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# AICGS POLICY REPORT

**PLAYING TO ONE'S STRENGTHS:  
THE IMPLICIT DIVISION OF LABOR IN  
U.S. AND EU CLIMATE DIPLOMACY**

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American Institute  
for Contemporary  
German Studies

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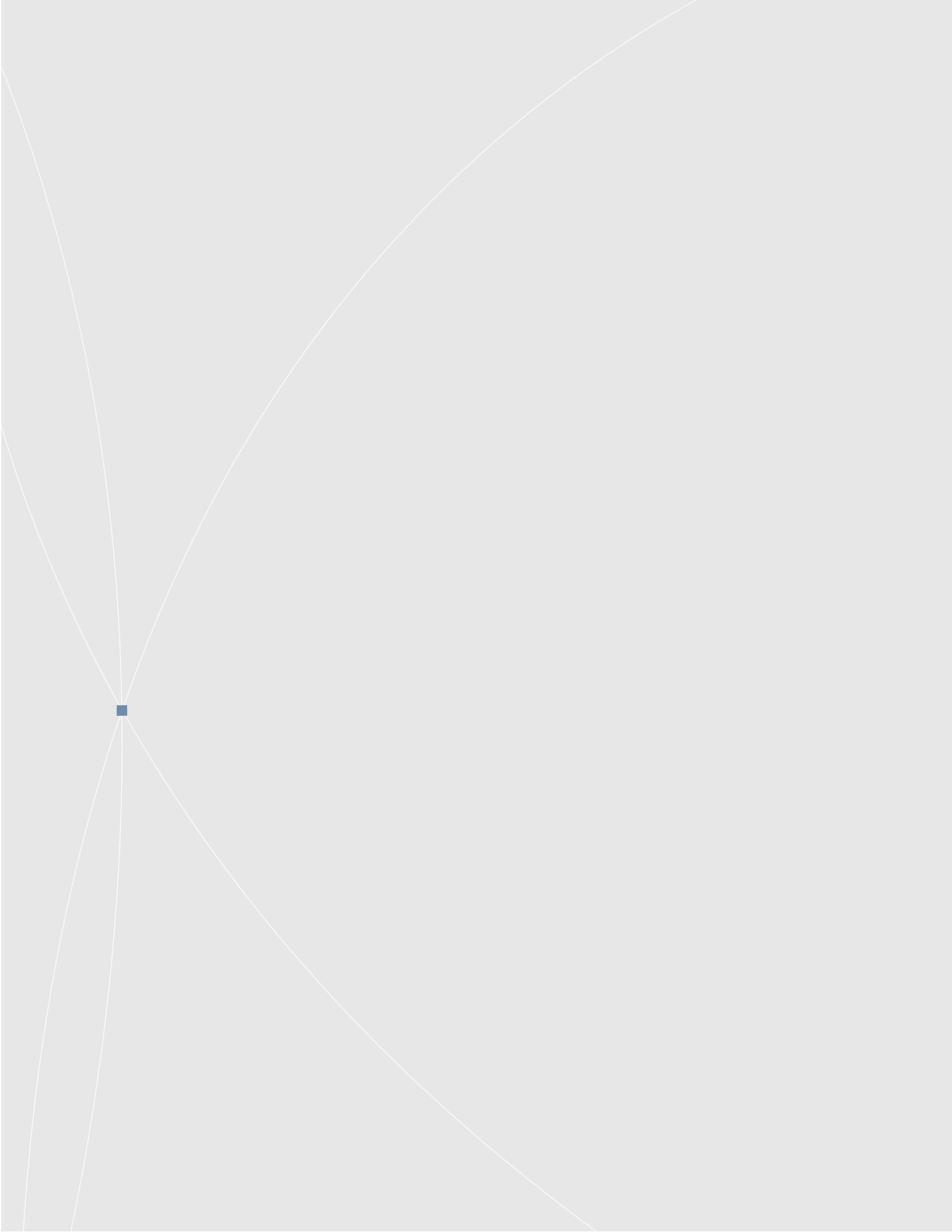
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## FOREWORD

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Forging a consensus on climate change action has long been a challenge for international climate negotiators and diplomats. Balancing the demands of domestic public opinion and politics, inequalities between developing and developed countries, and the need for an enforceable international framework seemed nearly impossible—until the success of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

In this Policy Report, Katja Biedenkopf and Hayley Walker discuss the history of international climate negotiations before turning to look at the factors that contributed to the Paris Agreement's adoption and quick entry into force. It identifies the United States and the European Union as crucial players in the diplomatic process, and examines the leadership styles that were employed by both actors to craft an agreement that not only met with their own approval, but that was accepted by other—at times less cooperative—actors. The authors acknowledge the role of EU member states in climate negotiations, and also look at the actions taken by Germany and France, two climate leaders within the EU, with the latter playing host to the climate summit. In a fresh take on climate diplomacy, Biedenkopf and Walker analyze key players' Twitter feeds to learn more about negotiators' priorities and opinions. By the act of Tweeting, the diplomat or negotiator reveals the value he or she places on various topics. Twitter feeds are also revealing for their information on who is met, where, and when, and can offer more insight into the process of negotiating a climate agreement than just the final outcome. The Policy Report concludes with an assessment of U.S. and European cooperation on climate and the division of labor that led to the Paris Agreement. Finally, it looks to the future of climate diplomacy in light of the new administration that will take office in Washington in January.

This report continues AICGS' commitment to providing innovative policy-relevant analysis of the challenges and choices facing Germany and the United States. We are grateful to the authors for sharing their insights and to the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for its generous support of this Policy Report.



Dr. Jackson Janes  
President, AICGS



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## INTRODUCTION

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The European Union (EU) and the United States (U.S.) were key actors in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations that culminated in the adoption of a global climate agreement in Paris on December 12, 2015. So far, they have remained central to ensuring the continuation of the negotiations on implementing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Germany, France, and the United Kingdom (UK) have been among the most active EU member states on climate diplomacy, contributing to the EU's international impact. While both were key to the 2015 climate negotiations, the EU and the U.S. are different kinds of leaders and distinct actors in international climate diplomacy. Overall, their strengths and activities complemented each other during the Obama era, contributing to the success of global climate governance. Time will show to what extent the Trump administration will disrupt this implicit transatlantic division of labor.

After a long and cumbersome process that was marked by some setbacks—most notably the failure to agree on a successor to the Kyoto Protocol at the 2009 UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) in Copenhagen—the Paris Agreement can be considered a major achievement. Progress was slow, with countries only reluctantly budging from their negotiation positions but ultimately culminating in the adoption of the first global climate agreement that includes commitments by all parties. In their own way and by making good use of their specific structural properties and positions, both the United States and the EU made major contributions to the process of reaching an agreement and bringing almost all the countries of the world on board.

In the absence of a consciously designed and explicit joint transatlantic strategy, the U.S.' and the EU's individual bilateral and multilateral outreach and coalition-building efforts complemented each other and could be characterized as an implicit division of labor: The United States did the heavy lifting to convince China and some other major emerging economies to make climate change mitigation commitments of their own and to agree to an inclusive agreement without a clear-cut bifurcation between developing and developed countries. The EU invested major efforts in building a coalition with developing countries and states that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This coalition called for the international climate agreement to set ambitious goals and also made an important contribution to breaking the categorical divide between developing and developed countries. Of course, the United States also engaged with developing and most vulnerable countries, and the EU also cooperated with China and other emerging economies. Yet, when assessing their major contributions to accelerating and facilitating the process culminating in the Paris Agreement, it is the United States-China interaction and the EU's engagement in the so-called High Ambition Coalition with the least developed and most vulnerable countries that stand out.

Both the EU and the United States had a significant impact on the efforts to include important constituencies and essential participants in the international climate agreement. They used their specific strengths and cognitive resources to reach out to those countries with which they expected to have the foremost influence in bringing the climate negotiations forward. This external engagement was of course also driven by domestic considerations. While the U.S. was probably the best actor to sway China's position, it also



needed China's commitment for reasons of domestic politics, where the climate debate often revolves around concerns of international competitiveness. The EU has consistently advocated a more ambitious position than most other parties'—especially with regard to the agreement's legally binding nature and level of commitment—which reflects the EU internal structure of climate legislation that sets a number of binding targets for the entire EU and for individual member states. In the pursuit of its position at the international level in this regard, the EU found support in the least developed and most vulnerable countries.

Achieving the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was the result of a combination of factors. The U.S. and EU efforts were only parts of a bigger picture, and a much broader set of actors was involved and contributed to the success. Nonetheless, the United States and the EU were crucial players without whom the agreement would not look the way it does. For this reason, this Policy Report focuses on the role of and interaction between the EU and the United States in the long diplomatic process that led to the Paris Agreement and the rapid process that has resulted in its entry into force less than a year after adoption. Some other noteworthy developments such as the Kigali Amendment on phasing down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are also mentioned.

While this Policy Report finds that the implicit division of labor between the U.S. and the EU has been a major contributing factor to explaining the adoption and content of the Paris Agreement, the future of international climate negotiations is likely to be thrown off course by the election of Donald Trump as the forty-fifth U.S. president. U.S. disengagement or a radically changed U.S. position in the UNFCCC process will create a leadership void that will be difficult to fill. The EU has evolved as a climate leader and developed many new skills, structures, and networks in the course of time. It could seize the opportunity and further profile itself as a key player on global climate governance. China has expressed a firm commitment to climate policy, which also addresses some of its other domestic problems such as air pollution and energy security. The leadership void created by the United States could provide opportunities for new or enhanced leadership by a

number of actors, including the EU and China.

The following three sections outline the international climate regime by introducing the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the history of climate negotiations, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the climate deal struck within the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the Kigali Amendment on phasing down the use of hydrofluorocarbons. This is followed by a conceptual discussion of climate diplomacy and leadership as well as an explanation of the analytical focus and research methodology on which this Policy Report is based. The ensuing sections trace the climate diplomacy and leadership of the European Union, Germany, France, and the United States. Based on these individual accounts, transatlantic climate cooperation and division of labor are discussed. This Policy Report closes with reflections on the future of transatlantic climate diplomacy.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE REGIME AND NEGOTIATIONS

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The United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC) is at the core of the international climate regime. It was established at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, setting the long-term goal to maintain the global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions concentration at “a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.”<sup>1</sup> In 1997, UNFCCC negotiations in Japan produced the Kyoto Protocol, which imposed concrete and binding emission reduction targets on developed countries. The ratification of the Protocol took eight years, and the United States never ratified. This left only a small fraction of global GHG emissions under the jurisdiction of the Protocol and in 2011—when it became apparent that it would not meet its targets—Canada withdrew, citing a “lack of wider participation” as its motivation.<sup>2</sup> Although GHG emission levels have indeed fallen in countries party to the Kyoto Protocol, these reductions cannot wholly be attributed to the effects of the treaty, since other factors such as the post-Soviet economic recession and the offshoring of carbon-intense industrial processes from developed to developing countries and the economic downturn also played a role.<sup>3</sup>

The Kyoto Protocol’s period of legal force was due to expire in 2012, yet negotiations to establish a post-2012 international framework for combating climate change progressed frustratingly slowly. The 2007 UNFCCC negotiation round in Bali produced the so-called Bali Roadmap, which outlined a two-year negotiation process that was intended to culminate in the adoption of a global climate agreement during the 2009 Conference of the Parties (COP) in Copenhagen.<sup>4</sup> However, the process became derailed and only resulted in the weak and unambitious Copenhagen Accord.

Heads of state and government attended the final days of the Copenhagen COP, and after a revised version of the Presidency’s draft text was rejected by developed and developing countries alike.<sup>5</sup> The voluntary Copenhagen Accord was negotiated at the last minute behind closed doors between the U.S. and the BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China). In the final plenary it failed to garner the necessary consensus for adoption under the UNFCCC procedure. Therefore, the Copenhagen Accord was not adopted at the summit but merely “acknowledged” after it was blocked by a group of developing countries including Venezuela, Sudan, Nicaragua, and Bolivia<sup>6</sup> and only later included in the UNFCCC framework.

To account for the failure to produce a post-2012 framework, a second compliance period of the Kyoto Protocol was adopted during the Durban COP of 2011 and the process of negotiating a global climate agreement was relaunched. A new timeframe was set for the adoption of an international agreement in 2015 in Paris.<sup>7</sup> To facilitate this task the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) was created with a mandate to begin work on the new agreement and to identify further areas in which to raise mitigation ambition before 2020.<sup>8</sup>

The UNFCCC negotiations are some of the most difficult and complex imaginable because of the plethora of actors and issues involved and the strict procedural rules of the Convention. One-hundred ninety-six countries and one Regional Integration Organization—namely the European Union—with radically different positions and preferences are party to the UNFCCC. The manifold issues pertaining to climate change—from finance and accountability to

historical responsibility and compensation—are united only by the levels of conflict and normative uncertainty that surround them. Moreover, the UNFCCC process requires that all decisions be made by consensus, meaning that each and every country has the power to block an agreement by voicing its opposition in the final plenary session, as happened in Copenhagen. Lessons have been learned from the failures of Copenhagen, and in the ensuing process of relaunching the negotiations extraordinary diplomatic efforts contributed to paving the way for an agreement in Paris, which was seen by many as absolutely imperative, given that the window of opportunity to take effective action against climate change will soon be closing.

## The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement constitutes a major milestone in international climate governance. It can be considered a move from confrontational to cooperative climate governance and a beacon of hope for both international climate action and effective multilateralism. For the first time, almost every country in the world committed to engaging in climate action. It is a departure from previous climate agreements, most notably because of its inclusiveness and its focus on establishing binding procedures rather than binding, quantified greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets per country. The Paris Agreement is more inclusive than the Kyoto Protocol, which set binding targets only for the few developed countries that ratified the protocol. Whereas the protocol covered only a handful of developed countries plus the EU and about 12 percent of global GHG emissions during its second commitment period, the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted by 183 countries prior to the Paris COP covered about 95 percent of global GHG emissions.

The Paris Agreement constructs a framework and establishes processes for directing, concerting, and ratcheting up national climate policies and other actors' activities. The procedure of submitting successively more ambitious NDCs in a five-year cycle is binding. The precise content of the NDCs, however, is not prescribed. There is also no legal obligation to achieve the goals set by one's NDC or a strong sanctioning mechanism in the case of non-

fulfillment of one's promises, which could be seen as a potential weakness. The Paris Agreement relies on peer pressure and other soft enforcement mechanisms for ensuring compliance with the self-set NDC goals. It binds countries to a process, but leaves room for self-determination of the actual national policies and level of ambition.

The Paris Agreement sets the collective goal of limiting the global temperature increase to “well below 2°C” while pursuing efforts to achieve no more than a 1.5°C global temperature increase.<sup>9</sup> A second goal is the peaking of GHG emissions “as soon as possible” and achieving net zero emissions in the second half of the twenty-first century,<sup>10</sup> which means that no GHG emissions will be added to the atmosphere. Potentially emitted GHGs either need to be captured or absorbed by carbon sinks.

Achieving these goals requires tremendous and profound economic and behavioral transformations globally. While the basic framework of the international process and the collective goals have been established by the Paris Agreement, the details still need to be negotiated and agreed upon in the coming years. It also remains open to what extent and when the collective goals will be reached since the individual NDCs that have been submitted so far are estimated to lead to a global warming in the range of 2.7 to 3.5°C.<sup>11</sup> Donald Trump's announcement to roll back U.S. federal climate policy adds additional uncertainty. Additional and swift climate action seems essential to achieve the Paris goals.

The Paris Agreement entered into force with unprecedented speed on November 4, 2016—less than one year after its adoption. The ratification threshold of fifty-five countries totaling 55 percent of the world's GHG emissions was reached earlier than most observers expected and much faster than comparable agreements. The Kyoto Protocol only entered into force more than seven years after it was signed. The Paris Agreement entered into force with ninety-seven countries, representing nearly 70 percent of global GHG emissions having ratified. The swift ratification by the United States and China spurred the ratification process in the EU so that entry into force could be achieved in record speed.

## Civil Aviation and Hydrofluorocarbons

While the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement are at the core of global climate governance, there are a number of other organizations and agreements that directly pertain to climate change and contribute to achieving the goals set out in the UNFCCC realm. Two of them—aviation and hydrofluorocarbons—are briefly included in this Policy Report since major decisions were made in those areas shortly after the adoption of the Paris Agreement and the U.S. and EU's international outreach on those issues can be considered part of their broader climate diplomacy efforts.

The Paris Agreement does not include the aviation or the maritime sectors. GHG emissions from those sectors are addressed in separate international organizations: the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), respectively. The ICAO adopted the first global deal to reduce the climate impact of civil aviation on October 12, 2016. The ICAO Assembly agreed to adopt a market-based measure that foresees that all emission increases from 2020 onward be offset. An initial phase until 2026 will, however, merely be voluntary.

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer also is part of the climate regime complex.<sup>12</sup> It was agreed in 1987 together with the Vienna Convention of the Protection of the Ozone Layer to phase out chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other substances harmful to the ozone layer. The Montreal Protocol generally is considered as one of the most effective international environmental agreements given that the ozone layer has since started to recover.<sup>13</sup> On October 15, 2016, the Parties to the Montreal Protocol adopted the so-called Kigali Amendment, which aims at reducing hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), a powerful greenhouse gas. The Kigali Amendment was hailed as a major step toward keeping global warming well below 2°C, the core goal of the Paris Agreement. HFCs were introduced as substitutes for CFCs. While solving the problem of the ozone hole, the use of HFCs contributes to global warming, as their climate change potential is several times greater than that of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). For this reason, phasing down HFCs is

crucial for the climate regime.

This Policy Report's analysis of EU and U.S. recent climate diplomacy will include a few references to these two landmark deals—the ICAO market-based measure and the Kigali Amendment on HFCs—in addition to its focus on the Paris Agreement negotiations. The following section discusses the concepts of climate diplomacy and leadership in general terms before applying them to the cases of the EU, Germany, France, and the United States.

## CLIMATE DIPLOMACY AND LEADERSHIP

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High or even top-level political support and active engagement, structural importance, diplomatic skill and capacity, and credibility are important ingredients that can make a jurisdiction a leader and an influential actor in international climate diplomacy. A unique combination of their cognitive, political, structural, and economic resources determine a jurisdiction's leadership potential, and as such no two leaders are the same: each possesses distinct characteristics and strengths. Harmonious interplay among such leaders can greatly facilitate successful negotiation outputs.

Actors become successful leaders when they manage to attract followers and sway negotiations from the status quo in the direction of their more ambitious goal. A leader "guides or directs the behavior of others toward a certain goal over a certain period of time."<sup>14</sup> Four types of (climate) leadership can be distinguished: Leadership through structural power derived from the leader's position in the overall structure and his/her indispensability for solving the given problem. Entrepreneurial leadership relates to active and skillful bargaining and diplomatic outreach. Cognitive leadership involves the production and promotion of new and ambitious ideas and solutions for the international process. Exemplary leadership is the setting of an example by adopting ambitious domestic measures that compel others to follow.<sup>15</sup> Generally, successful leaders exhibit traits of different leadership types.

A discussion of leadership is relevant in the context of diplomacy because the two concepts trade in the same currency—leverage (structural leadership), negotiation skills (entrepreneurial leadership), new solutions (cognitive leadership), and credibility (exemplary leadership). Entrepreneurial leadership includes the core activities that are generally understood as

diplomacy and as such will feature prominently in this analysis. The resources of the other styles of leadership, frequently in combination, corroborate and support successful diplomatic outreach.

Diplomacy is the outreach to other countries and actors with the aim to influence what is politically possible, including in negotiations. Negotiations aim to reconcile conflicting positions with the aim to reach an outcome that is agreeable to all parties.<sup>16</sup> Diplomacy supports negotiations in two distinct ways: First, it involves the collection and assessment of information not only about other countries' interests and positions, but also their constraints, capacities, and perception of the issues. Second, it strives to influence other countries' national priorities, interests, and positions so as to move their negotiating positions closer to one's own position and to generate support for a specific negotiation output. Diplomacy thus aims at identifying and influencing the "zone of agreement" of specific negotiations.<sup>17</sup>

Diplomatic actors who strive to influence the positions of others toward more ambitious outcomes of particular negotiations can make use of the different types of leadership: structural, entrepreneurial, cognitive, and exemplary.

**Structural leadership** describes an actor's use of his/her dominant position within the respective system to create incentives, costs, and benefits for others, thereby manipulating their utility calculations. An actor's position in the international system and the size of its market, financial resources, or other types of power can allow it to impose sanctions and provide incentives, pushing other actors into a certain course of behavior.<sup>18</sup> Structural leadership can also relate to an actor's indispensability and centrality in

solving a problem. For example, the United States and China's large shares of global greenhouse gas emissions make them central actors in international climate negotiations without whom a solution would not sufficiently address the problem of climate change.<sup>19</sup>

**Entrepreneurial leadership** is the active persuasion of others to engage in a certain practice or to recognize a specific policy problem. Entrepreneurial leaders have negotiating skills and are able to convince others through flexibility, bargaining, and framing.<sup>20</sup> This involves diplomatic outreach and bridge building. Entrepreneurial leaders are skilled in framing and reframing issues so as to offer benefits to each of the negotiation parties.<sup>21</sup> Strong (political) commitment and a high level of engagement and initiative in the international negotiations process often characterize entrepreneurial leaders.

**Cognitive leadership** describes the production of ideas, innovations, and concepts that shape the perspectives of others. A cognitive leader has ambitious proposals and ideas for the international negotiations and with regard to their outcome. S/he produces and pursues ambitious goals for the international process. Cognitive leaders provide possible solutions and scientific expertise on causes and effects of given problems and solutions.<sup>22</sup>

**Exemplary leadership** is derived from domestic ambition in contrast to cognitive leadership, which relates to an actor's ambition in the external context.<sup>23</sup> Exemplary leadership is the setting of a domestic example that compels followers. Some authors label it directional leadership.<sup>24</sup> Pioneers adopt an idea, policy, practice, or product that has not existed before in the respective jurisdiction or globally. They are characterized by their innovativeness and willingness to depart from routinized, commonly accepted behavior and practices.<sup>25</sup> An exemplary leader provides a model and experiences that inspire followers and demonstrate feasibility.<sup>26</sup>

While a cognitive leader is ambitious for the international negotiations, an exemplary leader is ambitious in its domestic actions. Both leadership types can be linked in different ways. For example, a jurisdiction can propose ambitious concepts and make aspiring

promises in international negotiations without fully complying with them yet, but rather making an international agreement a condition for domestic measures. Some jurisdictions can push for ambitious international outputs to use them afterward as leverage to compel domestic change, against which there would otherwise be fierce opposition.

Leadership Type	Main Characteristics
Structural leadership	Structural power derived from a central and strong position in the system: economic power and share of global GHG emissions, etc.
Entrepreneurial leadership	Active persuasion of others: diplomatic and negotiation skills
Cognitive leadership	Ideas and innovations that shape the perspectives of others: high ambitions for the international negotiations
Exemplary leadership	Domestic policies and activities serve as examples for others: high ambitions for domestic policy

**Table 1: The Four Different Leadership Types**

It seems unlikely that one type of leadership and one actor can drive international negotiations toward a more ambitious output. It seems more likely that "the contributions of more than one actor deploying different, but complementary, forms of leadership towards a shared goal can lead to positive negotiating outcomes."<sup>27</sup> Leadership based on mutually reinforcing types seems more likely to bear success.<sup>28</sup> Entrepreneurial leadership can reinforce cognitive and exemplary leadership by actively promoting the leader's policies and ideas. Conversely, exemplary leadership can create credibility, which supports entrepreneurial leadership.<sup>29</sup> Structural leadership provides a leader with leverage that places him/her in a strong negotiation position. Disregarding the demands and negotiation position of a strong structural leader seems difficult for other negotiating



parties.

Each country's leadership potential depends on its specific characteristics and political resolve. Structural power often is a prerogative of large economies and, in the case of climate negotiations, emitters of a large share of global GHGs. A large emitter can derive power and influence from its structural position as one of the main contributors to climate change without whom an agreement would be meaningless or ineffective. Entrepreneurial leadership requires diplomatic and bargaining skills, the political will to deploy them, and capacities such as the ability to collect information about other countries' positions, a network of embassies and diplomats, and skilled negotiators. For cognitive and exemplary leadership, the political will and capacity to adopt ambitious (international and/or domestic) climate policy is an important factor.

Certain prerequisites can be identified for successful climate diplomacy and leadership, including high-level political will and support, credibility, trust, and coalition building. Climate change is a complex issue involving trade-offs between sectors including economic development, energy, health, and agriculture. It involves a highly heterogeneous and conflicting set of national interests and negotiating positions. Political will and support at a high political level are therefore necessary to attain a perspective broad enough to straddle these divergent sectors, to make the necessary trade-offs, and to bring enough clout to influence other countries' way of thinking.<sup>30</sup>

Credibility is important for successfully conducting negotiations. Actions and promises have to be considered as sincere. Exemplary leadership can play an important role in this regard. Goals need to be presented as a joint purpose rather than one party's self-interest, which requires framing skills.<sup>31</sup> Climate diplomacy can help generate credibility through outreach, socialization, and concrete cooperation commitments.

Trust is important for negotiations. If negotiations partners have doubts and are suspicious about the statements and positions put forward by others, then negotiations seem more likely to produce suboptimal outcomes.<sup>32</sup> Entrepreneurial leadership corroborated

by exemplary leadership can generate trust and reduce uncertainty about another negotiation partner's motives and positions.

Building coalitions and coordinating among actors with similar or compatible goals can amplify the voice and influence of a leader.<sup>33</sup> Leaders can convince other actors who would not act on their own to join a coalition, which can amplify their activities and enable the achieving of a joint goal that none of the individual actors would have been able to achieve alone.

Climate diplomacy and leadership spans beyond the realm of the UNFCCC with governments discussing climate change in a range of other forums as diverse as the G7, the G20, the Major Economies Forum, the UN Security Council, and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The linking of discussions and negotiations across venues and topics can be an important part of a diplomacy strategy.

The aforementioned prerequisites for effective climate diplomacy and leadership are important individually, but it is their combination that ultimately transforms each jurisdiction with leadership ambition into a unique kind of leader. No jurisdiction has the exact same characteristics and resources. This leads to the rise and decline of different types of leaders in the international climate negotiations. The interaction among those leaders can be mutually supportive and complementary but can also result in some clashes and competition. The following sections will analyze the unique features of the EU, Germany, France, and the U.S. as leaders in recent climate negotiations.

## Focus of the Analysis and Methodology

This Policy Report analyzes the extent to which the EU and the United States displayed leadership in the international climate negotiations through their climate diplomacy. It compares the types of leadership that both actors employed and assesses the degree to which Europe and the United States cooperated and interacted in their climate diplomacy. The analytical focus is on the negotiations leading up to the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in December 2015. Reference is made to the months leading to the Paris Agreement's rapid entry into force on November 4, 2016 and to closely related negoti-

ations in the context of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Montreal Protocol.

While the European Union speaks and acts on behalf of its member states in the UNFCCC negotiations and a significant share of European climate policy is made at the EU level, member states are not inactive. Especially Germany, France, and the United Kingdom (UK) but also some smaller member states have been very active in engaging in their own climate diplomacy efforts, supporting and strengthening EU efforts in an explicit or implicit manner. For this reason, this Policy Report not only examines the European Union level, but also includes brief discussions of Germany and France's contributions to European climate diplomacy.

The empirical analysis is based on multiple data sources and methods. Information was collected through desk research, using primary and secondary information sources, interviews with a number of European and U.S. experts who were involved in the UNFCCC climate negotiations, and through an analysis of Twitter feeds of a selected number of high-level political actors.

Twitter feeds are an illustrative source of information since they reflect the author's priorities and opinions. Actors generally tweet about issues and achievements to which they attach great importance and which they wish to communicate to a broader audience. The subjectivity of Twitter permits a rare glimpse into the minds of decision-makers to see on what exactly they place value. For these reasons, the tweets and re-tweets of key high-level politicians have been analyzed to gauge the level and intensity of political support for climate diplomacy in the United States, the EU, and France. Germany could not be included in this analysis since its chancellor and foreign and environment ministers are not active on Twitter. Reports on their trips abroad in which climate change was mentioned were analyzed as an alternative source of information. As with Twitter, the reports on those politicians or ministries' websites also includes the subjective element of reflecting a degree of importance attached to an issue. The analysis of Twitter feeds and for Germany reports on trips abroad allow an approximation of the political importance and backing that climate diplomacy receives in a certain

jurisdiction.

Additionally, Twitter facilitates an analysis of diplomatic activity that might otherwise be difficult to access: where actors travelled, who they met, and which key policy areas were discussed. Twitter feeds were therefore used to track the bilateral and multi-lateral meetings that high-level political actors attended. As with the tweets, only those meetings that explicitly referenced climate change were included in this analysis. Since EU Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete's role is double-hatted, covering both climate action and energy, meetings that pertained to his energy portfolio (for example, energy security, energy cooperation, and investment in non-renewables) were excluded from this analysis.

In order to map the countries with which the United States and the EU are engaging in climate diplomacy via Twitter, a record was kept each time the chief climate diplomats for the U.S. and the EU, John Kerry and Miguel Arias Cañete, either: a) tweeted a representative of another country on an explicitly climate-related topic; b) re-tweeted an explicitly climate-related post from a representative of another country; or c) posted an explicitly climate-related tweet referring to another country or a representative from another country. In the case of Cañete's feed, only tweets referring to (representatives of) non-EU member states were included in the analysis. As with Cañete's overseas visits, tweets pertaining to his energy portfolio were excluded from the analysis. The data was used to create a visual representation of the most frequently tweeted countries on climate-related matters for both actors.

There are two significant limitations to using Twitter as a research tool. First, Twitter is not a comprehensive source and the compiled data is not intended to be an exhaustive list of actors' activity on climate diplomacy. There are doubtless many meetings and events on which no tweet exists, and of the meetings that were made public on Twitter, only those that explicitly included a reference to climate change are part of the analysis. Consequently, the figures presented in this Policy Report can be considered conservative, yet reliable.



The second limitation is Twitter's restriction on accessibility: only the most recent 2,300 tweets are visible in a user's feed. The result of this is that the analysis covers different timescales depending on each user's level of activity: the more prolific a tweeter, the less far back in time does the analysis extend. This explains why the activity of Laurent Fabius, who stopped tweeting after leaving his position in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join the Constitutional Council in early 2016, extends back into 2014, whereas the activity of John Kerry, who was highly active throughout 2016, cuts off mid-2015. Nonetheless, the analysis of high-level politicians' tweets complements the empirical analysis well by corroborating and substantiating the findings of the desk research and expert interviews.

To triangulate the Twitter analysis, the diplomacy and leadership efforts of the EU, Germany, France, and the United States have been traced based on the analysis of secondary and primary sources and expert interviews. The interviews were conducted in the course of 2016 mainly in Washington, DC, and Brussels. Given the request for anonymity by some interviewees, names and references cannot be included in this Policy Report. The interviews were used as underlying verification to ensure the accuracy of the information and analysis presented in the following sections, which will first discuss the EU, German, French, and U.S. climate diplomacy efforts and leadership individually before turning to the analysis of European-U.S. interaction and collaboration.

# EUROPEAN CLIMATE DIPLOMACY AND LEADERSHIP

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## European Union Climate Diplomacy and Leadership

In the negotiations that culminated in the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the EU deployed a mix of entrepreneurial, cognitive, and exemplary leadership supported by its relatively favorable structural position and resources. While in the early years of international climate negotiations the EU focused on cognitive leadership, advocating ambitious international outputs, it increasingly added strong elements of exemplary and entrepreneurial leadership elements to its set of activities by adopting relatively ambitious EU-level climate policy and intensifying climate outreach to non-EU countries. One of the highlights of its entrepreneurial leadership was the EU's strong involvement and engagement with most vulnerable countries and in the so-called High Ambition Coalition.

The EU has held climate leadership ambitions for a number of decades. In the 1990s and early 2000s, it focused on submissions to the UNFCCC negotiations themselves and pursued a strategy of cognitive leadership. Progressively, it intensified its exemplary leadership through ambitious domestic policy. In the course of time it has shifted its strategy toward a more comprehensive climate diplomacy that emphasizes coalition building, bilateral outreach, and mediation<sup>34</sup> and combines the different leadership types.

One of its major achievements and contribution to the process that made the Paris Agreement possible was the EU's strong engagement with developing and most vulnerable countries that manifested itself most prominently through the High Ambition Coalition. This alliance added to the political momentum that had been building throughout 2015 and pushed the Paris Agreement toward the more

ambitious end of what was politically possible. The High Ambition Coalition was one of the main drivers behind the inclusion of the long-term aspirational temperature goal of 1.5°C in the agreement.

The EU is a special entity in the international climate and many other negotiations since it is a so-called regional integration organization rather than a nation state. It comprises twenty-eight member states, all of which have their own diplomatic networks and domestic climate policies and interests. Climate policymaking is a shared competence between the member states and the EU, with the most important parameters being agreed jointly at the EU level. For example, targets for GHG emission reduction, renewable energy shares, and energy efficiency improvement have been set jointly by the leaders of all member states and constitute EU-wide binding targets. A number of key policies such as the Emissions Trading System (ETS) have been adopted at the level of the EU.

Given the relatively large extent to which climate policy is made jointly at the EU level, the external representation in the UNFCCC negotiations is also conducted by the EU as an entity rather than by its member states individually. The Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the European Commission—mainly represented by its Directorate General for Climate Action (DG Climate Action)—together represent the EU in the negotiations. Climate diplomacy is conducted by the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission, and the EU member states individually or jointly.

The EU can potentially mobilize more embassies and diplomats to achieve its climate diplomacy objectives and has a bigger team at international negotiations

than any individual country, since the EU capacity is the sum of all twenty-eight member states' individual diplomatic networks and negotiation teams, plus the EU-level system of so-called Delegations in a large number of non-EU countries and the international negotiations team staffed by DG Climate Action and the Council of Ministers. Yet, the EU is not as coherent an actor as a single country. In sheer numbers, it has a far greater capacity than individual nation states have, but this advantage is partially offset by its complex structure and the challenges involved in internal coordination.

The Presidency of the Council of Ministers changes every six months but DG Climate Action, the EEAS, and the Green Diplomacy Network provide for continuity. In the EU's negotiation team, a system of lead negotiators and issue leaders, who can be Commission or member state experts, ensures continuity. Not officially but in practice, DG Climate Action has taken over a large part of the EU's coordination and execution of the climate negotiations. Yet, the Council of Ministers and its Working Party on International Environmental Issues (WPIEI) also are highly involved. The Green Diplomacy Network, which consists of diplomats from the EU member state foreign ministries, contributes to the EU's climate diplomacy strategy. The EEAS has some diplomatic and strategic expertise in general, while DG Climate Action has expert knowledge on climate change. Wedding these two areas of expertise seems beneficial if conducted in an efficient non-rivaling manner. When the EU level takes care of the overall strategy, different member states can specialize in certain issues.

The EU has long held leadership ambition in international climate negotiations and consistently maintained ambitious positions in the different negotiation rounds, engaging in cognitive leadership. Yet, in the 1990s and 2000s it was criticized for spending more time on internal coordination and negotiations than engagement with and outreach to non-EU actors.<sup>35</sup>

While initially engaging more in cognitive leadership with ambitious international positions, the EU grew into an exemplary leader, adopting relatively ambitious domestic policy. In 2007, the European Council adopted the target to reduce its GHG emissions by

20 percent by 2020 and conditionally by 30 percent if other major emitters make comparable commitments. This was done in the context of the negotiations for a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol, which was planned to be adopted at the Copenhagen COP in 2009.<sup>36</sup> The EU's strategy was to lead the way by adopting an ambitious domestic climate policy but, at the time, no one else was willing to follow,<sup>37</sup> which led to the realization that leading is not useful if no one is interested in following. This experience emphasized the need for entrepreneurial leadership to complement the EU's cognitive and exemplary leadership efforts. Consequently, the EU's negotiation strategy has since included more coalition building, mediation, and bilateral cooperation.<sup>38</sup>

Entrepreneurial leadership through building coalitions with developing and most vulnerable countries was an important feature of the EU's climate diplomacy in the run-up to the 2015 Paris COP. In particular, the High Ambition Coalition and the Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action constitute the main outcomes of these efforts. Least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) had already pushed for an ambitious international climate agreement and a 1.5°C target at the Cancún COP in 2010. Until the Paris COP, however, the 1.5°C target had not found much traction with developed countries.<sup>39</sup> Taking their positions seriously and incorporating the LDCs and SIDS into the process by making their voices heard contributed to the positive and encouraging spirit at the Paris meeting.

The Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action is an informal negotiating group that was created at the 2009 Copenhagen COP on the initiative of the UK and Australia. It comprises about thirty nations. The EU and some of its member states, including Germany, worked together with developed and developing countries in the pursuit of an ambitious, comprehensive, and legally-binding regime in the UNFCCC.<sup>40</sup> The dialogue played a role behind the scenes at the Cancún and Durban COPs and contributed to avoiding a bifurcation between developed and developing countries in the negotiations.

At the Paris COP, the High Ambition Coalition played an important role. Initiated in spring 2015 by the Marshall Islands foreign minister Tony de Brum and

in close interaction with and support by the EU, this coalition included a range of developed and developing countries that were united in their high ambition for the climate negotiations,<sup>41</sup> a coalition of cognitive leaders. The core demands of the coalition included a temperature target of 1.5°C instead of 2°C and a legally-binding agreement. The High Ambition Coalition gained traction during the Paris COP, when increasingly other countries joined, including the United States. Toward the end of the Paris meeting, it comprised more than 100 countries<sup>42</sup> and proved to be instrumental in fostering agreement. When the EU convinced Brazil to join the High Ambition Coalition, it marked a schism in the influential BASIC group—representing Brazil, South Africa, India, and China—changing the negotiation dynamics.

While the course of events in Paris and the tremendous success of the High Ambition Coalition could not have been anticipated, this type of outreach and entrepreneurial leadership was explicitly part of the EU's climate diplomacy action plan. In their 2013 reflection paper *EU Climate Diplomacy for 2015 and Beyond*, the EEAS and the European Commission state that a challenge for the climate negotiations is the successful completion of the negotiating process “through intensive outreach activities [...], striving for an ambitious coalition and the necessary political momentum.”<sup>43</sup>

The EU also cooperated with China and other emerging economies on a bilateral basis. With China, the EU maintains a regular dialogue mechanism at the ministerial, senior official, and policy officer level. The 2015 EU-China Summit resulted in a joint statement in which both jurisdictions agreed to step up their cooperation on climate change. The EU and China cooperate closely on various climate policies such as GHG emissions trading<sup>44</sup> and sustainable cities. Yet, this engagement did not bear the same weight for the international climate negotiation dynamics as the U.S.-China joint announcements, which are described below. They can, however, be considered as a long-term engagement that contributes to the bottom-up process of the Paris Agreement architecture.

With regard to international climate finance, which has been an important demand from developing

countries in the course of the climate negotiations, the EU has shown some noteworthy commitment that partially derived from structural power, making use of the EU's financial resources. The EU has committed to spending 20 percent of its overall budget on climate-related activities. From 2010 to 2012, the EU and its member states provided €7.2 billion for priority areas of climate adaptation, REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), mitigation, and technology cooperation.<sup>45</sup> The Commission established the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), which provides policy and financial assistance in the areas of climate change to developing countries. The EU's outreach and financial support to developing countries is thus a central feature of its external climate engagement.

The rapid ratification of the Paris Agreement, less than a year after its adoption, was a challenge for the EU given its complicated internal ratification process. Nonetheless, in the light of fast moves by the United States and China, among other countries, the EU and its member states demonstrated flexibility and political will to expedite the ratification process and ensure the extraordinarily speedy entry into force of the Paris Agreement.

In the context of the negotiations in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the EU teamed up with Mexico, the Marshall Islands, and some other countries in a slimmed-down High Ambition Coalition to push for a global deal on a global carbon market for the aviation sector. These entrepreneurial leadership efforts were, however, somewhat more cumbersome than in Paris the year before.

With regard to the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, the EU engaged in exemplary leadership by adopting domestic legislation to phase down fluorinated gases before the international agreement was reached. It set an EU-wide cap on HFCs in 2015 and started reducing consumption as from 2016.

The European Union is an active diplomatic actor in international climate negotiations. It has continuously evolved and improved its performance by further developing and deploying a mutually reinforcing mix of different leadership types and activities.

## German Climate Diplomacy and Leadership

As part of the EU but also independently, Germany engages in climate diplomacy and deploys a mix of different types of leadership efforts. It has been one of the key actors in EU climate diplomacy and its activities generally support and reinforce EU efforts.

Germany engaged in entrepreneurial leadership through multilateral and bilateral outreach. The Brazil-German joint statement on climate change of August 20, 2015, which was signed by Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Dilma Rousseff, is an example of successful entrepreneurial leadership through bilateral outreach. Since 2010, Germany has hosted the annual Petersberg Climate Dialogues, which aim at providing an opportunity for informal exchange of climate policy experiences among a number of countries, thus demonstrating entrepreneurial leadership through multilateral outreach. It was initiated after the Copenhagen COP to provide fresh impetus for the international climate negotiations and is co-hosted by the country that holds the COP presidency in the particular year. In the 2016 edition, thirty-five countries participated, including the United States. Such bilateral and multilateral activities complemented the EU efforts and added value through Germany's structural position in the international system as a major trading partner of a number of countries.

Germany also plays a key role in venues other than the UNFCCC, such as the G7, acting as entrepreneurial leader. When Germany hosted and presided over the 2015 G7 meeting in Elmau, it pushed for a joint statement that called for the goal of decarbonizing the global economy during the twenty-first century. This commitment implies the phasing out of fossil fuels by 2100 by seven major economies. Moreover, the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting held in Lübeck during Germany's 2015 G7 presidency established a working group on the foreign policy risks of climate change. In December 2016, Germany announced its plans to make climate change one of the headline issues of the 2017 G20 summit in Hamburg, which it will preside.

Germany has an ambitious domestic climate and energy plan and aims to reduce its greenhouse gas

emissions by 80-95 percent by 2050, while at the same time to cease nuclear power generation. Yet, this policy ambition faces tough challenges such as the politics and social implications of abolishing coal from Germany's energy mix. This controversy and challenge is exemplified by German Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Sigmar Gabriel's announcement in October 2016 that coal would remain part of Germany's energy mix until at least 2040. Exemplary leadership is part of Germany's actor characteristics in international climate negotiations but faces some tough challenges to maintain and live up to its high level of domestic ambition.

Germany also used its extensive network of embassies for climate outreach through interaction with non-EU governments as well as public diplomacy efforts in various countries, engaging in entrepreneurial leadership. The German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) is an active provider of climate-related development finance and capacity-building.

## French Climate Diplomacy and Leadership

France acted as an extraordinarily active entrepreneurial leader in the period leading up to the 2015 COP that took place in Paris. It also engaged in cognitive leadership by setting high ambitions for the international negotiations. France generally engages in climate diplomacy and leadership as part of the EU, similar to Germany. In the run-up to the 2015 COP, however, it played a different role, that of international mediator, since it held the presidency of the UNFCCC negotiations during that period, a role which requires denationalization. This means that France did not participate in the EU's diplomatic outreach as it probably otherwise would have done.

Given the high levels of distrust between the global North and South in UNFCCC negotiations<sup>46</sup> and the notable failures of both the 2000 COP in The Hague and the 2009 COP in Copenhagen under European presidencies, France took great care to distance itself from the European Union and present itself as an impartial facilitator. Nonetheless, it was understood and broadly accepted that the French presidency was committed to securing an ambitious deal and it undertook various activities to prepare the ground, find

consensus, and raise the level of ambition by engaging in cognitive and entrepreneurial leadership.

The French presidency invested a tremendous amount of financial, time, and human resources in its climate diplomacy in the year leading up to COP21. A special team was created from foreign affairs and environment officials, housed in the same building and under the authority of Laurence Tubiana, whose title Special Ambassador for Climate Change also straddled the two areas. With its diplomatic network operating in unison, the French presidency was able to adopt a comprehensive approach in the year leading up to the summit, addressing issues and pushing the climate change agenda from multiple angles and from every corner of the globe in a manner that could only have been replicated by a handful of countries with comparable diplomatic resources.

For over a year before the COP, the team engaged in extensive diplomatic outreach seemingly on a level never before seen from a COP presidency to build trust and bridge the North-South divide. Experts interviewed agree that this long process of listening to countries not only generated goodwill and facilitated a smooth process free from the procedural objections and blockages typical of UNFCCC negotiations, but also helped France to construct a picture of how an ambitious final agreement could look.

The experience and international reputation of the COP president has been recognized as contributing to successful outcomes in UNFCCC negotiations<sup>47</sup> and the appointment of the highly experienced and respected Fabius was important for demonstrating political will. Fabius' personal and political authority was complemented by Tubiana's credibility as a champion of the cause and familiarity with the actors involved in international climate negotiations from a career spanning academia, NGOs, and the UN in a division of labor similar to that which we see between the U.S. and the EU (see below).

The French undertook a number of specific activities that helped them to achieve an ambitious deal, engaging in extensive entrepreneurial leadership activities. One such activity was the creation of the so-called Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) in conjunction with the Peruvian presidency of the 2008

COP. The LPAA was a platform devised by the two presidencies to engage non-state and sub-national actors in the implementation of climate action. Events were held in the run-up to the summit and in parallel as a second conference to the intergovernmental conference. The commitments and agreements that came out of the LPAA formed part of the final deal and allowed countries to expand the number of options informally available and facilitate concession trading. Moreover, experts interviewed consistently identified the significance of the LPAA in contributing to the momentum behind Paris and putting pressure on governments to agree on an ambitious deal. The LPAA has been renamed into the Global Climate Action Agenda, and Laurence Tubiana is one of its two global climate champions.

Another notable activity was the release of a number of bilateral declarations in the run-up to the COP. French President François Hollande and Chinese President Xi Jinping issued a bilateral declaration on climate change in November 2015<sup>48</sup> and a section on climate was also included in a 2015 France-India declaration.<sup>49</sup> This strategy was employed to bring difficult players into the fold and to secure language from key emitters from which it would be difficult to later retreat. Entrepreneurial leadership runs through many of the French presidency's activities.



## U.S. CLIMATE DIPLOMACY AND LEADERSHIP

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The United States re-engaged in international climate negotiations with the beginning of President Barack Obama's term in office and employed a mix of different leadership types. It used its structural leadership to influence the wording in particular with regard to the legal force of the Paris Agreement. Its active use of entrepreneurial leadership, most notably by reaching out to emerging economies and particularly to China, made a major contribution to the international negotiation process. Considerations about avoiding the obligation to request ratification by the United States Senate might have curtailed U.S. cognitive leadership. During President Obama's second term of office, his administration adopted numerous regulations that contributed to a certain degree of exemplary leadership.

U.S. involvement in the international climate negotiations is marked by phases of active leadership alternating with phases of abstention. With Obama's presidency, the United States re-emerged as an active and constructive party to the international climate negotiations after a phase of non-involvement under President George W. Bush. At the 2009 Copenhagen COP, the U.S. was a major actor and President Obama assumed entrepreneurial leadership by brokering a deal with a number of emerging economies—the so-called Copenhagen Accord—which was initially outside of the UNFCCC framework and only contained voluntary pledges. The Accord was merely noted after a number of parties raised objections during the final plenary session of the Copenhagen COP. The EU was sidelined throughout this process. The Copenhagen Accord can be considered an important step for international climate negotiations since it marked China's first ever (voluntary) commitments and the first U.S. international climate commitments since the conclusion of the

Kyoto Protocol.

Starting in 2011, the United States became more actively involved in the UNFCCC negotiations and since 2013—when President Obama presented a comprehensive climate action plan—ramped up its efforts on domestic climate policy and international climate diplomacy. One of the country's major achievements and contributions to the process that made the Paris Agreement possible was its strong engagement with China. The United States succeeded in preparing a number of joint statements in which China committed to climate targets and announced domestic climate policy. Bringing China into the core of the process and China's agreement to abandon the strict bifurcation between developed and developing countries was a watershed moment of the negotiation process and in part thanks to U.S. entrepreneurial leadership.

For the United States there were two key elements in the negotiations that represented red lines it was not willing to cross. The first relates to the definition of the concept of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Related Capabilities (CBDR-RC). The United States could not allow China and other emerging economies to explicitly have fewer responsibilities than itself. This competitiveness concern had already been part of the U.S. political rhetoric during the negotiations of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and remained important for domestic politics.

The second key element of the U.S. position was the legal nature of the Paris Agreement. The U.S. government wanted to avoid at all costs the need for Senate ratification since the Republican Senate majority had made clear that it would not ratify an international

treaty that would bind the United States to GHG emission reduction targets. For this reason, the United States meticulously pursued the drafting of an international climate agreement that introduced a binding procedure but no concrete mitigation or financing commitments.

The United States engaged in entrepreneurial leadership through bilateral diplomacy and coalition building. Especially its outreach to China was essential to the negotiations leading to the adoption of the Paris Agreement. Undoubtedly, a U.S.-China agreement in November 2014 was a watershed moment that generated momentum for achieving the Paris Agreement.<sup>50</sup> In 2013, China still defended the clear-cut distinction between developed and developing countries as enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol and opposed attempts to re-categorize countries. In 2014, it softened its stance to insist on differentiation on the level of stringency of the commitments but no longer on a differentiation at the level of legal applicability of the Paris Agreement. This brought the American and Chinese positions closer together so that an overlap of their respective positions emerged.

On November 12, 2014, President Barack Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping announced a climate agreement that stunned many climate observers. It was the result of about nine months of secret interaction and diplomacy between the two countries and constituted the first of a series of joint statements. U.S. climate envoy Todd Stern and Chinese lead climate negotiator Xie Zhenhua engaged in intense interaction. U.S.-China relations in general are not easy and it required presidential involvement by Barack Obama to initiate and support discussions between the two on a climate agreement. Personal meetings between Presidents Obama and Xi were important parts of the diplomatic outreach, which were carefully organized by White House climate counselor John Podesta and U.S. climate envoy Todd Stern.<sup>51</sup>

The United States has become a central actor in the UNFCCC negotiations. This is partially grounded in its structural power as the largest economy and the second largest emitter of GHG emissions. It also succeeded in generating some trust and credibility through its domestic climate policy. Especially in his

second term, President Obama became increasingly active on climate policy through the adoption of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-level regulation.

Before the Copenhagen COP, the United States Congress had tried to adopt a national climate law, which failed in the Senate. Obama had to travel to the climate negotiations in Denmark without being able to demonstrate exemplary leadership. Later, leading up to the Paris COP, the situation had changed. The Obama administration had announced a number of EPA regulations, including standards for new and existing power plants, standards for passenger and commercial vehicles, and standards to reduce methane emissions. He also introduced the Clean Power Plan, aiming at reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the power sector by 30 percent by 2030, compared to 2005 levels, and established individual reduction targets for each U.S. state. The United States could credibly claim to walk the talk of relatively ambitious climate policy and added to its leadership mix a certain degree of exemplary leadership.

The United States also engages with developing countries and funds climate-related development cooperation projects through the Enhancing Capacity for Low Emission Development Strategies (EC-LEDS) and other programs. The EC-LEDS established partnerships with twenty-six middle-income countries ranging from Mexico to Indonesia. While this engagement made a contribution to engaging with developing countries on climate action, it did not result in the same mobilization and negotiation dynamics seen in the High Ambition Coalition (in which the EU was heavily involved). However, it did support a number of countries in their preparations for the Paris COP and climate action in general.

The United States also engaged in entrepreneurial leadership in the context of the Montreal Protocol and pushed hard for the Kigali Amendment, which was adopted in October 2016. Secretary of State Kerry attended negotiations personally and reached out to key opposing countries such as India. In the case of the Kigali Amendment, however, the question of whether the U.S. Senate must ratify it has not been entirely clarified. A failure to do so, which seems a viable option given Donald Trump's election, could



have serious repercussions dissuading developing countries from joining the amendment. Yet, since U.S. companies could benefit from replacing HFC because they produce alternatives, an economic interest argument could play a role in the debate.

Also in the ICAO negotiations, the U.S. engaged through active entrepreneurial leadership and held a position of one of the structural powers. Despite some transatlantic clashes in the course of the negotiations, a deal was reached in 2016.

Overall, the United States' entrepreneurial leadership, corroborated by its structural position and flanked by a degree of cognitive and exemplary leadership, has marked the U.S. role in the international climate negotiations during the Obama presidency, thereby making a major contribution to the process and the success of the 2015 Paris COP.

## EU-U.S. COOPERATION AND DIVISION OF LABOR

### Comparing European and U.S. Climate Diplomacy and Leadership

The analysis of key politicians' Twitter messages that is presented in this section confirms the above evaluation that the EU engaged in a somewhat different type of outreach than the United States. The analysis also demonstrates that climate diplomacy is conducted at different political levels. In the U.S., climate diplomacy has moved up to the presidential level, while at the EU level the Climate Commissioner is a central figure.

A count of the climate-related tweets of the heads of state and foreign ministers of the U.S. and France as well as the President of the European Commission and the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy reveals stark differences with regard to their frequency (see Table 2 below), indicating that the prioritization of climate diplomacy at the highest political level differs among the three jurisdictions. For Germany, no tweets are available since the relevant politicians do not maintain a Twitter account.

The Tweets of President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry, as shown in Table 2, indicate that climate change has been a U.S. priority at the highest political level, as they have together posted a total of 145 climate-related items over the course of 20 months. In comparison, the EU's total of 20 posts over the same time period seems very low, although this should not necessarily be seen as a lack of political will. The climate-related posts of the EU Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, Miguel Arias Cañete, far outnumber those of Obama and Kerry combined. Rather, the information suggests

that climate diplomacy has received more attention at a higher political level in the U.S. than in the EU and is a higher-priority foreign policy objective. At the EU level, climate diplomacy is very much driven at the level of the policy resort, namely DG Climate Action.

Given that the French foreign minister, Laurent Fabius, was the President of the 2015 COP, the volume of his climate-related posts is unsurprising. What is perhaps surprising is the lack of (Twitter) activity on the part of French president François Hollande, which serves to emphasize by contrast the personal interest taken by President Obama in supporting climate mitigation and making climate change a part of his legacy.

The analysis of the reports on German chancellor Angela Merkel's trips to non-EU countries that can be found on the chancellery website reveals that she addressed climate change in conversations with emerging economies, Japan, and the Vatican (see Table 3 below). China stands out with two sets of discussions about climate change between the German chancellor and the Chinese government within less than a year. Outreach to China and other

		U.S.	EU	France
<b>Head of State / European Commission President</b>	tweets	26	3	8
	re-tweets	3	12	0
	total	29	15	8
<b>Foreign Minister / EU High Representative</b>	tweets	123	3	142
	re-tweets	15	2	159
	total	128	5	301

**Table 2: Number of climate-related tweets and re-tweets at top political level**



**Figure 1: Exemplary tweet by Secretary of State John Kerry**



**Figure 2: Word cloud of the most-frequently mentioned countries in John Kerry's tweets**



**Figure 3: Word cloud of the most-frequently mentioned countries in Miguel Arias Cañete's tweets**

emerging economies such as Brazil and India is thus not a prerogative of U.S. leaders.

Table 4 details John Kerry's climate outreach activity as published on his Twitter feed. It shows a high level of engagement in climate diplomacy and a sustained commitment after the adoption of the Paris Agreement. U.S. entrepreneurial leadership also

played a role in the ratification and implementation of the Paris Agreement. Secretary Kerry has been active promoting the U.S.' climate goals on the multilateral stage, and also bilaterally. The most frequently visited countries are France, China, India, and Norway.

The word cloud below shows which countries featured in Kerry's tweets on climate-related matters (see Figure 2). The larger the country's name appears, the greater the volume of tweets linked to it. The countries are not particularly numerous and the volume of tweets was small compared to that of the EU. France is the most-tweeted country, which is unsurprising given that it was the host of COP21. After France, China and India featured in the greatest number of tweets, which corroborates the finding that the U.S. engaged in extensive and intensive diplomatic outreach to emerging economies and in particular to China but also significantly to India.

Table 5 shows EU Climate Commissioner Cañete's climate outreach activity as published on his Twitter account. Since Table 2 demonstrated that climate diplomacy involves different actors at different political levels in the U.S. and the EU, the analysis of climate-related outreach to non-EU countries focuses on Cañete rather than Kerry's counterpart in the EU, High Representative Federica Mogherini. She engages in traditional foreign policy and diplomacy, but external climate policy and diplomacy falls to the Commissioner for Climate Action.

Commissioner Cañete is not as active as Secretary Kerry at the bilateral level, but he is extremely active at the multilateral level. An analysis of the word cloud below offers a possible explanation for this difference (see Figure 3).

The word cloud shows engagement with a much broader range of countries. Whereas the contribution of the U.S. to the success of the UNFCCC negotiations is characterized by diplomatic rapprochement with a limited number of key GHG emitters, the EU's contribution involved coalition building with a large number of developing and small island states. Bilateral consultations were therefore more important for the U.S.' strategy than for the EU's. Bilateral visits for a coalition of such size and complexity as the High Ambition Coalition would pose unreasonable legis-

<b>Angela Merkel</b>			
<b>Bilateral Meetings</b>		<b>Multilateral Meetings</b>	
China	13-Jun-16	G20 meeting (China)	3-Sep-16
China	29-Oct-15	ASEM summit (Mongolia)	13-Jul-16
India	6-Oct-15	COP21 (France)	30-Nov-15
Brazil	19-Aug-15	G20 meeting (Turkey)	15-Nov-15
Japan	8-Mar-15	UN Sustainable Development Summit (UN)	25-Sep-15
Vatican	20-Feb-15	World Economic Forum (Switzerland)	22-Jan-15

**Table 3: Angela Merkel's trips abroad for which climate change was mentioned in the chancellery's website reporting (2015-November 2016)**

<b>John Kerry</b>			
<b>Bilateral meetings</b>		<b>Multilateral meetings</b>	
France	7-Oct-16	Montreal Protocol COP (Rwanda)	14-Oct-16
China	3-Sep-16	Montreal Protocol Meeting (Austria)	22-Jul-16
India	30-Aug-16	Nordic-USA Summit (Sweden)	13-May-16
Bangladesh	29-Aug-16	US-Caribbean-Central America Energy Summit (US)	4-May-16
Kenya	22-Aug-16	Paris Agreement signing ceremony (UN)	22-Apr-16
Colombia	1-Aug-16	Future of Energy Global Summit (US)	5-Apr-16
Senegal	22-Jul-16	UNFCCC COP21 (France)	30-Nov-15
Denmark/Greenland	17-Jun-16	Climate and Clean Energy Investment Forum (US)	20-Oct-15
Norway	16-Jun-16	Expo 2015 (Italy)	17-Oct-15
China	5-Jun-16	Major Economies Forum on Energy & Climate (US)	29-Sep-15
EU	4-May-16	Glacier Conference (US)	31-Aug-15
France	15-Apr-16		
Laos	24-Jan-16		
Mexico	16-Dec-15		
Egypt	1-Dec-15		
France	30-Nov-15		
India	30-Nov-15		
Norway	20-Oct-15		
Vatican City	23-Sep-15		
India	21-Sep-15		

**Table 4: John Kerry's climate-related bilateral and multilateral meetings that were mentioned on Twitter**

tical hurdles, and multilateral forums would provide a more suitable venue for this type of diplomatic activity.

Commissioner Cañete's word cloud also confirms the importance of developing countries in the EU's climate diplomacy. The most-tweeted country is the leader and representative of the High Ambition Coalition, the Marshall Islands. The volume of tweets

to other countries is significantly higher in Cañete's feed than in Kerry's. This suggests that the EU attempted to build coalitions and engage third countries in their climate diplomacy, even if they did not travel as extensively for high-level bilateral visits as the U.S. did.

The diplomatic outreach to non-EU countries of French foreign minister and president of the 2015 COP, Laurent Fabius, is listed in Table 6 . Given that the information is taken from Fabius' Twitter account and only includes visits in which climate is specifically referenced, it seems likely that the actual number is higher. The table below suggests that Fabius' clout was used to engage some of the major players such as China, India, and South Africa (chair of the G77 group). In addition to Fabius' outreach, Laurence Tubiana, the French Special Ambassador for Climate Change in the run-up to the Paris COP, was extremely active in reaching out to other countries. She made between forty-five and fifty trips to different countries in the period before the Paris COP.<sup>52</sup>

2015 during which climate change was discussed, among other issues. It is based on the reports that can be found on the German foreign ministry's website. The volume of meetings that included climate-related discussions is significantly smaller than that of the U.S. and French foreign ministers. Of course, the data sources differ but, as discussed above, they can serve as proxy for prioritization and activities of the different foreign ministers. Reports on seven out of the sixty-one trips mentioned on the ministry's website for the period of January 2015-November 2016 mention climate change. Similar to Merkel, Steinmeier addressed climate change in meetings with emerging economies. Brazil stands out with two meetings within a timeframe of seven months.

Table 7 lists German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier's trips to non-EU countries in 2016 and

<b>Miguel Arias Cañete</b>			
<b>Bilateral meetings</b>		<b>Multilateral meetings</b>	
China*	23-Sep-16	Pre-COP ministerial meeting (Morocco)	18-Oct-16
Morocco*	22-Sep-16	Montreal Protocol COP (Rwanda)	14-Oct-16
Canada*	22-Jul-16	Ratification of Paris Agreement (UN)	7-Oct-16
U.S.*	22-Jul-16	Major Economies Forum on Energy & Climate (UN)	24-Sep-16
China*	29-Jul-16	Montreal Protocol Meeting (Austria)	22-Jul-16
Algeria	23-May-16	St Petersburg Dialogue (Germany)	4-Jul-16
US	7-May-16	G20 Energy Ministerial (China)	29-Jun-16
Japan*	1-May-16	Bonn ADP Sessions (Germany)	26-May-16
China*	23-Apr-16	G7 Energy Ministerial Meeting (Japan)	2-May-16
Iran	17-Apr-16	Major Economies Forum on Energy & Climate (US)	24-Apr-16
India	31-Mar-16	Paris Agreement signing ceremony (UN)	22-Apr-16
U.S.	16-Feb-16	High Ambition Coalition (UN)	21-Apr-16
Algeria	23-May-16	Cartagena Dialogue (France)	14-Apr-16
US	7-May-16	EU-OPEC Meeting (Belgium)	21-Mar-16
Bhutan*	10-Dec-15	IRENA Assembly (UAE)	17-Jan-16
Turkey	3-Dec-15	UNFCCC COP21 (France)	30-Nov-15
		IEA Ministerial Meeting (France)	17-Nov-15
		Atlantic Council (Turkey)	19-Nov-15
		<i>*meeting at margins of a multilateral event</i>	

**Table 5: Miguel Arias Cañete's climate-related bilateral and multilateral meetings that were mentioned on Twitter**



**Figure 4: Exemplary tweet by Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete**



**Figure 5: Exemplary tweet by Secretary of State John Kerry**

Laurent Fabius			
Bilateral meetings		Multilateral meetings	
India	20-Nov-15	IRENA Assembly (UAE)	17-Jan-16
South Africa	21-Nov-15	UNFCCC COP21 (France)	30-Nov-15
Brazil	22-Nov-15	Pre-COP Ministerial Meeting (France)	8-Nov-15
Nigeria	16-Sep-15	Bonn ADP Sessions (Germany)	20-Oct-15
UNSG	26-Aug-15	Peoples' Summit (Bolivia)	12-Oct-15
Peru	26-Aug-15	Ministerial Consultations (France)	27-Jul-15
South Africa	29-May-15	World Summit Climate and Territories (France)	3-Jul-15
China	15-May-15	Expo 2015 (Italy)	17-Oct-15
Paraguay	5-Mar-15	World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Japan)	13-May-15
Morocco	9-Mar-15	World Sustainable Development Forum (India)	5-Feb-15
Iran	5-Mar-15	UNFCCC COP20 (Peru)	1-Dec-14
Philippines	26-Feb-15		
India	5-Feb-15		
China	2-Feb-15		
EU	19-Jan-15		
Canada*	12-Dec-14		
U.S.	11-Dec-14		
Peru*	11-Dec-14		
Saudi Arabia	10-Dec-14		
India*	10-Dec-14		
Bolivia	10-Dec-14		
		*meeting at margins of a multilateral event	

**Table 6: Laurent Fabius' climate-related bilateral and multilateral meetings that were mentioned on Twitter**

Frank-Walter Steinmeier		
Bilateral meetings		Multilateral meetings
China	8/10-Apr-16	none
Tajikistan	1-Apr-16	
India	4/5-Oct-15	
Bangladesh	19-Sep-15	
Brazil	19/21-Aug-15	
Peru	14-Feb-15	
Brazil	12/13-Feb-15	

**Table 7: Frank-Walter Steinmeier's trips abroad for which climate change was mentioned in the foreign ministry's website reporting (2015-November 2016)**

their different characteristics, the EU and the United States did what they could do best and used their comparative advantages in the international system and their existing relationships and network structures.

Both the United States and the EU engaged in different kinds of coalition building, both bridging the divide between developed and developing countries. The United States advanced the negotiation process by achieving a breakthrough in its engagement with China and other emerging economies. The EU drove the process through its engagement with least developed and most vulnerable countries. These two sets of activities are only part of a broader set of activities, but they can be considered as defining moments in the entire process.

The analysis of key actors' tweets reveals a difference between the political level at which climate diplomacy culminates. While in the U.S. the highest political level engaged in entrepreneurial leadership, in the EU the political level of decision-makers involved differs. At the level of the EU institutions, the issue-specific politician, Climate Commissioner Cañete, is highly involved. French foreign minister Fabius engaged actively in diplomatic outreach. The presidential level in France seems less involved, similar to the President of the European Commission. In Germany, the highest political level of chancellor Merkel seems more involved in climate diplomacy than her foreign minister but the volume of her activities remains significantly below those of Kerry and Cañete. A second transatlantic difference in terms of the partners to whom the EU and the U.S. reached out was confirmed and is further discussed in the following section, which focuses on the interaction across the Atlantic on climate diplomacy and leadership.

### EU-U.S. Climate Cooperation and Division of Labor

Transatlantic interaction on climate diplomacy and leadership can be characterized as an implicit division of labor. The EU and United States' climate diplomacy and leadership were largely complementary activities during the Obama presidency. There was no joint transatlantic strategy but instead loose cooperation, frequent information exchange, and unilateral adjustment to the red lines of (in particular) the U.S. Given

U.S.-EU interaction in the climate negotiations that culminated in the adoption of the Paris Agreement can be characterized as information exchange and regular discussions. Their climate diplomacy efforts cannot be characterized as relatively harmonized strategies. Both had distinct negotiation positions that in the course of the period from 2013 to 2015 converged on some points. The EU insisted on and emphasized the importance of a legally-binding treaty, including binding mitigation commitments. This was unacceptable to the United States since legally-binding GHG reduction commitments would most likely have required ratification by the Senate, which is an extremely unlikely scenario. As the negotiations progressed, the EU came to accept the legally-binding nature of the international process instead of the content of the national contributions.

The United States and the EU diverged in some of their positions, but they also shared common ground on the need for transparency and solid measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) provisions, the abolishment of the division between developed and developing countries into two distinct categories, and the commitment of all parties to joint goals while differentiating in the details. They emphasized different aspects but there was no great contradiction or sharp conflict.

In the past, EU-U.S. relations in the UNFCCC nego-



tiations were not always harmonious. The negotiation of the Kyoto Protocol ended with the United States pushing through its preference for market-based mechanisms. The COP in The Hague that was dedicated to operationalizing the Kyoto Protocol's flexible mechanism collapsed because of EU-U.S. differences and in 2001 President George W. Bush officially withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol, entirely abandoning the UNFCCC process.<sup>53</sup>

In the negotiations leading to the adoption of the Paris Agreement, EU and U.S. positions were not antagonistic, but also not entirely unified. Regardless of their positional differences, the EU's and U.S.' coalition building proved to be complementary, with both of them engaging in the type of activity for which it was best positioned. Given their different characteristics, the EU and the United States could not have done exactly the same things. Both did what they could do best and used their comparative advantage in the international system and their existing relationships and network structures.

The United States' greatest influence derived from its cooperation with China and due to the fact that a climate agreement without the United States would have excluded a large GHG emitter. Everyone was aware of the U.S.' red line and took it into account. The United States is a greater structural power in economic and climate terms than the EU but was very committed to reaching an agreement. Its structural power combined with its entrepreneurial leadership can explain its big footprint on the Paris Agreement. The EU and its member states played a leadership role by trying to ratchet up the level of ambition of the agreement. They consistently had more ambitious positions than the United States. Since those positions were beyond the red line of the great powers of the United States and China, not all parts of their positions were necessarily enshrined in the text of the Paris Agreement, but they made a significant contribution by maintaining the level of ambition and pushing others as far as they could possibly go.

The EU played an important role in reaching out and building bridges to developing and most vulnerable countries that wanted to see ambitious targets and strong commitment by developed countries. The



**Figure 6: Exemplary tweet by Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete**



**Figure 7: Exemplary tweet by Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete**

United States played the role of bringing other powerful actors on board, most notably China. Germany and France also reached out to emerging economies, in particular to China, India, and Brazil, but the Europeans' engagement with China did not include the high-level joint declarations that the U.S. issued together with China. The intensity of the U.S.' outreach to China seems to exceed that of the Europeans.

Both the EU and the United States have worked on their credibility, engaging in exemplary leadership by adopting domestic policies and making sure that they are perceived as sincere actors. They were without doubt driven by their domestic context and politics. Obama had clear boundaries within which he needed to operate, and that determined key elements of his position. The EU's internal policymaking procedures and its long history of leadership rhetoric and ambitions were reflected in the priorities and proposals of its negotiating position. A process of binding commitments at the EU level that then need to be implemented at the member state level and a fair distribution of climate targets among EU member





**Figure 8: Exemplary tweet by Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete**

states are crucial elements of EU climate policy and influence the EU's preferences for the international level.

Overall, in the lead-up to the Paris Agreement the transatlantic dimension of climate diplomacy was characterized by an implicit division of labor in which the United States and the EU each did what they could do best and for which they had the necessary traits, credibility, and skills. After the adoption of the Paris Agreement both the United States and the EU continued to put their individual contexts and skills to use in the process of ratification, although this can be considered less a complementary division of labor. Rather, the actions of the U.S. precipitated urgent and unconventional action on the part of the EU to ensure that the momentum garnered from Paris could continue into the crucial stages of ratification and implementation.

Ratification of the Paris Agreement seems to be yet another success of U.S. climate diplomacy and of its outreach to China. On the eve of the G20 summit in Hangzhou in September 2016, President Obama and President Xi announced their countries' ratification of the Paris Agreement. This announcement put pressure on the EU to accelerate its own ratification process. Initially, the EU had stated that its ratification could take a few years. When there was the threat that the Paris Agreement could enter into force without the EU, commencing the decision-making process under the Paris Agreement without EU involvement, the EU engaged in an unprecedented speedy ratification procedure, thereby lifting the Paris

Agreement across the ratification threshold of fifty-five countries, representing 55 percent of global GHG emissions.

Also in the context of the negotiation and adoption of the Kigali Amendment, transatlantic cooperation through mutually supportive activities seem to have contributed to the process. In the negotiations of the ICAO a rare incident for recent climate-related negotiations occurred during which the EU and the U.S. presented conflicting positions. Yet, diplomacy was able to overcome this hurdle.

Overall, climate diplomacy and leadership during the Obama presidency and in particular during his second term of office has been characterized by a remarkable degree of high-level activity. Albeit not as part of a joint strategy, the EU and U.S. engagement in international climate negotiations has been complementary in an implicit division of labor approach, each of the jurisdictions using their respective feature, credibility, and skills.

## THE FUTURE OF TRANSATLANTIC CLIMATE DIPLOMACY

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Many challenges still lie ahead. The election of Donald Trump as President of the United States has injected a great degree of uncertainty into the process. International climate negotiations seem likely to have lost an active, skillful, and powerful leader who contributed to driving the process forward. Yet, there are signs that even with an inactive United States, the process of decarbonization and global climate governance will continue, maybe in a somewhat more cumbersome manner at times.

The goals set by the Paris Agreement remain to be achieved. Many challenges are still ahead and the negotiations continue. Two challenges are crucial in determining whether the Paris Agreement can lead to the success that many observers enthusiastically announced in wake of its adoption: First, the current NDCs even if fully implemented will lead to a temperature increase of 2.7°C at best. The ratcheting up of national efforts is essential. If the goal of well below 2°C is to be achieved, the NDCs quickly need to be made more ambitious. Second, the Paris Agreement only sets out the broad strokes of the procedures and requirements—the details still need to be negotiated. To enable the global stocktaking of national efforts and make the five-yearly review process a powerful tool, transparency and MRV are essential. The development of the transparency framework but also the provision of finance to enable developing countries' climate action will be an important part of the negotiations in the coming years.<sup>54</sup>

To achieve the targets that the global community set for itself, the momentum of the negotiations needs to be maintained. Political will and intensive investment in climate diplomacy and leadership need to be sustained. While the United States and the EU were key drivers of the process that delivered a success in

Paris in 2015, the Trump presidency poses a challenge for the EU. Sincere engagement with the most vulnerable countries to climate change is essential—and so is co-opting China and other major GHG emitters without whose economic transition global climate targets will not be achieved. While until the end of 2016 the transatlantic division of labor was well suited jointly to engage in these activities, the EU needs to reconsider its strategy for the period from 2017 onward.

It seems unlikely that Donald Trump will further pursue President Obama's recognition of the high level of priority and urgency that the climate change challenge poses. It cannot be expected that the United States will strive to fulfill its promises of 26-28 percent GHG emissions reductions below 2005 levels by 2025. Yet, the contours of Trump's climate policy are unknown and unpredictable. At his energy speech in May 2016 at the annual Williston Basin Petroleum Conference in Bismarck, North Dakota, Trump vowed to "cancel the Paris Agreement." Yet at the first debate between the presidential candidates in September 2016, Donald Trump denied having said that climate change is a hoax invented by the Chinese to destroy U.S. competitiveness. After winning the election Trump told reporters that he had "an open mind" on climate change, only to be contradicted by his press secretary days later. These conflicting statements make it difficult to assess his efforts to further pursue or dismantle climate diplomacy. During the election campaign, Trump promised curtailing oil and gas regulations, expanding areas for drilling, and abolishing the Clean Power Plan. Donald Trump's previous tweets pertaining to climate policy seem to promise an extremely radical break from Obama's policies but the extent to which those opinions and campaign speeches will be reflected in



**Figure 9: Exemplary re-tweet by Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete**



**Figure 10: Exemplary tweets by Donald Trump**

actual policy remains to be seen.

Donald Trump will not easily be able to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris Agreement's official rules and procedures, but he can easily disengage in climate diplomacy, stall the U.S. domestic climate policy process, and withdraw U.S. international climate finance. This will lead to the U.S. not fulfilling the promises it made in its NDC and undermining the trust and close ties that the U.S. had established through lengthy and intensive hard work. An alternative, and perhaps more pessimistic, scenario is that the Trump administration continues participating in the UNFCCC process but with the aim of derailing the process and watering down the level of ambition.

Many of the Paris Agreement's commitments are shared commitments. It moved away from the model that only a few countries engage in climate action. This joint effort is a fragile construction. When one of the large actors withdraws from the common commitment, it poses challenges for the remaining parties. Why would the others increase their action so that

the U.S. can free ride, or even worse, counteract the achievements of others who reduce their impact while the United States is not engaging in climate mitigation action?

It seems unlikely, however, that U.S. climate policy will cease. Subnational and municipal activity will likely continue. For example, California, New York State, and a number of large U.S. cities will most likely continue their ambitious plans. This is, of course, not the same as additional national action that complements and spurs subnational climate action. Also, none of these subnational entities can substitute for the U.S. government in the official UNFCCC negotiations and engage in climate diplomacy with China and India on par.

Taking the United States out of the UNFCCC equation will not be easy. It will leave a leadership void that will be not easy to fill. The EU's engagement with China seems even more important in that context. The international climate leadership void created by the election of Donald Trump places high expectations on the EU, China, and other key climate actors. Yet, for the EU it is also far from obvious that it can maintain its climate ambitions and leadership.

The UK departing from the EU is one of those uncertainty factors. Prime Minister Theresa May abolished the UK Department for Energy and Climate Change on her first day of office and integrated it into the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy. The term "climate change" is not contained in the department's title, which could hint at a lower level of priority in future UK policy and politics. The UK generally has been one of the drivers of ambitious EU climate policy. With its departure, the role of Germany, which has been another advocate of ambitious EU climate policy, and other progressive EU member states becomes even more important. The recent announcement by German economy minister Gabriel that the country will not abolish coal before 2040 could cast doubts about Germany's climate policy ambitions—or rather its ability to live up to the targets that it has set for itself.

Notwithstanding all uncertainties and concerns, an inactive United States is not a new phenomenon in international climate negotiations. Previous U.S. pres-

idents disengaged, which was a setback but did not halt the process. The EU has evolved as a climate leader and developed many new skills, structures, and networks. It could seize the opportunity and further profile itself as a key player on climate governance. China has expressed a firm commitment to climate policy, which also addresses some of its other domestic problems such as air pollution and energy security. The leadership void created by the United States can provide opportunities for new or enhanced leadership by others, including the EU and China.

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