

CHAPTER 10

Obstruction in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

LEAD AUTHORS: KARI DE PRYCK AND EDUARDO VIOLA

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS: STEFAN C. AYKUT, LARISSA BASSO, DANIELLE FALZON, MATÍAS FRANCHINI, FRIEDERIKE HARTZ, HANNAH HUGHES, VINÍCIUS MENDES, CARLOS R. S. MILANI, BRUNA BOSI MOREIRA, GÉRALDINE PFLIEGER, AND EMANUEL SEMEDO

INTRODUCTION: MAKING SENSE OF OBSTRUCTION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

One of the most important sites for crafting but also contesting how climate change is to be collectively addressed is the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held annually in major cities around the globe. For example, in 2023 at COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the Climate Action Network (CAN), a large network of civil-society organizations, used the event as an opportunity to bestow daily its inglorious Fossil of the Day award to thirteen countries and one province for their efforts at “doing the most to achieve the least” progress on climate change. CAN has been conferring these awards since the 1990s to denounce climate obstruction in the UNFCCC, but also domestically. It has also awarded countries the Colossal Fossil of the Year to denounce obstruction for the entire duration of the COP.

CAN tends to target countries they believe can be pressured and whose reputation might be negatively affected by being dubbed a Fossil. At COP28, CAN cited Saudi Arabia for resisting “language supporting the just and equitable phase out of fossil fuels and transition to renewables” and “repeated blocking across negotiation tracks.”¹ The European Union (EU) also received a Fossil for “ongoing opposition to including Loss and Damage in the negotiations of the New Collective Quantified Goal.”² The United States (US) was awarded the Colossal Fossil of the Year title for repeatedly “opposing language on the differentiation of fossil fuels” (see Table 10.1).³

In this chapter, we review obstruction strategies used by both state and non-state actors (nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], social movements,

Table 10.1 THE CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK’S FOSSIL AWARDS SINCE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT

COP	Fossils of the Day	Colossal Fossil
2023: COP28	Saudi Arabia, EU, Alberta (Canada), Russia, South Africa, Israel, Vietnam, Australia, Norway, Brazil, New Zealand, Japan, US, South Korea	US
2022: COP27	Egypt, Turkey, New Zealand, UAE, Japan, Israel, Russia, USA	US
2021: COP26	New Zealand, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, UK, Poland, IETA, Serbia, France, Australia, Mexico, Czech Republic, US, Norway	Australia, US, UK
2020: Fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement	Australia, Brazil	US
2019: COP25	Australia, US, EU, Canada, Russia, Brazil, Japan, Bosnia and Slovenia, Belgium	Brazil
2018: COP24	Australia, Egypt, US, Poland, EU, Austria, Norway, UK, Russia, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Arab Group, Brazil, Saudi Arabia	Poland
2017: COP23	Arab Group, India, Brazil, Germany, Australia, Norway, Canada, EU, US, ICAO, Japan, Kuwait, Developed Countries, France, Poland	US

Continued

Table 10.1 CONTINUED

COP	Fossils of the Day	Colossal Fossil
2016: COP22	Australia, Austria, New Zealand, European Commission, Indonesia, Venezuela, EU, Turkey	
2015: COP21	EU, Umbrella Group, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, LMDCs, Norway, US, Denmark, Belgium, New Zealand, Japan	

the transnational corporate and national private sectors, etc.) who participate in international climate negotiations—here, obstruction is defined as the efforts by powerful interests to slow or block policies or actions on climate change at the international level. While deliberate obstruction strategies are not the only explanation for limited climate inaction globally, they are an important one.⁴

We focus on the UNFCCC, which provides a basis for negotiation between states with increasing input from non-state actors. This is because the Paris Agreement (drafted at COP21 in 2015) assumes that non-state actors, and particularly the private sector, will play a key role in its implementation. Several initiatives have been launched to allow and promote their engagement, such as the Lima-Paris Action Agenda, the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA), and the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action (GCA).⁵ We also consider the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a political and scientific body producing reports about the state of scientific, technical, and socioeconomic knowledge on climate change. While independent from the UNFCCC, the IPCC regularly becomes enmeshed in controversy when unresolved issues are deferred to the organization in the hope that it can reset the international dialogue to a more “rational” discourse.^{6,7} In particular, the line-by-line approvals of its reports’ Summaries for Policymakers (SPMs) have become sites of struggle between governments over what is policy-relevant scientific knowledge to inform the UNFCCC.^{8,9} Statements included in the SPMs are considered to have a “soft policy prescriptive” character.¹⁰

Strategies of obstruction at the international level are regularly denounced but remain underexplored as a research topic. Scholars¹¹ have only recently provided the first comprehensive framework to assess obstruction in the UNFCCC, distinguishing between tactics to: limit the scope of an issue (e.g., by rejecting or excluding it from the agenda); reduce transparency (e.g.,

by impeding the collection of information about it); manipulate language around it (e.g., by supporting ambiguous text); and promote nontransformative solutions (e.g., by privileging further discussions over making decisions). While this framework offers valuable insight for tracking obstruction at the international level and should inform future research, there has been insufficient time since its publication for other scholars to apply it in their work. In this assessment of the literature, we highlight areas where the insights from this publication are echoed by other scholars examining obstructive efforts in the UNFCCC and IPCC.

In this chapter, we distinguish between *procedural obstruction*, which targets the negotiation process with the aim of slowing down or derailing the negotiations themselves, and *substantial obstruction*, which targets the substance of the negotiations by, for example, preventing an issue from being placed on the agenda or manipulating the way it is framed, scoped, and defined. After a brief description of important moments in the history of the UNFCCC that set the stage for climate obstruction, we highlight major structural and domestic factors underpinning international obstruction strategies. We then review strategies used by states and non-state actors to obstruct development on key issues (science, mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, equity and finance) and consider efforts to expose and resist climate obstruction.

THE UNFCCC, A FERTILE GROUND FOR OBSTRUCTION

The UNFCCC was signed in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development Conference in Rio de Janeiro (Rio). It is open to all states and regional economic integration organizations such as the European Union, known as the Parties. The UNFCCC sets the framework under which international climate cooperation occurs and inscribes its key principles—such as the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC)—distinguishing between Annex I (developed) and non-Annex I (developing) countries, with the former expected to take the lead in addressing climate change.¹²

The first quantified obligation to reduce emissions was inscribed in the Kyoto Protocol at COP3 in 1997 and approved at COP7 in Marrakech in 2001. During the first commitment period (2005–2012), industrialized economies undertook their obligation to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by an average of at least 5% against 1990 levels, which reflected the sum of the individual targets pledged by each of them. Abiding by the principle of CBDR-RC, the UNFCCC exempted developing countries from these commitments. The ambition of the Kyoto Protocol was low.¹³ On the one hand, the definition of

national targets was not based on “objective” criteria, but “on what countries were willing to put forward at the time.”¹⁴ On the other hand, not all Parties reached their individual targets, although on paper the agreement achieved its overall goals. Few countries (mainly from the European Union) fulfilled their obligations; the United States did not ratify the Protocol; and Canada withdrew in 2011 when it became obvious that it would not be able to adhere to its target. While a second commitment period (2013–2020) was adopted in 2012, several countries (Japan, Canada, Russia) did not participate.

The Paris Agreement is an indirect recognition of the limitations of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol crafted in a context in which global emissions had grown by 2% annually between 2000 and 2014. Universal by nature, it sought to commit both Annex I and non-Annex I countries to climate action through the submission of so-called nationally determined contributions (NDCs).¹⁵ The agreement also inaugurated a period of “hybrid multilateralism” by giving non-state actors a more integrated role, encouraging them to contribute to climate action.¹⁶ Non-state actors may differ in their respective lobbying and negotiating behaviors; thus, unpacking the roles played by, for example, the fossil fuel corporate sector, agribusiness, and ultraconservative think tanks versus climate activist networks and environmental NGOs is of paramount importance. Yet almost ten years after the Paris Agreement, there remains a gap between the aspirations stated by the Parties in their NDCs and the level of action that is necessary to meet the Agreement’s temperature goal (well below 2 degrees C), raising questions about whether it can be achieved. Challenges to implementing the agreement also affect the credibility of its Parties, raising doubt about whether they are seriously committed to these goals.

Weak implementation creates what one scholar¹⁷ calls a “fertile ground for obstructionists.” The weak implementation of the Kyoto Protocol ingrained mistrust against the industrialized world and offered support for arguments to those who claim that these countries have not taken the lead in climate change mitigation as promised. Challenges in implementing the Paris Agreement in a fair and ambitious manner have further eroded trust. Developed countries’ failure to mobilize the \$100 billion per year in 2020 and 2021 it had promised at COP15 in 2009 to support climate action in developing countries also increased distrust.

Structural Aspects Facilitating Obstruction

States make major decisions during COPs, transnational mega-events and meeting points for state and non-state actors invested in shaping the global response to climate change.¹⁸ The COPs have been increasingly partitioned,

divided into a Blue Zone—a space of negotiation but also side events restricted to accredited participants, a Green Zone—a semi-official space where non-state actors can hold side events that is open to the public, and a Fringe space—usually the streets and buildings of the host city where various activities and mobilizations are allowed.¹⁹

Several aspects of UNFCCC operations contribute to empowering obstructionist behaviors. For example, by not imposing a fair limit to the size of delegations, the UNFCCC has maintained significant asymmetries in participation and negotiating capacities between actors. Countries with high stakes in climate change mitigation often have larger delegations, and are hence better prepared to exert influence on the negotiations.²⁰ In contrast, low-income states, despite being highly vulnerable to climate change, are disadvantaged because they are “overwhelmingly outmatched in terms of financial resources, political influence, and negotiating capacity.”²¹ In practice,²² this means that many of them have smaller delegations and struggle to attend parallel meetings; are less fluent in English and can less effectively get their messages across; have fewer scientific and legal experts involved and encounter more challenges navigating discussions; and have bigger turnover and thus lack institutional knowledge over time. These disadvantages translate into less capacity to negotiate effectively and to oppose obstructionists, especially when negotiations extend into the night. To compensate for such challenges, many countries rely on coalition building.²³

These inequalities are even more acute in the IPCC because many countries in the Global South lack the infrastructure and resources to partake in global knowledge- production and build a sufficient knowledge base to contribute meaningfully to its assessments. Despite efforts to increase the participation of developing countries in the organization, “the economic and human resources required to conduct IPCC activities means that considerable asymmetries persist.”²⁴ This asymmetry means that their perspectives are not well-represented in the assessment reports, potentially generating biases and greater challenges to implementing climate policy in the Global South (see Chapter 8).

Finally, another aspect of the international climate regime that works in favor of obstructionists is consensus-based decision-making. While consensus is generally praised for giving any Party the right to effectively veto a proposal, in practice, such power is unequally distributed among participants.²⁵ Studies have noted that consensus can promote lowest- common-denominator outcomes and encourage uncooperative behavior.²⁶ Obstructionist countries from both the Global North and the Global South have historically maintained inflexible positions and disproportionately used their veto power to slow progress, delay, or block agreement in the UNFCCC²⁷ and the IPCC.^{28,29}

STRUCTURAL AND DOMESTIC FACTORS UNDERPINNING CLIMATE OBSTRUCTIONISM

While international climate negotiations provide a fertile ground for obstruction, some countries and groups of countries obstruct the process more than others. What makes these countries decide that their interests are best served by intentionally slowing or blocking action on climate change? Although this is a complex issue, this section highlights some of the main structural and domestic factors underpinning climate obstruction in the UNFCCC and the IPCC.

Historical Emissions and Responsibilities

The first structural factor in obstruction is a country's historical emissions: nations that have relied heavily on fossil fuels and built their economic and industrial sectors around them may be more reluctant to take a leadership role in the UNFCCC/IPCC, to set ambitious climate goals, and to provide the means of implementation (finance, technology transfer, and capacity building). While there are different ways to define and assess historical responsibility for CO₂ emissions, by all accounting a small number of industrialized countries and emerging economies dominates (Table 10.2). Consider, for example, cumulative CO₂ emissions since 1850, the beginning of the Industrial Revolution: ten countries alone are responsible for almost two-thirds of those total emissions. When considering cumulative territorial emissions since 1990—the standard baseline in the international climate regime—and consumption-based emissions, the same ten countries are listed, although the order changes slightly. Finally, when looking at cumulative emissions per capita and per population, the ranking is different, with large emerging economies falling off the top ten list.

Material Endowments, Values, and Ideas

Another structural factor in obstruction is the material endowments of different countries.³⁰ Nations whose economies are dependent on fossil fuel exportation or importation may be more reluctant to engage meaningfully in the UNFCCC/IPCC negotiations (Table 10.3).

While material endowments are crucial to understanding climate obstructionism, ideas, values, and beliefs are also important to consider, for example, when a country's leader is a climate denier. The election of conservative climate deniers in the United States (George W. Bush and Donald J. Trump),

Table 10.2 HISTORICAL CO₂ EMISSIONS BY TERRITORY, CONSUMPTION, PER CAPITA, AND PER POPULATION

Cumulative territorial emissions (1850–2021)	Cumulative territorial emissions (1990–2021)	Cumulative emissions: consumption (1990–2021)	Cumulative per capita emissions (1850–2021)	Cumulative emissions per population (1850–2021)
US	China	US	New Zealand	Canada
China	US	China	Canada	US
Russia	India	Russia	Australia	Estonia
Brazil	Russia	Brazil	US	Australia
Indonesia	Brazil	Indonesia	Argentina	Trinidad and Tobago
Germany	Indonesia	Germany	Qatar	Russia
India	Japan	India	Gabon	Kazakhstan
UK	Germany	UK	Malaysia	UK
Japan	Canada	Japan	Congo	Germany
Canada	UK	Canada	Nicaragua	Belgium

Source: Carbon Brief (2021), <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-which-countries-are-historically-responsible-for-climate-change> and Climate Watch. (The information on per capita GHG emissions is limited to countries with more than one million inhabitants.)

Canada (Stephen Harper), Australia (Scott Morrison), Argentina (Javier Milei), and Brazil (Jair Bolsonaro) diverted these countries' priorities away from leadership positions in the UNFCCC.

Domestic Politics and Vested Interests

Other factors are more closely related to how different actors, especially those against climate regulation, influence decision-making processes at the domestic level. Conflicts between domestic actors that are pro- and anti-climate action can influence the position of a country at the international level, as well as explain changes over time.³¹ The United States, for example, has twice complicated climate progress within the international community: by not ratifying the Kyoto Protocol and by withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, both out of the stated fear that the treaties would undermine its economy. According to some scholars,³² the decision not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol “was almost entirely driven by internal conflicts within the executive branch and the legislature.” Others³³ also note that then-President Trump’s withdrawal decision “was mainly driven by the U.S. domestic politics and his personal preferences [as a climate denier].”

Table 10.3 TOP TEN COUNTRIES BY EXTRACTION, CONSUMPTION, EXPORT, AND IMPORT OF FOSSIL FUELS 1990–2006 AND 2007–2023

Domestic Extraction		Domestic Consumption		Exports		Imports	
1990–2006	2007–2023	1990–2006	2007–2023	1990–2006	2007–2023	1990–2006	2007–2023
US	China	US	China	Saudi Arabia	Russia	US	China
China	US	China	US	Russia	Australia	Japan	US
Russia	Russia	Russia	India	Australia	Indonesia	Germany	Japan
Canada	Canada	India	Canada	Europe	Saudi Arabia	South Korea	India
Saudi Arabia	India	Canada	Russia	Canada	Canada	Spain	South Korea
India	Saudi Arabia	Germany	Japan	Iran	US	UK	Germany
Australia	Indonesia	Japan	Germany	Indonesia	Iraq	Netherlands	Taiwan
Germany	Australia	UK	South Korea	Venezuela	UAE	Taiwan	UK
Iran	Iran	Poland	Saudi Arabia	Nigeria	Qatar	India	Spain
UK	South Africa	Norway	Iran	UAE	Nigeria	Ukraine	Netherlands

Source: Global Material Flows Database, <https://energydata.info/dataset/world-unep-irp-global-material-flows-database>.

It is also important to consider the role of vested interests at the domestic level—people or organizations with a financial or personal advantage in delaying or blocking climate action—in obstruction in the UNFCCC/IPCC. Some research³⁴ emphasizes that various interest groups, particularly those representing the fossil fuel industry and related sectors, have employed deliberate political tactics and lobbying efforts “to maintain laggard positions in countries such as Australia and the United States and to mute leadership in others, such as Germany.” In many industrialized countries, notably the United States, industry groups have funded campaigns of misinformation aimed at discrediting the scientific consensus on human-induced climate change or claiming that a swift transition to a low-carbon economy would significantly disrupt established lifestyles.^{35,36,37,38,39,40} These groups have been supported by conservative groups that funded denialist think tanks, supported conservatism in academia, and promoted radical free-market ideologies and a positive image of corporations. Conservative media have also played a role in spreading climate denial. While supporting freedom of expression and respect for opposing views, right-wing media have simultaneously promoted the ideas of a minority of denialist scientists, who have subsequently become overrepresented. Denialist columnists and bloggers have become major disseminators of misinformation about climate change (see Chapters 5 and 6).

This denial machine is also active in Global South countries. In many cases, climate denial is associated with nationalism, land politics, and development strategies based on a zero-sum game between growth and environmental protection and has influenced the position of emerging economies in multilateral talks.^{41,42,43,44} For example, at COP26, Brazil obstructed progress in negotiations on Article 6, which allows countries to voluntarily cooperate to reach emissions-reduction targets, and presented an updated version of its NDC in which the country committed to a target regarded by many experts as an accounting maneuver and manipulation.^{45,46} Domestic vested interests have contributed to increased deforestation in the Amazon, reduction in the demarcation of Indigenous lands, the weakening of environmental monitoring bodies—notably the “Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources” (IBAMA) and the “Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation” (ICMBio)—and the increased vulnerability of biodiversity in Brazilian biomes. In so doing, they have influenced and discredited Brazil’s international climate commitments.^{47,48,49,50}

MAJOR OBSTRUCTIONIST COUNTRIES

Most major emitters have held international negotiating positions that could qualify as obstructive. We consider in this section the United States, China, Brazil, India, Russia, and the European Union.

The United States—the world’s major “climate power” given its historical emissions and the assets to reduce them—is according to one research team⁵¹ “the nation most significantly undermining the call to action.” It has historically alternated between periods during which it blocked advances in the UNFCCC and those in which it contributed to enhance international cooperation. As mentioned, while the United States signed the Kyoto Protocol, it never ratified it, arguing that the agreement would create unfair competition for American companies in favor of China. When Barack Obama became president in 2009, obstruction receded. In 2015, the United States presented a NDC pledging to reduce its emissions by 26%–28% below 2005 levels, an objective that was neither ambitious enough nor fair relative to the country’s historical emissions. In 2020, the year in which Parties were to have presented an updated NDC, then-President Trump decided to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Under the administration of Joe Biden in 2021, the United States rejoined the Agreement. It announced a revised NDC, pledging to reduce its emissions by 50%–52% below 2005 levels by 2030 and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The revised NDC was substantially more ambitious than the previous one, but still insufficient considering the country’s responsibility for the largest share in the world’s historical GHG emissions. While the climate legislation known as the Inflation Reduction Act (2022) could lead to a 24%–37% decline in US emissions, additional measures are needed if the country is to fulfill the NDC target. While the Act aims to advance the renewable power industry and “green” jobs, it includes concessions for the fossil fuel industry, including an annual minimum area of specified public lands made available for drilling.⁵² The Climate Action Tracker (CAT), an independent scientific project that tracks government climate action, thus classifies the US NDC as insufficient.⁵³

China’s position is more ambiguous. The country’s intensive economic growth in the last half-century has placed China as the world’s second-largest economy and in direct competition with the United States for global hegemony. In addition, Chinese economic growth and the consequent rise in energy demand have been driven mostly by the abundant use of coal, making China the world’s largest polluter. Thus, China has become a key climate actor at the international level, with substantial incumbent responsibilities it has resisted. It hews to a discourse of being a developing country, a characterization that no longer reflects its economic status, and insists on upholding the principles of CBDR-RC. At the same time, according to one author, China’s position on CBDR-RC is not “solely driven by concerns about economic growth, maintaining sovereignty, or simply not wanting to address the problem.”⁵⁴ Namely, China’s interests are also based on strongly held moral views about the importance of developed countries taking the lead on climate change. Domestically, China’s position is also ambiguous. Beijing

produces the majority of the low-carbon energy technologies—especially electric vehicles, batteries, and solar panels—and aims to achieve low-carbon development. Yet coal still provides about three-quarters of China’s energy supply including electricity. At COP21 (2015), China presented an NDC that is inconsistent with the world’s remaining carbon budget. It has since pledged to be carbon neutral by 2060. The CAT classifies China’s NDC as highly insufficient.

India is another fierce defender of the CBDR-RC principle, stressing the country’s right to development and its challenges in eradicating poverty. India continuous being a low-/ middle-income country, both in per capita income and emissions, and from the point of view of climate justice has the right to defend the principle (something not as valid for high-/middle-income countries like Brazil and China). In its updated NDC, submitted to the secretariat of the UNFCCC, the country pledged in 2022 to reduce emissions intensity by 45% below 2005 levels by 2030, to increase cumulative renewable grid capacity by 50%, and to increase forest carbon sinks by 2030. It has also pledged to become climate neutral by 2070. Yet implementation is lagging. India is highly dependent on coal for its energy supply—it is the world’s second-largest producer and importer of coal. Thus, fluctuations in the global energy markets strongly affect the country and its energy policy, as when it took advantage of decreasing prices and escalated its imports of Russian oil when Western democracies began an embargo after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The CAT classifies India’s NDC as highly insufficient.

Russia has always been a major obstructionist in the climate regime. Its emissions have been decreasing relative to the 1990 baseline, not as a result of decarbonization policies but rather decreased economic growth.⁵⁵ In its 2015 NDC, revised in 2020, Russia pledged to limit its emissions to 70% below 1990 levels by 2030, relying heavily on the capacity of its forests to sequester carbon. Russia has not pledged to reduce the use of fossil fuels, which the country considers key to its development—it is the world’s second- largest producer and exporter of oil and natural gas and the third-largest exporter of coal.⁵⁶ Even before its invasion of Ukraine, Russia was increasingly wary of multilateral cooperation, arguing that the climate agenda threatens its national security—a doctrine first announced in 2019 and reiterated in 2021.⁵⁷ The CAT classifies Russia’s NDC as critically insufficient.

Brazil could become a proactive actor in climate change cooperation but has been a reluctant for most of the climate regime’s history. Nevertheless, despite a period (2009–2011) during which it joined forces with other proactive actors to advocate climate cooperation and accepted voluntary emissions-reduction targets, Brazil has mostly defended the CBDR-RC principle and tried to exempt itself from responsibility.⁵⁸ In 2015, Brazil pledged to reduce emissions by 43% by 2030, without depending on financial transfers from developed countries.

At the time, it was the only major developing country to have a goal of absolute reduction of emissions.⁵⁹ In 2021, the administration of Jair Bolsonaro raised the goal to a 50% reduction; however, due to changes in emissions accountancy, the higher percentage actually yielded a lower reduction, in absolute numbers.^{60,61} Then, in 2023, under the administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Brazil updated its NDC and corrected the error, increasing the reduction to 56%. Since then, the discourse against climate action that had been promoted by Bolsonaro changed and policies to resume deforestation control in the Amazon were reinstated. That year, deforestation in the Amazon was reduced by 20% compared with 2022, a major achievement considering the deterioration of the law-enforcement apparatus that had been allowed to occur during the Bolsonaro administration.⁶² Yet Lula's administration has not pursued decarbonization in other sectors. For example, there is a large political divide over exploring oil reserves in the eastern margins of the Amazon, and Brazil is gradually becoming one of the most important exporters of oil, entering OPEC+ (the expanded version of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) in 2023.⁶³ The CAT classifies Brazil's NDC as insufficient.

The European Union has been a consistently proactive actor in the climate regime. For example, in 2015, the European Union pledged to reduce its emissions by 40% compared with 1990 levels and raised its ambition to 55% in 2020.^{64,65} However, individual member countries have not always fulfilled their obligations or left important gaps in implementing decarbonization policies. For example, after Russia reduced its exports of natural gas to Europe following the invasion of Ukraine and sanctions imposed by Western economies, many European countries increased their use of coal for electricity supply in 2022, despite an EU target to decrease dependence on fossil fuels.⁶⁶ Similarly, the European Green Deal provides a roadmap to reduce emissions from different EU sectors, and different policies have already been approved at the Union level. These policies include a ban on sales of new vehicles using combustion engines after 2035; the European Climate Law, enshrining the 2050 climate neutrality objective; and the European Climate Pact, an agreement to promote efforts to mobilize the public into taking climate action. Yet since the Union and its members share responsibility on climate issues and implementation depends largely on the latter, it has yet to be seen how quickly the gap between regulation and implementation will diminish. For example, in late 2023 and early 2024, major demonstrations of farmers against decarbonization policies in agriculture pushed the European Commission to reconsider several of its recommendations for the agricultural sector (see Chapter 4). Another important variable is the rise of right-wing parties in national parliaments. The CAT classifies the EU's NDC as insufficient.

OBSTRUCTION STRATEGIES BY STATE ACTORS

Obstruction strategies in the UNFCCC and IPCC can be divided into procedural and substantial obstruction. While both strategies are often intertwined, we distinguish them for the sake of clarity.

Procedural Obstruction

Sustained strategies of procedural obstruction have been documented since the establishment of the climate regime. These practices can include abusing rules of procedure, assuming key positions, and taking issues hostage or limiting their scope. Because they have been used repeatedly over time, these obstructive strategies have contributed to spoiling the atmosphere at meetings and creating distrust among participants: stalling the negotiations, weakening their ambition, and occasionally placing the whole regime in jeopardy.^{67,68,69,70} These strategies have been documented to occur in both the UNFCCC and the IPCC and have frequently been used by OPEC countries (especially Saudi Arabia and Qatar) and industrialized countries (especially the United States), although other actors' use of them cannot be ruled out.

When abusing rules of procedure, obstructionist countries often take advantage of the tacit norms of deliberation that make it impossible to deny the floor to a Party. The delegation of Saudi Arabia, for example, has repeatedly taken the floor to raise points of order or objections and to propagate their positions under different agenda items.⁷¹ In the IPCC, countries wanting to undermine the organization's influence on climate negotiations have also targeted the procedures used for compiling its reports.^{72,73} In 2009, for example, the "Climategate" scandal in which thousands of emails and computer files from a server at the University of East Anglia were hacked and divulged online, as well as some errors found in the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4), were amplified to discredit the organization. Ahead of COP15 in Copenhagen, a Saudi delegate reportedly said that Climategate would have a "huge impact" on the negotiations as "it appear[ed] from the details of the scandal that there is no relationship whatsoever between human activities and climate change."⁷⁴

A second obstruction strategy used in the UNFCCC/IPCC context is "procedural power,"⁷⁵ which involves assuming positions of power in the negotiations. Scholars^{76,77} have noted that OPEC countries have chaired the Group of 77 (the largest coalition representing developing countries in the UNFCCC) several times or assumed coordinating roles on several issues. According to another author, "the Chair of the G-77 . . . was filled by a delegate from an OPEC country for six of the eleven years spanning 1994–2004."⁷⁸ OPEC countries, and in particular Saudi Arabia, have also been continuously represented in both

the COP and IPCC bureaus.⁷⁹ While the latter advises the COP president, the former leads the assessment process. Being represented in these bodies is crucial to be kept informed of the latest developments and gain greater control of the process.⁸⁰ A related strategy is to join or remain in a negotiating process or treaty for the mere purpose of defending one's interests. Researchers⁸¹ have noted that OPEC countries joined the Kyoto Protocol only once it was confirmed that it would enter into force, to ensure that the group was able to influence negotiations about its implementation. The United States also kept attending meetings of the Kyoto Protocol, sometimes blocking issues and maintaining inflexible positions, despite that it had not ratified it.⁸²

A third obstruction strategy in international climate negotiations is bargaining by holding items hostage or limiting the scope of an issue. Research^{83,84} has shown how Saudi Arabia sought to link the question of adaptation (a major concern for developing countries) to that of response measures (an agenda item that discusses the potential adverse social or economic impacts of climate change mitigation measures), conditioning progress on the former to consideration of the latter. This strategy resulted in slowing progress on adaptation overall.

Substantial Obstruction

Obstruction strategies can also be observed on matters of substance in international climate negotiations, related to how different issues have been addressed over time in terms of their scope and ambition, but also in the language used to frame them. Many of the strategies of procedural obstruction outlined in the previous section have been used to support substantial obstruction. This section features examples related to science, mitigation (with a focus on energy), adaptation, loss and damage, equity, and climate finance.

Science and the IPCC

Obstructionist countries and their allies have continuously questioned IPCC conclusions, both within the organization and within the UNFCCC. In the IPCC, emphasizing uncertainty in the authors' assessment is a key strategy to weaken the authority of the organization and delegitimize calls for action based on its reports. In the 1990s and 2000s, OPEC countries and the United States focused on the confidence levels assigned to statements on the detection and attribution of climate change (the remit of its Working Group I on the physical science basis), with the aim of postponing discussions about GHG emissions-reduction targets. Negotiations often focused on "nuances of expressions,"⁸⁵ such as when the expression "appreciable human influence" on

global climate was replaced by “discernible human influence.” There have also been instances where countries downplayed the negative impacts of climate change.⁸⁶ In the last cycles, obstructionist countries have targeted findings from working groups II (on impact, vulnerability, and adaptation) and III (on mitigation), which assess policy-relevant knowledge for climate action. In AR6, for example, Saudi Arabia sought to dampen the emphasis on emissions reduction and fossil fuel phaseout. China also fought to undermine the focus on 1.5°C by emphasizing uncertainty about the assessment of irreversible impacts resulting from overshooting the target.⁸⁷ Finally, developed countries, especially the United States, sought to undermine statements highlighting the finance gap between developed to developing countries.⁸⁸

In the UNFCCC, agenda items related to the IPCC have been another sustained target of OPEC countries, and at times of the United States and the Russian Federation.⁸⁹ These countries, especially Saudi Arabia, have often fought to weaken decisions following the release of IPCC reports for fear that the reports’ conclusions could underpin calls for more ambitious action. This was most evident after the publication of the Special Report on 1.5°C (SR15) in 2018. At COP24 in Katowice, the US administration aligned with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Russia in opposing “welcoming” the report out of concern that it would convey support for a 1.5°C target and increased ambition.⁹⁰ More recently, China, India, and Saudi Arabia opposed noting that the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) was the “most comprehensive and robust” assessment of climate change and requested the deletion of a sentence linking AR6 to the “best available science.”⁹¹

Mitigation (with a Focus on Energy)

Obstruction of mitigation is sector specific. Some research has documented the reluctance of some states (in particular India, Argentina, and Brazil) to address emissions from agriculture in the UNFCCC.⁹² Scholars⁹³ have also identified strategies by Saudi Arabia and OPEC countries to slow progress on discussions about ways to reduce emissions from international aviation and maritime transport.

Obstruction strategies have been more fully documented in the energy sector. Obstruction is reflected in the near absence of debate over efforts to combat climate change through regulation of energy production and markets.^{94,95} Despite being ubiquitous topics in most other climate debates, energy issues have rarely been included in official multilateral climate talks. The basic treaty and negotiation texts of the climate regime either omit discussion of energy issues altogether or frame them in very specific and limited ways, in stark contrast to the way such issues are discussed by civil-society actors and international organizations. Some governments have devised explicit strategies to

keep energy questions out of climate negotiations. Historically, the most visible and arguably most important actor in this respect has been Saudi Arabia, which has consistently argued that the UNFCCC is “not an energy treaty”⁹⁶ and has successfully blocked progress on energy-related issues. Research shows that⁹⁷ Saudi Arabia, Iran and other OPEC members strongly opposed any reference to “CO₂ and energy taxation,” “new or increased oil taxation,” and “new greenhouse gas taxes” in the Kyoto negotiations. Two decades later, in the Paris negotiations, Saudi Arabia and other oil-exporting countries systematically lobbied against any formulations of a long-term target that contained the word “carbon,” such as “decarbonization,” “carbon neutrality,” or “low carbon economies,” so as to avoid a focus on fossil fuels as the main cause of global warming.⁹⁸ In the IPCC, Saudi Arabia has repeatedly opposed singling out CO₂ as the main GHG or mentioning fossil fuels as the main source of global GHG emissions.⁹⁹

Questions of fossil fuel phaseout, removal of fossil fuel subsidies, and/or disinvestment have thus been kept out of negotiation documents. In the few cases where fossil fuel regulation did enter climate talks, discursive reframing has occurred.¹⁰⁰ This reframing can be seen in negotiation tracks on “adverse effects of response measures” (which underpins calls for compensation for the prospective economic losses from mitigation policies) and in discussions on market-based approaches and technological fixes within several negotiation tracks of the Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement, such as the inclusion of carbon capture and storage (CCS) in the Clean Development Mechanism.¹⁰¹

COP26 has been regarded “as a watershed in the adoption and institutionalization”¹⁰² of anti-fossil fuel norms: its cover decision called for accelerating “efforts toward the *phasedown* of unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies” [emphasis added]. Although the text was diluted (“phasedown” replaced “phaseout”), “it marks the first time that a COP decision mentions fossil fuels [in the context of phasing out fossil fuel subsidies] and coal as part of the climate problem and as issues that require action from Parties.”¹⁰³ Countries opposed to the use of phaseout included India and China, which lamented the singling out of coal. Instead, India (unsuccessfully) called for all fossil fuels to be phased down in an equitable manner. At COP28, there was again strong opposition to language on phaseout from the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs), Arab Group, and some African countries.¹⁰⁴ As a compromise, the Parties agreed to mention “transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems.”

Strategic linguistic ambiguities were central to reaching an agreement on this issue and it remains unclear whether these developments will lead to major changes in the regulation of energy production and markets. A major loophole is the use of the term “unabated,” which could allow for the continuation of fossil fuel extraction if combined with CCS or carbon dioxide removal (CDR), methods whose feasibility and safety are highly uncertain, especially at the

scale needed to lower surface temperatures. In addition to advocating adoption of these technologies in the UNFCCC, fossil fuel producers (Saudi Arabia, Norway, the United States, and Japan) also sought to normalize them in IPCC assessments. There have been seven recorded instances in AR6 of Saudi Arabia intervening to add the word “unabated” to sentences referencing CO₂ and GHG emissions reductions, in one instance calling for retaining language “on avoiding unabated fossil fuel emissions” rather than using the phrase “displacing” fossil fuels.¹⁰⁵

Adaptation

Obstruction of adaptation (the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate impacts) has largely taken place through the relative neglect of the issue in the climate regime compared with mitigation (see Chapter 11). In contrast to mitigation, which has been central to negotiations, adaptation has been treated as something of an afterthought.¹⁰⁶ Adaptation gained more attention in the early 2000s, with several funds being set up in 2001 to support developing countries in writing National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs) and implementing adaptation projects. However, discussions on adaptation were relegated to a work program (the Nairobi Work Programme) in 2005. After years of developed countries (in particular the United States, European Union, and Australia) resisting the addition of a dedicated space in the negotiations to consider adaptation,^{107,108} the acceptance of this proposal by Argentina was considered a meaningful advancement of the issue.¹⁰⁹ However, decades later, we can understand the formation of a work program as aligning with a common strategy for delaying action on an issue, with Parties opposing the incorporation of the issue ultimately agreeing only to years of extended discussions rather than concerted decision-making. Mace¹¹⁰ found that industrialized countries had also been blocking action in the negotiations through assertions of scientific uncertainty about the attribution of impacts to climate change, calls for further studies, concerns about maladaptation, and requirements for adaptation mainstreaming into development planning.

Despite the recognition—in the Cancun Agreements negotiated at COP16 in 2010—that adaptation should be given the same attention as mitigation, adaptation has remained subordinate to mitigation for several reasons. First, adaptation has been framed mainly as an issue to be governed at the national or subnational level.¹¹¹ Second, there has been a proliferation of agenda items on adaptation under the UNFCCC, which weakens the issue through fragmentation, and the parameters around what adaptation should entail remain undefined. The fragmentation of adaptation items under the UNFCCC and the lack of clarity over adaptation action going forward, especially under the Global Goal on Adaptation established by the Paris Agreement, mean that adaptation

has systematically been made more difficult to track and assess. Third, adaptation has been consistently underfunded relative to mitigation.^{112,113} There is also a gap between the adaptation needs expressed by developing countries and the adaptation finance provided by wealthy countries.¹¹⁴

Concerns about inadequacies in adaptation finance speak to broader concerns about obstruction in climate finance under the UNFCCC. Wealthy countries have not consistently contributed the climate financing they have promised, most notably failing to meet the goal to mobilize \$100 billion per year by 2020. In the negotiations, these same countries have refused to establish clear definitions of climate finance, in particular denying assertions by developing countries that such finance should come in the form of grants (not loans), particularly for adaptation.¹¹⁵

Loss and Damage

Similar strategies of obstruction have been employed regarding the definition of loss and damage, or the consequences of climate change that are already felt and that to date have disproportionately affected smaller/lower income/more vulnerable countries. Wealthy countries, particularly the United States, have been obstructing the issue of loss and damage in the climate negotiations since the 1990s, when the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) first raised the issue.¹¹⁶ The reason the issue of loss and damage, particularly finance for loss and damage, has received so much resistance is likely because it comes closest to raising the topic of liability and compensation in the negotiations. The United States has directly prevented liability and compensation for climate change impacts from entering the decision texts for decades.^{117,118,119} Today, while loss and damage has become a key issue under the UNFCCC (through the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage and Article 8 of the Paris Agreement) the denial of any basis for the appearance of liability and compensation in UNFCCC decision texts continues to be a fruitful strategy for the United States and supportive Parties in developed nations. Scholars¹²⁰ outlined a set of tactics countries have used to obstruct loss and damage finance over the years, which fall into four categories: limiting the scope of agenda items; reducing transparency; manipulating the meaning of textual language; and pushing nontransformative solutions.

Language manipulation over loss and damage has also been well-documented in the IPCC.¹²¹ While the IPCC has engaged with the concept in previous assessments, it was only in AR6 WGII that the loss-and-damage terminology was first agreed to in a SPM, using the wording “losses and damages.” In earlier assessment and special reports, several EU countries, the United States, Canada, and other Parties prevented the notion of loss and damage from being mentioned in the SPMs, on the grounds that the concept

remained “a political term that has not been defined”¹²² and that could lead to “terminological confusion.”¹²³ During the SR15 process, the IPCC authors introduced a glossary entry on loss and damage¹²⁴ that separates the political debate around “Loss and Damage” from scientific evidence and projections on “losses and damages.”¹²⁵ One author argues that such subtle orthographic changes (variations in spelling) paved the way for getting loss-and-damage terminology—in the form of the less political phrase “losses and damages”—included in the AR6 SPMs. On this basis, several countries retroactively recommended against using the term “loss and damage” in the underlying AR6 WGII report.¹²⁶ The final corrected official document displays terminology adjustments (e.g., “loss and damage” has become “losses and damages”) in several chapters.¹²⁷

These examples highlight how countries have used subtle differences in loss-and-damage orthographies to influence the representation of the issue in IPCC documents. While some appreciated the eventual inclusion of loss-and-damage language in the SPMs, others raised concerns that the term “losses and damages” departs from language agreed to in the Paris Agreement; may result in attempts to depoliticize and dilute loss-and-damage language; could derail research funding; and may undermine efforts by vulnerable countries to have the loss and damage they experience recognized in international climate negotiations.¹²⁸

Equity and CBDR-RC

Obstruction on equity and CBDR-RC consists of either denying the salience of these principles in defining Parties’ fair share in solving the climate problem or defining Parties’ responsibilities in ways that do not reflect their different contributions to global emissions and economic growth patterns.

The United States has been the fiercest critic of the principles of equity and CBDR-RC in international negotiations. In the 2000s, the country justified its nonratification of the Kyoto Protocol on the ground that it did not include binding emissions-reduction targets for major emitters from the developing world, especially India and China. According to one researcher,¹²⁹ “even during more engaged Democratic presidencies, US participation has remained directed toward the flattening of differentiated commitments between developed and developing countries.” In 2011 during post-Kyoto negotiations, for example, the country’s lead negotiator, Todd Stern, supposedly claimed “if equity is in, we are out.”¹³⁰

The Paris Agreement introduced greater differentiation in the climate regime and sought to go beyond the Annex I/non-Annex I dichotomy. While referring to equity and CBDR-RC, the treaty also introduced the phrase “in the light of different national circumstances.” This caveat speaks to the

country-based approach to climate governance as well as self-differentiation between countries in mitigation obligations under the Agreement. As explained by one scholar,¹³¹ “the qualification of the principle [CBDR-RC] by a reference to ‘national circumstances’ introduces a dynamic element to the interpretation of the principle. As national circumstances evolve, so too will the common but differentiated responsibilities of States.”

This change has not meant that obstruction on this issue has ceased. Global North countries, and in particular the United States, are now working to limit the salience of CBDR-RC and equity in critical conversations around loss and damage, finance, and adaptation, by arguing that these issues should not be dealt with under the Paris Agreement.¹³² As part of the Global Stocktake—the process to assess states’ and non-state actors’ progress toward meeting the goals of the Agreement—many developed countries have emphasized the need to focus on forward-looking plans in an attempt to avoid any assessment of the fairness of their pre-2020 commitments and action.

In reaction to developed countries’ minimization of their historical responsibilities, some developing countries continue to fiercely hold to the principles of equity and CBDR-RC, even as they have become major GHG emitters themselves. Many LMDC members, for example, continue to embrace the Annex I/non-Annex I dichotomy, denying the level of responsibility that should be assigned to emerging economies with higher capabilities.¹³³ China often promotes the discourse that it is still a developing country, which no longer reflects its economic status. Brazil has also often raised the CBDR-RC principle when it worked to its own advantage.¹³⁴

OBSTRUCTION STRATEGIES BY NON-STATE ACTORS

The obstruction strategies of non-state actors are more difficult to trace because, as non-Party stakeholders, they cannot properly engage in formal climate negotiations. This does not make them uninfluential. One study¹³⁵ noted that non-state actors can influence negotiations indirectly via domestic channels or even directly at the international level. Their ability to influence is not straightforward and depends on several factors, including the political opportunity structure (e.g., the availability of channels of influence or the decision-making rules), the power of the state(s) supporting their position, and their involvement in transnational coalitions.

Non-state actors in the UNFCCC include nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and UN bodies and specialized agencies. The UNFCCC clusters NGOs into nine constituencies: business and industry NGOs (BINGO), environmental NGOs (ENGO), farmers and agricultural NGOs (Farmers), Indigenous peoples’ organizations (IPO), local

government and municipal authorities (LGMA), research and independent NGOs (RINGO), trade union NGOs (TUNGO), a women and gender constituency (WGC), and children and youth NGOs (YUNGO).

Non-state actors use substantial obstruction more frequently than procedural obstruction. The obstructive strategies of industry groups (especially the carbon majors) have been more thoroughly documented than those of other sectors. At the domestic level, because they control energy production, these industry groups are often privileged in negotiations on energy planning and implementation. Policymakers may also anticipate their reaction and take them into account when drafting policies. For example, European industrialists in the 1990s opposed the introduction of a community-wide carbon tax. In the United States, industry groups lobbied negotiators to ensure that the Convention would not include binding emissions-reduction targets. Once established, they pressured them to oppose discussions of a protocol, arguing that it would damage the economy.^{136,137}

Increasingly, industry groups have engaged in obstruction at the international level as part of a country delegation or as representatives of an observer organization. The former status gives these actors privileged access to policymakers.¹³⁸ Cases have been reported in which employees of state-owned companies accompanied their country delegation to provide technical support. For example, several negotiators from Saudi Arabia had close ties to Saudi Aramco, its national oil company.¹³⁹ An analysis by Corporate Accountability, Corporate Europe Observatory, and Global Witness¹⁴⁰ revealed that twenty-nine countries attending COP27 in 2022 had fossil fuel lobbyists within their national delegations, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Russian Federation. The UAE also successfully nominated Sultan Al Jaber, the CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, to be president of COP28.

When attending climate talks as part of an observer organization, the carbon majors are active mainly through the BINGO constituency, such as trade associations, because observer organizations must be NGOs. As representatives of BINGOs, they can network, engage in advocacy, and build coalitions with other non-state actors.^{141,142} Two umbrella groups that fit this model were particularly active in the 1990s and early 2000s: the Global Climate Coalition (GCC) and the Climate Council (CC). These groups comprised coal and oil companies, mainly from the United States, and some chemical and car companies (see Chapters 2 and 3). They built transnational alliances with other states, particularly members of OPEC. Other relevant associations (some of which are still active today) have included the International Climate Change Partnership (ICCP), the World Coal Institute (WCI), the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA), and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). ICC and IPIECA have included

representatives of oil companies. Some of their programs have also been chaired by oil companies.¹⁴³ The ICCP, IPIECA, and ICC are still registered as observer organizations.

At first, climate denial was prevalent among these groups. The GCC, for example, launched campaigns to discredit IPCC conclusions on climate change detection and attribution. The GCC, supported by well-known American climate skeptics,^{144,145} accused the organization in 1996 of corrupting the peer-review process by altering text after it had been formally accepted by governments.^{146,147,148} It was also caught giving text to OPEC countries.¹⁴⁹

In the UNFCCC, representatives of fossil fuel companies fought to have their interests reflected in key decisions. The GCC was in close contact with OPEC states, assisting them by supplying strategic information and political support.¹⁵⁰ Research shows¹⁵¹ they “have managed to get their positions adopted by many governments, and in several cases incorporated into international documents including the UNFCCC.” The ICCP, for example, was crucial in the drafting of Article 4, paragraph 10 of the Convention in collaboration with Australia. The paragraph notes that special consideration should be given to countries whose economies are highly dependent on the production or consumption of fossil fuels. Post-Rio proposals (incremental measures, emission trading, voluntary efforts, etc.) also continued to be, according to the same authors,¹⁵² “clearly in tune with the preferences of the energy industries.”

From the 2000s onward, a more pluralistic set of interest groups became involved in the UNFCCC.^{153,154} Once it became clear that the United States would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol, the influence of the GCC faded and it was dissolved in 2001.¹⁵⁵ Some corporations and business groups, including oil companies (such as Shell and BP), also became more proactive once the Kyoto Protocol’s flexibility mechanisms to help countries meet their emissions-reduction targets were introduced.¹⁵⁶ Interest in the UNFCCC has since increased within the private sector, with BINGOs becoming a dominant group that seeks to influence the agenda and decision-making.^{157,158} The lead-up to COP21 in 2015 was “a new moment in business’s positioning towards climate negotiation.”¹⁵⁹ Much work was done to restore the unity of the private sector. Scholars have observed that¹⁶⁰ “the new ‘business voice’ proved to be the exact opposite of the initial obstructive and defensive one, and keen to demonstrate that ‘business has changed.’” Ahead of the COP, the private sector publicly supported a universal and ambitious agreement. It also called for greater dialogue between the private and public sectors. The World Economic Forum (WEF), in participation with major multinational corporations from the Global North and as a very influential opinion leader in its own right, also began to prioritize climate change mitigation and the energy transition in its programs and public statements.¹⁶¹

At COP21, many more business sectors were represented than previously (including extraction, manufacturing, electricity and gas, transportation, and finance and insurance).¹⁶² Multisectoral business associations, especially the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) registered more than one hundred delegates each. In this context, the BINGOs have increasingly presented themselves as the providers of the solutions that will drive climate action. Beneath the assumed unity, however, there lay conflicting views and contradictions.¹⁶³ For example, there was disagreement over whether an emissions-trading scheme or a carbon tax was a more appropriate response. BINGOs' vision of the energy transition also remains dominated by assumptions about "the self-healing capacities of the market"¹⁶⁴ and least-cost scenarios.

The (official) position of the carbon majors on climate change has changed considerably but remains ambivalent.¹⁶⁵ Research¹⁶⁶ shows that the largest companies accept the risks posed by climate change and seek to offer cost-effective solutions, but that they also do not see the end of fossil fuel energy. Some companies even stress the important role of oil and gas in meeting future demand growth. The same author¹⁶⁷ also notes that many of the proposed solutions are likely to fail to lower net emissions. Many companies support methane gas, a "lower-carbon fuel," and CCS, a technology whose feasibility at large scale is debated. They also stress the need for CDR to reach net-zero emissions, another method whose safety, scalability, and maturity are uncertain.¹⁶⁸

Several business-driven initiatives have emerged in the last decade, such as the Low Carbon Technology Partnerships initiative (LCTPi), led by WBCSD, and the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI). The carbon majors are increasingly acting through the OGCI, a club uniting twelve of the largest firms. Launched at the UN Secretary General's Climate Summit in 2014, the OGCI's stated mission is to accelerate climate action: it promised to invest \$1 billion in low-emissions technologies.¹⁶⁹ Major companies among the OGCI membership have committed to ambitious emissions-reduction strategies and attended UNFCCC meetings in increasing numbers. Corporate Accountability, Corporate Europe Observatory, and Global Witness¹⁷⁰ reported that 503 fossil fuel lobbyists were registered at COP26, 636 at COP27, and 2,456 at COP28, creating concern among civil society organizations about the integrity of the negotiation process. The possibility of greenwashing looms large and it remains to be seen how the carbon majors translate their commitments into action.

While the obstructionist strategies of fossil fuel companies have been more systematically studied, those used by representatives of other sectors that attend UNFCCC negotiations have also influenced the talks' direction. For

example, civil-society organizations have raised concerns about the domination of agro-business players in discussions related to agriculture, especially through the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (see Chapter 4).¹⁷¹ The *DeSmog* news platform¹⁷² also reported on how livestock companies mobilized at COP28 to disseminate a pro-meat message throughout the summit.

EFFORTS TO EXPOSE AND RESIST CLIMATE OBSTRUCTION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Efforts exist to expose and oppose climate obstruction within the UNFCCC and beyond. Perhaps the most consistent group in contesting climate obstruction and supporting stronger climate commitments has been AOSIS. Since the start of the climate regime, this organization of small island states has acted as a “single voice” to craft a “niche diplomacy” around common moral arguments and the use of scientific evidence to defend their interests in international negotiations:^{173,174} advocating more ambitious emission-reduction targets and raising funds for mitigation and adaptation as well as losses and damages. Environmental NGOs and activists have also played a key role in resisting climate obstruction, naming and shaming the countries blocking progress, as the CAN example in the introduction illustrates.

There have also been coordinated multiactor campaigns to support ambitious climate action at the international level. For example, scholars have¹⁷⁵ identified four distinct schemes aimed at “climatizing” global energy governance inside and outside the global climate regime: (1) carbon pricing, promoted by international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Energy Agency (IEA); (2) fossil fuel phaseout, discussed by activists and raised in meetings of the Group of Seven advanced economies (G7); (3) anti-extractivism, advocated by social movements in the Global South; and (4) fossil fuel divestment, supported by social movements and NGOs in the Global North. Several countries have also joined these various efforts. Pacific leaders in 2015 joined a call for an international moratorium on the development and expansion of fossil fuel-extracting industries, the Suva Declaration on Climate Change. Since then, calls for a phasing out fossil fuel have followed, leading in 2019 to the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, supported by civil society and spearheaded by the small island nations of Tuvalu and Vanuatu.¹⁷⁶

CONCLUSION

This chapter assessed the available literature to define the extent and methods of climate obstruction in the global climate regime, focusing mainly on the

UNFCCC and IPCC. Defining and identifying procedural and substantial strategies of obstruction by both state and non-state actors, it identified the key tactics used, including slowing down or blocking international climate negotiations as well as controlling and manipulating the way relevant issues are framed and decisions are taken. Major fossil fuel producers and exporters in particular have distinguished themselves by their sustained efforts at impeding progress toward ambitious and fair climate action. The persistence of these efforts over decades seems to echo an observation from 1988:¹⁷⁷ “It is easier to avert international action than to obtain consensus for it.”

Obstructionist positions on the international stage are shaped by material endowments but also domestic politics and vested interests. Countries depending on high production, consumption, and/or export of fossil fuels are typically against decarbonization or reluctant to engage in such a transition, as are countries whose leaders adopt anti-climate ideas. The privileged access that some non-state actors (particularly the carbon majors) gain in these countries—sometimes even joining official delegations—can also contribute to reinforcing these positions. At the international level, obstructionist positions continue to be easily sustained in the context of long-standing distrust and suspicion between the Parties to the UNFCCC treaty.

Scholars have highlighted several ways climate obstruction in this arena could be tackled. They note that the UNFCCC and IPCC could change procedures to allow a seven-eighths supermajority voting rule (as was suggested in the past). Such a rule “would capture overwhelming support across the globe, while sidelining a tiny minority of obstructers.”¹⁷⁸ Obstructers could also be cited and sanctioned by, for example, being required to provide climate finance or contribute to the UNFCCC and IPCC budgets.

Some scholars¹⁷⁹ have called for greater transparency on who gets to participate in the UNFCCC. They suggest requiring “participating organisations to have plans that address their climate impacts in line with agreed goals.”¹⁸⁰ Others¹⁸¹ suggest establishing conflict-of-interest rules, drawing on best practices from other international forums including the OECD and the World Health Organization. They offer clear recommendations on how to limit the access and engagement of non-state actors holding interests diverging from those of the UNFCCC.

Observers and researchers have a key role to play in tracking and expanding our knowledge of climate obstruction in the UNFCCC and IPCC beyond the usual suspects (Saudi Arabia, the United States, and the fossil fuel industry). For example, more research is needed on climate obstruction on issues related to agriculture, legal and illegal mineral extraction in protected areas, aviation, and shipping. It is also important to learn more about the impact of the increased participation of private actors. Non-state actors differ in their respective lobbying and negotiating behaviors; thus, unpacking the roles played by, for example, the fossil fuel corporate sector, agribusiness, and

ultraconservative think tanks versus climate activist networks and environmental NGOs may be a task for future research.

NOTES

1. Climate Action Network, "The Biggest and the Baddest, Colossal Fossil Goes to the USA," <https://climatenetwork.org/resource/the-biggest-and-the-baddest-colossal-fossil-goes-to-the-usa/> (accessed June 28, 2024).
2. Climate Action Network, "Fossil of The Day: Attention EU: Loss and Damage is Part of the NCQG," <https://climatenetwork.org/resource/fossil-of-the-day-attention-eu-loss-and-damage-is-part-of-the-ncqg/> (accessed June 28, 2024).
3. Climate Action Network, "The Biggest and the Baddest, Colossal Fossil Goes to the USA," <https://climatenetwork.org/resource/the-biggest-and-the-baddest-colossal-fossil-goes-to-the-usa/> (accessed June 28, 2024).
4. Isak Stoddard, "Three Decades of Climate Mitigation: Why Haven't We Bent the Global Emissions Curve?," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 46, no. 1 (2021): 653–689.
5. Karin Bäckstrand and Jonathan W. Kuyper, "The Democratic Legitimacy of Orchestration: The UNFCCC, Non-State Actors, and Transnational Climate Governance," *Environmental Politics* 26, no. 4 (2017): 764–788.
6. Erland A. T. Hermansen, Bård Lahn, Göran Sundqvist, and Eirik Øye, "Post-Paris Policy Relevance: Lessons from the IPCC SR15 Process," *Climatic Change* 169, no. 7 (2021): 1–18.
7. Felix Schenuit, "Staging Science: Dramaturgical Politics of the IPCC's Special Report on 1.5 °C," *Environmental Science & Policy* 139 (2023): 166–176.
8. Hannah Hughes, Alice Vadrot, Jen Iris Allan, Tracy Bach, Jennifer S. Bansard, Pamela Chasek, Noella Gray, Arne Langlet, Timo Leiter, Kimberly R. Marion Suiseeya, Beth Martin, Matthew Paterson, Silvia Carolina Ruiz-Rodríguez, Ina Tessnow-von Wysocki, Valeria Tolis, Harriet Thew, Marcela Vecchione Gonçalves, and Yulia Yamineva, "Global Environmental Agreement-Making: Upping the Methodological and Ethical Stakes of Studying Negotiations," *Earth System Governance* 10 (2021): 100121.
9. Kari De Pryck, "Intergovernmental Expert Consensus in the Making: The Case of the Summary for Policy Makers of the IPCC 2014 Synthesis Report," *Global Environmental Politics* 21, no. 1 (2021): 108–129.
10. Makane Moïse Mbengue, "The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: A Singular Model of Expertise in the International Legal Order," in *International Law and Environmental Challenges*, ed. Yann Kerbrat and Sandrine Maljean-Dubois (Pedone/Hart, 2011), 97–114.
11. Danielle Falzon, Fred Shaia, J. Timmons Roberts, Md. Fahad Hossain, Stacy-ann Robinson, Mizan R. Khan, and David Ciple, "Tactical Opposition: Obstructing Loss and Damage Finance in the United Nations Climate Negotiations," *Global Environmental Politics* 23, no. 3 (2023): 95–119.
12. Farhana Yamin and Joana Depledge, *The International Climate Change Regime: A Guide to Rules, Institutions and Procedures* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).
13. Joana Depledge, "The 'Top-Down' Kyoto Protocol? Exploring Caricature and Misrepresentation in Literature on Global Climate Change Governance," *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics* 22, no. 4 (2022): 673–692.

14. Harro van Asselt and Fergus Green, "COP26 and the Dynamics of Anti-Fossil Fuel Norms," *WIREs Climate Change* 14, no. 3 (2023): 31.
15. van Asselt and Green, "COP26 and the Dynamics of Anti-Fossil Fuel Norms."
16. Bäckstrand and Kuyper, "The Democratic Legitimacy of Orchestration."
17. Joana Depledge, "Striving for No : Saudi Arabia in the Climate Change Regime," *Global Environmental Politics* 8, no. 4 (2008): 15.
18. Hannah Hughes and Alice B. M. Vadrot (eds.), 2023. *Conducting Research on Global Environmental Agreement-Making* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).
19. Stefan C. Aykut, Simone Rödder, and Max Braun, *Collaborative Ethnography of Global Environmental Governance* (Cambridge University Press, 2024).
20. Ayse Kaya and Lynne Steuerle Schofield, "Which Countries Send More Delegates to Climate Change Conferences? Analysis of UNFCCC COPs, 1995–2015," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16, no. 3 (2020): 478–491.
21. David Ciple, Timmons J. Roberts, and Mizan R. Khan *Power in a Warming World* (MIT Press, 2015), 98.
22. Danielle Falzon, "The Ideal Delegation : How Institutional Privilege Silences 'Developing' Nations in the UN Climate Negotiations," *Social Problems* 70, no. 1 (2021): 185–202.
23. Tracy Bach and Beth Martin, "Negotiations: Navigating Global Environmental Conferences," in *Conducting Research on Global Environmental Agreement-Making*, ed. Alice B. M. Vadrot and Hannah Hughes (Cambridge University Press, 2023), 93–120.
24. Hannah Hughes, "Governments," in *A Critical Assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, ed. Kari De Pryck and Mike Hulme (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 84.
25. Eva Krick, "The Myth of Effective Veto Power under the Rule of Consensus. Dynamics and Democratic Legitimacy of Collective Decision-Making by 'Tacit Consent,'" *Négociations* 27, no. 1 (2017): 109–128.
26. Luke Tomlinson, *Procedural Justice in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (Springer International, 2015), 21.
27. Joana Depledge, "The Opposite of Learning: Ossification in the Climate Change Regime," *Global Environmental Politics* 6, no. 1 (2006): 1–22; Depledge, "Striving for No: Saudi Arabia in the Climate Change Regime," 9–35.
28. Jeremy Leggett, *The Carbon War* (Routledge, 2001).
29. Michael E. Mann, *The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars* (Columbia University Press, 2012).
30. Navroz C. Dubash, et al., "National and Sub-National Policies and Institutions," in *IPCC, 2022: Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Contribution of Working Group III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, ed. Priyadarshini R. Shukla, Jim Skea, Raphael Slade, Alaa Al Khourdjie, Renée van Diemen, David McCollum, Minal Pathak, Shreya Some, Purvi Vyas, Roger Fradera, Malek Belkacemi, Apoorva Hasija, Géninha Lisboa, Sigourney Luz, and Juliette Malley (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 1355–1450.
31. Matto Mildenberger, *Carbon Captured: How Business and Labor Control Climate Politics* (MIT Press, 2020).
32. Michael Aklin and Matto Mildenberger, "Prisoners of the Wrong Dilemma : Why Distributive Conflict, Not Collective Action, Characterizes the Politics of Climate Change," *Global Environmental Politics* 20, no. 4 (2020): 18.

33. Hai-Bin Zhang, Han-Cheng Dai, Hua-Xia Lai, and Wen-Tao Wang, "U.S. Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement: Reasons, Impacts, and China's Response," *Advances in Climate Change Research* 8, no. 4 (2017): 222.
34. Stoddard et al., "Three Decades of Climate Mitigation," 661.
35. Yutong Si, Dipa Desai, Diana Bozhilova, Sheila Puffer, and Jennie C. Stephens, "Fossil Fuel Companies' Climate Communication Strategies: Industry Messaging on Renewables and Natural Gas," *Energy Research & Social Science* 98 (2023): 103028.
36. Lucy Michaels and Katharine Ainger, "The Climate Smokescreen: The Public Relations Consultancies Working to Obstruct Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions in Europe: A Critical Approach," in *Climate Change Denial and Public Relations: Strategic Communication and Interest Groups in Climate Inaction*, eds. N. Almiron and J. Xifra (Routledge, 2020), 159–177.
37. William K. Carroll, Shannon Daub, and Shane Gunster, "Regime of Obstruction: Fossil Capitalism and the Many Facets of Climate Denial in Canada," in *Handbook of Anti-Environmentalism*, eds. D. Tindall, M. C. J. Stoddard, and R. E. Dunlap (Edgar Elgar Publishing, 2022), 216–233.
38. Matt Huber, "Fueling Capitalism: Oil, the Regulation Approach, and the Ecology of Capital," *Economic Geography* 89, no. 2 (2013): 171–194.
39. Harriet Bulkley and Peter Newell, *Governing Climate Change* (Routledge, 2010).
40. Olli Herranen, "Understanding and Overcoming Climate Obstruction," *Nature Climate Change* 13 (2023): 500–501.
41. Eduardo Viola and Matias Franchini, *Brazil and Climate Change: Beyond the Amazon* (Routledge, 2018), 6–7;
42. Prakash Kashwan, John Chung-En Liu, and Jahnnabi Das, "Climate Nationalisms: Beyond the Binaries of Good and Bad Nationalism," *WIREs Climate Change* 14, no. 2 (2023): e815.
43. Jennifer C. Franco and Saturnino M. Borrás Jr., "The Global Climate of Land Politics," *Globalizations* 18, no. 7 (2021): 1277–1297.
44. Caio S. Milagres, Júlia N. Santos, Júlia A. Silva, and Sérgio M. Neto, "Monitoramento das negociações climáticas internacionais: breve relatório da COP 26," Rio de Janeiro: Cadernos do OIMC, 2022, <https://obsinterclima.eco.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Cadernos-OIMC-04-2022.pdf>.
45. Raoni Rajão, B. Soares Filho, F. Nunes, J. Borner, L. Machado, D. Assis, A. Oliveira, L. Pinto, V. Ribeiro, L. Rausch, G. Holly, and D. Figueira, "The Rotten Apples of Brazil's Agribusiness," *Science* 369, no. 6501 (2020): 246–248.
46. V. Korber Gonçalves and M. Eibs Cafrune, "Brazilian Anti-Indigenous Politics: Tracking Changes on Indigenous Rights Regulation During Bolsonaro's Government," *Revista Direito e Práxis* 14, no. 1 (2023): 436–457.
47. Matias Franchini, Eduardo Viola, and Ana Mauad, "La política ambiental en la era de Bolsonaro: desprotección florestal, destrucción institucional y desprestigio internacional," in *El Brasil de Bolsonaro en español*, ed. Gisela Doval, Juan Lucca, Estevam Iglesias, and Prometeo Livros Buenos Aires (Prometeo Editorial, 2022), 143–160; AO PONTO: Como o Brasil chega à Conferência do Clima da ONU? Entrevistada: Mercedes Bustamante. Entrevistadores: Carolina Morand e Roberto Maltchik. O Globo, podcast, October 28, 2021, <https://oglobo.globo.com/podcast/como-brasil-chega-conferencia-do-clima-da-onu-25254253> (accessed November 1, 2021).
48. Brasil Climate Action Hub/ CEBRI, "Uma concertação pela Amazônia—Balanço da primeira semana da COP26 e projeção da segunda semana," 2021, <https://www.cebri.org/br/evento/496/uma-concertacao-pela-amazonia-ao-vivo-da-cop26>.

49. Cada um por si, vácuo acima de todos. Na ausência de Bolsonaro, governadores brasileiros se articulam na COP26 para levantar recursos para projetos ambientais. Piauí, 2021. <https://piaui.folha.uol.com.br/cada-um-por-si-vacuio-acima-de-todos/>
50. Café Da Manhã, “COP26: a força da grana nas questões do clima. Entrevistados: Natalie Unterstell, Sergio Arispe, Marina Marçal e Ana Carolina Amaral,” *Folha de São Paulo*, November 12, 2021, podcast, <https://open.spotify.com/episode/20TpgJuZKeml9idLHQbpKL>.
51. Stoddard et al., “Three Decades of Climate Mitigation,” 661.
52. “What the Inflation Reduction Act Has Achieved in Its First Year,” *The Economist*, August 17, 2023, <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2023/08/17/what-the-inflation-reduction-act-has-achieved-in-its-first-year>.
53. The Climate Action Tracker (CAT) is the most important institution measuring NCDs every year, and classifying them in five groups: extremely insufficient, highly insufficient, insufficient, almost sufficient, and 1.5 degrees Paris Agreement compatible. See Climate Action Tracker, <https://climateactiontracker.org/>, Countries profile, United States, <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/usa/> (last updated April 2024).
54. Sikina Jinnah, “Makers, Takers, Shakers, Shapers: Emerging Economies and Normative Engagement in Climate Governance,” *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 23, no. 2 (2017): 292.
55. Larissa Basso and Eduardo Viola, “Para onde vão os BRICS na transição de baixo carbono?,” *Revista CEBRI* 1, no. 4 (2022), <https://cebri.org/revista/br/artigo/62/para-onde-vao-os-brics-na-transicao-de-baixo-carbono>.
56. Ibid.
57. “Russia,” Decree 216/2019 approving the Energy Security Doctrine, Climate Change Laws, 2019, <https://www.climate-laws.org/geographies/russia>.
58. Viola and Franchini, *Brazil and Climate Change*.
59. Ibid.
60. Natalie Unterstell and N. Martins, “NDC do Brasil: Avaliação da atualização submetida à UNFCCC em 2022,” April 7, 2022, <https://www.politicaporinteiro.org/2022/04/07/atualizacao-da-ndc-brasileira-vai-contra-acordo-de-paris-ao-nao-elevar-ambicao-climatica/>.
61. Eduardo Viola and Larissa Basso, “The First Five Months of Climate Policy of the Lula Administration in Brazil,” paper presented at the 27th Congress of the International Studies Association, Buenos Aires, July 15–19, 2023.
62. Brazilian National Institute of Space Research (INPE), 2024; Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, 2024.
63. Eduardo Viola and Larissa Basso, “The Climate Policy (Domestic and International) of the Third Lula Administration,” paper presented at the Seminar of the School of International Relations of the Getulio Vargas Foundation, Sao Paulo, May 14, 2024.
64. Claire Dupont and Sebastian Oberthur, “The European Union,” in *Research Handbook on Climate Governance*, ed. Karin Bachsrang and Eva Lovrand (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), 224–236.
65. Tom Delreux and Frauke Ohler, “Climate Policy in European Union Politics,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, (Oxford University Press, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1097>.
66. “Coal Production and Consumption Up in 2022,” Eurostat, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20230622-2/> (accessed April 23, 2025).

67. Peter Newell, *Climate for Change: Non-State Actors and the Global Politics of the Greenhouse* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).
68. Suraje Dessai, *An Analysis of the Role of OPEC* (Organization of Petroleum Exporters Countries) as a G77(Group for Negotiations at the UN formed originally 77 countries) Member at the UNFCCC, report for WWF, 2004.
69. Depledge, "The Opposite of Learning."
70. Stefan C. Aykut and Amy Dahan, *Gouverner le climat ? Vingt ans de négociations internationales* (Presses de Sciences Po., 2015).
71. Depledge, "Striving for No: Saudi Arabia in the Climate Change Regime," 9–35.
72. Kari De Pryck, "Controversial Practices: Tracing the Proceduralization of the IPCC in Time and Space," *Global Policy* 12, no. S7 (2021): 80–89.
73. Hannah Hughes, *The IPCC and the Politics of Writing Climate Change* (Cambridge University Press, 2024).
74. "UN Body Wants Probe of Climate E-mail Row," BBC, December 4, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8394483.stm>.
75. Depledge, "Striving for No," 9–35.
76. Depledge, "The Opposite of Learning."
77. Dessai, *An Analysis of the Role of OPEC as a G77 Member*.
78. Jon Barnett, "The Worst of Friends: OPEC and G-77 in the Climate Regime," *Global Environmental Politics* 8, no. 4 (2008): 1–8.
79. See also Kari De Pryck and Adèle Gaveau, "Scientists in Multilateral Diplomacy: The Case of the Members of the IPCC Bureau," *Political Anthropological Research on International Social Sciences (PARISS)* 4, no. 1 (2023): 65–105.
80. Hannah Hughes, "Actors, Activities, and Forms of Authority in the IPCC," *Review of International Studies* 50, no. 2 (2024): 333–353.
81. Dessai, *An Analysis of the Role of OPEC as a G77 Member*.
82. Depledge, "The Opposite of Learning."
83. Dessai, *An Analysis of the Role of OPEC as a G77 Member*.
84. Depledge, "The Opposite of Learning."
85. Bert Bolin, *A History of the Science and Politics of Climate Change: The Role of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 113.
86. Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB), "Summary of the 55th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the 12th Session of Working Group II: 14–27 February 2022," *International Institute for Sustainable Development* 12, no. 794 (2022): 1–24.
87. Jessica Leigh O'Reilly, Mark Vardy, Kari De Pryck, and Marcela da S. Feital Benedetti, *Inside the IPCC* (Cambridge University Press, 2024).
88. Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB), "Summary of the 56th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the 14th Session of Working Group III: 21 March–4 April 2022," *International Institute for Sustainable Development* 12, no. 795 (2022): pp 1–32.
89. Newell, *Climate for Change*.
90. Hannah Hughes and Mathew Paterson, "The IPCC and Key Tensions in Global Climate Politics," *Samfundssøkonomien* 2019, no. 4 (2023): 6–14.
91. Joana Depledge, Kari De Pryck, and Timmons Roberts, "Decades of Systematic Obstructionism: Saudi Arabia's Role in Slowing Progress in UN Climate Negotiations," Climate Social Science Network Issue Paper, 2023.
92. Agni Kalfagianni and Sébastien Duyck, *The Evolving Role of Agriculture in Climate Change Negotiations: Progress and Players*, CCAFS Info Note (CAFS, 2015).

93. Morten K. Flisnes, *Where You Stand Depends on What You Sell: Saudi Arabia's Obstructionism in the UNFCCC 2012–2018* (CICERO, 2019).
94. Thijs Van De Graaf, *The Politics and Institutions of Global Energy Governance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
95. Aykut and Dahan, *Gouverner le climat ?*
96. Depledge, "Striving for No," 9–35.
97. Joana Depledge, Tracing the Origins of the Kyoto Protocol: An Article-By-Article Textual History, 2000, FCCC/TP/2000/2: 20, <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/tp/tp0200.htm>.
98. Susan Biniarz, "Comma But Differentiated Responsibilities: Punctuation and 30 Other Ways Negotiators Have Resolved Issues in the International Climate Change Regime," *Michigan Journal of Environmental & Administrative Law* 6, no. 1 (2016): 19.
99. Depledge, De Pryck, and Roberts, *Decades of Systematic Obstructionism*.
100. Stefan C. Aykut and Monica Castro, "The End of Fossil Fuels? Understanding the Partial Climatisation of Global Energy Debates," in *Globalising the Climate: COP21 and the Climatisation of Global Debates*, ed. Stefan Aykut, Jean Foyer, and Eduard Morena (Routledge Earthscan, 2017), 186.
101. Irja Vormedal, "The Influence of Business and Industry NGOs in the Negotiation of the Kyoto Mechanisms: The Case of Carbon Capture and Storage in the CDM," *Global Environmental Politics* 8, no. 4 (2008): 36–65.
102. Van Asselt and Green, "COP26 and the Dynamics of Anti-Fossil Fuel Norms," 3.
103. Ibid.
104. Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB), "Summary of the 2023 Dubai Climate Change Conference: 30 November–13 December 2023," *International Institute for Sustainable Development* 12, no. 842 (2023): pp 1–30.
105. Hughes, *The IPCC and the Politics of Writing Climate Change*.
106. E. Lisa F. Schipper, "Conceptual History of Adaptation in the UNFCCC Process," *Review of European Community and International Environmental Law* 15, no. 1 (2006): 82–92.
107. Schipper, "Conceptual History of Adaptation in the UNFCCC Process," 82–92.
108. Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB), "Summary Report 6–18 December 2004," *International Institute for Sustainable Development* 12, no. 160 (2004): 1–16.
109. Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB), "Daily Report for 13 December 2004," *International Institute for Sustainable Development* 12, no. 256 (2004): 1–2.
110. Mary J. Mace, "Adaptation under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change: the international legal framework," in *Fairness in adaptation to climate change*, eds. N. W. Adger, J. Paavola, S. Huq and M.J. Mace (2006): 53–76.
111. Magnus Benzie and Åsa Persson, "Governing Borderless Climate Risks: Moving Beyond the Territorial Framing of Adaptation," *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics* 19, no. 4–5 (2019): 369–393.
112. Barbara Buchner, Angela Falconer, Morgan Hervé-Mignucci, Chiara Trabacchi, and Marcel Brinkman, "The Landscape of Climate Finance," Climate Policy Initiative, 2011.
113. Mizan Khan, Stacy-ann Robinson, Romain Weikmans, David Ciplet, and J. Timmons Roberts, "Twenty-Five Years of Adaptation Finance through a Climate Justice Lens," *Climatic Change* 161 (2019): 251–269.
114. UN Environment Programme (UNEP), "Adaptation Gap Report 2022: Too Little, Too Slow—Climate Adaptation Failure Puts World at Risk," 2002, <https://www.unep.org/adaptation-gap-report-2022>.
115. Khan et al., "Twenty-Five Years of Adaptation Finance through a Climate Justice Lens," 251–269.

116. For historical developments on loss and damage see Patrícia Galvão Ferreira, “Arrested Development: The Late and Inequitable Integration of Loss and Damage Finance into the UNFCCC,” in *Research Handbook on Climate Change Law and Loss & Damage*, ed. Meinhard Doelle and Sara Seck (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021), 127–148; Linda Siegele, “Loss and Damage under the Convention,” in *Research Handbook on Climate Change Law and Loss & Damage*, ed. Meinhard Doelle and Sara Seck, (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021), 75–99; Lisa Vanhala and Cecilie Hestbaek, “Framing Climate Change Loss and Damage in UNFCCC Negotiations,” *Global Environmental Politics* 16, no. 4 (2016): 111–129; Danielle Falzon, J. Timmons Roberts, Fred Shaia, Md. Fahad Hossain, Stacy-ann Robinson, Mizan Khan, and David Ciplet. “Loss and Damage Finance: Four Periods of Obstruction in the UN Climate Negotiations,” Climate Social Science Network Briefing, 2022.
117. Daniel M. Bodansky, “The Emerging Climate Change Regime,” *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment* 20, no. 1 (1995): 425–461.
118. Irving M. Mintzer and J. Amber Leonard (eds.) *Negotiating Climate Change: The Inside Story of the Rio Convention* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
119. Vanhala and Hestbeck, “Framing Climate Change Loss and Damage.” Link: https://econpapers.repec.org/article/tprglenvp/v_3a16_3ay_3a2016_3ai_3a4_3ap_3a111-129.htm
120. Falzon et al., “Tactical Opposition: Obstructing Loss and Damage Finance in the United Nations Climate Negotiations,” 95–119.
121. Friederike Hartz, “‘Loss and Damage’ to ‘Losses and Damages’: Orthographies of Climate Change Loss and Damage in the IPCC,” *Global Environmental Politics* 23 (2023): 32–51.
122. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “IPCC WGII AR5 Summary for Policymakers (SPM): First-Order Draft: Comments and Responses,” 2013, https://archive.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/drafts/WGIIAR5_FODSPM_annotation.pdf, 134.
123. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “IPCC WGI SR15 Final Government Draft Review Comments And Responses—Summary for Policymakers,” 2019, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/09/SR15FGD_Summary_for_Policymakers_Comments_and_Responses.pdf, 100.
124. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Global Warming of 1.5°C: IPCC Special Report on Impacts of Global Warming of 1.5°C above Pre-industrial Levels in Context of Strengthening Response to Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and Efforts to Eradicate Poverty* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 553.
125. Hartz, “‘Loss and Damage’ to ‘Losses and Damages,’” 32–51.
126. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “IPCC AR6 WGII Second Order Draft Government and Expert Review Compiled Comments Responses (Entire Report),” 2022, https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SOD_CommentsResponses_EntireReport.pdf.
127. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), “IPCC Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report—Corrigenda to the Final Draft_Rev2,” 2022, https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_Corrigenda.pdf.
128. Hartz, “‘Loss and Damage’ to ‘Losses and Damages,’” 32–51.
129. Stoddard et al., “Three Decades of Climate Mitigation,” 661.
130. Jonathan Pickering, Steve Vanderheiden, and Seumas Miller, “‘If Equity’s In, We’re Out’: Scope for Fairness in the Next Global Climate Agreement,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 26, no. 4 (2012): 423–443.

131. Lavanya Rajamani, "Ambition and Differentiation in the 2015 Paris Agreement: Interpretative Possibilities and Underlying Politics," *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (2016): 508.
132. Naveeda Khan, *In Quest of a Shared Planet: Negotiating Climate from the Global South* (Fordham University Press, 2023).
133. Lau Øfjord Blaxekjær, Bård Lahn, Tobias Dan Nielsen, Lucia Green-Weiskel, and Fang Fang, "The Narrative Position of the Like-Minded Developing Countries in Global Climate Negotiations," in *Coalitions in the Climate Change Negotiations*, ed. Carola Klöck, Paula Castro, Florian Weiler, and Lau Øfjord Blaxekjær (Routledge, 2020), 113–135.
134. Kathryn Hochstetler and Eduardo Viola, "Brazil and the Politics of Climate Change: Beyond the Global Commons," *Environmental Politics* 21, no. 5 (2012): 753–771.
135. Tora Skodvin and Steinar Andresen, "Nonstate Influence in the International Whaling Commission, 1970–1990," *Global Environmental Politics* 3, no. 4 (2003): 61–86.
136. Peter Newell and Mathew Paterson, "A Climate for Business: Global Warming, the State and Capital," *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no. 4 (1998): 679–703.
137. Robert J. Brulle, "Advocating Inaction: A Historical Analysis of the Global Climate Coalition," *Environmental Politics* 32, no. 2 (2023): 185–206.
138. Marcel Hanegraaff, "When Does the Structural Power of Business Fade? Assessing Business Privileged Access at Global Climate Negotiations," *Environmental Politics* 32, no. 3 (2023): 427–451.
139. Flisnes, *Where You Stand Depends on What You Sell*.
140. Corporate Europe, Corporate Accountability and Global Witness, "COP27: 100 More Fossil Fuel Lobbyists Than Last Year," November 2022, <https://corporateeurope.org/en/2022/11/cop27-100-more-fossil-fuel-lobbyists-last-year>.
141. Michele M. Betsill and Elisabeth Corell, *NGO Diplomacy* (MIT Press, 2008).
142. Kirsten Lucas, "Behind Success Stories: Goal Attainment in Global Trade and Climate Negotiations," *Interest Groups & Advocacy* 8, no. 1 (2019): 44–67.
143. Simone Pulver, "Organising Business: Industry NGOs in the Climate Debates," in *The Business of Climate Change*, ed. Kathryn Begg, Frans van der Woerd, and David Levy (Routledge, 2005), 47–60.
144. Myanna Lahsen, "Experiences of Modernity in the Greenhouse: A Cultural Analysis of a Physicist 'Trio' Supporting the Backlash Against Global Warming," *Global Environmental Change* 18, no. 1 (2008): 204–219.
145. Brulle, "Advocating Inaction," 185–206.
146. Paul N. Edwards and Stephen H. Schneider, "The 1995 IPCC Report : Broad Consensus or 'Scientific Cleansing?'," *Ecofable/Ecoscience* 1, no. 1 (1997): 3–9.
147. Myanna Lahsen, "The Detection and Attribution of Conspiracies: The Controversy Over Chapter 8," in *Paranoia Within Reason: A Casebook on Conspiracy as Explanation*, ed. George Marcus (University of Chicago Press, 1999), 111–136.
148. Tora Skodvin, *Structure and Agent in the Scientific Diplomacy of Climate Change. An Empirical Case Study of Science-Policy Interaction in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000).
149. Leggett, *The Carbon War*.
150. Newell, *Climate for Change*.
151. Newell and Paterson, "A Climate for Business," 683.

152. Ibid., 688.
153. Pulver, "Organising Business," 47–60.
154. Sarah Benabou, Nils Moussu and Birgit Müller, "The Business Voice at COP21: The Quandaries of a Global Political Ambition," in *Globalising the Climate: COP21 and the Climatisation of Global Debates*, ed. Stefan Aykut, Jean Foyer, and Eduard Morena (Routledge Earthscan, 2017), 57–74.
155. Brulle, "Advocating Inaction," 185–206.
156. Ingvild Andreassen Sæverud and Jon Birger Skjærseth, "Oil Companies and Climate Change: Inconsistencies Between Strategy Formulation and Implementation?," *Global Environmental Politics* 7, no. 3 (2007): 42–62.
157. Miquel Munoz Cabré, "Issue-linkages to Climate Change Measured through NGO Participation in the UNFCCC," *Global Environmental Politics* 11, no. 3 (2011): 10–22.
158. Nagmeh Nasiritousi, Mattias Hjerpe, and Björn-Ola Linnér, "The Roles of Non-State Actors in Climate Change Governance: Understanding Agency Through Governance Profiles," *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics* 16, no. 1 (2016): 109–126.
159. Benabou et al., "The Business Voice at COP21," 57.
160. Ibid.
161. World Economic Forum, "Financing the Transition to a Net-Zero Future," Insight Report, October 2021, https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Financing_the_Transition_to_a_Net_Zero_Future_2021.pdf.
162. Benabou et al., "The Business Voice at COP21," 59.
163. Ibid., 57–74.
164. Ibid., 71.
165. Matthew S. Bach, "Is the Oil and Gas Industry Serious About Climate Action?," *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 59, no. 2 (2017): 4–15.
166. Nagmeh Nasiritousi, "Fossil Fuel Emitters and Climate Change: Unpacking the Governance Activities of Large Oil and Gas Companies," *Environmental Politics* 26, no. 4 (2017): 621–647.
167. Ibid., 621–647.
168. Wim Carton, Inge-Merete Hougaard, Nils Markusson, and Jens Friis Lund, "Is Carbon Removal Delaying Emission Reductions?," *WIREs Climate Change* 14, no. 4 (2023): e826.
169. Bach, "Is the Oil and Gas Industry Serious About Climate Action?," 4–15.
170. Corporate Europe, Corporate Accountability and Global Witness, "COP27: 100 More Fossil Fuel Lobbyists Than Last Year."
171. Marie Hrabanski and Jean François le Coq, "Climatisation of Agricultural Issues in the International Agenda Through Three Competing Epistemic Communities: Climate-Smart Agriculture, Agroecology, and Nature-Based Solutions," *Environmental Science & Policy* 127 (2022): 311–320.
172. Rachel Sherrington, "Big Meat Unveils Battle Plans for COP28," *DeSmog*, November 29, 2023, <https://www.desmog.com/2023/11/29/big-meat-unveils-battle-plans-for-cop28/>.
173. Carola Betzold, Paula Castro, and Florian Weiler, "AOSIS in the UNFCCC Negotiations: From Unity to Fragmentation?," *Climate Policy* 12, no. 5 (2012): 591–613.
174. Nicole Deitelhoff and Linda Wallbott, "Beyond Soft Balancing: Small States and Coalition-Building in the ICC and Climate Negotiations," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 25, no. 3 (2012): 345–366.
175. Aykut and Castro, "The End of Fossil Fuels?," 186.

176. See Fossil Fuel Treaty, <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/> (accessed June 29, 2024).
177. Newell and Paterson, “A Climate for Business,” 690.
178. Depledge et al., *Decades of Systematic Obstructionism*, 15.
179. Nagmeh Nasiritousi, Alexandra Buylova, Mathias Fridahl, and Gunilla Reischl, “Making the UNFCCC Fit for Purpose: A Research Agenda on Vested Interests and Green Spiralling,” *Global Policy* 15, no. 2 (2024): 487–494.
180. Nasiritousi et al., “Making the UNFCCC Fit for Purpose,” 492.
181. Brook M. R. Dambacher, Matthew T. Stilwell, and Jeffrey S. McGee, “Clearing the Air: Avoiding Conflicts of Interest Within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,” *Journal of Environmental Law* 32, no. 1 (2020): 53–81.