European Union Leadership in Climate Change Politics

by
Edlira Majko

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Supervisor: Professor Annabelle Littoz-Monnet

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the European Union leadership role in climate change politics. More specifically, the aim of the thesis is to explain the motivations that have driven the EU to take on this role. For this reason, it looks at the evolution of EU climate change policy. Also, it examines the concept of leadership and the nature of the EU leadership role in global climate change politics. Arguing that a purely interest based explanation is not enough to understand the motivations behind this role, I use role theory, an underdeveloped theory in International Relations, but which provides through its concepts a valuable explanation to my research question. The paper concludes that at the bottom of the EU leadership role in climate change politics lie both normative objectives and economic interests which are informed by EU norms and principles.

To my parents…

Introduction

Climate change has become a very important issue in European and international politics. It is regularly discussed at the European level and taken also priority in G-8 Summits and has been placed high on the UN agenda, becoming an issue of 'high politics'. Climate change represents not only a serious threat for the present generation but also for human kind in general. The transboundary nature of climate change makes it impossible for states to deal alone with this problem. The only solution to fight climate change is cooperation, as the problem is neither national, nor regional, but global. The Rio Summit in 1992 was the first international attempt to find solutions against climate change and its effects. The Summit witnessed the emergence of a new green leader, the EU. Since then, the EU has claimed to be a leader in climate change politics and references depicting the EU as a leader in this field are found not only in EU documents, but also in others' comments about the EU's role in climate change politics.

Therefore, the topic of this dissertation is to analyze the leadership role of the European Union (EU) in global climate change politics. The topic has received an increased attention in the last decade. Most of the research conducted on this topic, however, is descriptive seeking to explain how the EU managed to take on this role, linking this success to the improvement and advances in EU internal environmental policy and to the organization and coordination of its external climate policy. In contrast, the research question of this thesis is why the EU has taken on the leadership role in climate change politics. Is it interest based or another face of its normative power? The paper seeks to examine the motivations behind the EU's leadership role using a theoretical perspective. Role theory, because of it actor-centered approach and its valuable concepts, will be chosen as the most appropriate way to explain the motivation

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behind the EU leadership. Role theory is underdeveloped in the field of International Relation. Thus, this thesis will not only contribute to the literature on EU leadership in global climate change politics by offering another perspective, but at the same time it will contribute to the development of role theory in International Relations.

My argument is that a purely interest based approach does not give the full picture of the incentives that have driven the EU to take on the leadership role in climate change negotiations. Normative and ideational factors should also be taken into consideration. For this reason it is important to examine the nature of EU leadership. By using role theory, I show that the role of green leader has initially conflicted with the role of the EU as trade promoter and that the introduction of the sustainable development principle has helped the two roles to change and adjust to each other. I argue that that at the bottom of the EU leadership role in global climate change negotiations lie both normative environmental goals and self-interested objectives which are directly influenced by norms and principles and are the outcome of a collective learning process.

Methodologically, I will use in-depth analysis of primary and secondary sources, such as EU official documents and press releases, academic articles and books, in order to examine the EU leadership role in climate change politics and its motivations in taking on this role using role theory. The thesis will explore the nature of its leadership which is a construct of EU self-perception and at the same time a response to outsiders' perception. EU official documents and statements, and academic articles will be analyzed to find out how the EU represents itself in climate change negotiations by looking for word frequencies such as lead, leader, leadership and similar words.

My thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter offers an overview of the evolution of EU climate change policy. This chapter answers the question how the EU has become a leader

in climate change politics. The second chapter analyzes the concept of leadership and different modes of leadership in order to understand the nature of EU green leadership. The third chapter explores the motivations behind taking on this leadership role. After comparing two competing approaches, the rationalist and the sociological, the role theory within the sociological approach will be chosen as the most appropriate to explain the motivations behind the EU leadership role in climate change politics. The second part of the chapter contains a wide empirical analysis. The last section of the thesis will conclude with a brief summary of the results of the research.

Chapter 1: How did the EU become a leader?

The aim of this chapter is to give review on the emergence of the European Union (EU) as a leader in climate change politics. This very selective review focuses on two main areas: the EU's internal development of environmental policy and its external dimension in order to explain the EU intervention in environmental policy and how the EU has become a leader in global climate change politics. It is very relevant to understand the two dimensions of EU's climate change policy and the EU's role(s) in the international arena, as these can reveal why the EU has taken on the leadership role in climate change negotiations.

1.1 Internal development of environmental policy

The EU has transformed its member states' environmental policy so that now more than 80 per cent of national policy in this field is estimated to come directly from the EU.[1] Four phases can be distinguished in the evolution of the environmental policy: focus on the common market (1957-72), the environmental evolution (1973-86), the establishment of the legal competence (1987-92), and finally, the consolidation phase (1993-).[2] Initially, the Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) did not have any provisions on environmental matters. Thus, environmental policy did not evolve as a coherent area with clear

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[1] Pamela Barnes, "Environmental Policy," in *Public Policy and the New European Agendas*, ed. Fergus Carr and Andrew Massey (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2006), p. 277

[2] John McCormick "Policy Evolution," in *Environmental Policy in the European Union,* (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 41-68; Writing in 1992, Philipp M Hildebrand distinguished three phases in the evolution of the EU environmental policy: 'incidental' measures (1957-72), the 'responsive' period (1972-86), and the 'initiative' phase (1985-1992). Philipp Hildebrand, "The European community's environmental policy, 1957 to '1992': From incidental measures to an international regime?" *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1992), pp. 13-44

agreed boundaries in the Treaties. Incentives for the development of an environmental policy came from its implications with trade, transport and agriculture, three areas that are regulated at the EC/EU level. Based on Article 100 and 235 of the Treaty of Rome[3], environmentally-minded officials of the Commission starting from the early 1970s used their exclusive right to initiate and develop green policies. These early 'unofficial' years of the EU environmental policy-making were incidental to market building.[4] The Commission used the strategy of issue-linkage between environmental and market objectives in order to overcome possible resistance from the Council of Ministers. In this way, since the beginning of the '1970s an impressive array of internal legislation has been developed to cope with the environmental effects of the success of economic integration in Europe.'[5] The first attempt to establish an environmental policy at the Community level came with the first Environmental Action Plan (EAP) in 1973, which aimed to regulate common environmental standards across member states in order to facilitate the free movement of goods. The movement to harmonize the environmental policy within the EC level was also a response to the 1972 United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm, which brought into focus the importance of protection of the environment.[6]

The next decisive step in the evolution of the EC/EU environmental policy was to include it in the Single European Act (SEA), which gave an end to the 'informal status of the EC's environmental policy'.[7] The SEA inserted a title on environment (Title VII), where the

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[3] Article 100 of the Treaty of Rome acknowledged the Community's competence to regulate matters that directly affect the functioning of the Common Market. Similarly, Article 235 gives to the Council the power to take actions to achieve the aims of the Community where the Treaty has not provided for such. In both cases, the Council could act by means of unanimous vote only after a proposal coming from the Commission.

[4] Andrea Lenschow, "Environmental Policy: Contending Dynamics of Policy Change," in *Policy-making in the European Union*, ed. Helen Wallace, William Wallace and Mark A. Pollack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 308

[5] John Vogler and Hannes R. Stephan, "The European Union global environmental governance: Leadership in the making?" *International Environmental Agreements*, Vol. 7 (2007), p. 393

[6] McCormick, "Policy Evolution," p. 46

[7] Lenschow, "Environmental Policy," p. 307

Community's environmental objectives were for the first time set explicitly: 'to preserve, to protect and improve the quality of the environment, to contribute towards protecting human health and to ensure a prudent and rational utilization of natural resources.'[8] The environmental provisions were based on the principles of preventive action, the rectification of damages at the source and the polluter pays developed through the EAPs. The formalization of environmental policy offered a legal basis for future policy-making in this field. It provided an impetus to environmental legislation. The SEA not only aimed to complete the Single Market, but also to foster environmental thinking. However, the linkage strategy continued as this provided an easier decision-making route.[9]

Treaty revisions, at Maastricht and Amsterdam, further upgraded the environment to an explicit policy responsibility of the Community. 'Protection of the environment was put on to the same basis as economic development as a core objective of the EU.'[10] More specifically, revisions at Amsterdam stated that "environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies and activities … in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development."[11] The decision-making procedure was also changed towards co-decision with the European Parliament and qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council on most environmental proposals. As a result, the pattern of linking environmental policy objectives to legal and procedural niches in the treaties became less common. This is a sign of consolidation in the field of environmental policy. The change in voting procedure also gave also powers to the European Parliament to influence the process of fostering environmental policy, which is quite important as the Parliament is considered to be the most environmentally

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[8] Single European Act, Article 130r, 1986
[9] Decision-making rules varied across policy areas, allowing for QMV in the Council on the single market measures but requiring unanimity on environmental matters.
[10] Barnes, "Environmental Policy," p. 279
[11] The Treaty of Amsterdam, Article 3c (now Article 6 of TEC), 1997; available at: http://www.eurotreaties.com/amsterdamtreaty.pdf

concerned EU institution. The accession of three green countries in 1995, Finland, Sweden and Austria, strengthened the group of environmental leaders.[12] With a green European Parliament, an active European Commission and the strengthened environmental group among its Member States, the EU not only had consolidated its internal environmental policy by the mid 1990s, but had also started to play an active role in the international environmental politics, especially in the area of climate change[13].

1.1.1 Climate change

The development of an internal environmental policy and its formalization through the inclusion in the SEA gave to the Community the opportunity to deal also with other environmental problems. It was during the 1980s that the European Community showed interest also in global warming and its negative effects. This was a response to the increasing international concern that global warming was a threat to the climate and as a result to humanity. Climate change, as most environmental problems, has a transboundary nature. It is caused by the emission of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in the atmosphere, known as 'greenhouse gases' (GHGs). Their nature is anthropogenic mainly caused by the high level of industrialization. However, there are unindustrialized regions in the world that have not 'contributed' to the increasing levels of GHGs in the atmosphere, but that are directly affected by the negative effects of climate change.[14] Due to its transboundary nature the problem cannot be solved

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[12] Germany, Netherlands and Denmark have always pushed for more stringent environmental laws.
[13] *Climate change,* in UNFCCC usage, refers to the climatic changes and their consequences resulting from global warming which is connected directly or indirectly to human activities. Available at: http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/glossary/ipcc-glossary.pdf
[14] Lyn Jaggard, "Introduction," in *Climate Change Politics in Europe: Germany and the International Relations of the Environment* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), p. 2

individually by nation-states. Climate change is a global problem, as it affects all parts of the world, and it can be solved only through international cooperation.[15]

The EU countries, along with other developed countries, are the primary emitters of GHGs. The EU as a whole has five diverse climatic zones, which means that changes in climate because of global warming will affect different regions of the EU. The climatic zones do not correspond to the political divisions of Europe; therefore, the establishment of a Community climate change policy permits the adoption of more coherent policy actions.[16] It was only in 1985 that the Commission tackled for the first time in a research policy the need for climate change policy at the EC level.[17] By the end of 1988, the Commission presented a Communication to the Council, in which it proposed recommendations based on the findings of a research group appointed by the Commission about the actions and measures that should be taken in respect to the greenhouse gases. The Commission proposed 'to launch a substantial policy-options study programme to evaluate the feasibility, costs and likely results of possible measures to limit greenhouse gases emissions.'[18] However, the objectives of the Communication were modest, as it saw the reduction of greenhouse gases not as an immediate objective but only as a long term goal.[19] The Communication acknowledged that the Community should not only implement all international agreements on the protection of the ozone layer, but also should 'be prepared to give

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[15] In the 1980s, international cooperation in the field of environment fitted perfectly to the neorealist-neoliberal debate on interstate cooperation which will be partly discussed in Chapter 3.

[16] Pamela Barnes and Ian Barnes, "Introduction: the rationale for an European Union policy on the environment," in *Environmental Policy in the European Union* (Cheltenham, UK: E. Elgar, 1999), p. 9

[17] John McCormick, "Ozone, Climate Change and the International Dimension," in *Environmental Policy in the European Union* (London: Palgrave, 2001, p. 280

[18] Commission of the European Communities, "The Greenhouse Effect and the Community," Commission Work Programme Concerning the Evaluation of Policy Options to Deal with the 'Greenhouse Effect', COM (88), final, 16 November 1988, p. 10; available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/5684/01/003076_1.pdf

[19] Jon Birger Skjaerseth, "The Climate Policy of the EC: Too Hot to Handle?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1994), p. 26

an important contribution to the preparation and negotiation' of agreements on the reduction of GHGs emissions.[20]

In 1990, the greenhouse gases issue was discussed at the European Council, which suggested the adoption of strategies and targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which was taken into account by a jumbo meeting of environmental and energy ministers in the end of that year, agreeing that greenhouse gases, in particular CO_2, should be stabilized at the 1990 baseline by the year 2000.[21] In 1992, the Commission proposed a 'climate package' which called for an energy efficiency programme, the adoption of national programmes for CO_2 reductions monitored by the Commission, and the introduction of a carbon energy tax.[22] The Fifth Environmental Action Plan for the period 1992-2000 encouraged the use of economic instruments, which showed '[a] shift in the EU's general approach of purely regulatory measures.'[23] However, the EU carbon energy tax proposal was not welcomed among the member states, because they were afraid that this would have increased the powers of the Commission, weakened their sovereignty and affected negatively on their industrial sector.[24] Due to these concerns member states chose to adopt national programmes for reducing their carbon emissions.

To summarize, in the preparation for the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, EU's climate policy consisted of a Council conclusion to stabilize CO_2 emissions by 2000 at 1990 levels, the Fifth Environmental Action Plan and a disputed proposal for an EU carbon energy tax. However, both the revisions of the Maastricht Treaty and the Fifth EAP gave the European Union the possibility

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[20] CEC, "The Greenhouse Effect and the Community," p. 10
[21] John McCormick, "Ozone, Climate Change and the International Dimension," p. 281
[22] Ibid. p. 281-282
[23] Desmond Dinan, "Social Policy, Employment and the Environment," in *Ever a closer Union: An introduction to European Integration* 3rd ed. (London: Macmillan, 2005), p. 467. However, the Fifth EAP did not tackle directly climate change and global warming. These were included as priorities only in the Sixth EAP (2002-2010).
[24] John McCormick, "Ozone, Climate Change and the International Dimension," pp. 283-284

to play an active role in global environmental politics. In a report for the Council in the beginning of the 1990s, the Environmental DG suggested that the EU should lead the world in the fight against global warming through reducing carbon dioxide emissions.[25]

1.2 EU involvement in international climate change negotiations

The same dynamics that have pushed for the evolution of environmental policies at the Community level, i.e. trade implication of the environmental policy, the transboundary nature of this problem and pressures from different groups, also served to internationalize them.[26] The Road Transport Agreement (ERTA) case judgment in 1970 gave a major impetus for the development and conduct of external environmental policy had the European. In this case the European Court of Justice (ECJ) went beyond the provision of the Treaty of Rome by advancing the doctrine of implied powers which means that when the Community has internal competence over an issue it can also exercise it externally.

This opened the way to the EC to be active in global environmental issues. However, EU external treaty making powers in this field, even though the Community has competences on most of the areas of internal environmental policy, are mixed, in contrast to the exclusive powers it enjoys in some fields where the Community alone negotiates on behalf of the Member States and becomes party to an international agreement. The 'mixed competence' means that Member States together with the Community negotiate and become party to international agreements. A working group of the Council, supported by expert groups, prepares an agreed position of the Council for international negotiations, on which the Commission and the individual Member

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[25] David Howard Davis, 'European global warming policy," in *Handbook of Globalization and the Environment*, ed. Khi V. Thai, Dianne Rahm and Jerrell D. Coggburn, (Boca Raton, FL [etc.] : CRC Press, 2007), p.43
[26] Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, "Environmental Policy: the Union as global leader," in *The European Union as a Global Actor,* (London: Routledge, 2006) p. 91

States then coordinate their strategies at international negotiations. Depending on the issue under discussion, either the Presidency or the Commission may speak for all, or "lead states" which are specialized in certain environmental issues can represent the EU in environmental international negotiating groups.[27]

In the case of climate change, the Presidency has the leading role, while the Commission has a limited competence. However, the Commission always takes part in the negotiations and as such plays an active role. The European Community enjoys legal personality and despite not being a full member of the United Nations it can take part in UN environmental conventions as a Regional Economic Integration Organization (REIO). As a result, the European Community is a signatory to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. In the initial period of climate change negotiations, it has not been easy for the EU to develop a joint position.[28] Just before the 1992 Rio Earth Summit where the negotiations for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change were held, the first important international agreement to directly address climate change, the Council did not accept the carbon tax initiative of the Commission, resulting in the boycott of the Conference by the then Environment Commissioner.[29] Nonetheless, the Member States acted as a unitary voice calling for a binding commitment, to stabilize CO_2 emissions by the year 2002 at 1990 levels, which had been agreed by the Joint Council of Energy and Environment for the internal climate change policy. However, binding commitments were refused by the US administration.[30] As a result, the Rio Summit marked the end of the US leadership role and witnessed the emergence of a new leader, the EU. Despite the initial

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[27] Sebastian Oberthür and Claire Roche Kelly, "EU Leadership in International Climate Policy: Achievement and Challenges," *The International Spectator*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (2008), p. 38

[28] Andrea Lenschow, "Environmental Policy: At a Crossroads?" in *Developments in the European Union*, ed. Maria Green Cowles and Desmond Dinan *(*New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 156

[29] Jon Birger Skjaerseth, "The Climate Policy of the EC: Too Hot to Handle?*" p. 32

[30] Alberta M. Sbragia and C. Damro, "The changing role of the European Union in international environmental politics: institution building and the politics of climate change," *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, Vol. 17 (1999), p. 57

difficulties that the Europeans encountered, the EU was one of the few actors to push for stringent international commitment.

The first phase of climate change policy (pre-Kyoto) is characterized by non-binding, informative measures, which helped 'the construction of a shared understanding' of how climate change should be addressed.[31] The UNFCCC, in which the Community is a signatory along with its Member States, framed the climate change strategies of the EU. The immediate measure after the Rio Summit was the adoption of a monitoring mechanism of the Community's CO_2 and other greenhouse gas emissions.[32] The Council decided that Member States should adopt, publish and implement national programmes to stabilize CO_2 emissions by 2000 at 1990 levels in the Community as a whole in order to contribute to 'the fulfillment of the commitment relating to the limitation of CO_2 emissions in the UN Framework Convention on Climate change by the Community as a whole through action by the Community and its Member States, within their respective competences' (Article 2). The role of the Commission was to monitor and evaluate the proceedings of the national programmes.

The concerns of poorer Member States for the costs of the programmes were assuaged by a Council regulation in 1994 establishing the Cohesion Fund.[33] The Cohesion Fund provided financial support *inter alia* for environmental measures and projects involving disproportionately high costs. In this way 'the international agenda of climate change had been incorporated into the EU through Commission communications, Council resolutions and European Council Presidency

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[31] Yoichiro Usui, "New Modes of Governance and the Climate Change Strategy in the European Union: Implications for Democracy in Regional Integration," *Paper prepared for: The CREP 1st International Workshop* (2005), p. 14

[32] Council Decision of 24 June 1993 for a monitoring mechanism of Community CO_2 and other greenhouse gas emissions (93/389/EEC), available at: http://www.legaltext.ee/text/en/T50220.htm

[33] Council Regulation, No. 1164/94 of 16 May 1994 establishing a Cohesion Fund, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1994R1164:20040501:EN:PDF

Conclusions, not through political statements by Member States leaders.'[34] As a result, the second phase of climate change politics, starting with the Kyoto Protocol, found the EU not only with a developed internal climate change policy[35], but also as a pivotal player in global climate change politics. The EU's views on global warming for shorter deadlines and no targets for developing countries dominated in both Conferences of the Parties (COP) in Berlin and Geneva, despite the strong US opposition.[36]

The EU entered the Kyoto Conference (COP 3), where the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was to be negotiated, with a joint position to press for a target of 15% cuts in GHGs emissions. To achieve the targets, EU governments agreed differentiated emission quotas for each member state, known as the Burden Sharing Agreement or European Bubble. However, the EU's proposal was strongly opposed by the US and Japan. The negotiations were hard, especially for the EU representatives from the Commission and member states, which had to meet often to discuss their position. At the end of the Conference, the EU agreed an 8% reduction of its GHGs, whereas the US and Japan only 7% and 6% accordingly, with a total of 5.2% reduction of 1990s levels within the period 2008-2012. The Kyoto Protocol, the first real step against climate change which set binding targets only for developed countries and the European Community for reducing GHGs emissions, was adopted on 11 December 1997.[37]

The EU started to promote the Kyoto Protocol after the Conference in order to have it ratified as soon as possible at both levels in the EU, at the Community level and in the Member States, taking into account also interest groups.[38] The Union 'managed to present a fairly unified position towards non-European parties to the Kyoto Protocol.'[39] After the rejection by the newly elected Bush and his

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[34] Yoichiro Usui, "New Modes of Governance and the Climate Change Strategy in the European Union," p. 14
[35] Member states were exceeding their reduction targets.
[36] Davis, "European global warming policy," p. 50
[37] Kyoto Protocol, available at: http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php
[38] Davis, "European global warming policy," p. 51
[39] Ibid.

administration in 2001 to ratify the Protocol, everything froze and the success of the Kyoto Protocol was called into question.[40] Two options were left: to renegotiate the Protocol in order to satisfy the US or to continue without it. Huge investments were made for the Kyoto Protocol and any delay in starting with its implementation would have been more damaging for the environment. Therefore, the EU decided to go ahead with the Protocol despite the absence of the US. The Marrakech Conference of the parties in 2001 was a good moment for the EU to proclaim its leadership role. '[A]lthough it failed to change the US position, it was successful in helping to convince other countries to ratify the agreement.'[41] This was not sufficient for the Protocol to come into force. The EU turned to Russia, whose ratification would have led to the entering into force of the Protocol. The EU promised Russia help for its admission to World Trade Organization (WTO) in return for the ratification. After the Russian ratification the Kyoto Protocol entered into force on February 2005.[42]The Union is seen as the saviour of the Protocol establishing in this way its leadership role in climate change policy.[43]

The Community has taken many initiatives in response to the commitments agreed at Kyoto. The Commission launched in 2000 the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) which brought together all relevant players, the Commission, national experts, industry and the NGO community with the objective of creating a framework for the implementation of the Protocol, including an emission trading scheme. The Programme was developed almost at the same time with the sixth EAP for the period 2002-2012 which has as one of the major priorities and for the first time climate change. In 2003, the Community adopted a pioneering Directive on EU Emissions Trading System

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[40] Bush attacked the Kyoto Protocol due to concerns about the negative economic impact its implementation would have had and for not including China, one of the biggest emitters in the world and one of the fastest growing economies.
[41] Miranda Schreurs, "Environmental Protection in an Expanding European Community: Lessons from past Accessions," in *EU Enlargement and the Environment: Institutional Change and the Environmental Policy in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. JoAnn Carmin and Stacy D. VanDeveer (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 46
[42] As of 2009, 184 parties of the Convention have ratified the Protocol.
[43] Oberthür and Kelly, "EU Leadership in International Climate Policy: Achievement and Challenges," p.36

(EU ETS).[44] The ETS started operation in 2005 soon after the Kyoto entered into force, being the cornerstone of EU efforts to reduce emissions cost-effectively and the largest multinational and multi-sectoral trading system in the world.[45] In addition to the effort made to fulfill the commitment taken under the Kyoto Protocol, the EU has seriously begun to think about the post-Kyoto period. In early 2007, the Commission put forward ambitious targets for the EU: to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with 20% by 2020.

In brief, the EU turned from being a laggard to a leader in climate change negotiations. The formalization of the environmental policy through the SEA gave an impetus to the EU involvement in international environmental negotiations, especially in global climate change politics. Although it faced problems in the first years to develop a position on climate policy, the EU is perceived to speak with one voice in international climate negotiations calling always for binding and stringent commitments. The ratification of the Protocol in 2005 is seen as an achievement of the Union. The fight against climate change cannot be won alone. The EU is promoting its EU ETS with the goal 'to create a carbon market among member countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) by 2015 and then to expand this to include the big emerging economies from around 2020.'[46]

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[44] Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32003L0087:EN:NOT
[45] Emission Trading System (EU ETS), European Commission, Environment, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/emission/implementation_en.htm
[46] *EU actions against climate Change: The EU Emissions Trading Scheme*, 2009 ed., available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/pdf/brochures/ets_en.pdf

Chapter 2: What kind of leadership does the EU exert in climate change politics?

The EU has often claimed in the last 15 years to be a leader in international climate change politics. This claim has not been challenged by any party, leaving the EU an unrivalled champion in this policy area. The EU has regularly pushed for internationally binding commitments, calling always for stringent commitments. After the US rejection, the EU key role in saving the Kyoto Protocol and the measures taken to implement it established the EU leadership in climate change politics.

After having explained in the first chapter the evolution of the EU climate policy, the internal institutional framework and the international climate politics which lead to the EU leadership role, this chapter aims to understand and explain the nature of this leadership. However, before exploring what kind of leadership the EU exerts in climate change negotiations, it will be useful to define the concept of leadership. Therefore, the first section will examine the leadership literature. Drawing on this literature, the second section will analyze different modes of leadership, their importance in climate change politics and the likelihood to assign them to the EU. Understanding the nature of EU leadership role might reveal the motivations that lie behind it.

2.1 Explaining leadership

The notion of leadership has attracted considerable scholarly attention since the beginning of the 1990s. The first author focusing on the leadership role was Oran Young. He defines leadership as 'the actions of individuals who endeavor to solve or circumvent the collective

action problems that plague the efforts of parties seeking to reap joint gains in processes of institutional bargaining.'[47] He focuses on the individual level[48] and distinguishes three types of leadership: structural leadership, entrepreneurial leadership and intellectual leadership. However, in his analyses, he does not take into account other actors in the international scene, such as organizations, that might also exert leadership.

Based on Youngs' work, Arild Underdal gives a more comprehensive conceptual analysis of the role of leadership in multilateral negotiations. His argument draws essentially from international organization literature. He defines leadership as 'an asymmetrical relationship of influence in which one actor guides or directs the behaviour of others towards a certain goal over a certain period of time.'[49] His definition of leadership is broader in the sense of actors, but narrow in the sense of time. While he includes other actors, such as international organizations, which might lead and influence international negotiations, exerting influence for a short time without significantly affecting the main developments will not count as leadership in his understanding. He also proposes three modes of leadership, but to some extent different from Young: coercive leadership, instrumental leadership and unilateral leadership.

Criticizing the first two attempts for being constrictive and not very clear in distinguishing between leadership and other modes of behaviour, Raino Malnes gives a rather debatable definition for leadership. He argues that 'a leader is supposed to look beyond his or her own interest and concerns, to the interests of a wider group, notably his or her followers.'[50] He

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[47] Oran Young, "Political leadership and regime formation: on the development of institutions in international society," *International Organizations*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (1991), p. 285

[48] Young's leaders are individuals, who are most of the time agents of states or international organizations. However, he does not count states or international organization as capable of exerting leadership.

[49] Arild Underdal, "Leadership Theory: Rediscovering the Arts of Management," in *International Multilateral Negotiation: Approaches to the Management of Complexity*, ed. William I. Zartman (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers 1994), p. 178

[50] Raino Malnes, "Leader and Entrepreneur in International Negotiations: A Conceptual Analyses," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 1(1995), p. 94

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distinguishes three modes of leadership: 'threats and offers' or 'sticks and carrots' leadership, problem-solving leadership and directional leadership. Based on his definition, an actor can be seen as a leader only when he acts to pursue a common purpose and not his self-interested goals. 'To be sure, leaders take an interest in what they get out of various arrangements, but their activity qualifies as leadership only if self-interest takes second place to collective goals.'[51] In contrast to him, Young does not exclude self-interest as being a major motivation for taking on a leadership role.[52] Underdal and Malnes both exclude this argument maintaining that 'some sort of sacrifice has to be involved for a specific course of behaviour to qualify as a leadership.'[53] Sebastian Oberthür agrees with the latter authors, arguing that 'since "leadership" in general has a positive connotation, I will only speak of leadership on climate change if an actor leads into the direction of strengthened climate protection, which is increasingly accepted as a commonly shared objective of humankind.'[54]

This tension in the concept of leadership between self-interested and common goals makes it difficult to decide whether an actor is or not a leader and to identify the motivations he can have in taking on that leadership role. However, for the purpose of this thesis I will take the broader meaning of leadership, which includes both the self-interested and normative dimensions. This will allow for a deeper and better understanding of the motivations that might have led the EU to take on this role, without excluding any possible explanation.

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[51] Ibid. p. 94

[52] While discussing structural leadership, Young writes: '[S]elf-interest, a concept based on the idea that individuals act to promote their own values, may well suffice to explain or predict the behaviour of structural leaders.' Young, "Political leadership and regime formation," p. 293

[53] Tora Skodvin and Steinar Andersen, "Part One: Negotiating International Environmental Regimes, Leadership Revisited," *Global Environmental Politics,* Vol. 6, No. 3(2006), p. 17

[54] Sebastian Oberthür, "The European Union in International Climate Policy: The Prospect for Leadership," *Intereconomics,* March/April (2007), p. 78

Drawing on the above mentioned literature, Michael Grubb and Joyeeta Gupta have proposed three types of leadership: structural, directional and instrumental.[55] Their major contribution is that they have tried to adapt the existing literature on leadership to the climate change negotiation literature. Table 1 gives an overview of the types of leadership proposed by different authors mentioned in this section. In my analysis of EU leadership, I will use the definitions proposed by Grubb and Gupta.

Table 1. Various typologies of leadership roles[56]

Young	Underdal	Malnes	Grubb & Gupta	Brief description
Structural	Coercive	Stick and Carrots	Structural	Use of incentives based on political and economic power
Intellectual	Unilateral	Directional	Directional	Use of ideas and domestic implementation to influence the perception of other countries as to what is desirable and possible
Entrepreneurial	Instrumental	Problem-solving	Instrumental	Craft structures and apply diplomatic skills

2.2 Analyzing EU leadership

2.2.1 Structural leadership

Structural leadership 'is associated with the exercise of power derived from political strength in the global order and the weight of the actor with the respect to the problem at hand.'[57] Young sees the essential feature of this type of leadership to be the ability to translate structural power into bargaining leverage by offering side-payments, promises or deploying threats which

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[55] Michael Grubb and Joyeeta Gupta, "Leadership: Theory and methodology," in *Climate Change and European Leadership: A Sustainable Role for Europe?,* ed. Joyeeta Gupta and Michael Grubb (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers 2000), p. 18

[56] Ibid., p. 23

[57] Ibid., p. 19

should be carefully crafted and credible. However, forming effective coalitions and preventing the emergence of rival coalitions should also be part of structural power.[58]

While the first three authors count hegemony as an extreme case of structural leadership, Grubb and Gupta argue that due to 'the global and long-term nature of climate change pure hegemony is not relevant to climate change.'[59] Climate change can be solved only through cooperation and long term strategies. A characteristic of the climate change problem as with all environmental issues is uncertainty and a long period of time between the actions taken against it and the possible positive result. A hegemon cannot provide for sustainable solutions, as it cannot bear the costs of providing side-payments for the rest of the world.

Structural leadership is clearly important for climate change. It can be '[r]elated to the size of present and future emissions and the economic resources that a country is willing to invest in the global regime.'[60] This is why much attention was paid in the Kyoto process to the competing visions of the US and the EU. The US, one of the biggest emitters of the world, has unquestionably structural power, but apparently climate change it is not one of its political priorities. The EU has also some structural power, although because of internal divergences and external limitations sometimes it is difficult to exercise this power. Being an economic and political power gives the Union the ability to influence and force other actors to respond to its efforts in multilateral negotiations.

The best examples of structural leadership were the EU's efforts to save the Kyoto Protocol after there was the clear sign of rejection from the US Bush administration. During the Marrakesh Conference of the Parties, the EU convinced many countries to ratify the Protocol. But the ratification of Russia was needed for the Protocol to enter into force. The promise by the

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[58] Young, "Political leadership and regime formation," p. 289
[59] Grubb and Gupta, "Leadership: Theory and methodology," p. 19
[60] Ibid.

EU to Russia for support in its admission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) is a clear example of structural leadership. This form of leadership is very useful particularly when it is used to support other types of leadership. Its exertion by the EU, before it was to late, saved the Protocol.

2.2.2 Instrumental and intellectual leadership

Instrumental leadership can be defined as the exercise of skills in negotiations to frame issues in ways that accommodate the needs of different parties.[61] This mode of leadership is relevant during the actual negotiation phase. These negotiating skills should be used to pursue issue-linkage and issue-based coalitions.[62] In the context of climate change, this form of leadership must take into account, along with short-term tactics, long-term and strategic assessment, which will accommodate the long-term interests of different parties. For example, the US combined instrumental leadership with its structural power in succeeding to include the emission trading innovative idea in the Kyoto agreement, recognizing in this way the needs of other countries for a more flexible mechanism in order to meet their targets.[63]

The literature on leadership does not see strong contributions from the EU in this mode of leadership. Because of its internal slow decision-making and external organization, the EU is not able to take quick initiatives and to respond immediately during tactical negotiations. This can sometimes be used in favour of the EU in international negotiations. However, despite problems faced during the 1990s the EU has matured and in international environmental negotiations

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[61] Ibid.; Young, "Political leadership and regime formation," p. 293
[62] Joyeeta Gupta and Lasse Ringius, "The EU's Climate Change Leadership: Reconciling Ambition and Reality," *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics,* Vol. 1(2001), p. 282
[63] Grub and Gupta, "Leadership: Theory and methodology," p.19

speaking with one voice is normal.[64] The EU was able to play a key role in the Marrakesh Conference of the Parties, pushing for concrete implementation rules for the Kyoto Protocol, which was finalized with the Marrakesh Accords. Exerting instrumental leadership using effectively its diplomatic and negotiating skills, combined with its structural power, the EU was able to build a 55 per cent coalition to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

Intellectual leadership is exerted by individuals, especially professionals from the so-called epistemic communities.[65] They 'provide systems of thoughts that offer a coherent analytical framework within which to think about the formation of regimes to deal with international problems.'[66] The EU as an entity does not qualify as an intellectual leader, but 'its role as an instrumental leader is enhanced by its reliance on scientific expert groups'.[67] The Commission in 1988 asked for and used the ideas and recommendations of a scientific group to put climate change onto the political agenda of the Union. Therefore, in the fight against global climate change intellectual leadership is relevant as it brings into focus the latest information and qualified knowledge. The EU relies on the information and knowledge provided by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) and *ad hoc* scientific groups. The EEA is an agency of the European Union which was created in 1993. It provides the EU with sound and independent information on the environment.[68]

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[64] The EU environmental policy is seen as one of the most successful of the EU foreign policy areas.

[65] For more on epistemic communities see: Peter M. Haas, "Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization,* Vol. 46, No. 1 (1992), pp. 1-35

[66] Oran Young, "Negotiating a Global Climate Change," in *International Governance: Protecting the Environment in a Stateless Society* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 45

[67] Ioana Creitaru, "Environmental Security from the European Union: The case of EU Climate Policy as a Preventive Security Policy," *Europolis*, Vol. 3 (2008), p. 90

[68] About European Environmental Agency see: http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/who

2.2.3 Directional leadership

While structural and instrumental leadership can be explained easily by classical theories of international relations, the same cannot be said for directional leadership. Directional leadership means leading by example. A directional leader uses ideas and domestic implementation as a good example to influence the perception of other countries as to what is desirable and possible to achieve. However, symbolic action will not qualify as leadership, as 'some sacrifice has to be made to make it credible.'[69] Therefore, the directional leader has to make some sacrifice, to commit themselves to potentially costly measures, in order to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of a particular measure. Only by being credible, can it change the perceptions and beliefs of other actors.

This form of leadership is very important in the context of climate change. Climate change is characterized by uncertainty and measures against it are perceived as costly. A leader, that demonstrates that advanced technologies and new measures to combat climate change can be efficient by undertaking the challenge to implement them first, makes a huge contribution to international climate change regime. Giving a good and credible example, not only influences and changes others perceptions about the issue, but also increases moral and ethical standards.

The European Union with its Emission Trading System is the best example of directional leadership. Even though it was an American proposal at the Kyoto negotiations, which the EU did not support in the beginning, it is now the main mechanism the EU is using to achieve its Kyoto targets. Not only did the EU make the first move in implementing the largest multi-country and multi-sectoral greenhouse gas Emission Trading System world-wide, but it also is seeking to demonstrate the pre-eminence of this system in fighting climate change cost-

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[69] Underdal, "Leadership Theory," p. 185

effectively. The EU is suggesting that also other regions of the world should create their own Emission Trading Systems in order to create a global carbon market. But for a directional leader to be successful, credibility is a key point. The EU acts a micro-laboratory and therefore if its policies are effective they can also be a good example for other parts of the world.

2.3 What kind of leader?

The EU is depicted in the literature as a directional leader.[70] However, as this chapter showed the EU is not only a directional leader in the case of climate change politics, but also a structural and instrumental leader (relying heavily on its epistemic communities). It is, however, true that different types of leadership are exerted more at different stages of negotiations. For example, at the stage of agenda formation intellectual leadership is important. During the negotiating phase, both instrumental and structural leadership are prominent and directional leadership plays a major role during the operationalization phase. Being a key part of all this processes, the EU has had to combine different types of leadership in order to achieve the set objectives.

The attempt to define leadership shed light on the two motivations that might have led the Union to take on the leadership role in international climate change politics: self-interest or common goals, which will be analyzed in the following chapter.

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[70] Oberthür and Kelly, "EU leadership in International Climate Change Policy," p. 36

Chapter 3: Why the EU has taken on the leadership role in global climate change politics?

After having looked at the concept of leadership and having argued that the EU exerts all different modes of leadership in climate change politics, this chapter focuses on the motivations of the EU taking on this role. As discussed above, the concept of leadership carries an inherent tension between self-interest and normative goals. Actually, the answer to the research question of this thesis revolves between these two options. Has the EU taken on the leadership role in climate change politics to achieve its goals, whether these economic goals or security goals? Or has the EU taken on this role in order to achieve normative environmental objectives and common goals?

This chapter seeks to find an answer to these questions using two competing approaches: the rationalist approach and a sociological approach. The first section looks at the explanation that the rationalist approach provides us in the case of climate change politics. Arguing that a purely interest based explanation that does not take into account norms, ideas and beliefs does not give the complete picture of the puzzle, I will turn to the sociological approach. For this purpose, I will use role theory which is an underdeveloped theory in International Relations (IR), but its concepts can provide a better picture to the motivations behind the EU leadership in climate change politics. This theory is not very different from constructivism, as both come from the same field of sociology into the IR. Actually, 'Alexander Wendt's work draws heavily on role

theory, in particular identity theory.'[71] However, being an actor-centered theory it provides more freedom for agency and as such is more appropriate to understand EU's perceptions, images and behaviour.

3.1 The rationalist approach and EU's leadership

At first sight, it might be tempting to answer in favour of self- interested goals. This will perfectly coincide with the rationalist assumption that states' actions are interest-driven. Despite differences, these theories share basically the same ontology and also the same epistemology. They treat the international system as anarchic and states as unitary and rational. They tend to explain the world in material terms arguing that the driving forces in international politics are power and interests. Rationalists do not oppose the fact that states can cooperate and agree to and comply with international norms, but in their opinion this happens only if states' interests are met and only as long as these norms satisfy their interests.

Neorealism poses two major problems concerning the EU leadership in climate change politics. Firstly, neorealists with their assumptions of states as rational utility-maximizer and their pessimistic view on cooperation pay only a marginal attention in their writings to environmental issues. Drawing from this, neorealism is not environmentally friendly. It is less optimistic about cooperation, as its focuses on power politics. As states are concerned about relative gains, the question of cooperation in this field needs a precise cost-benefit analysis in order to see what one gains from this cooperation in comparison with the others. As environmental problems are always transnational, cooperation will be questionable for them due to the 'threats' that this poses

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[71] Cameron Thies, "Role Theory and Foreign Policy," International Studies Association Compendium Project, Foreign Policy Analysis section, forthcoming (2009), p. 22; I want to thank Professor Cameron Thies for sending me his article on role theory.

to their sovereignty. Secondly, the EU as an actor poses a challenge to neorealism and its state-centric approach. However, they might argue that the EU has become a hegemon in global climate change politics and tries to impose its interests, rules and solutions on other parties.[72] This argument is problematic, as the EU leadership in climate politics, as discussed in Chapter Two, does not resemble that of a hegemon. Neorealist might also tend to explain EU's leadership role as merely a direct response to the wishes of the powerful green leader member states of the EU.

As mentioned above, neoliberalism shares certain main assumptions with neorealism, but its core stays within liberal approaches. Neoliberalism acknowledges more possibilities for cooperation as the rational states are not concerned about relative gains, but for absolute gains. And to international organizations and regimes are given a very important place because they allow information to be shared, reducing transaction costs and locking states into keep their commitments, thus reducing uncertainty. Hurrell points out that 'environmental degradation of the planet will involve losses for all and, more so than in the case of economic interdependence, states are locked into a situation from which they cannot escape and about which they will be forced to cooperate.'[73] Therefore, neoliberals focus on the formation of international institutions or regimes and their role in solving and regulating collective environmental problems by introducing common measures. But taking into account the problems that the international organization and regimes face, many neoliberals use the principal-agent framework to study

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[72] The neorealist version of hegemonic stability theory gives incentives for cooperation, with the precondition that a hegemonic state can lead cooperation and provide leadership. Marc Williams, "International political economy and global environmental change," in *The Environment and International Relations*, ed. John Vogler and Mark F. Imber (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 50.

[73] Andrew Hurrell, "International Political Theory and the Global Environment," in *International relations theory today*, ed. Ken Booth and Steve Smith (Cambridge: Polity Press,1995), p. 133

them.[74] The principals are the member states, usually the most powerful member of an international organization, whether the international organization itself is the agent. Member states use the international organization to pursue their interest, whereas the international organization has developed its own interests. The puzzle going on here is to what extent the IO can achieve its agenda in contrast to the principals' demands.

In relation to climate change politics and the EU leadership role the same question arises. The EU in neoliberal eyes has obviously developed its autonomous agenda over time. It has also shaped member states' behaviour. This can explain its active role in international environmental politics. But can this explain the leadership role taken on by the EU? Neoliberalism remains at its core state-centric. The EU, as an intergovernmental organization, could not have pursued a leadership role without the will of its powerful principals. Moreover, climate change policy, as mentioned before, is still a shared competence.

Both neorealism and neoliberalism will explain the EU leadership role in rationalistic terms, arguing that the interests of the most powerful member states are behind it. The motivations behind the leadership role can be not only economic and security objectives, but also foreign policy objectives. Many initiatives taken by the EU can be seen as attempts to generate economic advantages for EU companies from rich member states.[75] '[E]uropean economic interests are undermined if global competitors are free to profit from less rigid environmental standards.'[76] As rich member states have uploaded their environmental policies at the European level in order to enhance their competitiveness, the EU answering to their demands is doing the same in the global level: promoting its emission trading system. A global carbon market will

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[74] Lisa Martin, "Neoliberalism," in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, ed. Timothy Dunne, Milja Kurki, Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 118
[75] Ole Elgström, "The European Union as a Leader in International Multilateral Negotiations- a Problematic Aspiration," in *International Relations*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2007), p. 455
[76] Jan Zielonka, "Europe as a global actor: empire by example?" *International Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 3 (2008), p. 481

make the EU firms more competitive and the risk of delocalization will diminish. The EU has currently the highest climate standards in the world, which poses cost to its industry. 'Failure to export the same standards to other countries puts European firms at a comparative economic disadvantage.'[77] Thus, at the bottom of the EU leadership role in climate change politics lie the economic interests of different member states.

In addition to economic interest, another rationalist explanation for the EU leadership role can be the security threats that the climate change issue poses to the Union. In the last few years, climate change has been seen as a new potential threat, which has brought the securitization of the climate debate.[78] The European Union is particularly concerned about climate change and security. The European Council, in which heads of government meet, asked the High Representative and the European Commission in 2008 to present a report on this problem.

> Climate change is best viewed as a threat multiplier which exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability. The core challenge is that climate change threatens to overburden states and regions which are already fragile and conflict prone. It is important to recognize that the risks are not just of a humanitarian nature; they also include political and security risks that directly affect European interests.[79]

In order to prevent security threats, such as conflicts over resources, economic damage and risk of coastal cities, loss of territory and border disputes, and what is for the EU member states a hot issue environmental migration, it is in the EU's self-interests to take steps in order to address the security implication of climate change. Taking on the leadership role, the EU and its member states can promote solutions in line with their interests.

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[77] Ibid, p. 483

[78] Edith Vanden Brande, "Green Civilian Power," in *Europe's Global Role: External policies of the European Union*, ed. Jan Orbie (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2008), p. 174

[79] Climate Change and International Security, Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council, S113/08, 14 March 2008, p. 2; available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/reports/99387.pdf

The rationalist explanation for the incentives that have brought the EU to take on the leadership role in international climate change politics is purely interest based. Even though the EU might have some freedom from its member states, the leading role is taken on only because it is in the interests of the powerful member states. As analyzed in this section, these interests can be economic, security related or foreign policy objectives to demonstrate their power. However, this purely interest based approach does not give the overall picture of the puzzle. It takes identity as constant and interests as exogenously given, without paying any attention to norms, ideas and beliefs. 'These are seen as a reflection of power or interests balance, rather than independent factors independent factors influencing behaviour.'[80] Actors know from the beginning who they are and what they want without explaining how their identity and interests were formed. In this direction, sociological approaches to IR are more developed. Therefore, they might offer a more complete picture to the motivation of EU leadership.

3.2 A sociological approach

Constructivism is the best known approach of the sociological turn in IR which challenges the rationalist approach by arguing that many aspects in international relations are socially constructed. It takes into account social structures in its analyses claiming that 'the structures of international society are not only material but also ideational' and that identity and norms play a role in world politics.[81] These norms and the social interaction shape the preferences of actors, in contrast to rationalist approaches which take the preferences and

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[80] Jutta Brunee, "Europe, the United States, and the Global Climate Change Regime: all together now?" *Journal of Land Use*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2008), p. 19
[81]Helen Sjursen, "Understanding the common foreign and security policy: analytical building blocks," in *Understanding the European Union's external relations*, ed. M. Knodt & S. Princen (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 43

interests as exogenously given.[82] These norms and rules are defined and redefined during the social interaction in the form of intersubjective understandings. However, this does not mean that interests do not play a role at all in states and other actors' preferences. But it adds that the normative and ideational aspects are also important and should be taken into consideration when analyzing actors' behaviour. Constructivism seeks 'to understand how actor's interest-based strategies are socially informed by longer-term values.'[83]

Constructivism sees actors as role players shifting from the 'logic of consequence' to the 'logic of appropriateness'.[84] Role players 'act in accordance with rules and practices that are socially constructed, and publicly known, anticipated and accepted.'[85] The concept of role players is borrowed from role theory, another theory originating from the sociological field. Role theory, while sharing many aspects with constructivism, 'suggests how roles are constructed, sustained and changed in foreign policy.'[86] As constructivism is *per se* not a foreign policy theory, it will be more appropriate to use role theory for understanding EU's external dimension and its leadership role in climate change politics. Being an agent-centered approach, role theory in contrast to constructivism gives more freedom to the actors. This is important for the purpose of this paper, which focuses especially on the EU.

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[82] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what state make of it: The social construction of power politics," *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (1992), p.391
[83] Richard Youngs, "Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU's External Identity," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2004), p. 420
[84] J.T. Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and framework," *International Organization*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (2005), p. 804
[85] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4(1988), p. 952
[86] Lisbeth Aggestam, "Role theory and European foreign policy: a framework of analysis," in *The European Union's Roles in International Politics: Concepts and Analysis*, ed. Ole Elgström and Michael Smith (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 11

3.3 Role theory and EU's leadership in climate change politics

There exists a considerable literature about the EU as an international actor, but often it is not clearly specified in what roles the Union is engaged and why it has taken on certain roles. Role theory gives valuable explanations to these puzzles of the EU's external actions. Even though the theory with its sociological concept of role was introduced to the International Relations in the beginning of the 1970s to analyze foreign policy behaviour,[87] almost two decades before the constructivist challenge, the theory has remained underdeveloped and barely used to analyze the EU's roles in international politics.

Role theory was used originally in social science to explain individual behaviour. The theory believes that individuals are like stage actors who have to act according to a script. There relationship between the individual and social structure is highlighted to show that both are dynamically interrelated.[88] Holsti was the first that borrowed the concept of role in his seminal paper in 1970 to explain 'the relationship between national role conceptions and patterns of participation in international politics.'[89] The role conception 'refers to patterns of expected or appropriate behaviour.'[90] It is constructed by both the actor's self-images and perception of what is appropriate (ego-part) and the influence of others' expectations and perceptions about this actor (alter-part).[91] Thus, what role to play in the international politics often comes as a result of the socialization process, where the ego and alter meet. However, in these processes, an actor has a

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[87] Kaveli J. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 14 (1970), pp. 233-309; An abridged version of this article, which will be used here, can be found in: *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, ed. Stephen G. Walker (Durham: Duke University Press Policy Studies,1987), pp. 5-43

[88] Lisbeth Aggestam, "Role theory and European foreign policy," p. 12

[89] Stephen G. Walker. "Introduction," in *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, ed. Stephen G. Walker (Durham: Duke University Press Policy Studies,1987), p. 1

[90] Ole Elgström and Michael Smith, "Introduction," in *The European Union's Roles in International Politics: Concepts and Analysis*, ed. Ole Elgström and Michael Smith (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 5

[91] Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," p. 7; Knut Kirste and Hanns W. Maull, "Zivilmacht und Rollentheorie," *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1996), p.286

certain freedom to choose what role to perform. This leaves room for the agency. '[T]he complex and dynamic interplay between the actor's own role conception and actor autonomy, and on the other hand, the structurally guided role expectation constitutes the main advantage of the role theory allowing both for the development of approaches relating to the ideational basis of policy and for the evaluation of material policy concerns.'[92] It can be argued, that 'the use of roles might actually create a bridge between constructivism and realism' combining materialistic and ideational factors together.[93]

Some authors have focused more on the alter-part of the role conceptions, the role prescription. They use this perspective of role theory when writing about the superpower-role, arguing that the US and the Soviet Union behaved as superpowers, because they were seen from all states as such. Other authors, among them Holsti, focus more on the ego-part of the definition, as external orientations and actions are not only the result of the others' perceptions. There are primarily actor-level factors, such as value system, world views and self role conceptions, which define what role an actor will choose for himself in international politics and how they will behave towards other actors. This perspective allows for a focused examination on agency.[94] For the purpose of this thesis the latter perspective will be more appropriate. The perceptions of outsiders are also important, but as I am looking at the motivations of taking on a leadership role, it will be essential to look at the EU's self-images and self-presentation in order to find out the driving forces behind its roles, whether interest- or value-driven.

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[92] Elgstrom and Smith, "Introduction," p. 5

[93] Cameron Thies, "Sense and sensibility in the study of state socialization: a reply to Kai Alderson," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 29 (2003), p. 546

[94] Kirste and Maull, "Zivilmacht und Rollentheorie," p. 286-287

Actors usually internalize several roles (role-set) which are exerted in different contexts in their international relations.[95] It can be possible that dominant role conceptions conflict with each other within a role-set.[96] This usually happens when there is a change n the original conditions in which they were defined. However, the role conflict does not have to call into question the existence of one of these roles. The EU is considered to play many different roles in the international scene, and as will be shown below some might conflict with each other.

3.3.1 EU's self-representation

To arrive at the EU's self-images and how it represents itself in climate change politics, I review a large number of speeches, official communications, treaty provisions, press conferences, journal news and academic articles. One might argue that it is a difficult endeavour to see through rhetoric. But 'the self-representation of the Union cannot be dismissed as simply 'rhetorical,'' as rhetoric is not 'simply the product of underlying interests, but is part of the interests formation.[97] Rhetoric, even though used to respond to actor's interest, brings to collective understandings, which become a trap (rhetorical trap) for the actor that used it shaping the interest and self-perception of that very actor.[98]

Since the 1990s, the EU has been determined to present itself as a leader in global change politics. Almost all academic articles analyzed for the purpose of this thesis use words that confirm this point, such as: 'the EU claims to be a leader', 'the EU has proclaimed leadership in

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[95] Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," p. 28
[96] Lisbeth Aggestam, "Role theory and European foreign policy," p. 22
[97] Sonia Lucarelli, "Introduction," in *Values and Principles in European Union Foreign Policy* , ed. Sonia Lucarelli and Ian Manners (London and New York, 2006), p. 3
[98] Sonia Lucarelli, "Introduction," p. 4

climate change politics', or 'the EU has played a leading role' or similar phrases.[99] 'Any role that an actor attempts to adopt automatically implies a counter-role to form a relationship.'[100] The EU used the abdication of US leadership in the end of the 1980s and its rejection to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to represent itself as a leader, while depicting the US as a laggard.

Turning to declaratory statements, in 1991 a European Commission communication to the Council clearly showed the aim to take a leadership role in climate change negotiation, saying that 'the Community owes it to both the present and the future generations to put its own house in order and to provide both leadership and example to developed and developing countries alike in relations to protection of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources'[101] This was reflected in the EU's internal climate change policy and in the insistence for binding commitment in the Rio Earth Summit and also in later international environmental conferences. In 1996 before the Kyoto meeting, the then European Commissioner Ritt Bjerregaard argued that the European Union is the main force that can lead the climate change negotiations.[102] The claims for leadership become much stronger after the US rejection to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. The

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[99] For examples, see: Barnes, "Environmental Policy," p. 285; Dinan, "Social Policy, Employment and the Environment," p. 479; Nuno S Lacasta et al., "Articulating a consensus: the EU's position on climate change," in *Europe and Global Climate Change: Politics, Foreign Policy and Regional Cooperation*, ed. Paul Harris (Eward Elgar, 2007), p. 211; John Vogler and Charlotte Bretherton, " The European Union as a Protagonist to the United States on Climate Change," *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 7 (2006), p. 2; Vogler and Stephan, "The European Union in global environmental governance,", p. 389; Some of them argue that that the EU gained reputation as a leader during the 1990s in international climate change negotiations. This means that in a certain extent the EU self-representation as a leader coincids with the perception of the outsiders. See Pamela Barnes, "Environmental Policy," p. 282
[100] Cameron Thies, "Sense and sensibility in the study of state socialization," p. 545
[101] Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the Council, SEC (91) 1744 final, Brussels, 14 October 1991, p. 1; available at: http://aei.pitt.edu/4931/01/003172_1.pdf
[102] Speech by Mrs. Ritt Bjerregaard at the Public Hearing on Climate Change Held at the European Parliament, Speech/96/48, Brussels, 21 February 1996, available at:
http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/96/48&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN
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President of the Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, asked recently whether the EU can lead the world on climate change, answered very shortly: 'Not only we can, but we do.'[103]

As mentioned above, these statements are not simply rhetorical, as the EU performance in global change politics shows the contrary. It is guided by values and principles which can be found not only in the Commission's or Council's official declarations, in the Treaty provisions, but also in the COP meetings. One of the means that the Commission uses for developing environmental principles and values are the EAPs.[104] The first EAPs have developed principles, such as the prevention principle, sustainable use of natural resources, polluter pays principle, the idea of ecological modernization, the principle of rectification of pollution at source. These principles were incorporated into the SEA in 1987. With the fifth EAP the Community sought to promote the sustainable principle defined in the Brundtland Report in 1987. This also was included in the following amendment of the Treaty of Rome, in the Maastricht Treaty. Sustainable development has become one of the key principles of the EU and its environmental policy. It underlies also climate change policy. The Community sees the climate change problems as global and through its performance has shown that it is politically committed to lead the fight against it, embedding the principles listed above. This commitment is partly driven by a sense of moral obligation:[105]

> As Europeans and as part of some of the wealthiest societies in the world, we are very conscious of our role and responsibilities internationally. On the one hand, along with other developed countries, we are major contributors to global environmental problems such as greenhouse gas emissions and we consume a major, and some would argue an unfair, share of the

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[103] Speech by José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, "Can Europe lead the world on Climate and Aid Policies?" at the Friends of Europe VIP Policy Summit, 9/10/2008, available at: http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_8210_en.htm

[104] Susan Baker, "Environmental values and climate change policy: Contrasting the European Union and the United States," in *Values and Principles in European Union Foreign Policy*, ed. Sonia Lucarelli and Ian Manners (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 82

[105] Ibid, p. 84

planets renewable and non-renewable resources … On the other hand, Europe has been a leading proponent of international action and co-operation…[106]

The Community sees the climate change problems as global and through its performance has shown that it is politically committed to lead the fight against it. The principles listed above have become embedded, so as to become common understanding and norms influencing and shaping the EU's interest. The EU has succeeded in creating a new self-image guided on principle and values: a leader in global climate politics. In the academic literature, the EU has lately been depicted as a green civilian power.[107] On the other hand, at the same time the EU has also shown itself to be also a powerful activist in international trade relations, being one of the strongest actors in the WTO.[108] This obviously creates a contradiction between the Union's role as a trader and its leadership role in global climate change. Is the EU role as promoter of environmental values another face of its normative power? Or is it another face of its economic power?

3.3.2 Role conflict: green leader vs. trade promoter

The EU's self-representation and reputation as a principled leader in climate change politics is explained by many scholars through the notion of civilian/normative power. This also corresponds to the EU self-image of its international role.[109] Civilian power is a term coined by Francois Duchene, writing in the 1970s, to describe the EU role in international politics which

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[106] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the sixth environment action programme of the European Community: 'Environment 2010: Our future, Our choice', The Sixth Environment Action Programme, Brussels, 24.1.2001, COM (2001) 31 final, available at: http://www.ff3.hu/upload/6_action_plan_en.pdf
[107] Brande, "Green Civilian Power," pp. 157-180
[108] Jan Orbie, "The European Union's Role in World Trade: Harnessing Globalization?" in *Europe's Global Role: External policies of the European Union*, ed. Jan Orbie (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2008), p. 61
[109] Helene Sjursen, "The EU as a 'normative' power: how can this be?" *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2006), p. 235

utilizes political and economic means rather than coercive instruments. The term was reconceptualized by Ian Manners in 2002 to 'normative power Europe' which does not focus on to much on the conflicting concepts of civilian and military power, but on the EU 'ability to shape what is 'normal' in international relations'.[110] The EU promotes all the above mentioned 'universal' environmental normative principles, representing itself as a 'norm entrepreneur'.[111] During the Kyoto process the EU has positioned itself in favour of international law and multilateral actions, distancing itself from the laggard US. But is this enough to argue that the Union's green mission in the fight against climate change is motivated only by normative environmental objectives?

At the same time, the EU is also an economic power. It plays a key role in international trade negotiations and in the WTO. Thus, self-interested economic goals can also offer an explanation for the EU leadership role in climate change politics. The operationalization of the Kyoto Protocol and the flexible mechanism chosen to implement was in the interest of the EU, as it could bring economic advantages to the industrial sector. For example, 'a global emissions market could extend the economic advantages of the EUETS.'[112]

Thus, there is clearly a competition in the EU between environmental objectives and economic goals. It points to a role conflict between the climate change leadership role and trade promoter. Brande argues that the trade interests often prevail. An example in favour of Brande's argument could be the Lisbon Strategy of 2000, which is often criticized for not offering any environmental perspective.

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[110] Ian Manners and Richard G. Whitman, "The 'different engine': constructing and representing the international identity of the European Union," *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (2003), p. 389

[111] Sibylle Scheipers and Daniella Sirurelly, "Normative Power Europe: A Credible Utopia?" *Journal Of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (2007), p. 445

[112] Brande, "Green Civilian Power," p. 172

However, roles are not immutable. They can change, influence and adjust to each other. The emergence of EU as a leader in climate change politics in the 1990s clearly conflicted with its role as trade promoter which at that time was dominant. This was reflected in the difficulties the EU faced in the beginning to act as a unified actor in climate change negotiations. But after the completion of the Single Market and the introduction of sustainable development, the role as a green leader started to gain field. The role as a trade promoter has adjusted itself to the role of climate change leader by seeking to green the industry sector though innovative technology. The EU has lately campaigned for environmental provisions in the WTO agenda.[113] However, this does not mean that only the role as trade promoter had to adjust. The green leader role has also had to adjust to not conflict with free trade values. That is why many environmental agreements have trade provisions.

The introduction and the promotion of the sustainable development principle since the 1990s, which the EU has embraced as one of its core principles, has turned to be a middle ground for the environmental policy and trade issues, a win-win scenario. Both roles are very important for the EU. The Environment Commissioner Margot Wallström in 2002 after the EU ratified the Kyoto Protocol affirmed:

> Action to fight climate change is vital to achieve sustainable development. I am convinced that improving the environment through technological progress can actually enhance our competitiveness and economic growth. This is what sustainable development is about: Protecting our eco-system while ensuring economic prosperity.[114]

The normative dimension is pivotal to the leadership role in climate change politics, but this role normally also serves to the EU's economic interests and at the same time enhances its reputation as a normative power. Being a green normative power does not exclude an actor from

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[113] John Vogler, "The European contribution to global environmental governance," International Affairs, Vol. 81, No. 4 (2005), p. 845
[114] Summary: European Union ratifies the Kyoto Protocol, May 31, 2002, available at: http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_1420_en.htm

following its own interests. In fact, these interests are directly influenced by norms and principles and are the outcome of a collective learning process. Roles, identities and interests are closely intertwined. Therefore, at the bottom of the EU leadership role in climate change politics lie both normative goals and self-interests which are directly informed by norms and principles.

Conclusions

The aim of this thesis has been to explain the motivations that have driven the EU to take on the leadership role in global climate change negotiations. More specifically, I reviewed in the first chapter the evolution of the EU climate change policy, which revealed that the formalization of environmental policy with the SEA and the inclusion of environmental principles in the Treaties, not only gave an impetus to the EU's involvement in international negotiations, but also led to the creation of environmental norms and values.

I analyzed the concept of leadership arguing that a broader definition allows for taking into account both dimensions, self-interest and normative, as a possible explanation of the motivations behind the EU leadership role in climate change politics. Further, I showed that the EU is not only a directional leader, but also exerts instrumental and structural leadership in climate change negotiations and has often combined different modes of leadership to achieve its objectives.

 I also showed that the rationalist approach with its purely interest based explanation does not give a complete picture of the motivations that have driven the EU to take the leadership role in climate change politics. I suggested that it is role theory within the sociological approach with its actor-centered focus and its concepts, such as role taking, self-representation, role set, role conflict, which offers a better explanation. The research showed that the EU has long represented itself as a leader in climate change politics. I maintained that this cannot be dismissed simply as rhetorical, as it might become a trap which influences and shapes actors interests.

Finally, I argued that the green leadership role of the EU has originally conflicted with the trade promoter role. I showed that these roles, being not immutable, have changed and adjust to each other over time. The introduction and promotion of the sustainable development has turned

to be a middle ground for both environmental policy and trade issues. Therefore, I conclude that the normative dimension is important to the EU leadership role in climate change politics, but this role also serves to the EU's economic interests. However, these interests are directly influenced and informed by norms and principles that are an outcome of a collective learning process.

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