



COMMUNICATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN BY NON-STATE ACTORS: A
FRAMING ANALYSIS*

AKDENİZ'DE DEVLET DIŐI AKTÖRLERİN İKLİM
DEĐİŐİKLİĐİ İLETİŐİMİ: BİR ÇERÇEVELEME ANALİZİ

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ABSTRACT

How do non-state actors frame climate change in a region labelled as a climate hotspot? To answer this question, this article explores the climate communication strategies of non-state actors with various country origins. Adopting the quantitative content analysis method, it comparatively analyses differing frame utilizations (e.g. ecological/meteorological, policy, economic and energy interests, culture, science and technology, civil society) of non-state actors in their selected climate change/global warming-related reports (n=89) on the Mediterranean. The findings provide clues on the cosmopolitan framing of non-state actors on the regional level.

Keywords: Non-State Actors, Climate Change Communication, the Mediterranean, Framing Analysis.

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ÖZ

İklim sıcak noktası olarak sınıflandırmakta olan bir bölgeye ilişkin olarak devlet dışı aktörler iklim değişikliğini nasıl çerçevelemektedirler? Bu soruyu yanıtlamak için bu makale, çeşitli ülke kökenlerine sahip devlet dışı aktörlerin iklim iletişim stratejilerini incelemektedir. İlgili çalışma, nicel içerik analizi yöntemini benimseyerek, devlet dışı aktörlerin Akdeniz’le ilgili seçili iklim değişikliği/küresel ısınma raporlarındaki (n=89) farklı çerçeve kullanımlarını (örneğin ekolojik/meteorolojik, politika, ekonomik ve enerji çıkarları, kültür, bilim ve teknoloji, sivil toplum) karşılaştırmalı olarak analiz etmektedir. Çalışmanın bulguları devlet dışı aktörlerin bölgesel düzeyde iklim değişimine yönelik kozmopolit çerçeveleme eğilimlerine ilişkin ipuçları sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Devlet Dışı Aktörler, İklim Değişikliği İletişimi, Akdeniz, Çerçeve Analizi.

INTRODUCTION

Labelled as a “survival guide for humanity” by United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Synthesis Report (IPCC, 2023) emphasised that greenhouse gas emissions must be halved by 2030 to limit global warming to 1.5°C. As humanity’s last chance, the report prescribes that industrialised countries come together immediately and end their emissions by the early 2050s. Corresponding with the timing of the report, “the year 2023 has been confirmed as the warmest on record, driven by human-caused climate change” (BBC,2024).

Arguably, the “green economy” stands out as one of the most important tools we have. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP,2023) defines a green economy as “low-carbon, resource-efficient and socially inclusive.” In this parallel, with its stated goal to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, the European Union (EU) proposed the European Green Deal (EGD) as a “new growth strategy” to transform its economy into a sustainable, low-carbon, environmentally friendly, and socially inclusive model (EU, 2019).¹

¹ To materialize this profound economic shift toward sustainability and climate neutrality, the EU acknowledges the requirement to adopt relevant and efficient measures/mechanisms for more

Considering that the EU cannot achieve those goals of the EGD alone as problems and solutions are not restricted to Europe, the Union presented itself as a global leader in convincing and supporting others to contribute to harnessing green economic transition (Dyrhaug and Kruze, 2024: 8-9). However, the EGD's external dimension is a "little hazy" (Teenvan et al., 2021: x) at best, the neo-colonial practice of "the greening of the empire" (Almedia, et al., 2023) at worst.² In the external realm, as Tocci (et al., 2023) postulate, the EU should positively interact with its neighbourhood and mainstream green principles beyond national boundaries throughout its foreign policy for the EGD to be successful.

Among those regions, the Mediterranean strikes out with its renewable energy potential and its emergence as the world's climate change hotspot, warming 20% faster than the global average, even though the region is responsible only for 6 % of the global carbon emissions (Lange, 2020). This means the Mediterranean will be heavily affected by climate change with extreme weather events that are projected to become more severe and persistent in the Euro-Med region.³ Despite the EGD's potential in harnessing cooperation on climate action and providing opportunities for job creation, green growth, and sustainable development in the Mediterranean (Sandri et al., 2023), an integrated EU perspective toward the region is still "absent or embryonic" (Tocci et al., 2023).⁴

Against this backdrop, those (environmental) civil society voices to harness green economic transformation are likely to remain weak, thereby, policy-makers

inclusive policymaking with its pledge to "leave no one behind" (EU, 2019). Among those initiatives promoting citizen and civil society organization participation in policy-making, regular stakeholder consultations and more structured mechanisms such as the European Climate Pact and the Just Transition Platform should be noted.

² As the external dimension of the EGD has been gradually developing in various policy areas of the EU, Teenvan et al. (2021) spot three simultaneous approaches: 1) Collaborative (e.g. regional strategies for the Western Balkans, the Neighbourhood and Africa) development initiatives and investments) 2) Coercive (e.g. promoting green transition elsewhere thorough the strength of its market, likewise the carbon border adjustment) 3) Diplomatic (e.g. utilization of climate diplomacy to persuade and pressure others).

³ As Borghesi and Mazarrano (2023) put, "water, energy and food are connected in a complex nexus, vital for the long-term stability...outward and inward vulnerabilities characterize the nexus" of the Mediterranean. All of these will exacerbate other regional vulnerabilities (e.g. underdevelopment, inequalities, poverty, energy/climate injustice in the coming years).

⁴ To add insult to injury, those European renewable energy investments prioritise capital accumulation under the guise of neoliberalism (İşleyen, 2015), liberal-market frame adoptions (Herranz-Surrallés, 2018), economic interests (Günay, 2020), and strategic calculations (Günay, 2024) that will likely to exacerbate regional inequalities and climate injustice. As Sanchez-Reaza et al. (2023: 2) put it, the EGD's objective to harness "green transition is only possible with an enabling human transition, and only with the proper human development (social) policies to support this transition". By the same token, the key of this process EU-funded Green Infrastructure (GI) governance should involve all stakeholders, including civil society and citizens to ensure its success, which is largely missing at this stage (Bally and Coletti, 2023). In this vein, Akçalı et al. (2022: 2) propose that any regional energy cooperation initiatives should be democratic by encapsulating local stakeholders, thereby opening up a public space for genuine climate action.

won't be hesitant to stick with their preferred carbon-intensive growth models. Hence, many Mediterranean regional governments are not taking the required climate mitigation measures, not even including them in their electoral campaign pledges (cf. Adaman et al., 2023), regardless of public opinion's favourable approach to climate mitigation policies.⁵ Even though almost all of the Mediterranean countries have approved the Paris Climate Agreement and announced climate targets, their governance deficits with limited norm diffusion/policy transfer/convergence prospects from the EU curtails their prospects for green economic transformation.⁶ Arguably, regional policy-makers' and local business elites' primary apprehension is economic risks associated with the EU's proposed the CBAM, which will likely curtail exports of their carbon-intensive products to Europe (El-Katiri, 2023; Eicke et al., 2021; Acar, Aşıcı, and Yeldan, 2022). At this point, a critical eye would be sceptical of the extent of regional governments' climate laws' abidance to "leaving no one behind."

At the regional level, despite the emergence of the climate crisis as a "common existential threat" in the Mediterranean (Stergiou, 2023), conflicts over hydrocarbons have been going on.⁷ On the one hand, the dispute over preserving the Mediterranean from hydrocarbon drilling activities has pitted environmentalists against energy companies on both sides of the sea. On the other hand, potential hydrocarbon reserves and their prospective transportation routes through disputed sea areas have escalated geopolitical tensions among the littoral states in the Eastern Mediterranean (İşeri and Bartan, 2019; Talbot, 2021; Tziarras, 2021).

In the face of varied public interest and limited governmental emphasis, it is left to regional organizations and civil society actors to advocate a 'paradigm shift' in the Mediterranean climate governance. While there are various forums for cooperation among civil society actors (e.g., the Mediterranean Forum on Energy and Climate Change) along with the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) as a regional intergovernmental organization, climate governance in the

⁵ The region's public ascribes different priorities to climate change mitigation. A recent Eurobarometer study found that even in the affluent EU-member Mediterranean states, the percentage of those considering climate change 'as one of the main challenges that the world faces today' is much lower than their northern counterparts (just 7 per cent in Italy, 10 per cent in Greece and 16 per cent in Spain compared to 34 per cent in the Netherlands and 35 per cent in Denmark) (Eurobarometer No 513 / 2021). Yet, in a similar survey (UNDP, 2021: 16), it has been documented that the non-European Mediterranean public's belief in climate emergency (Morocco 68 per cent, Turkey 67 per cent, Tunisia 66 per cent, Egypt 66 per cent, Algeria 65 per cent) is higher than the European average.

⁶ For the Turkish case in this respect, see İşeri and Uygurtürk, 2022.

⁷ Clearly, further attempts to develop those hydrocarbons will worsen Mediterranean ecology, and climate inequalities and widen the gap between rich and poor. Meanwhile, the type of offshore wind pacts formed among continental European countries to harness renewable energy utilization are missing among the littoral states of the Mediterranean.

Mediterranean remains largely fragmented (Katsaris, 2015). It is therefore important to examine what may account for this lack of further (and deeper) cooperation. What may be the reason for the lack of Mediterranean non-state actors' cooperation regarding CC? Despite the overwhelming scientific consensus on the anthropogenic causes of climate change and measures to address it, there are still disagreements among various stakeholders - for our purposes non-governmental organizations (NGOs)- about its consequences and how to address it.⁸

Accordingly, each of these actors is actively engaged in promoting its agenda by “framing” climate change from their perspective. Differently put, they emphasize certain features of the issue while communicating them (Schafer and O'Neill, 2017). NGOs are among the impactful actors in climate change communication since, as past research has established, they are important conveyors and mediators of established scientific knowledge both for the public and the decision-making arenas (Corell and Betsill, 2001; Doyle, 2009; Yearley, 2008). In this capacity, they actively re-construct all scientific *objectivities* into *subjective* narratives -to affect their audiences. It is quite plausible, then, that the absence of substantial cooperation between the Mediterranean non-state actors over CC governance may be due to their different(rated) framing of it.⁹

In this light, the article raises the following question: “How do non-state actors frame climate change in a region labelled as a climate hotspot?” To answer this question, it explores and comparatively analyses various climate change frames propagated (e.g. ecological/meteorological, policy, economic and energy interests, culture, science and technology, civil society) by non-state actors' reports (n=89) on the Mediterranean. The findings shed light on non-state actors' cosmopolitan framing of the climate crisis on the regional level.

1. CIVIL SOCIETY, CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION, AND THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

In the absence of unified climate governance, the transformative impact of sub-state and non-state actors in general (İşeri et al., 2018; Hale et al., 2021) and civic environmental or climate community networks in particular becomes significant (Botetzagias et al., 2010; Berny and Rootes, 2018). The good news is

⁸ For differing perceptions on climate change, see Baysal and Karakaş, 2017; Arıkan and Günay, 2021.

⁹ Different framing in effect means different understandings, prioritisation and assessments of a particular issue, which make a common approach less likely. Previous research has argued that for organizations to form coalitions, they should ‘avoid debilitating frame disputes’ and they have to develop an over-arching “coalition framing”, whose emergence is dependent –amongst other things– on ‘the varying degrees of “fit” between [the constituent] organizational frames’ (Croteau and Hicks, 2003: 251).

that nation-states are no longer the sole actors while state-centric approaches have lost their dominance in global climate affairs. This has been referred to as ‘hybrid multilateralism’ denoting an intense interplay between state and non-state actors in this new landscape of multilateral and transnational climate action (Backstrand et al., 2017: 562). In parallel, various new governance structures have emerged that potentially allow all categories of civil society actors including NGOs to become leaders or pioneers in climate leadership.

Indeed, environmental NGOs (ENGOs) have developed a keen interest in climate change as well. However, their collaborations and networks remain limited (Hadden and Bush, 2021). Postulating that ENGOs are at a crossroads, Berny and Rootes (2018: 947) scrutinize whether they take into consideration radical solutions required to address the urgency of the climate crisis and its devastating effects on biodiversity or stick with mainstream positions. Even though the direct influence of such NGOs on climate negotiations and the policy-making process has been widely documented (Newell, 2000; Kadirbeyoğlu et al. 2017; Backstrand et al., 2017; Allan, 2020), there is limited research on their discursive or framing role in climate governance (Allan and Hadden, 2017). This gap in the literature is even clearer in those types of studies on NGOs in the context of the Global South, where climate change impacts are felt more strongly.

A recent analysis of the mission statements of those NGOs participating in global environmental conventions reveals that climate change is “the premier environmental issue” and “climate politics” is the discourse most of these organizations are engaged with (Partelow et al., 2020). At this point, one should note that NGOs’ dissemination of the discourse of “climate politics” per se does not entail the political engagement of the wider public with issues surrounding climate change. We concur with Carvalho et al. (2017: 123) that climate change is fundamentally a political issue and that improved communication practices can only promote urgently needed political engagement of the public with climate change. This entails opposing certain dominant climate policies, which have largely been detrimental to the climate, and exclusionary of dissident voices.

This brings us to the point that the consolidation of climate change ideas in the global public sphere can only be possible with the increasing visibility of NGOs as carriers of ecological ideas albeit at the expense of a compromise with economic evaluations (Yla-Anttila et al., 2018). Differently put, the spread of the concept of climate change in the global public sphere to date has occurred in parallel with an eco-modernist consensus, which argues that economic growth and environmental protection must mutually support, rather than hinder each other (Yla-Anttila et al., 2018: 597). Certainly, a critical eye would argue that the dominance of the eco-modernist approach to climate debates can undermine the very basis of the public

sphere as a discursive platform in which contending perspectives enter into dialogue in a democratic fashion (Pezzullo and Cox, 2018: 38).

Existing research on the climate communications of NGOs has largely focused on more established and larger ENGOs in an international context, analysing how they frame the phenomenon of climate change as well as their policy-forming actions (Allan and Hadden, 2017; Backstrand et al., 2017; Corell and Betsill, 2001). Yet this selective focus allows us only a partial understanding of the total climate change discourse and how it is framed. ENGOs may perform a variety of information-focused roles when it comes to climate change such as knowledge producers, policy advocates, and information intermediaries (Jones et al., 2016: 10-11). Since the performance of any of these roles is related to an NGOs' choice of agenda, strategy, tactics, and available resources, limiting our analysis to one particular class of NGOs (in our case, 'leading' or global organizations) runs the risk of leaving us with a skewed understanding of the climate change discourse and how it is framed, especially by excluding those actors focused on alternative framings. This concern is corroborated by the fact that existing research on NGOs' climate change-related content on Facebook identifies that NGOs from developed nations differ in their framing from those from developing ones (Vu et al., 2021). Thus, focusing solely on 'flagship' NGOs (or in effect, those from bigger nations) runs the risk that local knowledge and voices may be marginalized (McGregor et al., 2018: 67).

This study comparatively examines climate change communication strategies of non-state actors in the Mediterranean, based on the aforementioned discussions and relevant academic literature on environmental and climate communication (Boykoff, 2008; Gkiouzepas and Botetzagias, 2018; Yla-Anttila et al., 2018), as well as research on the climate discourse/framing of NGOs (Allan and Hadden, 2017; Partelow et al., 2020; Vu et al, 2021). We are interested in answering the following research questions:

R1. How do climate change frame utilizations in the Mediterranean by non-state actors alter over time?

R2. How do climate change frame adoptions in the Mediterranean by non-state actors alter depending on the country the actor is based in?

R3. How different is the framing of regional climate change by Mediterranean non-state actors compared with the framing of the phenomenon by non-state actors outside the region?

R4. How does the framing of Mediterranean climate change by non-state actors differ from that of transnational governmental organizations?

R5. To what extent is the Mediterranean a focal point in the documents analysed?

R6: Based on the above, can we find evidence of an (emerging?) coalition frame?

2. METHODOLOGY

This study primarily deploys the quantitative content analysis method to analyse to collect and analyse the frames adopted by selected non-state actors (Schafer and O'Neill, 2017). Frames are essential components of both our thinking and communicating activities. As Gamson (1989: 157) notes, “Facts have no intrinsic meaning. *They take on their meaning by being embedded in a frame or storyline that organizes them and gives them coherence*” (our emphasis). They are “unconscious structures” through which we think and talk (Lakoff, 2010). The information thus comes in a “framed” way. Framing is not only used by people in daily life when communicating why an (environmental) issue matters, who or what is responsible, and what the existing options might be, but it is also employed as a technique by experts (Littoz-Monnet, 2014), various media outlets (Günay et al., 2021), and journalists (Hiles and Hinnant, 2014).

Data Collection

In order to analyse the framing strategies of non-state actors regarding climate change in the Mediterranean, we conducted a study focusing on climate reports published in English after 2015, the year of the Paris Climate Agreement, specifically those that referred to the Mediterranean region.

With this aim, we first created a database of non-state actors working on climate change in the region. From February to May 2022, we searched the internet for English-language¹⁰ publications writing about climate change for the period 2015-2021. Our rule of thumb was to select publications that had in their (section) title any of the following keywords: ‘climate’, ‘climate change’, ‘warming’, and ‘global warming’.¹¹ Once such a publication was identified, we checked whether its author was an ENGO or a transnational, non-state organization, in which case we retained it—otherwise, it was rejected. Additionally, we checked whether it had any reference to the ‘Mediterranean’, no matter how small or fleeting. Again, if this was the case, the document was

¹⁰ We focus only on English language texts precisely because we are interested in examining how individual organizations ‘frame’ their message about CC-in-the-Med particularly when they are addressing a larger/other-than-their-national-audience, while they are reaching out to a transnational body of recipients (and potential allies). To reach such an audience, publishing in English is almost obligatory due to its de facto status as a *lingua franca*.

¹¹ The reason that we have picked those keywords stems from our assumption that at least one of those generic ones will likely be included in the report titles of various stakeholders that have an agenda on climate. Restricting our data collection filter to specific terms such as mitigation, adaptation, climate justice, and just transition would narrow down our focus.

retained; or else it was discarded. We also searched for Mediterranean networks of non-state actors as well as for any organization which featured in its title the word 'Mediterranean', and then examined its website for possible climate change publications, which were subsequently screened following the aforementioned rule-of-thumb (i.e., the presence of the word 'Mediterranean').

This collection and screening process left us with 89 English-language publications by non-state organizations from the period 2015-2021 that deal with 'climate change' and include references to the 'Mediterranean'. Nevertheless, the number of paragraphs per publication varies widely, from 10 paragraphs to 833. Interquartile range (IQR) analysis showed that nine cases were outliers, so they were excluded from the subsequent statistical analyses since retaining them would significantly increase the variability of the data and thus decrease any statistical power (see Hadi, Imon, and Werner 2009). Thus, all following analyses are based on the 'cleared' data (i.e., no outliers) which consists of 80 publications comprising a total of 6,855 paragraphs between them. The country of origin and year of these publications is presented in Table 1-2.

Data Coding

For our analysis, we assigned themes to each paragraph of the documents analysed. While most similar research analyses documents as a whole, assigning them a single overall 'theme', going into further, sub-document, detail offers us a more detailed and precise overview of the actual information contained in the documents. These themes are a slightly modified form of climate change categories first established by Boykoff and Boykoff (2007) in their article on climate change and US media coverage. This topic was later developed by Boykoff (2008) for his article on the UK tabloids and by Gkiouzepas and Botetzagias (2018) for their article on the Greek newspapers. Our modification was to introduce the framing category of 'other' to the six categories identified by Gkiouzepas and Botetzagias (2018). Thus, each paragraph was assigned at least one out of the following seven themes: ecology/meteorology; policy; economic and energy interests; culture; science and technology; civil society; and others (Table 3). If a paragraph covered multiple topics, then it was assigned multiple themes. Thus 'theming' of the 6,885 paragraphs of our 80 reports, resulted in 12,923 'themes' as follows. The themes were coded by four undergraduate students, who were employed for this purpose. To test intercoder reliability, the coders were presented with four randomly selected articles, consisting of a total of 172 paragraphs, which they independently coded according to the aforementioned themes. The results show a very high intercoder reliability (Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (single measures) ICC = 0.973 (95 per cent CI, 0.950 to 0.987), $p < 0.001$).

Concerning the overall presence of ‘themes’ in our dataset, the most common theme was the ‘Policy’ one (30.8 per cent of the total 12,923 ‘themes’ identified), followed by the “Economy/Energy” one (23.6 per cent). The ‘Ecology/meteorology’ and the ‘Other’ themes form a second grouping (18.7 per cent and 13.8 per cent respectively) while the ‘Culture’, ‘Civil Society’ and ‘Science and Technology’ themes all scored below 5 per cent (see Table 4).

In addition, we examined whether the documents had a ‘Mediterranean focus’. We coded the documents as containing this regional focus if they concerned climate change in the Mediterranean Basin. In contrast to the frame coding, where we coded each paragraph, for the ‘Mediterranean focus’ coding we considered the entire document/report. For example, if the report included the word ‘Mediterranean’ in its title or one of its subtitles, or if the report had a special section about the Mediterranean Basin, it was coded as having a Mediterranean focus. However, if the word ‘Mediterranean’ was mentioned a few times without being the central topic under analysis, the report was not coded as having a Mediterranean focus. Table 3 illustrates the topics used for coding and gives examples from the reports covered in our database.

3. FINDINGS

R1. How do climate change frame utilizations in the Mediterranean by non-state actors alter over time?

We find that some frames are positively correlated with the lapse of time (i.e., their occurrence percentages increase over time). This is the case for the “ecology/meteorology” frame (Spearman’s $\rho = 0.750$, $p = 0.026$), the “culture” frame ($\rho = 0.786$, $p = 0.018$), and the “civil society” frame ($\rho = 0.714$, $p = 0.036$) (Graph 1). On the contrary, for the remaining frames, no statistically significant correlation was observed.

R2. How do climate change frame adoptions in the Mediterranean by non-state actors alter depending on the country the institution is based in?

To answer this question, we analysed the extent to which each frame is deployed by the non-state actors based in each country separately. Firstly, there are significant differences in the volume of coverage (number of paragraphs) over time between the countries, as shown in Table 4. Our data illustrates that the framing of climate change in the Mediterranean by non-state actors alters significantly depending on the country in which they are based. For instance, for the institutions in Greece, the deployment of a ‘policy’ frame by the non-state actors is present in all (100 per cent) paragraphs; by comparison, this percentage falls to 35 per cent in the reports published by non-state actors in Turkey. Similarly, in France, the deployment of the ‘other’ frame by non-state actors can be found in

64per cent of the reports on climate change in the Mediterranean, but this percentage falls to 0% in the reports published by organizations in Morocco. Of all the frames, the use of the 'other' frame shows considerable variation depending on the country of actor origin. By contrast, the percentage of science and technology, civil society, and culture frames is consistently below 50 per cent in all countries (Table 4).

For testing whether there exist any sub-regional groupings (i.e. groups of country-based organizations which employed a similar mixture of frames in the period under study), we conducted a hierarchical cluster analysis, presented in the dendrogram (Graph II). We were not able to identify any clusters based on neighbouring country groups or any southern versus northern Mediterranean country division, or EU-member country versus non-EU-member country difference.

R3. How different is the framing of regional climate change by Mediterranean non-state actors compared with the framing of the issue by non-state actors based outside the region?

We examined if there is a divergence between climate change framing (i.e. total per cent of theme presence over the period) by Mediterranean non-state actors versus those based outside the Mediterranean. Based on the Mann-Whitney U test, we found that there are no statistically significant differences between the two groups for any type of frames (Asymptotic significance (2-tailed) $p > 0.05$).

R4. How does the framing of Mediterranean climate change by non-state actors differ from that of transnational governmental organizations?

As stated before, our study includes both NGOs and other non-state actors. Hence, we examined if there was a difference in how their respective framings of climate change differ from each other in their reports. Based on the Mann-Whitney U test, we found a statistically significant difference only for the 'Ecology/Meteorology' and the 'Economy/Energy' themes. For the former, it appears more often (i.e. has a higher percentage) in the NGOs' publications compared to other actors ($U = 112.00$, Asymptotic significance (2-tailed) $p = 0.015$). The opposite is the case for the 'Economy/Energy' theme, it is less common in NGOs' publications compared to other actors' ($U = 120.00$, Asymptotic significance (2-tailed) $p = 0.021$).

R5. To what extent is the Mediterranean a focal point in the documents analysed?

Lastly, we wanted to understand the extent to which the Mediterranean was used in the documents as a focal point. In our data selection process, we had already counted those reports that contained a mention of the Mediterranean.

That is, we performed a content screening run on the documents and only selected those that mentioned the Mediterranean. However, given the region's centrality to this discussion, we further wanted to assess the extent to which non-state actors concentrated on the Mediterranean itself as the primary arena for the consideration of climate change.

As opposed to frame coding, where we coded each paragraph, in this case, the coding was done per document. We found that 49 (61 per cent) of the reports focus on the Mediterranean region. This indicates that the remaining 31 (39 per cent) documents chose a global, national, or local geographic focus. Our findings suggest that the reports had, to a great extent, substantially dealt with CC in the context of the Mediterranean region.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to examine the framing strategies of non-state actors (both NGOs and transnational governmental organizations) when discussing climate change in the Mediterranean in their English-language publications. Our focus on the Mediterranean was dictated due to its condition as one of the hotspots of global climate change. We choose to analyse only English-language publications to determine whether there exists evidence of a regional, overarching 'coalition frame', which previous research has identified as an important precondition for civil society actors' cooperation.

Our findings suggest that CC is an issue of concern across the Mediterranean countries albeit with considerable variations in the volume of their reporting (see Table 1). Furthermore, a substantial percentage of these publications (over 60 per cent) focus (amongst other issues) on the Mediterranean implications of CC, suggesting that this is an issue which concerns the regional non-state actors. While there exist no differences in the way CC is framed by organisations seated in a Mediterranean or otherwise country, we witness some temporal variations in the framing of CC: the 'ecological/meteorological', 'cultural', and 'civil society' frames become more prominent in the reports of non-state actors over time, while no statistically significant changes over time were observed for the remaining frames. Nevertheless, the 'Policy' and 'Economy/Energy' frames have been the most prominent themes (alongside the 'ecological/meteorological' one) throughout the period over time (see Graph 1). Although our analysis does not allow us to account for the particular trends, it is worth noting that the sustained prominence of the two former frames is an indication of their (inter-wined) importance in the governing CC adaptation/mitigation while the upward trend of the 'ecological/meteorological' frame¹² may be related to two reasons: First, an

¹² For the use of the "ecological/meteorological" frame over time, see Gkiouzepas and Botetzagias 2018.

increasing emphasis CC's implications on the *region*. Second, the EU's efforts to render the EGD inclusive to civil society actors and promote the "climate act" at home and abroad to mobilize/alert the regional public. Further research is needed to understand what drives each frame's trend.

Moreover, our data reveal that non-state institutions' framing of climate change in the Mediterranean alters significantly depending on the country in which they are based (see Table 4) while we were unable to identify any (sub-regional) clusters of states which frame climate change in a "similar" way: the hierarchical cluster analysis results presented in Graph II, suggest that the regional non-state actors are still quite away from developing a common "coalition frame" which would facilitate their further (and deeper) cooperation to consolidate the climate idea in the Mediterranean public sphere (cf. Yla-Anttila et al., 2018). Overall, our analysis provided some first clues on the cosmopolitan framing of climate change in the Mediterranean by non-state actors.

Our results point to several future research avenues. On the supply side, those non-state actors' reports in other languages could be analysed to provide insights on their tailored made climate communication strategies targeting local audiences. On the demand side, it may be instructive to use surveys and focus groups to observe various audiences (e.g., categorized by age, gender, or political orientation) in a cross-country setting and analyse their reception of climate communications disseminated by non-state actors.

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APPENDIXES

Tables

Table.1: Publications Used in the Study by Country of Origin and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Belgium							1	1
Cyprus		1	1	1				3
France	1	1	1		2	2	1	8
Germany		1				1		2
Greece							1	1
Israel	1				1	1	2	5
Italy				1		2	9	12
Jordan				1				1
Lebanon		1	2	1	4			8
Luxemburg			1					1
Morocco			1	2				3
Spain	1	1		5	7	7	5	26
Switzerland					2		1	3
Turkey	1	2		1				4
United Kingdom							2	2
TOTALS	4	7	6	12	16	13	22	7980

Table.2: Five Non-State Actors with the Most Reports Analysed

Name of the Organization	Country	Number of Reports Analysed	Number of Paragraphs
IEMed - European Institute of the Mediterranean	Spain	13	1191
IAI - Istituto Affari Internazionali	Italy	11	454
Clima Med	Lebanon	8	579
Plan Blue	France	6	737

Table.3: Explanation and Examples of Selected Frames

Frames	Issues Covered	Examples
ecological/ meteorological	issues relate with biodiversity, habitat and/or weather events and/or disasters (e.g. heat waves, droughts, floods, desertification)	“Most countries in the region [the Mediterranean] are already experiencing rising temperatures, increasing water scarcity, rising frequency of droughts and forest fires....” (ClimaSouth, 2016:7).
policy	Various stakeholders’ claims of governance at any level	‘...More climate legislation is in place – only a handful of countries had climate legislation in place ahead of Copenhagen. Now, 75% of greenhouse gases (GHG) are covered by legislation...’ (PRIO Cyprus, 2016: 6).

economic and energy interests	business and energy interests	“The Paris Agreement has opened up new and significant market opportunities.” (IAI, 2018: 10).
culture	Lifestyles and consumption patterns	“Changing consumption patterns are also a driving factor for change in Morocco’s energy sector.” (Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2016: 17).
science and technology	Scientific advancements	“In recent years, there has been an astonishing fall in the cost of solar- and wind-generated electricity, and signs of a similar decline in the cost of complementary technologies such as battery storage and electrolyzers.” (ECFR, 2021: 12).
civil society	civil society engagement in various forms	“... climate objectives will then need to be translated into effective policy instruments...require...citizen engagement.” (ELIAMEP, 2021: 21).
other	migration, food security, water security, security, health, food, urbanization, transport, infrastructure, diplomacy	“For instance, 80% of people displaced worldwide by climate change are women...” (Euro - Mediterranean Women’s Foundation, 2019).
Geographic focus	Mediterranean region	“Mediterranean average surface air temperature is expected to be 2.2 °C higher in 2040...” (IUCN, 2019).

Source: Partly adapted from Boykoff and Boykoff, 2007; Boykoff, 2008; Gkiouzepas and Botetzagias, 2018

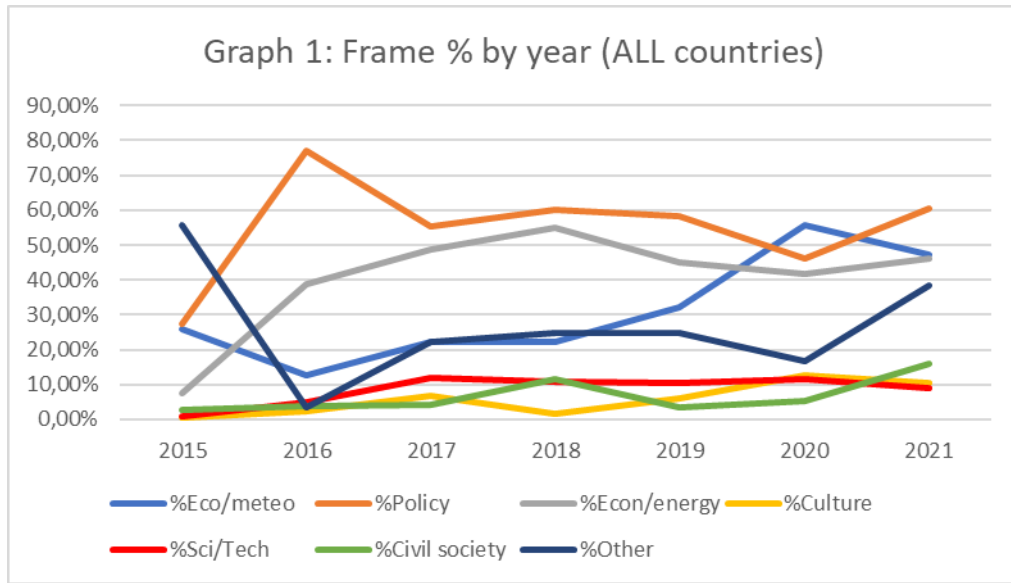
Table.4: Presence of Frames per Country-based organization, 2015-2021

	Total # of paragraphs	% Eco/ meteo	% Policy	% Econ/ energy	% Culture	% Sci/ Tech	% Civil society	% Other
Belgium	32	50%	72%	47%	9%	3%	38%	25%
Cyprus	49	27%	92%	80%	4%	2%	6%	10%
France	406	42%	35%	29%	1%	2%	7%	64%
Germany	433	15%	75%	37%	4%	3%	4%	7%
Greece	13	23%	100%	77%	0%	0%	15%	0%
Israel	35	49%	69%	31%	6%	9%	26%	54%
Italy	189	38%	74%	72%	10%	19%	15%	22%
Jordan	40	55%	50%	30%	15%	8%	30%	20%
Lebanon	350	9%	73%	65%	4%	10%	0%	8%
Luxembourg	38	13%	68%	76%	16%	18%	0%	0%
Morocco	22	73%	55%	68%	0%	50%	0%	0%
Spain	465	23%	45%	31%	1%	3%	9%	57%

Switzerland	577	50%	47%	16%	24%	4%	16%	48%
Turkey	162	35%	35%	52%	0%	9%	6%	3%
United Kingdom	316	14%	96%	86%	1%	14%	24%	18%
TOTALS	6,885	18.6%	30.8%	23.6%	3.7%	5.0%	4.4%	13.8%

Graphs

Graph.1: Frame Use Change over Time (All Countries)



Graph.2: Dendrogram for Country-based Clusters regarding Frame Use

