The influence of environmental NGOs on Colombia’s agenda-setting process regarding Climate Change issues (2010-2018)

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To my brother

whose brilliant advice

enlightened the path to developing this study
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1. Introduction

Colombia is one of the countries with the greatest biodiversity in the world, occupying the seventh place among those with the largest tropical forest cover. However, due to its physical, geographic, economic, social and biodiversity characteristics, Colombia is also one of the countries with the highest vulnerability to climate change (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, p. 3). In this regard, it is essential that the Colombian government can generate the capacity to understand the consequences of climate change, assessing threats to vulnerable communities, anticipating impacts on territories, ecosystems, and economies, moderating potential damages, taking advantage of opportunities and facing the consequences that this phenomenon might have on the country’s enormous natural wealth.

This study sought to better understand the influence that environmental NGOs have on the agenda-setting process in Colombia by addressing the following research question: have environmental NGOs been able to influence the agenda-setting process in Colombia regarding climate change issues during the period 2010-2018? This question is relevant for several reasons. First of all, there is an abundance of natural resources in Colombia that makes important for the country to properly deal with climate change challenges in order to avoid both human and material losses. Moreover, there is a great scarce of literature in Colombia regarding environmental NGOs and their role in Colombian policy-making. Finally, it is imperative to detect whether the Colombian government is willed to communicate and work closely with civil society, especially NGOs, as the democratic country it is.

The first objective of this study was to determine whether climate change framing processes carried out by environmental NGOs in Colombia were accepted and recognized as legitimate and thus, they were able to move from the systemic to the institutional agenda. it is also a secondary objective of this research to measure if the transnational character of the NGOs impacted their capacity to influence the Colombian agenda-setting process, starting from the assumption that international NGOs might have a better capacity to reach the national government’s agenda due to their wide-spread expertise and their well-linked social networks.
Based on the existing studies which demonstrated the inconspicuous role that NGOs have played on Colombia’s policy-making in the previous decades (Amaya Villarreal, 2008; Marín Aranguren, 2009; García Peña, 2011; López Pacheco, 2012; Bocchi, 2013), this study proposed the hypothesis, namely that environmental NGOs have not been able to influence Colombia’s agenda-setting process, which means that the framing processes carried out by the NGOs regarding climate change, have not been either accepted or recognized as legitimate, thus, they did not have any remarkable impact on the public agenda.

Two NGOs were selected as case studies –Fundación Natura (FN) and Conservation International (CI) Colombia– based on five specific criteria: they fulfilled the definition of NGOs specified in this research, they were based in Colombia as country of active work, FN represented a national NGO while CI characterized an international NGO, they both were working on climate change related issues in Colombia during the assessed time period (2010-2018) and there was enough available information about both NGOs and their projects regarding climate change which made it possible to put together this research.

In order to evaluate if climate change framing process performed by FN and CI were legitimate, two aspects were evaluated: the mobilizing structures that both NGOs had at their disposal as well as the political opportunity structures in which both NGOs were rooted. On one hand, the NGO's knowledge and expertise, the support received from a specific constituency, as well as the organizational entrepreneurship that backed up NGOs’ projects were the aspects evaluated for each NGO regarding mobilizing structures. On the other hand, the NGOs' access to the Colombian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, what influential allies they had, and what changes in political alignments promoted initiatives regarding climate change were the components that shaped the NGOs’ political opportunity structure.

It was concluded that CI and FN undertook prognostic as well as motivational framing processes regarding climate change. Likewise, after reviewing all the elements that shaped the framing process implemented by CI and FN, it was concluded that for the framing processes that the NGOs executed, regarding climate change, were both accepted and recognized as legitimate and thus, they moved from the systemic agenda to the public one.
Additionally, there was no evidence to indicate that the transnational character of NGOs implicated that they had a greater influence on Colombia’s agenda-setting process and whereby, both NGOs proved to be influential and play a decisive role in the formulation of the national policy in relation to climate change. This close work between NGOs and the Colombian government was possible because of the international juncture that encouraged the country to commit to the topic and set very ambitious goals, and because of the outstanding willingness of the Colombian government to work together with NGOs.

2. General aspects regarding NGOs

2.1. What is an NGO?

According to Londoño Toro (2002), the simplest and most generic denomination defines NGOs as organizations formed by groups of men and women who are associated to change the society in which they live. They are people who, regardless of their class, creed, ethnicity, or ideology, have come together to defend democracy and human rights, to fight for a more equitable world, for a healthy environment, or simply to improve the quality of life of their neighborhoods or communities. Contrary to the domestic character that Londoño Toro gave NGOs in her definition, Wapner (1996, p. 10) underlines how scholars have assumed that the role of the NGOs is mainly transnational. In this regard, NGOs are defined as “transnational pressure groups which gain political relevance to the degree they influence state actions” by changing states’ policies or creating conditions in the international system that enhance or diminish inter-state cooperation. Those NGOs that act beyond the national boundaries are known as International non-governmental organizations (INGOs).

However, the most common definition for NGOs characterizes for being both negative and extremely wide. In this sense, Yamin (2001, p. 149) explains that the definition is negative since it describes an NGO based on what it is not, as every kind of organization that is not part of a State and it is not-for-profit, and likewise, it is broad because of the nature of that negative definition: the group of non-state organizations catches the activities of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) as well as the entire realm of civil society. However, many writers have currently decided to define NGOs in such a way they can exclude IGOs.
and civil society from it. For instance, The Encyclopedia of Public International Law defines NGOs as private organizations "not established by a government or by intergovernmental agreement which are capable of playing a role in international affairs by virtue of their activities" and the International Law Dictionary defines an NGO as a "private international organization that serves as a mechanism for cooperation among private national groups in international affairs”.

Charnovitz (1996, p. 186-187) indicates that even though the definitions provided previously by both the Encyclopedia of Public International Law and the International Law Dictionary expose the international character that non-governmental organizations have, in the contemporary parlance, the term NGO is used as well to explain activities of organizations that are engaged only in national affairs. Those organizations are also known as “interest groups” or “pressure groups”, that even though they are engaged in political matters, have no any determination to take over the role of the State as formal maker and enforcer of laws.

On the other hand, Villar (2001, p. 10) defines NGOs, in a more positive sense, as the set of organizations that citizens generate to produce collective and/or non-state public goods. Public goods are understood as those that agree to all in the same way for their dignity, goods or services destined to the satisfaction of common and indispensable needs. The purpose of any public good is to make equity possible and overcome exclusions. That is why society itself can produce public and/or collective goods, which are called non-state public goods. One of the current criteria for analyzing the importance and strength of NGOs is their ability to produce those non-state public goods. There is a set of non-state public and collective goods that NGOs should and can produce: solidarity, tolerance, civil ethics, the legitimacy of the public state, political credibility, social forgiveness, etc.

For their part, The United Nations (1998, para. 1) have provided a definition for NGOs that basically covers all the above-mentioned characteristics: ‘‘A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens’ group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through
provision of information. [...] They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements."

The discussion to what is or is not an NGO might be considerably extensive for a whole, independent article and thus, it will be not examined in this occasion. Nevertheless, this research will consider as NGOs any international or domestic organization that is not established by a government or intergovernmental agreement, which gain political relevance to the degree they influence state actions. They will include mainly formal organizations and therefore will not cover the larger phenomenon of informally organized "movements" and profit-seeking entities. Thus, the activities and influence of multinational enterprises, international public corporations, cartels, and criminal groups will not be taken into account for this research. However, religions, charities, foundations, research organizations (that is, universities, institutes, and laboratories) will be considered as NGOs and will be included in the study.

Continuing with the general aspects of the NGOs, the next section will describe how NGOs have developed through history, both internationally and nationally. The historical development of NGOs is extremely important because it demonstrates how the role of NGOs has evolved over time, increasing not only the number of NGOs but also their importance and influence on public policies. NGOs will evolve until becoming truly organized groups, with the capacity for political influence and social mobilization on issues related to the improvement of social, environmental, and economic conditions, as well as any other issue that might affect society.

2.2. International historical development of NGOs

According to Charnovitz (1996, p. 189) even though NGOs were increasingly accepted as legitimate participants in international lawmaking after World War II, their involvement in

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international governance started much earlier than 1945 and that participation has been characterized by showing constant but uneven growth. Likewise, the author states that the participation of NGOs in governance seems to obey a pattern based on governments’ needs. In this regard, NGOs involvement rises when governments need them and falls when they gain self-confidence on certain topics that they used to consult NGOs.

It was probably the Roman Catholic Church the earliest internationally active NGO in history, although, the first formal NGO is related to a society created for the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1787, called Anti-Slavery society. It achieved its main goal in 1838 under the terms of the Slavery Abolition Act 1833 in Great Britain. Nevertheless, the first NGO in the “modern sense” had its appearance in 1839, with the creation of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, a successor organization of the Anti-Slavery society, that fought for global abolition (Pinzón Camargo, 2005, p. 76).

When NGOs acknowledged the importance of transnational cooperation, by the mid-nineteenth century, they became promoters for the creation of several public international unions. Governments started to complement their delegations for international conferences with non-diplomats and even they were not invited, NGOs traveled by their own in order to pursue their interests. NGOs participated then in new international conventions regarding rules of war, intellectual property, admiralty, prostitution, narcotics, labor, and nature protection. The creation of the Union of International Associations (UIA) in 1907 evidenced the beginning of “NGO self-awareness” (Charnovitz, 1996, p. 212).

The establishment of many Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO), such as the Red Cross in 1863 and the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1919 evidenced the “active behind-the-scenes involvement” of NGOs which was actually very active during the period between 1919-1934. During this period, petitions to secure minority rights were submitted by some NGOs, the League of Nations\(^3\) granted a small role to NGOs in some committees, and governments worked together with NGOs to create new treaties and organizations since

\(^3\) The League of Nations (founded in 1920) was an international organization, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, created after the First World War to provide a forum for resolving international disputes.
NGOs’ technical expertise was needed to ground international policy-making processes (Yamin, 2001, p. 150). Besides the Red Cross, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) stood out as important international actors.

In the twentieth century, the two world wars became causes for the strengthening of NGOs, and even more for their proliferation. Proof of this was the establishment of the Service Civil International (SCI) in 1920 after the First World War that sought for the peaceful coexistence of men and support for the reconstruction of areas devastated by the wars, and Save the Children in 1932, which was very valuable to help children affected by the Second World War. In 1945, with the same goal of helping the victims and survivors of World War II, twenty-two organizations from the United States partnered to create CARE (Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe), whose meaning of acronyms changed over the years to “Cooperative for Assistance to Help anywhere in the world” (Pinzón Camargo, 2005, p. 77).

Even though the number of NGOs might have grown during the in-between-wars period, there was a reduction of the NGOs participation in the international scene. Only a few new methods for NGO participation were developed during this time. This phenomenon is explained partly because of the League of Nations’ activities became routinized for which it needed less and less of NGO inputs, and opportunities for NGOs outside the league were actually were limited. However, nothing inhibited NGO participation more than the evolving hostilities of World War II did for which NGOs focused more on helping victims than participating in international governance. Chances for international NGO activity were very constrained during WWII (Charnovitz, 1996, p. 246).

However, there was a big advancement of the role of the NGOs after WWII: article 71 of the United Nations (UN) formalized the role for NGOs in global governance. This “formalization” was meaningful because, in fact, were NGOs who assisted governments in drafting Article 71 that gave them a “hunting license” to pursue involvement in the UN
beyond the Economic and Social Council\(^4\) (ECOSOC), provision that the Covenant of the League of Nations lacked. Article 71 of the UN charter not only set up the NGO participation in international policy-making but also codified the custom of NGO participation and was a model generally followed by UN specialized agencies (Charnovitz, 1996, pp. 255-258).

Even though NGOs had a very active role in the UN between 1950 and 1970, due to the limitations of Cold War politics and the institutional weakness of ECOSOC, their contributions were limited. Human rights were the area where NGOs mostly contributed at the UN, especially in the matter of regulation on refugees, eradication of discrimination, and the abolition of slavery. Additionally, environmental NGOs were quite a success during this period. The efforts of the coalition of British NGOs contributed to achieving a treaty on marine pollution in 1954 and the work of the International Waterfowl Research Bureau influenced to the negotiation of the Convention on Wetlands in 1971. In 1961, both Amnesty International and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) were founded, emerging as influential international actors in terms of human rights and environmental protection respectively. Finally, the creation of nuclear weapons encouraged cooperation among scientists looking for international control of nuclear energy (Charnovitz, 1996, pp. 258-261).

During the early 1970s, NGOs’ participation in international sphere commenced intensifying. The number, size, and diversity of the NGOs grew fast, and their expertise and tenacity impacted especially on environmental and human rights related issues. GreenPeace (1971), Friends of the Earth (1971), Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without borders-1971), and Human Rights Watch (1978) appeared as organizations of great importance on the world stage (Pinzón Camargo, 2005, p. 78).

On one hand, there was a prioritization of environmental issues on the part of the NGOs. The United Nations Environment Programme was established in 1972 as a follow-up to the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment which was attended by around 400 NGOs (Yamin, 2001, p. 151). NGOs also played a key role in motivating new environmental treaties

\(^4\) The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the United Nations’ central platform for reflection, debate, and innovative thinking on sustainable development.
such the treaty to protect polar bears and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) both in 1973. Moreover, they played an active role in the negotiation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982. Concerning existing treaties, NGOs worked to enlarge oversight and regulation on topics such whale’s protection and Antarctica off-limits to mineral resource extraction (Charnovitz, 1996, pp. 261-263).

On the other hand, regarding human rights, the role of NGOs was very extensive and deep. One of the biggest achievements that NGOs had during this period was their participation in the drafting of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Charnovitz, 1996, pp. 263). Advanced information networks that connected sympathetic governments, dissidents and the media were developed by some very influential NGOs such Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Finally, for the very first time, in 1985, an international damages case was arbitrated by agreement between a sovereign nation -France- and an NGO -GreenPeace- (Charnovitz, 1996, pp. 264).

Since early 1990s, NGOs gained access to more international organizations and exerted great influence in multilateral negotiations showing their growing power as international actors in world politics. There are several reasons that explained why NGOs were more active in international policy-making after 1992. Among these reasons are the incorporation of the world economy, and the adoption of neo-liberal doctrines (Pinzón Camargo, 2005, p. 78). However, the end of the Cold War was essential since it stopped the superpower polarization in world politics. Likewise, the appearance of a worldwide media such CNN international, that provided opportunities for NGOs to expose publicly their views, and the dissemination of democratic norms which created the chance for public participation (Charnovitz, 1996, p. 265).

A description of the historical development that NGOs have had in Colombia is listed below. It is important to make a distinction between the evolution of NGOs internationally and domestically since it can be stated that, in general terms for Latin America (and therefore for Colombia), NGOs had a "late" emergence that originated basically in the 80s when many
NGOs in Western countries had already established, learning how to gain influence and leadership in terms of public policy.

2.3. Historical development of NGOs in Colombia

Olvera (1998) points out that, in the Latin American context, the non-existence of civil society during the nineteenth century was the result of the post-colonial continuity of the relations of domination and dependence, as well as the absence of public space and a democratic culture. In fact, the common colonial past shared by Latin American countries, in which the rule was political control characterized by a centralized and authoritarian procedures, promoted that religious organizations played a key role by providing education, health, and other welfare services to the weak society. This pattern continued even after decolonization during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, reason why the role attributed to third sector organizations remained focused on charity and philanthropy (Fifka et al., 2016, p. 1098).

However, during the twentieth century, civil society became a “fashionable” concept due to the struggle against authoritarian military regimes in Latin America. In such contexts, civil society represented an extremely heterogeneous set of actors unified by the common goal of the “struggle for democratization” (Cohen & Arato, 2000). Political participation, as well as the promotion of human and citizen’s rights, was strongly oppressed so citizen groups could only contribute secretly to these issues. From the 1980s onward, NGOs could start to promote openly human rights and democratization due to the political transition that took place in many Latina American countries, including Colombia (Fifka et al., 2016, p. 1099). Salomon & Anheier (1997, p. 18) identified several issues that have influenced the development of the non-profit or the so-called third sector in Latin America (the sector which the NGOs belong to): a common colonial heritage, strong religious traditions, a period of state-centered

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5 The third sector denotes an economic role that groups a set of entities that do not correspond either to the State or the market. Organizations of the third sector are conceived as actors more prone to the market and to incorporate in their organizational practices models coming from the private company. In addition, it is a more recent concept that arose at the end of the 1970s and that had a great boom in the United States, from where it was exported to Latin America (Gómez Quintero, 2014, p. 363).
development followed by a period of market orientation, and the legal treatment of third sector organizations.

The Catholic Church, which for centuries exercised state public functions, political parties and governments, played a fundamental role in the formation and development of civil organizations in Colombia. Various mixed models of service provision with government resources and "private" management of non-profit entities, especially religious, have existed since the Colony (Villar, 2001, p. 24). However, NGOs as such were born in Colombia only during the 1960s and emerged from the need fill the space left by traditional political parties which had lost their effectiveness and credibility as mediators between the people and the government. It was thus that civil society decided to organize itself into groups or organizations which in turn formed institutions capable of making their voices reach the state. This better achieved organization included a variety of institutions, such as producer associations, cooperatives, community action boards, unions, foundations, parents' associations, neighborhood groups, etc. These organizations acted in two ways: as a channel of communication and dialogue between the State and the common citizen, and as a privileged forum from which citizens unite in a single voice to express their concerns and interests to the State (Londoño Toro, 2002).

Since the 1980s, the NGO movement evolved from the initial phase of scattered organizations with limited reach, to becoming a national sector with its own sense of identity and growing legitimacy in the eyes of the national government and the international community. In 1989 the Colombian Confederation of NGOs (CCONG\textsuperscript{6}) was created, which currently has twelve departmental federations and eighteen national NGOs that work in different sectors of social development and that represent around a thousand NGOs in the country (Londoño Toro, 2002). The main objective of the NGOs lies, from the perspective

\textsuperscript{6} The Colombian Confederation of Non-Governmental Organizations (CCONG), is a national organization of non-profit organizations (ESAL by its initials in Spanish) which brings together regional and departmental federations, associations, corporations and national foundations that work for the common good; sustainable development; the promotion, monitoring and guarantee of human rights; governance, democracy and peace. The CCONG belongs to or is a member of ECOSOC; Organizing Committee of the V Iberic-American Meeting of the Third Sector; Commission on participation of civil society in the activities of the OAS and Consultative Council of Civil Society with the IDB - CASC, among others. Source : CCONG
of the CCONG, in the construction of public goods for which in its relations with the State, they seek to "contribute and influence the construction of the public and public policy [...] Generate an attitude of predominance of the collective interest against the individual" (CCONG, 2003, p. 4). Similarly, NGOs in Colombia work with different emphases in the promotion of a sustainable human development, in the fight against poverty and exclusion in any of its forms, around the promotion, follow-up or concrete realization of human rights and the strengthening of the democracy at its various levels (Gómez Quintero, 2014, p. 368).

The so-called decentralization of the Colombian State became effective in 1991 with the new Colombian National Political Constitution. The absence of governability of the Colombian State, democratic opening and legitimacy of public institutions, accelerated the process of decentralizing administrative power to achieve a better state efficiency, giving rise to the Industrial and Commercial Companies, already other type of private entities, including NGOs (Villar, 2001, p. 71). In that sense, NGOs were defined as organizations with formal structures of decision and functioning that enjoy certain stability. They obtained the legal possibility to enter into legal commitments with the State, with employees and with recipients of the action which recognition is, in fact, implicitly included in the 1991 Constitution (Fernández, 2004). It is also important to highlight that the type of programs and problems assumed by these NGOs was greatly diversified during this period. Issues that were not at the time in the "official agenda of development" such as human rights, gender, environment, housing, training of micro-enterprises, promotion of popular culture, etc., began to take on strength at the national level (Villar, 2001, p. 72).

Regarding the nature and evolution of NGOs in Colombia, there are three basic categories, constituted in turn by different institutional forms and types of organization (sub-categories). The first category is Self-development NGOs, conformed by associative forms of an economic or community type. The second category is Support and Accompaniment NGOs, generally to the popular sectors that group Development NGOs, Services providers, Care and Assistance, Support for Government Policy, and NGOs that facilitate the action of the Donation Agencies. Finally, the third category represents the Institutional Coordination and Trade Union Representation NGOs which are basically popular organizations, Support and Accompaniment NGOs or organizations of paid workers, independent professionals,
different branches of production and distribution, among others (Vargas Cáceres et al., 1992, p. 16).

During the last two decades, NGOs have had a boom in Colombia for which not only the number but the diversity of the topics they work on have increased. In the beginning, these organizations focused on issues related to the Colombian armed conflict, victims, and poverty. However, at present, issues related to the supervision of the role of the State, such as the fight against corruption, the accompaniment of the State when it comes to fulfilling contracts, and the monitoring of public resources are some of the most common purposes of Colombian NGOs. Also, both the country's biodiversity and the problems related to fracking, mining and deforestation have attracted the interest of national and foreign NGOs which have turned their resources to the country in order to address these issues (RCN Radio, 2015).

In Colombia, NGOs are part of the non-profit entities regime that includes 21 different types of organizations, from social clubs to university foundations. But while there is a State census about non-profit entities, there is no an specific record in Colombia of how many NGOs exist in the country, what they do or how much money they own, despite the fact that according to the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (APC), which is responsible for receiving and managing all donations that come from abroad, there are more than 100 million dollars that the country receives annually in the matter of foreign donations. Similarly, the National Department of National Taxes and Customs -DIAN- (state agency in charge of taxes in Colombia) handles information on taxes collected from non-profit entities, there are no individual records for NGOs, so it is not possible to tax control over them but over the entire non-profit entity group as a whole (RCN Radio, 2015).

For the next chapter of this study, the literature related to the role played by NGOs in the policy-making process will be examined. It will begin with a brief, general description of the evolution of the State-NGO relationship. Then, it will be described the dynamic of this relationship in Latin America, which is important since it will highlight some general features of the region, that also exist in Colombia as a regional member. Subsequently, it will be reviewed the relationship that the Colombian State has had with the civil society (which includes NGOs), to finish with the examination of previous studies conducted in Colombia.
regarding the role of NGOs in different topics such as human rights, peacebuilding, and foreign policy. The literature has mostly neglected the role of environmental NGOs in Colombian policy-making reason why no previous cases were found.

3. Relationship between NGOs and governments

3.1. Evolution of the relation NGO-government

Changes have taken place in the international system that, together with globalization, indicate that the State has ceased to be the sole actor in a country's policy-making process and that other non-governmental actors are arising directly and indirectly (Ardila, 2009, p.109). Since the end of the 20th century, governments and diplomats have progressively lost their monopoly on international relations, allowing non-governmental actors to participate in diplomatic programs which has to do with the most effective way to develop and implement such programs. Thus, there is a world with multiple centers that creates a proliferation of non-state actors and governance over the states themselves (Riordan, 2005, p. 4).

In a globalized world, NGOs have the requirement to pass the barriers of time and space, to look for interlocutors all over the world to achieve their objectives, especially when, for example, the life of one or many people depends on urgent action. The work of an NGO is largely related to the visibility it has, with its impact on public opinion, the media and government policies. Regarding this last point, NGOs are learning not to despise the government's offer of participation, and rather learning to demand and generate it, demonstrating that they are the natural interlocutors of the non-state public and opening the way to reforms and significant changes for democratic countries (Londoño Toro, 2002).

This interaction between some States and non-governmental actors began at the level of consultation and feedback, without forgetting that the main decision-making responsibility lied on the State but understanding that these new agents were able to collaborate and enrich both the formulation and the execution of the actions of a country. In fact, from the second half of the 20th century, it became evident that the Nation-State no longer served as an effective unit of government, because it is too large to deal with the problems of the local
population and at the same time is limited for concepts too partial to face the problems of global interdependence. Consequently, political decentralization and regional development have become an urgent need of all countries (Wills Herrera & Wiesner Morales, 1996, p.49).

Through the span of the previous decade, it has turned out to be standard for governments to incorporate NGO agents on their designations who may utilize this situation to shape an administration's position or impact the negotiation process. What's more, governments may draw on their institutional rights to help NGOs. For instance, delegates of UN part states may present goals drafted by NGOs, issue adjustments to specific propositions, make proclamations for NGOs, ask for sections around passages and expressions with which they don't concur, and, most essential, vote for or against a specific proposition (Joachim, 2007, p. 29).

3.2. Latin America: how NGOs are related to governments?

In overall terms, NGOs have shown a weak link with Latin American States through public policies. The fundamental reasons for this situation are related to the lack of modernization and professionalization of political practices. For example, a large part of Latin American parliaments has information and knowledge support systems, but they tend to be nominal institutions, which do not lend real support to legislators. In addition, usually the executive bodies (Presidency and Ministries) practice using advisory teams that belong to their own government coalition. This situation has led to several corruption scandals, since it is used more as a form of financing of political cadres, than as real technical advisors. Finally, there are, among the rulers, practices of “omnipresence”, typical of the political culture of the Latin American State, where the democratically elected authority is erected as a "great sage" that does not require councils to govern. Clearly, this tradition would imply that NGOs specialized in certain topics are not consulted by the government or if they are, this is only sporadically or instrumentally (Ferrer et al., 2005, p. 12).

In the case of Latin America, the dialogue between NGOs and the State has occurred, primarily, in situations of crisis, modernization of the State, or democratization (Ardila, 2009, p.110). However, the role of accountability which can be exercised by NGOs in Latin
American democracies has been questioned under the argument that these organizations respond to “particular incentives”, which are also mutually exclusive and unequal since they can only be accessed by people with economic resources (Przeworski, 2002, p.81). However, the difficulties that the Latin American region suffers are inherent in democracy, and not the product of local and idiosyncratic characteristics. Despite this, the literature reveals a broad consensus regarding the lack of governmental accountability in large part of Latin America (Przeworski, 2002, p.82).

Similarly, in their research, Ferrer et. al (2005) explored the NGO-State relationship in the development of public policies for overcoming poverty in Latin America. The authors concluded that there was a weak incidence of NGOs in the development of public policies, characterized by isolated and unsystematic strategies to influence them. One of the central factors was the fragility of most NGOs to survive as an autonomous entity, which was expressed in their high dependence on public or private resources to function. From the State, the lack of modernization and professionalization of the political practices caused that the specialized NGOs are not consulted or included in the policy-making process, or when they were, it was only sporadically or instrumentally. Finally, the authors state that Latin American States would not have been prepared to understand, act and cooperate in a new political-executive dimension of the civil society-State relationship, product of the retirement of the Welfare State and the introduction of the neoliberal model.

### 3.3. Colombian government and its relationship with civil society

Ardila (2009, p.111) argues that the Colombian government usually has initiatives for cooperation and consultation with civil society in times of either concern or crisis. For instance, in Neighborhood Commissions\(^7\) such as the Venezuela one, the academic sector played a very important consulting role. Something similar could be said about the dialogue

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\(^7\) *Neighborhood Commissions* are bilateral mechanisms established by governments to promote border integration and development, through the definition and execution of actions and projects of economic and social impact for the border regions. At the end of the 1980s, the Presidential Commission for Integration and Border Affairs was established with Venezuela. Based on this experience, this model is replicated with some of the countries with which Colombia shares terrestrial and/or maritime borders such Ecuador (1989), Panama (1992), Peru (1993), Brazil (1993) and Jamaica (1994). Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
with the academic sector when Colombia assumed the Presidency of the “Non-Aligned” Movement and the validity of that organization was debated at a regional level (1995, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), or when the Ministry created the lecture “Europe 2000” (1997, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) with the participation of academics, businessmen and media.

From the beginning of twenty-first century, there is also an alarm about the issue of migration in Colombia, being this topic one of the most important for which the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has consulted civil society, especially the academic sector. The link between the academic sector and Colombia's foreign migration policy was due to the government's concern about the number of Colombians leaving the country and the remittances that were arriving, as well as to the lack of knowledge about the characteristics of those emigration processes and the migratory process in general. This consultation with the academic sector has been carried out in a cyclical and intermittent manner and at the level of diagnosis and information (López Pacheco, 2012).

Related to migration issue in Colombia, Ardila (2009) examines in her article, how the Colombian Academic Sector, as non-state actor, has influenced in the design of Colombian migratory foreign policy. The paper focused on a case study: Colombia Nos Une, in which the academic sector was consulted about the characteristics of migrants and the design of a migratory foreign policy led by the national government. In this sense, it sought to examine the incidence of the Academic Sector in the design and execution of those guidelines. The research determined that the participation of the Academic Sector was “circumstantial, punctual and intermittent”. The author concluded that, unlike other countries, the decision makers of the Colombian foreign policy interact little with non-state actors, reason why they are not really taken into consideration when designing the foreign policy of the country.

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8 Colombia Nos Une is an Internal Working Group attached to the Directorate of Migratory, Consular and Citizen Services, which seeks to link Colombians abroad and make them subject to public policies. Likewise, it seeks to establish the conditions for nationals wishing to migrate to do so in a voluntary and orderly manner, ensuring the protection of their rights, maintaining their links with the country, and providing accompaniment to their eventual return. Source: Cancillería de Colombia.
3.4. NGOs and their role in Colombian policy-making: consideration of prior studies

Despite the scarce literature in Colombia regarding civil society in general, and particularly about NGOs, it is possible to assert that the role that NGOs have played in Colombian public policy basically depends on the field that is being evaluated. In general terms, NGOs have gained relevance in the public agenda since they have learned not only how to take advantage of the media and social networks to spread their ideas and work, but also, how to work together with the State, especially in order to address domestic issues such as human rights and peacebuilding. However, in other cases, such as the determination of Colombian foreign policy, it is clear that the national government has taken a leading and controlling role in decision-making, which leaves out any contribution that civil society, and especially NGOs, can make according to their experience and capabilities. Other important subjects such as environmental protection and sustainable development have been totally neglected by the traditional literature, even though they have been deeply documented for media.

Human rights are the most popular topic address by both domestic and international NGOs in Colombia. For example, López Pacheco (2012, p. 120) argues that the human rights defense activity carried out by some NGOs in Colombia can be analyzed as an alternative exercise of “social accountability”, mainly characterized by the denunciation, control, and power abuse limitation. According to the author, NGOs have played a fundamental role in Colombia, as dynamic and self-motivated actors that expose conditions of vulnerability and violation of human rights in the country. Similarly, the author affirms that the mobilization and vindication of human rights in Colombia is presented as a defense of the rights constitutionally consecrated, against their violation and in search of their affirmation and consolidation. In this regard, NGOs have positioned themselves as agents that try to influence public agendas and exercise political pressure regarding human rights issues. The political and moral value of defending human rights has allowed a diverse group of NGOs to play a role of pressure and denunciation that is increasingly articulated and is receiving more and more attention every day.

Similarly, Marín Aranguren (2009) addresses the question regarding the role that international non-governmental human rights organizations have played in Colombia. The
article concluded that international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) have been played a significant role in Colombian foreign policy. INGOs carried out an intense public action in Colombia, especially in social networks, that distinguishes them more than as activists as “agents with character”. Likewise, INGOs could achieve, through advocacy, to inform, educate and empower civil society and other actors in human rights. The reports prepared by INGOs in the different international scenarios triggered alerts from the other actors (states, international governmental organizations, multinationals, and so on) to take action and to demand that the national government comply with the agreements it promised to respect. In general terms, INGOs censor, when the rights are violated; they resort to international regulations, when there is no national legislation, so violations are punished; and they always press to save lives.

In the context of the Colombian armed conflict, the responsibility of the military to respect and defend human rights has also been a key issue for the NGOs that played an influencing role in determining new laws. In fact, (García Peña, 2011, p.178) tells that in view of the concerns raised by human rights NGOs about the effect of the support for the military in the armed conflict, the Congress issued a law which included seven very strict conditions, whose compliance should be certified, every six months, by the elected President of Colombia. Among these conditions are the responsibility of the President of the Republic to ensure that officers accused of human rights violations are tried by civil courts, and the obligation of the General Commander of the Armed Forces to suspend officers accused of violations of human rights.

Another important area where NGOs have been actively involved in Colombia is in peacebuilding. After more than 50 years of civil war in Colombia, both the national government and the civil society decided to work together in another attempt to achieve peace. In this regard, Abozaglo (2009) found that NGOs did play a vital role in peacebuilding in Colombia. They mostly focused on constructing a new power structure and a peace culture that aimed to break the patterns of violence, exclusion and authoritarian power relations. In this regard, both national and international NGOs involved in peacebuilding in Colombia detected two main fields of failure. On the one hand, the necessity for a democratic society with more effective mechanisms for equal participation of citizens in public affairs, and, on
the other hand, the need for a better justice system to guarantee respect for the constitution, the rule of law and the compliance of human rights. However, the research showed that there was an inadequate cohesion and coordination among NGOs that avoided them from actively participating in peace negotiations and dialogues with a united peace agenda. The study concluded that, in order to play a leading role in constructing a common peacebuilding agenda for Colombian civil society, assisting to stop social divisions, implementing a culture for peace, and encouraging inclusion, NGOs should accomplish to build a greater cohesion among civil society sectors.

In a more general way, Bocchi (2013) analyzed in his study the role of different NGOs in determining Colombian Foreign Policy. The author found that the current Colombian foreign policy has been designed almost exclusively by the government. Violations of human rights, disrespect for the principle of democratic ownership in matters of international cooperation, internal armed conflict, socio-environmental problems in trade and investment, among others, are the internal problems that national and international NGOs show and transmit abroad, preventing Colombia from positioning the image it wants on the international scene: a country in post-conflict and respectful of the human rights, a partner with which you can conduct sustainable business at the social and environmental level. Meanwhile, in the themes of the regional and global agenda, civil society is presenting proposals that move away from the classic foreign policy based on the *respum polum*. For instance, the foreign policy that President Santos (2010-2018) adopted was based on the search for consensus and the use of international cooperation, but it seems to respond to governmental interests, without taking due account of societal interests. Santos government decided not to consult NGOs for the design and monitoring of its foreign policy and the consequence is parallel diplomacy.

Previously, the historical development of the NGOs was described, emphasizing the fact that both the number and the work of the NGOs grew and became more relevant in the last decades, positioning them as important actors in the political scene. It is now necessary to understand the possible roles that NGOs can have in society and how they can influence public policies. The next unit will be a review of the most relevant literature regarding the role played by NGOs in society and how they can influence the public agenda.
4. Theoretical framework

4.1. Review of the role of NGOs in the policy-making process

When addressing the role of non-State actors in the climate regime, Newell (2000) detailed a *regime-breakdown* approach that describes the role of different NGOs and their activities. He identified three main stages in the development of international regimes. The first one is the *agenda-setting* which is characterized by the identification of the nature and scope of the problems and the determination of the need for international regulation. The second stage is the *negotiation-bargaining* which refers, as its name suggests, to the negotiations and bargaining processes in which traditionally only sovereign States are involved. Finally, the last stage is the *implementation* which implies the execution of the rules that have been agreed at the international level. There is a fourth stage neglected by the author which is the *enforcement* which is related to the processes to guarantee that States obey their international obligations.

Unlike Newell, Yamin (2001, p. 153) asserts that in practice, these stages are rarely sequential and also indicates that, in the case of environmental field, problems require periodic adjustment of rules to take into account the latest scientific information. Likewise, Yamin considers that NGOs play very important and dynamic roles in the environment field for which the author identifies 6 main, interconnected roles that environmental NGOs might hold when pursuing their objectives: agenda-setters, conscience-keepers, partners, experts, lobbyists, and enforcers.

The first role that NGOs play is as *agenda-setters*. Even though NGOs usually have no legal rights to put issues or topics formally on governments’ agendas, they do exercise informal power in order to shape the way in which problems are addressed, their priority and how governments allow NGOs to collaborate to solve them. NGOs also raise and generate new forms of ecological sensibility, as well as moving societies towards sustainable development for which there are known as *conscience-keepers*. The next role played by NGOs is as *partners* which means that NGOs look for partnerships with institutions and States since achieving sustainable development, for instance, requires of lots of institutional coordination,
the development of substantive policies, the coherence of the existing policies and the integration of environment and development concerns. NGOs are experts in their discipline for which different governments call upon them to demand expert scientific, technical and policy advice. One of the most important roles played by NGOs is as lobbyists which refers to their ability to influence policymakers, which depends on their expertise and the public pressure they can exercise, as well as on the degree of access that NGOs have to both policymakers and relevant documentation. Finally, NGOs also play a fundamental role as enforcers or legal guardians of environmental laws at the national and international level by using court proceedings and demanding the fostering of law (Yamin, 2001, p. 153-161).

NGOs might have several roles related to their social work and to the particular objectives they would like to accomplish in a specific society. However, regardless the universe of possibilities that NGOs have at their disposal to solve issues that distress the society, this study will focus only on the role that allows NGOs influence the public policy from the very beginning. More specifically, this study will focus on how to influence the government in such a way that it gains interest in problems that NGOs call attention to. It is for this reason that of the numerous stages in the policy cycle, the agenda setting is the one where NGOs can influence the most since it permits them to highlight what they think requires especial attention from the government.

4.2. Agenda-setting and NGOs: consideration of relevant literature

NGOs have played a crucial role in winning both national and international recognition among governments for matters that once were considered exclusively domestic concerns, including, but not only, environmental issues. However, having access to these issues depends in large part on the strategies that NGOs have at their disposal and which they should know how to take advantage of. Among the possible strategies that NGOs can choose in order to influence public policies, agenda setting is one of the most studied and documented

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9 Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (1995) distinguish five stages that shape the policy cycle: agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision-making, policy implementation, and finally, policy evaluation.
strategies, reason why its importance in undeniable. Thus, this research will focus on agenda-setting to explain how NGOs get access to a specific government’s agenda.

Agenda-setting is not only the first of the stages in the policy cycle, but it might be, as well, the most critical one since it is in this stage where problems come out, or not, as contestants for government’s attention. According to Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (1995, p. 92), what happens in this stage has a critical impact on the entire consequent policy cycle and its results. Similarly, the authors highlight that the way in which problems are recognized, if they are, is a determining factor of how they will be tackled by policy-makers. Yet, the fact that an issue gets into the government’s agenda does not mean that it will be addressed or resolved by further government activity, but simply that it has been chosen for the government’s consideration from among all the existing problems in a society in a given time: it has been merely recognized as a public issue.

Several models have encapsulated the idea that the agenda-setting implicates the interaction of several factors such as institutions, state as well as non-state actors, and ideas. For instance, Downs (1972), in his study about the appearance of the US environmental policy in the 1960s, argued that public policy-making often concentrated on issues that, briefly but in a fierce way (usually because of the media involvement), would catch the public attention and thus, generated petitions or claims for government action. Yet, the author also noticed that many of these problems soon fade away from public attention basically when an ever-increasing number of individuals understand the challenges and time consumption required with tackling the issue. Downs denominated to this momentaneous public attention on a certain issue as the “issue-attention cycle” which was innovative to the extent that it could explain the agenda-setting as the linkage between political institutions, public opinion, and public policy. Despite the recurrent use of the Down’s theory in the literature during the following decades, the issue-attention cycle was hardly ever subject to empirical assessment and other models became more accurate to bring together policy theory and agenda-setting reality, especially the ones that included interest groups in the analysis (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 1995, p. 100-101).
Regarding the study of the agenda-setting in the domestic context, Cobb & Elder, (1972, p. 85-86) make a distinction between two different kinds of agendas that governments might possess. The first agenda is the “systemic or informal agenda” which contains all issues that are commonly perceived, by members of the political community, as for being worthy of actual public attention. It involves affairs within the legitimate jurisdiction of the existing governmental authority. The second agenda is the “formal or institutional agenda” which consists of all affairs that are explicitly up for the active and serious consideration of authoritative decision-makers as public problems. This distinction is useful since it permits understand that not all matters that government points out as important will receive action from it, but only a small amount. Therefore, it can be said that an issue has formally entered the institutional agenda only when the government has accepted the necessity to deal with it.

Cobb, Ross, & Ross (1976) building upon Cobb & Elder’s model, originally proposed that the type of agenda-setting process was eventually defined by the nature of the political system that governed a given country. In this regard, the authors defined three possible models based on three different political systems: the outside initiation model that was characteristic of liberal democracies, the mobilization model was typical of totalitarian regimes, and the inside initiation model that was distinctive of authoritarian bureaucratic regimes. Since it is a democracy the political system in Colombia, this study would be more interest in the outside initiation model which receives its name from the fact that the problems arise from non-governmental groups -outsiders-. Then, these problems move from the systemic agenda to the institutional one due to the pressure exerted for the government action. Nevertheless, it was later recognized that examples of each sort of agenda-setting were identified within each regime type which meant that the different forms of agenda-setting varied depending on the policy sector rather than the political regime.

It is also important to understand that agendas do not just exist out there, but they actually evolve. In this regard, Cohen, March, & Olsen (1972) developed the “garbage can model” which suggests that agendas are the result of the interaction of four relatively independent
“streams”\textsuperscript{10}: problems, solutions, participants, and choice-opportunities, which only meet when the fourth stream-choice opportunity- arises, as a garbage can, for the other streams to flow into. This model represents the choice-opportunity (decision-situation) as a “garbage can” where participants are messily throwing problems and solutions into, as they are being generated. Agendas come from a particular mix of “garbage” which depends on who are the participants, which solutions are proposed, and what problems are being evaluated. This model is useful to the extent that it exhibits agenda-setting as a dynamic process in which the interaction of participants and some structural changes determine the issues and the possible resolutions that policymakers might consider. Applying the garbage can model to this study, NGOs might be considered as participants that can make use of their influence by framing problems or offering solutions in a strategic manner that involves taking advantage of choice opportunities.

The last model that this study will review is the one proposed by Kingdon (1984) concerning his investigation about policy initiation in the US Congress in which he examined the role of both state influencers (civil servants, Congress, president, presidential staff, and political appointees) as well as non-state participants (interest groups, media, researchers, academics, consultants, foundations and think tanks, and public opinion) in the agenda-setting. According to Kingdon, there are three sets of variables that he has called “streams” that are constantly interacting with each other when it comes to the agenda-setting process: problems, policies and politics. The problem stream emerges when problems are perceived as public issues which require government action, the policy stream appears once experts and analysts examine the problems and actively propose solutions to them, and finally, the political stream is shaped by such things as public mood, election results, pressure group campaigns, partisan or ideological distributions in Congress, and changes of administration. Kingdon stated that even though these streams operate mostly independently from each other, during one specific

\textsuperscript{10} Problems are conditions that people both inside and outside the organization find no longer acceptable and that require attention from decision makers. Solutions are the policies that policy-makers came out ranging from further research to education, laws, and resource allocation. Participants with different resources drift in and out of the decision-making process with their pet problems and solutions. Choice opportunities are changes in the political climate, political realignments, and earmarking events that create openings or a window for change to occur (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972).
time, known as a \textit{policy window} (the opportunity to push pet solutions, or to push attention to special problems), their paths cross thanks to the activities of \textit{policy entrepreneurs} (those who invest time, energy, reputation and money for advocating policies) who links policy problems and policy solutions with political opportunities. Policy windows open predictably due to institutionalized events like periodic elections or budgetary cycles, but unexpected events such as crises, accidents, scandals or the presence or absence of policy entrepreneurs inside or outside the government can also signify opening factors.

This overview of previous studies had the intention of showing how the notion of the agenda-setting has evolved in such a comprehensive way that it has been recognized how key actors, their views and opinions about potential policy problems as well as the institutions where they work or have some kind of connections can influence this stage of the policy process. This discussion will be important since it is the foundation of this research in the extent that it will try to review all the components that make possible the influence of the NGOs during the agenda-setting process as key actors of the policy-making process. The next section will address the theoretical framework that is used in this study, explaining in detail all the factors that will be revised during the methodology chapter.

4.3. Theoretical framework used in this study

The models presented in the former sub-section are all very vital to understand the agenda-setting as a dynamic, multi-factor process. However, separately, the models fall short to explain the role of NGOs in the agenda-setting. For instance, it is now well-known that the agenda setting process has less to do with the political regime as Cobb, Ross, & Ross originally proposed and more with the policy sector, and even though it is more applicable to environmental issues (which is the focus of this study), Down’s model did not capture the importance of interest groups, especially NGOs, in the agenda-setting process. Similarly, even though the garbage can model is very interesting since, in some way, it can describe the dynamism and spontaneity that the determination of the agenda-setting might have, it is also a bit chaotic and unstructured to imagine this process in the way that the model presents itself.
On the other hand, while Kingdon’s model was more accurate to demonstrate the role of the policy entrepreneurs (where NGOs can be included) to take advantage of existing policy windows in order to push issues to the institutional agenda, Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl (1995, p.108) assure that “the content of the problems identified in the agenda-setting depend very much on the nature of the policy subsystem found in the area concerned and the kinds of ideas its members have”. That is why this study will base on the way Jutta Joachim conducted her study: “Agenda setting, the UN, and NGOs: gender, violence, and reproductive rights”, where she determined how, why, and under what conditions women’s organizations -NGOs- succeeded in placing the issues of violence against women and reproductive rights and health on UN agendas. Her theoretical framework presents a more organized, straightforward way to determine the influence of NGOs in the policy-making process which will benefit more the way this study will be structured.

Of the numerous stages in the policy cycle, Joachim, (2007, p. 16) highlights that the influence of NGOs is argued to be the greatest in the agenda-setting. The author points out that NGOs try to use influence in their attempt to shape the agenda of a specific government. That influence is carried out by framing processes which the author defines as “strategic packaging of new ideas and interpretations” that seek for social mobilization. Additionally, the successful of these frameworks, which means that they are accepted and recognized as legitimate, depend mostly on the interaction of two factors: “the political opportunity structure in which NGOs are embedded, and the mobilizing structures that NGOs have at their disposal” (Joachim, 2007, p. 16).

4.3.1. Framing processes

Joachim’s (2007, p. 19-22) study is based on Snow & Benford (1988) and reflects on framing processes. It recognizes three relatively independent forms of framing processes: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. Diagnostic framing refers to the recognition of a problem and the attribution of blame or causality which implies a deep study of the roots of the problems as well as the shift from individual blaming to system-critical blaming (structural dislocations). Prognostic framing mainly consists of the identification of solutions to specific problems which can include technical fixes, legal instruments, research,
transfer of resources and education. Similarly, this type of framing also requires that NGOs develop strategies, tactics, and targets to address these issues. For instance, decisions such as working inside or outside existing institutions, or whether mobilizing support through formal strategies, including lobbying or the provision of information, instead of so-called voice strategies, such as demonstrations or sit-ins, are some of the strategies that NGOs can use. Finally, motivational framing suggests a rationale for action, it provides a reason for why people should act with respect to a particular issue which, in some cases, includes arguments regarding what would happen if nothing is done.

Having examined the types of framing processes that will be taken into account in this study, it is imperative now to clarify what makes them accepted and recognized as legitimate. For this, Joachim (2007, p. 22) considers that there are two essential elements that legitimize these framing processes: the political opportunity structure which surrounds NGOs, as well as the mobilizing structures that NGOs have at their disposal. Political opportunity structures allude to the institutional context that gives chances to, or forces limitations on, NGOs that are working on specific framing processes. For its part, mobilizing structures represent the organizational resources and networks that NGOs use in order to mobilize and engage people in collective action processes. Below, these two elements will be explained in greater depth with the idea of knowing what elements make them up and how they can be analyzed in the specific study of NGOs.

4.3.2. Political opportunity structures

The political system where NGOs are embedded is very important to determine what opportunities or constraints NGOs are encountering when dealing with specific framing processes (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996, p. 2). The political opportunity structure might rely on several factors; however, this study will focus on the following three aspects as the most important ones in concordance with Tarrow (1988) McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996) and Joachim (2007): access to institutions, influential allies, and political alignments or conflicts.
**Access to institutions**

Having access to the institutions that NGOs seek to influence is, probably, the most critical aspect of the political opportunity structure. The introduction of issues or the circulation of solutions and new ideas frequently depends on how easily NGOs can access to a specific institution. For instance, Joachim (2007, p. 24) tells how NGOs have gained more access to the UN agenda in the last two decades, and especially after the Cold War, by taking part of their events as well as taking advantage of changes in the institutional discourses, rules, and procedures within the UN. In this way, NGOs have been able to make their voices heard while they make policymakers aware of the prevalence and severity of a particular issue or call into question policies that they had previously taken for granted.

**Influential allies**

Similarly, influential allies can help NGOs to mobilize support for new ideas and resolutions due to the resources they own as well as the influence and/or pression they can exert over other influential actors, the society and the government itself. Among the influential allies that NGOs might have are the media, prestigious foundations, the Church, famous people as well as government officials. These allies might also contribute to the growth as well as the visibility of NGOs. As a result of their support, NGOs are now able to maintain international offices and staff, publish newsletters and other materials, hold international meetings, conduct international campaigns, conduct research and in general, do their job in a more comprehensive way. The media, however, is the most critical ally of NGOs according to (Joachim, 2007, p. 28). In this regard, Tarrow (1994, p. 127), states that media provides a diffuse vehicle for consensus formation that NGO movements on their own could never achieve. Contrary to NGOs, the media can reach various and large sections of the public in relatively short time. In connection with environmental NGOs, Wapner (1995, p. 321) points out that “through television, radio, newspapers and magazines transnational activist groups bring hidden spots of the globe into people's everyday lives, thus enabling vast numbers of people to ‘bear witness’ to environmental abuse.”
Changes in political alignments

Finally, changes as well as conflicts in political alignments might affect the framing processes that NGOs are carrying out. Changes in political alignments can represent opportunities for NGOs. These changes in political alignments might be understood as the manifestation of various voting groups or blocs, especially the emerging ones which can create opportunities for NGOs since they might seek for outside backing to firm up their still-unstable positions. Joachim (2007, p. 30) took into account the emergence of groups such as the European Union, and the Group of Seventy-Seven for her research in order to demonstrate that topics such as women’s rights dominated the UN agenda after the Cold War because of the emergence of these groups which were searching for new issues to build up a global profile and to solidify their positions. However, for this study, changes in political alignments will be more understood as changes in existing policies, international commitments as well as changes in the government in power.

4.3.3. Mobilizing structures

The mobilizing structures that NGOs have at their disposal is the other key element to evaluate how legitimate their framing processes are. The mobilizing structures represent the organizational resources and networks that NGOs use in order to mobilize and engage people in collective action processes. Even though the mobilizing structures are varied wide-ranging, the study will focus on three of them: the presence of organizational entrepreneurs, the support of a constituency, and the knowledge and expertise NGOs have (Joachim, 2007, p. 32).

Organizational entrepreneurs

Organizational entrepreneurs refer to individuals or organizations who are interested enough on an issue that are able to afford the initial costs of mobilizing people, have organizing experiences and are well-linked. Likewise, organizational entrepreneurs have developed many friendships and become members of many different organizational networks which is useful in mobilizing individuals and facilitating collective action. They have also available mechanisms for spreading information, including among others, newsletters or mailing lists,
meeting facilities, and an established membership. For instance, it is well-known that Peter Beneson, founder of Amnesty International, depended on his professional, legal and religious networks to assemble the organizing core of his organization (Joachim, 2007, p. 33). Organizational entrepreneurs are also a source for new strategies and methods and can facilitate the contact with policy-makers.

Support from a specific constituency

The second element of mobilizing structures is the support of a constituency. Joachim (2007, p. 34) has called this element: international constituency, however, given the scope and the nature of this research, possibly the most relevant constituency is the national, so its international character has been left aside to highlight only the importance of having the support of the public. The constituency is formed by both active members who take part in campaigns or other organizational activities as well as passive members who simply pay their fees. One important aspect of the constituency is its composition which may affect the effect on the mobilization. Heterogeneous constitutencies can boost the reliability of frames but also it can lead to reach, on one hand, consensus among the members, and on the other hand, fragmentation and factionalism due to the cultural and political background that might make it difficult to reach agreement on the causes of a particular problem, acceptable solutions, and even strategies and tactics (Joachim, 2007, p. 35-36).

Knowledge and expertise

The third main element for mobilization is the NGOs’ knowledge and expertise which give these organizations a relatively favorable position over different actors and makes them esteemed contributors in the agenda-setting process. Nevertheless, distinctive types of expertise and information are needed for successful framing efforts. Most of the time, NGOs will need to prove not only the existence of a particular problem, but the feasibility of a solution. For this, statistics and scientific studies are especially important, because scientific

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11 A big problem related to heterogeneous constituency refers to mobilizing over large geographical distances. This is still complicated in some parts of the geography since the communication systems are not well-developed and not everyone has access neither to information nor devices. Also, there is still a high degree of illiteracy which makes it difficult for individuals and NGOs to exchange their ideas about a particular issue.
*knowledge* provides credible and reliable source of information that is verifiable and generalizable but also objective and neutral. However, NGOs can also make use of *testimonial knowledge* quite successfully in their movements. It comes from personal experiences or circumstances which makes it particular in nature and subjective. The use of pictures, videos and statements are typical for this kind of knowledge that looks for assigning blame and identifying perpetrators, making it more difficult for them to negate their responsibility and forcing them to justify their actions. Another type of knowledge that NGOs can exhibit is the *procedural knowledge* which can be defined as an understanding of the political institutions that NGOs target as well as these institutions’ internal political processes (Joachim, 2007, p. 36-38).

Having considered both previous studies concerning the role that NGOs played in Colombian public policy and the main components of the theoretical framework that will be used in this research, the next chapter will explain the methodology that the study will follow in order to determine what was the role of some environmental NGOs in Colombia’s agenda-setting process. As it will explain better in the next chapter, it was decided to use case studies, mainly because it is more manageable to select specific cases rather than assessing the whole spectrum of environmental NGOs in Colombia, especially because of the scarcity of information available.

5. Methodology

This study is based on an exploratory, inductive approach which seeks to evaluate if some environmental NGOs have the adequate elements to influence the formulation of the government’s agenda concerning environmental issues. The methodology of this research will be based on a comparative analysis of two environmental NGOs or case studies, were then used in the search for common or divergent elements that permit to explain the relation NGO-Colombian government regarding environmental issues.
5.1. Case studies selection

The selection process of the NGOs was based on some specific criteria. First, the NGOs needed to fulfill the definition of NGOs made in section 2.1. Second, all NGOs had to be based in Colombia and had active projects there. Third, since it is also a secondary objective of this research to measure if the transnational character of the NGOs impacts their capacity to influence the agenda-setting process, it was decided to split the case studies into two groups, so NGOs were either national or international NGOs. Fourth, given the great diversity of environmental issues, the fields of action and the work areas in the country, it was resolved to consider only NGOs that work on the issue of climate change in Colombia, regardless their focus. Fifth, it was essential to look at the degree of available information not only about the NGOs but also on their work on climate change issues as the selected topic for which only NGOs with enough existing information were selected. Based on the mentioned criteria, two NGOs\textsuperscript{12} were finally selected as study objects: Fundación Natura as the national NGO as well as Conservation International Colombia as the international one. The design of the study is qualitative and thus involves a process of analyzing various subjective evidence. The observations rely on information collected from primary sources, mainly from the selected NGOs’ websites, publications, reports, and projects, as well as secondary sources, predominantly news, reports, and in some extent, academic articles.

5.2. Analytical framework

Figure 1 below illustrates the analytical framework of the study. As it was already explained in section 4.3, this research will intend to find if the selected two environmental NGOs –Conservation International Colombia and Fundación Natura– have the necessary elements to influence Colombia’s agenda-setting. First, it will determine which type of framing process (diagnostic, prognostic, and/or motivational) is used by each of the selected NGOs.

\textsuperscript{12} There are more NGOs –national and international– that fulfill the criteria considered for this study such us WWF Colombia, DeJusticia, and Fondo Acción. However, due to the necessities and objectives of this study, the other NGOs won’t be taken into account for the study. The information collected for the two case studies was enough for making some conclusions regarding the studied topic. Nevertheless, it would be very interesting to include them in a future research in order to make a wider study of the role of the NGOs in Colombian policy-making.
Later, it will be assessed whether these framing processes are accepted and recognize as legitimate which depends on two factors: the political opportunity structure in which NGOs are embedded and the mobilizing structures that NGOs have at their disposal (Joachim, 2007) which, in turn, depends on three other elements each that will be explained in more detail below.

5.2.1. Sources to evaluate mobilizing structures

Regarding mobilizing structures, there are three indicators that make it up: knowledge and expertise, support from a constituency, and organizational entrepreneurship. The first indicator to be analyzed is Knowledge and Expertise that the chosen NGOs have on environmental issues and especially on climate change, information that can be collected via NGOs’ websites, news as well as reports, campaigns, and academic literature. The organizational entrepreneurship indicator will be revised by using reports from the NGOs as well as news to obtain information concerning well-linked individuals or organizations that were interested enough on climate change to afford the initial costs of mobilizing people, and/or organizing experiences. It might include people, organization and other States that have financed NGOs’ programs in Colombia with the interest of findings ways to adapt or mitigate the negative effects of climate change.
The manifested support from a constituency is the last indicator which will be addressed mainly through social media (Facebook, YouTube and Twitter). When searching throughout the NGOs’ social media, the information will filter by using “climate change” as a keyword. In the case of Twitter which has an advanced research tool, the filtration will be more specific for which the following criteria will be applied: “cambio climático” (for climate change in Spanish) will be the words used for "All of these words". In this regard, the tool identifies all cases where the combination of these two words were used regardless the use of graphic accents like in the case of "climático" (climate in English). For the field: "these hashtags", it will be defined: #cambioclimatico; and finally, for the field "from these accounts", only the NGOs' Twitter accounts will be used but independently: @CIColombia and @fundacionnatura. The other fields will be left blank, so the search will be wider. Nevertheless, this indicator will also include news and NGOs’ campaigns where the information regarding the number of climate change initiatives supporters can be found.

5.2.2. Sources to evaluate political opportunity structures

The political opportunity structure is shaped by access to institutions, influential allies, and changes in political alignments. For the first indicator, the access to the institutions that NGOs would like to influence, will be considered whether the environmental NGOs have access or not to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS for its acronym in Spanish or Minambiente for its short name in Spanish) which is the institution that deals with the design and formulation of the national policy in relation to the environment and renewable natural resources (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, n.d). The second indicator to be considered is what influential allies the NGOs have, including the media, other institutions and NGOs, members of the government and so on. In order to find it out, the NGOs’ websites, projects and publications will be revised since they usually show what their allies and partners are. Finally, the third indicator is related to changes in political alignments in which it will be considered any changes regarding national or international environmental law, new agreements and/or ratification of subscribed treaties as well as the emergence of new groups or government officials supporting environmental initiatives related to climate change that might have worked as an open window for the NGOs to introduce their initiatives about climate change.
6. Evidence

In the next section, the case studies are presented, starting with Conservation International Colombia, and then with Fundación Natura. The cases are described independently, beginning with a short introduction of the NGOs, and then, each case will be revised according to the indicators shown in figure 1 which is the analytical framework used by this study. In section 5.2 were already described all the elements that will be taken into account while reviewing each indicator.

6.1. Conservation International Colombia

Conservation International (CI) was founded in 1987 in the United States of America with the goal of protecting nature for the benefit of people under the motto: “Nature doesn’t need people. People need nature”. At the beginning of its establishment and for the next two decades, CI focused its work on protecting “biodiversity hotspots” right after scientist Norman Myers wrote the paper that originally introduced this concept in 1988. Due to its abundant biodiversity, and the danger that this natural vegetation faces, a large area of Colombia’s territory is recognized as one of the 36 hotspots in the world and thus, CI decided to set one of its global field offices in Bogota, Colombia on December 17, 1991 (Conservation International, n.d.-a).

CI’s current work has extended beyond the defense of hotspots to topics such as plastic pollution and climate change because the NGO has recognized that protecting species and places is not enough for the humanity to survive and prosper, but it is necessary to protect the whole nature as an essential part of human society. Up to now, CI along with more than 2,000 partners in 30 different countries and a payroll of more than 1,000 employees, has been able to safeguard 1,200 protected areas throughout 77 countries, preserving more than 601 million hectares of land, marine and coastal areas (Conservation International, 2017, p. 18).

13 A biodiversity hotspot is a region of the world that completely fulfill the following criteria: it has a high percentage of plant life that cannot be found anywhere else in the planet, and it possess 30% or less of its original natural vegetation which means that it is a threatened place (Conservation International, n.d.-a).
Such a global and comprehensive work has made CI one of the most important environmental NGOs worldwide.

6.1.1. Evaluation of Conservation International’s mobilizing structures

CI’s knowledge and expertise

Besides the fact that CI is an NGO with vast international experience, in its more than 30 years of work, the NGOs has been able to build up a great stock of knowledge regarding environmental management, protection, and risk control. Regarding climate change, CI has focused on the idea that countries should adapt to the challenges that this phenomenon brings to the environment. In this sense, CI has been developing processes and best-practices for decades that seek to affect global policy decisions and local means management by using the so-called ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) approach which is based on the idea that natural ecosystems need to be sustainably managed, conserved, and restored in such a way that it can help people to successfully adapt to climate change. By merging lessons from former experiences (previous projects mainly carried out in Brazil, CASCADE —Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala—, Cambodia, Colombia, Galapagos, Madagascar, South Africa, and the Philippines) with the best climate science, CI has been able to target adaptation outcomes more precisely. That is why CI not only produces results at a project site but use these projects to generate learned lessons that are used into the formulation of national policy concerning climate change management and in international fora such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - UNFCCC (Conservation International, n.d.-d).

The Mentioned expertise and knowledge regarding climate change was employed by CI, with the support of the Colombian government and financed by GEF, when implemented the Integrated National Adaptation Plan (INAP)\textsuperscript{14} using EbA activities as a foundation to productively manage the effects of climate change in high mountain ecosystems of Chingaza Massif\textsuperscript{15} in the Colombian Andes (Pérez, Muñoz, Páez, & Triana, 2010). The EbA approach

\textsuperscript{14} The INAP will be explained in more detail in the section “Access to government”.

\textsuperscript{15} The high mountain ecosystems of Chingaza Massif located in the Colombian Andes, which are situated over 2,740 meters, are truly susceptible exposed to the foreseen effects of climate change. Models have anticipated
applied to Chingaza Massif as a high mountain ecosystem exhibited evidence of success since it resulted in a more integrated, ecosystem-based vision of the territory. Moreover, the project improved governance of the region by incorporating EbA into regional planning processes, including municipal and watershed management plans. It has additionally contributed to the *National Climate Change Policy* (PNCC) which incorporated sectoral activities towards environmental change adjustment and reasonable advancement. Local communities were also included in this project by making native plant selection and using climate information to create an early warning system for fires, avalanches, and inundations. Likewise, baseline data was set up for land spread and land use, water and carbon cycles, cultivating frameworks, and hazard zoning (Colls, Ash, & Ikkala, 2009, p. 3).

**Support from a specific constituency to CI’s initiatives**

Even though it is very difficult to measure the support from a specific constituency, this study took as a proxy variable the analyses of CI’s social media, specifically Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. First of all, the study took into account how many followers or subscriptions of each social platform in order to estimate the number of *potential supporters* for climate change initiatives. Then, it was examined how many “likes”, and “shares” CI managed to collect regarding climate change posts in the different social media analyzed as a more accurate measure for the support of the constituency which is effectually interested in climate change as an environmental issue –not all the people that follow CI’s social media are interested in the same environmental issues and thus, they are not effective supporters of climate change framing processes–. Below are the trends found in the analysis, citing some specific examples, dates and numbers.

This study first revised the content of the CI’s Facebook account regarding climate change (https://www.facebook.com/CIColombia/?ref=bookmarks). Since 18 January 2013 when the account was created and until April 2019, CI has reunited more than 55,700 followers on

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that 78% of glaciers and 56% of moorlands could vanish by 2050. These progressions would mean the loss of a large number of ecosystem services gave in the locale, particularly soil insurance, nourishment and water supply, water stream regulation, and related hydropower potential. 80% of the populace that live in the encompassing ecosystems of the Capital city of Bogotá depend on the water from the Chingaza Massif (Colls, Ash, & Ikkala, 2009, p. 3).
Facebook who might be the potential supporters of climate framing processes carried out by CI. By applying the filter: “climate change” in the search for CI’s posts in its Facebook page, it was found all the publications that have climate change in any part of their description, title or hashtags. A total of 55 posts were found from 2013 (when publications started) to 2018 when the last post regarding the topic was published. The publications include practical guides to avoid climate change, re-posts from Minambiente’s announcements, famous people’s speeches, videos, news, and so on. Just as publications vary in their content, so is the support or interest that CI followers in Facebook have in those publications. For instance, a video published on February 23, 2018 in CI main Facebook page that was later shared with the CI Colombia about “Gwala” –practice of setting aside a reef or forest area to allow the ecosystem to recover– has more than 22k views (Conservación Internacional Colombia, 2018 -a) while the booklet with "the 5 commandments to stop climate change" has only 104 shares and 65 likes (Conservación Internacional Colombia, 2015 -a). Some other posts just have a few likes and shares.

On the other hand, the NGO's YouTube channel for its Colombian account (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAWm9qDgYusFke-BVnC423g) has only 991 subscribers –while the US CI channel has more than 82,000 subscribers, for example– and since 2015 (when the first video was published), CI Colombia has made public a total of only 8 videos related to climate change. The video with the most views is titled: "Paramos - water for life" and has more than 37k views. The 7-minute film produced by Conservation International reveals the history and importance of paramos –ecosystems found in all mountainous areas located in tropical latitudes– for the provision of water in Colombia (Conservación Internacional Colombia, 2015 -b). On average, the videos have a total of 135 views, without counting a video in which the actor and Conservation International Board member, Harrison Ford, argues that people who don't believe in science should not be empowered – about U.S. leaders who don't believe in climate change which is already scientifically proved–. The video, which was subtitled in Spanish for the Colombian audience, has nearly 7k views in total (Conservación Internacional Colombia, 2018 -b).

Finally, this study analyzed the content of the CI’s Twitter feed available in its account (https://twitter.com/CIColombia). CI Colombia joined Twitter under the name
@CIColombia in September 2014 and until April 2019, it has almost 7k followers, and 1,959 tweets (an average of 34 tweets per month) and 1,932 "likes". Twitter advanced research showed a total of only 30 tweets related to climate change issued by @CIColombia. Once again, 2015 was the year when the NGO posted more tweets connected to climate change with a total of 18, followed by 2014 with only 8 tweets. Even though the tweets cover a large amount of approaches regarding climate change, most of them show very little support from followers. For example, the tweet regarding the role of Angela Andrade, CI Director of the Climate Change Program, in the negotiations on climate change was neither retweeted nor liked (Conservación International Colombia, 2015 -c). Likewise, the tweet about the actor Leonardo DiCaprio’s speech on climate change as a real environmental challenge only was retweeted once and did not have any likes (Conservación Internacional Colombia, 2016). In the same way, many other tweets can be found with the same dynamic: very few retweets and likes, if any.

6.1.2. Evaluation of Conservation International’s political opportunity structures

CI’s capacity to access to the government

Due to its large seaside, marine and mountain ecosystems, Colombia is one of the most vulnerable countries to the negative impacts of climate change which has already caused numerous flooding, landslides, changes in water provision, and diseases that affect human health. According to Conservation International (n.d.-b), the Colombian government has been a "visionary ally" in the country’s adaptation to the effects of climate change and by working in close association with CI, the country has made a great improvement in its resilience to climatic alterations that put at risk their sources of water and livelihoods. The two examples consider below illustrate how CI has been able to gain access to Colombia’s government (or the institutions that represent it) by working with it in the design and execution of different projects regarding climate change.

The most important example related to this close partnership between CI and Colombia’s government was the design and development of the National Pilot Project for Adaptation to Climate Change, known as INAP for its acronym in English (Integrated National Adaptation
Plan). This 5-year project (2006-2011) was the first climate change adaptation plan of its kind in the country and it was seeking for a better country’s response to imminent environmental alterations as a consequence of climate change and the implementation to several adaptation projects in extremely vulnerable areas. Furthermore, The INAP was the primary step for Colombia to develop, first, the National Plan of Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC) in 2011 that later evolved into the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC) in 2014. The INAP was developed in the framework of the donation agreement TF056350 signed between the Colombian government throughout the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation (Social Action), Conservation International Colombia (CI) and the World Bank for an amount of US $ 5.4 million, financed by the Global Environment Facility –GEF– (Conservation International, n.d.-c; Minambiente, 2011).

Similarly, a new project titled The High Mountain Climate Change Adaptation is being executed right now by Colombia’s Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development through Conservation International Colombia which was financed by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) through the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). The 4-year project (2015-2019) seeks to strengthen the buffering and hydrological regulation capacity of the upper areas of the Neusa, Sisga, Tominé and Chisacá reservoirs, considered strategic for the water supply system of the capital city of Bogotá—the most populous city in Colombia with more than 10 million people which characterizes for having a high mountain climate—. Moreover, the project is expected to develop some recommendations for adaptation actions to be followed by the national government in order to mitigate climate change impact on high mountain climate to guarantee water regulation and provision to the city. The total investment of the Project is estimated at USD $15,624,750; and the direct execution is USD $4,216,000 (Conservation International, n.d.-c; Conservation International Colombia, 2018).

CI’s influential allies

During the more than 26 years since the CI’s office in Colombia was founded, the NGO has been able to establish a very stable network of allies, which has allowed it, among many other things, to participate in the different initiatives in the environmental field developed in the country. At the national level, CI has several strategic connections to public institutions (at
national and regional levels) that have been essential in its effort to reach the national government. Among these allies are the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Minambiente), the Attorney General's Office, National Parks of Colombia, and Mayor's Office of Bogota. Moreover, the INGO has managed to organize a very comprehensive network with other NGOs in Colombia such as WWF Colombia, Fundación Omachá, Fundación Yubarta, Fundación Malpelo, and Fondo acción, in order to address different environmental issues, including climate change. Similarly, due to its trajectory and prestige at an international level, CI has also many international allies that have supported its work in Colombia like GEF (which has financed the two projects developed by the NGO in the country), Inter-American Development Bank, as well as the United Nations Environment Programme –UNEP– (Conservation International Colombia, n.d.-b).

In addition to the allies that CI counts on to develop its projects, it also has strong support from renowned celebrities who have supported the campaign "Nature is Speaking" which is a series of short documentaries which seek to raise awareness among people of the importance of nature. In each video, different actors give "voice" to elements of nature, such as water, soil, tree, ocean or mother nature itself. In all the message is clear: “nature does not need people, but it is people who depend on nature to live” (Biodiversidad, 2017). This campaign was launched in 2015 in the United States and began with the voices of Harrison Ford giving voice to the "ocean", and Julia Roberts personifying the voice of "mother nature", then the campaign was launched in other languages and it has been to the air in several countries. In the Hispanic case, the campaign was launched in September 2017 and features the voices of Salma Hayek as mother nature, Ruben Blades as the coral reef, Eugenio Derbez as the sky, Penélope Cruz as the water, Juan Fernando Velasco as the soil and Rubén Bladés as the coral reef. Representing Colombia and forming part of the Hispanic team that supports the CI initiative, the singers Carlos Vives16 and Fonseca17, give their voices to the

16 Singer, composer and businessman, Carlos Vives is one of the most emblematic artists of Colombia and one of the most important figures of Latin music. Winner of 2 Grammys and 11 Latin Grammys, he is considered a pioneer of the new Colombian and Latin American sound. In addition to his work as an artist, Carlos leads the social initiative “Tras La Perla” to promote the integral development of his hometown Santa Marta and the Sierra Nevada region (Conservación Internacional Colombia, n.d.-e).

17 Juan Fonseca, better known only by his surname Fonseca, is a Colombian singer and composer. Versatility has always been the hallmark of the increasingly broad and influential career he has built as a singer-songwriter.
páramo and to the mountain respectively. The campaign has had a great impact on social networks awakening awareness of the need to seek to live in balance with nature (Conservación Internacional Colombia, n.d.-e).

**Changes in political alignments faced by CI**

One of the most important factors for the Colombian government to decide to prioritize the issue of climate change in the country were the ravages left by “la Niña” phenomenon during 2010-2011. According to the study "Valuation of damages and losses. Winter wave in Colombia 2010-2011”, authored by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), “La Niña” evidenced Colombia's high social, economic and environmental vulnerability and the absence of adaptation strategies in response to climate change and extreme weather events. According to this study, “la Niña” caused losses close to 11.2 billion pesos, 3.2 million people were affected and 82% of the estimated damages focused on housing and infrastructure sectors (ECLAC & IADB, 2012, p. 37).

The economic loses from “La Niña” along with the realization of Colombia’s vulnerability to climate change led to the creation of the Adaptation Fund\(^\text{18}\) and the formulation of the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC) in 2011. The PNACC was an integral part of the 2010-2014 National Development Plan denominated "Prosperity for all", designed during the first mandate of former Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos, which prioritized a set of strategies aimed at comprehensively addressing the problem of climate change, including the formulation and implementation of the PNACC. The ultimate objective of the PNACC was to reduce the risk and socio-economic and environmental impacts

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\(^{18}\) The Adaptation Fund is an entity attached to the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit of the Colombian Government that was initially created to attend the construction, reconstruction, recovery and economic and social reactivation of the areas affected by the events derived from “La Niña” phenomenon during 2010 and 2011. In 2015, with the enactment of Law 1753 of 2015 adopting the 2014-2018 National Development Plan "All for a new country", the Fund was given the power to implement comprehensive projects for risk management and adaptation to climate change with a multisectoral and regional approach, in addition to those related to La Niña phenomenon (Fondo Adaptación, n.d.).
associated with climate change in Colombia (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2012, p. 11-12). Even though the National government had recognized the importance of climate change management since 2006 when the idea of the INAP was conceived, “La Niña” embodied a perfect opening window for CI to keep working along with the government in a more comprehensive way, transforming the basic pilot plan that INAP represented into a much wider, important plan as it was PNACC.

Later on, in 2014, the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC) was formulated, intending to merge all the efforts that the country had been developing for several years, but mainly since 2011, through the Colombian Low Carbon Development Strategy (ECDBC)\(^\text{19}\), the PNACC, and the National Strategy for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (ENREDD+)\(^\text{20}\) which sought to mitigate the negative effect of extreme weather conditions on Colombian natural resources, but mainly in an more independent, sector-focused way. The objective of the PNCC was to incorporate climate change management into public and private decisions in order to move forward on a climate-resilient and low-carbon development path that reduced the risk of climate change and made it possible to take advantage of the opportunities it could generate. In institutional terms, the PNCC took advantage of the National Climate Change System (SISCLIMA), created by Decree 298 of 2016, which defines that SISCLIMA is the instance of coordination, articulation, formulation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies, norms and other management instruments that are developed by public, private and non-profit entities in matters of adaptation to climate change and mitigation of greenhouse gases (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, 2017, p. 8-12).

\(^{19}\) The ECDBC seeks to decouple national economic growth from the growth of GHG emissions by maximizing the carbon-efficiency of the country’s economic activity and contributing to national social and economic development. Through the ECDBC the country seeks to establish a pillar of economic growth that promotes competitiveness, efficient use of resources, innovation and the development new eco-friendlier technologies (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, n.d.).

\(^{20}\) The ENREDD+ began in 2010 with the support of several international cooperation agencies and sought to incorporates measures and actions that seek to control the causes of the loss of natural forests and propose a sustainable management of them (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, n.d.-c).
At the international level, the signing of the Paris agreement was a milestone for Colombia since it implied the country's commitment, in the eyes of the world, to reduce greenhouse gases (which in turn implies a reduction in deforestation in the country). The Paris Agreement was negotiated by representatives of 196 states during the 21st Conference of the Parties (known as COP21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Le Bourget, near Paris, France, and adopted by consensus on 12 December 2015. The Paris agreement was historic because it not only finally achieved a consensus on the existence of a radical alteration of the climate due to human activities, but also because it was the first step for all countries to act jointly in order to counteract Climate Change (Medio Ambiente, 2016). In this sense, the PNACC contributed to the basis to strategically guide all efforts towards fulfilling the commitment made by the Colombian government in the framework of the Paris Agreement (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, 2017, p. 9).

**CI's Organizational entrepreneurship**

CI has also benefited from the support, trust and sponsorship of important international entities and organizations which have allowed it to carry out its work through the economic financing of important climate change adaptation projects in Colombia. For example, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation each contributed US$50,000 for the implementation of the project "Strategy for Capacity Building in Climate Change, Environmental Services and REDD+", which sought to develop a national strategy for capacity building in climate change, ecosystem services and REDD+ (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p. 3).

CI was also at the forefront of designing forest carbon projects in different parts of the country, which were financed by national and international organizations. For example, the project "REDD+ Feasibility in four Putumayo river basins" received financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (FORMIN) who contributed $64,623 dollars; J.P. Morgan disbursed $100,000 for the project "Feasibility analysis for REDD+ projects in two localities in the Amazon (Leticia and Tarapacá)"; and Cerrejón and CCX Colombia contributed $132,800 and $40,469 dollars respectively for projects related to the evaluation
of REDD+ potential in the Colombian Guajira (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p. 3).

Finally, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) contributed $14,335,524 dollars for the "BIOREDD+ Program" which sought to support the sustainable management of the country's natural resources, for which it consisted of three main components: Climate Change, Biodiversity Conservation, and environmental governance. The direct beneficiary of the resources was Chemonics Colombia, but there were 34 other recipients who participated in the project, among them CI (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p. 8).

6.2. Fundación Natura

Fundación Natura (FN) is a non-profit organization (NGO) created in 1983 with the mission of contributing to the conservation of Colombia's biological diversity and the search for alternatives for the sustainable use of natural resources. During its 36 years of existence, the Foundation has played an important role in the baseline studies for the creation and conservation of protected wild areas of high biological diversity around the country such as the Utría National Park in Chocó, the Carpanta Biological Reserve in Cundinamarca, the Guanentá Wildlife and Flora Sanctuary - Alto Fonce River in Santander, and both the Cachalú and the Encenillo Biological Reserves. It has also developed programs of Conservation in the Chingaza National Parks in Cundinamarca, La Paya in Putumayo and Cahuinarí in the Amazon. In recent times the Foundation has enriched its conservation approach, through the incorporation and development of essential concepts and innovative strategies to fulfil its mission (Fundación Natura, n.d.-a).

6.2.1. Evaluation of Fundación Natura’s mobilizing structures

**FN’s knowledge and expertise**

In terms of climate change issues, FN has been a very dynamic actor, thus building a fairly broad stock of knowledge and expertise throughout its work all around Colombia, focusing mainly on initiatives against deforestation and reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
For example, in June 2014, the Alliance between FN and Horizonte Verde Foundation won with their project: ‘Implementation of strategies to adapt to climate change, through the management of water resources and soil, with producers of the star water from Zamaricote hill and in the upper and middle basin of the Ariporo river and Guachiría river (Casanare),’ to the open national call launched by Ecopetrol21, called "National Call for Strategic Regional Environmental Investment - IARE". This call was aimed at identifying entities and/or strategic allies with the capacity to develop, within the framework of the company’s activities, projects to reduce the impacts of climate change, promote the conservation of biodiversity and improve management, and protection of water resources in Colombia. The 36-month project, which started in January 2015 and lasted until January 2018, benefited 40 livestock producers and had 80 hectares under restoration, 30,000 hectares of ecosystem in conservation and was financed by Ecopetrol, FN, Fundación Horizonte Verde as well as by the direct beneficiaries (Fundación Natura, n.d.-b).

Furthermore, since 2009 and to date, FN has headed the “CarbonoCero” (ZeroCarbon in English) initiative in Colombia which seeks to participate in the growing voluntary carbon emissions mitigation market, in order to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the growing concern of individuals and institutions about global climate change and its consequences. CarbonoCero is a simple scheme that allows individuals, private companies or public institutions aware of their role in the problem of climate change and, above all, in its solution, offset their CO₂ emissions through emission reduction (mitigation) or carbon capture projects. The CarbonoCero program hopes to link at least 10 new companies annually to this initiative, becoming a complement to corporate social responsibility actions, which can be included in their sustainability reports. It is also expected that the offsetting of emissions by companies, institutions and interested people will take the form of activities such as the planting of trees in conservation and restoration areas, the purchase of carbon credits and, finally, the mitigation of an amount of tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e) that contributes significantly to the national goals presented in the country's Nationally

21 Ecopetrol S.A. is the largest company in Colombia and the main oil company in the country. Due to its size, Ecopetrol S.A. belongs to the group of the thirty-nine largest oil companies in the world and is one of the five largest in Latin America (wpadmin, 2014).
Deterrent Contributions (NDC)\textsuperscript{22}. Up to 2016, 255 new trees were planted and the amount of mitigated or compensated \(\text{CO}_2\) (projected at 15 years) was 61 tCO2e (Fundación Natura, n.d.-c).

Finally, FN provided the basis for a national voluntary carbon market by creating the \textit{Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Voluntary Emission Mitigation Mechanism} (MVC), which sought the adoption of strategies that would guarantee the permanent mitigation of GHG emissions at the corporate and institutional levels. The MVC implemented a technological platform to carry out transactions in the carbon bond market. This platform was operated by the Colombian Mercantile Exchange, a legally constituted entity authorized by the Colombian Financial Superintendence to trade carbon credits and environmental services in the country. FN and its allies formed a portfolio of forest carbon projects which was offered to entities interested in voluntarily offsetting their carbon footprint. The MVC was a 5-year program which started in 2011 with GEF as the financing entity of the project and the IDB as the implementing agency. As its main achievements, the MVC had 18 contracts and/or agreements, geographically impacted 9 departments of the country, directly benefited more than 1,000 people, trained and/or sensitized 881 people and 60 companies, organizations or institutions were linked to the foundation in the execution of this project (MVC Colombia, n.d.; Fundación Natura, n.d.-d)

\textit{Support from a specific constituency to FN’s initiatives}

As it was done in the previous case study, for the development of this section it was taken, as a proxy variable of the constituency, the analyses of FN’s social media: Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Once again, the study took into account the number of followers and/or subscriptions that FN had in each social platform in order to estimate the number of

\textsuperscript{22} On September 7, 2015, Colombia presented its NDC through which it committed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20\% compared to the projected level by 2030. The issue of adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change was also included in the NDC, along with an offer of South-South cooperation from which Colombia can share national experiences that may be useful to other countries. Although Colombia only generates 0.46\% of global greenhouse gas emissions, for the National Government climate change is a major issue that must be addressed urgently. Colombia is a highly vulnerable country to the effects of climate change and considers the increase in greenhouse gas emissions as a direct risk to its possibilities for sustainable development (Cancillería de Colombia, n.d.).
potential supporters for climate change initiatives. Then, it was examined how many “likes”, and “shares” FN collected in their climate change posts as a more accurate measure for the support of the constituency which is effectually interested in climate change as an environmental issue. Below are the trends found in the analysis.

The first social network analyzed was FN’s Facebook account (https://www.facebook.com/fundacion.col/?ref=ts) and all its posts regarding climate change. FN’s account was created on April 9, 2015, and since then it has reunited more than 24,000 followers. After applying the filter “climate change” to the posts section, to look for all the publications that have climate change in any part of their description, title or hashtags, a total of 117 posts were found from 2015 to April 2019. One of the posts with more likes (130 likes and 267 shares) was the article titled “Urban forests, keys to mitigating climate change” written by Elsa Matilde Escobar, director of Fundación Natura, on March 12th, 2019 in one of the most important political magazines in the country: Revista Semana (Escobar, 2019; Fundación Natura Col, 2019). Similarly, the post about the news regarding the appointment of Ricardo Lozano as the new minister of Environment and Sustainable Development by the current Colombia’s president, Iván Duque, had 45 reactions and 36 shares (Fundación Natura Col, 2018). The article, that was originally posted in El Tiempo (one of the most popular newspapers in the country), explained that Lozano was an expert in climate change and risk management and how his vast experience in this field would benefit the country during the new administration (ElTiempo.com, 2018). In general terms, the posts have between 4 and 25 likes, and they cover all kind of climate change related content such publication regarding FN’s projects, special events led by FN, articles and other interesting facts regarding climate change. However, no more than a dozen “likes” or “reactions” were recorded for their posts to the exception of those already mentioned.

About FN’s YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/user/fundacionnaturacolom), it has 533 subscribers and 93,259 views in total. Since February 2012 (when the account was created) until April 2019, it has published about 110 videos related in some way to climate change, mostly videos related to its projects and specific management on climate change in certain areas of the country. Although most of the videos are related to the FN projects, their popularity among the audience varies drastically. For example, the 6-minute video on
Commercial Forest Plantations, a carbon project for the voluntary market in Colombia, has had 1,116 views (Fundación Natura, 2016), while the 6-minute video about *Esenttia*, that was a successful case in Carbon Footprint management, has had 719 views (Fundación Natura, 2018 -a), and the 5-minute video on Efficient Firewood Stoves (English) has had only 120 views (Fundación Natura, 2015). In general, the videos do not have more than 100 views with the exception of some wide-spread videos that managed to collect more than 1,000 views, especially the ones regarding big projects.

Finally, this study analyzed the content of the FN’s Twitter feed available in its account: https://twitter.com/fundacionnatura?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw. Under the name @fundacionnatura, FN joined Twitter in February 2009 and up to now, it has 22,5k followers, and more than 3,500 "likes". It has been very active in Twitter with 15k tweets posted, but only 119 of them about climate change, in a period of time that covers from 2012 (when first tweet related to climate change was posted) to date. In both 2016 and 2018, FN posted 32 tweets related to climate change, the years where the most tweets were recorded. So far this year, only 4 tweets have been published on climate change, the same amount that in 2014. During 2015 and 2017, the NGO posted 18 and 19 tweets respectively. Although all tweets have to do with climate change, their approaches vary widely. Basically the tweets cover the topics dealt with on Facebook such as appointments of government officials, journalistic articles on climate change, and publications of the NGO, but it also extends its content to publish events –such as courses, congresses and trainings–, reports of their management and projects, recommendations, among many others. Nonetheless, the tweets only have a few likes (not more than 10 in the majority of the cases) and have been only retweeted a couple of times. For example, FN posted a tweet about green bonds and their importance in climate change on October 31st, 2017 that had 6 retweet and 9 likes (Fundación Natura Col, 2017). Similarly, the tweet on the public forum: "climate change, air quality and health in Bogotá", published on 24 July 2018 had 5 retweets and 7 likes (Fundación Natura Col, 2018).

In addition to the use of social platforms, FN has developed an effective initiative taking advantage of the growing interest of Colombians to run and so the idea of the GreenRace arose. The first GreenRace was held in Bogota on February 22, 2015 and had more than 5,000 participants, and since then five (5) more races have been held, the last one on February 17,
2019 in Bogotá. The event has also taken place in Medellín whose third edition will be in May 2019. The GreenRace has been an event that is part of the program "United for the Forests" of Fundación Natura, which seeks to plant three trees for each runner registered in each race which, so far, amount 128 thousand planted trees as results of the races between 2015 and 2019 (Negocios verdes, 2015; Fundación Natura, n.d.-e). The GreenRace is part of the many activities that FN carries out in favor of biodiversity and people, which seeks ecological restoration by planting trees, to recover degraded areas and support processes of mitigation and adaptation to climate change (Escobar, Carrera Verde Colombia, n.d.). The GreenRace has not only raised funds to plant thousands of trees in Bogotá and Medellín, which seeks to counteract the effect of climate change, but has also been a focus of media attention for its excellent organization, the use of latest technology, eco-friendly management and of course, for the thousands of runners that join it every year.

**FN’s organizational entrepreneurship**

FN has benefited enormously from the support that different organizations have given it, making it the direct beneficiary of important financial support to carry out projects related to climate change. For instance, in the framework of REDD+ for Colombia, FN together with the Colombian Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM), a public entity, participated in the project "Institutional, technical and scientific capacity to support projects to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation REDD in Colombia". The project, funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation for an amount of US$2,297,086, aimed to support activities that strengthen technical and institutional capacity to design, implement and monitor projects to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) at national and sub-national levels in Colombia (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p.1).

In addition, the Rainforest Alliance and FN carried out the project "Zero Net Deforestation Zones in Caquetá, Colombia" which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for US$2,521,907. The project sought to Develop Zero Net Deforestation Zones and mitigate climate change through the reconversion and implementation of sustainable production practices in livestock and agroforestry systems in
the municipalities of Florencia, El Paujil and El Doncello in Caquetá, Colombia (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p.1).

Likewise, one of FN's flagship projects was the "Voluntary Mitigation Mechanism for Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Colombia (MVC)" which was financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), through the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for an amount of $1,664,080 dollars. The ambitious project, which in addition to Fundación Natura also involved ONF Andina, and South Pole Group - C&B, carried out the design, validation, registration and verification of a portfolio of forest carbon projects in Colombia (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p. 3).

Finally, the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD) contributed $137,022 and $126,666 dollars respectively, through the Earth Innovation Institute, for the project "Support to the Visión Amazonía program and the construction of a business case for the United Kingdom, focusing on the immersion of the private sector". The program, carried out by FN along with WWF Colombia and Forest Trends, sought to validate and develop key recommendations to the Visión Amazonía program in Colombia as well as to help building a business case for the UK for its funding (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 1, p. 8).

6.2.2. Evaluation of Fundación Natura’s political opportunity structures

FN’s capacity to access to the government

Regarding its ability to access to the government, FN has participated in several processes of Colombia’s Global Climate Change (GCC) policy design, led by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, among which are Colombia’s Low Carbon Development Strategy (ECDBC)\textsuperscript{23}, the National Strategy for Reducing Emissions from

\textsuperscript{23} The ECDBC seeks to decouple national economic growth from the growth of GHG emissions by maximizing the carbon-efficiency of the country's economic activity and contributing to national social and economic development. Through the ECDBC the country seeks to establish a pillar of economic growth that promotes competitiveness, efficient use of resources, innovation and the development new eco-friendlier technologies (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, n.d.).
Deforestation and Forest Degradation (ENREDD+), implementation of REDD Early Movers (REM) programme in Colombia, and the work plans for the Norandino and Orinoquia Climate Regional Hubs (Climate Action, n.d.).

FN has also been the recipient of resources for REDD+ activities with National Public Financing for Colombia. Among these projects, it is worth mentioning the project "REDD+ de Robles en el Corredor Guantiva -La Rusia-Iguaque" financed by Ecopetrol S.A. for $879,482 dollars and whose objective was to preserve the last remnants of oak forest in the Eastern Andes Mountain Range and reduce deforestation rates through various sustainable productive activities and the sustainable management of forests Colombia (Gómez & Hernandez, July 2016, Annex 2, p. 1).

Another important example of FN's work with the Colombian government was the document developed together in the framework of the Paris agreement in early 2015. Right before starting to formulate the necessary policies to meet the objectives proposed during the environmental summit in Paris, Minambiente, in partnership with Fundación Natura and WWF Colombia, create a 60-page document titled "The Paris Agreement. This is how Colombia will act on climate change". The text explains in detail each of the pending tasks to fulfill the commitments made at COP 21, including the challenges that the country had to overcome to confront and adapt to climate change, the importance of climate negotiations, details former president Santos' announcements at COP21, presents key data on the country's contribution to global warming, describes national strategies to change that scenario and even proposes a recipe for successful implementation of those measures (Medio Ambiente, 2016).

To finish, FN was part of the panel of experts during the second regional forest protection forum-workshop organized by the Colombian Ministry of Environment (MADS), the government of Norway and SEMANA magazine, which was held on 22 February 2019 in

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24 The REDD+ Colombia began in 2010 with the support of several international cooperation agencies and sought to incorporates measures and actions that seek to control the causes of the loss of natural forests and propose a sustainable management of them (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, n.d.-c).

25 With the issuance of Decree 1760 of June 26, 2003 the organic structure of what was then called Empresa Colombiana de Petróleos was modified, which became Ecopetrol S.A., a public company by shares, one hundred percent state-owned, linked to the Ministry of Mines and Energy (wpadmin, 2014).
San Vicente del Caguán. According to the government's second biennial climate change update report, in Colombia the main emitter of GHG is deforestation (33% of the total), followed by agricultural activities (22%). Due to the great economic importance that livestock has in the area, the forum sought to raise awareness and educate farmers in the area so that they themselves would find viable solutions for reducing GHG emissions –as a result of their own livestock activities– and for this, they relied on the advice of a panel of experts including FN. The result of the workshop was the elaboration of a concrete proposal for the reduction of greenhouse gases in the area, which was presented to the national government (Medio Ambiente, 2019).

**FN's influential allies**

On its website, Fundación Natura (n.d.-f) has a general list of both national and international organizations that it considers to be its main partners or allies in the projects and initiatives that the NGO carries out. Basically, the list includes 8 organizations that work for environmental conservation and good ecological practices such as the National Environmental Forum (fna), BioTrade Fund, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, Colombian Natural Heritage Fund, Colombian Network Association of Natural Reserves of Civil Society (Resnatur), Sustainable Agriculture Network (RAS), and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

However, each FN’s project has specific partners and allies who enable the projects to be carried out successfully. For example, the project “Adaptation to Climate Change project in Casanare” had the help of the Green Horizon Foundation for its implementation. Likewise, the project "Support to the Governance of the 2050 Huila Plan and its link with the private sector" which sought to support the implementation of plans and commitments related to climate change with public and private actors, was supported by the Government of Huila, the Regional Autonomous Corporation of high Magdalena (CAM), the municipalities of Neiva and Pitalito, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS) and the National Planning Department (DNP). Finally, the project "Green Growth and Climate Compatible Development Plan for Eastern Antioquia" counted on The Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), and Climate and Development Alliance as
donors, and for its execution, FN allied with the Eastern Antioquia Business Corporation (CORNARE), and WWF Colombia (Fundación Natura, n.d.-b). Those are only some examples of FN’s projects, however, more projects can be found in its website (http://www.natura.org.co/proyectos/proyectos-ejecutados/) which also contains the specific allies and partners for each project.

Another important ally of FN is Forest Trends, which in the framework of its project "Monitoring International Financing of REDD+ (REDDX)", released the actual financing aid that the country, donors, recipients and REDD+ activities were receiving. For the execution of this project, Forest Trends turned to FN in 2012, its partner in Colombia, to be in charge of compiling the information and producing a report in which it was detailed the country's level of REDD+, not only in relation to the actual funding flows that Colombia was receiving, but also in relation to the REDD+ activities that were financed, the identification of the country's gaps and needs in relation to issues that did not have funding or that, on the contrary, were over-financed. Likewise, the information obtained in the REDDX project was a great opportunity for the Government to strengthen the work being done in the formulation of the National REDD+ Strategy (ENREDD+) and its subsequent implementation (Fundación Natura, 2016, p. 5-9).

Finally, another of FN's initiatives that has received extensive support is the GreenRace, which was originally promoted by the U.S. government. In that sense, the U.S. Ambassador in 2015, Kevin Whitaker, assured that the race would be a milestone in Colombia since "climate change is a global challenge that no nation can fight by itself. We are convinced that public-private partnerships and citizens can create strong support to combat climate change" (Negocios verdes, 2015). The race is currently organized by FN, along with Bogotá Bank and Argos group, with the sponsorship of large national companies such as Nutresa, Doria and the Environmental Business Corporation (CAEM), and at the regional level by the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce and Comfenalco Antioquia. Also, the race has a large number of allied in the media such as Caracol TV, Cine Colombia, Blu Radio, GO, Semana Magazine and the Great Alliance against deforestation, which make a special coverage of the event every year (Carrera Verde Colombia, n.d.).
Changes in political alignments faced by FN

An important milestone in the Colombian government's fight against deforestation, that also triggered the need for joint work with NGOs, occurred in 2009 in Copenhagen (Denmark) which was later ratified in Cancun in 2010 before the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), when Colombia committed to the goal of zero net deforestation in the Colombian Amazon by 2020. The setting of this very ambitious goal lead to the establishment of the REDD+ national strategy for Colombia, which was part of the actions on Climate Change foreseen in the 2010-2014 National Development Plan: “Prosperity for all”, by the National Government at the head of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. For the preparation of the final version of REDD+ Colombia, Minambiente relied on the commitment from the Forest Carbon Cooperative Fund (FCPF), the United Nations REDD+ Program, international cooperation, some NGOs and national budget (Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible, n.d.-c).

Likewise, with zero net deforestation in the Colombian Amazon by 2020 objective in mind and falling behind in reaching it, the Colombian government launched in 2016 the program "Visión Amazonía" which seeks to promote a new model of development in the region that allows improving the living conditions of local populations while maintaining the natural base that sustains the immense biodiversity and the productivity of the region. Regarding the project, Colombia formalized agreements with Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom that provided financial support for 85 million dollars to Colombia throughout the German Development Bank (KfW) to combat deforestation in the Amazon for a period of 5 years (Visión Amazonía, n.d.). These available resources to fight deforestation have opened an opportunity window for FN since the Colombian government has relied on different NGOs, for the development of the projects related to zero deforestation in the Amazon (see Access to the government to understand better this project).

Once again, the Paris agreement signed in 2015 was a landmark as almost all the participants presented concrete and voluntary plans for reducing emissions and adapting mechanisms to the consequences of this phenomenon as a first measure to act against Climate Change. Colombia was one of the countries that proposed the most ambitious goals in this regard. The
then president Juan Manuel Santos committed himself to reduce 20 percent of Colombia's polluting emissions by 2030 and to create a National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change. The Paris agreement opened a window for FN in the sense that it not only worked along with the government finding the challenges faced by Colombia towards COP21 fulfillment, but it also encouraged FN to continue with its work on carbon emission reduction and climate change management in accordance with the established objectives (Medio Ambiente, 2016).

7. Discussion of the results

This section shows the results of the empirical case-based analysis. According to the theoretical framework used in this study, the successful of the framing processes (performed by NGOs), which means that they are accepted and recognized as legitimate, depend mostly on the interaction of two factors: “the political opportunity structure in which NGOs are embedded, and the mobilizing structures that NGOs have at their disposal” (Joachim, 2007, p. 16). In this sense, it will be revised these two elements for both NGOs, making a comparison of the main findings and characteristics.

CI and FN’s mobilizing structures

NGOs’ knowledge and expertise were the first element analyzed in this study. According to the literature, both knowledge and expertise give NGOs a much more favorable position over other actors and makes them valued contributors in the agenda-setting process. On this subject, both CI and FN have been able to build a great stock of knowledge and expertise through their work in Colombia which dated more than 27 and 36 years respectively. Nonetheless, the literature also highlights that distinctive types of expertise and information are needed for successful framing efforts and most of the time, NGOs will need to prove not only the existence of a particular problem but the feasibly of a solution. That is why both NGOs have decided to focus their job using different approaches, even though they both work on climate change related topics. While CI is using the so-called ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) approach, FN has focused mainly on initiatives against deforestation and

26 For more information about this aspect, see section 4.3.3. mobilizing structures.
reduction of GHG emissions such “CarbonoCero” campaign and GHG Voluntary Emission Mitigation Mechanism.

The support that both NGOs received from a specific constituency was the second element revised that following the literature, it is essential to echo NGOs’ framing processes for the government’s consideration. In this regard, NGOs’ social media was revised, particularly their accounts on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Even though both NGOs have a large number of followers in all social media networks, their actual support (via likes, shares, and retweets, for instance) to climate change posts was mainly scarce since the numbers were very modest, if any. Likewise, the NGOs managed a great number of topics in their social media, it might be the reason why climate change as the main topic for their posts was very limited if not completely neglected in some years. However, other campaigns such the GreenRace (by FN) and Nature is speaking (by CI) did enjoy greater acceptance by the public who have actively supported them.

Finally, the last element reviewed was the organizational entrepreneurs that both NGOs count on. The literature indicates that it refers to individuals or organizations who are interested enough on climate change that are able to afford the initial costs of mobilizing people, or having organized experiences, are well-linked and can spread information easily. It was found that both NGOs have benefited from the support, trust and sponsorship of important national and international entities and organizations which have allowed them to carry out their work through the economic financing of important climate change adaptation and mitigation projects all around Colombia. For instance, CI had the sponsorship of USAID, NORAD, FORMIN, J.P. Morgan, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation as international actors, and Cerrejón and CCX Colombia as national entities. For its part, FN’s projects have been funded by different entities such as Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, USAID, IADB, GEF, DFID, and NORAD.

CI and FN’s political opportunity structure

Having access to the institutions that NGOs seek to influence is likely the most critical aspect of the political opportunity structure, and the first element revised in this section. Conforming
to the literature, the introduction of issues or the circulation of solutions and new ideas frequently depends on how easily NGOs can access to the institution it would like to influence, and in the case of this study, to the national government through Minambiente. In this sense, both NGOs managed to obtain access to the government when developing their projects about Climate Change. On one hand, CI was working hand-to-hand with the Ministry of Environment in the design and development of the INAP, and in the implementation of the High Mountain Climate Change Adaptation project. On the other hand, FN has participated in several processes of Colombia’s Global Climate Change (GCC) policy design, led by the Ministry of Environment, among which are ECDBC, ENREDD+, implementation of REM programme in Colombia, and the creation of the document "The Paris Agreement. This is how Colombia will act on climate change" in the framework of the Paris agreement.

The second element assessed regarding NGOs’ political opportunity structure was the influential allies they had. In line with the literature, influential allies can help NGOs to mobilize support for new ideas and resolutions due to the resources they own as well as the influence and/or pressure they can exert over other influential actors, the society and the government itself. Both NGOs showed to be surrounded by very influential allies that go from public entities to celebrities. In the case of CI, its group of allies was formed by public entities such as the Attorney General’s Office, National Parks of Colombia, and the Mayor's Office of Bogota; other NGOs such as WWF Colombia, Fundación Omacha, Fundación Yubarta, Fundación Malpelo, and Fondo acción; and national celebrities such as Carlos Vives and Fonseca as well as international celebrities like Penélope Cruz, Julia Roberts, and Harrison Ford. For the case of FN, there is also a large list of allies such as the fna, BioTrade Fund, FSC, Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, Colombian Natural Heritage Fund, Resnatur, RAS, IUCN, WWF, Forest Trends, and the US government. Similarly, FN has relied on the media in order to spread its message and in this sense, it has Caracol TV, Cine Colombia, Blu Radio, GO, Semana Magazine and the Great Alliance against deforestation as its allies.

Lastly, changes in political alignments, might affect the framing processes that NGOs are carrying out and that is why this was the last element reviewed in this study. Changes in political alignments can represent opportunities for NGOs since they shift the status quo in
terms of existing policies and open opportunity windows for NGOs to work closely with the
government. For the case of CI, “La Niña” phenomenon was a milestone in terms of
Colombia’s climate change policies since after accounting all the losses that this natural
disaster left for the country, along with the fact that a new president (Juan Manuel Santos)
came to power, the national government was ready to finally start a climate change mitigation
and adaptation policy. For FN which focuses on GHG reduction and deforestation
counteraction, the commitment that the government ratified in Cancun in 2010 before the
UNFCCC about “zero net deforestation in the Colombian Amazon by 2020” was the most
important change in the national political alignment. The fact that the government committed
to this very ambitious goal was the perfect reason for the Colombian government to partner
different NGOs in their intent to fulfill its international commitments. Likewise, the signing
of the Paris agreement in 2015 was very important in national terms since the then president
Juan Manuel Santos committed himself to reduce 20 percent of Colombia's polluting
emissions by 2030 and to create a National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change which
required the help of both NGOs.

8. Conclusions

This paper has discussed the role that environmental NGOs have had on Colombia’s agenda-
setting process by having the necessary elements to legitimize their framing processes
regarding climate change. First of all, it is essential to define the type of framing processes
that CI and FN have been carrying out in the timeframe evaluated: 2010-2018. According to
Joachim’s study (2007, p. 19-22), there are three relatively independent forms of framing
processes: diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational. However, due to the evolution that the
issue of climate change has had in recent years, the NGOs did not use diagnostic framing
which refers to the recognition of a problem and the attribution of blame or causality of it
since it was scientifically proved and recognized years ago that it was due to human activities
that the climate began to change. That is why both NGOs have focused on the other framing
processes, starting with the prognostic framing which consists of the identification of
possible solutions to the issue of climate change: reduction of GHG emissions, and
deforestation, reforestation, implementation of climate change policies and adaptation
measures for vulnerable areas of the country, among others. Likewise, the NGOs have also utilized motivational framing, especially CI, which suggests a rationale for action by highlighting what could happen to the planet if nothing is done in order to stop global warming: “nature does not need people, but it is people who depend on nature to live” (Biodiversidad, 2017).

After reviewing all the elements that shaped the framing process implemented by the CI and FN –the mobilizing structures that both NGOs had at their disposal as well as the political opportunity structure in which both NGOs were rooted–, it was concluded that for the prognostic as well as for the motivational framing processes that the NGOs undertook regarding climate change were both accepted and recognized as legitimate and thus, they moved from the systemic agenda to the public one. This conclusion came from the fact that both NGOs not only had the necessary elements exposed by Joachim (2007) to legitimize their framing processes but also, they actually cooperated with the national government in the implementation and design of new policies regarding climate change in Colombia. Additionally, there was no evidence to indicate that the transnational character of NGOs implicated that they have a greater influence on Colombia’s agenda-setting process. In other words, the fact that an NGO is international does not make it more influential than a Colombian NGO. Both NGOs proved to be influential and play a decisive role in the formulation of the national policy in relation to climate change.

It is also important to highlight that this close work between NGOs and the Colombian government was possible because of two main factors. The first factor was the work that the international community was doing on the topic during the evaluated timeframe since it pushed the country to commit to very ambitious goals which ended up requiring the assistance and cooperation from outsiders, namely NGOs. Similarly, the second factor was the remarkable willingness of the Colombian government to work together with NGOs. Colombian government’s international commitments did not necessarily imply that it would appeal to external actors, however, it did so, making the country's work against climate change more dynamic and inclusive.
9. References


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