

The background of the slide is a complex, abstract network diagram. It consists of numerous nodes of varying sizes, some solid black, some solid blue, and some white with black outlines. These nodes are interconnected by a dense web of thin, light gray lines. The overall effect is a sense of global connectivity and complexity. The title text is overlaid on a solid black rectangular area in the lower right portion of the slide.

# CONNECTING THE DOTS? THE EUROPEAN UNION'S DIPLOMACY ACROSS THE INTERNATIONAL REGIME COMPLEX ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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# OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

## **Framing my research**

1. Puzzle and gaps in the literature
2. My research objectives
3. Approach

## **Dissertation**

1. Conceptual framework
2. Research design
3. Empirics
4. Analysis
5. Discussion and conclusion
6. Reflections on EU climate diplomacy post 2022



# PUZZLE

- Very likely that EU uses these '**non-focal fora**' to facilitate preferred outcome in '**focal forum**' negotiations.
- Yet, neither lit on **EU as climate actor** nor that on **regime complexity** is sufficient for explaining EU's diplomacy in IRCCC.
- **EU lit:** little work on EU multilateral diplomacy or its role in climate negotiations beyond the UNFCCC.
- **Regime complexity lit:** mostly around selecting/modifying fora to suit objectives; little work on simultaneously working across fora.

# MY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- Unpack the 'blackbox' of EU climate diplomacy in multilateral settings.
  - Does the EU 'walk the talk' and utilise the regime complex to its advantage?
  - What factors facilitate or inhibit such a diplomacy?
  - Dig into the mechanisms affecting its diplomacy
- In doing so:
  - Develop a more holistic (if not critical) view of EU as international climate actor
  - Contribute to a more holistic understanding of actor behaviour inside regime complexes

# APPROACH

- Dissertation: a longitudinal/comparative study of EU climate diplomacy (2015 – 2018)
- Necessary building blocks:
  - ❑ *Evaluating EU responsiveness to the evolution of the international regime complex on climate change*
  - ❑ *One Big Conversation: The EU's Climate Diplomacy across the International Regime Complex on the Paris Agreement Negotiations*
  - ❑ *Missed opportunities: The impact of EU internal compartmentalization on EU climate diplomacy across the international regime complex on climate change*

# APPROACH

- Case-specific work adds further insight into how EU diplomacy works outside the UNFCCC:
  - *A Nice Tailwind: The EU's Goal Achievement at the IMO Initial Strategy*
  - *It's not as simple as copy/paste: the EU's remobilisation of the High Ambition Coalition in international climate governance*
  - *Parallel Universe: EU Cross-forum Coherence on Climate in International Transport Fora*
- **Key takeaway: what happens in the UNFCCC does not readily transfer elsewhere in the complex.**



# DISSERTATION



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**RQ1:** *How does the EU connect its preferred negotiating outcome in one forum with its action in another forum (fora) of the international regime complex on climate change?*

- **SQ1.1:** *In which forum (fora) does the EU connect its preferred negotiating outcome in one forum with its action in another forum (fora) of the international regime complex on climate change?*
- **SQ1.2:** *In what ways does the EU connect its preferred negotiating outcome in one forum with its action in another forum (fora) of the international regime complex on climate change?*

**RQ2:** *Why does the EU connect its preferred negotiating outcome in one forum with its action in another forum (fora) of the international regime complex on climate change?*

- **SQ2.1:** *What conditions explain the existence of connections between the EU's diplomacy in one forum and its action in another forum (fora) of the climate change regime complex?*
- **SQ2.2:** *What conditions explain the use of connections?*

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Analysis of EU diplomacy in four climate-related agreements negotiated 2015-2018:
  - Paris Agreement (UNFCCC; 2015)
  - ICAO CORSIA (ICAO; 2016)
  - Kigali Amendment (Montreal Protocol; 2016)
  - IMO Initial Strategy (IMO; 2018)
- Abductive approach first identifying the manifestations of EU's diplomacy and then explaining this

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- Develop a framework based on **bounded rationality** and **rational choice institutionalism**, along with insight from **historical and sociological institutionalism**
- **Connections:** actions employed by an actor in a non-focal forum (NFF) of the regime complex in order to help facilitate its preferred outcome in the negotiations (via influencing the actions of particular parties in the NFF or the negotiating process)
- **Explanatory factors:** those specific to an actor and those related to the regime complex, i.e. the structure in which it acts.
  - ❑ Bureaucratic politics ('focal venues')
  - ❑ Institutional overlap

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

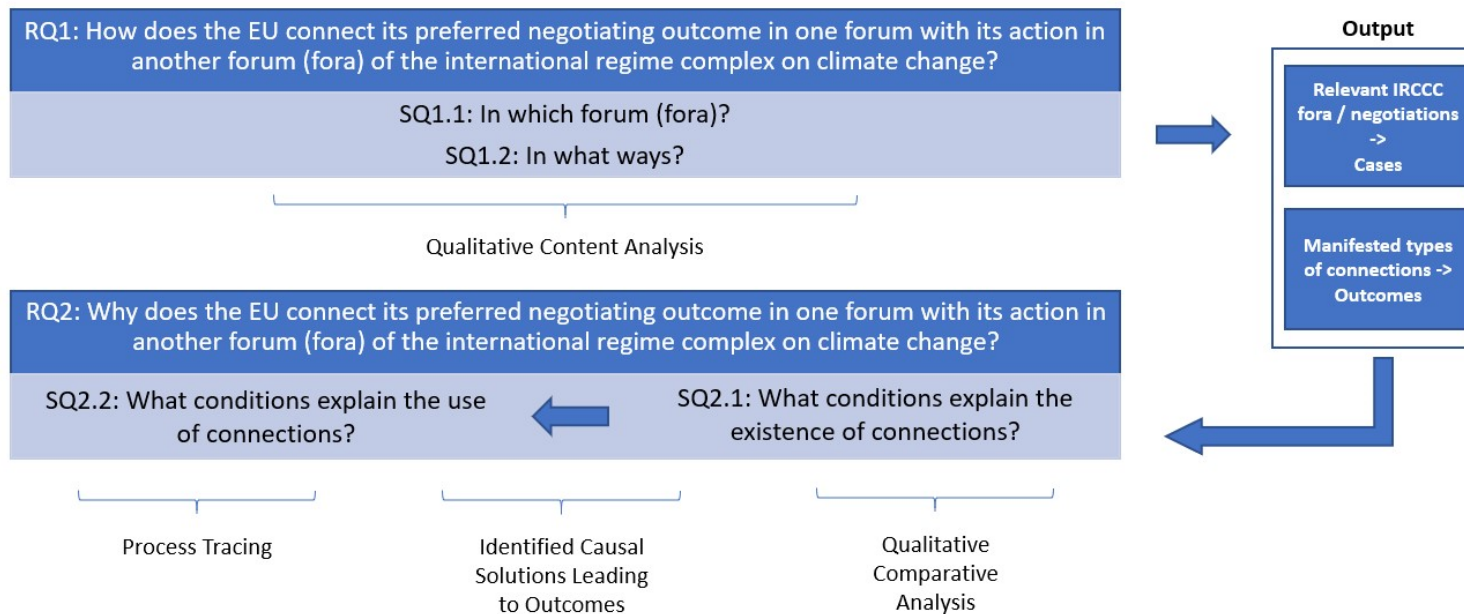
Actor-related	Regime complex-related
Presence of Communication channels	Functional overlap
High level of expertise and resources available	Issue Overlap
Similar priorities and policy framing	Presence of influential actors OR Participants with a high level of authority

# DATA

- Three sources of data: (1) official documents, (2) specialized press reports, and (3) semi-structured interviews. All were triangulated.
- **Official documents:** I utilised to determine potential fora of interest for connections, identify potential interview respondents, and find evidence of connections
- **Specialized press reports:** summaries of the proceedings and identify potential references to other IRCCC fora as well as to learn about different actors' various positions
- **Semi-structured interviews (53):** principal data source

# RESEARCH DESIGN

- Sequential, multi-method design based on an abductive approach.

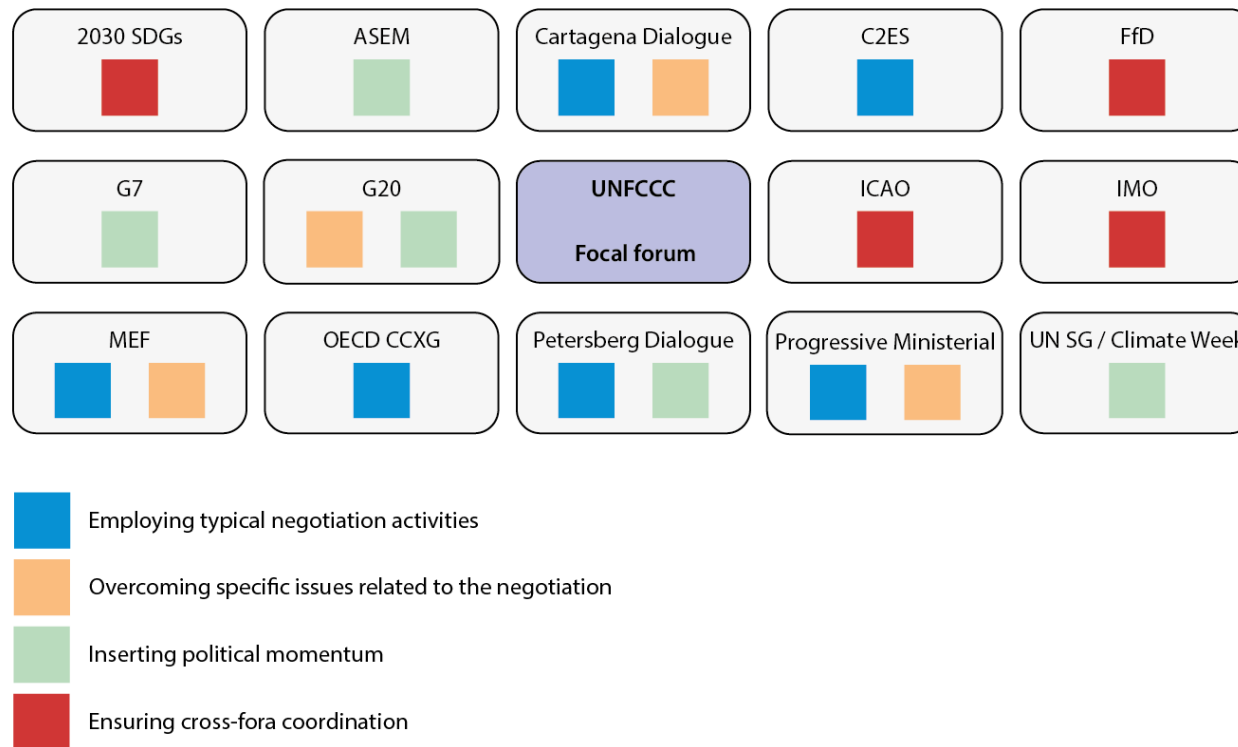


# EMPIRICS

— Four connection types:

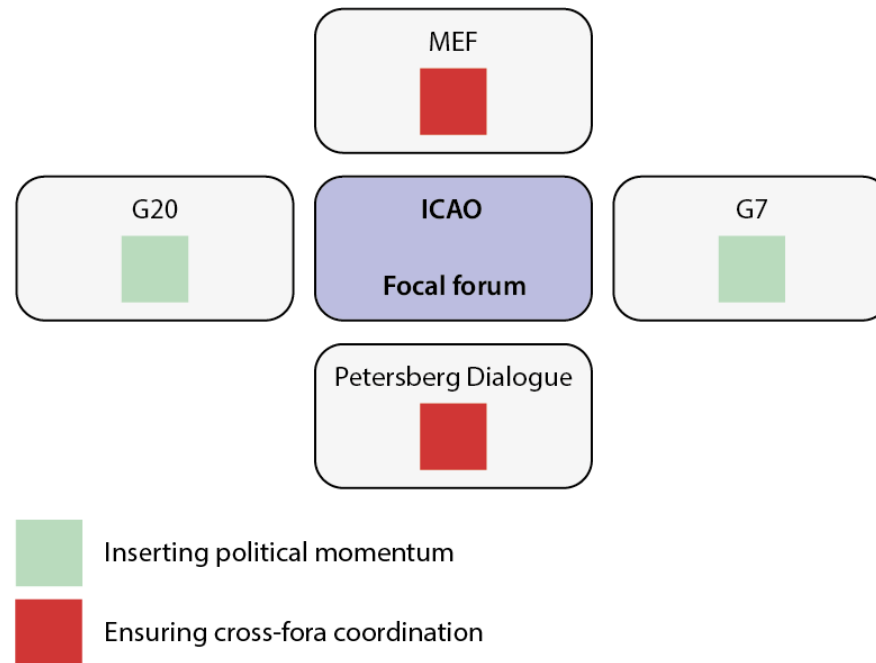
- 1. Employing typical multilateral negotiation activities**
- 2. Creating political momentum**
- 3. Overcoming specific issues of the negotiations**
- 4. Ensuring cross-fora coordination**

# PARIS AGREEMENT

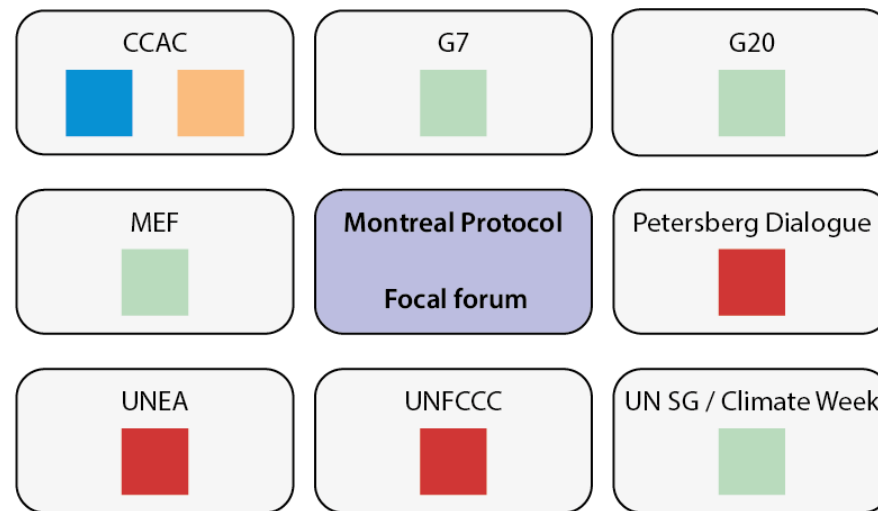








# ICAO CORSIA

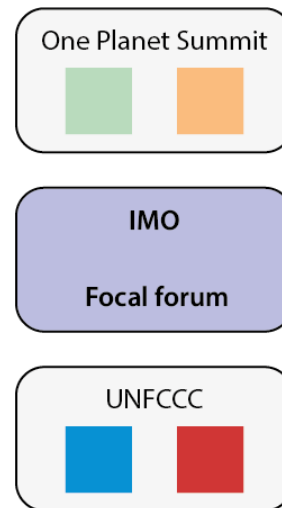


# KIGALI AMENDMENT



-  Employing typical negotiation activities
-  Overcoming specific issues related to the negotiation
-  Inserting political momentum
-  Ensuring cross-fora coordination

# IMO INITIAL STRATEGY



- Employing typical negotiation activities
- Overcoming specific issues related to the negotiation
- Inserting political momentum
- Ensuring cross-fora coordination

# ANALYSIS

- Fuzzy-set QCA to determine (combinations) of 7 conditions associated with use of particular connection
  - Case: intersection of the non-focal fora identified in empirics with each of the negotiations (result of exhaustive triangulation of fora for this time period)
- PT to confirm the conditions play a causal role in bringing about the outcome.

# ANALYSIS

Key findings:

1. Both internal and external factors shaped the EU's use of an NFF to facilitate its preferred outcome in the FF.
2. The diversity of the connection types calls into question the extent they can be considered and assessed collectively.
3. The **level of issue overlap** and the **level of authority of participants** in the NFF appeared to play a causal role in the EU's use of specific connections.

# DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The international context shapes the potential for connections, while bureaucratic politics shapes the ultimate use of the connections.

Quid the EU as a climate actor?

- Findings support that the EU has indeed extended its climate diplomacy apparatus outside of the UNFCCC proper but with mixed results.

Quid the international regime complexity literature?

- Findings identify specific ways actors can connect diplomacy across fora, though more limited than expected. Internal and external factors at play.

# DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

## – Contributions:

1. Conceptual:
  - New type of actor behaviour and framework for future study
2. Empirical: understudied negotiations
  - More holistic understanding of (EU) climate diplomacy
3. Methodological
  - An attempt at operationalising a QCA-PT design
4. Societal
  - Heatmap of international climate governance and its inherent complexity, nuancing its power politics appearance

# WHAT ABOUT THE EU AS A CLIMATE ACTOR IN 2023?

- The dissertation covered a specific period in time. Do the findings still hold today?
- A final round of interviews with stakeholders to unpack any changes vis-à-vis today.
- Three main observations:
  1. The changing role of intergovernmental negotiations
  2. Climate mainstreaming
  3. Unchanged climate diplomacy coordination structure



# CHANGING ROLE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS

- Formal intergovernmental negotiations are less prominent now (though still important)
  - UNFCCC remains a key negotiating venue, though not necessarily in the same sense as in the lead-up to Paris.
  - Accordingly, fora like Petersberg, MEF, G7/G20 are still key part of EU diplomacy
- Non-state actors are increasingly involved in international climate governance
  - EU recognises these stakeholders as important. Yet struggles to coordinate its approach: “the more you create, the more difficult your life will be”

# CLIMATE MAINSTREAMING

**Climate is everywhere: “*generalities and abstractions simply won't do anymore*”**

- Impact on EU diplomacy: previously ‘generalist’ fora take on increasingly specific topics (e.g. carbon markets)
  - ❑ Positive: more opportunities to discuss issues in new fora
  - ❑ Negative: EU climate negotiators have to brief and follow these meetings
- European Green Deal also facilitates increased communication and climate-expertise across government
  - ❑ Yet, limited impact thus far on fragmented climate diplomacy structure
  - ❑ Furthermore, difficulties convincing counterparts

# UNCHANGED CLIMATE DIPLOMACY COORDINATION STRUCTURE

- Despite other evolutions, the system in place for coordinating multilateral outreach / EU climate negotiating remains the same
  - WPIEI-CC remains the focal venue for the UNFCCC and hub for coordinating outreach: “a very bureaucratic and very technical and very expert based silo looking strictly at the UNFCCC”
- Yet, it has to deal with expanding UNFCCC agenda (with more or less the same staff levels)
- However, there is a growing acquis amongst climate experts

# EXAMPLE OF G7/G20 TANDEM PRESIDENCY

EU objective: develop ambitious language on communiqués pushing parties towards updated NDCs, net zero, and phase out of fossil fuels

G7 partners crafted language and consensus in G7, and then undertook “G7+” coordination for G20.

Italy pushed hard bilaterally to get hesitant G20 member states on board with 1.5°, while G7+ (EU included) pushed in sherpa/ministerials

Yet, little to no coordination needed with WPIEI



# ROLE OF THE EEAS

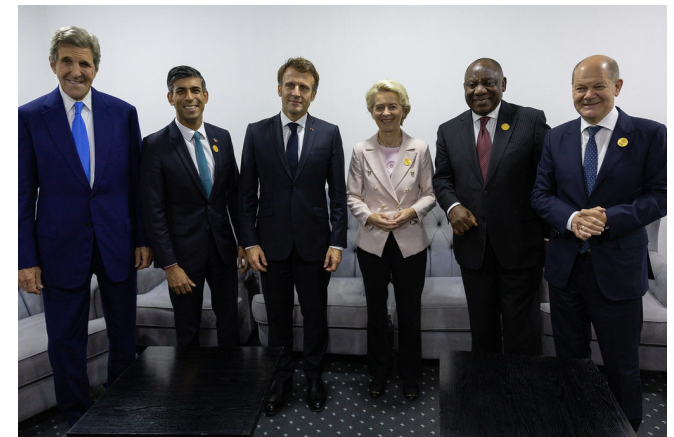
- One notable exception: role of the European External Action Service (EEAS)
- Previously, EEAS was “a junior level affair in the weeds” largely tasked with drafting climate diplomacy documents and coordinating work with delegations. Two people for Paris.
- Now counts 12 staff, along with an Ambassador-at-Large for Climate Diplomacy

# EXAMPLE OF GLOBAL METHANE PLEDGE

- UNEP report: 45% reduction in methane emissions could prevent 0.3° warming.
- Key actors in US and EU recognized voluntary methane pledge as opportunity: pushed beginning in July 2021 to gain signatories
- COP26: 100+ signatories commit to a 30% reduction of methane emissions by 2030
- On EU side, it was led by EEAS Ambassador at Large for Climate Diplomacy. Pushed downwards as 'urgent'. Reflection of his contacts and working style.

# JETP

- \$8.5 billion commitment from France, Germany, UK, US, and EU to financially contribute to decarbonization of the South African economy, notably with respect to its electricity system
- Viewed at political level as practical response “where we can actually make real progress. That is lacking in a multilateral context right now”
- Spearheaded by Ambassador for Climate Diplomacy. Pushed down as ‘urgent’



# OVERALL REFLECTIONS ON EU CLIMATE DIPLOMACY IN REGIME COMPLEX TODAY

- Yes, the context has changed but the tools and structures the EU uses to coordinate its climate diplomacy appear largely the same.
  - Important to acknowledge ‘innovations’ – MVH and G7/G20 team
- EU’s approach to transnational forms of governance likely will require further research and the move away from formal negotiations suggest that further research is needed on diplomacy in the regime complex.
- Likely that bureaucratic politics and institutional overlap will continue to shape EU climate diplomacy in the IRCCC.