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EU Climate Diplomacy towards the IMO and ICAO George Dikaïos, Palgrave Macmillan, 2024

Μαριάννα Τερεζάκη

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EU Climate Diplomacy towards the IMO and ICAO

George Dikaïos, Palgrave Macmillan, 2024

This book unfolds a new reading in the ever-growing European Union climate policy and diplomacy literature. Namely, the book engages in a direct dialogue with the post-2010 body of literature on EU climate diplomacy, drawing extensively from a substantial corpus of scholarly articles that critically analyse the transformation and progression of the EU's climate diplomacy across distinct phases. By thoroughly engaging with this existing literature, the author situates the book within the expansive academic discourse, thereby contributing novel insights into the EU's external climate action.

Unlike existing approaches that focus on the EU's climate diplomacy either within the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and beyond (Minas & Ntousas, 2018) or towards other states through European embassy narratives (Buchmann, 2022), this book offers an in-depth examination of the EU's external action and diplomatic practices, particularly within the framework of Normative Power Europe (NPE) theory. In other terms, the author takes a nuanced approach to illustrate how the EU exports its position at the international level by applying the NPE theory as a tool of external action (Chapter 2). To that end, Dikaïos introduces a three-level approach: internal processes ("what the EU intended to negotiate"), external processes ("the means deployed to negotiate the agreed position"), and outcome evaluation ("the EU's ability to influence in favour of this position"), structuring in that way the interrelation between the internal policymaking and the EU's external action and effectiveness (Chapter 3). The ultimate question it aims to answer through this examination is "In what ways does the EU perform normative power in the field of climate diplomacy?", followed by an assessment of whether the EU is or is not a normative power. At the same time, by addressing the question of whether the EU performs normative power in the field of climate diplomacy, the author identifies and seeks to bridge a gap in the existing literature between NPE and EU (climate) diplomacy, connecting them with the notion of "structural diplomacy". The empirical part of the book examines the EU's climate diplomacy performance towards the cases of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

In particular, the author elaborately links the analytical framework outlined in the previous chapters with the empirical data analysis in Chapters 4 and 5. This analysis utilises a rich dataset of fifty-four semi-structured interviews with EU officials, providing insights into the EU's tactics for influencing the two IOs in climate change. Not only does this thorough analysis clarify the EU's strategies, but it also addresses gaps identified in the secondary literature review and document analysis concerning the externalisation of the EU's climate norm, which concludes

that it centres on mitigating GHG emissions. More specifically, Chapter 4 offers a detailed examination of the internal processes within the EU, focusing on 'competence', 'coordination', and 'coherence'; it underscores the constant battle for competence between the EU supranational institutions and its member states, particularly in mitigating GHG emissions in transportation (competence); it delves into how the Commission persuades member states to align their positions and presents a compelling argument for the EU's coordination competence (coordination); it highlights the significance of coherence in projecting a unified EU voice in international arenas (coherence). Through the abovementioned analysis, the author effectively demonstrates how these mechanisms work in tandem to enhance the EU's influence at the supranational level by providing a significant understanding of the EU's internal dynamics and its interaction with member states.

Chapter 5 analyses the external processes at the international level, scrutinizing the NPE theory through the six mechanisms outlined by Manners (2002): contagion, informational diffusion, procedural diffusion, transference, overt diffusion, and cultural filter. These mechanisms are pivotal in determining the EU's influence within the two IOs. This chapter also examines the impact of Covid-19 on selected mechanisms, particularly overt and procedural diffusion within the two IOs. The author in this chapter also evaluates the effectiveness of the EU's performance through the outcomes within the IMO and the ICAO, employing the lenses of "diplomatic cohesion" and "NPE mechanisms". It is noteworthy that the negotiation results may not entirely align with the EU's interests when scrutinizing "diplomatic cohesion". Similarly, the assessment of NPE mechanisms reveals that even when impeccably applied in the relation of the EU with third parties, effectiveness is not assured.

The final chapter of this book (Chapter 6) circles back into answering the research question of whether the EU possesses the normative power to influence the operational norms of international organisations such as the IMO and the ICAO regarding GHG mitigation. The author astutely argues that despite the EU's unwavering efforts to drive the climate agenda forward and establish impactful regulations, the prevailing sentiment within the international community, namely into the two IOs, opposes significant challenges. Consequently, the EU's endeavours to wield normative power and reshape the norms of the IMO and the ICAO have fallen short, at least to great extent. Yet, the book's narrative does not culminate there. The author adeptly illustrates that the NPE mechanisms, as elucidated in Chapter 3, can be effectively applied at the internal level of the EU, thereby conferring upon it the status of a normative power within its internal domain. This thought-provoking exploration ultimately leads to an interdisciplinary and uncharted conclusion: while the EU can be perceived as a normative actor in the international arena concerning the two IOs, it undeniably assumes the role of a normative power in its internal sphere. This uncommon perspective offers readers a compelling and insightful re-evaluation of the EU's normative influence, shedding light on its multifaceted presence on the global stage.

In conclusion, the book offers a thorough analysis of the EU's efforts to impact the IMO and the ICAO in the context of GHG mitigation through normative power. Despite encountering challenges in reshaping international norms, the EU demonstrates normative power within its internal sphere. Additionally, the book significantly contributes to understanding European diplomacy in the context of climate change, highlighting how climate policy serves as a crucial tool for the EU's external action. This nuanced perspective on the EU's influence makes it an engaging and insightful read for those interested in international relations and climate governance; the book can be additionally useful for policymakers and diplomats, particularly those from the EU Member States and EU institutions, as well as third countries and parties.

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