

Institutional Design and Elite Support for Climate Policies

Evidence from Latin American Countries

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- International climate summits have fallen short of expectations
- Debates about which institutional features lead to successful agreements
- Climate agreements are incomplete contracts:
 - Take domestic circumstances into account
 - Voluntary goals (e.g., Nationally Determined Contributions)
 - More accountability, but higher transaction costs
- Increases the importance of local elites

- Elites act as *de facto* veto players in local environmental policies
- Behavior of elite groups – advocacy groups, lobbyists, political coalitions – explains countries' climate policy performance (Jahn 2016; Karapin 2012)
- “Societal steering” (Andonova et al. 2009; Bulkeley et al 2014): capacity building and rule-setting

- Recent studies on public opinion and climate agreements (Aklin et al 2013; Bechtel and Scheve 2013; Mildenberger and Tingley 2017)
- Elite preferences not documented in the literature
- Elite coalitions crucial in trade regimes and banking regulation (e.g., Chalmers 2017; Pagliari and Young 2014)
- *What climate agreement are elites willing to support?*

- Conjoint experiments to estimate the effect of institutional features on climate agreements
- 654 elites members in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, and Peru:
 - 101 members of executive
 - 61 legislators
 - 194 academics in the energy sector
 - 226 members of civil society
- Each respondent evaluated 7 pairs of conjoint experiments

Data and Methods

Attribute	Values
Who makes the rules?	International organizations; federal government; local government; local community members; non-governmental organizations
Conflict resolution mechanism	United Nations; government bureaucracy; local courts; private arbitration; informal norms
Punishment	Imprisonment; fines; blacklist; none
Punishment for repeated violations	More penalty; same; less penalty
Agreement costs	Rich countries pay more than poor countries; proportional to history of emissions; proportional to current emissions; only rich countries pay
Renegotiation	Never; fifty years; twenty years; five years; one year

Figure 1: Attributes and values for climate change mitigation conjoint experiments

Example

Which of these two agreements do you prefer?

Agreement A

Who makes the rules?	Non-Governmental Organisations
How are conflicts resolved?	Local courts
What punishment do they use?	Fines
How are repeated violations punished?	Less penalty
How are costs distributed?	Rich countries pay more than poor countries
How often will the agreement be renegotiated	Five years

Agreement B

Who makes the rules?	Local government
How are conflicts resolved?	Local courts
What punishment do they use?	Blacklist
How are repeated violations punished?	Same
How are costs distributed?	Rich countries pay more than poor countries
How often will the agreement be renegotiated?	Twenty years

Figure 2: Example of conjoint experiment presented to respondents

Results

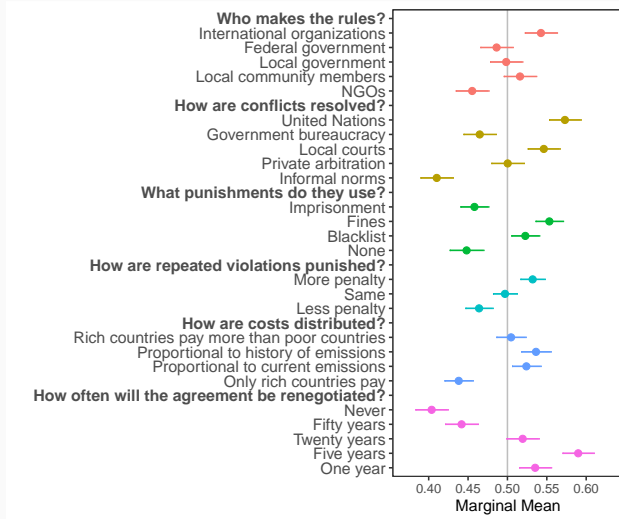


Figure 3: Effect of institutional attributes on the probability of support for climate change agreements in 10 Latin American countries

Who Makes the Rules?

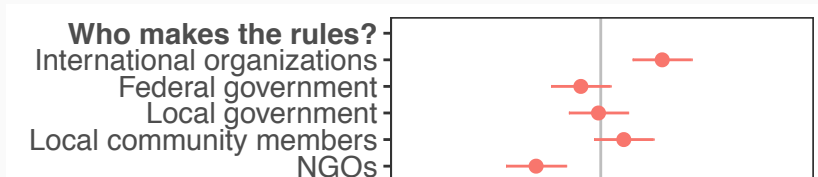


Figure 4: International organizations: 54%; federal government: 49%; local government: 50%; local communities: 52%; NGOs: 45%

- Elites favor international organizations and local governments; distrust NGOs
- Results support long Latin American tradition of reliance on the state

How Are Conflicts Resolved?

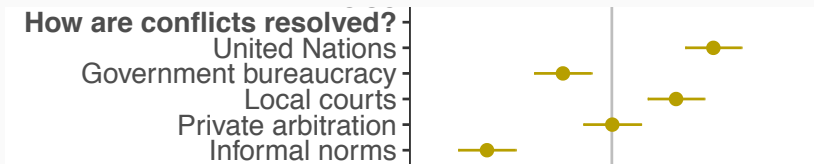


Figure 5: United Nations: 57%; local courts: 54%; arbitration: 50%; government bureaucracy: 46%; informal norms: 41%

- Similar pattern: respondents prefer the UN and local courts
- Informal norms are the least preferred option

What Punishment Do They Use?

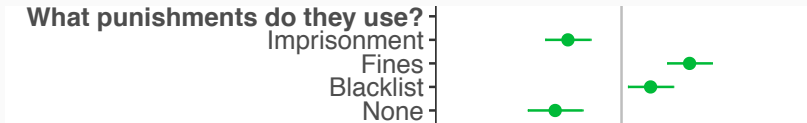


Figure 6: Fines: 55%; blacklist: 52%; imprisonment: 46%; none: 45%

Limitations

Conclusion

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