debt remissions illustrated a divergence from the dominant technical regime of climate science, rooting the issue in political-economic drivers as opposed to purely abstract and technical debates. However, Cissokho’s voice did not represent the majority view of those in attendance.

In particular, the statement of the Toronto Conference frame aligned with the Cold War construction of climate change and its particular mode of crisis governance. Speakers positioned

climate change around national security as opposed to political-economic patterns (Masco 2010).

As the collective Conference Statement explained,

Humanity is conducting an unintended, uncontrolled, globally pervasive experiment whose ultimate consequences could be second only to a global nuclear war [...] As the UN Report On The Relationship Between Disarmament And Development states: ‘The world can either continue to pursue the arms race with characteristic vigour or move consciously and with deliberate speed toward a more stable and balanced social and economic development within a more sustainable international economic and political order. It cannot do both. [...] The same consideration applies to the vital issue of protecting the global atmospheric commons from the growing peril of climate change and other atmospheric changes. Unanticipated and unplanned change may well become the major non-military threat to international security and the future of the global economy (292-295).

Constructing a parallelism between nuclear armament and climate change, the conference conditioned climate change on specific terms of threat that posed technologically mediated interventions as the antidote to a set of symptoms. These interventions effectively propositioned a global temperature dial as the solution (Hulme 2014, Hamilton 2015). The conference thereby captured climatic changes “on terms historically useful to the national security state” (Masco 2010, 29). These propositions would stand in contrast to proposals of the South discussed in the following section focusing on a systematic diagnosis of the issue rather than technical solutions.

The Toronto Conference laid the groundwork for the creation of an inter-state institution to manage what became a planetary climate. In this particular moment, frame alignment of political delegations with global kinds of scientific knowledge served as a mechanism underpinning the authority of claims for the management of climate on a world scale, in part leading to the formation of the INC and the Framework Convention (Miller 2007, 339).

Abstraction and modeling rooted in the practices of the IPCC and other scientific bodies thus served as the basis of INC delegations’ knowledge claims. As Working Group II noted in the second session, “There was virtually unanimous agreement that science and the continuing

development of scientific knowledge through research were the bases upon which the convention should rest” (16). In fact, INC Decision 1/1 derived the structure of the Compilation of Possible Elements for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, effectively the first draft of the Framework Convention, from the IPCC Legal Measures Report of Topic Coordinators (INC 1991c, 9).

In this compilation, delegations consistently refracted their proposals through global kinds of knowledge. A key policy product of this knowledge was the reification of global surface temperature (GST), an average of the surface temperature of the sea and air over land. This statistical practice became central to the language of climate change and an organizing metric of global climate politics as the primary locus of normative policy targets (Mahony and Hulme 2018, 406).

For example, in the Compilation (INC 1991c, 41) the delegation of the Netherlands called for a maximum two-degree Celsius increase above pre-industrial levels. The illustrious status of GST within scientific, policy, and public discourse rendered it the near-exclusive index of global climate performance and management (Hulme 2010, 559). The GST, representative of the wider process of making and governing global kinds of knowledge, was the product of the “panoptic gaze” of climate modeling via a system of global data collection (Barnett 2009). It was a “gaze which isolates and divides, separating global processes from local experience [...] while privileging certain synoptic processes and variables over other, more locally-relevant changes” (Mahony and Hulme 2018, 407).

This decontextualized, top-down form of knowledge production and management, a “view from everywhere” (Hulme 2010, 559), rendered an otherwise abstract concept—the long-term statistics that define the global climate—governable (Head and Gibson 2021, 700; Oels

2005, 197). As Hulme (2010, 560) explained, “no-one experiences or witnesses global-mean temperature and it requires extraordinary efforts of the imagination for it to acquire purchase in the practices of everyday living.” In ascribing a single global value (global mean temperature) to the single index of atmospheric warming (greenhouse gasses), this truth regime framed the problem of climate change as a planetary issue requiring planetary management. It effectively opened the way for “managerialism on a planetary scale” (Hulme 2010, 561). The culmination of this knowledge would be the establishment of a proverbial global thermostat—“a control technology for the purpose of optimising global temperature according to a unitary global economic calculus [...] demand[ing] that everything that humans value be entered into one single planetary account” (Hulme 2010, 561). Physical science expertise and technical fixes thus became the prescribed solutions to a problem envisioned through a technical lens (Oels 2005, 197; Lutes 1998).

This knowledge thus reproduced globalist forms of politics and spatial organization. In fact, the final text of the UNFCCC did not aim to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions but rather work towards a “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (UNFCCC 1992, 9; Oels 2013).

Through the process of science-led politics modeled by the INC, science was effectively imagined as independent of the political process and as a source feeding value-neutral information to policy makers in a manner that would absolve policymakers full responsibility (Demeritt 2001, 329). Political reliance on the authority of climate science enshrined in putative scientific objectivity the particular judgments and values embodied by global kinds of knowledge. Policymakers could use the scientific control over the narrative to boost the

credibility of the “claim that the Earth’s climate system should be treated in international law as an ontologically unitary system that spans the entire globe and, thus, as a common concern of humankind” (340).

This knowledge infrastructure organized an authoritative epistemic community that called upon geophysical modeling as the dominant approach to validating and thereby governing climate change, as opposed to political-economic or climate-society approaches (Mahony and Hulme 2018). The climate science community, whose composition has historically been drawn disproportionately from North America and Europe (Ho-Lem et al. 2011), provided to a handful of knowledge producers the credibility to claim universal and global urgency to motivate political change in a particular scalar path (Miller 2004 64-65). Global kinds of knowledge effectively privileged a dominant Northern conception at the expense of the Southern proposals that tied climatic changes to less abstract processes of political-economic domination.

The INC frame aligned with the existing truth regime of the climate as a global system to be managed on a global scale within the venue of the United Nations, reproducing particular spatial logics (Beck et al. 2017, 534). The process of the INC illustrated how this configuration of global geographical scale—scaling climatic changes into a singular climate change—was accomplished via an alignment with existing epistemic authority. As with other global institutions, the key epistemic orientation of the UNFCCC became, not inevitably but through a particular mechanism of frame alignment and reproduction thereof, scientific determinism.

Yet, the partiality of this conception illustrates that climatic changes are not global or local by their very nature. Rather the INC subscribed to “notions of scientific and technological inevitability” to construct this scale (Jasanoff and Martello 2004, 343). The boundary ordering that assigned science as value neutral input and policy as political output legitimated the scalar

orientation of the Framework Convention as a global manager of climate, making global scale intervention seem inevitable to policy makers (Oels 2005, 197, 200). And this scalar construction would ultimately abstract the core historical drivers of atmospheric warming, namely the extraction and propulsion of carbon to fuel industrial economic growth, in favor of universalizing and abstracted technical constructions.

Institutional path dependence

An institutional path dependence on UN governance norms further helps to further explain why the UNFCCC took the particular developmental path it did (David 1985; Collier and Collier 1991). This path dependence is predicated upon a sequence of events that narrow the scope of institutional action and result in a state of persistence and inertia (Pierson 2000; Castro et al. 2014; Schreyögg and Sydow 2010, 4). The critical juncture framework probes why a particular outcome emerges over all others and, therefore, assigns significance to relatively small events which can have large and enduring consequences via the positive feedback they can create (Pierson 2000, 263). Archival materials of the INC highlight the path dependence of delegates, particularly in relation to the scale and governance framework of climate planning.

In this section I show how the UNFCCC did not simply emerge as ‘naturally global.’ Instead, delegations actively constructed the very meanings of these normative scalar divisions. The negotiating fora of the UN General Assembly, UNEP, WMO, IPCC, Ad Hoc Working Group of Government Representatives and, finally, the INC to form the UNFCCC, together with national research programs, expert bodies, and NGOs, collectively constructed climate change as a global problem requiring global solutions (Bulkeley 2005; Head and Gibson 2021).

The scientific framing of climate change, as discussed above, had profound implications for the political ordering of space. Scientists and policy makers, via a process of co-production,

represented climate change as a global problem and a common concern of humanity that required solutions global in scope and management (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006). If global climate change produced by humanity writ large was the problem, then anything less than global solutions between sovereign states would be inadequate in this formulation (McCarthy 2005; Beck et al. 2017, 537).

Co-producing a knowledge infrastructure of climate change as a global issue to be managed on a global scale, scientists and politicians soon began to turn to a familiar governance venue. Following the 1988 Toronto Conference, the government of Malta, represented by Alexander Borg Olivier, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, alongside Vincent Tabone, Minister of Foreign Affairs, submitted a declaration (A/43/241) addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations “proclaiming climate as part of the common heritage of mankind” and calling for a comprehensive “global strategy to conserve climate” (2). The Malta Resolution (A/C.2/43/L.17), as it came to be known, was predicated upon the previous “common heritage of mankind doctrine” popularized by Maltese diplomat Arvid Pardo (1975) and Maltese law professor David Attard. Mostafa Tolba, UN Environment Programme Executive Director presiding over the climate negotiations at the time, soon after appointed Attard as his senior legal advisor (Malta Independent 2009).

Policy makers had previously applied the common heritage doctrine to areas and resources beyond the national jurisdiction of states in the 1979 Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and other Celestial Bodies, as well as the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Notably, these agreements simultaneously enclosed the global commons while providing ultimate rights to sovereign member states (Raymond 2008). Yet rather than developing a “law of the atmosphere” equivalent to these two precedents as the Toronto

Conference had proposed, the General Assembly sought a Framework Convention model for delegates to acknowledge the problem and the need for collective action without committing to binding action. In this governance framework, delegates could come together at a later point in time to formulate a protocol imposing specific obligations on member states. But why did a framework convention model win out over proposals for a law of the atmosphere and other governance frameworks?

In his speech to the Meeting of Legal and Policy Experts held in Ottawa from 20 to 22 February 1989 (Center for International Environmental Law 1990), the Executive Director of the UNEP, Dr. Mostafa Tolba, criticized the law of the atmosphere as a politically unrealistic model, calling instead for a convention model. Tolba had just succeeded in leading the Montreal Protocol negotiations which gave his proposal credence. The scheme for a law of the atmosphere never regained momentum (Bodansky 1990, 53).

Nevertheless, within the INC process, delegations did submit proposals to form a principle akin to a law of atmosphere. As the “possible alternative to Principle 3” noted in the Consolidated Working Document (INC 1991e) of the fourth session of the INC:

All inhabitants of the planet have an equal right to the atmosphere lying outside national jurisdictions. All States have an obligation to protect the atmosphere for the benefit of present and future generations of mankind on the basis of intra-generational as well as inter-generational equity. This common obligation to protect the atmosphere shall be equitably distributed between countries in accordance with developed and developing countries’ common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities and different time frames set out for implementation with a view to achieving convergence of anthropogenic carbon dioxide greenhouse gases, both in historical and current terms, originates from developed countries, and that those countries [in the first instance have the main responsibility]/[shall take the lead] in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof (27).

This proposal, however, would ultimately be eliminated in the consensus process at the behest of Northern delegates.

Still, UN General Assembly delegates received the Malta Resolution for a global strategy with wide interest at the forty-third session of the General Assembly on 24 October 1988 (United Nations General Assembly 1988a). The United Nations General Assembly (1988b) agreed to formally address climate change in Resolution 43/53, “welcoming with appreciation the initiative taken by the Government of Malta” (United Nations General Assembly 1988b, 1989). A series of UN General Assembly resolutions (A RES 43/53, A RES 44/207) soon assigned the United Nations a formal role in the “protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind.” It was in the 1989 resolution that the General Assembly “reaffirms that, owing to its universal character, the United Nations system, through the General Assembly, is the appropriate forum for concerted political action on global environmental problems” and “urges governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations and scientific institutions to collaborate in efforts to repair, as a matter of urgency, a Framework Convention on climate” (United Nations General Assembly 1989, 131).

Subsequently, on 21 December 1990, at the 71st plenary meeting, the United Nations General Assembly (1990b) passed Resolution 45/212 formally establishing “a single intergovernmental negotiating process under the auspices of the General Assembly” (148).

The mechanism of path dependence helps to explain the normative dilemma of climate planning, namely which actors decided how to manage the planet’s climate under particular trajectories of change (Eriksen et al. 2015, 527). There was practically no question among delegations that member states of the United Nations would serve as the lead governing actors, predicated on the longstanding sovereignty ideal in environmental negotiations. The Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference called for a global strategy “without prejudice to sovereignty of States” rooted in the development of national programs (16). In

addition, ministers agreed that “the Framework Convention on climate change be framed in such a way as to gain the support of the largest possible number of countries while allowing timely action to be taken” (United Nations General Assembly 1990a, 22).

The sovereignty clause initially emerged in the INC process in the second session, as the *Compilation of Possible Elements for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (1991)* details, via proposals from the IPCC and delegations of the United Kingdom, China, the United States, and Vanuatu. As the sessions progressed and the draft of the Framework Convention neared completion, the promotion of the sovereignty ideal strengthened via the consensus process. During the third session of the INC held in Nairobi from 9 to 20 September 1991, both working groups presented updates on the negotiations (INC 1991d). Working Group I informed the Committee that

the inclusion of the principles of sovereignty, equity, common but differentiated responsibility and the precautionary principle was broadly supported; however, views differed on their wording and placement in the structure of the Convention. The inclusion of the concept of right to development was broadly supported but also questioned by some delegations. There was disagreement on the inclusion of the polluter-pays principle and the principle of non conditionality among the group as well as differences of interpretation and legal implications of these two principles (18).

The sovereignty ideal was not among those contested concepts up for debate within the negotiating process. It held a rather sacrosanct and inviolable position within this particular forum particularly because of its previous application in environmental negotiations.

Often upheld as the first inter-state environmental treaty, the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment (1972) of the UN Conference on the Human Environment set the stage for the spatial construction of environmental issues (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006, 224; Selcer 2018). Delegations at the conference had wrestled with the tension between sovereign territoriality and responsibilities beyond national territory. Ultimately, Principle 21 of the

Conference “epitomizes this wrestling” in its simultaneous reinforcement and challenge to the principle of state sovereignty (Lovbrand and Stripple 2006, 224), establishing,

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

At the behest of developing and industrialized states alike, the final text of the Framework Convention thereby enshrined the sovereignty ideal developed at the 1972 Stockholm Conference duplicating the principle almost verbatim:

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (UNFCCC 1992, p. 2).

While delegates from across the political spectrum readily accepted the sovereignty ideal, the choice to form a Framework Convention over the Law of the Atmosphere and other proposals was inherently political as these actors framed problems and set the agendas with significant consequences for legitimacy and power (Jasanoff and Martello 2004, 342). The scalar construction of climate change determined the forums in which it would be taken up—the United Nations—and further who could speak on it—delegates representing states. Yet some of the core drivers of atmospheric warming, multinational fossil fuel corporations, were effectively absolved of identification. While the discourses of climate change appeared neutral and technical via the border ordering that divided science from politics, they were “normative in the ways that they join together, reach across, circulate through or obstruct passage between spheres that are held to be local or global” (Jasanoff and Martello 2004, 342).

Together, the mechanisms of frame alignment with the global knowledge infrastructure and path dependence on the sovereignty ideal set the stage for delegations of the INC to construct the Framework Convention in this particular governance path within the United Nations system. But these mechanisms did not complete the story. The INC process was animated by a widening political cleavage among particular actors without which the critical juncture of the Framework Convention may not have emerged in the form in which it did.

VI. Fashioning a critical juncture: North/South institutional bargaining

Emerging out of these antecedent conditions was a political cleavage, an enduring conflict between actors that polarized the political system and triggered the critical juncture or the particular developmental path of this Framework Convention. In this section I sketch the cleavage between the Third World Front and the Industrialized Front focusing on the political choices that animated the development of the institution and revealing the scope of discretion available in the bargaining process. First I briefly outline the technical process of the INC. Then I review a selection of the most contentious Southern proposals, followed by the Northern proposals that won out. To explain why delegations set the Framework Convention on its particular developmental path, I characterize the INC process as one that “sanitized” Southern proposals via institutional developmental idealism—material and ideological conditions of the negotiations—that privileged certain delegations over others.

To characterize this cleavage, I turn to audio materials from the INC negotiating process as well as three key documents from the archive (see Figure II for a visualization of this sanitizing process). First, “The Compilation of Possible Elements for a Framework Convention on Climate Change” (INC 1991c) from the second session of the INC bridged the source of virtually every element of the Framework Convention to the informal state papers that proffered

the proposals of each delegation². Second, the “The Consolidated Working Document” (INC 1991e) from the fourth session of the INC identified the most controversial of proposals.³ Finally, the completed Framework Convention (UNFCCC 1992) that opened for signature in June 1992 revealed the proposals that were actualized.

The technical process of the INC began at the second session of the INC with Bureau staff members deriving the structure of the “Compilation of Possible Elements” from Committee decision 1/1. This decision cited the IPCC Legal and Institutional Mechanisms Report (IPCC 1988)—a guiding document linked to the scientific framing of climate change—as a possible structure for the Framework Convention. This included a preamble, definitions, principles, general obligations, specific commitments, measures to protect, enhance, and increase carbon sinks, the special situation of developing countries, financial resources, transfer of technology, compliance control, institutional arrangements, dispute settlements, and entry into force. Within each section, the document compiled quotations organized alphabetically from the various sources identified above, including past resolutions and state informal papers.

As the negotiations proceeded, the fourth session of the INC facilitated formal and informal readings of the draft convention, progressing toward a “Consolidated Working Document” (INC 1991e). Delegates continued to debate the scope of the Framework Convention, diverging on quantitative targets for reduction, the choice of gasses to be controlled, measures to regulate gasses, the criteria to be used to control emissions, and the question of categorization of countries in relation to the creation of an international climate fund and its governance. Many delegates cited lack of time as a major inhibitor and some met in informal groups to work through differences and create a compromised text (10). The “Consolidated

² Around two dozen state informal papers are available individually in the archives. See INC 1991f-h for samples.

Working Document” illuminated key provisions of the proposed convention that were eliminated through the consensus process (see Figure II for select examples of the most controversial proposals as they progressed through the “sterilizing” consensus process).

The Southern perspective

The Third World Front of the INC—while composing various pacts such as the oil-producing states and small-island states—rooted their collective climate proposals in the seminal projects of late twentieth-century Third Worldism. These projects are represented, among others, by the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (United Nations General Assembly 1974a) and the Charter on the Economic Rights and Duties of States (United Nations General Assembly 1974b). These projects had animated environmental and developmental debates within the inter-state halls of the United Nations system for two decades prior to climate bargaining (Agarwal et al. 1999; Getachew 2019).

This core group of delegations in the INC focused attention in climate debates around a coordinated set of proposals rooted in themes of development and equity. Represented most often by the delegations of Ghana or Pakistan, respectively presiding over the Group of 77 (G77) during the INC period, these delegations sought to reorient climate planning around questions of economic neo-colonialism and dependency. Given the G77’s history as the formal negotiating block during the founding of the UN Conference on Trade and Development in 1964, the group continued to target processes of dependency in an uneven international economic system in the climate bargaining process (Selcer 2018). Their coordinated—although not harmonious—pact framed climate politics around what many hinted to as the colonial present: the inequalities that persisted after decolonization via inter-state economic relations and processes like sovereign debt (Potts 2019).

Elucidating the Southern perspectives, Tariq Osman Hyder (1992, 336), Director General for Economic Coordination of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry representing Pakistan and the G77 at the INC, commented: “Since 1492, Europe has expanded beyond its borders and across the world—into vast areas and continents which either belonged to the peoples of the South or lay within their natural path of expansion.”

Southern proposals on the stage of the INC aligned with the key principles of the New International Economic Order, including the sovereign equality of all states and their natural resources (in particular non-interference in the environments of other states), the environmentally even exchange of resources, and the transfer of financial and technological resources under terms favorable to the developing states (INC 1991j). In the INC, these principles materialized in the form of proposals (see Figure II) for new and additional financial resources and technology transfers on preferential and non-commercial terms, the reduction of industrialized emissions and convergence with developing emissions on a per capita basis, non-conditionality in climate aid (such as no structural adjustment or policy reform requirements), the right to development via an equitable use of atmospheric space (as a commons for humanity), inter-generational equity (not compromising future generations’ needs), the polluter pays principle (those responsible for causing damage to the environment bear the responsibility for rectifying that damage, i.e., historical and differentiated responsibility), the precautionary principle (taking measures which anticipate, prevent, and attack the causes of environmental degradation prior to conclusive scientific proof), and an insurance pool (considered by some a form of debt) funded by developing countries to compensate the most vulnerable from climate impacts. I will briefly review a selection of these contentious proposals.

Three key themes emerged in proposals from the Third World Front: sovereignty, development, and historical responsibility. The delegation of China positioned the “principles of sovereignty of States and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries” as a fundamental component to protecting developing state interests (INC 1991f, 26). The delegation called for the obligations of climate change to be “equitably distributed between developed and developing countries in accordance with their responsibility and capabilities, and different time frames [...] noting that the largest part of the current emission of greenhouse gases originates in developed countries and that those countries have the main responsibility” (26). The informal Chinese paper also declared that “an appropriate level of economic development is the prerequisite for adopting concrete control measures to address climate change, and all the peoples in the world are entitled to an appropriate standard of living. Therefore, the energy consumption of developing countries must grow. Any limitation or control measures shall take full account of the per capita emission levels of various countries and the developmental needs of developing countries” (26).

The proposals of the delegation of India also focused on “reaffirming the direct interrelationship between environment and development [...] that the developing countries have as their main priority the eradication of poverty and the achievement of economic and social development and that their emissions must grow to accommodate their development needs, reflecting the equal right of all peoples in matters relating to living standards” (INC 1991g, 15). The proposal called for new financial resources and technology transfers on preferential and non-commercial terms, “without introducing a new form of conditionality in aid or development financing or constituting a pretext for unjustified barriers to trade” (16).

Finally, proposals from the Vanuatu delegation, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, focused on a series of principles that would hold particular actors responsible for their historical contributions: the Polluter Pays Principle; the Precautionary Principle; sustainable development; responsibility for the Global Commons; equity (with due regard to the development requirements of developing countries); differential responsibility (different time frame taking into account the right to development); inter-generational equity (preserve and protect natural capital for the benefit of present and future generations); liability (including historical responsibility); and clean production (24-25). Additional obligations included the “prohibition on subsidizing activities which contribute to climate change [...] elimination of subsidies and incentives for inefficient resource use [...] and the] prohibition on the dumping of goods benefitting from subsidies which support activities adversely affecting climate change” (29-30). The Vanuatu delegation, along with other small island states, also proposed an insurance mechanism for damage resulting from climate change, considered by some to be a form of climate debt or reparations (INC 1991d, 19).

The Northern perspective

Proposals from the Third World Front looked radically different from those of the Industrialized Front. While I group industrial economies of the North Atlantic into the category “Industrialized Front,” I must note that Western European, Nordic, and North American proposals differed on proposals like emissions reductions. Nevertheless, these delegations shared an overarching strategy that I outline below.

On the Industrialized Front, delegations framed climate planning around the future and a shared responsibility, noting differentiated responsibility but calling on the participation and responsibilities of all states as a method to curtail the amount of emissions industrialized

countries would otherwise be liable to reduce. The United States delegation (INC 1991h, 16) laid out an economic vision of climate planning, “recognizing the interdependence of environmental protection and economic growth, and the need to pursue strategies of global stewardship that advance both these goals.” The American informal paper also stressed “the need for all nations to participate in any international responses to climate change, in accordance with the means at their disposal and their capabilities” (17). With regard to specific emissions reduction obligations, the American and United Kingdom papers called for “economically efficient and effective implementation” (31), arguing that “specific commitments for emissions reductions should not be included in the Framework Convention because of the need for flexibility in nations’ choices of their own measures. Further, there is a real need for further analysis of the costs and benefits of international responses, at the same time that prudent steps may be taken by nations even in the face of great uncertainty” (46). While the American and United Kingdom papers called for the transfer of relevant technologies, there was no mention of favorable and non-commercial terms, and the goal was to “facilitate the fulfilment by the developing countries of their obligation” to reduce emissions (65). Meanwhile, European states like Norway and Germany proposed a tradable emission “clearing-house” mechanism to allow industrial states the ability to offset emission reduction commitments by funding projects in developing states.

A North/South cleavage emerges

The cleavage between North and South can be distilled into the following polemical postures: The North’s “wait and see” proposals focused on symptoms while the South’s “no regrets” proposals targeted a structural diagnosis (Pachauri and Damodaran 1992). The South focused their temporal horizon on the historical and inequitable share of atmospheric space polluted by the North and the precautionary need—in spite of unsettled scientific or economic

analysis—to begin reducing emissions immediately. The South therefore called for drastic reductions on the part of Industrialized states in order for Southern states to advance their economic development using high-emitting processes via the share of the atmospheric commons they, as members of humanity, rightfully deserved. Meanwhile, the North, in particular the United States (as a handful of European states had initially agreed on reductions), called for flexibility (i.e. no emissions reduction commitments) and justified a laggard global response by positioning the scientific and economic analysis required before commitments could be made as unsettled. The North wanted to delay commitments, and even the Framework Convention itself, to an unspecified future. Some delegations of the North also called for the emissions reduction of all member states, shifting the conversation away from the North’s historical use of atmospheric space towards what they positioned as an equitable responsibility of all. Yet this delay would, as pointed out by Southern delegates, effectively prevent developing states from utilizing fossil fuels to the same extent as the North to develop, requiring them to “leap-frog” their development using Northern technologies.

Archival data from the INC process highlights how the global kinds of knowledge deployed by elite actors of the negotiating process had material and geographical consequences. As the early negotiation phase highlighted, delegations aligned with and reproduced the existing truth regime of global climate change, which provided the impetus to cut through geographical complexities via a globally orchestrated institution (Radcliffe 2010, 103). However, those peripheralized from the process questioned from the beginning whether the institutional design of a global institution was best suited to the peculiarities of anthropogenic climatic changes (Beck et al. 542). Delegations and those on the sidelines peripheralized by the national-state process were concerned with the upscaling of knowledge and development of a unitary and

universalizing approach (Beck et al. 2017, 541). Scaling up to the global enabled the Northern agenda to override and circumvent Southern developmental politics taking place at lower scales (Hulme 2010, 560):

In recent years, two decades of the green movement are being erased. The local has disappeared from environmental concern. Suddenly, it seems, only “global” environmental problems exist, and it is taken for granted that their solution can only be “global” [...]. The global does not represent the universal human interest, it represents a particular local and parochial interest which has been globalized through the scope of its reach [...]. The recent emergence of a focus on “global” environmental problems has in fact narrowed the agenda (Shiva 1993, 149-156).

Global knowledge production elided the different forms of knowledge about environments, “of living in places and of imagining the future which are embedded in local cultural practices and knowledge-making traditions” (Hulme 2010, 560). In the global knowledge production process of the INC, place-based knowledge and the apprehension of heterogeneity and complexity were marginalized under the presumption that a single changing climate existed. This upscaling invited “ontological monism” and “dreams of ‘total analysis’ (as if the world is a gigantic jigsaw and experts can assemble all the ‘correct’ pieces in given time)” (Castree 2015, 310). Enlarging the scope of governance from the local or national-state to the supranational thereby entailed the systematic elision of marginal, unorthodox, and non-scientific framings (Jasanoff and Martello 2004, 339).

In particular, the narrowly technical scientific regime of the INC constructed a partial management framework in reductionist forms (Demeritt 2001, 312) that failed to address the plurality of knowledge (Hulme 2010, 563). “Collapsing human knowledge about climate change into one global signature hides far more than it discloses. It is psychologically sterile: no-one experiences or witnesses global-mean temperature” (Hulme 2010, 560). Yet scientific expertise became “the foundation and guarantee for properly constituted [climate] politics/policies”

(Swyngedouw 2010, 217). Privileging quantitative, predictive models, the knowledge infrastructure of a climate-science-informed global management regime acquired hegemony over alternative visions of the future, including visions in which the right to development—including the right to atmospheric space—would play a vital role (Dove 2015, 40).

The partial scientific framing of climate change as a global-scale issue attributable to universal and predictable physical properties of greenhouse gasses reduced the future to climate in a “climate reductionist” process (Hulme 2011, 264) that stripped away the social, cultural, and political dynamism of the past, present, and future (Barnes 2015, 131). For Hulme (2014, 302), “science has done what it can” and the universalizing tendencies of a climate science abstracted from individual human experience can have materially consequential effects (Jasanoff 2010; Head and Gibson 2021, 700). Privileging the physical over social sciences may amount to environmental determinism whereby “the physics and chemistry of climate change set the parameters for environmental and biological change; societies must then adjust as best they can to the change in their environment” (Taylor and Buttel 1992, 410; see also Barnes 2015, 131).

A key example of this partiality is the mechanism of greenhouse gasses which were assigned utmost symbolic meaning in the co-produced policies. For some, this ascription surmounts to “CO₂ fetishism,” or the universalization of a particular object of knowledge (Swyngedouw 2010; Demeritt 2001, 313). The global scaling of climate change, and reliance on globalized concepts like greenhouse gasses as the metric of change, privileged Northern authoritative scientific discourses at the expense of Southern ways of formulating the issue, such as the structural political economic drivers (uneven capital accumulation) and micro or localized drivers like fossil fuel corporations who were responsible for a majority of atmospheric emissions (Demeritt 2001, 313; Shiva 1993, 151). The INC consensus process, in its alignment

with and reproduction of global kinds of knowledge, elided “an equally authoritative account of the socio-historical drivers of climate change” (Fraser 2021, 96).

Nevertheless, actors in and beyond the INC process refuted the dominance of this approach and pointed to the political function of this analytical division of labor between science and politics (Demeritt 2001, 313). Key among the figures refuting the truth regime of greenhouse gases were Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain of the Centre for Science and Environment in India. Agarwal and Narain (1991) offered a subsistence rights argument in their short report, *Global Warming in an Unequal World*, that pointed to a distinction elided in the INC’s alignment with the dominant truth regime: that of subsistence and luxury emissions (Raymond 2008). The fetishistic dominance and reductionism of carbon dioxide within the truth regime effectively enabled the consensus decision-making process to disavow the multiple and complex drivers of climate change rooted in a history of colonial domination, maldevelopment, and environmentally uneven exchange (Jasanoff 2004, 46-47). In the INC process, the globalized climate became a site where “rituals of dominance” became reinscribed via the deliberate abstraction of greenhouse gases.

Agarwal and Narain (1991) noted in their calculations of the atmospheric warming potential of greenhouse gases that commensurating all emissions under the universal banner carbon dioxide or greenhouse gases, regardless of their source or type, would effectively penalize “subsistence” activities—generated to meet basic needs—just as severely as “luxury” ones—generated for unnecessary consumption. This process equalized and concealed a political benefit, if not intention, for those who had historically colonized more atmospheric space by eliding the different uses of resource consumption and historical paths of development (Martello and Jasanoff 2004). The dominant truth regime effectively obscured the uneven political

economy of emissions, sundering atmospheric accumulation and warming from social and economic use (Demeritt 2001, 313).

As delegations with large historical emissions sought to displace the burden of debt onto others, greenhouse gases abstracted from their political history became a legitimizing tool for programs that shifted the benefits of capital exchange towards the North, as with cap and trade programs, technology transfer, etc. (Demeritt 2001, 313). That is, in obscuring the uneven political economy of emissions, states were positioned on a putatively equal playing field—a reset button obscuring historical emissions and power relations. The analytical abstraction represented by greenhouse gases is not invalid, I must add, but rather partial. As Demeritt (2001, 313) contended, “The atmosphere is profoundly indifferent to the source, social context, and meaning of GHG emissions—but the same is not true for us humans, so it is important to unmask the effects of this partiality. A narrowly scientific focus on greenhouse gasses dissociates their physical properties from the surrounding social relations producing them and giving them (particular) meaning(s).”

Materially, delegations of the INC as well as those on the periphery charged that the concern with putatively global climate problems was a Northern concern that held little meaning for developing states and peoples struggling with the more immediate consequences of structural adjustment and uneven exchange (Demeritt 2001, 313). The danger of the Northern scientific view of climate policy-making was perhaps best encapsulated in the moment following the deletion of the right to development from the Framework Convention. Delegates from Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Pakistan (on behalf of the G77 and China), and Benin expressed reservations following the adoption of the final Framework Convention by the

Chairman in the fifth session over the convention's exclusion of the right to development and other key elements.

As the delegate from Iran explained, “the right to development is an inalienable right, a natural right for all people. It emanates as the right to life, freedom, and property from natural law.”³ For the delegate from Bangladesh, “the need for socioeconomic development is a sine qua non for survival,” while for the delegate from Benin, “we deeply believe in the right to development and sovereignty over natural resources [...] our draft convention is weak there. Our draft convention did not seriously take into account those two principles which are dear not only to Africa but also to developing countries as a whole.”⁴ The delegate from Malaysia expressed the strongest disapproval, noting that his delegation would not recommend the signature of the Framework Convention by their government:

In our view, we have before us a document which does [sic] not been negotiated transparently and in a spirit of true partnership but rather we have a text in which key parts have been virtually dictated to us on a take it or leave it basis in a manner in which we perceive as another manifestation of the so-called new world order. For my delegation therefore the draft convention is fundamentally flawed as it has been made clear to us that this package is too delicately balanced to withstand further negotiation especially on the fundamental areas of concern to us.⁵

For delegations of the Third World Front, the climate was not exclusively global in nature and impacts from climatic changes, at that time, were not regarded as immediate a concern as were the rights to development. The world did not have just one global climate, or one global pathway, but rather a multitude (Hulme 2010, 563). Global accounts of climate change via the UNFCCC surmounted to a neo-environmental or geographical determinist account that offered universalizing explanations of a biophysical globe enveloping the peoples of the world (Radcliffe

³ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509) (I herein cite audio materials from the INC using the UNFCCC Archive's codes)

⁴ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

⁵ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

2010, 100; Dove 2015, 41). This understanding obfuscated the historical processes that engendered colonial maldevelopment and uneven exchange.

This “impersonal, apolitical and universal imaginary of climate change projected by science” (Jasanoff 2010, 233) contrasted with the discourses of delegations of the Third World Front. “Personally, my second daughter was born in the course of this [negotiating process], she will experience the consequences of what we’ll be doing” explained the delegate from Uruguay in the fifth session of the INC.⁶ For many delegates, issues about human life on a changing planet were, first and foremost, “humanistic and not scientific” (Hulme 2014, 308-309). Some delegations thereby doubted the efficacy of technical and solutions-oriented programs for climate change. As the delegate from Cuba claimed, “there has been some slippage backwards vis-a-vis the intentions behind the convening of this exercise [...] a reflection of the fact that the world as yet is not ready to abolish nasty intentions and does not intend to deal with the threats inherent in climate change by reducing and stabilizing emissions that cause the greenhouse effect. Those countries most vulnerable to those changes will be the first victims of such political negligence and as a result we can do nothing other than to express our deep disappointment.”⁷

For these delegations, the deployment of global scale became a means for continued environmentally uneven exchange. As Shiva (1993, 233) explained on the sidelines of the negotiations:

The “global environment” thus emerges as the principal weapon to facilitate the North’s worldwide access to natural resources and raw materials on the one hand, and on the other, to enforce a worldwide sharing of the environmental costs it has generated, while retaining a monopoly on benefits reaped from the destruction it has wreaked on biological resources.

⁶ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509_20:47-21:19)

⁷ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

In particular, the INC consensus process rendered proposals by the delegations of India and Vanuatu for the concessional, preferential, and non-commercial public-domain transfer of technology obsolete in favor of Northern proposals by the United States and United Kingdom. These latter proposals encouraged the development and transfer of technologies although argued that “most technologies were developed in the private sector, protected by intellectual property rights and, consequently, transferred in general on commercial terms” (INC 1991b, 15). The final text of the Framework Convention was thereby devoid of language about fair and favorable conditions. In its final formulation, “solutions to the global environmental problems can come only from the global, that is the North. Since the North has abundant industrial technology and capital, if it has to provide a solution to environmental problems, they must be reduced to a currency that the North dominates” (Shiva 233). The UNFCCC effectively reconstituted the imperial core through technology transfer and a “trickle down green politics” (Ajl 2021), situating the global North in a dominating position. The transfer of technology from North to South was predicated on the assumption that solutions were founded in the Northern halls of innovation. But delegations of the Third World Front were more interested in institutionalizing a solution for uneven resource and atmospheric use that is itself the core of the problem (Taylor and Buttel 1992).

Another issue widening the political cleavage between North and South was the creation of financial resources “on the basis of new, additional and adequate financial resources which will not have any effect on existing multilateral or bilateral financial assistance arrangements” (INC 1991c, 59). The delegation from India called for a Climate Fund to be financed by contributions from developed countries Parties in convertible currency and “disbursed only to developing countries Parties” (56). Yet some delegations “felt that there was no need to establish

a new institution, which would be expensive to operate” (INC 1991b, 14). Delegations to the Third World Front made it clear that industrialized countries owed those marred by the violence of colonialism a climate debt due to historical and ongoing unequal environmental exchange (Roberts and Parks 2009; Sultana 2021). “Remission of debts is one of the first actions needed to reverse the actual negative north-south transfer,” the delegate from Senegal explained at the Toronto Conference (1988, 287), a proposal considered by Working Group I in the third session of the INC (INC 1991d, 19).

The lack of commitments from industrialized countries served as another key source widening the cleavage. For the delegation from Malaysia,

We have serious reservations over important parts of the package. Our primary concern is over the text on commitments in article 4, especially the section on specific commitments in paragraph 2 which we all agree is the core of the convention. We are told that this part of the convention is especially finely balanced and therefore so fragile that it is not negotiable. This non-negotiable heart to the convention contains no commitment on the part of industrialized countries to stabilize the emissions of greenhouse gases but instead offers ambiguous indications that this may take place under equally obscured circumstances...It is clear now that we expected too much in hoping that the developed countries would show the necessary political vision and commitment for this to have happened. My delegation considers that there are important principles at stake here and we are not prepared to accept less than what we strongly believe in for the sake of arriving at an agreement.⁸

Similarly for the delegate from Colombia, speaking on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean Group, the text was not cohesive or in keeping with the magnitude of climate change.⁹

The delegate from Bangladesh offered a similar argument,

We had hoped that those who had contributed more than three-fourths of the anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere could make clear commitments to rectify the present state of affairs. We have noted with appreciation that some developed countries have set targets and timetables on stabilizing emissions. While we welcome those announcements, we also note that those targets have nothing to do

⁸ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

⁹ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

with the convention. How will the international community protect and compensate [developing countries] for the effects of the actions of others?”¹⁰

These empirical cases highlight the widening cleavage between the North and South in the INC process of climate bargaining. Yet, the symbolic arrangements do not necessarily explain why or how the Northern proposals won out. In the following section, I discuss the material conditions of the negotiations that privileged Northern proposals through an uneven playing field from the very beginning.

Fracture in the eleventh hour: Institutionalizing the political cleavage

I am going too fast, and I should have taken up the gavel. But I will do it now. I have asked you the question several times with regard to which I have received a positive response. Requests for clarification have been met, so at this time I'd like to give you the package as described, with this question of the texts already indicated. I propose that the committee express its agreement and adopt the text and recommend it for signature at the next conference. Do you agree with those sentences that would appear—

—Jean Ripert, INC Chairman, fifth session

Before Jean Ripert, Chairman of the INC, could complete his sentence in the final moment before the Framework Convention was adopted, over ninety seconds of applause broke loose, met by a standing ovation. But not everyone in the room was celebrating the moment. In this section I examine the culmination of the INC: a final text of the Framework Convention. This critical juncture of policy breakthrough and institutional innovation is mirrored in the cleavage between Third World delegates and the elite decision makers crystallized in this concluding moment. It was in the INC that the political cleavage long brewing between these groups reached its peak via a “sanitizing” consensus process and uneven material conditions.

At the final session of the INC, the second meeting of the fifth session, the committee entered the last phase of its mandate in preparation for signature of the Convention at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development scheduled the following month (INC

¹⁰ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

1992b). Following informal, inter-sessional meetings, on 9 May 1992, at its ninth plenary meeting, the Chairman announced the adoption of the text of the Framework Convention and recommended it for signature. While some delegations met the announcement with a standing ovation and applause, thirty-eight delegations followed the announcement with statements of reflection and disappointment. These statements highlighted the widest political cleavage in the foundational institution of planetary climate governance, revealing its embroilment in unresolved questions over power and inequality.

Delegates of the Third World Front enumerated four key material deficiencies of the negotiating process: a feeling of marginalization and lack of transparency; a take-it-or-leave-it prescription; lack of commitments from developed countries; and the removal of the right to development. Three rejoinders were recapitulated by delegates of the Industrialized Front celebrating the moment: the negotiations transpired under a spirit of compromise and a delicate balance; the agreed upon framework represented only what was politically feasible; and these negotiations represented merely the first step in an ongoing process. I briefly review these reflections below.

Numerous delegates, particularly of the Third World Front, expressed their disappointments about the manner in which these negotiations were held. “It’s true that there is a great deal of politics going on” explained the delegate from Brazil decrying the “vagaries of our negotiations.”¹¹ The report of the fifth session, as well as audio recordings from the ninth plenary, noted that the Chairman introduced the proposed working document of a draft convention which “arose out of extensive consultations in the inter-sessional period and broad-based requests to the Chairman to produce a clean negotiating text [...] that could assist in

¹¹ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

moving the Committee towards agreement” (INC 1992b, 4). The Chairman advised the committee that his inter-sessional work “did not in any way invalidate the revised text [...] rather, by merit of the absence of brackets, it was an effort to advance the negotiating process by incorporating points of convergence and building bridges among different points of view” (4-5). Yet the Chairman’s hastened production of a clean draft, eliminating not-yet negotiated political choices represented in previous textual iterations by brackets, was described by some delegations as a deeply political perversion of a purportedly consensual and transparent process.

For the delegates from Malaysia, Uruguay, India, Iran, Bangladesh, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil, the final text of the Framework Convention, completed via an informal revision process by the Chairman, had not been negotiated in “a spirit of true partnership.”¹² The delegate from Malaysia asserted that “the text adopted had not been seen before the resumed fifth session, that important and substantive parts of the text had been drafted after consultations with the Bureau and selected delegates only and that there had been no plenary discussion” (INC 1992b, 10). The delegate of India continued: “Rather unexpectedly we find within the document circulated today certain changes, some language that we have not seen before”.¹³ The delegate from Bangladesh agreed: “At our first meeting we had agreed that there would be transparency in the process of negotiations. We had also agreed that there would not be any intersessional meetings. Most of the text we are asked to approve today is new. We have not seen it before the resumed fifth session.”¹⁴

For many delegates, the happenings of the eleventh hour crystallized a broader process of marginalization they claimed to have experienced throughout the fifteen-month negotiating

¹² (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

¹³ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

¹⁴ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

process. The delegate from Uruguay explained how “a number of delegations were marginalized arbitrarily from the negotiations,” with the delegate from Iran adding “we were intentionally overlooked,” and the delegate from Saudi Arabia contending that “developing countries weren’t entirely given full and effective opportunity to participate in negotiations” or informal sessions.¹⁵ Finally, the delegate from Cuba expressed that “we do not agree with the way in which there has been a marginalization from aspects of the convention, that is to say a large group of member states has been marginalized.”¹⁶

This marginalization represented the Chairman’s privileging of developmental ideals within the UNFCCC (Falzon 2021). Contemporary ethnographic analysis of the performative and theatrical politics of UN climate negotiations illustrates how normative ideals of national development are embedded into the institutional structures of the UNFCCC (Falzon 2021). My empirical data points these structures to the INC process and this particular moment of bargaining. These ideals reproduced hierarchies of power in global climate governance whereby delegations could contribute equally to negotiations. Normative ideals identified by Falzon (2021) include 1) the size of delegations (dependent on the national-state’s fiscal ability to support a delegation), 2) the language abilities of a delegation (and the privileging of English), 3) the knowledge of Western scientific and legal standards given the history of climate science and the liberal foundations of the United Nations, and 4) maintaining a consistent knowledge base and network of relations by sending the same negotiators every session and year thereafter. While the rhetoric of INC delegations, albeit in relatively private negotiations, might not be enough on its own to validate the systematic disadvantages faced by delegations rendered non-normative, when triangulated with Falzon’s participant observation of contemporary

¹⁵ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

¹⁶ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

negotiations, the archival material reveals a similar process of ideal type formation (Gerth and Mills 1959).

In a consensus-based process of decision-making that transpired across multiple working groups, the INC effectively bestowed institutional privilege upon larger delegations that could afford to send enough personnel to contribute to each process, especially to informal meetings. The list of participants available for each session of the INC, for instance, illustrates the gap in delegation sizes (see INC 1991i). Developing countries sent one to three delegates, if any, who were expected to navigate the range of techno-scientific, political, and legal dimensions of the negotiations. Meanwhile, larger delegations from industrialized countries like the United States sent upwards of two dozen delegates comprising specialists from each field.

In the general debate of the first session of the INC in Washington, D.C., “many countries stressed the need to ensure the participation of developing countries, in particular that of the least developed among them and small island developing countries, in the negotiating process through provision of financial resources from the special voluntary fund” (15). The Special Voluntary Fund, established by United Nations General Assembly (1990b, 148) Resolution 45/212 in 1990 aimed to ensure that developing countries were able to “participate fully and effectively in the negotiating process.” And indeed, the report of the fourth session of the INC (1991e, 12) thanked entities for their support in “mobilizing the participation of developing countries” through contributions to the fund, supporting eighty developing country delegations, dozens more than the first session. Yet while participation of delegations representing developing states increased over the course of the sessions due to support from the Special Fund, delegation sizes remained incommensurate through the last session of the INC. In

a consensus-based process taking place across a range of working groups, the number of delegates present surely makes a difference.

The developmental idealism of the UNFCCC helps to explain the marginalization of certain delegations, especially developing state delegations and those absent from negotiations altogether. The question of language also features prominently in archival materials. “Will there be [language] interpretation on Saturday?” asked the Saudi Arabia delegate of the Chairman in the third session of the INC.¹⁷ The question sparked a discussion in the plenary session in which delegates, especially from developing states, expressed their difficulties in the negotiating process due to the scarcity of translated materials and the pace of sessions preventing adequate time for the translation of materials before each session. These meetings were inaccessible for many delegates, especially in informal sessions that often lacked language interpreters.

The material cleavage between delegates here, animated by developmental idealism, a feeling of marginalization and lack of transparency, and a take-it-or-leave-it prescription help explain why delegations set the critical juncture—the Framework Convention—on its particular institutional developmental path in which Northern delegates shaped a sanitized governance infrastructure in the wake of negotiations delimited physically by accessibility. Lack of commitments from developed countries, deletion of the right to development, and exclusion of a host of proposals from the Third World Front can be traced to these precise moments in the INC. Power asymmetries facilitated through a global knowledge infrastructure that privileged technical as opposed to political-economic drivers, as well a path dependence on the United Nations brokerage system and the material conditions of negotiating, created the Framework Convention as a system that privileged certain actors over others.

¹⁷ (INC3_INC 1st meeting_19910909)

Consensual conventions: A critical juncture emerges

The Framework Convention's formation as an institution of global governance and the production of its institutional norms were not apolitical and did not take place in a 'post-political' world (Kythreotis 2012; Swyngedouw 2007, 2010, 2011). Rather, the objective of the INC, to craft a Framework Convention via consensus, carried with it spatial assumptions and knowledge claims about the climate as a unit of management (Mahony and Hulme 2018, 411). In this section I sharpen an argument about the INC as a bargaining process prefigured by normative developmental ideals that privileged certain delegations and forms of knowledge over others (Falzon 2021).

Amidst reflections on marginalization and transparency, the Chairman of the INC, as well as delegations from the United States, Russia, Sweden, Finland, Australia, and other industrialized states expressed similar reactions that they completed the negotiations in a spirit of compromise and that the final text represented a delicate balance that should not be disturbed in the eleventh hour. "Please do not ask me for further explanation, the texts are there, they say what they say, and you yourself were involved at the time when I was carrying out informal conversations in this room on those points, so I don't think that anyone can claim that they were completely kept out or things were marginalized," responded the INC Chairman in response to delegate claims of marginalization.¹⁸ The delegate from Sweden added that the time for negotiations was over—the framework was a package deal and there was no more time for getting into the details. "We are not here as country negotiators, but to take into concern questions of climate change."¹⁹

¹⁸ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

¹⁹ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

Decision-making within the INC was set up by consensus. Decisions thereby reflected not that of an apolitical global citizenship (Demeritt 2001, 313), but rather the “will of the laggards,” or those least inclined to commit to emissions reductions (Kuyper et al. 2018, 345). Just one delegation, such as the United States, could and indeed did shape the Framework Convention through the affordances of consensual decision making. If one delegation did not accept a principle, they could hold up the entire negotiations until such a principle was removed. This was often the case in the INC.

The developmental idealism of the INC, as I described above, further delimited which delegates were physically and socially (via language and the system of knowledge) present for negotiations. The Chairman and delegates of the Industrialized Front utilized the claim of consensus as a performative expression of a post-political condition, appearing to foreclose politicization and erase dissent by claiming that the resulting Framework Convention was a collective agreement (Swyngedouw 2010, 227). Technocratic management and consensual policy-making such as those of the INC reinforce a depoliticized, post-democratic institutional configuration (Swyngedouw 2011).

Yet, however neutral such discourses and technocratic action may appear on the surface, they are precisely political and normative in the ways that delegates staked uneven claims over authority and resources (Jasanoff and Martello 2004, 342). A close historical reading reveals the profoundly political process that shaped the development path of the institution. The INC’s process of consensus indeed reflected the least-common-denominator of political will, namely delegations like that from the United States (Kuyper et al. 2018, 345). Answering the question posed at the beginning of this analysis—what is being secured if not the climate (Oels 2005, 201)—the Bush Administration proverbially declared in Rio de Janeiro following the 1992

signing of the Framework Convention: “The American life-style is not up for negotiation” (Elmer-DeWitt 1992). The process of the INC was such that no universal agreement on binding emissions reduction commitments was met because of the unwillingness shown by a handful of delegations including that from the United States. That is why the final text of the Framework Convention, including only a nonbinding goal to stabilize emissions by 2000 at 1990 levels, deferred commitments to future accords.

While the Industrialized Front justified the hasty conclusion of negotiations through iterations of a delicate balance, numerous delegations of the Third World Front accused the Chairman of offering no other option but to accept or decline the final convention. The delegate from Cuba described the final decision as having been “adopted on the basis of take it or leave it. Such a procedure faults the spirit of universality and democracy inherent in the United Nations.”²⁰ The delegate from Kuwait similarly contended that “the principle of global partnership which is so important in dealing with climate change was not adhered to in this final round of negotiations [...]. We had to decide to either leave it or take it.”²¹ For the delegate from Malaysia, citing the power dynamics of the bargaining, it was “with deep regret [that we reserve our] position on the draft convention on climate change and cannot join in the adoption nor participate in any resolution emanating from this meeting.”²²

For other delegates, the final convention represented the maximum that was politically feasible at the time. “We are accepting what is achievable and not what is desirable. We are accepting what we can achieve today and not, I repeat not, what we expect to achieve tomorrow,” contended the delegate from Vanuatu on behalf of the Small Island States.²³ As the

²⁰ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²¹ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²² (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²³ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

delegate from India explained, “my delegation recognizes that this is all that is possible at the present moment.”²⁴ The outcome was just barely acceptable to the delegate from Uruguay: “This is not the best text that we might have gotten, in fact some paragraphs contain a seed of inoperance, however we can support its adoption because it’s the only text we have, particularly it’s the only one that would make it possible for us to make progress in the future to ensure a healthy and secure world for our children.”²⁵

In response to the dissatisfaction over the elimination of commitments from the final Framework Convention, delegates from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, representing the Industrialized Front, and the INC Chairman (a French national) expressed similar sentiments laying aside the past and turning to the future. For the delegate from Australia, “this was not as some have expressed, in our judgment, a take it or leave it option but rather take it as the best we could achieve at this time and build on it to make it stronger and better in the future option. We all know that it represents, we’ve heard it again and again, careful balances and compromises. We all know that no one is fully satisfied and that everyone has had to shift ground to accommodate the concerns of others.”²⁶ For the delegate from the United States, “we need to look to the future. We have created something here for the future, for future generations that offers many opportunities for a partnership among all nations [...] the way in which we have come together in the end to transcend the national interests and perspectives that each of us had to bring here, to build something together, to go beyond that which could have limited us and prevented an agreement.”²⁷ Similarly for the delegate from Canada, “at a moment such as this, there is a tendency to look back and reflect on what has been accomplished, but I’d like to focus

²⁴ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²⁵ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²⁶ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²⁷ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

on the future, for much remains to be done. Resolutions adopted today on interim steps are a key element in preparing for early and effective operation of our convention.”²⁸

Closing the fifteenth-month negotiation process, the Chairman acknowledged the dissatisfaction in the room but justified the process he oversaw:

I had heard previously that ‘you didn’t keep your promises; you didn’t respect the commitment to ensure transparency.’ But everyone knows that when it’s time to prepare a decision, with complex documents in a room of one-hundred and fifty people, with one-hundred thirty-seven delegations here, well some at one time or another must get together and propose arrangements. The problem for the UN is to utilize its best possible means to find machinery that ensures that the voice of the large and small will be heard. Those in the room have the mandate to speak and have made a decision. I’m not saying this to defend what we did, but we finally have been able to find a way, a response to that question, particularly if we want this institution to be more and more useful. How can we find an institution that will make it possible for us to prepare decisions among a few and at the same time ensure that everyone sees each other’s rights respected? We have not found the best response, but I do think we made a strive forward. I would like to say goodbye and until Rio at the conference.²⁹

The Framework Convention, it is now clear through close archival reading, encoded uneven geographies of scientific authority (Mahony and Hulme 2018, 396) via normative developmental ideals that privileged certain delegations and forms of knowledge over others (Falzon 2021). These ideological postures further translated into material consequences: continued environmentally uneven exchange and dominance in a world economic system (Ajl 2021). The INC became a setting in which power relations between national state delegations were configured in ways that undermined the knowledge claims of Southern actors (Hulme 2010, 561). This configuration set the agenda of future negotiations—each successive Accord widening the cleavage by moving closer to the proposals of the Industrialized Front towards a “flexible,” all-hands-on-deck approach devoid of historical responsibility. Today’s institution—and its most recent 2015 Paris Climate Accord assigning emissions reduction obligations to each member

²⁸ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

²⁹ (INC5-2_INC 9th meeting_19920509)

state (as opposed to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol assigning commitments to OECD member state)—is a product of this institutional structure of the INC and the normative mechanisms of climate planning it reproduced.

VII. Normative geographical dimensions of climate planning: The legacy of the INC

The concatenation of antecedent conditions and transformational mechanisms yielding a cleavage between delegates engendered this particular critical juncture or developmental path. The mechanisms of frame alignment and path dependence that brought about the INC and Framework Convention render visible the power relations undergirding the foundation of this institution. These relations continuously unsettle the objectives of the institution and raise a critical question: “What is being secured by the institution if not the climate?” (Oels 2005, 201). By whom, and with what effects, have these normative dimensions of climate planning been reproduced? (Anderson 2010, 788). In this section I trace key normative geographical assumptions emerging in the wake of the critical juncture as an enduring institution and form of organizing climate politics. These normative assumptions continue to delimit how and by whom the climate can be governed.

A focus on “prefigurative politics,” or “the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture and human experience” (Boggs 1977, 2), illuminates how the INC has reproduced a vision of the future that privileges certain forms of life as valorized and protected while abandoning others to the periphery (Anderson 2010, 788; Tavory and Eliasoph 2013). Furthermore, this investigation of the INC’s prefigurative politics illuminates the production of counter-futures, or oppositional practices of future making in the context of top-down planetary climate planning (Craig and Dyson 2021, 641).

The INC bargaining process reproduced state space in ways that both structured and obscured oppressive relations of power (Sylvestre et al. 2019, 23). The legacy of the INC is marked by the Committee’s codification of the sovereignty ideal and territoriality in climate politics. The historical explanation of ordering discussed above highlights the enduring institutional path dependence on sovereignty norms and the policy precedent that shaped the final text of the agreement.

The global climate order was predicated through the INC process upon the primacy of the sovereign territorial state as the irreducible representation of peoples and places (Alatout 2006; Agnew 2018; Painter 2010; UNFCCC 1992). This particular institutional arrangement, rooted in mythic Westphalian-style political-territorial imaginaries was, and continues to be, an enduring and rather transcendental approach to environmental crisis over time (Agnew 1994; Murphy 2010). Political geographers have framed this conceptually hegemonic arrangement more broadly as a “sticky” sociospatial arrangement so as to stress territoriality’s enduring significance and iterative structural power, deriving “precisely from their ability to become ontologically dominant, seemingly inevitable, sociospatial configurations” (Murphy 2010, 168).

This stickiness has endowed state-territorial configurations with an “epistemological monopoly” in climate politics as the fundamental arbiter of climate futures. While ostensibly inevitable and static, this sociospatial configuration is far from natural but rather constructed and contingent. While it remains incumbent upon analysts not to reproduce the methodological nationalism of climate politics, we nonetheless cannot disregard the continued relevance of Westphalian sovereignty norms and the continued inertia of territorial ways of thinking. “To ignore the normative impacts of Westphalian territorial ideals is to miss a much deeper way in which the norms exercise influence—by constituting the very polities that enjoy sovereignty, and

the very international system that helps to establish their authority [...]. We are far from living in a post-territorial world” (Murphy 2010, 39).

Privileging the dominant territorial understanding shaped geopolitical procedures and potentially foreclosed alternative imaginations. The INC reproduced a widespread scalar assumption that the governance of global climate issues required global solutions, “which are then ‘cascaded’ down through national, and, implicitly, subnational arenas of governance” (Bulkeley 2005, 879). Institutionalization of the global as the primary locus in which climate politics could take place effectively dislodged the drivers and consequences of such problems from the practices and politics taking place across sites and scales of governance beyond the Westphalian territorial state ideal. For example, multinational fossil fuel corporations were not easily captured in the INC state-territorial configuration, and these corporations’ extraterritorial nature cannot be redressed by state actors alone.

Consequential to this assumption was an understanding of states as unitary actors, as the privileged, near-exclusive subjects of world politics, “with each state trying to maximize status relative to others. No entities other than states are involved, by definition, in international relations. World [and climate] politics is entirely about international (i.e., inter-state) relations” (Agnew 2018, 34). State actors, especially those yielding more economic and political influence through the practices of developmental idealism (Falzon 2021), have operated to secure the futures of their own territories often at the expense of others. While this seems fairly obvious, the continued investment in the global climate order and doublespeak of state delegations at the INC eschewing national interests would suggest otherwise.

The proliferation of the territorial national-state as the “sole legitimate expression” of climate politics has institutionalized the territorial form of power associated with the state,

thereby casting state actors as the primary arbiters and enforcers of climate futures (Delaney 2005, p. 20). It has also placed security—the maintenance of borders and division—at the heart of geopolitical climate projects (Delaney 2005; Mason 2013). The security state has thus achieved a near-totalizing position within climate politics, with state actors holding definitional monopoly over climate futures, territory, threat, and security (Masco 2010), in addition to the legitimate use of violence (Weber 1978), potentially weaponizing these definitions to effectuate territorial projects and violence (Thomas and Warner 2019) on behalf of certain groups and spaces.

The sovereignty ideal mischaracterizes world politics by assuming states to be fixed, static ontological units of sovereign space, each state claiming exclusive space within which they derive authority and governance (Agnew 1994). States are assumed to be unproblematic, unified, fixed entities (Delaney 2005), yet states indeed do not constitute an exclusive sphere of jurisdiction, nor do they participate equally or hold exclusive claims to sovereignty (Agnew 2005). Rather, “extraterritoriality can be seen as a major long-standing feature of the interstate system” as state actors advance into the social, economic, and political processes of others (Sassen 2013, 32).

Political geographers and others have long questioned the coherency of the state as the sole arbiter of politics. The state is not a coherent or unified social actor but rather a concatenation of agents and agencies (Painter 2005; Mitchell 1991). The denial of the relationality of territory in global climate planning may obscure “the operation of forces and processes that are less amenable to a flat, horizontal reading of territorial power [...] As a consequence society becomes a national phenomenon” (Delaney 2005, 58). Climate politics have been relegated to the national scale via the INC, with little consideration of alternative spatial

arrangements. The consequence of the sovereignty ideal, as the gridlock of the INC highlighted, in part prevented the inclusion of a verification and review mechanism within the Framework Convention and the persistent claim over the past three decades that the climate institution infringes on state sovereignty. Assumptions of an inter-state legal system based on state sovereignty, as opposed to planetary sovereignty or the sovereignty of peoples, must always be questioned (Adamian 2009, 84).

VIII. Conclusion: Heterodox climate planning and lessons from the margins

The rupturing of the institution of the UNFCCC via a close historical reading of its contentious genesis should not be construed as an abandonment of the project of planetary climate planning. So too, it should not be read as an endorsement or methodologically nationalist engagement siloing climate change governance within the inter-state system. At the same time, three decades of contentious negotiating surmounting to no robust or historically-just plan to avert uneven use of atmospheric space demands that critical scrutiny be applied and lessons from the margins sought out. The critical juncture approach evidently helps to identify why and how the UNFCCC took the developmental path it did over all others. Additionally, this approach illuminates those developmental paths not actualized with meaningful lessons for a future critical juncture. The Framework Convention emerged through particular antecedent conditions, transformational mechanisms, and a cleavage between the Third World and Industrialized Fronts as the analysis sets forth. The INC process renders visible two key lessons that were peripheralized.

First, proposals of the Third World Front attempted to imbricate the ecological diagnosis of climate change with its major political-economic connections, namely world-scale developmental inequities (Fraser 2021). This involved a reversal of the relations of epistemic

power away from “single-issue ecologism” (Fraser 2021, 97) or science-as-authority toward the human and more-than-human experiences of change, or “technologies of humility” (Jasanoff 2007) that privilege modes of knowing often pushed aside (Jasanoff and Martello 2004, 345; Hulme 2014; Harris 2020). Only by addressing the underlying dynamics of a world system rooted in unequal exchange can a strong heterodox bloc be constructed. These delegations represented climate change as a crisis of hegemony, one where the reproduction of capital outweighed the history of colonialism and dependency.

Two decades following the INC negotiations, these lessons were actualized in one of the largest projects imagining an alternative to the UNFCCC yet: the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth held in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in April 2010. With the participation of more than 35,000 delegates from social movements and organizations from 140 countries, these meetings offered an alternative approach to the deadlocked UNFCCC institution (Dawson 2013). The submission by the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2011) to the UNFCCC stressed the structural roots and historical drivers of anthropogenic climate change. This project called for the principles of historical responsibility and climate debt, the equitable allocation of atmospheric space to all peoples (implying the right for developing nations to emit greenhouse gasses), the removal of restrictive policies on migration, technology transfer in the public domain and free from conditionalities, and the establishment of an International Court of Climate and Environmental Justice, among other proposals. Most of these proposals are rooted in the cleavage that emerged in the INC process, highlighting its continued relevance.

Second, while critical state theory and political geography approaches shifting away from methodological nationalism may rebuke the siloing of climate planning into the boundaries of the inter-state system, proposals on the periphery in the INC process highlighted a renewed

defense of state sovereignty, alongside demilitarization and decolonization (Ajl 2021, 9). Indeed the Third World Front of the INC played a large role in calling for the sovereignty ideal to be applied to climate planning. While the sovereignty ideal mischaracterizes how the world operates, nation-states are clearly the political framework within which the world operates and can thereby serve as “a central political-social vehicle that carries resistance to oppression” (9). The national-state can serve as the “basis for calculating ecological debts in world political fora. And planning on the whole, the right to determine the contours of the future, requires sovereignty, although it cannot be reduced to it” (10). The national-state may serve as the principal vehicle of eco-societal reform (Fraser 2021, 120).

Reflections on the thirtieth anniversary of the UNFCCC should thereby serve to recall the contestations that formed this foundational institution and the normative geographical assumptions reproduced in its wake. The debates and political dynamics that afflicted the INC, as well as dissension and counter-hegemonic projects in the periphery, remain as relevant today as they were three decades ago. It is my hope that by reprising the critical juncture that informed the institutional innovation of the UNFCCC, those building a counter-hegemony can be supplied with the critical knowledge of the past and normative implications such an institution has produced.

APPENDIX

Figure I: Timeline and key outcomes of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee

	Date	Location	Key outcomes
First session	4-14 February 1991	Washington, D.C.	Formation of Working Groups I and II
Second session	19-28 June 1991	Geneva	Compilation of Possible Elements for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC 1991c)
Third Session	9-20 September 1991	Nairobi	
Fourth Session	9-20 December 1991	Geneva	Consolidated Working Document (INC 1991e)
Fifth session (part I)	18-28 February 1992	New York	Revised Text under Negotiation (INC 1992a)
Fifth session (part II)	30 April - 9 May 1992	New York	Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC 1992)

Figure II: Political cleavages emerged in the INC process via nine key proposals. State delegations initially advanced these proposals in the second session (captured in the Compilation of Possible Elements, left). As institutional bargaining proceeded (represented by the Consolidated Working Document, center), the consensus process sanitized these nine proposals into their final form (the Framework Convention, right).

	Compilation of Possible Elements for a Framework Convention (second session) (INC 1991c)	Consolidated Working Document (fourth session) (INC 1991e) ³⁰	Final text of the Framework Convention (fifth session) (UNFCCC 1992)
New and additional financial resources and technology transfers on preferential and non-commercial terms	<p>(Delegation of) India: “Recognizing also that adequate, new and additional financial resources and technology transfers on preferential and non-commercial terms are necessary to enable developing countries to effectively contribute to limiting, adapting to and mitigating the adverse effects of global climate change” (16)</p> <p>Vanuatu: “Need to take immediate action based on the Precautionary Principle so that the consequences of climate change can be averted...responsibility for the problem lies historically with industrialized countries. Currently responsibility lies with all countries, but not equally: the principle of differentiated responsibility; responsibility for the solution lies with all countries on the basis of historic contributions and differentiated responsibility,</p>	<p>“Principle 10. Recognizing the need to strengthen international cooperation in addressing adverse effects of climate change [through the development within a global framework of appropriate policies [including the provision to developing countries of adequate, new and additional financial resources [based on assessed contributions by developed countries] and technology transfer on [preferential, concessional and non-commercial]/[fair and most favorable] terms], [the preparation of protocols on specific problems]/[the consideration of additional related instruments as may be agreed] and by means of increased research into atmospheric, terrestrial and marine ecology sciences as well as into the social and economic impacts of climate change and related response strategies, systematic observations, cooperation on scientific, technical, economic and legal matters and exchange of information” (23)</p>	<p>“Commitments 7. The extent to which developing country Parties will effectively implement their commitments under the Convention will depend on the effective implementation by developed country Parties of their commitments under the Convention related to financial resources and transfer of technology and will take fully into account that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of the developing country Parties” (14)</p>

³⁰ Throughout the working document, political choices to be negotiated were indicated by the use of brackets and alternative paragraphs.

	<p>taking into account the special circumstances of developing countries, particularly the need for appropriate technology and new and additional funding...Responsibility for the Global Commons” (17)</p> <p>China: “under fair and most favourable conditions” (62)</p>		
Reduction of emissions on per capita basis	<p>China: “...an appropriate level of economic development is the prerequisite for adopting concrete control measures to address climate change, and all the peoples in the world are entitled to an appropriate standard of living. Therefore, the energy consumption of developing countries must grow. Any limitation or control measures shall take full account of the per capita emission levels of various countries and the developmental needs of developing countries” 26</p> <p>India: “Anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide from States should converge at a common per capita level, and which would take into account net carbon dioxide emissions during this century...Developed country Parties shall, as immediate measures: (a) declare, adopt and implement national strategies and reduce their per capita emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide...should be set at 1990 emission levels...at least a (20%) (30%) (40%) (50%) reduction...(b) provide new and additional financial resources for developing country Parties for the objective described in paragraph 4 below...(c) provide assured access to appropriate, environmentally sound technology on preferential and non-commercial terms, to developing countries” (39)</p>	<p>“Principle 12. Recognizing the need for [all] countries [with excessively high per capita rates of anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions] to take immediate action in a flexible manner on the basis of [short, medium and long]/[clear priorities, as a first step towards] comprehensive response strategies at the global, national and [, where agreed, regional] levels which take into account all greenhouse gases, with due consideration of their relative contributions to the enhancement of the greenhouse effect and recognizing also that strategies required to understand and address climate change will be environmentally, socially and economically most effective if they are based on relevant scientific, technical and economic considerations and continually re-evaluated in the light of new findings in these areas” (23)</p> <p>“Reduction of Emissions: Alternative A: The developed country Parties shall [make efforts]/[commit themselves] to take immediately steps towards reducing emissions of all anthropogenic carbon oxide and other greenhouse gases [...] Alternative B: The developed country Parties shall commit themselves to continue negotiations towards reducing emissions [...] Alternative D [...] the Parties shall commit themselves to measures to limit and reduce greenhouse gas” (38-39)</p>	<p>“Preamble. Recognizing also the need for developed countries to take immediate action in a flexible manner on the basis of clear priorities, as a first step towards comprehensive response strategies at the global, national and, where agreed, regional levels that take into account all greenhouse gases, with due consideration of their relative contributions to the enhancement of the greenhouse effect” (4)</p>
Conditionality in aid	<p>India: “Reaffirming the importance of integrating environmental concerns and considerations into policies and programmes in all countries without introducing a new form of conditionality in aid or development financing or constituting a pretext for unjustified barriers to trade” (16)</p>	<p>“Preamble 20. Bearing in mind the importance of integrating environmental concerns and considerations into policies and programmes in all countries [without introducing any form of conditionality in aid or development financing or constituting a pretext for devising new barriers to trade]” (25)</p>	<p>“Principles 5. The Parties should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to sustainable economic growth and development in all Parties, particularly developing country Parties, thus enabling them better to address the problems of climate change. Measures taken to combat climate change, including unilateral ones, should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade” (9)</p>

<p>Right to development</p>	<p>Vanuatu: “This convention shall be based upon and interpreted in the context of the following principles: [...] (e) Differential Responsibility: There should be different targets with different time frames for different categories of countries so that the right to development of developing countries is taken into account...” (24-25)</p>	<p>“Principle 1. The right to development is an inalienable human right. All peoples have an equal right in matters relating to reasonable living standards. Economic development is the prerequisite for adopting measures to address climate change. The net emissions of developing countries must grow to meet their social and economic development needs” (27)</p>	<p>“Preamble. Recognizing that all countries, especially developing countries, need access to resources required to achieve sustainable social and economic development and that, in order for developing countries to progress towards that goal, their energy consumption will need to grow taking into account the possibilities for achieving greater energy efficiency and for controlling greenhouse gas emissions in general, including through the application of new technologies on terms which make such an application economically and socially beneficial” (6)</p>
<p>Inter-generational Equity</p>	<p>Vanuatu: “This convention shall be based upon and interpreted in the context of the following principles: [...] (f) Inter-generational Equity: the duty of all States to preserve and protect natural capital for the benefit of present and future generations” (24-25)</p>	<p>“Principle 3. “All States have an obligation to protect the climate [system] for the benefit of present and future generations of mankind on the basis of [inter-generational as well as intra-generational] equity. This obligation shall be carried out within different time frames for implementation in accordance with common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities [between developing and developed countries] and taking fully into account that the largest part of emissions of greenhouse gases have been originating from developed countries and those countries have the main responsibility [and should take the lead] in combating climate change and the adverse consequences thereof” (27)</p> <p>“Possible alternative to 3. All inhabitants of the planet have an equal right to the atmosphere lying outside national jurisdictions. All States have an obligation to protect the atmosphere for the benefit of present and future generations of mankind on the basis of intra-generational as well as inter-generational equity. This common obligation to protect the atmosphere shall be equitably distributed between countries in accordance with developed and developing countries’ common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities and different time frames set out for implementation with a view to achieving convergence of anthropogenic carbon dioxide greenhouse gases, both in historical and current terms, originates from developed countries, and that those countries [in the first instance have the main responsibility]/[shall take the lead] in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof” (27)</p>	<p>“Principles 1. The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof” (4)</p>
<p>Polluter pays principle</p>	<p>Vanuatu: “This convention shall be based upon and interpreted in the context of the following principles: [...] (b) the Polluter Pays Principle: the principle that those responsible for causing damage to the environment bear the responsibility for rectifying that damage” (24)</p>	<p>“Principle 8 alternative A. The developed countries responsible for causing damage to the environment through inducing climate change should bear the primary responsibility for rectifying that damage and the cost of prevention measures and should compensate for environmental damage suffered by other countries or individuals in other countries” (38)</p> <p>“Alternative B. Those countries directly responsible for causing damage to the</p>	<p>“Preamble. Noting that the largest share of historical and current global emissions of greenhouse gases has originated in developed countries, that per capita emissions in developing countries are still relatively low and that the share of global emissions originating in developing countries will grow to meet their social and development needs” (2)</p>

		environment through inducing climate change should bear the responsibility for rectifying that damage. By openly demonstrating their direct responsibility or negligence, those countries shall compensate for environmental damage suffered by other countries or individuals in other countries” (28)	“The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof” (9)
Convergence of emissions at per capita levels	India: “Anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide from States should converge at a common per capita levels; and which would take into account net carbon dioxide emissions during this century” (39)	<p>“Objective. The ultimate objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments that might be agreed upon is to achieve, in accordance with the principles set out in the above articles, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level which would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with climate. Such a level should be reached within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to permit economic development to develop in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner.</p> <p>[The anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide, from States should converge at a common per capita level, taking into account net carbon emissions during this century as well as the economic needs of developing countries.]” (20)</p>	“Objective. The ultimate objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments that the Conference of the Parties may adopt is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner” (9)
Insurance pool	Vanuatu- “Fund to compensate developing countries (i) in situations where selecting the least climate sensitive development option involves incurring additional expense, and (ii) where insurance is not available for damage resulting from climate change” (60)	“[6. The developed country Parties shall set up an international insurance pool to provide financial insurance against the consequences of sea level rise to compensate the most vulnerable small island and low lying coastal developing countries against sea level rise.]” 47	“Commitments 8. In the implementation of the commitments in this Article, the Parties shall give full consideration to what actions are necessary under the Convention, including actions related to funding, insurance and the transfer of technology, to meet the specific needs and concerns of developing country Parties arising from the adverse effects of climate change and/or the impact of the implementation of response measures” (14-15)
Specific commitments on financial resources	<p>“India: The Climate Fund shall be financed by contributions from developed countries Parties in convertible currency or, in exceptional circumstances, in national currency...Resources under the climate Fund shall be disbursed only to developing countries Parties” (56)</p> <p>Vanuatu- “funding will be on the basis of new, additional and adequate financial resources which will not have any effect on existing multilateral or bilateral financial assistance arrangements” 59</p> <p>“Fund to compensate developing countries (i) in situations where</p>	<p>“[Specific commitments on financial resources: (a) The developed country parties and other Parties in a position to do so [shall commit adequate [new] and additional]/[will] [may] provide on a voluntary basis] financial resources [additional to the ones that are disbursed for developed at the time of the signing of the Convention], and [separate from development aid budgets] to enable [developing country] Parties to meet the [full]/[agreed] incremental costs...and [ensure]/[facilitate]/[promote] the expeditious transfer of [environmentally safe and sound]/[appropriate] technologies to developing country parties to improve and develop their indigenous technology on a [fair and most favourable]/[preferential, concessional and non-commercial] basis [...]</p>	“Financial Mechanism. A mechanism for the provision of financial resources on a grant or concessional basis, including for the transfer of technology, is hereby defined. It shall function under the guidance of and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties, which shall decide on its policies, programme priorities and eligibility criteria related to this Convention. Its operation shall be entrusted to one or more existing international entities” (22)

	<p>selecting the least climate sensitive development option involves incurring additional expense, and (ii) where insurance is not available for damage resulting from climate change” (60)</p>	<p>(b) Alternative A: [At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties]/[The Parties[shall][create]/[identify by (...)] an [International]/[Multilateral] [Climate Fund] [specific to this Convention] to expeditiously mobilize adequate, [new and additional] financial resources from [developed country Parties and other] parties [who would wish to contribute]/[in a position to do so], in accordance with an agreed scale of assessment, for [developing country Parties]/[other Parties with demonstrated needs]/[Parties meeting agreed criteria] in order to [...]</p> <p>Alternative B: The Parties [will]/[may] through the agreed financial mechanisms, where appropriate, assist the developing country parties [...]" (41-42)</p>	
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